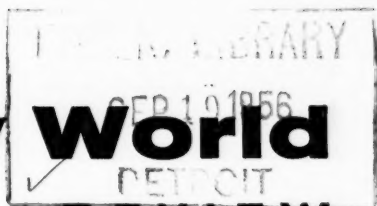


SOCIAL SCIENCES ✓

SEPTEMBER, 1956

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New World REVIEW



School Begins in Moscow

**Yugoslavia Revisited • Soviet Yiddish
Writers • Suez Crisis • New Trends in
Soviet Art Criticism • Chinese Theatre**

New World

REVIEW

SEPTEMBER 1956

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Vol. 24, No. 9, September, 1956. Re-entered as second class matter June 27, 1951 at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Subscription \$2.50 per year. \$1.25 for 6 months (Canadian, \$5.00 foreign \$3.50 a year. Draw money orders or checks payable in New York). Published monthly by the S.R.T. Publications, Inc., 25 West 26th Street, New York 10, N. Y. Indexed in Bulletin of the Public Affairs Information Service. Phone: MUrray Hill 3-3855.

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SUEZ

by KUMAR GOSHAL

WHEN Egypt's President Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal Co. on July 26, Washington, London and Paris were reported stunned by the action. But the Western powers should have foreseen some such move by Nasser.

The United States and Britain had for some time been dangling an offer of financial aid to Nasser to build the Aswan High Dam on the Upper Nile. The aid was offered palpably as a bait to lure Nasser away from closer economic ties with the Soviet Union, China and other socialist countries.

Observing that Egypt's trade with the socialist countries was nevertheless increasing, and pressured by Senators from the cotton growing states who opposed helping Egypt grow more cotton for the world market, Washington in mid-July brusquely withdrew its offer of aid to build the Aswan Dam. London immediately followed suit.

Both the London and the Cairo press reacted sharply to the Anglo-American move. The London *Observer* July 22, for example, said that the sudden withdrawal "will

make unhappy reading throughout Asia. . . ." A leading Cairo newspaper said: "Britain and America have once again unmasked themselves and [revealed] that their policy is based on destroying people's free wills, and that their aid . . . is merely intended to buy peoples, enslave them and rob them of their sovereignty. We have the last word to say. . . ."

The "last word" Egypt had to say came a week later when, speaking before a wildly cheering audience in Alexandria, President Nasser announced nationalization of the Suez Canal and said: "The Suez Canal belongs to us. [It] was built by Egyptians and 120,000 Egyptians died building it. . . . Thirty-five million Egyptian pounds (\$100 million) has been taken from us every year by the Suez Canal Company. We shall use that money to build the high dam. We shall rely on our own strength, our own muscle, our own funds." Nasser announced that the canal company's stockholders would be compensated on the basis of current market quotations, and assured normal passage of ships through the canal.

Western diplomats considered Nasser's scheme to finance the Aswan Dam out of canal revenues a pipe-dream, felt Egypt would go bankrupt trying to compensate stockholders of the canal company while

KUMAR GOSHAL, journalist and lecturer, is author of "People of India," and "Peoples in Colonies". He is the United Nations correspondent for the weekly *National Guardian*.

simultaneously attempting to build the dam. But impartial economists agreed that "if Egypt can realize at least the better part of the annual revenue of \$100 million" from the canal, it could finance the Aswan Dam (*N. Y. Times*, July 28). Qualified observers in Paris noted that from its sterling balances of \$308 million in London—piled up through services rendered Britain during the last war—Egypt could easily pay off the \$233 million estimated by the Suez Canal Co.'s own officials as the total market value of its stock before nationalization.

After the first reaction of stunned bewilderment, the Western powers decided to take vigorous action to regain control of the Suez Canal. U. S. Secretary of State Dulles severely condemned the seizure of the Suez Canal Co.; Deputy Under Secretary of State Robert Murphy flew to London to consult with British Foreign Secretary Selwyn Lloyd and French Foreign Minister Christian Pineau.

British Prime Minister Eden made a number of bellicose statements, sent troop reinforcements, warships and aircraft carriers to the Mediterranean threatening military action against Nasser. France demanded immediate punitive action against Egypt. The U. S. Sixth Fleet was reported (*N. Y. Herald Tribune*, July 30) to be on "stand-by alert" status, "ready to move swiftly to protect American nationals" in case of trouble in the Canal Zone.

There was open demand for the overthrow of Nasser by overt use of force or by an internal coup—as in the case of Mossadegh in Iran after the nationalization of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Co. Tory MP Hugh Fraser (*N. Y. World-Telegram*, Aug. 4) urged ridding "Egypt and the world of Nasser [by] the use, and

not just the show of force." The London *Daily Telegraph* (July 28) asked the Western governments to search for "that little strategic push which will totally overthrow a man who has already overreached himself."

Reaction elsewhere was different. Newspapers throughout Asia and the socialist countries supported Egypt's right to nationalize its resources, strongly endorsed Nasser's action regarding the canal. Arab nationalists threatened action against Western oil investments in case of war to regain control of the canal, urged nationalization of all foreign interests anyway. Even pro-Western Iraq joined other Arab states in supporting Nasser. Indian Premier Nehru and Indonesian President Sukarno warned against the threat or use of force to restore Western hegemony, urged peaceful negotiations to settle the canal issue with proper acknowledgement of Egyptian sovereignty over the canal.

Gradually, however, the first bellicose Western reaction to Suez nationalization gave place to grave doubts about a solution by force. With the Eisenhower administration's prestige as a "peace and prosperity" regime at stake in an election year, Washington, for the time being, shied away from supporting the use of force against Nasser. Paris became worried over jeopardizing its \$1,285,000,000 assets in Cairo in contrast to Egypt's negligible assets in France.

In Britain, the Labour Party "appeared to be moving swiftly away from" its earlier support of Eden's "militant policy" (*N. Y. Times*, Aug. 13). *The News Chronicle*, the *Daily Herald* and the *Manchester Guardian* tried to restore a calmer perspective. In an article in the *New Statesman &*

Nation (Aug. 11) George Wigg, MP, vigorously exposed the fallacy of Eden's argument that available British forces could possibly reoccupy Suez against the newly strengthened Egyptian resistance. (The *N. Y. Times*, Aug. 5) pointed out that there seemed to be "no anti-Nasser segment of Egyptian public opinion to line up behind an 'arranged' coup" to overthrow Nasser.

Attempts were being made, in short, to remind Britain and France—but especially Britain—that the year is 1956, not 1882 when Britain conquered Egypt to control the Suez lifeline to the British Empire.

The Suez Canal was built by France during the period of intense Anglo-French rivalry for the control of the East Indies and its trade. The British at first opposed it because, by shortening the route to Asia, it would successfully compete with the longer route around the Cape of Good Hope, which Britain controlled. Opened in 1869, it was leased for 99 years by the Compagnie Universelle du Canal Maritime de Suez, organized by the engineer Ferdinand de Lesseps, largely controlled by French shareholders, with the Egyptian Khedive holding nearly half the shares. The company was chartered in Egypt under Egyptian law; it was to revert to Egypt in 1968.

The 103-mile-long canal, which greatly shortened the West-East shipping route and vastly reduced the cost of transporting goods both ways, soon came to be looked upon by British Prime Minister Disraeli as "a highway to our Indian Empire." In 1875, when the heavily debt-ridden Khedive Ismail of Egypt was desperately trying to find a way out of his financial difficulties, Disraeli, without consulting Parliament, bought the Khedive's shares in the Suez

Canal Co., making Britain the largest single stockholder and dominant partner in the company.

But the sale of Suez shares did not eliminate Ismail's financial problems. He imposed heavy taxes on the already overtaxed population. By 1881 there was great discontent among the Egyptians, who put in power an anti-foreign nationalist movement led by Col. Ahmed Arabi and other army officers. Threatened with loss of control over the Suez, Britain attacked Egypt on July 11, 1882, overthrew the government, placed Egypt for the next 25 years under the virtual control of British Consul-General Major Evelyn Baring of Baring Brothers bankers. But it is hardly possible for Britain to duplicate in 1956 its military campaign of 1882. Incidentally, Britain's original investment in the canal "is estimated to have been repaid more than eight times" (*N. Y. Times*, Aug. 5).

At this writing, the Western powers have conceded Egypt's right to nationalize the Suez Canal Co., but are demanding international control of canal traffic to ensure passage of ships, of all nations at all times. (Ships of 48 nations ply the canal, with British ships leading and U. S. vessels second.)

At the invitation of Britain, 22 of 24 nations met in London during the third week of August to consider an Anglo-French proposal for international control of the canal with acknowledgement of Egyptian sovereignty over the canal. Egypt rejected the invitation because it was issued "without consulting the Egyptian government, which is directly concerned in the canal." Greece turned down the invitation because of the Cyprus issue.

The conference failed to reach a

unanimous decision, agreed to send the entire record of proceedings to the Egyptian government. Eighteen of the 22 nations supported—with reservations—U.S. Secy. of State Dulles' proposal for an international Suez Canal Board, with Egypt as a member, to control and operate and maintain the canal. These 18 nations set up a five-nation committee (U.S., Australia, Iran, Sweden, Ethiopia) to negotiate with President Nasser.

Soviet Foreign Minister Dmitri Shepilov proposed a wider, more representative conference to be convened by the Big Four plus Egypt and India. Indian representative Krishna Menon, supported by Indonesia and Ceylon, proposed an international consultative body of canal users to "advise" the Egyptian government about canal affairs, leaving canal control in Egyptian hands. At this writing the reaction of the Egyptian government, which has consistently rejected international

control of the canal, remains undisclosed.

Anglo-French-U. S. worry over the Suez nationalization is understandable in the light of events preceding and following nationalization. Under pressure of the Asian-African and Latin American groups, the UN General Assembly has already endorsed the right of the underdeveloped nations to nationalize their resources irrespective of current ownership. India has nationalized Western-owned insurance companies. Only a week after Indonesian papers enthusiastically supported Nasser's action, the Indonesian government repudiated its billion dollar debt to the Netherlands; the debt consisted largely of the cost to the Netherlands government of its war against Indonesian independence.

Egypt's nationalization of the Suez Canal is part of the process of economic and political colonial liberation movement now in rapid progress.

As we go to press the invitation sent to President Nasser by the five-nation committee of the 18 nations to meet with them on the proposal of the U. S. for international control of the Suez Canal has been accepted by Nasser without any conditions either oral or written. President Nasser's reply merely acknowledged the receipt of the committee's request and said, "I agree to the proposed meeting as requested by your committee."

THE BAMBOO CURTAIN?

Twenty-eight Chinese theater companies totalling 2,373 people gave performances in 27 countries during the past six years. 42 companies, composed of 4,238 people from 17 countries visited China. These figures from a review of China's cultural contacts with 86 countries contrast with the lack of cultural contact between the peoples of China and the United States in the past few years.

The Everyman Opera Company could not fulfill an invitation they had accepted to put on *Porgy and Bess* last November because the U.S. State Department refused them passports for China.

American newsmen have been denied passports valid for travel to China by the State Department which declared "it was not considered in the best interests of the United States that Americans should accept the Chinese Communist invitation" to visit that country. (N. Y. Herald Tribune, Aug. 21)

YUGOSLAVIA REVISITED

by W. G. BURCHETT

I LEFT the train at Belgrade station this time with conflicting emotions. I had visited Yugoslavia several times since the end of the war and had sensed varying moods of the Yugoslav people. The first time was in early 1946 when rubble still sprawled across the streets of Belgrade. In the ruined streets and empty shops one found people with wasted frames and gaunt faces, clad in rags but with a wonderful spirit of optimism and confidence burning like a flame in their eyes. Victory after the years of bitterness, the invaders driven from their blood-soaked soil, they saw the perspectives of marching hand in hand with the rest of the Slav family towards socialism. No one who visited Yugoslavia at that time could fail to be moved by the spirit of the people. My next visit was in 1948, a few days after the Cominform resolution, when the mood was one of stunned bewilderment, people could not yet believe it had happened. Their deepest loyalties were in question

and especially old-time Communists were faced with an agonizing dilemma.

By 1949 when I paid my third visit the flame of optimism and confidence had been transformed into the bitterness of disillusionment, realizing that for years they would have to plough a lonely furrow, isolated for reasons which no one could satisfactorily explain from the socialist camp and the Slav world; perhaps even committed to a war in which they would be on the wrong side for reasons not their own.

The atmosphere of Belgrade 1956, I soon found was akin to that of 1946. A people brimming over with optimism and confidence again. But Belgrade is unrecognizable from 1946 or even 1949. Not only have the war scars been almost completely obliterated, and many new buildings erected, but the shops are well-filled with consumer goods and the haggard, gaunt faces, the rag-clad passers-by are no longer to be seen. Prices of textiles, foodstuffs and shoes, all of which are in plentiful supply, are at least as reasonable in relation to wages as in the People's Democracies. The city shines with cleanliness and goods are displayed in the co-operative shops with a taste

W. G. BURCHETT, Australian journalist, well known for his reports from Korea and China. He is at present travelling in Europe.

and elegance Belgrade has not known before. If the appearance is not one of prosperity, it is at least one of an adequate supply of essential consumer goods, whereas in 1949 even a second hand, broken comb was displayed in shops for anything up to two dollars. But the confident, optimistic air was not just due to improved material conditions.

"Our relations with the Soviet Union are back on a good and absolutely solid footing," a high-ranking government official told me, "and that is a source of profound happiness for us all. 'Our relations with the People's Democracies are getting better every day and that is what we want. The tempo of improvement is not the same with all of them but there are special reasons for this which we understand. Our people feel we are no longer isolated.' Speaking of the results of the Brioni conference between President Tito, President Nasser and Prime Minister Nehru, he said: 'It is absolutely incorrect to say as some journalists have done that we are neutralist, or wanting to create a third force in Europe. We have a Marxist government, we are building a socialist country along Marxist lines. We cannot be neutral in world affairs.' In the course of our conversation, I mentioned the very friendly and helpful attitude of all officials I had met despite the fact that during the years following the Cominform resolution I had written some very harsh things about Yugoslavia.

"We fully understand the position of progressive journalists and of Communist Parties abroad during that period," he replied. "It was difficult to write or to act otherwise on the basis of the information available. We felt however that Communist Parties abroad should have gone

more deeply into matters after the visit of Bulganin and Khrushchev to Belgrade. But since the 20th Congress, things are improving. Comrade Togliatti has been here, the French Party Congress decided to send a delegation here, after the recent changes in Hungary, there was a decision to work for improved relations. All these things are of great importance to us. We will do nothing to hinder these positive developments."

These points were emphasized by almost every official and member of the League of Communists with whom I spoke. The friendliness and frankness which was noticeable in all contacts by myself and Hungarian, Czech, Polish and other progressive journalists, with government officials, was a reflection of the deep desire for closest relations with the socialist camp and the optimism that things were moving in that direction.

"Yugoslavia absolutely wants to develop contacts on the broadest basis with all workers' and progressive organizations throughout the world," said Velimir Sojnic, member of the Central Committee of the Yugoslav League of Communists and member of the Federal Executive Council, the highest government organ. "We want to cooperate with and exchange opinions on ideological matters, exchange experiences in the building of socialism with the progressive movement in all countries."

In factories and the villages, I found the same outstretched hand of friendship towards the progressive world and this was the experience of my colleagues from the People's Democracies.

The Yugoslav workers, I found, were proud of the fact that they had broken some new ground in socialist

construction with their self-management of factories. This was introduced in June, 1950, and revised in 1952 and applies to all factories and enterprises throughout Yugoslavia. All factories and enterprises belong to the people as a whole and are managed by Workers' Councils elected from the rank-and-file workers. In small enterprises employing thirty or less, all the workers constitute the Workers' Council. In large ones it can range up to 120. The Council elects a management committee of up to 15 members which makes all decisions connected with running the enterprise. A manager is hired from outside to execute the decisions of the worker's management committee. The Workers' Council has a great degree of autonomy in settling production schedules, work plans, wages and even disposal of a large share of the profits. At the "Rakovica" tractor factory which I visited just outside Belgrade, the workers, after contributing 50 per cent of profits to Federal authorities, put another 28 per cent into enlargement of the factory and split the rest up between themselves. It amounted to the equivalent of two months' wages. The manager, Milovan Savovic, members of the Workers' Councils and rank-and-file workers, all seem satisfied that the scheme worked well and was superior to the previous centralized administration. "It's much better to get my instructions from workers from the benches who know what's possible than from bureaucrats sitting in a government office," said manager Savovic.

Government officials also claim self-management works well and has largely eliminated the worst aspects of bureaucracy. They declare it trains workers in management, increases production by the powerful

stimulant of workers sharing the fruits of their own good management and produces a far higher variety of goods to satisfy public taste. They point to the shops well stocked with a wide variety of each type of goods and say this is the product of self-management. However, it is admitted that there are still many kinks to be ironed out. In some cases it has tended to anarchy in production and workers have wanted to divide up all the profits for themselves and leave nothing for plant expansion and modernization. In big enterprises it is more efficient than in small ones. Factories work out their own plans and submit them through district or republic authorities to the federal authorities. Planning in this way comes from below and is coordinated on top by controlling credits necessary for expansion, raw materials etc. Some new legislation is being worked out now to remove some of the trends towards anarchy but there seems no doubt that it has resulted in high morale in the factories and in an upsurge of production.

Remarkable strides have been made in building up industry—but at the cost of neglecting agriculture. It seems that the Western powers were prepared to help Yugoslavia build up a military machine and to provide agricultural products but did nothing to help build either heavy or light industries. As a result Yugoslavia's own effort was concentrated on building up heavy industry, while agriculture declined, foodstuffs being imported. Steel production was expanded to well over three times the pre-war figure to produce over 800,000 tons in 1955, coal production has doubled, electric power quadrupled, gasoline tripled by the end of last year. Yugoslavia is building tractors, trucks, cars, all sorts of machines and

other industrial products never before produced.

In agriculture however the picture is grim indeed. In 1953 the system of agricultural cooperatives virtually collapsed. They had been formed on a wrong basis—by administrative means, without the technical equipment for working the pooled land and with a system by which peasants drew out profits on the basis of the amount of land they contributed instead of according to work done. Production went down and down. In 1953, 3,500 of 4,679 cooperatives of the “working” type were disbanded. Since 1953 the number has shrunk to about 500 and it is officially admitted the movement was a failure. As a result grain has had to be imported in ever larger quantities. By 1952 wheat was already the largest single imported item with 433,000 tons imported. By last year the figure had reached 975,000 tons, twice as much as any other single item. Next highest items were crude petroleum and fertilizers—excluding of course military equipment.

A start has now been made to reform cooperatives on a new basis, under which land remains in the hands of the peasants but tractors, threshers, ploughs etc. are provided by the government on credits and are owned by “general cooperatives” of peasants, who hire the necessary

technicians. Those already formed seem to be working satisfactorily, but the peasants, “once bitten twice shy,” are reluctant to move again without being absolutely sure that the step is a correct one.

Government leaders explained to me that the first phase in building heavy industry is now completed and that beginning next year emphasis will be on light industry, housing and agriculture. There is no tendency to gloss over difficulties in the economic developments and the hard road that still lies ahead. But what was in the mind of every person with whom I talked and what is in the faces of those one sees in the streets, is that the worst is over. There may be more economic difficulties if the West cuts its aid as relations between Yugoslavia and the socialist camp improve. But the ardent desire of every Yugoslav citizen is for the closest political, economic and cultural relations with the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies. They know the conditions are now at hand for this and each day brings fresh evidence that the visions which lit up their faces in the first post-war months are now coming true.

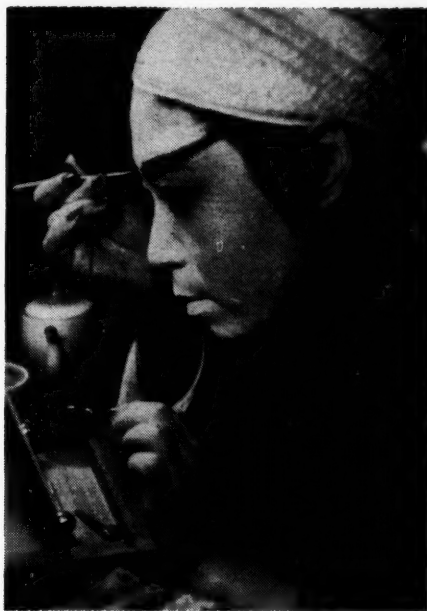
“We belong in the socialist camp. Our future lies there with the rest of the Slav family” were the last words from an old friend as my train pulled out of Belgrade station for Budapest.

AMERICANS IN THE USSR

American tourists to the number of 1,500 will visit the Soviet Union this year, according to the *Wall Street Journal*, August 23. While next year, the *Journal* goes on to say, the prediction is that the number will rise to 10,000. This would equal the record set in the period between 1934 and 1936, just after we had established diplomatic relations with the USSR. The *Journal* quotes the head of one large travel agency as saying that “Everybody in the tourist business is getting into the act for next year.” He went on to predict that travel by Americans to the USSR “will double and double and double.”

GLIMPSES OF THE CHINESE THEATER

by MILES MALLESON



Actress Hou Yu-lan makes up.

EVERYWHERE we went in China, we were asked who and what we wanted to see; and always I said the theatre and those working in it.

Of course I caught a glimpse of far more than the theatre. I sat in on interviews and conferences when members of our group were meeting and discussing with their opposite numbers; I went visiting and sight-seeing with them. We went to some wonderfully well-run villages, which seem to me to have advanced several centuries in a few years, where life has begun anew for the peasants on their own land. We talked to so many, and saw so much, and I kept my ears

and eyes wide open. In some ways it was the most exciting experience of my life, and I find it quite impossible to say anything about the theatre without a word about the vast background of New China itself.

I believe that when future historians tell the whole story of the times through which we are living today, this Chinese Revolution will be seen as one of the great landmarks of human history. A mighty and ancient civilization hurtling into the future. A nation-wide renaissance of the human spirit.

Now, if I'm right, all this will inevitably be reflected in their theatre; and must influence not only the theatre of their immediate neighbors, but of the whole world. At first reading, that may seem far fetched; but it isn't. If the jet engine doesn't help to destroy our world, it will help to enrich it immeasurably; and, in the

MILES MALLESON, distinguished English stage and screen actor, visited China last year with a cultural delegation.

case of the theatre, in a quite special way.

For consider: A company of players, with their scenery and properties can be transported thousands of miles across the world in about the same time that it has hitherto taken them to get from town to town in their own country. If we had a little more sense—and we must have, if we're to survive at all—regular theatrical exchanges with Peking would be a practical proposition.

So, bearing in mind that, although China has always seemed very far away, we are entering an age when she is, so to speak, on our doorstep; and that, on this planet of ours distance no longer means what it did, let me try and share my glimpse of the Chinese theatre and, as an outsider, at least suggest what it is and what it may become.

One of the essentials for a prosperous theatre is an audience. This China has. Everywhere we went the theatres were packed. And the audiences are increasing. The hunger for education, knowledge and culture among the millions, their eagerness for the amusement, knowledge and insight that the theatre has to give is not easily appreciated in the West—but India must know this phenomenon intimately.

The theatre people themselves are meeting this urgent challenge with vigor and enthusiasm. More theatres are being built, more actors and actresses are being trained. There are, for instance, so I was told, some sixty amateur dramatic groups in Peking alone; and nearly every factory, mine, workshop and army unit has its amateur group. From such groups, anyone showing ability, and wishing to take up acting professionally, is given free training at one of the new Dramatic Schools. I talked

to a well-known actress in Shanghai who is now busy teaching; she can only act for six months in the year. A famous dancer was in the same position.

By far the largest part of the Chinese theatre is still their opera; which is, as far as I know, a unique form in the dramatic history of the world. But at first encounter these operas seem so strange to one's eyes and ears that it is difficult to give any effective impression of them. To begin with, the little orchestra of drums, cymbals, wood and strings, crashes, bangs, howls and wails through much of the acting; and, too, the highly stylized voice production of the singers is unlike our own.

And yet, unable to understand a word of what was spoken or sung, nor the significance of any of the movements and gestures, most of which have their own special meaning, before long I found myself watching it all fascinated—and understanding more and more the age-long hold that these operas have on the cultural life of the people. Nor indeed are they really so difficult to understand and appreciate; often they have the truth and simplicity of fairy-tales and folk-stories.

Each of the operas I saw contained a scene of mime, and a scene of ballet. The technical perfection of their stage management I shall never forget. But, as someone said to me, "We have worked at these scenes not for a few weeks, but for centuries."

And for one opera, there was not the small noisy orchestra at all. Its place was taken by an orchestra of some twenty players—most of them in their 'teens, and with many familiar instruments whose music I found much gentler, more tuneful, and easier on the ear.

I was fortunate and honored to



Scene from the classical play "Liang Shan-po and Chu Ying-tai". Prevented from marrying by the cruel feudal marriage code, the lovers swear that even death shall not part them.

meet, and have a long talk with, their famous actor Mei Lan-fang. He is a national figure, a member of the Central Governing Body of China, and the head of the new Institute of Drama in Peking. He explained to me how they were adapting the old operas to the New China—in his own words "to give an old Art a new figure."

But this has to be done with care and discretion. Neither the audiences nor the actors want their operas altered more than is necessary, or changed in any way for the worse. So a good deal of this work of adaptation is to rid the old folk story plots of a large over-lay of feudal ideas and values; for in the course of time many features of the old oppressive feudalism have been glorified, warlords becoming the heroes and the peasants being held up to ridicule or contempt. Mei Lan-fang himself has dropped right out of his repertory an opera and a part that in the old days was one of his biggest successes. He

had put it aside without the least feeling of regret, because "the historical themes that we want to give our people are those that give them a sense of bravery, patriotism, industry, goodness, justice—and of greatness." He spoke of new operas being written today with contemporary themes which must inevitably lead to new developments in the way these are staged; but he added that his new Institute of Drama "has research departments in costume, music, masks, settings, and traditional ways of singing, so that we may be able, properly, to mix the old with the new."

I asked him what changes had taken place in the life of actors and actresses off the stage. And again I quote his own words: "Some few of us have always lived well; but there was a great gap between the successful ones and the majority of the profession. For them life was very miserable. Now the gap has been closed. All actors and actresses now

live quite well. In the old days we performers of the classical stage looked back on our training period with horror. Young people learning the theatrical art were forced to suffer physical and mental torment. . . . Now the old system of apprenticeship and adopted daughters that served as a shield for such inhuman exploitation has disappeared altogether. In China today the rising generation of students for the classical theatre are not only taught dramatic art, but receive a regular education as well. They will graduate both as good actors and good citizens of the new democracy."

When we said goodbye, I felt that the classical theatre, like everything there around it, was moving swiftly into the future, with tremendous vigor and enthusiasm, but building all the time on what was finest in their long and splendid past.

Not that these operas are all of the old Chinese theatre. Very far from it. The modern theatre is coming along at a quite phenomenal rate; which is only to say it is keeping pace with their lives. And the fascinating thing about it is that in modern realistic plays and the acting of them they are starting for themselves right at the very beginning.

I had an interview with a Government official whose job it was to look after entertainment in the factories. He told me how their innumerable dramatic groups were writing and acting their own plays. Mostly short one-acters. And then it usually took several authors, working together, to write it. "You would find them very infantile," he said to me, "although the little plays are serving their purpose. They are being enjoyed by audiences and actors alike, and a successful one might be seen by twenty or thirty thousand workers." He told

me, too, how they were getting technical advice and help from all kinds of professional theatre people—writers, actors, electricians, and so on. "Infantile" maybe. But a very healthy infant with a vigorous life of its own in the near future.

I saw one modern three-act play, in a proper theatre, acted by a professional company. The standard was that of a good English provincial repertory company. A well-constructed play. "Good theatre," as we should say. All about life in a factory: factory problems in the new society, with an underlying practical moral of the need for increased output, seen through the attitudes of a variety of factory personalities. But how a packed audience of workers cheered and laughed, or were held in enthralled silence! To sit among them would have warmed any actor's heart. It certainly warmed mine.

And I spent a morning with several of their dramatists. Again I can quote their words, because I noted them down as they talked. "The people," said one of them, "want plays about the things they know of, from their own lives." "The four walls of our studies have disappeared," said another, "and now we get out among the people for our subjects." Another joined in: "It's been an eye-opener for some of us. There's such a mass of new material, vivid and living and growing, that our plays must be better than when we wrote in a kind of isolation."

In the years ahead, an exchange of our literatures and arts could be of incalculable value to our two peoples. Indeed, every local and national culture could influence and enrich every other and then all the peoples of the world would be able to enjoy the finest things the human spirit has to give.

ON SOVIET YIDDISH WRITERS

by AMY SCHECHTER

Based on an Interview with Chaim Suller

SOME answers are now on hand to the questions about what is happening to Soviet Yiddish writers and writing, about the rehabilitation of those imprisoned or exiled who lived to be rehabilitated, what is being done about plans for a revival of Yiddish culture, and the status of Jewish people in general in the Soviet Union today.

Some of the answers were brought back recently by Chaim Suller, general manager of the Yiddish daily, the *Morning Freiheit*, who spent four and a half weeks in the Soviet Union, returning on July 16. He speaks both Yiddish and Russian and was able to talk with the fourteen Yiddish writers who came to meet him at the offices of the Writers' Union in Moscow—several of them back after years in prison or exile—without an interpreter. In Russian he could talk with Alexei Surkov, secretary of the Writers' Union, with Russians in newspaper offices, at the auto factory he visited in Moscow and collective farm a few miles outside the city, and to a variety of citizens he saw in their homes, and in restaurants and stores. At a soccer game his neighbor, a soccer enthusiast he thought was a worker but turned out to be a research historian, took him in tow, and talked at length later over a drink about the Soviet Union and the United States, about history, writing, politics and sports, and insisted on coming to get him

the following day to show him round the city and for more talk.

In Leningrad Mr. Suller visited his brothers, a shipbuilding engineer and an economist, and a sister and other relatives, which meant he was able to get the sort of intimate insights which a person coming to a country cold is not able to get in a short stay.

He found people approachable, knowing him for an American; the general mood one of relaxation and of hope. This was true among the Jews he met too, although he found that in the absence of a definite official declaration forthrightly condemning anti-Semitism, even though it is known that those involved in overt anti-Semitic acts have been tried and punished, a certain shadow of fear necessarily remains.

In Moscow Mr. Suller went to the Soviet Writers' Union headquarters to try to find some of the answers. Here he met with the poet Alexei Surkov, now general secretary of the organization.

"I talked with Surkov for three hours," he said. "Surkov has a really broad knowledge of the Jewish writers and a warm feeling for Yiddish literature, and was terrifically concerned about pushing through the program for reviving what had been destroyed."

In charge of the committee to handle the work is V. Azhaye, author of "Far From Moscow", who during

his years in Far Eastern Siberia took an interest in and aided the development of the young Jewish writers in Birobidzhan, and who, in his novel created an outstanding Jewish character in the party secretary, Zalkind.

Surkov said that of some 200 known writers, poets and others using the Yiddish language, about 30 now live in and around Moscow; the others are mostly in Odessa, Kharkov, Kiev, Minsk, and in Riga, Vilna, Cernowitz, and in Birobidzhan which still has its Yiddish language newspaper. This, he said, is in addition to the Jewish writers who use Russian as a medium, adding that in the Moscow branch of the organization, over 35 per cent of the 1,000 members are Jewish. Speaking of the Yiddish writers Surkov said, "We are in touch with all of them and know what they are working on."

At the time of Mr. Suller's visit many of the Moscow Yiddish writers were out of the city on vacation. Surkov was able to get in touch with fourteen who were in dachas (summer homes) nearby. At the offices of the Writers' Union he talked with them for several hours. First they bombarded him with questions about Jewish cultural life in the United States, then they spoke at length on what had happened to Soviet Jewish writers and what is happening now. Without attempting to hide the outrages inflicted on them and the suffering they had gone through, emphasis was on today and the future, and they eagerly discussed general plans for recreating Yiddish culture in the Soviet Union and the works they themselves were occupied with.

"They are very anxious to write," Mr. Suller said, "just because of the past." They repeatedly stressed that despite what had happened they are

a part of Soviet life. The poet Samuel Halkin, who ranks with top flight Yiddish poets in any land, author of the noted play in verse, *Bar Kochba*, which tells of a slave revolt of the Jews in early times, acted as a sort of spokesman. He said, "Take our warmest greetings to the Yiddish writers, cultural workers and readers in other lands. Tell them that *we were Soviet Yiddish writers and remain Soviet Yiddish writers.*"

From Alexei Surkov and the Yiddish writers with whom he spoke Mr. Suller found that a broad plan for the revival of Yiddish culture existed with the following major features: 1. Setting up a Yiddish-language publishing house; 2. Issuing a Yiddish literary periodical, said to be planned as a bi-monthly; 3. Launching a Yiddish newspaper, at first on a three-times-a-week basis; 4. Re-establishing the Soviet Yiddish theater (travelling Yiddish theater groups have been operating for the past two years, he found.) 5. Calling a conference of Yiddish writers and those working in other Yiddish cultural fields, from all parts of the country. The publication of large new Russian editions of the works of leading Yiddish writers, notably of Itzik Feffer and Peretz Markish, is also tied in with the plan. The Ukrainian Writers' Organization is also publishing Ukrainian translations of some Yiddish works.

Mr. Suller's statement on the information given him on these plans has been corroborated by Chaim Shoskes, well-known writer for the Yiddish New York daily, *Der Tag* (The Day), arriving in the USSR shortly after Suller had left. Mr. Shoskes' initial findings were given in a report to the *New York Times* (Aug. 11). The *Times* reported that "... Mr. Shoskes said he was im-

pressed by the vast plan of rehabilitating Yiddish culture. . . ." in the Soviet Union. He said that he was told the Yiddish literary periodical, running to 200 pages, would be off the press in two to three weeks; also that the Writers' Union was allocating 400,000 of the 600,000 ruble income accruing to it in 1955 to get the periodical started. In regard to the newspaper, he said that a special commission of three Yiddish and three Russian writers was working on a project to launch it sometime in 1957.

To get the Yiddish theater going, a special committee he reported has been set up in the Ministry of Culture.

In addition to Samuel Halkin, the writers with whom Mr. Suller met include the following: Noah Lurye, Aron Vergelis, Samuel Gordon, Yisroel Serebriani, Abraham Gunter, M. Grubien, Joseph Rubin, Mira Henkin, S. Druzh, Z. Telesin, A. Barachovitch, and I. Lyubomirski. They gave him a list of 71 of their colleagues writing in Yiddish in Moscow, Kiev, Odessa and other centers, including 31 writers of fiction, 29 poets, 2 dramatists, 7 critics and literary historians, and 2 essayists. Something of the broad range of interest of these writers can be seen from a partial list of the work they are engaged on: Aron Vergelis, one of the younger poets who has lived in Birobidzhan and Moscow, has a book of poems on life in Central Asia and the Far East; M. Belinsky, of Moscow, a dramatic work based on the life of Spinoza; Uri Finkel, of Minsk, a novel on the 1905 revolution; H. Balushstein, of Kishinev, a new book of poetry; Yakov Sternberg, Moscow, a cycle of poems on Pushkin; Noah Lurye, Moscow, an autobiographical novel; Prof. Shatz-Anin of Riga, a study of the Yiddish classics; Nok-

hen Oislander, Moscow, a monograph on the Yiddish dramatist, Osher Schwartzman.

One important piece of information on Soviet Jewry that Mr. Suller brought back was about the Jewish farmers of the Crimea, about whose fate since the war little was known here. It came from S. H. Gordon who has written a book about them. Jewish colonists from the towns first came to settle in the Crimea in the early 1920's. Later these settlements became collective farms, and two of the five Jewish national districts — Freidorf (Free Town) and Larindorf were set up in the area. Yiddish was the language of the local Soviets.

During World War II, as the Nazis advanced, it seems that the Jews of this district were evacuated. Apparently many of them were saved and returned after the war. Mr. Suller was told by S. H. Gordon, that there are now about 80 collective farms in the region; that about half are wholly Jewish, and the other half mixed Jewish and Russian. In all, there are about 5,000 to 6,000 of these Jewish farm families, mostly Yiddish speaking.

A sidelight on the changed attitude on Yiddish culture is the exhibition of the works of the artist Alexander Tischler which was being held in Moscow. Tischler formerly had been connected with the Mikhoels Yiddish Theater which was closed down. Most of the paintings exhibited were studies of the great actor Mikhoels who was a leader of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee.

Of the Jewish intellectuals, Alexei Surkov of the Writers' Union, estimated that roughly about 20 per cent had been affected by repressive measures of one kind or another. Without in any way under-estimating the enormity of the crime against them

or its special aspects, Surkov spoke at the same time of the very high percentage of other Soviet intellectuals—and others—who had also suffered from such measures.

This the Jewish people he came into contact with also realized, Mr. Suller found. And he met some of them home after years in prison or exile who said that alongside them as fellow-victims had been Russians and others, in some cases workers or farmers as well as intellectuals. Emphatically, as in the case of the Yiddish writers he had talked with, most felt themselves an organic part of the Soviet land and people. He said that in the short time he was there, he could feel the mood of Jews he met changing, and tension lessening.

On the use of Yiddish as a day-to-day language, Mr. Suller found much the same situation among the young people as here. Most of those he met did not speak Yiddish; although he heard that this is not the case in the newer Soviet territories. Of the Soviet children, he said, "They're beautiful, especially the teen-agers, there is an eagerness and lack of sophistication about them . . . they read a tremendous lot, and very good stuff. You feel their sense of security. . . ." Jewish young people too, plan their career—as engineers, factory workers, scientists, physicians, actors, writers, ballet dancers, farmers or agronomists out in the great new pioneering agricultural areas, without any fear that being Jews will in any way keep them from accomplishing what they want to.

Rehabilitation measures not before noted were stressed in a survey by Harrison Salisbury, (*N. Y. Times*, July 26, '56), of the special efforts of Soviet literary publications to bring before the public the names and work of Jewish writers previously wrongly

attacked or banned. These are writers using both Yiddish and Russian as their medium. He characterizes this as a ". . . comprehensive—but unpublicized—drive to rehabilitate Jewish literary victims of past purges, living and dead."

As one of the most notable examples he speaks of Aleksandr Isbakh, whose novel, of Jewish life "Years of My Life" was "savagely attacked" in 1949, in a way he characterizes as "openly anti-semitic", and who today writes regularly for the monthly *Novy Mir*, nad the weekly *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, both organs of the Union of Soviet Writers. Others he cites are D. Danin, expelled from the Communist Party in 1949, now an essayist for the monthly *Znamya* and other literary publications; L. Sheinin, a surviving member of the executive of the Jewish Anti-fascist Committee, center of the attack, now a leading contributor to *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, and P. G. Antokolsky, a leading poet, and G. Broman, expelled from the Gorky Literary Institute in 1949 at the height of the purges, and now published regularly.

Special note was lately taken of the 60th birthday of Antokolsky, who has had some 20 volumes of verse published over the years. His long poem "Son", addressed to his only son, killed in the war, one of the finest poems to come out of the war, is available in English translation. Antokolsky, who writes in Russian, is a man of broad culture who besides writing sometimes excellent lyrical verse, is also a translator of poetry from other Soviet languages, and from the French. "Son", written in 1943, filled with a father's grief and with hatred of the Nazi order, also passionately affirms the poet's belief in the Soviet way of life.

For those for whom rehabilitation

comes too late, there are large pensions for each member of the surviving family; new appreciations of their writing, and extensive new editions of their works such as those now being prepared, for publication in Yiddish and Russian, of the works of poets Itzik Feffer and Peretz Markish.

According to Mr. Suller the plan is for complete new Yiddish editions of the works of these two writers; as well as publication of selected works in the Russian and Ukrainian languages. The new novel Markish wrote in prison, "In the Footsteps of Generations", about the Warsaw Ghetto uprising, is slated for publication in English as well as in Yiddish and Russian.

The Writer's Union publishing House, "Sovietsky Pisatel," is issuing a new Russian collection of selected poems of Markish, covering all periods of his work. A recent article by the poet Aron Vergelis quotes the

managing editor of "Sovietsky Pisatel" on Markish as follows:

"... We are including Markish's poem "Volhynia" written in his youth, as well as chapters from his epic about the civil war, "Brothers," and lyrical verses. . . . Furthermore Goslitizdat is issuing a two-volume edition of Markish's works, and Detgiz (children's publisher) is issuing a volume of his ballads.

Summing up, Chaim Suller spoke again of the many excellent measures in which the government, Writers' Union, Ministry of Culture and other organizations are engaged. "But," he said, "a forthright statement is still awaited that anti-semitism will not be tolerated in the USSR. Such a statement is necessary because European Jews have lost six million of their brothers at the hands of the Nazi hangmen and they are particularly fearful of any recurrence, anywhere, anytime, of their experiences."

WHAT THE FIGURES SAY

A chart from the new statistical handbook "National Economy of the USSR", recently published in the Soviet Union.

Items	Measures	1913	1928	1940	1945	1955
Overall output	Per cent	100	132	852	782	2723
pig iron	million tons	4.2	3.3	14.9	8.8	33.3
steel	million tons	4.2	4.3	18.3	12.3	45.3
coal	million tons	29.1	35.5	165.9	149.3	391.0
oil	million tons	9.2	11.6	31.1	19.4	70.8
electric power	billion kwt-hrs	1.9	5.0	48.3	43.3	170.1
machine-building and metal-processing output	Index	1.0	1.8	35.0	30.0*	162.0
cotton fabrics	billion meters	2.6	2.7	4.0	1.6	5.9
woolen cloth	billion meters	103.0	86.8	119.7	53.8	251.0
leather footwear	million pairs	60.0	58.0	211.0	63.1	274.5
sugar (granulated)	million tons	1.3	1.3	2.2	0.5	3.4

1913—Prerevolutionary Russia attains highest economic level.

1928—Beginning of five-year plans.

1940—Level attained before World War II

1945—Level at end of War

(*) 1946

SOVIET ART DISCUSSION

by RALPH PARKER

EVER SINCE it was announced several months ago that Soviet artists would hold their first all-Union Congress earlier this year the art world in the Soviet Union has been in a ferment. Many of the local organizations of the Union of Soviet Artists have held conferences and drawn up suggestions for the agenda while the press has opened its columns to discussions on aims and methods. Not only the fine arts but the related branches of folk art and industrial design have come up for discussion. Meanwhile the country's art galleries have reflected important changes that are taking place in the public's taste. The past six months have seen the first public exhibition for many years of the major part of the rich collection of post-impressionist French painting that used to hang in the Museum of Modern Western Art, closed on the outbreak of the war; exhibitions of modern Indian painting, including the work of children, that provoked much controversy; a sensational retrospective exhibition of the work of the gifted Armenian painter Saryan.

No single line has been laid down

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by any authoritative body and it is clear that the rather narrow interpretation of socialist realism that emanated from the Academy and the Organizing Committee of the Union of Soviet Artists has been abandoned. As in other countries critics and art historians have found the appellation of "realist" extremely difficult to define and today their approach has become somewhat more flexible. Incidentally, much interest was aroused in art circles here in the views expressed by the Mexican artist Sequeiros in the open letter to Soviet artists read at a session of the Soviet Academy. (Published in *Masses and Mainstream*, April, 1956). In this letter Sequeiros argued vigorously against over-simplification in defining realism, especially against the practice of pinning the realist label on to the works of such painters as Courbet and Repin, whom he said would certainly be painting differently, were they alive today, than they did in the 19th century. Each epoch, he urged, should find means of expression which corresponded to what that epoch had to say. No more energetic championing of this point of view had been heard since the death of the sculptress Vera Mukhina who from time to time used to raise a lone voice to urge modern Soviet artists to take full account of the new materials and

opportunities offered by a society erecting large public buildings.

One of the most striking contributions to the discussions now in progress has been made by the critic A. Kamensky writing in the monthly magazine *Novy Mir*. In his *Reflections before the Canvases of Soviet Painters* this critic brings under review the whole range of Soviet painting roughly called realist, executed since the Revolution. The occasion for this article is the recent reopening of the Soviet art section of the Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow where a good deal of rehanging has been done.

Kamensky starts from the premise that Soviet painting has on the whole always been motivated by two conceptions: the task of the artist to provide an illustrative documentary picture of reality and the effort to convey the ideas and facts of contemporary life in an artistic form. It would be unreasonable, he argues, to state that pictures of an illustrative character were always insignificant. The efforts of certain painters in the 'twenties who formed the Association of Artists of Revolutionary Russia (AKHRR) for instance, had positive value in that they broadened the scope of painting and provided artists with new subjects. However, the critic maintains, the painters of this group were successful only when they raised themselves above the primitive principle of "documentalism" (Cheptsov, Grekov, Ioganson) and then some of them painted interesting and original works on Soviet subjects, such as "The Death of a Commissar" by K. Petrov-Vodkin, "The Defence of Petrograd" by A. Deneika, "The Old and the Very New" by M. Saryan, and the portraits of peasants painted by S. Gerasimov in the 'twenties.

Turning to the work of Soviet painters at the beginning of the 'thirties, Kamensky maintains that the secret of the success of the best subject painting of that time was that despite considerable variety in styles these painters remained faithful to three principles: the importance of the main idea, originality in execution, and freshness and depth in form. He singles out for praise such works as Ioganson's "In an Old Urals Factory," Y. Pimenov's "New Moscow", Deneika's "Future Airmen," portraits by M. Nesterov and landscapes by G. Nissky.

Why then, the critic asks, with a school of good realist painting established in the early 'thirties did Soviet painting develop so disappointingly in later years? What was the reason for the carelessness in execution, the superficiality and dullness that characterized it? And he lays the blame for these things on a pseudo-realistic trend which was in fact a reversion to the primitive "documentalism" of the 'twenties, to a photographic naturalism which most of the artists mentioned above had thrown off, but which was revived in a painting such as I. Brodsky's "Formal Opening of the Second Congress of the Comintern", a huge, showy canvas without any artistic merit.

But while in their creative method the pseudo-realists (A. Gerasimov, D. Nalbandian, V. Yefanov) differed in no way from the AKHRR group of the 'twenties, there were superficial differences mainly introduced to disguise the dullness of their conception: striking color effects, glossiness and other tricks which deceived a public whose taste was not sufficiently developed and enabled the pseudo-realists to maintain their claim to be socialist realists.

This school of painting, Kamensky

continues, was able to flourish largely owing to the cult of personality. It was this cult that permitted an exploitation of public taste. But the real harm done was not so much the result of the painting of a mass of pictures glorifying Stalin and reducing everybody else to the role of sycophantic, applauding "walkerson", as the fact that the people then in charge of Soviet art organizations upheld the "cult" pictures as the highest achievements of Soviet art. The result was a whole series of subject pictures devoted to triumphs, celebrations, the presentations of medals and other pompous scenes in factories and on farms that were quite untrue to life. At the same time artists like A. Plastov, S. Chuikov, T. Yablonskaya, V. Kostetsky, not to mention the older Saryan and Konchalovsky, were blamed for their honest portrayal of life.

Noting with satisfaction that many of the large, showy, "cult" pictures he objects to have been removed from the Tretyakov Gallery, the critic calls for greater recognition for a realistic art that shuns both "documentalism" and a rosy view of life.

When Soviet artists meet to discuss their problems later this year they will have on their agenda two questions concerning the role of the artist in industrial production. One of them arises out of the widely-felt concern for the fate of the tradition of folk-art. At local conferences there has been much talk about the neglect by artists organizations of the small number of cooperatives to be found, often in remote villages and country towns, producing traditional pottery, carvings, miniatures, lace, embroideries and so on. Too often, it is felt, these cooperatives are at the mercy of trading organizations more inter-

ested in fulfilling their "plans" than in protecting the folk-artists from a debasement of quality that can easily arise when they start supplying a mass public. It is hoped that a closer relationship between folk-artists and the Union of Soviet Artists will develop from the Congress.

The other question concerns the role of the artist in industrial design. There was a time, soon after the Revolution, when a fair number of artists turned their hands to improving the aesthetic quality of consumer goods. In the rapid process of industrialization, however, the role of the artist appears to have been largely overlooked with results that most artists regret. The Congress will have before it various suggestions for improving industrial design.

The Soviet public is taking a lively interest in the discussions going on in the art world. One of the ways it is itself participating in them is in the ample use that is being made of the Visitors' Books at exhibitions. Judging from the pages of these books where single entries often cover several pages public taste is sharply divided on the subject of "modern" art while being practically unanimous in its approval of the policy which is allowing them to see it. Attendance at seasonal exhibitions has risen greatly during the past year, particularly among young people and this may safely be attributed to the much wider variety in styles of painting now to be seen. One thing is certain, in no country of the world is there such an active relationship between painter and public as here today. The days are over when the organizers of Soviet art exhibitions seemed to be approaching the public with a "This is official art. Whether you like it or not, it's all you are going to see."

ARTIST IN HUNGARY

by DAVID CAPLAN

I SUPPOSE I am what could be called a Hungarophile. First fascinated on a 4-day visit in 1934, I jumped at the opportunity of paying a short visit three years ago, albeit at the depth of the most bitter winter in forty years, with the great Danube frozen from bank to bank.

As an artist and designer I spent most of my time meeting designers, visiting art schools, printing plants and suchlike, and asking interminable questions. One result of that visit was the organization of an exhibition of British graphic art (posters, book jackets, illustrations, brochures, etc.) in Budapest during May of this year. I and a colleague were invited to the opening of this exhibition and spent a very crowded and fascinating week in this city of exciting baroque architecture, with the wide Danube sweeping under its many bridges. Let me, however, warn prospective tourists straightway to take earplugs with them if they want a modicum of sleep. The inhabitants of Budapest appear to start the day's work at about 4:00 a.m. traveling mainly by tramcars, whose fiendish crashing, grinding and clanging reduced even so seasoned a Londoner as myself to a state of jitters.

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We were astonished at the public interest in our exhibition. On the first morning people were queueing outside the National Salon, where it was held. During the scheduled fortnight of its run, nearly 20,000 people visited the show, causing the authorities to extend it for a further two weeks. At no time when we looked in was the gallery anything but crowded.

There were two unforgettable mornings during my short stay among these warm-hearted, many-talented people. One was a visit to the little flat-cum-workshop of Margit Kovács, the famous ceramic artist. Her little home, shared with her charming old mother, is packed with statuettes, pottery, plates, statues, groups and ceramic pictures perhaps 50 square feet in area; all of these the work of a little, shy, smiling modest woman who is a genius. Certainly most of the works we saw were masterpieces, no less, of ceramic art.

Public restaurants in Hungary usually have a traditional Gypsy orchestra, consisting basically of violin, viola, clarinet, 'cello and cymbalum. The cymbalum replaces the piano, and is common throughout Southeast Europe and Turkey. It is the modern form of the dulcimer, and looks somewhat like a tiny grand piano with no top and no keyboard. The player strikes the strings

with a slender, curved wooden stick held in each hand. The striking end of these hammers is wrapped in wool or felt or other materials according to the effect required. A hammer with thick springy felt can produce a sound hardly distinguishable from a modern grand piano, while other types will make the cymbalum sound like virginals, clavichord, etc. Don't, however, let me give the impression that the cymbalum does not give forth its own unmistakable, inimitable and heavenly sound. It is a ravishing instrument.

On expressing my fervent desire to hear this instrument played solo, I was told that there was living in Budapest an old man, Aladár Rác by name, who had enjoyed world renown as a virtuoso on the cymbalum, but who was now unfortunately long retired and too old to play. I insisted on a phone call to him on my behalf, and the result was an invitation to visit him next morning. This was my second unforgettable experience.

His home was difficult to find, the car having to take to paths across fields before running him to earth in a most delightful house, high on the hills of Buda, with magnificent views of Pest and the Danube far below. We were greeted like old friends by the slight, almost Turkish-looking man and his wife, a still beautiful woman of remarkable serenity. On the walls of the music room were ancient posters announcing cymbalum recitals by Aladár Rác, "the Liszt of the cymbalum" (as Saint-Saens had called him) in Geneva, Lausanne, Paris, etc., in the 1920's. The old musician spoke to us (in French) for about twenty minutes with almost childlike frankness and simplicity with anecdotes of his life, such as his first meeting with

Stravinsky, who was so bemused after hearing a recital by Rác that he came and woke him during the following night and demanded to be taught to play this wonderful instrument. After three weeks he had to admit defeat.

Rác showed us the extraordinary arrangement of the strings on the cymbalum, summing up with a mischievous smile that "such an instrument could only have been invented by the devil!" He himself claimed never to have had a lesson. He then played to us for more than an hour—an hour of unforgettable enchantment—Scarlatti, Rameau, Bach, Couperin. When we left he embraced us as if we had been his children instead of complete strangers.

What further memories remain of one hectic week in Hungary? The surprising discovery of a 100 per cent bourgeois night-club, complete with chanteuse, in the basement of the very hotel at which we stayed. The big football game in the magnificent People's Stadium, seating 100,000. This is a game I watch regularly in London; I thought the first quarter of the match I saw had the quality almost of poetry. As we left the stadium, I was asked what I thought of the way the crowds were clothed as compared to a similar crowd in London. I saw no noticeable difference.

I noticed in general, compared to three years before, that shops were much more plentifully stocked and prices considerably lower.

Meals (very good food) in the smarter restaurants cost about the same as in Paris, though there are also many cheap restaurants. When shopping for presents I noticed a great lack of variety and quality in children's toys. Cigarettes are pretty good and far cheaper than in Eng-

land. Very few private individuals own cars and practically all dwelling houses (all divided into flats) are sadly in need of a coat of paint. One curiosity—you must pay each time you use an elevator. With all this, there is little to show that 80 per cent of Budapest was badly bombed and shelled in the last war.

Conditions are splendid for artists. The majority of students at the main art schools are on scholarships and receive handsome grants during their five-year courses. In fact, the head of the chief art school told me that they were rather embarrassed by the number of students who were marrying and raising families on their grants. I found the work of last year graphic art students really impressive.

At the big annual art show, rather like the Royal Academy show in London and the Salon in Paris, 80 to 90 per cent of the work exhibited is sold! Although there are some private buyers, the state has become the main patron, in the form of ministries, factory social clubs, army departments, trade unions, etc. So many ordinary working folk want to buy pictures at the annual show that the authorities have recently instituted an installment system, which is very popular. Trade unions, who are the biggest buyers of art, spend over 20 per cent of their budget on cultural activity. For instance, most industrial projects have extensive social and cultural clubs. I visited one attached to the Optical Workers Union. It was a fair-sized building containing a first-rate dance-hall, gymnasium, recreation

rooms and free evening classes with professional teachers, including a very well equipped art class.

Most factories and organizations of any size boast a symphony orchestra, Gypsy band, choir, folk-dance groups, theater company, and of course, football (soccer) teams. Most trade unions own magnificent holiday homes as well as establishments with the utmost facilities for every kind of sport.

One should remember that before the war this country was known as the "land of three million beggars." I remember well in 1934 walking down the main shopping street of Budapest on a Saturday evening—the pavements packed with people, and—unbelievable and depressing—most of the women including young girls, offering themselves for the price of a meal; the shop windows, breathtaking in beauty and luxury, unsurpassed—perhaps unequalled—in any capital city of the world. In comparison, those shops are now drab and perhaps shoddy. But gone are those pathetic women; gone also are the many ragged, barefoot, hungry children.

A last memory. A visit to a large village about 40 miles north of Budapest. It was Sunday and the village appeared devoid of human life. Suddenly the door of a big church opened and hundreds, or so it seemed, of gaily clad, chattering women and girls in voluminous pleated skirts like Scottish kilts, poured forth. On the instant a door on another side of the same church opened and out poured their menfolk. I doubt if I ever saw a happier looking crowd.

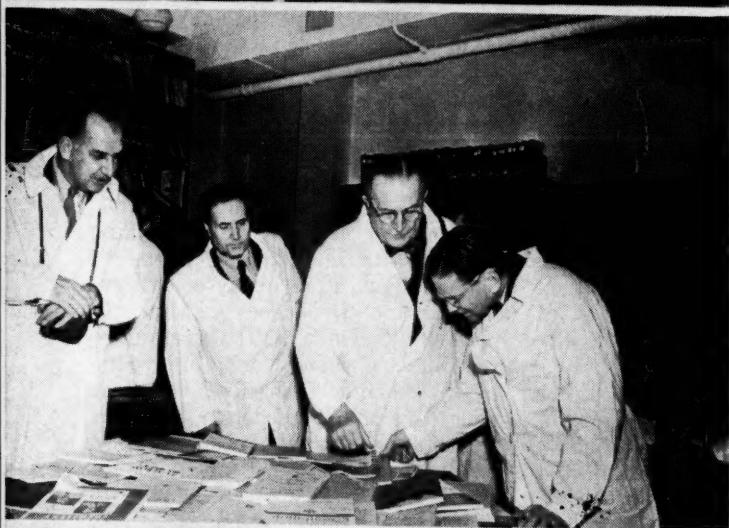
AMERICAN PROFESSORS IN USSR

Three American professors of Russian history and literature are visiting the Soviet Union this summer: Prof. L. Hamson of Chicago University, Prof. E. Brown of Brown University, and Prof. M. Ginsburg of Indiana University.

America In the USSR



At the All-Union Conference on High Energy Particles. Left to right: Academician Bogoliubov, Prof. F. J. Dyson of the Princeton Institute of Higher Studies, Prof. Shirkov of the USSR.



Members of American delegation of scientists at the Ivanovsky Virusology Institute. Left to right: Dr. R. E. Shope, Rockefeller Foundation, Prof. Kosyakov, the Institute's director, Dr. Karl Meyer, University of California, Dr. John Paul of Yale.



Ellsworth Bunker, President of the American Red Cross, is presented a Soviet Red Cross insignia by Soviet student nurse.



Delegation of American builders, headed by Earl Smith, hears Boris Priimak, Chief Architect of Kiev, describe plans for city.

means the USSR

Jan Peerce, Metropolitan Opera tenor, congratulated by cast of "Traviata" with whom he sang role of Alfredo at the Bolshoi Theater Annex.



Isaac Stern receiving applause for his playing in the Grand Hall of the Moscow Conservatory.



Mr. Sol Hurok announcing at a press conference in Moscow the forthcoming tour of the Moiseyev State Folk Dance Ensemble in the US this fall.



Rev. Paul Caudil, Baptist minister of Memphis, Tenn., preaching in the Evangelist Church in Leningrad.



LANDLORD INTO PEASANT

by JACK CHEN

CAN YOU TURN a sow's ear into a purse? Can you turn an oppressive, feudal landlord into a keen-working, socialist collective farmer? The proverb is out of date! The thing's been done. This is not a question of ones and twos, but of a whole class. This is one of the biggest jobs of conversion, re-education or brain-washing, call it what you will, on record.

China's ex-landlords are entering the collective farms as members or candidate members by the scores of thousands.

In a little hamlet in Chekiang Province where rustling bamboos put a cool shade about the office of the collective farm, a former Kuomintang police-sergeant, usurer and landlord told me how it was done.

A poor peasant, chairman of the farm, whom the landlord's father had exploited and beaten unmercifully, sat by him with somewhat the air of a man introducing his protégé, and filled out the story.

In Kuomintang times, Loh Ah-chuan's father was a roisterer. Not a big landowner himself, he had only a few acres of his own; but through

family connections he rented another five acres of ancestral, clan land, paying two per cent of the harvest as rent and sub-let these in small parcels to landless peasants at the rate of 50 per cent of the harvest. "A big fish eating little fish," as the peasants said.

Most of the family income, however, came from usury and gambling. A loan of grain had to be repaid six months later with a hundred per cent interest. As proprietor of a gambling hell he took the lion's share of the money fleeced from the unfortunate patrons.

For this he could thank Madame the Generalissimo's wife. She was running a highly publicized "New Life Movement" and, with a flurry of trumpets had got an anti-gambling law passed that put gambling effectively into the hands of racketeers like the Lohs.

Loh Ah-chuan was his father's right hand man and wielded the power in the village as Kuomintang police-sergeant. The Loh family snapped their fingers at the law themselves, but took the law with a vengeance to any "off premises" gamblers.

Occasionally Loh senior served as headman, but in general he and his son utterly disdained physical work. Work was for fools. Hired hands tilled their fields; a dozen servants were at their beck and call.

JACK CHEN, well known artist, writer, and journalist has traveled widely outside of China. His "The Chinese Theater" was published in this country in 1952.

"We were scared stiff when we heard the People's Army was coming," said Loh Ah-chuan. "We had a bad conscience. We thought the peasants would take it out of us. We'd skinned them unmercifully. Beaten many of them up."

The co-op chairman had got a beating once only because he happened one day to get in the way of Landlord Loh. There were few village families that hadn't starved because of the Lohs. How many peasant babies had gone to their death because of that landlord yoke? Spring famine was a yearly occurrence in this fertile valley. In those months when the last of the rice was finished and the spring crops hadn't yet ripened the peasants were accustomed to feed on roots and leaves.

Loh, father and son, were not surprised when after the establishment of the People's Government they were arraigned before the local people's court as tyrants. But they were surprised that they got off so easily. They themselves had lived and acted according to the law of the social jungle: "Every man for himself and the devil take the hindmost!" They knew how they would have acted if they had been in the place of the peasants. Their vengeance would have been terrible and unmerciful.

Their fright increased as the long tale of their crimes was told by their victims. Everything came out bit by bit, even crimes they had thought were secret. Blackmail, extortion, outrageous usury and cruelty. The people had seen all! And even after liberation they had hoarded rice and speculated with it during a shortage.

The sentence: restitution, where that was possible of what they had robbed. Their land was confiscated but they were allowed to keep the house they lived in and as much land

as every landless peasant in the village got in the land reform. They got three years under public surveillance. This meant that they could live at home and go about their work freely. But they had to report to the local authorities if they went away from the village and they couldn't go out at night unless to attend a meeting or for some other good reason. That was all.

The farm chairman added: "We followed the policy of the people's government: we disarmed the feudal landlords. They lost their political rights for a time, but we gave them a way to make an honest living. They had to reform themselves by working so as to become new men."

A general policy of leniency had in fact been followed for all except those who had been directly guilty of crimes of bloodshed.

Loh Ah-chuan was a bit constrained at first talking to a stranger. He was surprised that I wanted to know his story. When he understood why, he quickly lost his self-consciousness and talked animatedly. He has a long rather angular face, is tall and strongly built. He wore a peasant's dark, blue cotton trousers rolled up over his knees, he had just come in from the paddy fields, and a well worn, but clean and unpatched jacket of sky-blue cotton. Every now and again his face would light up with a smile. He would frown as he thought through some complex idea.

"We were afraid we'd lose everything and have to work," he recalled. "Well, we did have to work. We didn't know how to at first. We didn't know how to plough, or sow, or hoe or reap. The first few years were difficult, but the peasants who were looking after us taught us bit by bit, and we got used to working. We obeyed the orders of the people's gov-

ernment and lived quietly. Now we're not getting on badly."

"Last December I was admitted to the collective farm. I reckon this year I'll make about 2,000 work points and my wife and son—he's fourteen and been to school—will make a bit too. We should have 5,400 catties of grain income left after we've paid up our share of the investments in the co-op. Before I joined I'd only made about 900 catties a year myself. So you see there'll be a big difference this year."

"The old man is in too! Though he's only a candidate member as yet." (A candidate member, the co-op farm chairman explained, has no vote on farm affairs and can't stand for election to any post in the farm. He gets paid for work at the same rate as full members however).

"And there's another big difference," Ah-chuan continued. "In these years past we've learnt to hate that word 'landlord'. We wondered when we would get rid of that label. Now this year I applied to the authorities to have my status changed from that of 'landlord' to 'peasant'. The collective farm is backing my application."

The chairman nodded approval: "There doesn't seem any doubt it'll go through. That'll be the end of that!"

Ah-chuan paused a while as he summed up his thoughts: "Now we can see again that the people's government is something new in governments. The Communist Party always keeps its word. The past is finished for us. Those old days were no good. It was wrong to exploit others. Now I earn my food by my own labor. I don't exploit any man. I don't wrong any man. Now I can look every man in the face and not feel ashamed."

The farm chairman smiled: "Yes, it's good." He summed up a whole social philosophy in the clearest of words: "If we are to build a strong prosperous country, we must all work together. Nobody should exploit another."

When Loh Ah-chuan had gone, I couldn't refrain from asking the farm chairman confidentially: "Are they really reformed, he and his father?"

The old man answered frankly: "Ah-chuan, yes! That's why we admitted him as a member. He gets paid like any other member; he can vote, but for the moment he can't hold any important post. Several co-ops had some unpleasant experiences when some of the old rich peasants and landlord elements got into the leadership. So we can't take a chance on that yet. But after a bit we'll see about ending that restriction on Ah-chuan too. He works well, and the peasants have no hard feelings

"The co-operative movement here is strongly organized now. The peasants understood things well. The ex-landlords and rich peasants are also not what they were. They know that all the rotten things they stood for are finished and done with for ever. That's why we're letting them into the collective farms. Everyone in our township is in our collective farm, and we can make over-all plans for the whole township area. That's to everyone's benefit. We couldn't do that before and it held us back a bit.

"And the father?" I insisted.

"That's a bit different. Even six years isn't enough for the people to forget all the harm and wickedness he did. And we don't feel he's completely changed his ideas, that he's really one with us. But he's getting on. He works."

THE SECRET OF MR. KOO

by BASIL DAVIDSON

IN CHINA'S struggle against the fetters of the past there are many heroes, sometimes famous, often not. I met several myself. They are fine people, and their work will live. All the same, when sitting down to write these notes, I found myself recalling not these strong and positive men and women, whose liberating path is boldly chosen and whose lot is joyfully cast, but my friend Mr. Koo, whom I met in Shanghai and came to know in many walks through that ramshackle city by the China Sea.

Mr. Koo will not mind my saying that he is not a hero. The thought that he might be a hero will never have entered his head. He was a pale young man whose spindly arms and legs, even in 1952, had yet to achieve full health and strength after the gruelling hunger of his childhood years. He had a cough that was small, dry and sinister, although he told me that the TB clinic he was attending offered him hope of cure; and there were lines of painful worry round his questioning eyes. He was sometimes a little spiteful. He felt he was a failure, but he

thought that the world was to blame for that. He may not have been so very much mistaken, either.

It happened, though, that Mr. Koo took a liking to me. "I will show you Shanghai," he offered stubbornly, perhaps half expecting I should refuse: "It is an ugly city. We are too many here."

I have no idea how many miles we pushed and jostled through Shanghai, slipping behind one another through arcades of timber shops that were drab with squalor or suddenly bright with enamel and gilt, and sometimes walking side by side down the middle of the broader streets.

But gradually I became aware that Mr. Koo was no longer quite as I had first understood him. There was confidence beneath his modesty. Now and then he laughed with sheer pleasure at something or other he was showing me. His questioning eyes seemed to lose those small spiteful lines of worry; and I in turn forgot about his cough.

As my experience of Mr. Koo and Shanghai grew stronger, it became apparent that Mr. Koo had a secret which gave him happiness. I say it was a secret, because Mr. Koo never threw it at my head. Perhaps he cherished it too much for anything so riskily demonstrative as that. It

BASIL DAVIDSON is the well-known English writer. His books include **DAY-BREAK IN CHINA**, **AFRICAN AWAKENING** and **THE GOLDEN HORN**.

appeared to me that Mr. Koo handled this secret happiness of his as though he were a lover.

I thought that Mr. Koo must be in love, and hoped that he would introduce me to his girl. I spent some time, quite fruitlessly as you will see, in wondering what this girl of his was like.

But Mr. Koo said nothing about that; and in the end, growing too curious, I asked him: "Mr. Koo, why do you feel like this?"

He was not prepared, at first, to tell me. It may be even that he thought a foreigner, someone he barely knew, might laugh at him. Perhaps the seeds of Mr. Koo's happiness were still too near the surface to risk the chill wind of anyone's lack of sympathy.

But he told me in the end. And it had nothing to do with a girl. He took me one day to the mouth of a dim dark alley in the slums of central Shanghai. Only a single shop sign gleamed a faded dusty gold in that

grey tunnel. Squalid houses leaned towards one another as though too weak to stand up straight.

Mr. Koo said quietly, a little desperately: "That is my street. I did not mean to show it to you."

I waited.

Mr. Koo said: "I was nothing. We were nothing." I felt proud of his trusting me and yet afraid I might inadvertently pain him; and I also felt strangely moved. I said nothing. "But now," he added, "we have a reading circle."

"And you read to them?"

"No," he said suddenly, boldly, proudly, and this time with joy and self-confidence, "I am the leader of our reading circle. I read *with* them. We are helping each other."

That was all. There is nothing else to this story.

But it stays warm in my mind. Somehow or other I have learnt a great deal from it. About Mr. Koo and about China and China's revolution. And perhaps about myself too.

FROM "A LETTER TO CHINA" BY JEAN-PAUL SARTRE

THE INEVITABLE MISTAKES which you keep on denouncing and correcting don't change the essential thing: that friendship becomes the motive force behind production. Today China is still poor and—and this is something that touches us deeply—you have the spectacle of the poor lending one another mutual aid. There has to be a fight against flies, rats, disease, flood and drought. Every time it is a crusade; the people move into action as one; the result of the crusade is not the death of a hundred and twenty million rats alone, but linked bonds of friendship joining together hundreds of millions of people. I am astonished at the way the people here in China never leave off working for one another, how they free themselves by a sort of give-and-take action which constantly brings everybody closer together. You still lack schools, but that is not the point; every Chinese who can read can teach another what he knows, and that means that every Chinese who can read will become a teacher of another. That is how socialization presents itself as the most rigorous necessity and at the same time the most human and tender of human relationships. For me, and, I think, for most of your guests, what touches me most profoundly is this two-way aspect of New China.¹



JOHN ADAMS KINGSBURY

1879-1956

A LOVER of life, a friend of mankind, a fighter for human happiness and peace, has been taken from us with the passing of Dr. John A. Kingsbury on August 3. We mourn his loss deeply as a personal friend and as a long time supporter of our magazine and contributor to its pages.

In his later years, Dr. Kingsbury's primary interest was the furthering of world peace through promoting understanding and friendly relations between our country and the Soviet Union. He shared in the organization in 1941 of Russian War Relief and was a member of its Board of Directors. He was one of the founders of the National Council of American-Soviet Friendship and its national chairman since 1949. In the recent difficult years he remained at this post, sacrificing his health and strength in defending the right of Americans to work for peace and friendly relations with the USSR, in the hearings before the Subversive Activities Control Board.

A direct descendant of Henry Kingsbury and Henry Adams, who settled in Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1638, Dr. Kingsbury devoted his life to carrying forward the humane and democratic principles of our founding fathers. He was a distinguished leader in fields of social work, public welfare, health and education. Among his many important official posts in earlier years was that of Commissioner of Public Charities in New York City, and Administrative Consultant to the Works Progress Administration in the New Deal period. For many years he headed the Milbank Memorial Fund, through which he

helped develop a national health program.

Widely travelled, Dr. Kingsbury spent considerable time in the Soviet Union and was joint author with Sir Arthur Newsholme, chief British Health Officer, of "Red Medicine: Socialized Health in Soviet Russia." In the post-war period he attended several international peace gatherings and in 1952 made a visit to the People's Republic of China, described in a series of articles in *New World Review*.

A student of American and world history and culture, Dr. Kingsbury also had a deep love and knowledge of the natural world that included an amazing familiarity with every variety of mushroom and reached out to touch the stars. To talk with him was to share the riches of his mind, to hear the voices of the poets—above all of Shakespeare, whom he knew by heart.

More than all, as his associates in the National Council of American-Soviet Friendship said:

... He loved his fellow-men, and truly laid down his life for them. We can ill spare him now. But in a larger sense we can rejoice in a life so fully lived, in the rich satisfactions it brought to him and all who knew him. We know that the great gifts he has given us will endure and be an ever-living inspiration to those who care for humanity's present and future well-being.

We share these thoughts, and draw new confidence from his shining example that the principles to which this good and great man devoted his life can and must prevail.

AFTER THE WRITERS' CONFERENCE

by ELEANOR WHEELER

This is a continuation of the article on the Czech Writers' Congress by Eleanor Wheeler published in our August issue. The Congress was held April 22-29 of this year.

Jan Otcenasek, new First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Union of Czechoslovak Writers said of the Czechoslovak Writers' Congress that one of its greatest contributions was in doing away with the false impression of unanimity among Czechoslovak writers. Speaking at the plenary session of Slovak writers which followed the national congress on June 1, he said that one of the greatest faults of the period between 1945 and the Congress was "an artificial striving for a unity of opinion and a permanent harmonizing which was merely proclaimed and did not in actual fact exist." The lead article in *Literarni Noviny* had said on April 21, "We are going through a period of burying illusions."

Now the surface will not be so unruffled, doubts and differences will exist without being smoothed over, but the essence of culture will be more vital and interesting, say Otce-

nasek and those of like mind. Differences had, of course, been there before the Congress, but the writers themselves had not been so conscious of them. Even progressive cultural workers had divided into groups in the 1920's and 1930's. What was not realized was that these groups had persisted even through the occupation and into the period of building socialism.

The message from the Central Committee of the Communist Party had recognized this in part when it said to the April Writers' Congress: "It is natural and right that in the struggle for new artistic expression, groups of artists should form among those who are close to each other and who are fighting for one or another artistic view." But even then it came as a surprise to those at the Congress to find that divergencies in artistic views were so deep in some cases. The effort to make this clear took a good deal of time which could otherwise have been spent in formulating esthetic views and defending them.

In other words, a "plus" of the Congress was the realization that a more realistic approach must be taken toward differences in opinion, that facts must be faced and not glossed over. This "decentralization" and acceptance of greater variety carried over into other spheres. The Prague Spring Music Festival had

ELEANOR WHEELER, a frequent contributor to *New World Review*, lives in Czechoslovakia with her husband and four children.

more diversity of artistic schools this year than before, more clashing of musicological views, for instance, in the discussions on Mozart. The International Film Festival not only had a larger number of entries (37 from the 43 countries attending as guests and participants), but more angles of approach to the central theme of peace and international understanding.

In general there was more recognition that in some fields socialist countries still could learn many things from the "western world." This view was expressed at the Communist Party Conference in June by Jan Bures, of the Academy of Science, when he protested against the situation "since 1951, when, in connection with the struggle against cosmopolitanism, there was a radical cut in the purchase of technical literature from capitalist countries." He also decried the dogmatic procedure in publicizing Soviet science, leading to the expectation that "Michurin biology or Pavlov physiology will bring immediate significant results in practice." When this did not occur there was disillusionment, said he, among a certain part of the Czechoslovak agricultural experts and doctors, especially when "citations from the works of Pavlov or Michurin were rated higher in discussions than were the factual results of experiments!"

The call for more variety took many forms. For instance, there was the curious phenomenon of a literary weekly demanding more competition! And new literary journals have been starting—one carries works of foreign authors, one is a regional journal "Red Blossom," from the Moravian-Silesian region of Ostrava which produced two of the great modern poets of this country—J.

Wolker and Petr Bezruc. It is insisted that this is only a beginning, and that the journals should not specialize so much, but each should "confront" the works of Czechoslovak writers with foreign writings.

The suggestions coming from the Conference of the Communist Party for decentralizing cultural activities have begun to be put in effect. The local national committees have taken over more responsibility for education and culture. A friend of ours says that in the phonograph industry, where he works, the difference is already felt, that the plans from above are not so precise and confining, more leeway is left for a stimulus to the lower echelons to do better work on their own initiative. Officials in the publishing industry have themselves been calling for an end to the "cultural combines" in which one publishing house would specialize in modern literature, one in children's literature, one in Russian and Soviet, one in classics and translations, this meant in practice that other publishers wanting to publish something "not in their field" had difficulty in getting it put in their plan. Deserving works were sometimes neglected because the publisher into whose plan they fit turned them down, and others did not have the authority to take them.

The general call for a loosening up made itself felt in the school system as well. Ever since the 1953 school reform which reduced the compulsory age limit from 15 to 14 years and in effect put the same subject matter in eight years' schooling that had been covered in nine, there have been complaints from parents and teachers. Parents wrote to the papers that they had "had to sit up until late helping Jan (or Jana) with arithmetic problems more suited to

a college student than to a sixth grader." Teachers have described the difficulties of cramming all the study material into the basic eight years (after which time the student is supposed to be able to decide whether to go to a technical school or the more academic "gymnasium"). Mothers worry about the ten to fifteen pounds of books the children carry to and from school. Doctors point out that there must be more exercise and less home work. Athletic directors complain that not enough attention is given physical training in the early years and therefore athletic preparation has to be more intensive in later years to develop good sportsmen. The serious attention given these complaints indicates that changes will be made in the educational system to liberalize it.

The word "liberalize" must not be understood as a proposed co-existence in this country of capitalist and socialist ideologies, but instead as an open searching for different methods to be used on the way to socialism. It has not got so far as the "Let every school of thought contend" advocated in Chinese writers', artists', and scientific circles, but still represents a greater willingness to examine differing pedagogical, literary, scientific and other theories.

It is a pity that the examination of defects in the present situation and proposals for changes in the higher institutions of learning were not made public earlier. The "Majales" or traditional student celebrations took the form in some places of demonstrations, sometimes for the very reforms which were about to be instituted. The trend now is for much more open criticism and discussion.

The student demonstrations were similar in origin, though not nearly

so serious as the Poznan riots in Poland. That is, there were real grievances, but those who had an ax to grind distorted and misused the grievances. For instance, stipends for living expenses are granted only when the parents' combined monthly income is 1200 crowns or less (that is, after deductions for other dependents, etc., are made). This is approximately \$160. The students demanded that stipends be paid when the parents' income is 1500 crowns. Tuition is free, but as a mother of three students, the stipends to wider groups seems a reasonable demand, of course! Some of the workers who must produce the goods to supply the stipends may feel differently. At any rate, the older workers tend to compare the present situation with the old days when very few workers could afford to attend college and university, and they tend to be impatient with the students—especially, as it sometimes happened, if the student demands were misrepresented to them.

Other student demands which seem to me reasonable are those for a reduction in compulsory lecture hours, improvements in the dormitories and libraries, etc. But the point is that all these matters were being discussed by educators, government officials, lawmakers, etc., and if the present methods of more public discussion had prevailed last fall it is quite likely there would have been no demonstrations.

Our 19-year-old Thomas has just returned from voluntary brigade work on a big dam being constructed up the Vltava River. His stories of the behavior of university students there show how complicated the problem is. These students are much less noble than they appear in Petr Zenkl's letter to the Washington Post

(in July) in which he goes back to 1348 and the founding of Charles University to show how admirable and independent Czech students are. Neither is it true that, as some officials here declared, the discontent was all the work of enemy elements. The truth is closer to what was said at the Communist Party conference that the "University students are not on a political and ideological level which would render them immune to influences alien to socialism."

The difference in attitude was seen on the brigade work. The technical school students, many of whom had done an apprenticeship in practical work, were used to physical labor and not afraid of it. Many of those who go to the "gymnasium" and then on to the university are those who intend to keep a white collar no matter what. So when they found themselves at the dam on a job involving manual work they gold-bricked their way through it and further alienated themselves from those with a working class background, and added again to the problems.

This illustrates some of the psychological difficulties between the university students and the working class government leadership. In addition to this, the more erratic demands reflect a sophomoric reaction against poorly directed work of the youth organization and against bureaucracy in the faculties. Correct ideas were often made unpalatable to the students. These demonstrations do not, as Zenkl avers in the letter cited above, "Cast a grave doubt on the future" of the regime here. But they do indicate directions to take in correcting mistakes in administration. Technical school students, most of whom have a more working class background than do the university students, have similar economic prob-

lems, but a different approach to their solution. They were not involved to any extent in the demonstrations. I believe it is they, with their solid, practical approach to learning and life, who are the youthful backbone and the hope of the present regime.

I have tried to give a brief sketch of the atmosphere, the problems—thrown out and as yet unresolved—in this last spring, a period of discussion, argument, change and proposals for change following the Writers' Congress. It has been an important time of ferment similar to that in 1945 immediately following liberation. Eleven years ago the emphasis was on the guiding role of the Communist Party because it was the party which had been most consistent in the underground fight against the occupation forces. The leading position of the Communist Party is still recognized, and with even more reason because of the immense advances the country has made since then.

The new note is a greater willingness to learn not only from experts in non-socialist countries, but also from non-socialist experts within the country.

Eva Vrchlicky, noted playwright and actress, closed the discussion at the April Writers' Congress with the comment that often the voice of the non-party writer had been more ardent and convincing in the discussion than that of the party member. She urged a recognition of their contribution and a more sympathetic co-operation between party and non-party cultural workers. My belief is that this will be done and that it will release new forces for new scientific and cultural advances in this interesting outpost of socialism in Europe.

THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

by JESSICA SMITH

THE DEMOCRATS are making a campaign issue of the charge that our country is losing the cold war, while the Republicans claim that we are winning it.

But the real issue that concerns the American people is to *end* the cold war, and to win a lasting peace. The candidates who most clearly recognize this, who offer the most concrete steps to achieve this goal, are the ones who will merit support in the elections.

The exercise of democratic rights means far more than simply a choice between one candidate and another. It means determining the issues for which the candidates stand and on which they must show themselves able to deliver.

In the absence of a real party of the people with a constructive and peaceful foreign policy, a militant program for civil rights and civil liberties and the expanding well-being of all Americans, those standing for these things are faced with a real dilemma in the coming elections. Yet it cannot be denied that it makes a difference whether those candidates are elected who give evidence of the greatest ability to make progress toward these goals, or those who will retard such progress.

There is little to choose in the foreign policy planks of the two party platforms. Both give lip service to peace and disarmament, but still

talk in terms of cold war, military pacts and a continuing arms race. Both speak of the dangers of nuclear weapons, but neither offers constructive steps toward their abolition.

Both retain an obsessive anti-Communist attitude and support the idea of "liberation" of the so-called satellite nations and even of the Baltic Republics which are an integral part of the USSR, thus continuing the idea of a world divided into hostile blocs. Neither projects a policy based on continuing negotiations of all international issues, peaceful and fruitful competition and co-existence between countries with different social systems, based on mutually beneficial trade and cultural and scientific exchange. Both profess support of the United Nations, yet insist on the continuance of the policy of keeping it weak and ineffectual by denying admission to People's China, containing one fourth of the world's people. Both profess a concern for the future, yet turn toward the past in their continued support for the discarded dictator on Formosa.

The Administration of course has an advantage in being able to point to the armistice in Korea and the Geneva Conference. President Eisenhower himself has given evidences of a sincere desire for peace and has been able to restrain the more warlike elements in Washington. Yet the voters will hardly forget that it was

Vice President Nixon, again his running mate, and the man who could become the President of the United States, who advocated sending U.S. troops to Indo-China, and Eisenhower's Secretary of State, Dulles, who boasted of his "brink-of-war" policies.

It must not be forgotten that it was the pressure of the people that made ending the war in Korea the decisive issue in the last campaign which brought Eisenhower to office, and it was the same pressure which sent the President to Geneva. The pressure of the people can be decisive again, and bring to office those most responsive to it.

In the Republican convention the Old Guard won; in the Democratic convention they lost, as far as the candidates were concerned. This would indicate that the Stevenson-Kefauver ticket has the greater possibility of striking out on new paths. But the platform they are running on, in the vital foreign policy and civil rights planks, was dictated by the Old Guard. To win the campaign, the Democratic candidates must prove both determination and ability

to go beyond this platform. This is where the pressure of the people must be ceaselessly exerted.

The people's demand for ending the cold war abroad must include ending the cold war at home as expressed in the continued repressions against those who differ with Administration policies. They must demand an end to the Smith Act and McCarran Act persecutions and the un-American legislation under which they are carried on, an end to Congressional inquisitions and thought control travel restrictions, an end to new harassments such as the forthcoming sedition trial of John and Sylvia Powell and Julian Schuman, for having been critical of U.S. conduct of the war in Korea and Far Eastern policies, and for trying to bring the war in Korea to an end.

The people must decide which candidates will be most likely to restore America's democratic traditions and initiate and carry through a program for lasting peace. And they must keep constantly in mind the fact that the vigor of their own demands alone can determine the issues and the outcome.

Eisenhower-Bulganin Letters

PRESIDENT EISENHOWER on August 8, answered the latest of the personal communications initiated last year by Premier Bulganin on the disarmament question. Premier Bulganin's letter had been delivered on June 7, but the President's illness had prevented an earlier reply.

In his letter, Premier Bulganin had referred to the fact that recent easing of international tensions had created more favorable conditions for ending the arms race. He said that the Soviet Government had therefore sought to help find a way out of the blind alley to

which the UN disarmament negotiations had led.

To this end the USSR had decided to make a cut in its own armed forces of 1,200,000 men, in addition to the reduction by 640,080 carried out in 1955, including a substantial reduction of its forces on the territory of the German Democratic Republic. He expressed the hope that the United States would consider a reduction of its own armed forces, in line with the May 14 proposal of the Soviet Government. This proposal had envisaged similar steps by Great Britain and France, and made the point

that such a move by the big powers would open the way to international agreement on over-all disarmament measures and the banning of nuclear weapons.

Meantime, the Soviet Union in the Disarmament Committee of the UN had accepted the earlier armed force levels (reduction to 1,500,000 by the U.S. and the USSR) proposed by the Western nations but since rejected, and had also both in the UN Committee and at the meeting of the Supreme Soviet, proposed a cessation of nuclear weapons tests as a first step toward agreement on all-out banning of nuclear weapons.

Peace supporters had been deeply disappointed at the position of the United States in the Disarmament Committee which, despite these new concessions by the Soviet Union, had laid prime emphasis on President Eisenhower's air inspection program, generally conceded to have little meaning without any over-all disarmament agreement, and had tied the possibility of reaching any such agreement to the solution of political problems such as the unification of Germany. Since the U.S. had made the condition for such unification the entrance of a re-armed Germany into NATO, increasingly opposed both within Western Germany and throughout Europe, and to which it is known the USSR would never agree, this condition is tantamount to a veto on any agreement on disarmament.

Apparently some elements within the Administration, affected by scientists' opinions on the radiation dangers to mankind from continued tests and the growing world pressures against them, felt that some new initiative in this direction was required. It was reported that President Eisenhower in his reply to Premier Bulganin would advocate "limiting the number and size of nuclear tests," (Robert S. Allen in the *New York Post*, August 7), a position said to have the support of Harold Stassen, the majority of the Atomic Energy Commission, and even Secretary Dulles. Prime Minister Anthony Eden has also sup-

ported the idea of limitations (but only after Great Britain has made its own tests). While scientists have made clear that mere limitation will not eliminate the hazards, such a proposal might at least have led to further negotiations.

The Eisenhower letter, published on August 8, contained no such proposal, or any other offering a basis for further negotiations.

The President said he "welcomed" the Soviet action in reducing its armed forces. But he took the position that the United States had already, with the exception of the Korean war period, been reducing its forces ever since World War II, and in effect rejected the proposal of further reductions in the absence of agreement on "supervisory mechanisms."

President Eisenhower again put forward his air inspection program, and repeated a previous proposal that after an agreed-upon date, "production of fissionable materials anywhere in the world would no longer be used to increase the stockpiles of explosive weapons." This proposal had received no response from the Soviet Union, yet, if made sincerely, it is difficult to see why the United States would ignore the proposals for ending tests as a step in this direction.

President Eisenhower also accused the Soviet Government of failing to carry out the Geneva Summit agreement that "Germany should be reunified by means of free elections carried out in conformity with the national interests of the German people and the interests of European security." Since the actual agreement at Geneva provided for consideration of "European security and the German question" this seems rather disingenuous. President Eisenhower also referred to "statements from your side which seem to imply that your Government is determined to maintain indefinitely the division of Germany." This accusation was based on a one-sided account by Chancellor Adenauer of purported remarks by Nikolai Khrushchev, which the Soviet Government subsequently vigorously denied.

While asserting that he and his associates were continuing to study the matter of limitation of armaments, President Eisenhower failed to make any constructive statements other than the assurance that "if this study develops further possibilities of international action" they would be communicated to the Soviet Union either directly or through the United Nations.

If this study is being undertaken seriously, it is difficult to see why our government has been willing to leave the entire initiative in the hands of the Soviet Union, limiting its own position to the rejection of Soviet proposals. In opening the correspondence last year, Premier Bulganin had declared the willingness of the USSR to accept the aerial inspection plan, if coupled with its own proposals for ground inspection, and as part of a concrete disarmament pro-

gram. Eisenhower had indicated his willingness to accept the Soviet inspection plan along with his own, but failed to support any concrete disarmament measures. Bulganin's proposal last January for the conclusion of a treaty of friendship and cooperation between the United States and the Soviet Union was rejected out of hand.

Concrete and effective steps toward disarmament, so ardently desired by the people of America and the world, should become a burning issue of the current Presidential campaign. Pressure for a strong stand on ending nuclear weapons tests, advocated by both Adlai Stevenson and Estes Kefauver in speeches prior to the Democratic convention which chose them as the party's standard-bearers, would be at this time an exceptionally good place to start.

DR. REISSIG PREACHES IN MOSCOW

THE REV. DR. HERMAN REISSIG, international relations secretary of the Council for Social Action of the Congregational Christian Churches, gave an account of his ten day visit to the Soviet Union as the leader of a group of 26 Americans, most of them clergymen. (*N. Y. Times*, Aug. 16)

Dr. Reissig was surprised at the numbers of worshipers found in all churches that he visited, and was struck, he said, by the fact that there were comparatively more young worshipers than he had been led to expect.

He described a sermon he had preached to a congregation in Moscow's largest Protestant church. His sermon, he said, was translated by his guide, a Communist Party member. Seldom, he asserted, had he had a more responsive audience in his whole career.

The text of his sermon was based upon Tolstoy's famous precept that no man is good enough to judge another and that in the eyes of God there is little difference, as regards sin, between judge and criminal.

Dr. Reissig described how when he told his audience that Russia could not judge America and that America could not judge Russia—that God must be the judge of both, they had nodded their heads and said, "Da".

Dr. Reissig told the press conference that the spontaneous goodwill of ordinary Russians had impressed both himself and the whole group. "We got the impression that they were just reaching out for human contact with non-Russians."

"MUCH HAS CHANGED IN THE USSR"

**SAYS PROFESSOR FREDERICK SCHUMAN
IN A RECENT SERIES IN *THE NATION***

The Nation has recently published a series of four articles on the USSR by Prof. Frederick L. Schuman, political science Professor of Williams College and author of "Soviet Politics" and other volumes on world affairs. The articles are based on a recent visit to the Soviet Union where he went to gather data for a new book.

The series opens with a description of the "breathtaking" sight of the miles of new apartments completed and under construction, seen on the drive from the airport into Moscow. Professor Schuman said that what had impressed him most, as a visitor who had not seen Moscow for over twenty years, were the three characteristics of punctuality, cleanliness and efficiency. The throngs in the streets showed no signs of being oppressed by poverty or despotism. New residential building on an immense scale was everywhere in evidence, solid and impressive, yet behind Western standards in "detailed perfection of craftsmanship." He noted the priority given in Soviet society to education and culture.

In Stalingrad, the miracle of reconstruction recalled the miracle that had ended "the longest, bloodiest, most destructive and most decisive battle of World War II." Out of the ashes of the totally destroyed city has risen "a city of half a million people and a place of rare beauty and unique inspiration," with a dream city planned for the future, despite continued present austerity. Banners flung across main thoroughfares proclaim the people's hopes for peace, which Professor Schuman has no doubt are "wholly sincere."

A third article raises, without answering them, complex questions about inequality of incomes and purchasing power of various strata of the population, quotes high prices from which it might be inferred that the Russians are living in abject poverty, yet declares that such an inference "is demonstrably false by all the evidence of eyes and ears throughout Muscovy." While declaring that there exist a steadily growing "new rich" who can pay prices which the poor cannot, the author also notes:

Observation suggests that social mobility is high in this rapidly expanding economy and that, in the major cities at least, a substantial minority, and possibly a majority, of the residents have achieved an earning capacity which makes them, by Soviet standards, well-fed, well-clothed, and fairly well-housed. Current standards in such matters do not yet match Western Europe, and, still less, America. Yet they represent an immense transformation of the Soviet way of life compared to the conditions of twenty years ago.

The final article, dealing with the re-evaluation of the Stalin era, is the most interesting and illuminating, whether one agrees or disagrees with all Professor Schuman says:

A few weeks of travel in the USSR will remove all doubt. These vast new cities are not "Potemkin villages." These innumerable schools, libraries, institutes and universities are no more a mirage than the gigantic publishing industry, the profusion of new factories, mills and mines, the thou-

sands of flourishing collective farms. All these changes, moreover, are irreversible. No return to illiteracy is conceivable. Seven grades of the ten-year schools are now attended by all girls and boys. By 1960 all ten grades will be available to all. No reversion to small-scale or "free enterprise" industry is imaginable. No restoration of private farming is possible. A giant industrial civilization is here to stay. . . .

Such a society cannot be ruled by the methods of Stalinism. The transition to an alternative requires Stalin's deportation from Olympus. . . . "Socialist legality" and "government by law" are replacing the arbitrariness of the police state.

While he feels that no effective "democratization" of party or government is yet in evidence, Professor Schuman stresses that the "thaw" has come and "the floodgates are half open," and declares that "the new Soviet policy . . . is altogether likely to cherish civil rights, human dignity and personal freedom beyond the wildest pretenses of the 1930's."

Professor Schuman says that those Westerners who conclude that "nothing has changed" are wrong. Much has changed. "Peaceful Co-existence" is synonymous with survival, for the Soviet Union, as for us. "Atomic fission and fusion make peace necessary. The global stalemate makes peace inevitable. That which is both necessary and inevitable is at once imperative and attainable." He believes the competition

in creeds of the years ahead will be reciprocally "stimulating and creative," and must replace outmoded formulas of "containment," "massive retaliation" and "'collective security' via alliances, embargoes and subversive propaganda." Soviet civilization is too "flourishing and formidable" to be disrupted or damaged by any such methods. The floodgates of foreign contacts and exchange opened up by the flexible new foreign policy have started in motion processes which are also irreversible. Prof. Schuman concludes his articles:

Under these circumstances, cynicism is as unwarranted as euphoria. What is sure is that East and West will be more and more mixed up together, teaching and learning to the advantage of both across frontiers which are highways rather than barriers. High politics will become a rivalry for the respect of the uncommitted half of the human race. Which system can contribute most to the emancipation of the world's slumlunds from poverty and ignorance? Here the West will be forced to look to its laurels. Human contacts will enrich life in both segments of a still divided world and promote an ultimate assimilation of ends and means in the search for the good society. Skeptics will scoff. Their ranks will include the fanatics of communism and of anti-communism. But fanaticism, too, is obsolete and will mellow into moderation. The processes of change, visibly and palpably at work in the USSR of 1956, promise good for all mankind.

CULTURAL EXCHANGES

A WHITE HOUSE announcement of August 15 (*N. Y. Herald-Tribune*) stated that President Eisenhower had approved a recommendation of the National Security Council that the U.S. "should seek exchanges between the United States and the countries of Eastern Europe, including the USSR, along the lines of the seventeen-point program put forward by the Western foreign ministers at Geneva in October, 1956."

William S. B. Lacy, former United States Ambassador to Korea, has been assigned to handle the program which embraces proposals for increased exchanges of literature, films, students, tourists, scientists and scholars.

"THE MANDARINS"

a review by MURRAY YOUNG

*Not in Utopia, subterraneous fields,
Or some secreted island, Heaven knows
where,
But in the very world which is the
world
Of all of us, the place where in the end
We find our happiness, or not at all.*
—Wordsworth

THE MANDARINS, by Simone de Beauvoir. World. N. Y. 1956. \$6.00. 610 pp.

AT THE END of the Second World War two remarkable literary figures emerged in France: Jean-Paul Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir. Participants in the Resistance, their names began to be known to a wide public with the publication of their articles and books in the years following Liberation. In the icy season of the Cold War that all too soon settled down over the Western world their writing was welcomed happily by people in many countries as a sign that at least some part of the traditional brilliance of French intellectual life had managed to survive the freezing blast that had immured so many intellectuals in bitter isolation.

Sartre became known as the chief exponent of Existential philosophy and the magazine he edited was a stormy center that kept the clash of ideas flashing in the bleak air. His plays were widely produced; but it was the publication of the first three volumes of a proposed four-volume novel that gave him his most solid claim to literary fame. For these novels presented a revealing picture of France on the eve of the war, during the brief period of military action, and on into the sodden days of the defeat of the Republic. They were books remarkable not only

for the assured mastery of their technique, but even more for the questions that provided their intellectual core: what is the nature of man's freedom (asked against the shame of a whole nation's defeat), what are man's responsibilities, and what are the proper forms in which to realize these responsibilities?

The fourth volume, presumably planned to answer finally the questions so insistently threaded throughout the earlier three books, has not to date been published. But the subsequent actions of Sartre—his increasing indictment of warmongering, his widely expressed concern to see justice done in the Rosenberg and Morton Sobell cases, and the recent direction of his plays—serve to indicate what, at least in part, the answer will be.

Simone de Beauvoir has published, besides several novels, a study of the position of women in her book entitled "The Second Sex." This study has been compared with a good deal of justice to the historic document of "The Vindication of the Rights of Woman" written by Mary Wollstonecraft at the end of the 18th century. Like Mary Wollstonecraft, writing in the exhilarating climate of the most advanced ideas of the Enlightenment and under the immediate inspiration of the French Revolution, Miss de Beauvoir, fully competent in the whole range of intellectual development since the Enlightenment and profoundly influenced by

the Russian Revolution, reassesses the question of the emancipation of women in the light of this accumulated knowledge and the historical advance of an established socialist society. This is a remarkable book.

As in Sartre's writing, the basic questions in Miss de Beauvoir's books and studies are the nature of man's freedom and responsibility. Present in all her earlier novels as the underlying theme, it is in her most recent novel "The Mandarins" that the question is posed most clearly and the answer given most directly.

This novel has a special interest since it is a study in fictional form of the intellectual group out of which both Sartre and de Beauvoir herself emerged, and in the novel they are both easily recognized as leading characters. The reader is given a most carefully detailed study of this group who having worked closely together in the hazardous underground days find, as the war ends, a host of pressures—ambition, jealousy, political opportunism—that begin to sever the closebound comradeship in the frigid winds of the approaching Cold War.

The characters are projected with assured skill, their private lives woven firmly into the over-all pattern of their public actions now increasingly complex in the fluid post-war situation in which the rapidly growing hostility toward the Soviet Union by her wartime allies is the most dominant feature. In the National Front that arose immediately at the end of the war the leading characters of the book are, of course, on the left, a left that is in the process of rapid shifts and changes as the rigid necessities of the war period recede.

Dubreuilh, clearly based upon Sartre, attempts to build an independent socialist party. A man of great intellectual authority, he wants his proposed party to safeguard the noble tenets of the traditional European humanism which he feels are deeply threatened. He hopes that his former student and now leading journalist, Henri Perron, will join in the task of building such a party and

that Henri will, indeed, make the newspaper he edits the party's official paper. But the disorder that grows in the new period foredooms Dubreuilh's hopes for such an independent party. The political scene is increasingly dominated on the left by the Communist Party as a result of its brilliant record of leadership during the Resistance and the solidity of its establishment among the French people, and it is dominated on the Right by the more and more reactionary parties spurred on as a result of the severance of the Soviet alliance.

The question of the Cold War becomes increasingly pervasive: as between Russia and the United States which should be the choice? By virtue of their philosophic and political convictions a world dominated by American capitalism is unthinkable to these French intellectuals. But a world dominated by a triumphant socialism of a kind about which they hold many doubts gives them profound hesitation and fear.

This political dilemma is inextricably a part of the personal dilemmas and problems of the characters and it is as the book draws to its close that Miss de Beauvoir displays her masterly control over this interrelation of the personal and the political life of her characters.

In the final pages of the novel Dubreuilh and Henri are speaking:

"There's one thing that you must realize," Dubreuilh says, "and that is that acceptance is always a matter of choice, love always a matter of preference. If you wait until you meet absolute perfection before getting involved, you'll never love anybody and never do anything."

"Without demanding perfection, you can nevertheless come to the conclusion that things are pretty rotten, and not feel like getting mixed up in them," Henri said.

"Rotten in relation to what?" Dubreuilh asked.

"In relation to what they could be."

"You mean to certain concepts you have in your head," Dubreuilh said. "The Soviet Union as it should be,

revolution without tears—those are pure concepts, that is to say; nothing. Obviously, compared to the concept, reality is always wrong; as soon as a concept is embodied, it becomes deformed. But the superiority of the Soviet Union over all other possible socialisms is that it exists.”

“If what exists is always right, there’s nothing left to do but fold your arms and sit back.”

“Not at all. Reality isn’t frozen. It has possibilities, a future. But to act on it—and even to think about it—you’ve got to get inside it and stop playing around with little dreams. . . . We don’t always realize it, but it takes a hell of a lot of arrogance to place your dreams above everything else. When you’re modest, you begin to understand that, on the one hand, there’s reality, and on the other, nothing. And I know of no worse error than preferring emptiness to fullness. . . . History isn’t rosy. But since you can’t escape it, you’ve got to seek the best way of living in it. In my opinion, abstention isn’t the answer.”

So in the end for the protagonists of the novel, what they have dreamed of, what they have idealistically believed possible, what they have passionately desired, both in their personal relations and in their political aspiration, is tested by the realities of life. The reader closes the book with the quickening sense that he has, through the lives of the characters portrayed, looked a little closer at the very substance of that reality which “shapes our ends, rough-hew them as we may.”

This book, like all the work of these two important French writers has meaning for us today because it deals with the world as it actually exists. As it exists, it is true, for a relatively small group of intellectuals, but nevertheless by virtue of Sartre’s and Simone de Beauvoir’s ability to look honestly about them, by the urgency of their sense of social responsibility, and by their profound commitment to “the very world which is the world of all of us,” they help us see a little more

clearly the direction of the history through which we are living, and because they are deeply creative writers, they also help us to see a little more clearly the nature of our relations to each other.

HUNGARIAN SPRING

SPRINGTIME ON THE DANUBE,
by Janine Bouissounouse and Louis
De Villefosse. Hungarian Word. New
York. 214 pp. \$1.50.

EXCERPTS from this charming book were published in our May and June issues. We were very happy to present these brief glimpses before publication because we were delighted with a book on one of the People’s Democracies that was at once perceptive, critical and at the same time sympathetic, and written with great skill and style—qualities we felt the translator had most successfully captured.

Now that the book is available in full we heartily recommend it to our readers. The authors, Janine Bouissounouse, a noted French newspaper correspondent and novelist, and Louis De Villefosse, former Assistant Chief of the Free French Navy and author of many biographies and novels, bring their wide experience as writers and trained observers to this account of their visit to Hungary in 1954. The result is a book which gives you an illuminating picture not only of Hungary as it is today but as well some understanding of the historical development of this country so little known to the outside world.

The occasion for the visit of the two authors was a Writers’ Conference to which they had been invited. This conference made possible extensive contacts with the most important Hungarian intellectuals and artists. The record of their discussions with a diversity of novelists, poets, painters, sculptors give the reader real insight

to the problems of creative people in the midst of a profound transition from one form of society to another. Trained observers as they are, the writers relate the discussions of the intellectuals and artists to the actual changes in the everyday lives of the masses of the ordinary Hungarian people. Thus observing on two levels—the level of abstract ideas, philosophic controversy, and artistic problems, and the level of a changing pattern of economic life for everyone in the country—the result is a description of Hungarian life in all its complexity that considerably out-ranges the scope of most books of travel observation.

The authors are frankly sympathetic to the present social reorganization taking place in this once backward and more or less isolated country with its bitter history of foreign domination and autocratic tyranny. Nevertheless they raise probing questions and indicate surprising contradictions in the present situation that are especially revealing in the whole complex problem of social and political change in relatively undeveloped countries.

Hugo Gellert has generously illustrated the book with striking drawings and Dr. Bela Pogany has contributed a useful introduction.

CHINA RESEEN

NEW CHINA AS WE SAW IT, by Homer G. Brown and Muriel J. Brown. Rev. Homer G. Brown, Box 680, St. Marys', Ontario, Canada. 27 pp. 25c—5 for \$1.00.

READERS of New World Review will remember the enlightening article in our special July issue, "Religion and Morality in China" by the authors of this pamphlet. Missionaries in China from 1913 to 1942 under the United Church of Canada, Rev. and Mrs. Brown returned for a visit there last year. This pamphlet is an account of the changes they discovered in a China

they had been so long familiar with in the old days.

Sympathetic but critical, they observe the new life in all its aspects—education, industry, agriculture, justice, with, of course, special concern for the moral and religious changes to be noted in the New China.

The recent denial of passports to American reporters by our State Department makes us ever more grateful for first-hand descriptions such as this by the Browns who bring wide knowledge of the country and a deep concern for the Chinese people to their effort for a true understanding.

FORWARD JOURNEY

A MILLION YEARS OF HUMAN PROGRESS, by Ira D. Cardiff. Pageant Press. New York. \$2.50. 133 pp.

THE AUTHOR of this brief survey of human progress has left out accounts of wars and the genealogies of princes and has selected what seem to him to be the really important milestones in man's long journey. He marks man's steps from his simian beginnings to his mastery of the art of writing and his development of ethical concepts, on through his increasing scientific achievements and his growing recognition of human rights—exemplified by the struggle against slavery, the adoption of a Bill of Rights in the USA, the challenging idea of socialism throughout the world today, and the establishment of the United Nations.

Mr. Cardiff's survey serves to remind us that the control of the world in which we live is a forward movement, and it serves, happily, a further purpose in reminding us that however dark a given period of history may seem to be, in actual fact just and noble ideals increasingly influence our human relationships.

IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

THE ANTI-STALIN CAMPAIGN AND INTERNATIONAL COMMUNISM. A Selection of Documents. Edited by the Russian Institute, Columbia University. Columbia University Press, New York, 1956. 338 pp. \$1.75.

THIS TIMELY and invaluable collection of documents on the Stalin re-evaluation and its repercussions begins with the "secret" speech of Nikolai Khrushchev concerning the "Cult of the Individual," delivered February 24-25 at the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The text given is that issued by the U.S. State Department and published in the *New York Times* of June 5. In an introduction to the text, the State Department said that the document had been obtained from a "confidential source," and that it did not vouch for its authenticity. It has been generally accepted as in the main authentic, although incomplete.

The volume also contains the statements made by Communist Party bodies, leaders and publications in the United States, Italy, France and England following the publication of the Khrushchev speech, the resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union answering some of the criticisms expressed by other Parties and subsequent official statements by the Communist Parties of various countries in response to the Soviet resolution. It also includes statements by the Italian Socialist leader Pietro Nenni. A number of items from the *New York Daily Worker* are published. Of particular interest is the report to the Central Committee of the Italian Communist Party by its leader Palmiro Togliatti (not previously published in this country) dealing with the question of autonomy of Communist Parties, peaceful transition, and various roads to socialism in different countries.

This compilation of documents, which appear to have been accurately trans-

lated from the original printed texts in the case of those in other languages, provides essential material for an understanding of the Khrushchev revelations on the Stalin era and their worldwide effects.

SOVIET NATIONALISM

SOVIET RUSSIAN NATIONALISM, by Frederick C. Barghoorn. Oxford University Press. New York. 1956. \$7.00. 277 pp.

IN THIS STUDY of the relations of the central authority in the Soviet Union to the non-Russian national groups and minorities Mr. Barghoorn's purpose is to prove that the real objective of Soviet power is imperialism. To this end he analyzes at great length what he sees as the contradiction between the internationalism basic to Marxist theory and the narrow nationalism that, beginning in the thirties, increased during the strain of World War II, and reached its climax in the post-war period.

Unfortunately for Mr. Barghoorn's purpose, his book, obviously the work of a good many years, appears at a time when much of the material he uses to build up his case has been opened up for the freest discussion by the Soviet authorities themselves, and when great strides have already been taken to correct the nationalist distortions that in fact did manifest themselves in the later years of Stalin's regime.

Mr. Barghoorn does not include the proceedings of the 20th Congress in his account, and of course none of the significant changes initiated since, changes already well underway in the three years preceding the Congress. The author does, it is true, give some attention to the policies introduced in 1953 immediately after the death of Stalin, but he sees these as merely tactical changes, not as a real reversal of policies.

Like so many other interpretations of Soviet policy and intention, this book was outdated before it left the press.

NEW RECORDINGS

reviewed by **SIDNEY FINKELSTEIN**

THREE COMPLETE operas by Rimsky-Korsakov, performed by Soviet Union opera companies, are available on American records, and they are worth investigating by enterprising music lovers. Of all big musical forms, grand opera most requires a mode of presentation rooted in national traditions. It is an organic part of the national theatre, and its melodies are intertwined with the sounds of the spoken language. Our own Metropolitan Opera Company has built up a workable Italian and German wing. It would be too much to expect it to build up a Russian wing. The result is a loss to our musical knowledge. Rimsky-Korsakov alone, for example, wrote thirteen operas and these are his major achievements in the field of music. Interchange of visits between the Metropolitan Opera Company and the Bolshoi or Kiev companies would, it is obvious, enormously enrich our cultural life, but pending this, records will have to fill the gap.

A member of the Russian "Mighty Five," including Moussorgsky, Balakirev, Cui and Borodin, Rimsky-Korsakov carried on an intensive study of folk music and its creative use. He did not express in his music the deep personal identification with the peasantry that one finds in Moussorgsky. But of all the "Five," Rimsky-Korsakov had the keenest political mind, with a resentment of oppressive forces which he expressed in sharp satiric barbs, hidden within seemingly innocent legends and fairy tales. His satiric masterpiece, "The Golden Cockerel," which got him into trouble with the censors, is unfortunately not recorded by a Russian company. However, an earlier opera,

"May Night" written in 1878, is available, and displays his combination of fantasy and satire. The satire here is gentle. The story founded on Gogol, is of a village lad in love. His father, however, the domineering village headman, also has an eye out for the same young maiden. A number of hilarious tricks are played on the father. The village lake is also haunted by mermaids, who favor the young lad because he has helped them discover an evil witch in their midst. Finally they help him, and the village youngsters, to win their revolt against the petty, hypocritical officialdom, and the course of true love runs smooth. The music not only has beautiful peasant choruses and love music, but an eerie fantasy quality when the mermaids come on the scene. There is also a subtle satiric touch in the music when the father-headman sings of how he once rode beside the Tsarina's coachman and the musical accompaniment becomes a sour-note distortion of typical Tsarist patriotic strains. The performance, by the Bolshoi Theatre company conducted by Vassily Nebolsin, features the noted tenor Serge Lemeshev (three long playing records, Vanguard VRS-6006/7/8).

There is even richer music, although less satire, in "Sadko" (1896). The setting is a part real, part mythical medieval Novgorod, where the merchants sing proudly of their freedom from domination by the warlike princes. Rimsky-Korsakov is in full accord with these sentiments, but he also thinks that the merchants should show a little more vision and enterprise. This spirit of enterprise is represented by the minstrel Sadko, who urges the merchants to explore, and build new routes

connecting them with other lands. They laugh at him, but the Princess of the Sea, who is enchanted by Sadko's music, helps him to fit out a fleet of ships. The voyage is successful, but Sadko himself must be drawn to the bottom of the sea, to live with the beautiful princess and her father, the sea-king. Now another moral enters,—that the poet must not lose himself in visions and dreams. At the end of the opera a stern pilgrim banishes the magical power of the sea-spirits, and Sadko finds himself back with his wife in Novgorod. The opera is literally drenched with sea music, of the most sensuously lovely kind, foreshadowing the impressionism of Debussy. Also remarkable is its rich use of Asian motifs and rhythmic patterns. The excellent performance is again by the Bolshoi Theatre company, led by Nicolai Golovanov. Kozlovsky's enchanting singing of the famous "Song of India," so often maltreated, restores this music as Rimsky-Korsakov in-

tended it to sound (three long playing records, Concert Hall, CHS-1307).

"The Tsar's Bride" (1898) is one of Rimsky-Korsakov's few operas with a realistic historical setting. The drama is a powerful tragedy of the oppressiveness of court life in the days of Tsar Ivan the Terrible. There are, as always in Rimsky-Korsakov, powerful choruses. There is none of the fantasy music of the other operas, but Rimsky-Korsakov's interest in folk idioms differing from the customary major-minor scales is shown in the beautiful music written for the Gypsy woman, Lubasha, splendidly sung by the contralto Larisa Rudenko. Also outstanding in the somber music is the great bass, Boris Gmirya, taking the role of the merchant Sobakin. The company is that of the Kiev Theatre, conducted by Vladimir Piradov. The libretto is especially well prepared, containing Russian, a transliteration of the Russian, and English (three long playing records, Westminster, OPW 1301).

A NUMBER of years ago a trio gotten together for recording purposes, made up of Jascha Heifetz, Emanuel Feuermann and Artur Schnabel, was advertised as the "million dollar trio." I am sure that the trio made up of David Oistrakh, Lev Oborin and Sviatoslav Knushevitsky is not known in the Soviet Union as the "million ruble trio," but it is easily of the same musical calibre. They perform, on one record, Dvorak's wonderful folk-inspired "Dumky" Trio and Smetana's early, but very sad and beautiful Trio in G Minor, both for violin, 'cello and piano. The perfection of style, and the sensitive interplay of these three great virtuosi make this one of the most masterly performances ever put on records (Westminster XWN 18175).

Pretty much the entire score of Prokofiev's ballet, "Romeo and Juliet," is now available on two long-playing

records. It is performed by the Bolshoi Theatre Orchestra, conducted by Genadi Rozhdenskiy, who performed the music for the soundtrack of the film. (Westminster XWN 2206).

Two young Soviet composers, Otar Taktakishvili and Otar Gordeli are represented on one record, each with a recently written piano concerto. Both concertos follow in the romantic bravura vein of Khachaturian and Kabalevsky, and they suffer from a lack of complete personal emotional revelation, which in this writer's opinion, is necessary for great music, however realistic and social minded. In other words, they are a little glib. But both composers have a real flair for music, and Taktakishvili has an especially ingratiating melodic gift. The pianist in both works, Alexander Iokheles, is a new name to me, and he seems to be a first rate virtuoso (Westminster XWN 18171).

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