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Bomb Tests Must End!

by JESSICA SMITH

HOPES rise and fall with the conflicting reports as to whether some first steps toward disarmament and ending nuclear weapons tests will be taken at the UN Disarmament Subcommittee meetings in London.

It seems unthinkable that the overwhelming worldwide pressures in this direction will not result in some beginning being made. Yet, despite encouraging statements by President Eisenhower, we know that powerful circles in Washington have placed grave obstacles in the path of successful negotiations.

It is therefore necessary that pressure to end the tests be kept up unremittingly. The importance of even a limited agreement is that it is at least a step toward a complete ban on nuclear weapons, and effective arms reduction.

The Soviet Union has opened the way for agreement by accepting the Western proposal for a control system to assure observance of an agreement to suspend nuclear tests, although previously it had held that no inspection is necessary since all tests can be detected. On June 6, Soviet delegate Valerian Zorin proposed that tests of atomic and hydrogen weapons be suspended for two or three years, with an international commission to observe implementation of the agreement, and control posts stationed on the territory of the nuclear powers.

This last month has seen a series of actions reflecting the growing de-

termination of the American people to eliminate the dangers to themselves and their children of radiation from continued testing and the ultimate disaster of atomic war.

The hearings of the subcommittee of the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy under the chairmanship of Rep. Chet Hollifield (D-Cal.) performed an important service in alerting the public to the dangers. A procession of leading scientists disputed the official view of the Atomic Energy Commission that tests could continue at the present rate for decades without appreciably increasing the damage to humanity. Dr. Wright Langham of the Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory, Dr. Merrill Eisenbud of AEC's New York office and Dr. William F. Neuman of the University of Rochester called for an international limit on testing, the latter warning that the atmosphere might already be close to loaded with cancer producing Strontium 90.

Prof. Herman J. Muller, Indiana geneticist, and several fellow-scientists agreed that any radiation, no matter how small a dose, caused harmful mutations, and that there is no threshold below which genetics damage is not caused. Prof. Muller pleaded that tests be ended because at their present rate injuries and deaths will result for hundreds and thousands and millions all over the world in future generations, and because continued testing leads the war nearer to atomic war and the "cataclysmic ruin of humanity."

Following Dr. Albert Schweitzer's appeal to humanity to stop the nuclear weapons tests and other such appeals by leading personages throughout the world, a tremendous impact has been made on American public opinion by the appeal for international agreement to end tests initiated by Dr. Linus C. Pauling, Nobel prize biochemist and a number of fellow scientists, and signed by 2,200 leading American scientists. The appeal declares that under continued testing "Each added amount of radiation causes damage to the health of human beings all over the world and causes damage to the pool of human germ plasma such as to lead to an increase in the number of seriously defective children that will be born in future generations." It summons scientists to their special responsibility to make known the dangers of which they have special knowledge. The Eastland Internal Security Committee had to retreat in confusion from its plan to question Dr. Pauling as to "who was behind" the appeal, when he declared he would welcome an opportunity "to educate some of our representatives in Washington" on the dangers of fall-out and atomic wars.

The Executive Committee of the Federation of Atomic Scientists has urged the United States to take the lead in seeking a ban on further tests of large nuclear weapons. Church groups, Methodists, Unitarians and others, and a number of influential organizations such as the Parent Teachers' Association have taken up the issue. Many individuals and organizations are joining in the campaigns to end the tests being carried on by the Women's

International League and the American Friends Service Committee.

It is high time for the United States to pay more attention to the demands of American public opinion than to objections being raised by the British, French and Bonn Government (contrary to the demands of their own people) to East-West agreement on ending tests and arms reduction. It is high time for the U.S. Government to take the initiative in easing world tensions rather than heightening them by its own actions, and then insisting that their easing must be a precondition to any effective disarmament agreement.

Nikolai Khrushchev, in his television interview made a strong bid for the replacement of the cold war by a policy of peaceful co-existence and friendly competition. He emphasized the readiness of the Soviet Union to take any small step toward disarmament and ending tests and proposed a mutual agreement to withdraw all foreign troops from European territory.

Here at home, a heartening aspect of the recent Supreme Court decisions is the fact that they go a long way toward destroying one of the main pretexts for the cold war—the alleged worldwide conspiracy headed by the USSR for the violent overthrow of capitalist governments including our own. This, according to Justice Harlan's opinion on behalf of six Supreme Court members, the government had been unable to prove in the California Smith Act Case.

The way is open for a return to sanity in international relations—as a beginning, the bomb tests must end!

Cultural Exchanges

by MURRAY YOUNG

THIS SUMMER in Moscow there is to be an exhibition of the paintings of Rockwell Kent in honor of his seventy-fifth birthday. The artist, waiting the outcome of his suit before the Court of Appeals against the State Department's refusal to give him a passport, will not be there.

In New York the Museum of Modern Art is currently presenting an exhibit of Pablo Picasso's paintings in honor of his seventy-fifth birthday. Picasso has not been invited. "We did not want to put him in an embarrassing position by inviting him only to have his entry questioned by our government," said Alfred H. Barr, Jr. who arranged the exhibit.

To such absurdities has our policy of cultural isolation led us.

Two years have now gone by since the agreements on cultural exchange were reached at the Geneva Conference in 1955. With the concerts in America during the 1955-56 season of Emil Gilels, David Oistrakh, and Mstislav Rostropovich, and the "Porgy and Bess" visit and also concerts in the Soviet Union by the Boston Symphony, Isaac Stern and Jan Peerce, a period of really fruitful exchanges seemed to be opening up, particularly when added to the cultural exchanges there was for a while a considerable exchange of scientific experts.

Hampered always by our government's refusal to remove the ludicrous provisions on fingerprinting all persons entering this country—the most obvious expression of a fundamental timorousness on the part of those in charge of the carrying out of the policy of exchange—it was clear before long that progress would be at best slow.

With the Hungarian crisis last fall exchanges were brought to a virtual standstill.

True, a trickle of scientific exchanges continued, and since last September the distribution of the Soviet magazine "USSR" has gone on and its counterpart the U.S. magazine "Amerika" has continued to be distributed in the Soviet Union. But like so many of our decisions and policies in this past decade, time itself proved this enforced isolation to be hopelessly unrelated to reality.

The Russians, who do not seem to share our lack of confidence in relations with other countries, appointed in the early spring a new government committee—the State Committee for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries—to forward in every way possible exchanges in cultural and scientific fields with corresponding organizations abroad.

Shortly thereafter it was announced that Emil Gilels is to return for another engagement this next sea-

son, and that the famous Soviet violinist Leonid Kogan is to appear in concerts here for the first time. Following upon this announcement came another stating that two leading American singers, Leonard Warren and Blanche Thebom, were to give concerts next season in the USSR.

Early in June the Soviet Ambassador Georgi N. Zarubin presented a plan to our special assistant to the Secretary of State for East-West Exchanges, William Lacey, for the resumption of the exchange program on a really broad scale. Mr. Zarubin proposed the appearance here of the Bolshoy Theater ballet troupe and technical and scientific delegations with similar groups from the U.S. making reciprocal tours of the Soviet Union. Mr. Zarubin particularly mentioned the Philadelphia Orchestra as one of the artistic groups they especially wanted to visit the USSR.

Mr. Lacey, after conferring with the Soviet Ambassador on his proposals, expressed his belief that there would probably be more exchanges in the near future if negotiations continued to be successful.

Happily less timorous than those concerned with government policy, some 500 young Americans are planning to attend the Moscow Youth Festival to be held July 28-August 11, joining the 35,000 young visitors from all over the world, coming to this great celebration of friendship and peace, where cultural exchanges will take the form of musical performances and dramatic productions from many lands, as well as a host of sport events. Furthermore all signs indicate that the number of tourists going to the Soviet Union

this year will considerably exceed the number visiting there last year.

It was, however, the televised appearance of Nikita Khrushchev on the C.B.S. network on June 2 that most energetically sparked the whole question of exchanges. In an hour's interview with three American reporters, Khrushchev revealed himself before 10,000,000 Americans as a straightforward, humorous and persuasive spokesman for his government's position on the great problems perplexing people throughout the world. Khrushchev made it clear that his country wanted peace, a cessation to the arms race, control of nuclear bomb testing and the fullest exchanges of culture and ideas. For the first time, millions of Americans learned directly from its chief spokesman the real objectives of socialism: a peaceful world in which differing social systems can compete on the basis of industrial, agricultural and scientific advances as reflected in the improved living conditions of the people.

Mr. John Crosby, television and radio critic of the *New York Herald-Tribune*, has capably answered those frightened souls who raised objection to Khrushchev's appearance:

This position I consider unwise, unrealistic and rather cowardly. In the first place and most importantly, it is rather an insult to the intelligence of the American people to insinuate that they can't listen to any amount of propaganda without being dangerously swayed from their purpose. In the second place, the assumption that the Soviets are such devilishly clever propagandists that they can't be permitted into our living rooms is flattering their intelligence to an unwarranted degree. In the third place, how can we argue that our own voice should be allowed in Russia if we don't allow theirs here? (N. Y. Herald Tribune, June 6, 1957)

In a world grown increasingly small through rapid communication and travel, and increasingly interdependent as a result of the vast strides forward in technical developments, the attempt to impose isolation upon the peoples of any country must in the end fail because the awareness of the people has grown in proportion. The wide approval of the C.B.S. presentation of Khrushchev on television is a clear indication of the interest of the American people in the aims and purposes of a socialist society.

Perhaps the most direct expression of the urgency and determination of the people to open up, continue and broaden the exchange of culture and ideas between the East and West was contained in the statement (*New York Times*, June 6, 1957) of Al Brown of Rockford, Illinois, one of a group of thirty farmers from Illinois and Wisconsin who left on June 5 for a two-week visit to the Soviet Union: "I hope to be able to talk to the people and tell them how I feel about things and ask them how they feel."

ROCKWELL KENT ELECTED NCASF CHAIRMAN

ROCKWELL KENT, distinguished artist and author, has been elected Chairman of the National Council of American-Soviet Friendship.

Mr. Kent's election was announced at a Testimonial Dinner under the organization's auspices celebrating the artist's 75th birthday by Mr. Theodore Bayer, Administrative Secretary, on behalf of the Board of Directors. The event took place on June 19 in New York City.

Mr. Kent succeeds the late Dr. John A. Kingsbury who died last August. Other chairman of this organization, established in 1943, have been the Rev. William Howard Melish and Dr. Corliss Lamont. In his speech of acceptance Mr. Kent said:

"It is the purpose of the National Council to do all within its means to promote mutual understanding and good will between the two great powers of the world, the United States and the Soviet Union, and thereby to establish lasting peace. With this purpose and the means that have been taken to promote it, I am in heartfelt agreement. I accept the national chairmanship as a great honor and responsibility. To those who wonder why an artist should concern himself with public affairs, I will quote Pericles addressing his fellow Athenians: 'We are the only people who think him who does not meddle in public affairs not indolent but good for nothing.' The greatest cause today that any citizen can serve is peace. As Chairman of the National Council, I shall do my utmost in that cause."

Dr. Lamont presided at the Testimonial Dinner. Those offering birthday tributes included Mrs. John A. Kingsbury; Reverend Melish; Miss Jessica Smith; Mr. Anton Refregier, a fellow-artist; the Rev. Richard Morford, Executive Director of the NCASF; Mr. Mandel Terman, Chicago businessman and Chairman of the Chicago Council of American-Soviet Friendship. Other guests of honor were Mrs. Rockwell Kent and Mme. Tamara Mamedov, Cultural Attache of the Embassy of the USSR in Washington.

Reflections on Hungary

by THE REVEREND JOSEPH L. HROMADKA

The Reverend Joseph L. Hromadka, Protestant theologian and teacher, is a prominent member of the World Council of Churches. Dean of a theological seminary in Czechoslovakia, he was formerly on the faculty of the Princeton Theological Seminary.

We print below an article of his from the April issue of the monthly newsletter, *Protestant Churches in Czechoslovakia*, preceded by excerpts containing the essence of the special article he wrote for the newsletter last December on the Hungarian crisis.

The article from the April issue was written after he visited Hungary in March. The text is given in full except for a final section dealing specifically with relations between Czechoslovakian and Hungarian Protestant Churches.

Excerpts from First Article

IF RELATIONS between nations are filled with distrust, agitation, suspicion, or even hostile and subversive intentions, any creative efforts for understanding and peaceful coexistence are almost impossible. And here it is necessary to stress the fact that, while the Geneva meeting of statesmen in 1955 was a sort of agreement against a new war, it did not cleanse the atmosphere of mistrust or hostility. It did not stop the attempts to deepen conflicts between nations, which are called the cold war.

I do not wish to pronounce judgment on anyone. All of us are responsible for the atmosphere which was created among nations after the war. I wish only to draw attention to the ruinous and moral perversity of the cold war, which can cause more moral harm than the "hot"

war and can poison relations between nations for many decades. For in essence the cold war far exceeds the measure of justified criticism and controversy.

It would be naive—yes, wrong—to shout down mutual criticism. Representatives and citizens of the "Western democracies" have a right to draw attention to their own advantages and to the mistakes and shortcomings of the other party. And in turn, the citizens of socialist states can rightly praise the principles, order and institutions of the Soviet society or that of the People's Democracies.

There can be no world progress without competition and discussion, or without a struggle to apply those social and political principles we consider correct. But such a competition or struggle is thinkable only if the international atmosphere is not poisoned by crude propaganda

and hostile attempts to cause the fall of those with whom we do not agree or with whom we are competing.

The cold war is a consistent, and in many ways an immoral, attempt to achieve by evil agitation, subversive work and the organization of illegal activity in other countries, that which we wish to achieve otherwise by war. This is a consistent disguising of hostile intentions and of military attempts to conquer one's opponent by exerting power. If we have achieved at least the probability that a new catastrophe of war will not occur, it is our task to concentrate all our forces on the suppression of the cold war.

So long as we wage the cold war, we disturb not only political, but also moral relations between nations, and live constantly in the danger of actual war. Therefore we have pointed out several times in our ecumenical relations, the disaster of the cold war and our responsibility to work against it, just as we have hitherto worked against real war—in my opinion there is no more urgent task in ecumenical work. . . .

The Hungarian tragedy showed the consequences of the anti-Soviet hysteria, cultivated systematically in many parts of the western world. Will it be a lesson for the future? This we should understand at long last—that moral co-existence among nations and social and political progress of Europe, Asia and other continents is unthinkable if the relations between one another are poisoned by anti-Soviet and anti-Communist hostility.

Are we aware of the fact that such an attitude undermines the creative forces of Western civiliza-

tion, that it keeps alive reactionary instincts and makes it impossible for nations in the socialist sphere to overcome their shortcomings, to improve their political, economic and legal systems?

We have a thorough understanding for the critical objections of a Westerner to the ideological system of Soviet society and that of the People's Democratic states. But these objections are no longer fruitful, are even harmful, if they are based in principle on anti-Soviet and anti-Communist attitudes.

Whether the Western world and its churches realize it or not, their joy over the Hungarian uprising and their anger over the change on November 4, 1956, grow far more from anti-Soviet sentiments than from an interest in the liberty of the Hungarian nation.

We have all had to reflect over the Hungarian events. But when we learned, by reading the Western press, listening to its radio and speeches, what passionate crusading indignation there was over the Soviet intervention, we fully realized that this passion had no true moral consecration, and that it is dictated much less by the knowledge of facts than by that anti-Communist attitude which had for years been systematically cultivated by all possible means.

I repeat: we have understanding for criticism and serious objections, but we are faced by the great task of learning to speak responsibly with one another about the difficulties which press hard on us all. This above-described attitude has caused measureless moral and material damage, not only to the Hungarian people, but to us all.

Further Reflections

The commentary on the Hungarian events, which I wrote on December 8th, 1956, was written as a brotherly reply, at the request of several friends abroad, who asked me to tell what I thought of the Hungarian events. I was surprised when I saw that a great number of foreign papers had printed my analysis and added their own remarks—favorable, critical, or very unfavorable and negative. Today, letters and articles are still coming in, reacting to my commentary. I also know that in Hungary itself there was a discussion on the correctness or incorrectness of my comments. Voices were raised in various places in Europe, and outside Europe as well, hinting that it is no longer possible to rely on my judgments and raising doubt as to the reliability of my theological views.

I can do nothing but accept with all humility the judgments of my friends, examine my views and do everything possible to achieve mutual understanding, even though agreement is not possible. It was with great hesitation that I wrote my December comments. I knew the complexity and obscurity of the situation. Moreover I was especially aware of the fact that the Hungarian events made not only international relations, but also the discussions within the ecumenical fellowship more difficult. But I do not regret having presented my views. I only regret that I did not succeed in speaking convincingly, and that in many places I deepened the mistrust in my views and in the motives for my activity. This we cannot help.

We are in the midst of very com-

plex events. We are walking on the edge of such an abyss that it is impossible to remain silent. It is impossible to remain silent even when we know how many errors our views may be exposed to, and what misunderstandings they may cause.

I thank for their attention all those who were interested in my comments. I thank them also for their severe, even harsh, criticism. The lines which I am now writing are not intended as, and cannot be, the final word on the Hungarian question. My recent visit in Hungary (March 23-27, 1957) convinced me that everything is still in the process of change and that there is a great variety of opinion among public figures and church representatives. It also convinced me that we must have a very sensitive perception for what is going on in human souls and hearts. I realized that all this furore around the Hungarian events, all this excitement, indignation and passion in the commentaries on the Hungarian eruption, made it impossible to penetrate to the heart of the matter and to offer genuine aid to the man in Hungary—be he within the church or outside it.

This article of mine is intended to show friends abroad that I have not ignored their letters, remarks or printed comments, that I am studying them very seriously and that I want nothing more than that we understand each other and help each other.

The December article was meant as a contribution to ecumenical discussions in particular. Its purpose was to express what I had experienced myself and how the situation looked from our point of view. In

our country, "behind the iron curtain," directly on the border between the so-called western and the so-called eastern world, we lived through the Hungarian events with special intensity.

We were not mere spectators who observed from afar and gave good or bad marks on behavior. We experienced directly the shocks in the neighboring country. We did not immediately find our way around in the maze of events. Even among us there were differences in judgment and in evaluation. However, we felt that it was not a question of Hungary alone, but also of us and of Europe as a whole. We understand very well the sympathies which were expressed for the Hungarian students and workers in their attempt to cleanse public life, to overcome everything which had been burdening Hungary in regard to politics, culture and ideas.

The events shook us and showed the depth of the crisis in the leading Hungarian party, but also the crisis of us all. The Hungarian outburst also showed the whole world much personal heroism and genuine desires to aid the Hungarian people. Who could deny all this? Who could throw mud on those individuals and groups who in decisive moments showed such intrepidity and courage?

But why did all this enthusiasm and heroism end in such a catastrophe? Where are the prime causes of the Hungarian tragedy? That is our disquieting question.

I was interested in showing our joint responsibility for the misfortune which afflicted Hungary as a whole and which made and is making thousands of Hungarian men,

women and children as well suffer.

There is not the slightest doubt that the internal causes of the Hungarian uprising were the injustices, mistakes and errors on the part of the Hungarian government, the Hungarian party and those of all socialist countries. There is no doubt that among the rebels there were many genuinely progressive and heroic individuals. It is also known that in many places workers took part in the events in the interest of socialist progress. But these individuals and these attempts, although well meant and aimed at correction, became victim to the situation for which all of Europe and—I underline this with particular emphasis—progressive European groups as well, bear the responsibility.

In what sense? The atmosphere throughout Europe, and especially on the frontiers of what is usually called the iron curtain, was, and is now, saturated with tension and nervousness. The Geneva Conference of heads of state in July 1955 seemingly, and on the surface, relaxed the tension and the danger of war. And yet, whoever observed events, whoever read the press, and whoever took part in ecumenical discussions, felt (and more than felt) that under the surface human thoughts were getting rigid, prejudices were becoming stronger and there was no willingness to give up the elementary anti-communist (and very often anti-Soviet) sentiments.

I say sentiments, because it was not a question of an articulate, openly declared program. But these sentiments accompanied, and still accompany, the discussions, negotiations, and decisions, and created an atmosphere in which every event

which meant the weakening or disintegration of socialist countries was received with joy.

Precisely because it is a question of a state of mind—often very difficult to define—we get into a blind alley from which it is difficult to find one's way out in discussions and actions. Very few will admit that they are against socialist reconstruction or for the weakening of the Soviet group of nations. But the accompanying motive of a tremendous number of our friends abroad with which we continually meet, and perhaps more and more, is an unfortunate anti-communist obsession which prevents them from having a simple, direct and frank view of what is actually going on in our countries behind the iron curtain, what is going on in our simple, personal, daily life.

I was disappointed to find out that many of my friends recognized my Christian testimony as long as they thought that it would covertly, and thus all the more effectively, hamper the building up of my socialist country. But when they realized that I want to carry on my theological and church activity in the new conditions of a socialist society without anti-communist overtones, in freedom of faith and in the certain hope for my people, they began to doubt my inward freedom and ceased to take my work seriously.

I repeat: only very few friends accept my view that testimony concerning Jesus Christ is also fully for communists, for citizens of socialist countries and that not only does it fail to weaken the newly built society, but strengthens, although indirectly, and cleanses it in its most

important and significant aspects.

We who come from countries behind the iron curtain must continually defend ourselves and must constantly explain why we consider it possible to carry on our church and theological work in socialist "atheist" countries. And at the same time we are met with astonishment when we turn the question around and ask whether genuine testimony of faith in Jesus Christ is possible in capitalist countries which go by the name of Christian.

We are always being warned and reminded, but seldom really encouraged with joy at the fact that it is possible to carry out positively the service of faith everywhere, also among communists. Behind all the artificial schematic theories and labels which draw a line between the free and unfree world, men lose sight of man and understanding for people who—after the terrible catastrophes of the last forty years—are attempting a different structure of society. Even the churches in the ecumenical movement regard us partly with compassion, partly with amazement, partly with mistrust.

It has never occurred to me to declare that the socialist order is closer to the Kingdom of God than is the capitalist order. We are all sinners—whether we are on this side of the iron curtain or behind it. And we all need the light of God's truth, forgiveness of sins and hopes for the final victory of Christ. But we also know that the "free" Christian countries are not an inch closer to the Kingdom of God than the so-called communist ones.

Why am I writing all this in connection with the Hungarian events? In order to draw attention to one of

the roots of the Hungarian catastrophe and to come together with my western friends in a realization of our joint responsibility for what happened in Hungary. I was shocked and horrified by the self-satisfied and moralizing judgments which were pronounced even in the Christian press about the Hungarian tragedy. It was a united, noisy attack on one side. Only here and there did we hear a feeble voice of self-examination, a more profound understanding of what was happening.

In a certain sense the Hungarian events are a touchstone of political and historical outlook. If the so-called progressive and socialist groups in the West joined the general crusade against the Soviet Union, they missed a great opportunity which was accorded them by Hungary at the end of October and beginning of November 1956. Either they succumbed to propaganda which was extraordinarily clever and which skillfully used the Hungarian uprising for its own purposes to break through the Soviet front at its weakest point—or else they got lost in abstract considerations on freedom and self-determination.

How is it possible to forget the fact that for at least ten years official funds were being used to undermine the political and social structure behind the iron curtain? From morning to night, certain radio stations are assailing the minds of citizens beyond the Elbe and beyond the Czech and Hungarian frontiers, in order to disintegrate their work, destroy their positive efforts to build up their country, promising them help from abroad. Ask Hungarian refugees how many among them joined in the battle because they ex-

pected (and expected in vain) the armed assistance promised from abroad. It is true that this aid was not promised officially. But the situation was therefore all the worse and all the more dubious morally. Political opinions can have true moral weight if they weigh responsibly the situation in which we are living, if they are not misled by abstract—noble, it is true—but still insubstantial illusions.

The progressive groups in western Europe should view in perspective the European catastrophes from 1914 to 1945, and the international shifts in the years 1945-1953, and should realize that there is no progress, that there can be no way forward in an atmosphere of hysteria, of cold war and under the slogan of a crusade against the region represented by the Soviet Union and People's China. In the decisive moments in Hungary, progressive Europe should have shouted down the anti-Soviet voices calling for restoration of the old, and should have defended the souls of the Europeans from political and moral chaos.

I am reproached that I do not see that the anti-Soviet opposition grew just after November 4th, 1956. But what did progressive Europe do to remind Hungarians and other Europeans of the fact that the very moment the attempts to correct matters in Hungary got on the anti-Soviet path they had to end in failure? Is it not true that the west European statesmen remind us unceasingly that they would not tolerate communist changes in western Europe? Would not every attempt at a socialist revolution anywhere in the western hemisphere be nipped in the bud? Who could expect the socialist

states to tolerate or bear the shift from western Europe right up to the borders of the Soviet Union?

We have to do a great deal to bring our affairs into order. Socialist countries must struggle and work for a higher living standard, for progress in all relations and patterns in cultural, intellectual and religious life, but all progress on a political and economic, cultural and spiritual basis is unthinkable the moment it is borne under anti-Soviet banners.

This is not a defense of Soviet policy. I have no mission to do this.

We also need great self-criticism in our country. This is going on more rapidly than our friends in the West imagine.

My view is that of a person who is in the center of a country and a part of Europe which went through terrible catastrophes and which is in the midst of constant danger. It is the view of a man who in faith (perhaps I can say this without exaggeration) realizes his responsibility and wants to win his friends over for cooperation and service in our common interests.

J. D. BERNAL VISITS HUNGARY

IN ITS ISSUE for May 18 the *New Statesman and Nation* published a letter from the distinguished scientist J. D. Bernal describing a recent visit to Hungary. The following excerpted passages are from his letter:

"I had the opportunity of two long evening with George Lukacs, just returned from his exile. I was delighted to find him serene and cheerful and fully prepared to undertake what he considers now to be his major work, the analysis of the difficulties and problems of the building of Socialism in a war-threatened world. It will be interesting to see how he develops his ideas in the new philosophical journal which he is helping to edit. . . .

"I learned something of the opinions and judgements of at least the scientific sector of Hungarian intellectuals. Naturally I heard much of the October days and of people's experiences in them. Nearly all spoke both of the spontaneous revolt against intolerable conditions and of the well-planned counter-revolutionary coup which determined its outbreak, though their opinion varied as to the relative importance of these two factors. . . .

"All recognized, however, that the events in Hungary are not isolated but that the country has been, on account of its geographical position and recent history, a victim of the Cold War. They cannot expect any full recovery of the country's liberty and prosperity except as part of a European settlement which will make possible a withdrawal of military force on both sides. . . .

"Most of the damage, which was largely to walls and windows, has already been repaired and here and there whole houses have been rebuilt. Supplies are plentiful owing partly to better relations with the peasants and partly to Soviet deliveries. . . .

"In education and science the restoration is practically complete. All damage to the university has been made good. Classes have been going on since February. . . . Research work is also in full swing though still suffering from certain shortage of apparatus and foreign scientific literature. . . ."

Inner Mongolia

by ELSIE FAIRFAX-CHOLMELEY

Elsie Fairfax-Cholmeley, an English journalist long resident in China, and a frequent contributor to New World Review, has sent us the following account of her visit this past May to the new China's Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region (not to be confused with the independent Mongolian People's Republic) on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of its establishment. Apart from its great interest as a description of the economic and social development in this little known region, the article affords an insight into the policy of the People's Government in relation to the many minority groups found within China's borders.

HUHEHOT means "Blue City" in Mongolian. Known for a long time by the Han (Chinese) name of Kweisui, which had the connotation of "pacifying the barbarians," it was for two centuries a trading center for exploiting, and a fortress for keeping down the Inner Mongolians. Later it became the capital of the now abolished Suiyuan province, one of the four (with parts of others) into which Inner Mongolia was cut by Chiang Kai-shek to ensure its disappearance as an entity. Now, having regained its original name, Huhehot, lying below the Taching mountains on the plateau west of the new Peking-Ulan Bator railway, is the rapidly growing capital of the new China's Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region, which has replaced Chiang's provinces.

In the first days of May this year, Huhehot was gay with silk flags flying from every roof and red banners emblazoned with huge gold-lettered slogans in both the Mongolian and Chinese scripts, on every public building and shop. It was the tenth anniversary of the establishment of the regional government—the oldest example of the Chinese Communist Party's policy of autonomy for all non-Han (the main body of the Chinese people are known as Han) nationalities; and representatives of all China's national minorities, Tibetan, Korean, Chuang, Miao, Li Uighur and Hui people, had come from their own autonomous areas to join the Inner Mongolians in their celebrations. Among the most colorful was Kalon Surkhang, a high Tibetan official of the Dalai Lama's retinue, in gorgeous orange robes and broad brimmed hat. It would have taken him six months to make the journey a year ago. Now he was able to reach the railhead at Lanchow from Lhasa in some three hours by the new airline.

Also present was Ahaidati, born a princess of the Yis, a people who have just emerged from slavery. Today, Ahaidati is a member of China's National People's Congress. There was besides, a vice-premier of the Central People's Government of China and visitors from the Mon-

golian People's Republic, men and women whose western dress and brisk air showed how far they had gone since 35 years ago when their country was primitive, feudal and priest-ridden.

Indeed, Inner Mongolia had much to celebrate. Up to the end of World War II, the people who give it its name were poverty-stricken, divided and weak. Semi-nomadic and mainly pastoral, they were ruled by princes, who in turn were subject to the land-grabbing Chiang Kai-shek government on the one hand and the occupying Japanese army (which gradually penetrated most of the area) on the other. Yet the Mongolians had once been a mighty force. In the thirteenth century they conquered the whole of China and much of Europe. But later they fell under the oppression of Chinese feudal rulers who, fearing these horsemen might again sweep southwards, set tribe against tribe, intriguing with the princes and splitting up their land by administrative trickery. Huge areas of pasture had been ploughed up, especially since railways began to penetrate the region early in the present century. Originally Mongolian communal property, they were sequestered by the official Colonization Bureaus of old China, which gave some money to the princes to pay them, in effect for guaranteeing that their people would not resist. The Japanese, after first flattering the Mongolians, were even more predatory, once they got a firm grip on the area.

But there was another current running. Sun Yat-sen had foreseen a China of equal nationalities, and as early as 1922, the Chinese Communist Party had announced its

policy of home rule, within China, for all nationalities. In 1935 it advanced a specific program calling for a united, autonomous Inner Mongolia and the abolition of the provinces (Jehol, Chahar, Ninghsia, Suiyuan) which had been superimposed on her by the Kuomintang for the purpose of division and enfeeblement. To do this, it was necessary to defeat first the Japanese, then the Kuomintang. The program provided a basis on which Hans and Inner Mongolian could and did unite to an increasing degree.

With the victory of the Chinese revolution, the Inner Mongolians were freed from national oppression, both from without and within China. For the first time in centuries, they were united under their autonomous people's government. In this government the interests of herdsmen, workers and peasants are paramount—and it has carried out first democratic, then socialist reform in their favor. But the united front is broad—former princes, aristocrats, herd-owners, merchants and lamas all have a place—and all nationalities, Han, Mongolian and other minorities, are equal.

Among the Mongolians, unity is based on the fact of national aspirations satisfied, and this, plus cooperation with all the rest of China, is the basis of the great advances that have been made. It enables Inner Mongolian leaders to state confidently that at the end of several five-year plans (the first will be completed at the end of this year) the economic and cultural standards of the Mongolian people will be as high as those anywhere else in the country, as part of which they are building socialism. This will be

achieved by developing the resources of this huge territory, which, shaped like an enormous scimitar, is 1,800 miles long, and just over half a million square miles in area: three times the size of France or twice the size of Texas. Its population however, is only 8,750,000 (little more than that of New York City); of whom only 1,080,000 are Mongolians. The great majority, 7,000,000 are Hans, who came in mainly during the past century, as colonists. The rest belong to several smaller nationalities.

After national oppression had been done away with the problem of development was faced. The first things done were to free the peasants from exploitation by the landlords and the herdsmen from the yoke of feudal privilege. In many cases herdsmen were working for the princes without any wages whatsoever, as virtual slaves.

In the agricultural areas land reform was carried out in much the same way as in the rest of China. Because the Mongolian peasants had no long agricultural tradition, their skill was lower than that of the Hans, and moreover the land had originally been taken from them by force; therefore the allotments given them in the land reform were twice those the Hans received. This, like the granting of autonomy, was an act of just restitution to remove the old bitterness between the two peoples. Much work had to be done to explain this to the Han farmers. They were told not only that it was the fair thing for the majority nationality to do but also, if violence had not originally been done to the minority, they themselves would not have been there at all. Such mea-

sures and the possession of their own administration by the Mongolians have laid a basis for a new situation in which Hans coming from other parts of the country, as they must do to develop the area which needs people as one of its major resources, are welcomed as friends, not feared as intruders displacing the original population.

In the pastoral areas, feudal privileges were abolished: i.e. the right of princes to collect taxes, to judge and punish, *corvée* and slave labor. Grazing, which had been restricted within certain areas allotted to each "banner" or sub-division of a tribal league, also became free. But there was no division of herds as there had been of the land, and no class-against-class attack on the livestock owners. The aim was to do nothing that might result in a reduction of livestock—through wanton killings or neglect—but to create conditions in which herds would grow and form the basis for a socialist animal husbandry gradually to be achieved by peaceful means. When the aristocrats, right after the foundation of the autonomous region, came to the government to ask who would take care of their animals after serfdom was abolished, it was simply suggested to them that they might pay wages. Thus, the thunderstruck feudal lords were hustled into capitalism. The arrangement was now to give the herdsmen half of the lambs, calves and colts reared. As a result they took much better care of the livestock than when their labor was forced; and the owners, to their surprise, found that instead of losing out on the deal, they too were better off. That the total head of livestock in the region has tripled in the past

ten years is proof of this. Moreover, its ownership distribution has changed. The big herders have increased their wealth somewhat. But proportionately they have less than before, while the ex-poor have more. There are now virtually no families in the pastoral areas without their own livestock.

Hwara, who is today the woman chairman of the Patriotic Cooperative in the Chota League, for instance, told me that at the time of liberation her sole property was three cows, but when the cooperative was organized in 1956 she took in 284 sheep, 42 cows and 2 horses.

An interesting feature of the herding co-ops is the retention by members of private mounts; of some cattle for their own milk consumption; and of some sheep. (A Mongolian who can't go out and kill a sheep at will for his dinner, especially to entertain friends, would feel that the life was neither free nor worth living.)

Socialist reform followed the democratic reform. Mutual aid teams in agriculture began to develop in 1948 and the first agricultural cooperatives were formed in 1952. Since 1956, all cultivation has been done cooperatively. The great majority of herdsmen too have organized themselves into mutual aid teams or co-ops.

This has again led to a new situation for the large livestock owners. Once more they are finding it difficult to get anyone to look after their herds—even for hire. Everything is moving to socialism; they cannot stand out. But, as before, the government has not resorted to confiscation. Instead, it has provided a bridge for them. Big herd-owners,

if they wish, can apply for joint state-private management, as China's private businessmen and industrialists have done. One former owner near Huhehot who did this is now himself the manager of the joint stock-farm; before the liberation he had 1,000 head of livestock, he is now a partner in a business with 10,000. The second method suggested was participation in the cooperatives, which accept big owners as well as small, and pay interest on investment as well as wages for labor. The third method was an arrangement whereby the animals are entrusted for herding to co-ops, not individuals, on a contract basis (half the lambs and calves reared being given in payment).

For the lamas and big lamaseries, the way to socialism was similarly smoothed. With no temple-serfs, many lamas are themselves tending the monastery animals. If they don't wish to do this they can either sell their livestock to the co-ops or let it out on contract. In any case, the principle is that their living and religious expenses must be covered. The transition to socialism, as practiced here, does not impinge either on national or on religious customs. The principle in all camps is flexibility of method ensuring the widest unity. Every effort to get "quick results," or to automatically transfer to Inner Mongolia the experience of other places has been criticized. Just as China seeks ways forward suited to herself, so each of her areas with different characteristics is expected to apply the common policy in the special form most suited to it.

One guarantee of this in Inner Mongolia, is the training of government and party workers of local na-

tionality. Mongolians form only 12 per cent of the population of the region, but besides occupying the top posts, they constitute 30 per cent of all government personnel (this is an average, the figure in stock-breeding localities is nearer 100 per cent).

While animal husbandry is expanding, the economy of the region is becoming more varied. The key to its new progress lies in the development of modern industry. There are rich deposits of iron, coal and other minerals and the Central Government, bringing top technicians and workers from all parts of the country, is building what will be one of the main steel complexes of the nation in Paotow in the western section. A huge beet-sugar factory is already in operation. It was built with the help of technicians and is equipped with machines from the German Democratic Republic. These large-scale enterprises form part of the national plan for industrial development. It would be far beyond the present means of the regional government in investment, man power or technique, to develop these, but they will bring incalculable benefit to the people. A good many Mongolians are being trained as workers, technicians and managers for the new industries.

The regional government, on its part, is pushing local industry. It has already built many factories, including milk processing, woolen mills, leather and meat processing plants, which increase the markets and income of the herdsmen—and also some agricultural implement plants. From practically no factories, the total number has grown to 800 and the total industrial output in 1956 was 28 times that of 1946.

Industry now accounts for 27 per cent of Inner Mongolia's total production, by value.

These were among the achievements that were being celebrated in Huhehot in May. They were also apparent in the development of the city itself, which has grown from 130,000 to over 310,000 people in the past ten years. The broad popular-lined boulevards that fan out from the old core of crowded shops, houses and mosques, lead to an educational center where a new university is now going up and where three colleges—medical, veterinary and normal school—are already functioning; to the government quarter with rows of new three-storied offices and the spacious new museum building which had just opened with a comprehensive exhibition of the history and economy of the region; to the industrial area; to the shopping center with a large department store, trade union building, three-storey bookstore, and so on, and the newly laid out park with boating lake and sports stadium close by.

An instance of fundamental change is the slogans on the walls which are written in the new script now being adopted. Government officials say it will be universal in four years time and its adoption will immensely hasten the wiping out of illiteracy which was almost universal. The transition is facilitated because the same script, a modified form of the Slavic (Cyrillic alphabet) is used in the Mongolian People's Republic from whence large quantities of literature are already being imported.

The contrast of old and new was perhaps brought together most strik-

ingly at the *Nadam*—or traditional Mongolian sports tournament—on May 1st. The Mongols must be among the best horsemen in the world. Here, in a colorful display children raced as well as grown ups. One of the winners was a nine-year old girl riding bareback whose horse covered the three-mile course in 7.24 minutes. "Equestrian calisthenics" called for riders to assume a vast variety of positions seated and standing. The participants used their galloping mounts like a gymnasium bar. There was expert wrestling and archery for which Mongolia has long been famous; and competitions in throwing a kind of boomerang which is still used for hunting small game. At the end came a breathtaking obstacle race for motorcyclists in which three

girls, their pigtailed flying, took part. Pervading all was a spirit of youth and enthusiasm and an energy which is only felt in places where people have all before them.

Outside the sportsground were parked huge buses made in Hungary and other East European countries, which had helped carry the audience from the city. By the sky-blue triple-domed reviewing stand were hundreds of new cars, among which were noted 1956 models of Chryslers, Plymouths and Buicks. One wondered what enterprising American businessman had found a way to get them through the blockade all the way to Inner Mongolia. I saw an old archer, his long bow slung across his back and with ivory-tipped arrows at his waist, climb into one of these to be carried home.

TENDER CARE FOR FLOWERS

"AS WE WALKED across the garden I passed the first of many bulletin boards which, with the loud-speakers, the meetings, the street committees, the unceasing flow of persuasion, advice, admonition, and encouragement, rather than command or injunction, epitomized the whole apparatus of moral pressure, the re-molding-by group-influence, the achievement of orthodoxy and conformity. Thus is the collective mind achieved—the harnessing of six hundred million people to a single-minded purpose by creating a desire to be together. The inscription said: The People Should Have Tender Care for Their Flowers and Their Grass.

"It worked. There was no guard, no policeman. Yet not a petal was plucked, no one trod on the grass. In Peking that night and for many nights to come, I walked the unpatrolled streets, feeling that no one now locked either doors or windows because there were no thieves to fear, Marx and Lenin appeared to me not as bearded political revolutionaries, but as philosophers voicing the sententious utterances of Confucian moralists. Orthodoxy, government by self-control and a rigid moral education, order in society through conformity to a code of behavior and thinking—these were not new in China, but thousands of years old, ideals for millenniums. Marx and Lenin appeared strangely Chinese in Peking."

From an article by Han Suyin, author of the best-selling novel *Love is a Many-Splendored Thing*, in *Holiday Magazine*, June 1957, describing a visit to her native city of Peking after twenty years.

ILYA EHRENBURG

Writes on Cultural Problems

Translation by Amy Schechter

PART IV

In our June issue we printed the first half of Ilya Ehrenburg's article, "A Necessary Clarification," which appeared in two issues of Literaturnaya Gazeta for February 9 and 12, 1957. The second and final section of the article is printed below.

Like the first half, this is the first full translation to appear in English.

CARLO LEVI, the Italian writer, looking around his Moscow hotel room crammed with old-fashioned furniture, with its clutter of little vases on the what-nots and bronze paperweight on the writing table, said it took him back to his childhood days in the Piedmont.

At the Geneva Conference in the summer of 1955, and more recently at the meeting of the European Society for Culture at Venice, in rather the same way I felt I had been carried back to the Moscow of my childhood. At Geneva and at Venice highly educated individuals talked of the meaning of culture, of Joyce and existentialism and non-representational painting; but neither the citizens of Geneva nor the citizens of Venice displayed the slightest interest in these debates. The peasants of Southern Italy so excellently portrayed by Carlo Levi have not read his books. When I was in Alabama and Mississippi ten years ago, talking with the local intellectuals—physicians, lawyers, engineers — I found that books of leading Ameri-

can writers whose work mirrored Southern life, Faulkner, Steinbeck, Caldwell, were not familiar to them.

I remember the Moscow of the first years of the century very well. At sessions of the "Circle for Free Aesthetics" the talk was about Mallarme's poetry, about mystical anarchism, about anthroposophy. The ladies were deep in the novels of Przybyszewski and admired postcard reproductions of Stuck and Boecklin. I spent my childhood around the small factory in Khamovniki where my father was employed. Leo Tolstoy lived next door. The seasonal laborers at the factory knew that Count Tolstoy was a famous writer, but it is unlikely that any one of them had read his novels. Most of them were illiterate, and those who were able to read got their ideas about what was happening in the world out of the news sheet *Moskovsky Listok*.

In the Russia of those years Chekhov and Pavlov, Gorky and Scriabin, Bunin and Mechnikov, Stanislavsky and Blok were at work, and in that Russia 77 per cent of the population were illiterate.

What happened after the October Revolution? Some members of the "Circle for Free Aesthetics" went abroad; others learned the meaning of hardship and forgot about an-

throposophy. Abroad they were sure Russian culture was doomed to extinction.

At the beginning of 1923 V. I. Lenin wrote: "While we are chattering about proletarian culture and its relation to bourgeois culture, facts and figures reveal that we are in a bad way even as regards bourgeois culture." At that time, as 1920 statistics show, two-thirds of our population was still illiterate.

Thirty years later the Soviet Union decided to make the transition from obligatory elementary education to obligatory secondary education. That decision not only shows the long distance that has been traveled, but signifies a real transition to a socialist culture.

Universal elementary education, which first began to be realized in the West a hundred years ago, reflected the hopes of the 19th century. It allowed a number of talented individuals to become scholars, writers and artists. In some degree it leveled off surface differences between the educated elements at the summit of society and the illiterate and semi-literate millions. Some welcomed the change, seeing it as an earnest of progress; others thought that literate workers would be capable of achieving greater speed and precision than illiterate ones. The door had been opened, a little way, but it was difficult to get through the chink.

The sum of knowledge acquired in a German *volksschule*, and in the middle schools of England and France, differs in essence from the knowledge a graduate of our own secondary schools possesses. Because of the very nature of capitalist society the lower classes are distinct

from the upper in their inner spiritual development as well as outwardly. An Oxford student and a London longshoreman speak quite different languages. When an Italian worker gets through elementary school he can read and figure, but knows nothing at all about the masterpieces of world literature, or the history of philosophy or the laws of physics. He has not had time enough in school to acquire a love for reading; before he was grown he was already at the work bench.

The transition to compulsory secondary education is a tremendous cultural revolution. It has its source in our concept of culture as a creation of the entire people. A college student who is specializing in philology does not continue to take physics courses as he did in secondary school; the mathematics student does not return to the study of ancient history. Over and beyond the subjects they are specializing in, their general knowledge is determined by the knowledge already acquired while still in secondary school.

The young person who goes to work in a plant and his schoolmate who enters the university have the same general education; our students, it should be borne in mind, finish secondary school at 18, by which age they have had time to acquire intellectual discipline, a love for reading and a capacity for critical thinking.

In our country a book has become an essential object. At the readers' conferences organized by our district libraries, readers of many kinds take the floor: a mechanic follows a student, a woman textile worker follows a woman physician.

It is possible for them to carry on discussions with one another, they are not separated by the gulf dividing the intellectuals from the people in western lands.

We all extol the art of ancient Hellas. In the Golden Age of Athens, for each free citizen there were nine slaves. The slaves were the guarantors of prosperity, leisure, and the blossoming of Athenian culture. The same situation obtained in India in the time of Kalidasi and the Temple of Ellore. Racine wrote his tragedies for a small circle of aristocrats. In those days *gods* men lived a twilight semi-primitive life in order that a hundred might believe and doubt, rest and struggle, think and love. Soviet society was the first to draw the whole people into the orbit of cultural life.

We all understand how the process of spreading culture over a wide area at first operates at the expense of its depth. A person who is just beginning to read books does not fully understand all of the psychological subtleties, the profundity of thought, the wonderful artistry of *War and Peace* or *The Red and the Black*. Reading, just as the appreciation of painting or music, demands an answering creativeness, and such creativeness is bound up with the general level of cultural development.

Taste is formed slowly. Talking with readers in the twenties and thirties, I often heard naive and over-simplified opinions. Even during the first Writers' Congress some authors confessed that they were disturbed by the primitivity quite a large part of the reading public displayed.

That was over twenty years ago.

Those were years of grief and hope, work and reflection. Today it is not the writers who are alarmed at the primitivity of their readers, but the readers who bitterly deride the primitivity of some of our current fiction and drama.

Now I shall venture into another field—architecture. Many of our houses are in an eclectic style. In their efforts to achieve the decorative, some of our architects revealed neither taste nor sense of proportion; they failed to take into consideration the spirit of our times. Why did this happen? In the twenties the constructivists were the dominant force in Soviet architecture. Many factors contributed towards their failures. At that period highgrade building materials were in short supply, and the barer an object the better its material must be—cheap cigarette cases and little boxes are always loaded with decoration. After only a few years the houses put up by the constructivists in Novosibirsk or Sverdlovsk were cracked and patched all over. It must also be said that many architects built houses the way manifestoes and declarations of principles are often written, correct principles being carried to absurd lengths.

The houses had a dismal air, people called them "coffins." The artistic taste of the public was poorly developed at the time, thus for some years architecture of the eclectic, much-ornamented type maintained its hold. Now, however, a healthy reaction has set in. What has happened is not merely that the government has condemned certain buildings as utilizing space uneconomically, but that the people have matured, grown more exacting, they

want architecture with cleaner lines, more closely related to the present.

We must keep in mind the fact that we are living in a highly creative society. Everyone reads our books, but that "everyone" is a spiritually more richly endowed individual, more perceptive, more exacting, than many readers of privileged circles in the West.

We too have many levels of general and especially of aesthetic development. But I do not believe that literature or art can be marked off into zones—for the connoisseur and for the rest. Every writer, every artist, wants to be understood and accepted by everybody.

I remember very well how people laughed when Mayakovsky read his "Man" at the Polytechnic Museum. Now we even have a Mayakovsky Square. But clearly, the evolution of theme, image and form in poetry cannot stop with Mayakovsky. The symphonies of Shostakovich are more difficult to apprehend than popular songs out of films, but this does not mean that complex music lies outside of the world of people's culture. It must be acknowledged that some of our writers and artists take the line of least resistance, as if striving to nurture bad taste. But in addition to mediocre novels, our readers have had Alexei Tolstoy and Gorky and Sholokhov; and in addition to ostentatious canvases at exhibitions they have been able to view all the treasure of the Hermitage and our other museums.

The growth of our society is beginning to outstrip the growth of our literature. I say this with profound conviction. I often have occasion to attend readers' conferences and I receive many letters from

readers. Workers, students, engineers, housewives discuss books more interestingly, with more insight, than many critics. They all demand a literature more significant, more complex, deeper.

It is not a question of individual works nor of the statistics of talent; not a question of whether or not a new Leo Tolstoy has been or will be born. It is rather the general character of our literature that is involved.

When Chekhov was living, people read other writers too—Potapenko, Boborykin, Barantsevich, Skitalets and many other mediocrities. It is true the better part of the readers understood there was no comparison between Potapenko and Chekhov, Skitalets and the young Gorky; but literature as a whole did correspond to the demands of society. Writers, even those who were utter mediocrities, did throw some light on questions of interest to readers of *Russkoye Bogatstvo* or *Russkaya Mysl*. In these days the Soviet reader often lays down the book he has been reading feeling dissatisfied; it has been no help to him in gaining a better understanding of himself and those around him, has failed to put into words the things he is feeling or to provide answers to the questions plaguing him.

Why the urgent discussions we hear in connection with our theater? Basically the rise in the demands of the audience. Naive plays in which the denouement is obvious from the first moment the curtain goes up, possessing neither depth of characterization, lofty ideas nor dramatic skill, today no longer satisfy our audiences. Our directors and our actors cannot rest satisfied with

what has already been accomplished. No time of solstice ever comes in any art in any period to any artist: life for the artist either waxes or wanes. No one can live on credit accumulated by splendid successes won in the past.

Every foreigner visiting our country remarks on the important place the theater occupies in Soviet life. The audiences' love of the theater imposes heavy responsibilities on our playwrights.

No less intense is the controversy now going on among the artists. This controversy cannot be explained away as some of the press has tried to do, contemptuously, by assuring the reader that the passionate character the controversy has taken on is attributable, in some instances, to personal attacks made against certain individual artists; that in other instances it is attributable to our painters wanting to imitate foreign painting; and in still others, to insufficient understanding of Marxist philosophy on the part of our youth. No, the controversies among our artists are born of the spiritual growth of the people attending the exhibitions; of the artists' feeling of responsibility, of dissatisfaction. And, I venture to say, the dissatisfaction with himself and his comrades the artist feels, is the leaven without which art has never progressed.

Our failures in literature or in art in fact spur us on rather than holding us back. They are explained by our greatest and most indisputable success—the spiritual growth of our people. For today frankness compels us to state that unless our literature, theater and painting begin to break away from everything impeding our

advance, than we may find ourselves trailing behind the people we are working for, our thoughts and feelings on a lower plane than theirs.

PART V

Three years ago Academician Sobolev wrote in *Pravda*: "The mortal enemy of all progress and science is dogmatism; its substitution for genuine scientific investigation invariably results in establishing the proposition, the dogma. In our scientific circles this method is still far from being eliminated."

These words are not obsolete today; they are relevant not only to the situation obtaining among scientists about which Academician Sobolev was speaking, but to the situation among our writers and our artists as well. Dogmatism is contrary and hostile to our socialist view of the world.

When our western opponents write about an unsuccessful Soviet novel they solemnly declare: "See what socialist realism leads to!" When this sort of pronouncement comes from persons hostile to socialism it is natural enough. But I find it difficult to understand why some people who maintain the socialist world outlook attack socialist realism. The Polish critic, Tieplicz, claims that failures in Soviet literature are due to its following the path of socialist realism. It seems to me that in arguing along such lines he is taking the road to scholasticism; and, fighting against dogmatism, becomes dogmatic himself.

Tieplicz, in the same manner as some western men of letters, assures us that Soviet literature was stronger and richer before the first Soviet

Writers' Congress when the concept of socialist realism first found definition. I said earlier that we put out some excellent books also in the years following the first Congress; I now add that it is also true that prior to the First Congress, we had our greater and our lesser writers, courageous writers and opportunists, trail-blazers and imitators.

At the same literary evenings where Mayakovsky appeared, writers of feeble verse also held forth, striving to substitute a manufactured frenzy for the talent they lacked. Yessenin was surrounded by trashy sycophants. In *Krasnaya Niva* [where Yessenin's poetry appeared] there were scores of colorless stories.

I am amazed to see how glibly people judge great cultural phenomena, influenced by what are often only transient moods. Last summer I heard one of the Soviet critics advance a totally unjustified line of reasoning in regard to our literary past: all of a sudden it seemed to him that up to now there had been nothing, and that everything must now be started from the ground up again. Several months went by. Page four—the foreign news page in our papers assumed a gloomy tinge; and straightway another critic comes out with the declaration that up to now everything in our literature was good, but now suddenly everything is bad.

This is not a caricature. Recently in *Literaturnaya Gazeta* I read a lengthy article by the critic Zelinsky about the excellent anthology, *A Day's Poetry*, a volume which was a delight to every lover of verse. In his article Zelinsky wrote—italicizing the words—that he saw in the anthology “a weakening of the feel-

ing for the contemporary.” In Zelinsky's words, the poems appearing in the anthology showed “. . . a definite trend in the direction of the descriptive lyric and the lyric ‘in general.’” But actually both in the past and the present, Soviet culture, and specifically Soviet literature, is infused with a feeling for the contemporary.

There is no point in getting nervous and beginning to rush from one side to the other. When Paul Henri Spaak [Secretary of NATO] is in a happy mood, we used to know that what we needed then was civic valor, steadfastness and an implacable attitude in relation to the capitalist world. When Spaak is angry, however, we know that Soviet poetry stands in need of lyricism, that the Soviet reader cannot be content with civic verse alone. This sort of careening from one extreme to the other is something I note not so much in literature as in writing about literature.

I return to the problem of socialist realism. Tieplicz's error lies in the fact that he sees socialist realism as a tendency in art, whereas it is in fact, an approach to life, which can bestow clarity of vision on the artist or writer, but which must not hinder the development of diversity in artistic trend, genre, form.

What is needed is the ability to separate the concept of socialist realism from the misuse of the words. If a critic wanted to slander a landscape by Saryan or a still life by Konchalovsky, in years past, he would insist that their painting went counter to the ideas of socialist realism, comparing them unfavorably with flashy, oleograph-style portraits in which there was neither socialist

perception of the world nor reality. Sometimes the same sort of thing could also be observed in articles dealing with literature. For some critics there were only two methods of approach—the book awarded a prize they hailed as a masterpiece of socialist realism; the work they disliked they treated as if it were a criminal act, charging the author with breaching every principle of socialist realism. All of which demonstrates that it is not our world outlook that is wrong, but the dogmatic, the bureaucratic interpretation of that outlook.

World outlook never has predetermined either the framework within which the artist depicts the world or his method. Fra Angelico, Uccello and Masaccio were not only contemporaries, but also men of one world outlook which we may define as a peculiar blend of the still vital religious mood of the Middle Ages with the first critical estimates reached by humanism. But how distinctive the work of each of these masters, what vast differences exist between the touching madonnas of Fra Angelico, Masaccio's women who are woman incarnate, and the raging horsemen of Uccello!

Does *Peter the Great* by Alexei Tolstoy resemble *Kyukhlyu* [a noted novel based on Pushkin's life] by Tynianov, Babel's *Red Cavalry* resemble Fadeyev's *Rout*, or the poems of Tvardovsky the poems of Martynov? And yet every one of these works is today without demur accounted a work of socialist realism.

Some western writers claim Soviet literature is bad because it is tendentious. I am uncertain whether there is more of fatuousness or of hypocrisy in these charges. Tenden-

tiousness is passion, and passion has always dwelt in authentic art. *The Divine Comedy* or Stendahl's *The Black and the Red* are not only tendentious, the flame of political struggle is in these works, and yet they have withstood the test of time. If the artist loves his heroes, if he is firm in his devotion to the idea which inspires him, then he will be immutably tendentious. So-called "pure art" is far from being pure, it too is filled with a tendentiousness of its own, drawing into himself, the artist renounces the struggle for the great human values. No, it is not tendentiousness that diminishes the stature of some of the work of our artists, but coldness of spirit, lack of real inspiration, contempt for human feelings as well as for the laws of art.

The fable is an entirely worthy form of literary creation, and frequently, as we know, points a moral. But it is incorrect to write novels and plays according to the fable formula, manifesting above all, a lack of respect for the reader, a fear lest he fail to grasp the author's idea at the very first glance. Reaching the end of this sort of book or leaving the theater, the reader says to himself: "How stupid that author is, that isn't at all the way Tolstoy or Chekhov wrote. . . ."

Children read fables with more enthusiasm than adults do. Many of our books which are meant for adults are written with a deep conviction that the reader is a child. Some of the blame for this lies at the door of our criticism, which lags behind literature, and what is still worse, behind life.

Some critics have an extremely naive idea of the influence exerted

on our Soviet people by a work of art. They believe that if an ideal workingman is portrayed everybody will forthwith imitate him; and if a worthless character is portrayed, then all the worthless, except perhaps the altogether hopeless ones, will straightway become converted into honest workingmen.

It is a weary task to try arguing with these critics—one wants to say to them: come out, at last, from your studies and talk with living beings; you are not surrounded by fifth graders but by a mature and wise people, a people which is in the vanguard of humanity, a people which is toiling and struggling, suffering and rejoicing.

In approaching any work of art this type of critic feels compelled to separate the characters into two categories—the positive and the negative. If then the positive hero reveals many negative traits, the critics are displeased. If the negative characters show certain good traits, the critics are outraged—the proper order of things has been subverted. They never think about those things which separate our present fifties from the past twenties. Thirty years ago, the class struggle was going on in our land; there were people who had been formed in a capitalist society and wanted to weaken the socialist system, who were real enemies. A different situation exists today: during the years of the war, during the postwar years of reconstruction, our people demonstrated their unity, their steadfastness and spiritual strength. But the idea that conflict, contradictions, struggle, had disappeared from our life, was of course wrong and harmful. Everything had become more complex.

The struggle between the future and the past, the lofty and the base, still continues in the minds and the hearts of millions of people.

Every day we see around us a host of contradictions. An efficient manager is criminally indifferent to the well-being of his workers; an engineer and inventor continues to hold to the family code of the Middle Ages in his private life; a man who showed a truly daring spirit in battle now behaves like a servile coward in relation to his chief.

The duty of the writer is to show us not how machines are constructed, but the inner world of the man who runs the machine; and the writer who has an honest desire to picture the contemporary Soviet hero cannot possibly limit himself to two colors—white or black; life demands a different, an immeasurably richer palette.

Many of the critics make me think of laboratory technicians, checking the composition of wine: is it sweet enough, is the degree of acidity too high? They never cease worrying about correct balance being maintained in each and every book. If the author describes a bureaucrat, then it is absolutely mandatory upon him to think up an honest worker to counterpose, who, supported by the collective, carries on a struggle against this petty bureaucrat. If he depicts a hack writer, he must be shown setting obstacles in the road of a selfless artist. If frivolity is the distinguishing characteristic of the woman in a novel, her friend has to be a model of virtue.

This sort of criticism has a crippling effect on the young author, especially when the criticism is directed to work still in manuscript.

Under its impact the young author who has written a truthful story about a hack writer and has failed to add the figure of a selfless artist, decides, after receiving his tenth rejection slip that it is incumbent on him to listen to his mentors' "good advice," and himself is transformed into a hack writer.

Is it necessary to insist that the artistic individuality of a writer determines not only the genre of his works, but also the range of the subjects they deal with? The balance about which some critics keep ranting may exist in literature in the aggregate, but not in each individual work. But let the writer focus his attention on the somber aspects of life, and the critics forthwith attack him for distorting reality. Such critics constantly play the ever-vigilant role of either fussy nurse or guardian entrusted with the education of the young. They are afraid that perhaps someone reading a novel which has a callous director of an Institute in it may suddenly take it into his head that all directors are like that. To such critics, I wish to repeat what I said to some of the cultural workers of the West: You see the things which have been created in our country—consider the creators. These are not children but people of mature stature, spiritually indomitable.

By attempting to "balance" the bright and the dark sides of life, an author, without willing it, sins against his artistic conscience, shatters the basic conception of his work, and violates his integrity; and all this because he is afraid they will accuse him either of "lacquering" his work—or, as is more often the case—of "traducing Soviet reality."

The writers Nekrassov, Chernyshevsky and Saltykov-Schedrin were all contributors to the same periodical—*Sovremennik* (The Contemporary)—during the same period. Could anyone possibly have demanded of Nekrassov that he portray the world of the revolutionary with the spiritual completeness of a Chernyshevsky, or reproach Saltykov-Schedrin for not creating outstanding Russian women?

We are right to laugh at Hollywood films with their mandatory "happy ending." But, to speak bluntly, in our country as well novels appear with artificially tacked on endings where every conflict is felicitously resolved. But the truth is that conflicts do exist which in actuality have not yet been resolved. Exploring these conflicts in our writing may, perhaps, bring their solution nearer. The author, however, concedes the point demanded, fearing that his book will not be published unless he puts in the happy ending.

We often hear today about the necessity of carrying on a struggle against the administrative approach to literature. Much has already been accomplished along these lines, but by far not all that has to be done. The editors of certain periodicals treat manuscripts, especially those by young authors, with needless suspicion. Some editors and publishers, afraid to issue a certain work, but still not quite making up their minds to reject it, come to a crafty but not very wise decision: to print only a small edition of the "doubtful" work. The purpose is not to check on how readers will receive the book, but automatically to limit the number of its readers. Obviously those who follow this course have no

understanding of the democratic nature of our society nor of the fact that ours is a people's culture.

The administrative approach sometimes is expressed in the evaluation of books on publication. It will be recalled that nine years ago the Writers' Union held a discussion of the story *Smoke of the Fatherland* by [Constantin] Simonov. All the writers present discussed the story in favorable terms. But some days later an article appeared in *Kultura i Zhizn* (Culture and Life) sharply critical of *Smoke of the Fatherland*, and incidentally, of Fedin and Ehrenburg who had liked it.

The Writers' Union also carried on a discussion of Panova's novel, *Seasons of the Year* in the spring of 1954, almost everyone praising it. Some months later one of our central organs carried an article with an exactly opposite estimate of the Panova novel. Not long ago writers carried on a discussion of the work of some of the young writers and poets. In their analysis all of those participating emphasized the valuable traits of the books. Suddenly, however, a number of articles began appearing which concentrated exclusively on negative aspects of novels or poems by various of these young authors. Here again, as in the case of *Smoke of the Fatherland* and *Seasons of the Year*, there was no real discussion. My view is that discussion of books should be carried on through a genuine exchange of opposing viewpoints, and that whether a book is good or not should not be decided by administrative fiat.

In other fields of art, the same thing is also evident. In painting,

quite surprisingly, a campaign was launched against Impressionism. I say "surprisingly" because Impressionism belongs to an earlier period in the world of art: the works of the Impressionists long since have occupied a secure place in all the museums of the world, including our own.

Arguments about Impressionism were understandable 90 years ago when Zola was passionately defending the then new trends in painting from the upholders of academicism and romanticism. But at this stage of things no one can possibly speak seriously about imitating Impressionism, just as no one can seriously deny that there are things today's artist can learn from the Impressionists. Polemics launched against artists who take a positive view of the paintings of the French masters of the 19th century have the ring not of creative discussion on an important historical phase, but of the cantankerous chiding of a pedantic teacher. It went so far that *Soviet-skaya Kultura* ran a feuilleton attacking one of the people who somewhere or other wrote something or other favorable to Impressionism, in the tone we use only for disturbers of the public peace.

Possibly one of the pious devotees of dogmatism will say: "Are you not in actual fact denying the role of the Party in giving guidance to our literature?" The answer is No. What I reject, comrade, is your mechanical, oversimplified understanding of every great idea. For example, "social command" you understand simply in terms of a publishing house or an editorial board commanding a story or a poem; but the concept of social command is much more

complex. Carrying out the social command does not mean turning out books according to the instruction of some certain editor on some certain theme; it means to live the life of the people, to be with the people, to answer the questions which are agitating them and to illumine their way forward. The Party in our country gives leadership to all the nation's activities; but the character of that leadership varies in accordance with the character of those activities. In the case of a plant fulfilling its plan, precise directives, fixed dates, facts and figures can be applied. In the case of a scientist working on problems to improve industrial production, setting precise time limits is impossible; all that can be done is to indicate that some specific problem has to be studied. The physicist, mathematician or biologist may work on their own initiative, their labors then finding practical application in production or in agriculture.

Literature, the arts, cannot by their very nature tolerate administrative measures. In our country the writer takes his inspiration from the life of the people, and in this lies the primary and basic meaning of the Party's guiding role in relation to literature. The writer takes an active part in building communism, even if his work for it goes on entirely at his writing table. The life of the Party and the life of the Soviet people are tightly interwoven; the Twentieth Congress of the Party was an event touching the life of the whole nation. Answering the comrade who put the tricky question to me (as to whether my approach means rejecting Party leadership in

literature) I say that since the Twentieth Congress things have become harder for you, easier for literature. What I object to is not the Communist orientation of our literature, but the administrative approach to it, some of the manifestations of which I have touched on.

The writer must live the life of the people, pose problems of social import, throw light on psychological processes which still need clarification, keeping in advance of his readers. He should not make a practice of transferring the content of the latest press dispatches to his novel, play or poem. The writer should take part in building society, in the development of its culture, in the spiritual growth of Soviet man. This he can accomplish by revealing the inner world of his hero so truly and profoundly that the reader will gain a better understanding of himself and of his contemporaries, will find it easier to eradicate unworthy traits springing from alien sources in his environment and in himself. The writer will be able to fulfill his task if he is keen in observing and experiencing, if he keeps in mind his calling and responsibilities.

The man of letters who regards his vocation merely as a job not only loses his authority, he becomes superfluous. Let us bear in mind the great Russian writers of the last century, and those many of us knew—Gorky, Blok, Mayakovsky. It is not given to each to be a genius, but is incumbent on each to keep on remembering his writer's obligation. Knowing how to construct a novel or play is not the major thing making a good writer (though this is, of course, also necessary); the writer must penetrate to the core of his

theme, and not merely report on what is, but foresee what is to come.

An extremely difficult task confronts the Soviet writer—to carry out the lofty duty of being a writer worthy of our people. Every writer has to cope with the sort of obstacles I have reviewed—the arrears left over from the time that is past. Since the Twentieth Congress I can rightly call these anachronisms.

The hardest part is already behind us—creating a society justifying the hopes of advanced mankind; creating, for the first time in history, a culture in which not limited circles of society alone participate. The village teacher who wrote me, along with millions of other educational workers, has done much to spread culture and give it new depths. She has sown the seed and has the right to count on the harvest.

PART VI

My article may seem rambling; it may be asked what there is in common between the anti-Soviet campaign in the West and the transition to universal secondary education in the Soviet Union; what connection between the causes for the confusion gripping some circles of left intellectuals in the West and the question of the survivals of dogmatism in our cultural life? My feeling is that all the questions I have raised are interconnected—they are the questions of our times.

My words are directed to two different groups—to our Soviet readers and to the Western intellectuals. But the Soviet reader may find it useful too to examine in a broader frame of reference those questions which are now agitating him, to

look back once again along the road he has traveled, to understand the significance of Soviet culture in relation to the fact that world attention is now centered on it, its growth calling forth hope in some, fury in others.

For the Western reader it is, I believe, of interest to read both about the successes won by Soviet literature and about its difficulties. We can speak freely about our shortcomings because, despite all our difficulties we are right in the fundamental thing: we have created an intensely humanistic people's culture in the most direct and the highest sense of the word.

In a variety of letters sent to Soviet writers by some progressive writers in Western countries who have been perturbed by recent developments, they put the following question: is the development of Soviet culture moving ahead along the road set at the Twentieth Party Congress, or are we turning aside from that road?

For those asking such questions, perhaps my article will be one of the signs that we are going forward, in spite of the sharpening international situation and the rage of enemies of socialism—that there is no retreat for us, nor are we going to be sidetracked.

It is time for Western intellectuals to relinquish their over-simplified concept of Soviet society, which for decades was pictured in other countries as either heaven or hell. We live on earth. Many difficulties beset us. But we are happy because we were the first to enter the new road—the road that will be taken by all mankind. It seems to me altogether natural that one or another

Western writer should disagree with us and criticize us on many points. If he is honest and capable of discerning more than isolated details, he must inevitably be aware of the significance of our growth for the progress of all mankind.

The events of the past months, the new sharpening of the international situation, have tended to heighten the anxiety of spirit that exists among many representative Western intellectuals. They need to understand that the road to socialism is not a flower-strewn path, that the struggle for the future, the building of the future, is hard, that it is sometimes fraught with profound shocks and deep spiritual suffering. Loyalty is not a slavish sentiment; loyalty is a lofty virtue. It is linked to a measure of self-restraint both in the relations between men and in the relations of men to society. This self-restraint is dictated by reason and conscience, by an understanding of the need for taking into consideration the sacrifices of the people and their hopes.

Individual rebellion or a manifesto, even one drawn up by the noblest group of men of letters, cannot be set over against the world of profit and spiritual stagnation. It is possible to be for socialism or against it, there is not a "third force," a third road, a third destiny.

Exactly fifty years ago, in my

teens, I attended my first underground meeting of Moscow workers. I cannot draw a straight line from that far-off day to the present. I often wandered far afield in my youth, mine was a circuitous path. But now I see its direction, understand what I was seeking, what I wanted. Perhaps it is because I remember my earlier wanderings that I do not want to pass judgment on those writers of the West who now, in the grip of anxiety, look around uncertainly. What I want is only that they succeed in separating the main thing from all that hinders them from seeing it clearly.

I am convinced that without fail—and if not tomorrow then the day after tomorrow—we shall come together with those writers of the West who like Vercors and Carlo Levi believe the most important thing for them is the "search for truth."

In your youth you often say to yourself: perhaps it would be better to lay away what you have written in the table drawer, think it over a little, look around a little, wait a little. At my age, putting things aside is difficult. The times, too, tell you you must not keep silent. The times are hard, the responsibility of each of us is great. We shall not take a single step backward—the soul of our people is the pledge.

WHY NOT?

"WHY NOT?"—"Wide possibilities to see the Soviet Union for yourself." Said a Soviet travel agency poster in the Soviet exhibition at the Oklahoma Semi-Centennial Fair held this June in Oklahoma City.

The first Soviet trade exhibit since the war featured television and radio sets, canned good, tobacco, furs, and the unique Russian "turbodrill" for use in drilling oilwells.

A 90-minute color film of the Bolshoy ballet performing "Romeo and Juliet" was also shown, as well as another film entitled, "Atomic Energy for Peaceful Aims."

EVALUATION OF SOVIET SCIENTISTS

IN ITS ISSUE for February 1957, *Fortune* magazine published an article based upon interviews with thirty-six American and British scientists who have visited Soviet laboratories within the past two years. We print below excerpts, touching only a few of the many scientific fields covered.

In general the 36 scientists agreed that: "It [Soviet science] is good—in some branches, extremely good; in some branches, respectable; in others, mediocre but improving. . . . Taken as a whole, the achievements and capabilities of Soviet science are still below the level of the West—but not so far below as many Westerners might suppose (or hope). . . . In the purely theoretical fields, Soviet scientists are as good as any in the world, and in fact a pronounced emphasis on theory dominates all of Soviet science."

WINDOW ON WORLD SCIENCE

"The Institute of Scientific Information, established in Moscow in 1953, is the Soviet scientists' window on the world. This organization systematically abstracts and distributes throughout the USSR about 8,000 journals, including 1,400 from the U.S., 800 from Britain, even three from Madagascar.

"A British biologist who saw the institute's operation describes it as follows: 'When a journal comes in, all the papers in it are put on filing cards and each is allocated to a senior scientist—not a hack—to abstract. If the abstractor cannot read the language, a complete translation is quickly provided him. In general biology they are publishing 100,000 abstracts a year. No other agency in the world is doing this job. I wish to God I could read Russian.'"

MATHEMATICS

"Today Soviet mathematicians rank among the world's best. They excel in probability theory, topology (the study of the properties of space), gas dynamics (applicable to aircraft and missiles), and analysis (the study of mathematical expressions). . . . Although Soviet mathematics is heavily theoretical, the work of outstanding applied mathematicians has been very significant. It actually underlies much of Soviet progress in modern physics, particularly nuclear physics."

The article illustrates the quality of Soviet mathematics by speaking of N. N. Bogoliubov, a pure mathematician who has turned his attention to theoretical physics: "Last September he dazzled an audience of theoretical physicists meeting in Seattle, Washington. His paper dealt with a new technique for attacking the deepest and thorniest problems of nuclear theory—a technique that promises to succeed where all other mathematical methods have failed. . . . At Seattle, with an analysis that left his hearers gasping, he provided a rigorous proof that the new technique was sound. 'Bogoliubov,' says J. Robert Oppenheimer, 'is the hottest thing out of Russia in my field that I have seen yet.'"

PHYSICS

Fortune lists a Soviet theoretical physicist as one of the ten top in the world:

"Lev D. Landau, forty-six, who has probably made major contributions to a wider range of theoretical problems than anyone else now living. He is an authority on high-energy physics, low temperatures, the solid states, and even hydrodynamics. After the war, it was discovered that he had published openly in 1941 the basic

theory of a hydrodynamic phenomenon that two years later was the subject of a secret British publication, believed at the time to be an original contribution."

ATOMIC WEAPONS

On the disputed question of priority in the discovery of nuclear weapons the article has this to report:

"The leading Soviet atomic weaponeer is Igor Vasilevich Kurchatov. He has had an international reputation since 1935 when, at the age of thirty-two, he made a basic discovery in the field of artificial radio-isotopes. . . . In 1939, Kurchatov and his associates published some of the earliest theoretical studies of nuclear chain reactions—both slow and explosive. His group already found that each splitting uranium nucleus releases between two and four neutrons and that chain reactions were, therefore, conceivable. In 1940 the Kurchatov group was the first to report that uranium fissions spontaneously. In short, according to a recent report by the Rand Corporation, Soviet physicists through mid-1941 were as far along as any group of scientists in the world. . . . The U.S. has never set the record straight, officially, but it is now widely believed that the USSR beat the U.S. to a practical thermonuclear weapon. . . . The Russians, according to all the evidence, must have incorporated lithium (a compound extremely easy to come by, replacing the rare isotope of hydrogen known as tritium, which had to be produced at a tremendous cost in an atomic pile) in their very first thermonuclear test—in 1953."

The article goes on to point out that last year Igor Kurchatov startled his audience at Harwell, the great British atomic center, by explaining quite openly the work he and his colleagues were doing on thermonuclear energy for peacetime power. It was later revealed that U.S. physicists were engaged in doing work along very much the same lines.

CHEMISTRY

"Last year's Nobel Laureate in chemistry, who shared the prize with England's Sir Cyril Hinshelwood, is a world pioneer in this field (reaction kinetics). . . . The work that brought Nikolai Semenov his Nobel prize was actually done in the mid Twenties. He was the first to explain the chain-reaction mechanism underlying virtually all explosive processes. . . . When Semenov first proposed such a mechanism for chemical reactions, some of the world's leading chemists hooted."

MEDICINE

"The Russian concentrate on vaccines containing weakened strains of live virus. Perhaps their most original contribution is a flu vaccine that is freeze-dried to a powder and snuffed up the nostrils. It has been administered to some 12 million people, and there has been no major flu-epidemic in Russia for the last two years." (See account in *New World Review* for April 1956.)

The article quotes Dr. William B. Scoville, chief neuro-surgeon at Hartford Hospital, who last summer saw in Moscow a brain-tumor operation performed without a knife. "It was like science fiction. Sound waves are geared up to such high frequency that you can't hear them. They put the cylinder against the patient's head. It actually cuts the brain and can be used as a knife, though acting like electric current. This method is brand new."

Fortune concludes in some bewilderment that a country "run," as the authors put it, by ex-engineers, Khrushchev, Bulganin and Malenkov, should so value basic research rather than practical application, quoting Dr. M. H. Trytten, scientific-manpower expert of the U.S. National Academy of Sciences: "Somehow a system of government based on materialism has found a way to bestow its highest rewards on men who deal in abstract ideas."

AMERICAN BOOKS IN THE USSR

AN EXHIBITION of American books opened in Moscow in May. More than 1,500 volumes were sent by 50 publishing houses and 21 university presses.

Dr. Du Bois' New Novel

reviewed by MURRAY YOUNG

THE ORDEAL OF MANSART, by W. E. B. Du Bois. Mainstream Publishers, New York, 1957. 316 pp. \$3.50.

"There comes a time when people get tired of being trampled over by the iron feet of oppression. There comes a time when people get tired of being plunged across the abyss of exploitation where they experience the bleakness of nagging despair. There comes a time when people get tired of being pushed out of the glittering sunlight of life's July and left standing in the piercing chill of an Alpine November. So in the midst of their tiredness these people decided to rise up and protest against injustice. As a result of their protest more than one billion three hundred million of the colored peoples of the world are free today."

From an address by the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. at the First Annual Institute on Non-Violence and Social Change, Montgomery, Ala., Dec. 1956.

THE ORDEAL OF MANSART is the first volume of a three-part novel by the great Negro scholar, W. E. B. Du Bois. The completed novel—to be called *The Black Flame*—is to tell the story of the Negro people in this country from 1876 to the present time. This volume brings the story to the First World War.

The immediate scene is the Reconstruction period to 1916, but the wider background against which the characters work out their lives is the oppression of all the colored peoples of the world.

Because he sees his characters' lives as bound so inextricably to the voracious drive of imperialism, Dr. Du Bois by no means stays within the bounds of the conventional novel. The reader must constantly shift his attention from the brooding events involving the leading characters in the foreground to the play of wider national and international conflicts, which ultimately determine the direction and final resolution of these events.

Thus the immense vistas that open from the specific scenes in various small towns in Georgia and, towards the end of the book, in Atlanta in particular, provide the necessary background for the story Dr. Du Bois outlines. Unfortunately too few readers, on the basis of their own knowledge or experience, will be able to grasp completely all the historical material concentrated in the course of the novel. But any reader who gives his full attention will find himself profoundly stirred and his understanding of American history greatly enriched. He will hear the voice of a man whose own life-span encompasses the climactic years he is describing, a man whose whole career has been an attempt to understand the significance of the world-wide oppression of the colored peoples and to give clarity and guidance to their struggle for liberation.

Dr. Du Bois has chosen as his central character a Negro whose awakening to the meaning of his tragic circumstances is slow and painful. His life exemplifies all the traps, false roads and savage betrayals that have been the lot of the Negro people in this country. Born on the night of his father's lynching, Manuel Mansart gropes his way agonizingly through the endless obstacles that everywhere surround him. We leave him at the end of this volume still uncertain, still bewildered, but coming in contact at last with individuals whose greater understanding and wider experience may help him find an answer to his problems.

Dr. Du Bois has freely chosen real people from the period for inclusion in his book. This direct use of historical personalities throws a searching light on various political movements, social reforms and educational programs that very much deepens our grasp of both American history and the drive of colonial oppression on a world scale.

The reader closing this volume impatiently looks forward to the two concluding volumes which will bring the story of

Mansart and his children through the first half of the twentieth century—which may well be remembered longest as the century which saw the emergence of the colored peoples (by far the largest majority of the world's population) into the "glittering sunlight of life's July" after the long and bitter winter of imperialism.

20th Century Music

A Review by

SIDNEY FINKELSTEIN

OLIN DOWNES ON MUSIC. A selection 1906-1955. Edited by Irene Downes. Simon and Schuster, 473 p. \$5.00.

THIS is to me the best picture of twentieth century music in book form. It is not a history of course. It is a selection of the reviews and newspaper columns on music written by Olin Downes over a period of fifty years as a practising music critic. But I can think of no other book in which the leading figures of our age in music, such as Richard Strauss, Jean Sibelius, Ralph Vaughan Williams, Igor Stravinsky, Ernest Bloch, Sergei Prokofiev, Maurice Ravel, Arnold Schoenberg, Dmitri Shostakovich, Heitor Villa-Lobos, come so well to life in terms of their first appearance on the music scene, their arrival at maturity, and in some cases their decline. Also in its pages appear many of the great concert artists of the period, such as De Pachmann, Hoffman, Hubermann, Szigeti, Rachmaninoff, Brailowsky, Hess, Koussevitzky, Beecham.

The portrayals are so penetrating because Downes was one of those rare and true critics who upheld for himself as a writer on music, the same standards that he unconsciously applied to composers and performers. I say "unconsciously" because he avoided anything that sounded like an "aesthetic," a slogan, or a theory of what music should be and how it should be written.

He felt that to attach himself to any such "aesthetic" might ally himself with one musical camp or another, and so prejudice his objectivity. But the standards

he applied rose out of his own character as a human being. What his reviews constantly ask of musicians is that they possess integrity and heart. And these two qualities are basic to his own writing. He refused to praise anything shoddy, or lacking in integrity, no matter how well publicized, how surrounded by glamor, how technically sensational, how impressively acclaimed by schools and coteries. And at the same time he brought to bear upon music the breadth of views of a man fully conscious of the great troubles and problems that beset his fellow men.

Accordingly, some passages in this book take on—in spite of himself, one may say—a combative character. It was not that he propagandized for any one composer or group of composers. He was keenly interested in anything that offered itself as a new or experimental music. But increasingly as such trends developed, he became aware of their own narrowness. And more important, he became conscious of the fact that some such trends, waving the banner of "freedom of musical expression," were turning into a dictatorship of their own. Their proponents arrogantly denied the right of other, more humanist-minded composers, even to consider themselves as belonging to the twentieth century. Downes could find himself deeply moved by a composer with whose practises he had little sympathy. Thus he wrote of Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire*, "the listener is plunged into a particular world of sensibility, in which everything but its truth disappears. . . . That is a result proceeding fundamentally from the integrity and scruple of Mr. Schoenberg as man and artist." But at the same time, his deep appreciation of composers of quite a different cast, such as Sibelius, would occasionally take the form of a polemic against the dictatorial advocates of music as "pure form."

"Why should music be construed to mean anything? What have a composer's race, past, environment or individual temperament to do with his creations? Every thoughtful and educated person knows that great art is international, and great music—just music. What is music, then? Music is a wonderful arrangement of tones in certain positions and patterns which, for reasons we have not successfully analyzed, gives us a certain aesthetic pleasure—that

is, if we are really cultivated people. We then derive from it, as the Greek philosopher said, a gentlemanlike joy. This orderly and symmetrical arrangement of the tones takes our mind off the real and urgent problems of existence and lifts us above the human equation and the fairy story in art. But Beethoven knew better, and this knowledge is what gives his music universality. Wagner knew it, too, and likewise the youthful Sibelius."

To Olin Downes, this approach rose not out of any desire to impose on music something that did not properly belong to it, but out of true respect for music, as something more than a pastime, or a shoemaker's craft. Thus he showed deep interest, as few other American critics did, in the movements in the Soviet Union to create a music that would respect the great classic traditions of the art, and would also be truly popular, in its breadth of emotion and responsiveness to life. At the same time he criticized sharply what he saw there as interferences with the freedom of composers to find their own path. He had this interest in the relation everywhere between the artist and his people, and in music as a humanist, democratic and national expression, because he saw this as also the central problem facing the growth of a flourishing and meaningful American music.

There is in his writing, as the years pass, an increasingly poignant sense of obligation to the task of nurturing every seed that might strike root in the rich and musically little-explored soil of our own country. He sought such trends everywhere; not only in the concert hall, but in musical comedy and popular song. At the same time, he never exaggerated the actual worth of an American musical work, however worthwhile a step he felt it represented. There are certainly many judgments in this book with which the reader will not agree. But these add up to little, compared to the deep and serious thought behind the judgments; judgments which he himself was always ready to alter and correct. I have no hesitation in calling this collection of review articles one of the most important books on music our country has produced. It is also one which shows to the rest of the world the best intellectual face of our own country.

British Labor

THE BRITISH LABOR MOVEMENT, 1770-1920, by A. L. Morton and George Tate. *International Publishers*. New York. 1957. 313 p.p. \$3.00.

THE BRITISH labor movement is the oldest in the world and has made decisive contributions in the course of its long history to the whole development of working class political theory.

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The authors of this study have admirably organized this crowded history into a concentrated but always clear account of the complicated development of the working class of the first industrialized country.

Their account ends in 1920 with the resurgence of the British labor movement in the post-war years. Tremendously strengthened by its struggles during the war and deeply inspired, as were the labor movements throughout the world, by the Russian revolution, it was in 1924 to take power for the first time.

1920, which saw among other important developments in the labor movement the founding of the British Communist Party, marks a significant division point between the history of British capitalism in its long period of dominance and the subsequent years of its decline in the epoch of the crisis of world capitalism.

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