MASSES & MAINSTREAM

AT THE

Soviet Writers Congress

speeches by

EHRENBURG — SHOLOKHOV
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Notes from North Carolina

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TV: Mickey Mouse Revolution

By V. H. F.

The Dreamer—*a story*

By PHILLIP BONOSKY

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AT THE SOVIET WRITERS' CONGRESS

THE Second Congress of Soviet Writers, which opened in Moscow on December 15, 1954, lasted nine days. During that time, scores of speeches and reports were made. Discussion, criticisms, rebuttals, and self-criticisms filled the hall where 738 delegates, speaking for organizations with memberships of 3,700 writers, tackled the challenge of making their literature an even more effective, more artistic expression of their lives, hopes and aspirations.

Held twenty years after the First Writers Congress, this Congress was able to cite many beautiful and talented works produced not only by leading Russian writers in the USSR, but also by many writers who arose in the sister Socialist republics which make up the multinational family of Socialist nations. At the same time, as the main reports and many speeches in the discussion show, many problems of organization, publishing, criticism and creative art remain to be tackled and solved. The rise of a highly cultured new Soviet public, numbering many millions of readers seeking the highest forms of literary art, as well as many problems arising from the clash between the new and the old in Soviet reality, were often cited in the discussion.

It is manifestly impossible for this publication to present the full reports. We have merely selected a very small portion of the Congress' speeches, choosing those whose authors are widely known in the United States, and whose statements reflected some of the conflicting viewpoints in the Congress. The Congress revealed once again the extraordinary esteem in which Soviet society holds its literature and the high demands it makes on its writers as a result of this deep love for literature and art. The entire country followed the proceedings during the nine days in the press where full texts of virtually all speeches were printed.

The weight of the Congress' thinking was against any dogmatism in the conception of Socialism realism

as a literary method and outlook, insisting that Socialist realism is no fixed scheme of ideas or practices, but a flexible method, taking in the greatest variety of styles, in a constant effort to make literature a more truthful image of reality in its development.

The Congress concluded with a fervent offer of friendship to all writers everywhere, and urged a face to face meeting in 1955 of writers from all countries, as well as closer and constant interchange of ideas and experiences. This is a plea which we most firmly believe offers to American writers an opportunity to study for themselves the enormously vital literature which this first Socialist country in the world has produced. This also opens the way for that creative and cultural interchange which can do so much to preserve the peace of the world, based as it is on the mutual respect of nations for each other's contribution to the world chorus of our common human heritage.

The Sholokhov and Ehrenburg statements are translated from the Russian, the rest from the French in the Special Writers Congress Edition of *La Nouvelle Critique* in Paris.

In our March issue we published a first-hand report on the Congress by the British novelist and critic Jack Lindsay, as well as the text of greetings addressed to the Congress by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

Speech by Ilya Ehrenburg

I HAVE frequently heard readers argue heatedly over our books not only in Moscow's universities but in remote villages on the steppes. I have often seen people distant from the boundaries of our country who were inspired and ennobled by a Soviet book. Our literature owes its birth and meaning to the people, who are building the future on the foundations of justice and humanism.

Why has the bourgeois literature of the West become so barren today? Is it that talent is extinct or that writers have become lazy there? Not at all. There are many talented and diligent writers there, but the society in which they live has little to inspire them; outstanding writers of the past described the happenings

about them, while writers now present such spiritual desolation that the author escapes like a coward into a hole that resembles a dark bomb-shelter rather than an ivory tower.

No one could suspect J. B. Priestley of sedition, and precisely for this reason I cite his indictment of the latest British literature:

"When these novels depict episodes in the life of society it seems strange and absurd. These are works which do not confine themselves simply to personal life, but the deeply intimate personal life which is confined to the bedroom and the bar. . . . About thirty years ago a strange novel by Romer Wilson was published and attracted wide attention. The novel was called *The Death of Society*. When you read the works of young writers you get the impression that this has already happened."

We may add: Indeed, the dissolution of bourgeois society has already begun, and it is here that you will find the clue to the sterility of those Western writers who have not broken with a spiritually impoverished society. It is also a clue to the world significance which has been achieved by Soviet literature.

If we were at a celebration of the 40th anniversary of the First Congress of Soviet Writers, I could probably end on this note. However, we have not met merely to add up our achievements. We must think also of what we have not yet accomplished and why, we must discuss not only past books but those which are still to be written.

We know that the problems that confronted young Soviet literature were exceptionally difficult. Our predecessors described a society which was already formed and stratified. But we have spent decades building not only cities but people. Our way of life, our thoughts and emotions were rapidly changing. And together with the people we were changing too. But now before us are no longer the dug-out foundations, but a house to live in. New times demand new creative inspiration.

SOVIET writers have given their readers many good books. Why do readers, however, often become angry as they read this or that novel in which Soviet reality is being described? It seems to me that the reason is they find neither themselves nor their contemporaries in these books.

In my opinion, too much has been said about a certain article which stated that the weakness of some books can be explained by a lack of sincerity on the part of their authors. Reactionary critics have asserted from time to time that Nekrassov also was not completely sincere. And no one, on the other hand, has disputed the sincerity of Katkov.

However, the truth about their time was told by Nekrassov, not Katkov.

We know a number of contemporary writers who write lies with complete sincerity—some because they do not have enough understanding of their contemporaries, and others because they are accustomed to seeing only two colors in a world of many hues, black and white. Writers such as these embroider their heroes externally and impoverish them spiritually; they do not lack golden colors when they portray communal living conditions; the departments in their factories resemble scientific laboratories, and collective farm clubs resemble the mansions of lords. But this gilded show-piece world is peopled with primitively conceived beings, waxen goody-goodies who have nothing in common with the complex and profound inner life of Soviet people.

A society which is developing and growing strong need not fear truthful portrayals; truth is dangerous only to the doomed.

In our literature, truthfulness does not clash with the Party spirit but is closely bound up with it. We know that great art will always be tendentious, that is, passionate. The writer is not an observer of life, he creates it. In describing the spiritual life of man he changes it. However, this influencing of readers should not be understood so simply—"Do this, and don't do that"—or "If you behave like the solid hero everyone will praise you, but if you follow the course of the villain you will inevitably be caught."

The Writers' Union has a commission for children's publications from which we have received many good books. But sometimes in reading a novel in a magazine where the writer naggingly lectures the reader right from the start, you wonder if it isn't time to set up a commission for adult writing in the Writers' Union. (Applause)

During the first ten to fifteen years after the October Revolution there were many who did not want or could not understand the principle of our Socialist society. There were open enemies as well as those who were biding their time, expecting things to come to an end. There were skeptics and indifferent people. At that time there was a struggle for the very recognition of the new system. Our society was divided then not only into the advancing and the backward but into adherents of our society and its enemies.

Since that time much has changed. Generations have grown up for whom our society is their very own, the only logical one for them. The struggle of heroism, creative inspiration, and love for the people against selfishness, indifference and stagnation, now floods the consciousness

and the hearts of very many people, and it is there that the new struggles against the remnants of the past, and it is there that good battles evil.

It stands to reason that one could set up polar opposites and write a romantic book with a hero who embodies everything that is best contrasted to a complete villain. If written faithfully and with intensity such a book has its appeal to readers, especially if they are young. But it seems to me that there also ought to be books which portray not such polar extremes but the vast world, books which reveal the thoughts and emotions of millions of Soviet people.

Soviet readers are tired of dozens of works where from the first page one can clearly see when the villain will be denounced and where the leading worker is portrayed in the style of a mediocre painter of icons. Such books educate nobody: a man with failings will not recognize himself in the villain, and those who are good but with many human weaknesses will look upon the positive hero as being outside of this world.

Writers who classify the characters of all novels in the required categories of "positive" and "negative" are themselves negative phenomena in our literature (applause); too much of the past still survives in them.

Naturally, nearly everybody now recognizes that you cannot paint a picture only in black and white. But let an author portray a good man with all his weaknesses and he will be immediately met by a writer who will cry out indignantly: "This is a slander on Soviet people." Let a writer show that a beaucrat, a hack or an idler is not an evil-doer, that there is something human about him, and the same critic or his colleagues protest: "Why is the author so forgiving towards negative characters?" Such men of letters want us at all costs to maintain a simple-minded attitude toward characters: they are afraid that the development of literature will leave them behind.

BUT what has actually happened? The readers have left many writers behind. Let us recall the First Congress of Writers. We saw before us millions of new readers. These readers were taking a novel into their hands for the first time. They were living through many things for the first time. From the beginning of the Revolution up to the years following 1930 culture was widening; it was necessary to put the people into contact with it. Certain writers could then complain of a certain lack of subtlety among their readers. Now the Soviet reader looks down upon them from a height: he sees that the characters of a novel are more straitlaced, cruder, and poorer intellectu-

ally than are the readers and their co-workers.

Our Soviet attitude to the problem of individuality is the exact opposite to that which prevails in the United States. Individualism is cultivated there, but individuality is suppressed; man is deformed by his occupation, by narrow specialization. We, on the other hand, are striving for a harmonious development of the individual. But sometimes our education proceeds more rapidly than the cultivation of feelings. All of us have met people who work well and reason correctly but who do not know how to deal in a human way with their wives, mothers, children or comrades.

I think that writers in part share some of the guilt for this; sometimes we pay too much attention to the machine rather than to the man who stands behind it. We have been called "engineers of human souls." This gives us a heavy responsibility. But often you read a story or a novel in which everything is neatly laid out—both the parts of the machinery and the production conference—as if an engineer had written the book, but where have the human souls gone?

At the time of the First Writers' Congress the Socialist reconstruction of the countryside was still a subject of wide discussion. The people were building the first giants of industry by dint of enormous labor and this enabled them to drive the invader from the homeland, and not twenty years later it enables them to make life easier and more beautiful through an abundance of the good things of life. In 1934, people abroad still spoke of us as the "Russian experiment," and Hitler, who had just come to power with the kindly cooperation of his future antagonists, figured out a plan to conquer Russia.

We live in different times today. No government in the world has as great authority as ours. Our Congress is meeting in days which are portentous for the future of Europe and of the whole world; the peoples know that the powerful and peace-loving influence of the Soviet Union can save mankind from unprecedented disaster. Today we are not alone; with us are great China, the People's Democracies and all of progressive humanity.

Culture has become profoundly rooted in our country in the past twenty years, and we are proud not only of the number of our readers but of their profound and passionate appreciation of literature. Today the entire people read literature which before was limited to circles of hundreds, or at most, thousands. And the entire people follows the work of our Congress. This puts the greatest responsibility upon us; we must do all in our power to make our litera-

ure worthy of our great people.

I have said what, in my opinion, vriters must do with the characters n their books. Now I want to say vhat the writer must do with other vriters. It is not necessary to flay vriters as an élite caste or to attack hem as mischievous school-boys.

Why have commonplace and even oubtful books been immune some-imes from any kind of criticism? Vhy does the tone of some critical rticles remind one at times of an ndictment?

Criticism is the clash of differ-ng opinions. The final judge is to-ay's reader and the reader of to-norrow. The opinions of readers ometimes differ from those of crit-cs—I have often seen this at readers' onferences.

I agree completely with Comrade imonov, when he feels sorry that ometimes some letters from readers re published and go unnoticed. 'hat's true. Many readers have sent ie copies of letters which they have ritten to *Literaturnaya Gazeta,* ob-ecting to Comrade Simonov's article in which Ehrenburg's novel, *The 'haw,* was severely condemned]. hese letters were not published, hile many letters which agreed with ie opinions of the Secretary of the 'riters' Union found their way into rint. I am glad to learn that Com-de Simonov opposed such practices. Applause)

I WELCOME an irreconcilable struggle against enemy ideology. But in my opinion critics should be very careful when they are discussing a work steeped in our Soviet ideology. We know how often even the greatest writers have been mistaken in their judgments. Goncharov called Turgenev a plagiarist, and Turgenev insisted that the name of Nekrassov was doomed to rapid oblivion. Hugo believed that Stendhal was a boring and illiterate writing-maniac, and Stendhal considered Hugo a questionable rhymster.

Why go so far into the distant past? Let's all recall the creative career of Mayakovsky and its harsh condemnation by many who later on came to praise him.

Someone may tell me that I am knocking on an open door. Everybody nowadays admits that critical evaluations are not good for all time. But this is mostly in theory. I hope that soon it will be just as true in practice.

I should have preferred not to allude to the criticism of my book contained in the report and co-report [of A. Surkov and K. Simonov]. But this could be wrongly interpreted. I definitely do not suffer from any delusions of grandeur about myself, and I know that there is much that is incomplete and not fully realized in *The Thaw,* as in some of my other books. However, I criticize my-

self for far different reasons than those picked by my critics. If I should be able to write another book I will try to make it a step forward from my last one, not a step back.

Vera Panova's novel [*A Year's Span—Soviet Literature,* May 1954] did not please Galina Nikolayeva [author of *The Harvest*]. There is nothing astonishing in that and we certainly could find a writer who doesn't like Nikolayeva's novel. But Nikolayeva and Panova are Soviet writers, devoted to the country. Nevertheless, with regard to Panova and with regard to myself, certain critics use the term "objectivism."* I don't think this accusation can be accepted. A great struggle is unfolding for the future of our people and all humanity. A book is the heart of a writer and one cannot separate the author from his work. Can one, in paying tribute to the work of a writer, single out one of his books with the statement that he nullifies in this book what he has defended during his whole life? Can one consider as indifferent observers of life people who are in the ranks of struggle and who battle for the common cause?

If he does not take part in the building of our Soviet society, if he has no passion and fire, the writer is condemned to spiritual sterility. Abroad, those who do not wish us well often accuse us of fanaticism, of lack of artistic individuality. They cannot, or will not, understand that for us the policy of the Communist Party is the road to the flowering of human values, to the triumph of humanism, and if we are devoted to the point of fanaticism, to the road which our people have taken, this in no way contradicts the teachings of our great predecessors, Pushkin, Tolstoy, Chekhov, and Gorky, who taught us to defend man.

We are all in agreement on that, but we differ in our literary judgments and how we write. We choose different characters, and these are linked to the character of the writer, to his life's experience, and to his literary method. Where is the set of rules which blueprints how we should write? Where are the scales, where are the measuring instruments which allow one to measure unmistakably which hero is typical and which is not? One can and must discuss all of this, but the discussion of a book is not a court of judgment and the opinion of this or that Secretary of the Writers' Union must not be considered as a verdict with all its dependent consequences.

Arbitrary conclusions are especially dangerous where writer-beginners are concerned. Young writers are our tomorrow, our hope. We must do everything to help them surpass us

* An attitude of aloofness on the part of the writer.

and for this we must do away with certain habits which we unfortunately still have. We can only smile bitterly when we imagine what would have happened to Mayakovsky at the start of his career had he brought his poems in 1954 to Vorovskaya Street.* (Laughter, applause)

Of course, these days Mayakovsky's name is invoked on all occasions. His name is invoked when one has to condemn a writer to whom one objects. References to the traditions of Mayakovsky are mingled with the scoldings of judges who lack moral authority and with the subjective evaluations of magazine editors and publishing houses. It is painful for Mayakovsky's contemporaries and friends to listen to all this since they have not forgotten the difficulties of his creative life.

WHY have I devoted so much time to the conditions in which we work? Because the fate of literature is indivisible from the fate of writers. Someone said: "We will help our comrades ruthlessly." In my opinion we should be ruthless to our enemies, not toward our comrades. I want to call all writers to a greater understanding of each other, to greater comradely solidarity. One of the leaders of the Writers' Union said, when he was speaking of the importance of so-called average writers, that there can be no cream without milk. To continue this rather unfortunate comparison we can also say that there is no milk without cows. (Laughter, applause). It would be helpful not to forget this.

Literature has never and nowheres occupied so high and responsible a position as it does today in our country. The Soviet state and the Party have provided us with remarkable conditions. We are not at the mercy of business-minded publishers and editors, and we have no McCarthy over us. It is up to us, the writers, to explore the best ways of doing our work. In doing this we must remember that during the past twenty years our society has grown faster than our literature. This is natural — one doesn't begin building houses with the roof. When society matures, takes form, a literature appears which fully expresses its morality, its aspirations and its passions. The writer is that kind of man who possesses talent, that inner fire, that sharp eye and acute sensibility. It is this which enables him to express the thoughts and emotions of his people. Our Soviet society is at so high a level that we can with justice envision an extraordinary flourishing of our literature.

Friends! The enemies of humanism, the enemies of progress, the enemies of the peoples, attempt to stop the march of time. They threat-

* Address of the Union of Soviet Writers.

en to drown the future in blood. With all our strength we will defend peace, and if the madmen dare to make an attempt on the hopes of all mankind they will meet a people who have not only a strong army and an advanced industry—they will meet a people who have a great heart and a great literature. (Long applause).

Speech by Konstantin Simonov

THE literature of Socialist realism is hostile to pessimism of any kind because the "mold and rust of pessimism," to use the expression of Gorky, is lack of faith in the people, while the essence of Socialist realism is unshakable faith of the people in the victory of just, Socialist relations in the world.

In the literature of Socialist realism, which in its widest sense is the literature of work and popular achievement, it is impossible to have a place for the defense of egotism in the form of affirmations of one's "priceless self" or, let us say, the poetization of passivity or admiration for one's own private scepticism.

In the literature of Socialist realism, as in all literature, the characters dispute, make mistakes, and even commit crimes; nevertheless without closing its eyes to these manifestations, the literature of Socialist realism must judge these in an unequivocal manner, basing itself on the standpoint of the people's interests.

The esthetics of the literature of Socialist realism has never demanded that the artist pass in silence, or evade the difficulties of the struggle for the future.

The temptation to look at reality through rosy glasses, any more than to delight in darkness and suffering, is foreign to Socialist realism, which has a well-defined attitude towards life and judges human actions in their relation to the people. Nevertheless, during the past twenty years of our literary life much confusion was introduced on this question. Even in several speeches at the First Congress of Soviet Writers and in many articles published subsequently there appeared statements showing an incorrect understanding of the essence of Socialist realism.

The question under discussion was put in this manner: Is Socialist realism critical, or contrary to the old critical realism, can it only affirm reality?

Explaining his conception of So-

cialist realism, Gorky wrote: "It is not enough to depict what is, it is indispensable to define what is desirable and possible." In another passage of his article entitled "Conversation with Youth," Gorky criticized those writers who did not understand 'the profound inner difference between the present and the past, and how to understand the present worthily." Gorky criticized them for having an incorrect attitude toward life so that "their attention is attracted toward negative phenomena, while they do not notice the phenomena which require support and development."

On the other hand, he spoke of critical realism as a realism "which is indispensable to us to bring into full view the survivals of the past in order to struggle against them and abolish them."

The general meaning of these statements of Gorky is clear to those who do not approach them in a dogmatic fashion but see their essence.

Nevertheless, after Gorky's articles appeared, and even at that Congress, there were some who, overlooking the general meaning of these statements, seized these formulations in a scholastic manner, particularly the imprecise and one-sided formulation of Gorky on critical realism and hastened to build on this basis a theory according to which Socialist realism could be solely a realism of affirmation as against formal realism which could only be critical. . . .

(Simonov discussed the problem of "objectivism" in literature, a tendency which he said was manifest in some of the work of Vera Panova, author of *The Train* and *A Year's Span.* Objectivism, he said, is not, as some argue, the portrayal of the good and bad sides of life and of people without any explicit judgment by the author on his characters; it is rather the failure to show how a dramatic situation arises and in what direction it will go, what has determined this or that act of a character and how this character will develop. In a word, it is to limit oneself to a mere statement.)

. . . In the center of the picture, which literature gives of our time, must be the men who are the center of our era, the men of creative labor, ordinary people who have in them something heroic. But to portray such people only in their *work,* however greatly they give of their time and strength, is to portray them one-sidedly. For labor is the center of their life, but it is not their whole life. Labor is the new content of their life, but not its entire content. They cannot conceive of their life without creative labor, but neither can they see it without love, without friendship, without motherhood, without all the other joys and difficulties of life.

. . . The primacy of social interests over personal interests is linked to the high ideological conception of the builders of Communism, to the creative character of their work, it is the real truth of life. But the word "primacy," as one knows, means the "preponderance," and not the rejection, the negation or the ignoring of the personal in the name of the social.

Speech by Boris Rurikov

OUR literary history has grown with the scientific thought of the vanguard, with Marxist thought, and with our literature. It is concentrated in the struggle against the liberal theory of the "single stream"* and against vulgar sociologism, against subjectivism, against nationalist deformations, etc. We can note dozens of serious scientific works in the field of the history of literature. But quantity is not the essential thing; the important thing is that the scientific level of Soviet literary history has been substantially raised. It has become a creative Marxist science of the vanguard which has proved its capacity to study deeply the literary process in its development, its different periods and moments, and the work of different writers.

Our scholars have not only overcome the erroneous conceptions of the bourgeois thinkers but they have given a new Marxist solution to complex and difficult questions.

The works of Soviet historians of literature disclose in all their greatness the grandeur, the force and the originality of such writers of genius as Pushkin, Gogol, Belinsky, Tolstoy, Chekhov, and all the depth of their ties to their country and to the people.

Our literary science has overcome the influence of formalism, characterized by the rupture between art and life, the forgetting of the ideological and social role of art, and consequently by a narrow, impoverished and primitive conception of form. . . .

Soviet public opinion has resolutely criticized pseudo-scientific, idealistic and cosmopolitan conceptions. The essential idea, the content of this criticism, consists not so much

* The theory that culture is homogeneous and shows no conflict between classes, or between historically progressive and reactionary trends.

in indicating the errors of such scholars as Vesselovski* and his disciples, as in drawing attention to the solution of a positive task: to put in evidence, with all their depth, the roots which tie the geniuses of literature to the people who have produced them, to the country which has educated them.

It is beyond question that the struggle against "comparativism" has contributed to the development of the history of Soviet literature. It is also true that we have not escaped vulgarization in this regard. There were critics who labelled as treason every word on the influence of such and such a Western writer on a Russian writer, and who stuck on the label "servile admirer." We reject the attempts of vulgarizers to separate the history of Russian literature from world literature; such attempts are anti-scientific and foreign to our conception of the world.

The struggle against vulgar sociologism was a great and deep process, extremely important for the development of literary history. The conception of vulgar sociologism, with its indifference to art, with its mechanical manner of attacking the phenomena of the delicate and complex domain of the artistic superstructure, has obscured the ideas of the scholar, has corrupted scientific analysis, has destroyed among its followers the understanding of art and the love which we have for it. This vulgarization was and still is the basis of sectarian narrowness, of primitivism, of a disdainful nihilist attitude toward artistic creation.

In the struggle against anti-scientific, anti-democratic conceptions, Soviet literary history has defended and developed the conception of literature as a great picture of the life of the people, complete and rich in content, as an expression of the spirit of the people, as an expression of its beauty and spiritual richness. In the struggle against alien notions, the conception of literature as a particular form of the knowledge and activity of man is re-enforced, our representation of its artistic beauty and of its great moral and ideological force is enriched.

Nevertheless, one might cite numerous books and articles, many of them "jubilee" works, in which the writers are strangely alike. In these books and articles, nothing but good is said of these writers, and this good is expressed in general phrases which might be applied to any writer. Consequently, ideas such as the popular character, the democratic character, realism, become vague, deprived of content and empty in the characterization of the writers.

* A. Vesselovski (1843-1918), historian of literature who insisted that the originality of Russian literature was produced by foreign influences.

Vulgar sociologism has not disappeared into the past, never to return, but it is no longer what it was around 1930. It is a fairly widespread phenomenon, often disguised, but which as formerly does enormous injury to the development of our artistic culture.

One of the most obvious examples of the vulgarization of criticism is the book of M. Gushchin on Chekhov, which appeared lately at Kharkhov. The satirical pieces and the miniatures of the young Chekhov are, for M. Gushchin, a sort of "Rosta Window" [propaganda poster composed from 1919 to 1922 by painters and poets, among them Mayakovsky]. The first works of Chekhov are not distinguished from his mature works, and all these works are not distinct from the works of Shchedrin.

In the story, "A Dark Night," the author finds a certain allegorical idea. The story starts: "No moon, no stars . . . no shapes, no silhouettes, not the least bit of light . . . all is drowned in thick and impenetrable shadows." Next it is a question of horrible mud, a soaking road. And the author of the research finds in the story, "the theme of 'no way out,' the theme of the way followed by reaction, in thick shadows. . . ."! Every piece of Chekhov's work is interpreted with a uniform silliness. A carriage gets stuck in the mud, it means the lack of political perspective; shadows mean the mists of reaction. And so on. The great writer is stripped of realism and poetry and humor, and is transformed into a second-rate maker of silly allegories on political themes.

One of the accomplishments of literary science is the elaboration of the heritage of the revolutionary democratic critics.

The work of N. Mordovchenko on the esthetics and criticism of Belinsky, the works on Dobrolyubov by V. Kroykov and V. Zhdanov, B. Boursov's work (*Problems of Realism in the Esthetics of the Revolutionary Democrats*) are serious scientific works. A work in three volumes, part of the remarkable scientific series, *Literary Heritage,* contains valuable documents and material devoted to Belinsky. The first scientific collection of the works of Chernyshevsky is completed; the complete works of Belinsky are being published.

IN THE history of Russian criticism two traditions clashed for several decades. On one side there is the trend of Belinsky, Chernyshevsky, Dobrolyubov, continued by Marxian criticism. But there is another tradition. This is estheticizing, subjectivist, anti-democratic, anti-social criticism, upholding the position of "pure art," a criticism which separates art from life, from the social

struggle, from the progressive ideas of the time. . . .

The classical heritage of Russian criticism is our ideological treasure, our national pride. The history of Soviet literature is intent on developing, studying and enriching these glorious traditions. . . .

The ideological struggle in literary history and criticism among the peoples of the U.S.S.R. has been complicated and intense. We clashed with manifestations of national nihilism; some critics rejected treasures of the art of the past on the pretext that these were foreign or feudal art.

Naturally, the themes of an epic bear the marks of a definite era and of a definite historical setting, and if one criticizes an epic of the eleventh century from the point of view of socialist realism, one can find in it many grave errors. Not only in the eleventh century but much later, at the time of the movement of the peasants of Razin and Pugatchev, the popular masses nursed Tsarist illusions; but does that prevent us from appreciating the spirit of struggle which inspired those movements?

The "single stream" theory has exercised an unfortunate influence on the study of the literature of our fraternal Republics; this theory serves as an instrument of bourgeois reactionary nationalism. In Georgia, in Azerbaijan, in Armenia, in the Baltic republics and in Central Asia, much has been done to uncover and do away with false and harmful conceptions. Our history of literature has dealt a powerful blow against Pan-Turkish, Pan-Iranian, and other nationalist distortions. It must be said that in Armenia, in Georgia and other republics, some elements, under the pretext of struggle against the bourgeois theory of the "single stream" tried to stir up a provocation at the expense of the whole national culture, all the riches of art and literature. Under the direction of the Party organizations, these nihilistic attacks were unmasked.

The appearance of numerous interesting works on foreign writers should be considered a marked success. We are the heirs and conservers of the treasures of all world literature. Works on the great artists of the past and of our own time have been published. Among those published just in the last few years, one can point out the works of M. Morozov on Shakespeare, of M. Shaginyan and N. Vilmont on Goethe, of A. Pouzikov and of M. Elizarova on Balzac, V. Petrov on Ai Tsin, of V. Nikolayev on Hugo and Barbusse, of T. Motyleva on Anna Seghers, of V. Neustroiev and A. Dymchits on Nexo, etc. The philosophical wisdom of Goethe's characters, the creative

boldness and strong modeling of Shakespeare's characters, the pitiless truth of Balzac's pictures of daily life, the delicate and sad irony of Heine, all this has become our treasure.

In speaking of the indisputable success of literary history, we do not delude ourselves; we know very well that there is still an enormous quantity of scientific problems which are as yet hardly touched, such as, for example, the establishment of the periods of literary history, the question of national traits of literature, etc. We cannot pass over in silence the fact that the Institute of World Literature of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R. has not yet produced a history of Russian literature although they have worked nearly twenty years. For this we must blame the desire of many literary historians to avoid the study of complicated phenomena, for example, the works of Dostoevski and Tyutchev.

THE development of Soviet literary history and criticism is handicapped more and more often by the fact that very important esthetic problems are not being worked at. The study of esthetic questions, like the teaching of esthetic disciplines, is not at a level that can satisfy us. It is enough to say that we do not have either programs or handbooks of esthetics, there are not even collections of articles on questions of the philosophy of art. Scientific establishments, the Institute of Philosophy of the Academy of Sciences, the Institute of World Literature, do not concern themselves systematically with the elaboration of these problems.

Many questions of vital importance for art, like the question of beauty, of satire, of conflict, the hero, of the principles of the typical, of the tragic and of the comic, have not yet been studied in any deep or fundamental way. The problem of the *method and style of art* has not been posed with the necessary theoretical depth. To pose fundamentally and in a principled way the question of the diversity of artistic styles and the abundance of means for representing reality, would help in the struggle against dull and crude works.

Our conception of socialist realism is not changeless and static; it changes and develops with the development of literature, of the arts, of esthetic theory, and most important, with the development of life itself.

Socialist realism bases the choice of its themes on the life of the masses, on their work and their struggles for Socialism. But life goes ahead, in a particularly swift fashion in the conditions of the change from Socialism to Communism. The present development of society has been prepared by the past, and the present necessarily prepares the future, in which the traits of the future which are growing and strengthening today

will be fully developed. That is why there has never been in human history an artistic method such as socialist realism which could turn toward *the future,* which could help show clearly the marvelous horizons, and could teach us to understand that the road to these horizons goes through hard and difficult struggle.

One cannot fight for a brilliant and fully valuable art without fighting against the primitivist conception which still finds expression in the theory and practice of the arts, and which amounts to saying that art does nothing but illustrate general ideas. Art does not merely clothe the truth in images; it seeks and expresses in its own way artistic truth; it does not merely illustrate, but it creates, discovers the new, helps to penetrate life in all its complexity. To forget this very important principle leads to patchwork and the creation of petty, dull types; it removes from art its function of innovator; it deprives it of its special impact on the human soul.

The historic documents of the Central Committee on ideological questions* have denounced the tendency to absence of ideology, the tendency to separate art from the people in the name of estheticism. There were people among us who thought that after having crushed the enemy, after having won a great victory over fascism, we could forget ideological demands, and turn toward an art of diversion, "rest ourselves on the bank of a quiet stream." The Party condemned this demobilizing spirit.

While fighting against the positions of estheticism and formalism in the arts, our public opinion has taken as persistent a stand against all the over-simplifiers and vulgarizers of Marxism. Meddlesome preaching, insufferable moralizing, are sometimes justified among us by, of all things, Party spirit or the wish to increase the educational role of literature. But the principle of Party spirit obliges us to take a position against all narrowness, against scholasticism and against dogmatism; it demands a deep study of the nature of artistic creation.

The Party calls us to go ahead, toward living truth, toward a high artistic perfection, while the incantations of the vulgarizers would make us lag behind. Taking as a base the scientific discussion on the typical, the critics must uncover and eliminate the constructions of the vulgarizers.

One must not forget that, in giving a definition of socialist realism as a method of Soviet literature and criticism, the Party *opposed* this formulation to the abstract formulas of the R.A.P.P.* people on dialectical ma-

* See *Essays on Literature, Philosophy, and Music,* by Andrei A. Zhdanov, International Publishers, 1950. *(Eds.)*

* A Soviet writers' organization which in the 1930's advocated a narrow, dogmatic literary doctrine.

terialism considered as a method of artistic creation. The formula of the R.A.P.P. avoided concrete tasks, the specific character of art, and in spite of its apparent orthodoxy, was full of contempt toward originality in art. This was an attitude entirely foreign to Marxism.

The vulgarizers' contempt for art shows itself from time to time either in certain crude books and brochures, or in articles in reviews and newspapers, in which a work is praised for its subject, for its current interest, but in which the artistic quality is considered as something of the least importance. Similar tendencies were echoed, for example, in an article published by *Literaturnaya Gazeta* on the novel by F. Panferov, *Mother Volga.*

There are many simplifiers among us who are quick to praise a work for the timeliness of its subject, for the data taken from life.

Idealist estheticism and vulgar sociologism are indissolubly linked. The esthetes speculate on the faults of the primitivists; the vulgarizers hide themselves in a fight against estheticism. But they sustain and nourish each other. Soviet literature goes on its way, overcoming all deviations from socialist realism.

CRITICISM is often reproached for "publicism." However, if publicism is understood as passionate and profound thinking about the most urgent questions of life, not dry, general chatter, then publicism deepens the judgment of the realistic worth of literary works. It not only does not contradict a subtle esthetic analysis, but it assists a fuller understanding of how life is reflected artistically in literature.

Criticism is directed both to the writer and to the reader, to the maker of books and to the consumer. The critic is not the "reader" of a publishing house, he is not an editor commenting on improvements in the text; he expresses the interest of the reader, he is the representative of public opinion, he estimates literary works from the broad point of view of the public man. The critic's mission is to create in the Writers' Union a highly exacting atmosphere, uncompromising toward shortcomings.

Cold neglect and petty intrigue prevent the writer from developing. But unmeasured enthusiasm in praise is just as much an obstacle.

When the critic does not present the author with high demands, or if he expresses his appreciation with unbounded enthusiasm, it is not a question of the tone, but above all, of the *independence of criticism* which concerns us. One cannot help seeing that in a whole series of brochures and articles on writers, which contain interesting remarks, the authors show no independence in their estimates. They speak of inadequacies

as though excusing them, and magniloquently of merits. It is thus, for example, that A. Tripolsky spoke of Korneichuk, L. Lazaryov of Simonov, and T. Trifonov of Ehrenburg. . . .

Even the expressions of public approval, which should stimulate the struggle for artistic craftsmanship, certain people try to use to establish a peculiar "table of rank," to make certain works untouchable by criticism.

Rank of whatever sort can only prevent the establishment of truly high standards for the appreciation of literary work.

Criticism has done a disservice to literature and readers in failing to struggle in a satisfying fashion for high standards, in failing to defend them persistently, and in accepting lowered standards. Today, allowance is made for the timeliness of the theme, tomorrow for the past merits of the writer, day after tomorrow for his social activities, etc. One makes allowances to a writer in order not to offend him in relation to another, and one applies to a third the diminished standard which was used for the first two. . . .

Sometimes people think that the summit of artistic criticism is expressed in the capacity to see and to find faults in a work. This is not true. A high standard is expressed above all in the ability to see the merit of a work. This is the most difficult task of the critic. It is easy to find more or less substantial faults; every work has them. It is incomparably harder to determine what makes a work good, what makes it truly poetic. There one must have a sure eye, conviction and good taste. . . .

Speech by Galina Nikolayeva

OFTEN in their works writers will study and conscientiously describe this or that phenomenon of life, but they will study their characters only on the run and in a superficial way. But if one analyzes the classics, one sees that in them phenomena are not only described for their own sake, but are embodied in typical characters. . . .

It is an important weakness in creative work that we do not pay enough attention to one of our main artistic weapons—the typical char-

acter. . . . In many of our articles on criticism I read about the importance and timeliness of the theme chosen by the writer, about his truth to life, his language, and his structure. But I have not read anywhere about the most important thing—the analysis of the writer's method for achieving typical characters.

If some critics today were to analyze Lermontov's *A Hero Of Our Time,* they would do it along these lines: They would say that the hero, Pechorin, is a successful character, but that there are no peasant uprisings in the novel, no landlords, that the Princess is poorly described, and that the character Bela is not fully realized.

Any critical analysis which loses sight of the basic artistic standard of typicality leads to a loss of individuality and in a levelling off. That is, if a critic were to try to analyze Galina Nikolayeva's novel, *Harvest,* after finishing Lermontov's novel, he might wind up with the pleasant but illusory conclusion that Nikolayeva is almost as good as Lermontov, or maybe better, because Lermontov did not write about peasants and she does.

We often forget that the typical requires the necessary unity of opposites—the individual and the social. And we often take a schematic character for a typical one. We forget the esthetic law that the typical can emerge only in conflict, when the forces opposing it are portrayed, and when the character combats these forces. We forget that typicality in literature is possible only when based on a deep study of life. . . .

Failure to use the basic art of typicality causes even so distinguished a writer as Ilya Ehrenburg to falter in his creative work. Ehrenburg peopled his novel *The Thaw* entirely with petty, passive, and nontypical characters, creating an alien atmosphere of ineffectiveness. . . .

The second obstacle which hampers our work, in my opinion, is the insufficient attention that we pay to questions of talent. It seems to me that the word *talent* has entirely disappeared from our considerations. . . .

Speech by Mikhail Sholokhov

I SHOULDN'T like to disturb the classical calm which reigns at this Congress, clouded over only by two or three speeches. However, allow me to say what *I* think of our literature, and a few words about what cannot leave us undisturbed.

Much has been said here about our common achievements. There is no arguing the fact that the achievements of multinational Soviet literature for the last two decades are really great. Many talented writers have entered our ranks. In spite of this, we continue to be plagued by the gray, colorless stream of mediocre literature which gushes from the pages of the magazines and still floods the book market.

It is time for us to stop the course of this muddy stream and build a reliable dam against it. Otherwise we are threatened with a loss of respect from our readers, a respect which our serious writers fought for by unremitting labor over many years. This certainly in no way reflects upon those young forces who are pouring into our literature nad developing from book to book, but to those who are already known, and who, losing respect both for their own labor and for the reader, are drooping on the vine and, finally, from masters have become mere practitioners.

Really, what has happened over the last few years, if we consider it as that period which has elapsed since the day that ended the war? Naturally, in the days of war, for the great majority of writers there was no use in thinking about the creation of great literary productions, born with travail in difficult and long meditation, polished in language and irreproachable in style. In those days the artist's message was to arm our fighting forces and the people with courage, and the writers had no time to try to give a perfect form to their work. For them, there was only one task: if only their word would smite the enemy, if only it would serve to lend a hand to our fighters, if only it would kindle and not allow the burning hatred for the enemy and love for the motherland to be extinguished in the hearts of the Soviet people. Our writers handled this problem quite well.

But when the post-war period arrived, many a writer, still adhering to the tempo of the war years, as if by inertia, continued to write hur-

riedly, and in a slovenly, careless manner; this circumstance was not long in reflecting itself sharply in the artistic level of a considerable number of literary works. That which the reader could forgive us during the war years, he could no longer forgive us in the post-war period. And such really talented books as appeared in the post-war period by Fadeyev, Fedin, Ajaev, Pavlenko, Gladkov, Leonov, Paustovsky, Upitz, Tvardovsky, Yakub Kolas, Gonchar, Nekrassov and some others, serve the more sharply to emphasize the artistic squalor, the fly-by-night production and short life of other books which one may venture to call literary miscarriages.

But it goes without saying that this factor, the war-time habit of speedy writing, is not the only cause for the general lowering of the value of our work.

ONE of the main reasons, it seems to me, was the striking and completely unjustified falling-off of demands on oneself which became habitual among the writers, and also the lowering of standards among the critics. With marvellous indifference, writers with blank faces ignored not only the mediocre but the so obviously ungifted works of their comrades. They did not raise their voices in indignation against the penetration into the press of worthless books which implant bad taste among an undiscriminating section of our readers, which corrupt our youth, and which repel qualified and demanding readers, irreconcilable in their taste, from literature.

Well, as to other critics, the situation is still worse: if a talentless and good-for-nothing work was published by a famous author, and moreover, one who was crowned with the laurels of literary prizes, a great number of critics not only disregarded it but turned away in great embarrassment.

Before the very eyes of the readers, there sometimes occurred an amazing, simply stupendous metamorphosis. "Raging Vissarions"* suddenly became blushing maidens. Some in silence were covered with shy blushes; others, lisping, bestowed unearned, unrestrainedly lavish compliments on the famous ones. And in truth, was there even one critical article in our press giving its due to some literary maestro for his unsuccessful work, without a word of reservation and without glancing over his shoulder? There was no such article. Too bad! We must not and should not have literary "settlements," deals, and persons who enjoy the right of inviolability.

Some may raise objection to my saying this, that such articles were

* A reference to Vissarion Belinsky, Russian 19th century critic.

written, but that due to certain circumstances over which the critics had no control, were not published. During the Civil War the workers and peasants said, "Soviet power is in our hands." With full right we can say at present: "Soviet literature is in our hands." The less there will be of timid editors in the editorial offices of newspapers and magazines, as for example, Comrade Rurikov, the more there will be of daring, principled and most urgently needed literary articles.

Literaturnaya Gazeta shapes the opinion of our readers. *Literaturnaya Gazeta* holds the key position in our literature for the unbiased understanding of it. But of what kind of unbiased opinion can one speak, if at the head of this newspaper stands one who is in no small measure obligated to Comrade Simonov for the advancement of his career as a literary critic? *Literaturnaya Gazeta* requires a leader who stands outside of all sorts of groupings and groupets, a man for whom there is only *one* love—the great Soviet literature in its entirety, and not its individual servers, be they Simonov, Fadeyev, Ehrenburg, or Sholokhov.

Coming back to some critics, one may say that a reverse metamorphosis occurred with some of them when there appeared a weak work by a mediocrity or a little-known writer, or a young author. Oh, well! Now the lyric soprano of the critics changes immediately to a bossy baritone and bass, as if to say, "On your guard! Get ready for a fight," as the old refrain says. Even Comrade Rurikov will willingly publish you, without fearing a "Hey, You!" from Vorovskaya Street. Here one can even sparkle brilliantly with both condenscending wit and bitter sarcasm.

BY THE way, much has been said here (not one, but many times) about a literary cartridge-clip, about a group of five or ten leading writers. Isn't it time for us, comrades, to reexamine our powder and shot zealously, as experienced soldiers? Is there anyone who does not know that cartridges, after remaining in the clip for a long time, especially in rainy or slushy weather, known as a *thaw,* become oxidized and rust? And so, isn't it time for us to rid the clip of the old cartridges that have lain there for so long, and replace them with new and fresher ones?

It goes without saying, the old cartridges should not be thrown away, they may be useful some day. But it is necessary that, like a good husbandman, we rub them with lye, and if that is not enough, with sandpaper. Never mind, their skin will not come off. These old cartridges must be preserved, not every one will misfire. This must also be understood. Poor is the fighter who for armament

has only one clip, he cannot win the battle with such meagre reserves. Like you, I am in favor of having more cartridges in the clips to spray in an emergency. We have the people who will look after their safety. Our readers are not misers, but good, thrifty and prudent husbandmen.

And again, one more thing: the term "leading," in applying it to a man who really leads someone, is in itself a good word, but in life it happens that there was once upon a time a leading writer who led, but now he is not leading, he has been standing still not only for a month, a year, but for about ten years, perhaps longer, like your humble servant and all who resemble him.

You understand, comrades, it is not always pleasant to say such things about oneself, but one must—it is self-criticism. Such a writer resembles the ram, who stubbornly pushes the wall with his head, but stands in the same place. And what kind of leading is this, when he stands in one place, hit or miss!

In our party it sometimes happens —and everybody knows it—an estimable man is working as Secretary of the Regional Committee. He is a leading figure, but for the first year his work is so-so, for the second it is much worse, and then he is told politely: "Go away, dear comrade, and try to polish yourself up a little." Then, as the saying goes, the holy place is never empty. The literary cartridge clip will be filled up. And it isn't the writers themselves who will fill the gap by their own wish, for wishing alone is not enough. They will be placed in the clip by the hand of the master, the people, who want to fight for their culture, for their happiness — for Communism.

ANOTHER reason for the lowering of the value of artistic work is the system of awarding literary prizes, which unfortunately is still in effect today. This was discussed in great detail by Comrade Ovechkin, and I have to add only a few words. I beg your pardon, but as God is my witness, dividing literary productions into first, second or third prizes, reminds me of handing out first, second or third grades.

But how about that which was not entered in this inventory? What name shall we give to that number of productions which were not honored by prizes? What shall we call this—a lowered standard for mass consumption? As a consequence, it becomes absurd, offensive and painful. And this system of encouragement is no good anyhow, especially if we consider the fact that many good books are not honored by prizes —talented, intelligent books, which are sometimes more widely read than those which have been so honored. (Applause.)

For example, it sometimes happens

this way. A writer would write a mediocre book. He had not even expected it to be a success, for he had soberly judged his own abilities. He thought that his next book would be better. But lo and behold! he receives a second prize. But no! He does not say: "Brothers, what are you doing, don't give me the prize, this book of mine does not merit it." Don't kid me! There never were such simpletons. (Laughter, applause) The writer takes the prize, and a little while later begins to think that not only had he underestimated himself, but those who awarded the prize did also, and that his book could boldly step up, not only for the second prize, but for the first. Thus, in these evaluations we corrupt our writers as well as our readers.

Concerning all this, I do not undertake to propose something definite to the Congress. But one thing is clear. We are in duty bound to petition the Government for a basic re-examination of the system of awarding prizes to workers in art and literature, for it can no longer so continue. (Applause.) If such a system continues, we ourselves will forget how to tell gold from copper, and the completely disoriented reader will be wary on seeing the book of the next laureate.

The high award cannot be given easily, nor can it be given on the run, otherwise it will cease to be high.

Just think what will happen in ten or fifteen years with some of the talented representatives of our art and literature if the existing situation in regard to awards should become set.

I don't even speak here about Comrade Simonov. He will fearlessly add up, one at a time, a play, a poem, a novel, not counting such chicken-feed as a few verses, articles, etc., etc. . . . This means that three medals a year are guaranteed for him.

By now, already, many laureates are inspiring, if not rapture, at least a pit-a-pat in the hearts of their readers for themselves. What will happen next? Recently I saw a man in civvies, his breast ablaze with gold and medals. Holy Saints! I thought, can it be Ivan Poddubniyi? Taking a good look at him his body was not that of a wrestler—he turned out to be some sort of movie director, or motion picture operator. Well, what can one make of this? In what category shall we place it? No, comrade writers, let us shine with books, not with medals. (Prolonged applause.) A medal is acquired, but a book is suffered for.

ONLY a great and deep concern for literature forces me to speak

of such unpleasant things to my comrades-in-arms. With characteristic modesty and according to the unwritten law of duty, Konstantin Simonov said nothing of himself. Permit me to fill in the gap.

This is neither the time nor the place to analyze his individual writings. I would like to speak about the sum total of his creative work.

Konstantin Simonov is by no means a rookie in literature, but rather a middle-aged and experienced fighter. He has written a great deal and in all literary genres. But when I read his works I am left with the feeling that in his writing he was aspiring to one thing, to see if he could pull it up to grade B, or C plus.

He is an undoubtedly talented writer and his lack of desire to give himself completely to his work (there cannot be any argument about his not knowing how) makes us think about it with alarm. What can the young writer learn from Simonov? Possibly only fast writing, and the know-how of diplomatic manners which are absolutely unnecessary for a writer. For a great writer this ability, I'll say it straight out, matters very little. His last book arouses special alarm. To the eye everything is smooth, everything is in its place, but when read to the end, the impression is created as if you, who are hungry and have been invited to a fine dinner, were treated to watery soup. You feel annoyed and hungry and in your heart you damn the miser-host.

This is not Comrade Simonov's first year as a writer. It is time for him to look back on the path that the writer has travelled, and to ponder somewhat that the hour will strike when some wise boy with seeing eyes, pointing to Comrade Simonov, will say: "The emperor has no clothes." (Applause.)

FOR the sake of an old friendship I cannot keep from mentioning Comrade Ehrenburg here. Don't think that I again intend to argue about creative problems. God protect me! It is good to argue with one who fiercely defends himself, but he feels offended about the slightest critical remark and declares that he doesn't feel like writing after criticism. Let Ehrenburg write; it is better that way. He performs a great and important task by actively participating in our common struggle for peace. We criticize him not as a fighter for peace, but as a writer, and this we have a right to do.

In particular, he got sore at Simonov for his article about *The Thaw*. He got sore for nothing, because if Simonov had not dashed out ahead with his piece, some other critic would have spoken differently about *The Thaw*. Simonov, in substance,

saved Ehrenburg from sharp criticism. However, Ehrenburg continues to be sore.

This can perhaps be explained only by the "acute oversensitivity" which Ehrenburg attributed to all writers in his recent speech at the Congress. We should, however, not be especially concerned about the cross-fire between Ehrenburg and Simonov. They will make it up somehow. There is only one question I should like to ask of Comrade Ehrenburg. In his speech he said: "If I shall still be able to write a new book, I will try hard that it may be a step forward from my last book, *The Thaw.*" In comparison with *The Storm* and *The Ninth Wave, The Thaw* is indisputably a step back. Now Ehrenburg promises a step forward. I don't know what these dancing steps are called in any other language, but in Russian it sounds like "shifting from one foot to another." You have promised us very little consolation, esteemed Ilya Grigoryevich!

Malicious enemies abroad say of us, the Soviet writers, that we write by orders of the Party. The fact is somewhat different. Everyone of us writes as our hearts direct us, but our hearts belong to the Party and to the people, whom we serve with our art. (Prolonged applause.)

Sometimes we are too sharp in our attitude towards each other, sometimes we are intolerant of creative evaluations, but this is certainly provoked, not by our bad disposition, not by ambition and not by cupidity, but by our single desire to make our literature a still more powerful aid to the Party in the cause of the Communist education of the masses, to make it still more worthy of our great people, and of the great literary past of our country, of which we are the heirs.

I believe with all my heart that for the Third Congress many of us will create new and marvellous books. With all my soul I wish for every one of you, comrade writers, new creative successes and the bright joy which every toiler experiences who has really performed his job well. (Prolonged applause.)

Speech by Konstantin Fedin

OUR reality is the Socialist society which is building Communism; that is why our enemies hurl their darts against Soviet literature. They are in fact warring against our Socialist society, this new fact in history. It is understood that the struggle is led from "esthetic" positions, and one uses for this an oft-repeated tactic: under cover of criticizing the artistic side of our works they are using all their efforts to call into question its foundation.

It must be recognized that the work of the adversaries of Soviet literature is very easy. Most often they fish up words or isolated phrases in our self-critical statements and they triumphantly announce: "You see," they tell us, "you yourselves are dissatisfied with the artistic level of your literature; you recognize yourselves its faults and weaknesses. So we are right; writers can only create freely among us in the West, and with you, in the East, they cannot create freely."

Nervous people might be the victim of the following temptation: shouldn't we Soviet writers stop criticizing our own literature in order not to give nourishment to our adversaries?

No, we will not give up criticizing our own literature. Two weighty circumstances would prevent us from doing so: in the first place, self-criticism has always been and always will be in Soviet society the motor-force in the building of this society; and secondly, no sooner would we give up self-criticism, or even begin somewhat to soften it for fear of bringing grist to the mill of our adversaries, than the Western commentators would feel a surge of fresh strength so they could triumphantly say: "We have always said that the Bolsheviks forbid you to freely criticize Soviet literature!"

NO, WE are not disposed to give up the right which belongs to us, the right to criticize our literature, without flattering ourselves, without presumption, without exaggeration, but also without lowering the value of our ideological and artistic achievements. One thing, we will not give to our adversaries the satisfaction that they flatter themselves they can get from us, that is, we will never

criticize Soviet literature from the standpoint of our enemies. . . .

I must declare from this platform that the study of the problems of artistic form has nothing in common with "formalism." Formalism is the negation of the ideological character of art and the rejection of the principle of the unity of content and form. Conversely, the rejection by criticism of the analysis of form is itself the other side of formalism; that is to say, a loss for the ideological level of Soviet literature. . . .

Two years ago in London a young English writer told me: "You, in Russia, judge English life according to Dickens. That's a mistake. Dickens is completely of the 19th century. Nothing remains of him in the England of today."

I replied: "In our conversation you have just judged Russian life according to Dostoevsky. That's a mistake. He wrote at the same time as Dickens. There remains infinitely less of Dostoevsky in contemporary Russia than there remains of Dickens in England." (Applause)

The English writer began to think things over. In his place I would undoubtedly have done the same. It seems to me that we have too few discussions among writers, with our friends abroad. Even important literary questions remain inadequately discussed. . . .

The art of Socialist realism is bearing its fruits and opens up a great future to the literatures of all countries, independently of the stage in which they find themselves in their history.

I speak of the variety of methods of realistic art, because realism has elaborated in the course of its development a rich multiplicity of methods of creation and emphatically does not exclude variety of form. The example of Soviet poetry illustrates my thought better than anything else; the image of the new man, of our world, is given in a realistic fashion in styles quite dissimilar and with forms equally different in the works of Mayakovsky, Tikhonov or Tvardovsky. One can see the same thing very clearly in the examples of the novels of Sholokhov and Leonov.

But when somebody asks us: "What is Socialist realism?" and we reply, "Read all the best works of the different Soviet writers," we often see disbelief on their faces.

People expect formulas from us. And here is what is astonishing: the more the foreign writer says that art is free and that we, Soviet writers, regiment and blueprint art, the more he insists, and even aggressively demands, that we give him an absolutely clear answer: what is Socialist realism, and how can one use it? . . .

When he got up to speak, Sholokhov stated that he wished to say something concerning what he thought of our literature and concerning that which cannot but disturb all of us. Indeed, he spoke on an extremely important fact—on the decline that has set in among writers in what they exact of themselves, and on the "lowering of the artistic value of a work."

It would be very important to disclose in a more profound manner the true cause of this fact which has so disturbed us in recent times, and the voice of the great artist Mikhail Sholokhov, his opinion on this question, would be very valuable to literature.

This, to our great regret, Sholokhov did not do.

I refuse to believe that he quite seriously considers the cause of the lowering of the artistic value of our works to be such things as the three-grade literary prizes which existed until recently, or the residence of writers, whether in a vicinity close by or distant, or the taking of one editor, Rurikov, under the protection of another editor, Simonov, or even the really deleterious and abominable phenomenon of clannishness among writers.

It goes without saying that we must thoroughly re-examine the practice of handing out prizes (and as a matter of fact this is being re-examined); we must fight against favoritism; we must put an end to clannishness. (Applause) But, in my opinion, these problems should not be made the central ones in speaking of the most urgent matter of the whole of Soviet literature. (Stormy applause)

The chief question posed by Sholokhov remain unanswered in his address. . . . After Sholokhov's address we shall be afraid to gather more than two writers at a time in a room. (Laughter, applause) We shall be afraid that at a Congress we may be addressed in the same kind of language used by Sholokhov in relation to Simonov. This is a sort of special language, perhaps not the same language used by Sholokhov in noting his ignorance in his questionable remarks addressed to Ehrenburg —but not the kind of language Soviet writers speak or would like to go on speaking. (Applause)

A fear among us of clannishness, which we have taken serious decisions to put an end to, might lead us only to a point at which even the friendly solidarity between Sholokhov and Ovechkin would seem to all of us nothing but an expression of clannishness. (Applause)

Of course, this is not what you wanted, Mikhail Alexandrovich, and it is left to me only to regret that you did not carry out what you promised the Congress to do in the opening of your address. (Prolonged applause)

Speech by Fyodor Gladkov

IT IS painful for me to take the floor at this time, but my conscience and my Party duty make it necessary to speak out against the speech of Comrade Sholokhov, which I must say I found petty and lacking in Party spirit. (Applause)

. . . A writer like Sholokhov, who has great prestige, should not harm his position. It is possible and necessary to criticize, and perhaps to criticize drastically, but there is criticism and criticism. Criticism grounded in principle has nothing in common with jeering and cheap fault-finding.

Two or three ideas expressed by Comrade Sholokhov in the form of flat witticisms were followed by wholly improper assaults on individuals, assaults which very much resemble spite and settling of personal accounts.

Comrades, on the basis of long experience, I sense that this very much smacks of cliquism.

Such a talk, intended for cheap effect, is not for a Congress platform. People should rise above their personal likes and dislikes. One must show wisdom, and in these historic days one must hold strictly to principle, remembering that every imprudent heedless expression is seized upon by all kinds of malicious pople and enemies—"Listen to what Sholokhov said!" and "Listen to what Sholokhov thundered!"—and is not used in our interests, in the interests of our society.

I trust that Comrade Sholokhov will think over these remarks and draw the necessary conclusions from them. (Prolonged applause)

Speech by Alexander Fadeyev

WE HAVE the right to say, with the building of a socialist society in our country, that the Leninist principle of a literature really free and openly linked to the people is being realized under a form particularly unified and complete. The ideas of Communism, profound devotion to the people, are bringing ever new strength to the ranks of Soviet literature. This literature is written for millions and for tens of millions of people. It is written by writers who have come from the people, and it reflects the new life of the people.

We have, therefore, the right to say that our literature is on the level of the tasks and achievements of our people, but we do not have the right to say that it is serving the people with its full potential and that it has already created and is now creating lasting artistic values which one could consider as a new step in the artistic development of humanity.

In the greeting which the Communist Party has addressed to our Congress, in this remarkable document which poses great new problems before us, it is said that Soviet literature had important successes after the First Writers Congress, that "works of art were created which accurately reflected the building of Socialism, the incomparable exploits of Soviet patriots during the hard years of the Great Patriotic War, 1941-1945, the labor heroism of our people after the war in restoring our economy."

But on the other hand it is said in the greetings of the Central Committee that "our literature lags behind the rapid developments of life, behind the needs of a reader who has grown politically and culturally."

I have found it necessary to cite these lines on the successes and lags of our literature because only this way of looking at the state of our literature is just and objective.

Our Congress has taken place under the standard of a serious and deep criticism and self-criticism. It is wholly natural and normal that our writers are not satisfied with the results of their work when the country has entered the period of the suc-

cessful building of Socialism and the progressive passage to Communism, and when the world significance of Soviet literature has therefore increased.

I wish, in part of my speech, to examine critically the path which we have traversed. This will all the more give me the right to disagree with the statements of certain of our writers who are inclined to think that the last few years in the development of our literature have been something of a continual "decline."

I have worked in Soviet literature for more than thirty years and like other writers of my generation I have had to hear similar complaints more than once. Every time our country passes to a new, higher stage in its development, every time the swift advance of our life emphasizes that the life of our people is not reflected with sufficient fullness and scope in our literary works, we hear voices telling us almost of the "decadence" of our literature. The reality is that our Soviet literature is developing, ripening, is always embracing new sectors of life, and the number of writers capable of solving complex artistic problems is increasing without any let-up.

LET us recall the years of the first five-year plan. If one were to go by certain articles in publications of that time one might indeed think that literature had ceased to develop. Yet, these are, nevertheless, the years which gave us works like Sholokov's *Upturned Soil,* Alexei Tolstoi's *Peter the Great,* Kataev's *Time, Forward!,* Ehrenburg's *The Second Day of Creation,* Leonov's *Soviet River,* and works by Ilin, Panferov, Shaginyan, and others. One need only remark that during the last six months alone works like these have been published: *the Russian Forest* of Leonov, *The Unhappy Year* by Gladkov, Grossman's *For a Just Cause,* works which one can fully qualify as important examples of Russian prose. Other good books have been issued such as *The Baltic Sky* of Chukovski, *The Seekers* by Granine, *Heart of a Friend* by Kazekevich, *Story of a Farm Station Director* by Nikolayeva and the sketches of V. Ovechkin. For the most part these are new books, but the novel *For a Just Cause* and the narrative *Heart of a Friend* have been revised by their authors following the criticism to which their works were submitted. Now these books take their rightful place among the best books of the year which has just passed. (Applause)

I mention only eight recent books, and no writer having a feeling heart, no writer with a noble conception of literature, could deny that the works I have mentioned—with their faults —uncover new aspects of life and of

human relations, and are literary works of stature. We must see literature in its living process of development, and not substitute general formulas for this process.

Literature falls short of life. Yes, that is true if one compares what has been written by us with the heroic exploits of the people. But the strength of Soviet literature is that it has always had, that it has, and will always have writers, of the relatively older generation as well as among the younger ones, who have a living feeling for that which is new —and there are more and more of such writers who are revealing to us new aspects of life and are capable of solving the great problems of art.

Writers do not sufficiently study life. Yes, that is true for many of us. But how would dozens of our best books get written, many of them the pride and glory of Soviet literature, if their authors had not known life, had not studied it?

Writers do not strive for mastery. How true that is for so many among us. But we must never forget that Soviet literature has produced a galaxy of masters of prose, of poetry, of the drama, who do not write only in Russian but in the different languages of our peoples. . . .

BUT when numerous writers of our country try to explain and to justify their weaknesses by the theory of the "absence of conflicts," that is quite naive. Such a writer is too slothful to merge deeply with the life of the Soviet peoples, with that life seething with the struggle between the old and the new in every field. In numerous other cases, he makes such an effort, but for lack of a world-view sufficiently thought out to permit him to see the exact truth of life, he cannot find his way in events and human relationships, he does not see clearly enough the road of development for that which is new and advanced, and as a result does not dare to flay the survivals of the old world of exploiters in the consciousness of men. Or even more frequently he sees all this very well but does not have at his command the forms with which to express the conflicts of life. And so we see such-and-such a one coming to the platform to say, "It is the notorious theory of the absence of conflicts which has prevented me from writing. . . ." But enough of this. Does this theory really exist?

If there are among us writers and critics who want to try to "legalize" the weakness of numerous writers of our country by the formula, "Dear me, I had better pass that by," this formula has nothing of a "theory" about it, the theory for this has still to be constructed.

If it exists, this "theory," it has been denounced for the past three

years. Why, then, despite this, are the changes in our dramatic art so unimpressive? No, it is evident that the issue here is not a "theory." Can we think that Leonid Leonov could have written his novels and plays without recourse to conflicts? In a more general way, how could the best works of prose, poetry, and drama written by Soviet writers have been produced if their authors, our best writers, poets, and dramatists, had not understood that underlying most literary works of varied genres, there is conflict, if they did not know how to express this by artistic means?

No, comrades, let us not justify our weaknesses by a "theory," no matter what it may be.

IF IN our publishing houses and in our literary organizations, the Union of Soviet Writers included, there are people—and there must be—who by routine or inertia have encouraged or tend now to encourage any embroidering of reality, to muffle the contradictions and difficulties of growth, it is only because the struggle between the old and the new shows itself here in literature as well as it does in all domains of life. The writer who does not know how to fight with his pen against what is obsolete in life affirms and celebrates in vain what is new in literature and art. And those who represent the flower and strength of our literature are remarkable because they throw themselves into life, fighting everywhere where the new battles with the old. It is precisely the works of these writers that the people love. . . .

[Fadayev then spoke of the role of the writer which he said has advanced enormously, particularly in a time when everyone can see "the competition between socialism and capitalism on an ever-widening world arena, amid the efforts of reactionary and aggressive circles to cut off the growth of the forces of socialism by violence." Fadayev said that literature "must not only reflect the new, but with all its power help the new to win."]

In the discussion on poetry which opened up before our Congress, I am personally inclined to agree with Olga Bergoltz, but precisely from the standpoint which I have just spoken of. [Olga Bergoltz had emphasized the need for poets to express their individuality and personal experience more in writing on social experiences.] It is not only in lyric poetry, it is in all fields of artistic creation that the writer must involve all his reason and his heart, all his love for our Soviet people, all his hate for our enemies, for everything which is routine and backward and hampers our progress. Whatever subject the writer speaks of, whatever aspects of life he portrays, he must bring to it

his own direct experiences. (Applause) . . .

In satire, as in all other genres, there exists still another hero—perhaps the principal one—whom we must know; that is, the author himself. Our satire, like that of all our great forerunners, is above all a humanist satire. The writer who passionately loves our new life and who, in the name of his affirmation and his development, opposes what is hostile and routine will always find the forms to express his love and his hate; just as it is well not to forget that in different kinds of satire this phase of the problem gets different solutions.

[Fadayev spoke of the issue of "sincerity in literature," which had been raised in a widely discussed article in the paper *Novy Mir.* Fadayev said that real literature cannot be written without sincerity; this is obvious, "it is like proving that water is wet." He struck at the slander that some active Soviet writers were not sincere, saying that this could only come "from an enraged petty-bourgeois" hostile to the aims of Soviet society. The "conformers and careerists one meets sometimes in our literature are only the dry rot in our society," he said. "More often one meets people inexperienced artistically, who do not always have the means to express their thoughts and feelings which are not only sincere but are the product of their entire life and are filled with a deep love of the people."]

. . . It is a fact that all Soviet writers feel the honor of being, above all, Soviet persons, and when certain writers are silent on the ideological enemies of Soviet literature and concentrate all the fire of their criticism solely on those aspects of our life which depend only on ourselves, and when moreover they are smug about this criticism, they do not notice that they have opened a breach through which the adversary can reach them.

I have listened attentively to the critical speeches of Ovechkin, Aliguer, Bergoltz, Kaverin, and I find many things that are just in their criticisms to which I shall return. But it seems to me that the speeches of these writers would have gained much if their authors had thought at the same time of what I have just spoken.

I would say the same thing to Mikhail Sholokhov, whose speech I have studied carefully in the stenographic text.

A writer who fights consciously and ardently for Communism should always keep in mind the main enemy of his ideological principles: it is first with this enemy that he must settle his accounts, and it is only in this way that the writer can give greater force to the criticisms he makes of those things which depend

solely on us and which we can therefore change. This is all the more true when it concerns a writer like Mikhail Sholokhov who is a great writer, for whom the people have unbounded love, whose authority is great and who could himself do much to correct the defects in our literary development. (Applause) One can only regret that he reduced his speech to personal attacks: that is not a serious way.

To all the comrades whom I have just mentioned and who are fine Soviet writers, I wish to say: "For your criticisms, thanks, but reflect, nevertheless, a bit more on the speeches you have made to the Congress and you will perhaps agree with me after consideration that in these speeches something essential is lacking."

I WISH to sound an alert against a vulgar conception on the assimilation of our classical heritage which has been spreading somewhat: we constantly meet the statement that Soviet literature inherits only what is realistic in the art of the past.

Certain writers seem to have the opinion that there was a popular realistic art in the past of which we are the inheritors, and an anti-realist and anti-popular art which belongs so to speak only to the bourgeois classes. An opinion something like this was expressed, for example, by A. Sobolev in an article which *Pravda* published September 16, 1954, under the title, "Questions of Aesthetics in Soviet Literature." He wrote: "Reactionary classes have always sustained and always will sustain an anti-realist and anti-popular art. Entering the struggles of history, the working class intervenes actively for a truly realist art."

When I was young I also shared this viewpoint, and I even wrote in my time an article entitled, "Down With Schiller!" It took me a certain time to grasp that Soviet literature is the inheritor of absolutely everything progressive and advanced which humanity has created in the past. To be sure, this progressive and advanced character is best expressed most often in realist art, but it would be stupid to reject Schiller from our classical heritage.

This is even truer when it applies to a romantic writer like Victor Hugo. At the publishing center, we have learned, Konstantin Fedin and I, that Hugo has been published in our country in eight and half million copies, this being two and half million more copies than the Balzac editions, three million more than Maupassant, and more than twice the total edition of Zola. Why is it important to mention this at this moment? Because the assimilation of our classical heritage contributes to the enrichment of the forms of so-

cialist realism and their variety. (Applause)

Samed Vurgun [who made the report on poetry] was right when he said that socialist realism must not diminish but increase the forms of world literature. Lenin said, after affirming the party character of literature: "It is certain that in this domain a much larger place must be assured to personal initiative, to personal tastes, to thought and imagination, to form and content." The greeting to the Congress by the Central Committee likewise states: "Socialist realism provides the possibility for a vast creative initiative, for the choosing of diverse forms and styles, which correspond to the inclinations and personal tastes of the writer."

From this point of view I would like to support the idea which was expressed by A. Surkov [editor-in-chief of *Literaturnaya Gazeta* who delivered the Congress' main report on the present problems of Soviet literature] and K. Simonov [novelist, poet and playwright who delivered a co-report on Soviet prose writing], according to which, in the realms of form and style, there exist in fact within the common boundaries of our socialist realism, different artistic currents and styles competing with one another. It would be very harmful if writers who belong to different currents, but whose work develops on the common ground of socialist realism, were to conclude that they must give organizational form to their literary grouping. That would be harmful because it is impossible to trace a strict line between literary currents, and all efforts to establish such boundaries can only end up in the petty spirit of coterie. . . .

It seems to me that the merit of the report of A. Surkov was to have asserted the diversity of forms and styles in Soviet literature within the substance of socialist realism. In this sense, it was useful for Surkov to cite various names. We must remember that we have often overlooked this side of the question. The report of A. Surkov was objective, and it is this above all that our Soviet literature needs at this moment. . . .

[Fadayev disagreed with the position of the writer, Margarita Aliguer, who had argued that the literary discussion could only be for the purpose of "bringing to light different points of view." Fadayev replied that the freest discussion is needed, but only for the collective body to be able to arrive at a closer approximation to the objective truth which Marxism affirms is knowable. At the same time, he argued against those writers who in the discussion "present their opinions as fully formed, to which all must rally, who dictate and impose their point of view and

ignore the opinion of the collective." Fadayev then discussed some problems of the literary and general press with relation to literature. He criticized himself in this regard.]

We know, for example, that it was our press which first acted against the exaggerations in the criticisms of the real and serious errors which Vassily Grossman committed in his novel, *For a Just Cause*. This created such an atmosphere around the book in one section of public opinion and even within the Writers Union, that we who had not seen the errors in Grossman's book were constrained to accept responsibility for mistakes greater than the writer or we had actually made. Naturally, this does not excuse us, and I still regret that I showed this weakness in my article on this novel and that I did not challenge, after supporting the justified criticisms which were made of it, the exaggerations in the criticism, and for declaring the novel harmful from an ideological standpoint. (Applause)

I have repaired my fault to a certain degree in working with Grossman, jointly with the publisher, on his book, leading to the publication of the book after its essential weaknesses were corrected. (Applause)

[Fadayev concluded with a brief picture of the world situation in politics and literature, citing the struggle of humanity for peace against atomic catastrophe.]

We have the right to say that everything that is honest and living in the literature of each nation, large or small, is the spiritual expression of that nation's progressive forces. We are able now to speak of a great progressive literature of the world. We march shoulder to shoulder with that literature. . . .

Resolution

TWENTY years have passed since the First Congress of Soviet Writers. . . . During these years, Soviet literature and progressive literature of the world have come closer together more and more. The common interest in the future of humanity, in peace, cements this friendship among humanist writers without regard to their social status, their religious, philosophical or esthetic beliefs. The world situation demands the closest unity among men of culture, in the name of peace, of the

friendship and mutual understanding of peoples, in the name of the struggle against the forces of reaction which menace the very existence of humanity.

The Second Congress of Soviet Writers warmly greets its guests who have come from many parts of the world, and wishes them success in their work for the welfare of their peoples. It sends with equal warmth its greeting to its friends abroad who could not come to Moscow for reasons beyond their control. It sends its greetings to all writers devoted to the ideals of peace and progress. There are no obstacles which can prevent the development of a literature that expresses the best aspirations of the people, their desire for peace and liberty.

In the name of social progress and of the friendly relations of the literature of the world, it is especially important that fighters for peace constantly exchange creative experiences. The Second Congress of Soviet Writers emphasizes the need for an ever wider exchange among writers of different countries, of opinions, publications and information.

The new magazine *International Literature** will have to give the greatest attention to the important question of *the exchange of artistic experiences* among writers of good will in all countries. . . .

The Second Congress of Soviet Writers greets and supports the idea expressed by writers of a number of countries for an international meetign of writers in 1955. Such a meeting could take place on the basis of the widest representation. Its platform could be the defense of peace and culture. At the conclusion of its proceedings, the Second Congress of Soviet Writers states its profound belief that the strength and authority of progressive literature will grow. . . .

* A decision to set up this publication was made at the Congress.

NOTES ON THE SPEAKERS

Ehrenburg, Ilya: author of *The Storm, Fall of Paris, The Thaw,* and other novels.

Fadeyev, Alexander: author of *The Nineteen, Young Guard,* member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party.

Fedin, Konstantin: famous for many novels including *First Joys* and *No Ordinary Summer.*

Gladkov, Fyodor: author of widely read novels on Socialist construction, including *Cement,* as well as *Autobiography,* and *The Tragic Year.*

Nikolayeva, Galina: born 1914, physician, author of *The Harvest.*

Rurikov, Boris: editor of the *Literary Gazette,* leading literary journal.

Sholokhov, Mikhail: one of the most widely read Soviet writers. Author of *Quiet Flows the Don, Upturned Soil.*

Simonov, Konstantin: born 1915, poet, novelist, playwright. Author of *Days and Nights, The Russian Question.*

The Junius Scales Case

Notes from North Carolina

By HERBERT APTHEKER

Greensboro, North Carolina
April 17, 1955

JUST some notes from O. Henry's town of Greensboro where Junius Scales is being tried under the membership clause of the Smith Act, facing, upon conviction, up to ten years in jail.

Juni, Chairman of the Communist Party in the Carolinas, is 35 years old, and looks even younger. A college girl in the crowded courtroom asked a friend: "Where is he; which one's the Communist?" When he was pointed out, she nearly shouted: "Him? Why, he's such a sweet-looking man!"

Sweet is a good word for Juni, for his looks and for himself. Juni's a sweet guy.

All sorts of people love him. An old carpenter, a white man, stopped him, said God bless you, shook hands and in doing that gave Juni ten dollars. Several textile workers have wished him well. Two Negro workers shook his hand—not publicly, of course—said they knew why he faced jail and that they loved him for his courage and his goodness.

Two elderly women were discussing him, during a court recess—and folks here know Juni, for this is his home. "Now isn't it a shame. You remember him as a boy, in church, with that curly blond hair and those big blue eyes of his? He was always such a kind boy; but he was worrying about the poor too much, and the colored folks, too. I mean it wasn't exactly balanced, you know what I mean? And he took it too hard. Isn't it a shame?"

A star witness for the prosecution is unveiled today, one Ralph Clontz, a Charlotte lawyer. Big, heavy, well-groomed. Proper, sitting erect. Eager to do the right thing.

An overgrown and unrepentant Matusow. Spinner of fantastic tales, all with great earnestness and righteousness. The most fantastic is the most damaging and it is to say this that he is on the stand—all else is window-dressing. The second time he ever saw Junius Scales, he was told by him that the Communist Party wanted to overthrow the government of the United

States by force and violence; that force was the only answer and that ideas could accomplish nothing. And Scales said that the revolution would come soon, how soon exactly he didn't know, but he told him that his daughter (she was then a year old) would marry in a socialist America. (Oh, how he was protecting white Southern womanhood with that one!)

Pretty soon he joined the Party and all the time his salary from the J. Edgar Hoover bund was growing, until he was employed full-time at $450 per month.

This week-end, to get the Clontz taste out of my mouth, I was reading about a relatively honest witness named Titus Oates. There is a biography of him, by Jane Lane, published in London in 1949, and on page 30, the author explains how Oates got started. She writes: "It was a most extraordinary thing, but no sooner did this young parson [Oates] come into contact with Papists, than they rushed to tell him their horrid secrets."

But there is no cause for despair, for one turns his head from this Clontz, as from a stench, and then his eyes fall on Junius Scales. There sits a white man, in the prisoner's dock, before an all-white jury and an all-white prosecuting staff, who was born and grew up right here in Greensboro, and who spent his whole life in the South. A man whose ancestors were Southern colonial judges and state governors and senators and admirals and generals; a man who grasped the truth of Marxism-Leninism and merged himself with the white working class of his own South and allied himself with the Negro people (and who has earned their fraternal embrace) and knows that in the power and the needs of those scores of millions—and the millions of other ordinary folk everywhere—lies the guarantee of freedom, equality and peace.

I write of this the same day that the news reaches us down here that Ben Davis, of Georgia, is free. That which, in our country and in the South, in our day, unites Junius Scales of North Carolina and Ben Davis of Georgia is that which no persecution can destroy. The truth that both independently found and to which both have dedicated their lives is the truth which will help save our country and set all free.

April 19

THE government rested its case today. After Clontz it presented one Childs, all of 24 years now. The F.B.I. had gotten its claws into him when he was 18, and ever since he has been informing. His testifying was a surprise—he said he had paid his Party dues three days before testifying.

Indeed, a couple of days ago he had met Juni in Chapel Hill and had greeted him warmly, hugging him, and had told Juni: "Gosh, I hope you win your case, old boy."

Here he was testifying for the prosecution. It developed that Juni had paid his initiation fee; this evoked broad grins from the prosecuting attorneys —imagine the silver coming from the crucified one! Amusing, is it not?

This young Childs—an enterprising lad, intent on making good—had gotten the F.B.I. to pay for his education, as it were. It appeared that it was his services as an informer which won him a deferment from the draft, and he himself swore that for the past three years, while at the University of North Carolina, the Department of Justice had been paying him $100 per month, plus expenses.

Much of his testimony actually tended to disprove the prosecution's own case (when he—and Clontz—were forced, in cross-examination, to testify to what they *did* in the Party, it turned out they helped expose the Ku Klux Klan, or worked to help elect Negro office-holders in North Carolina, or to get higher wages for workers), but apparently everything was preliminary to his sensational announcement—at a Party school, during a recreation period, an instructor had demonstrated, with the defendant present, of course, how to kill a man with a lead pencil. The witness demonstrated this before the jury, using the prosecutor as his model victim. The newspapers duly reported that Communist schools taught the art of murder!

It is apparent we need new slogans, to wit: Workers of all countries, unite, you have nothing to lose but your lead points!

Now, too, I understand the real meaning of a passage I once read in a biography of Stalin. There it was reported that, early in the Bolshevik revolution, a Red Army man asked Stalin, then editor of *Pravda,* whether or not he should take his rifle to some meeting, and that Stalin replied: "Well, I shall take my pencil."

The whole case of the prosecution was so absurd that one had to bring himself up sharply in terms of its deadly seriousness. At stake are several years out of the young and fruitful life of Scales and the meaning of this to his family and many devoted friends and comrades. And involved here, as in the case of Claude Lightfoot, was the reality of facing jail merely for membership in a political party. Involved, too, of course, is the Administration's effort to smear the whole labor movement, the Negro liberation movement, and the mounting disgust with the witch-hunting role of the Federal Bureau of Informers.

April 20

DEFENSE witnesses made their first appearance today. It is a sign of the turn against McCarthyism that two professors from the University of North Carolina—Fletcher M. Green of the History Department, and Raymond W. Adams of the English Department—were willing to appear and testify to the fact that to their knowledge Junius Scales' reputation on the campus had been one of honesty and sincerity—though at the prosecution's prodding both men added that they had felt him to be misguided. Substantially the same testimony was forthcoming from the Rev. Charles M. Jones of the Community Church in the university town of Chapel Hill. More notable is the fact that another professor sends Juni a check for $100 and writes: "You are a victim of hysteria and intolerance."

Of very great consequence was the appearance of Dr. Robert S. Cohen, Assistant Professor of Physics and Philosophy at Wesleyan University in Connecticut. Professor Cohen, whose very distinguished career makes almost incredible his youth (he is 32 years old), testified as a non-Communist scholar of Marxism-Leninism.

Speaking very much as in a classroom (one of the courses he teaches is on Marxism) Professor Cohen testified briefly, quietly and clearly as to the universal scope of Marxism, the various sources from whence it developed, its scientific nature, and the fact that it was democratic-minded. He spoke, too, of the growth of this body of thought, how it has changed in the course of growth, and how its application depended very much upon specific time and place. He stressed that the advocacy of violence was hostile to Marxism-Leninism and sought, also, to convey something of the respect with which this system was regarded among all serious scholars and thinkers.

The cross-examination of Professor Cohen was conducted in an exceedingly bitter and hostile manner, but it did not shake the scholar, nor did it cause him for a moment to lose his calm.

Professor Cohen, asked to explain why he, a non-Communist, had testified on behalf of the defendant, said that he believed that any citizen who possessed knowledge that might be helpful to the furtherance of justice ought to be willing to offer it; that he was disturbed by the grossly incorrect characterizations of Marxism-Leninism that he had read about in other cases as coming from prosecution witnesses and felt that these should be corrected, especially where the possible imprisonment of people was involved; that he believed these prosecutions of Communists were a major part of the growing restrictions against civil liberties in the country and that these

restrictions troubled him, as a citizen and scholar, very much; and that he felt the defense of the rights of Communists, as those most persecuted, was most crucial to the defense of the Bill of Rights. The young professor's integrity and courage and learning clearly impressed those in the very crowded courtroom.

Then came a moment of high drama. Mrs. A. M. Scales took the stand to speak in defense of her son. An elderly woman, conveying a sense of frailty and clearly under most intense strain, she nevertheless kept perfect control of herself. Indeed, when she was asked where and when she was born, she pointedly chose to answer the first question—Richmond—and to remain discreetly silent about her age.

Her testimony was brief and simple. The mother of three children and a resident of Greensboro since 1914, she spoke of her Junius with love and respect. Junius, she said, had chosen some fifteen years ago to leave his very well-to-do surroundings and throw in his lot with the working people. He had said he wanted to join the mill people, to see if he could take it, and to see if he could help make conditions for working people better. He had always been, she said, for the fellow on the bottom.

With the war, he had volunteered and served four years in the army. When she asked him if he were a Communist, he told her yes and this worried her for as she understood Communism she did not agree with it. And she asked him several times whether there was any truth to the Communists wanting to overthrow the government by violence and he had always said of course not, that was plain silly and she did not think he was stupid, did she? She knew that her son believed in socialism and that he had told her many times he was going to educate the people about socialism and that when enough of them wanted it, they would get it, and that until enough of them wanted it, right here in our country, we would not get it.

April 21

Douglas B. Maggs, Professor of Constitutional Law at Duke University in Durham, testified for the defense and showed informer Clontz to have lied in several respects. Professor Maggs, friend of Justices Black and Douglas, and one of the country's leading legal authorities on civil liberties, was dragged into the case by the prosecution deliberately in a smearing attempt. Clontz swore that Scales had told him to visit Professor Maggs and ask the professor if he would defend Scales should the latter be arrested under the Smith Act. Clontz further swore that Professor Maggs had told Clontz to tell

Scales that he would defend him. The professor, on the stand, swore that he had never discussed Scales at all with Clontz, that he had never been asked by anyone at any time to defend Scales and that he had never given any message of any kind to Clontz. The prosecution tried some baiting cross-examination of the professor, but coming out second best every time, dropped their questioning, and everyone in that courtroom knew that Clontz had lied—one more of Brownell's informers caught in the act in the courtroom itself.

When the defense rested, the summation began. The prosecution divided their two hours in half, and opened with an hour's illiterate, demagogic, and anti-Semitic harangue by one of the District Attorney's assistants.

Mr. David Rein, an extraordinarily competent and brave attorney from Washington, who was Scales' sole counsel, then addressed the jury for two hours. He showed the real and sordid motives of the government's stool-pigeons, he exposed the whole fabric of falsification, he reiterated the actual content of the ideas and summarized again the acts of the defendant throughout his adult life—acts in direct conflict with one conspiring or advocating forcible overthrow of the government. He told the jury of the momentous civil liberties issues involved in the case, and pleaded with them to put aside their anti-Communist prejudices and to bring in a verdict based on the credible evidence they had heard—doing which they would have to bring in a verdict of not guilty.

Mr. Rein was followed by a hour-long tirade from District Attorney Stanley—a tall, heavy, rather sallow complexioned man of perhaps 45. Mr. Stanley made a rip-snorting, arm-swinging, Huey Longish kind of speech. He was sweating, contorting, striding, shouting. When he said "book," it sounded like "butchery." He was full of phrases like: "right here in our own Greensboro"; "strange and vicious doctrines"; "made him sick deep down"; "no honor too high for Clontz and Childs"; "sinister force lurking in our own North Carolina." He whipped out his pencil and showed the jury once more how Scales had made a murderous weapon out of it; he wanted "to keep this the land of the free and the home of the brave"; he wanted this jury by its verdict to wipe Communism out forever in our own North Carolina. And he wanted to say something else and with this he said he'd be done. He wipes his face and gets right up close to the jury box. "I'm going to say to you something I've never said to a jury in all my years of practicing law. I don't just want you to convict this man, this viper, but I want you to go out of here and to come back, quick, with a

guilty verdict. I tell you I want a quick conviction, and I hope you'll give me that and show the world that Communism has no place in our own North Carolina."

In an hour and twenty-five minutes the jury returns and says that Junius Scales is guilty.

The judge says he will pass sentence tomorrow. Meanwhile, Scales will be held in jail and the court will reconvene in the morning.

April 22

AT 10 A.M. the court reconvenes. David Rein speaks briefly, appealing for a moderate sentence: this is a trial of ideas and in such cases errors are especially frequent; the defendant's character is good and he has been convicted of nothing previously; he served long and honorably in the army during World War II.

Junius Scales speaks before being sentenced. He talks perhaps five minutes, in a very low voice: I am innocent of the charges and so is my Party. Neither I nor my Party advocated the overthrow of the government by force and violence. This trial is a heresy trial, a medieval heresy trial. In this country, ideas must not be tried, and people must not be jailed for their ideas; we must take ideas out into the fresh air and let them be discussed. The prosecution's professional perjurers have said that I broke with my family and had no use for my father and mother. They lied there as elsewhere. My father, now dead, was a man of honor and loved freedom and though we did not see eye to eye we loved and respected each other. And my mother loved and loves freedom, too, as she understands it and we are devoted one to the other. I have broken with deceit and exploitation and the oppression of the Negro people and that is all I have broken with. Finally, I am proud of my Party which stands now as in the past in the front ranks fighting for freedom and peace and equal rights and the well-being of the workers and the farmers and, ultimately, yes, for socialism.

The prosecutor pleaded for a severe sentence—the man was unregenerate, not contrite and very dangerous.

His honor looked from side to side to see that all had had their say. Then he opened his mouth and he said: "I sentence you to jail for six years."

He denied bail, pending appeal, and instructed the marshal to convey the prisoner to his place of incarceration at once.

The marshal took Junius by the arm and started for this office. His

mother, and an Aunt Lucy—she disagreed with Junius, but loved him and stood by him—went after him. The marshal disappeared behind the door, making no effort to hold it open for the elderly women. I opened it for them and we followed Junius.

We got into an office and Junius was placed, at once, with terribly shocking suddenness, in a cage—not a cell, but a cage. His mother asked: "Is that necessary?" I asked the chief marshal if he could not be let out while he spoke to his mother for five minutes, before being hauled off to jail. "No. Who'll watch him?"

Juni sits on a stool, close up to the bars, puts his nose through and is able to see. He is smiling. Mrs. Scales is perilously close to tears and so is Aunt Lucy, but both gallantly fight them back.

"Juni," says the mother, "what can I bring you in prison?"

He thinks about the question. "Mom," he says, "you know that new translation I just got of Dante? Well, I'd like to have that. And, mom, bring me the two-volume *Joseph Andrews* by Fielding. You know, with the beautiful binding, mom, on the top shelf."

The marshal wants to know if I'm a relative and when he learns I'm not he orders me out.

Several of us wait in the hall. In a few minutes, Juni comes out, handcuffed, and held by two marshals. He looks for friendly eyes. He sees several and mine, too. And in his eyes, as always, a youthful eagerness, a sweetness, a gentleness, and a confidence.

A cold-war criminal, 1955, has been given his day in court and his years in jail. How long, dear friends? How long, dear country?

Junius Scales is now in the Forsyth County Jail, Winston-Salem, N. C., and he is allowed to receive letters, so please write to him. It would be very helpful, too, if our readers would write to Attorney-General Brownell, in Washington, and ask him to withdraw his Department's opposition to the granting of bail to Mr. Scales, pending the appeal of his conviction. [*Editors*]

THE DREAMER

A Short Story

By PHILLIP BONOSKY

"I KNEW it! I knew it!" she cried, making a wild grab for his dark hair, bushy with curls, and anchoring her fist in it. "I swear to God I knew it when I gave you them spy-glasses. Something kept telling me to stop and think, *think* what you're doing—but you got me so dragged down with your pestering that I couldn't think no more! And now you went and lost them!" She pulled his head back by the curls, baring his teeth in a pained smile. "Now Donny is sure going to break your bones when he finds out!"

"You won't tell, Mama!" he cried, twisting gently to ease her grip.

"How did you lose them?" she cried, despairingly. "How *could* you lose them spy-glasses that was around your neck tied to a cord! Your head stayed on, so how could you lose them?"

"I took them off, Mama, to see the game."

"Took them off! *Took them off!* Didn't you know if you took them off you'd be sure to forget them somehow? Don't you know by now you're a dreamer?" She shook his head back and forth, and the curls shook too. "Them glasses cost Donny $10.98, and he's going to break every bone in your body, see if he don't! Didn't he tell you *never* to take his glasses? Didn't he tell you that?"

"*You* gave them to me, Mama!"

She slapped his face. "Didn't you make me give them to you, didn't you, with your whining and begging and making my life miserable? Did *I* lose them? Do *I* go somewhere and leave my precious things behind because I'm dreaming and dreaming all the time? Do I?"

He tried to shake his head, but she held it too tightly.

"I'll go back and hunt for them," he said.

"Go back! Go back! With all them thousands of loafers at the ballgame, every one of them a crook just waiting for some dreamer like you to come along and leave behind their glasses! Why, all you'd do is forget something else if you went! From now on, I'm not going to let you out of this house with nothing

but your pants and your shirt, and I'm not even going to let you go out with your good shoes! You already forgot one pair of shoes this summer, and no more! No more!"

"I found the shoes," he said, "later."

"Ruined, ruined," she moaned. "Filled full of muck and frogs eggs where you threw them in the pond!"

"I promise, Mama!"

She shook his head once more and then helplessly let it go. "Promise," she said gloomily. "What good is a promise from a dreamer!" She went to the copper kettle where she was brewing whisky and looked into the bottle beneath the coils steadily filling drop by drop. "I just hate to think when Donny comes home!" she grumbled. She examined the copper coils. "He's going to tear you apart, and I'm not going to say a word! I'm just going to go into the next room and not care if he kills you! It'll learn you maybe not to dream away your life."

He stood tragically in the middle of the kitchen, his outspread hair slowly settling around his head.

"You'll see!" she said ominously. "You'll see! It cost him $10.98 to buy them spy glasses and he's going to be wanting to use them to go to the ball-game, and then he's going to ask me, 'Where's them glasses, Ma?' And do you know what I'm going to say?" She looked over to him, while he hung on to her eyes as though the moment had already arrived and the verdict was about to be delivered. "I'm going to *tell* him —that's what I'm going to do!" she said emphatically. "I'm going to say to him—" and she pointed her heavy arm with its faded thick forefinger at him and he shivered—" 'It's him, the Dreamer!' That's all I'm going to say, the exact words, and then I'm going to walk into the next room and let him do what he wants to do with you."

"He'll kill me!" he said flatly.

"Don't I know it? Don't I know it? Wouldn't you? *Wouldn't you?*" she chided.

He hung his head.

SHE mumbled to herself, picked up a bottle and began to wrap it in newspaper. "How could you forget?" she cried, once again, turning suddenly on him almost with a desperate hope in her eyes. "What do you dream about?"

He shrugged painfully and knitted his brows.

"I don't remember, Mama! I *try* to remember, and I sometimes do remember right up to the minute I forget! I just was thinking about something and when I got half-way home I remembered I'd forgotten the spy glasses." He looked at her anxiously. "I almost did remember, Mama!"

"Almost!" she echoed mournfully. "Almost!"

She tied the bottle with white string and brought it over to him and took hold of his hair. She brought his head into exact position to receive her instructions, and held it secure. "Now, listen to me!" she shouted. "Take this to Rafferty's, and bring back $2.50! And don't forget! Don't dream! If you do, don't come home, because I'll skin you alive! Don't leave the bottle with him if he don't have the money. And whatever you do," she said, accenting each word with a jerk, *"don't start to dream!* Do you understand?"

He held very still until the grip on his hair loosened.

"Two dollars and fifty cents," she repeated. "And I want to see every penny of it! If he don't have the money bring it right back again! And don't take pity on him no matter what he says! And don't talk to nobody, and don't tell nobody where you've been. You want to be arrested?" she demanded.

"No, Mama!"

"Well, then, if you don't want to be arrested, don't dream!"

She gave his head another shake and let him loose. She followed him to the door, and before she opened it she ran her big comb through his hair, shaped it with her hands, and pushed him out of the door.

"Remember!" she flung at him, as he left the house, the newspaper-wrapped bottle held with both hands to his chest, and he nodded.

After he had left, she rushed to the window and stared at him as he walked slowly down the alley. "My God," she groaned. "He's not even going the right way!" She ran out on the porch and screamed: "Joey, Joey! Not that way!" But he had already turned around the board fence and didn't hear. She fell back on the porch swing, which creaked as she fell on it, and a glazed look came over her eyes. She sat stock-still there until she spied his hesitating form coming back up the alley again. She leaped to her feet and ran to the gate, her mouth open about to scream. But when he saw her his face broke into a radiant smile of triumph and he cried happily: "Mama! I remembered!"

She closed her mouth again and sagged down as he passed by with an air of such self-confidence that something like terror took hold of her heart.

"If he comes back with just two dollars," she promised the air, "I'll not say anything!"

She went back into the kitchen, and making sure that the blinds were still down and no passerby could catch her at work, she descended to the small cellar which was hollowed out of the earth under the kitchen, and there she picked up a

sack of sugar crystals and brought it upstairs. The crystals in the bag ground together as she climbed.

WHILE she was busy mixing mash, Donny, who was about sixteen, entered the house.

"Close the door!" she said sharply, and hastily he shut it. Then, remembering the lost binoculars, her tone relented and she said: "There's cake, Donny. You can have some."

He went swiftly to the cupboard and brought down a plate on which half a chocolate layer cake lay exposed. "Leave some for Joey," she said grudgingly. Then she added: "What happened?"

"I told him I was eighteen, and he said: 'Show me your birth certificate!' So I said, 'The church where I was baptized burned down!' "

"So what'd he say?" she asked marosely.

"He said, 'Bring me the ashes.' "

"Smart aleck," she said crossly. "Don't you *look* eighteen? Ain't you as big as any eighteen year old? What do they want? How much brains does it take to dig out them cellars—a college education?"

She heated some coffee for him and brought a cup over to the table.

"Did you act smart with him?"

"No, Ma. I just spoke to him like I'm speaking to you right now. I said what you told me, *like* you told me, and he just said: 'Bring me the ashes.' "

"Smart aleck," she repeated tartly. "By the time you get to be eighteen, we can all be dead. I'm always cooking and cooking and still I can't make enough to live off decent."

"Did you have to pay another fine?" he asked solicitously.

"Twenty-five dollars," she said crossly. "I told the magistrate that if you get a job, I'll quit making it! But he just had his eyes on the $25 and didn't hear what I was saying about *that*—and *him*," she said with fiery contempt, "he drinks like a fish! He'll drop dead some day right in the middle—just you watch and see!"

"Where's Joey?" Donny asked, to change the subject.

"Who knows?" she said fiercely at him. "Dreaming, dreaming! You go out later and see if you can find him and bring him home. He has to bring back $2.50 for me too."

"Why don't you smack him?" he advised.

"Now, don't you go talking like that!" she cried at him. "He can't help it if he was born that way! And don't you keep on hitting him and mauling him the way you do! Just because he's a dreamer! There's nothing you can do about it till he grows up, and then maybe he'll wake up."

"He'd lose his head if it wasn't

tied on his neck," Donny said complacently.

"And I'll knock yours off!" she cried.

She stirred the mixture in the kettle, and examined the progress in the new bottle she had placed beneath the coils. "If I get three quartes," she mumbled, "I'l be satisfied."

There was a knock on the door and the piece of cake approaching Donny's mouth froze, and the hand that was stirring the kettle stopped. "Stand in front of it," she ordered, and Donny got up hastily and put a chair in front of the coils and stood before the kettle, hiding it with his body. She went to the door and pulled the shade a little. Then she opened it a crack.

"Are you the lady of the house?" said a young man, reaching behind for a suitcase which, until that moment, had remained obscure.

"Yes," she said hesitantly.

"Well, Madame," the man said. "I have here a floor cleaner," he said, raising a yellow bottle in which a liquid bubbled as he spoke, "a cleaner just new on the market that disposes of soap and cleans a kitchen floor in half the time you ever did it before!"

"Not interested," she said.

"Of *course* not!" the salesman granted easily. "*Naturally* not! You haven't see it work yet, how *could* you be interested?" He pushed gently against the door, and she leaned her weight on it from the opposite side. "Now, if you'll just let me give you a free demonstration—"

She hugged the door, while he kneed it.

"Go away," she cried. "Not interested."

"It won't cost you a cent," he grunted, his face growing red. "Not a cent! No obligation! No investment necessary except your precious time!" He pushed a trifle more, hintfully, and she braced herself.

"Donny!" she cried.

He ran to her aid, and yelled: "Go way, my mother don't want your stuff!"

The salesman's eyes widened; he gritted his teeth which had never ceased to smile, and then suddenly gave up. The door slammed in his face. They stood against it, panting, and listened until he left the porch.

"DO YOU think it was a agent?" she asked, half to herself. "I'm going to get a dog," she said, sneaking the blind up a little and gazing out. Donny returned to his cake, drank his coffee, and then went into the next room. In a moment there came a roar from it.

"Mama!" he cried. "My spy-glass case is empty!"

In the kitchen she braced herself and shouted back: "Look around the room. Maybe it fell out somewhere!"

After a moment his voice returned,

on a note of agony. "Nowhere! I can't find it nowhere!"

"Look! Look!" she ordered. "It must be lost somewheres!"

He came out of the bed-room into the kitchen, holding the empty case in his hands and cried: "Joey took it and lost it! I know it! I know it! I'm going to murder him! I'm going to kill him! This is the last time. I told him, I told him to keep his hands off my spy-glasses!"

"Shut up!" she ordered. "How do you know it was Joey?"

"Who else?" he demanded violently. "Who else but him? I'm going to beat his head so hard this time he'll never forget! I'll kill him!"

"You're not going to touch him!" she cried. "He didn't have nothing to do with them glasses." She wiped her hands on her apron, lifted the apron to her brow and wiped it. "I did," she said. "I took them glasses down town," she said firmly, "and sold them. That's what I did!"

He gaped at her, unable to speak; then he repeated brokenly: "Sold them! *You* sold my glasses! Sold my glasses!"

"Well," she cried at him belligerently, "what was I going to do? How do you think I got the money to pay for that cake you were eating? When I had to pay that $25 fine, I had to have money from somewheres to pay Schlemmer. Do you want to live out in the alley?" she demanded, "or in a house? So I sold the glasses," she said. "I got $10 for them."

"You had no right to sell *my* glasses!" he cried. "They were mine! I *worked* to get the money! I paid for them out of my own money!"

"*Your* money!" she said offended. "And where do you think your food and your clothes and this house come from?"

"I worked and saved to buy them glasses!" he said tragically. "I saved for *three* months! You're just like a thief!" he said bitterly, coming up to her. "Go down and get them back!" he cried, lifting his hand.

She suddenly grew white and rigid. "Are you lifting your hand to me, your own mother?" she demanded.

He let him arm fall. "I don't care. I don't care. You stole it, just like a crook!"

"And don't it matter to you if we don't have nothing to eat?" she cried again.

"They were my glasses," he said stubbornly. "You stole them. I don't have no rights. I go out looking for work all day long, and when I come home, what do I find? You stole my glasses and sold them!"

"Oh, them puny useless glasses!" she said. "You talk like they were part of your blood I was taking. I'll get them back in a month."

"*Now!*" he said. "Now! I want them now!"

"Now!" she cried. "With what?

Air? You need money! Do I have money?"

There were bitter tears in his eyes, and he turned away from her and walked to the table where he sat down and stared at a plate.

"I have no rights," he said. "Only Joey has rights, and he makes all kinds of trouble, but you never do nothing to him. You don't care what happens to me. You send me out to work when I'm not even eighteen yet, and yet you go and steal my glasses. You're no mother to me. This ain't no home to me. I'm going to leave, see if I don't. I'll go on the bum. I'll go on the bum, and you can sit here making your hooch and kissing dear little Joey, but you won't get nothing from me any more! I'll go out and make my own living, see if I don't."

"You leave this house and you better never come back!" she cried.

"Who cares?" he said bitterly, looking at her. His brown, thin face was marked with tears, and his yellow eyes were filled with them. "I don't call this no home! And you're no mother—you're a bootlegger; and you go to jail and everybody knows it! They all call you a bootlegger, and they know when you go to jail, and I hear all about it! I don't even play with my gang here; I have to go way across town. I wanted them glasses to see the game and to go out in the woods and look for things. That's all the pleasure I get, and now you went and sold them! If you don't care for me, why should I care for you?"

She, too, sat down on a chair, and in a moment she was sobbing.

"It's too much," she wept. "It's too much! I can't go on any more!"

He didn't look at her.

She made a ball of her apron and padded her eyes.

"You talk as if I was your worst enemy and not as if I gave birth to you and fed you and brought you up, best way I could, after Daddy died. Did you want me to go out and clean people's places? I had to make whisky so I could stay home with you and see you got to school in the mornings and have supper for you when you came home! I'd never let my kids come home to a empty house! Never! My place was here taking care of you. Think I could do that working for somebody else in somebody else's house?"

"I didn't ask you to," he said.

"No, no," she said with bitter agreement. "You didn't ask to be born and I didn't ask to have you, but you're here anyhow making my life a misery! You're even big enough to raise your hand at me!"

"I don't care," he said. "I don't care."

They fell into a heavy silence, in which they could hear the steady drip of the whisky as it filled the

bottle. The blue flame of the gas drew both their eyes and they stared moodily as it burned.

THERE was the noise of feet on the porch, and then a slight knock. The door-knob turned and the door opened slowly. Joey stepped inside, and stood at the door, his big eyes staring at his mother.

When she turned to look at him, she let out a gasp and then a shriek: "Oh, my God," she cried. "What did you do to your hair? What happened to your hair?"

She burst into wild tears and flung her face into her apron, as though this were a final blow. Joey looked sadly at her and then at Donny. "She was always pulling it," he explained. "So I told the barber to cut it all off."

"You little dope!" Donny snarled. "He shoulda cut off your head!"

Joey looked from him to his mother; then his face paled and he went to his mother and put his hand on her shoulder. "Don't cry," he said. "It's summer and it makes my head feel cool. Besides," he added, "you won't have to pay money for haircuts all summer long!"

"Why did you do it?" she moaned, removing the apron from her face and gazing at the glassy naked dome. "All that nice, beautiful hair, like your Papa's! Why did you do it?"

"So you won't pull it any more," he said gently. "You couldn't help it, Mama. Everybody likes to touch it, or pull it, or something. Now they can't."

Donny got up from his chair and went to the door.

"You cry more about his lousy hair," he declared, "than you do about my spy-glasses! That shows how much *you* care!" And with that he slammed out of the house.

Joey sought for his mother's eyes, and whispered: "He found out?"

She nodded.

"But he didn't hit me!" he said incredulously.

"He don't know you did it," she said mournfully. "I told him I took it and sold it." She reached her hand out to grasp something, saw it falter in the air, and then drop helplessly into her lap again. "I told him I went and sold it."

"Mama, was he sore at you?"

"He wanted to hit me," she said gravely, "but he didn't."

His face paled, and he stared at her with stricken eyes: "Oh, Mama!" he cried.

"He said he's going to run away," she said.

"*I'll* be with you," he answered.

She drew him toward her, and laid his head in her lap. She pressed her fingers on his head and ran them along the bluish dome.

"Oh, never mind," she said. "He won't do it."

"Mama!" he said violently, "when I can work, we'll get out of here! You'll see! I'll take you somewhere I know of, Mama! It's a real place I know of!"

"Oh, when you grow up!" she said. "You, too. Just like him."

"No, Mama!" he cried. "I thought it all out. You'll see where I'll take you. I know of a place," he said mysteriously.

"Where?" she said smiling at him. "The Poor House?"

"No, Mama!" he said, in agony. "A real place I know of," he repeated dreamily. "You'll see: it's a white house."

"So I'll have to get it painted every year," she said.

"No, I'll paint it," he declared. "You won't have to get anyone at all. All you'll do is cook."

"And not wash your clothes and worry about you?"

"No," he said. "Just cook. There'll be a garden, too."

"And I'll have to break my back digging in it," she said.

"No, no, Mama," he said impatiently. "There'll just be flowers there! Don't you see? And there'll be a pond where our ducks can go and swim."

"Ducks," she said. "And I'll have to feed them and clean their coops."

"Oh, Mama!" he wailed. "You won't have to do anything! That's why I'm taking you, don't you know?"

"What else will there be?" she said, looking down into his eager, transfixed eyes. "What else did you dream, little dope? What else?"

"We'll have chickens and a tree where we'll have a hammock. Sit still, Mama," he ordered as she made a motion to get up. "Listen to me! Don't you want to hear?"

"Go on," she said. "Will this happen before I die?"

"Soon, soon," he assured her passionately. "There'll be a river there where we can ride in a boat and fish; and there'll be a little island in the middle of the river where we can go and nobody will know we're there! You can stay all day just hunting for wild flowers and eating sandwiches and laying still in the grass!"

She sighed from her depths. "Just for a day!" she said. "Just for one day!"

He looked up at her gratefully. "No, all the rest of your life," he pronounced.

"And what else will there be there?" she asked, looking sadly at him.

"Something you like," he said.

"Something I like? What?"

"Miles and miles of cloth so you can sew dresses and things," he said.

"And what else?"

"And minnows," he said, "and big gold fish."

They fell silent for a moment.

"Do you like that, Mama?" he asked, nudging her gently.

"It's a nice dream," she answered.

"But it'll be real, Mama!"

She sighed, and then began to weep again. He looked at her, shocked.

"MY DREAMER," she said. She placed her hands over his shriven head and mourned: "All gone. All that beautiful hair, all gone!" She pulled him to her and began to weep more: "Donny's left me, and you, too, went and cut off your hair. I'm mean to you, I'm no mother to you! I was mean to Donny and he ran away, and I was always pulling your hair, and you cut it off. I deserve it, I deserve it! You don't care for me."

"Oh, Mama," he cried. "It'll grow back! You'll see—it'll grow back, and you can pull it all you want!"

She looked down at him with tear-filled eyes, lifted her apron, turned to look at the kettle, and let out a sudden tragic cry, jumping up at the same time. Joey looked at her, startled and frightened.

"Oh, God," she cried, running to the still, from which the liquor had kept dripping; it had filled up the bottle and had begun to spread over the floor. She whipped the bottle away and stuck a new empty one in its place. She fell down on her knees and began to wipe up the spilled liquor.

He stood in the middle of the floor, his hands helplessly at his sides, staring at the ruin.

When she caught sight of him, she suddenly flared: "You, standing there. Get me the mop!" and when he handed her the mop, she cried: "That's what I get, a big fool like me, listening to a dreamer! My God, what's happened to my brains?"

He looked at her helplessly, until she rose painfully onto her feet, wrung the mop out into the sink which smelled dizzily of alcohol. She returned to the table and sat down, staring at the coils, at the dripping alcohol, at the blue fire with its yellow point.

Finally she stirred and turned to him.

"Where's the money you got from Rafferty's?" she asked.

He brought a pile of coins out of his pocket and handed them silently over to her. She began to count them.

"There's only two dollars here!" she suddenly cried, finishing the count.

His face turned smaller and paler than ever. She looked at him: "Where's the other fifty cents?"

For a moment he could not answer and then turning up his face to her bleakly whispered: "I gave it to the barber, Mom, to cut off my hair."

TV:
Mickey Mouse Revolution

SOMETIME in October this year, a month often honored for such occasions, a revolution will take place. The entire television world knows of its coming, but is aware of its impotence before it. Howdy Doody, no doubt, has already turned grey in face of the known future. Pinky Lee's happy lisp is edged with terror. All local TV stations featuring their own programs everywhere in the United States are ready for unconditional surrender. For Walt Disney and his animated hoards will take over the networks daily from five to six PM beginning with the Fall of 1955.

This will be Mr. Disney's second television revolution in little more than a year and since we can learn something from his first great effort, *Disneyland,* it might be advisable to review some recent history.

Until the advent of *Disneyland* on ABC, most of TV's large minds had concluded that certain conditions must be met to produce a successful (commercial, that is; highly rated, that means) children's show. The large minds asserted the dictum: action, noise, pratfalls, screams, funny hats and, wherever needed, the gravy of violence spells juvenile entertainment. Quality was unnecessary. Any feeling of moral responsibility to a children's audience was shunned. And wasn't it true that "the little monsters will watch any lousy western" or poorly painted marionette or seedy ex-burlesque comic? Follow the formula, concluded the large minds, and the money will follow you.

So they made a mistake.

Walt Disney (somewhat like an A-Bomb, exploding first and thundering sometime later) presented his *Disneyland* in the Fall of 1954. It was not very long afterward that *Disneyland* had become the top show on Wednesday night and one of the top shows on the air. His "children's" entertainment had ruined several adjacent (in time and opposing channel) adult shows. One of his victims was Arthur Godfrey and that alone ought to prove that Disney has acted in the best interests of mankind.

The substantial basis of *Disneyland* is the old and forthcoming Walt Disney film presentations originally

made for theatrical distribution. These are skillfully edited into an hour-long show with enough special film "shot" to coordinate and adapt the film for TV presentation. Since, as every TV viewer knows, most live shows offered are rather poor and most movie shows rather old and poor, *Disneyland* made a deep nationwide audience impression because of its great comparative quality. (After all, every thing offered on *Disneyland* was up to the standards of Walt Disney.) His nature films are among the very best done. His graceful plugs for forthcoming Disney movies are entertaining and educational, as he shows how underwater photography is accomplished or how an animated cartoon is made. Yet, most of this is old Disney—tested and true.

The new Disney on TV brought us (as if you didn't know) that great hero, that legend, that oversight of history, Davy Crockett. So enormous was the audience response to the three-part serial presentation of Davy Crockett that children all over the United States have crowned him King of the New Frontier. Daniel Boone is nobody, Superman will have to hustle to stay alive, and such as Paul Bunyan will have to go out and get themselves press agents. Davy Crockett via W.D. is the young people's hero of the decade.

All of this, Mr. Disney accomplished with only one hour of network time. This fall he will have six hours. The revolution will be complete. Children within the range of TV will live in a Mickey Mouse culture. Almost as if he senses the import of his coup, Walt Disney has erected a great entertainment area named "Disneyland," after his Wednesday night TV show. It will be a concrete version of all Disney creations and peopled by Disney characters. It will feature "rides," etc., a sort of Disney Coney Island. This California shrine to the world he is making will welcome in the young tourists at so much per head and it ought to gross millions each year. (Mr. Disney will also keep his studios there—so no matter how you slice it, the economics are quite sound.)

In his new daily TV venture, Mr. Disney will present Mickey Mouse as his master of ceremonies, to introduce cartoons and other features. Among these will even be a special daily newsreel tailored to the young audience.

THERE is no doubt at all that the Disney efforts will raise the general level of TV, especially the level now offered to children in a mass sense. (There are and have been many exceptionally good TV presentations for young audiences. Most of these, unfortunately, and without ex-

amining the reasons, never garnered a mass audience.) But for all Disney's triumph, American parents will be plunged even more deeply into the TV dilemma.

Conservative statistics tell us that children watch TV a minimum of twenty-one hours a week. (Time enough to go to the movies seven times a week.) With Mr. Disney's ability to gather the young on the living room floor, children from Portland, Me., to Fresno, Calif., will be gripped very firmly by the simultaneous pleasure of Mickey Mouse and Davy whatever-his-name is. Regional culture, regional experiences will give more ground to television's great levelling hand. In a way it almost seems natural. In the H-Bomb U.S.A., we develop a Mickey Mouse culture, a television world for the next generation where everything is slick, idealized and fast moving. (Children, I'm afraid, will be utterly delighted with the animated circus.) Children, unfortunately, lack experience. In a contemporary world which is unbelievably complex, our young people need to learn about themselves and their relationship to real life. No adequate means have been devised in this school-short country to equip children with the tools they certainly will need to survive emotionally, economically or physically.

In face of this, television offers idealized experience in place of actual experience; it replaces the latter with the former. Children who watch enough TV absorb ideas about everything under the sun. Since they learn these things by seeing ("experiencing") them, children often feel that they have accumulated actual experience. Of course, this is untrue, and while a six-year-old has notions on which automobile to purchase, proper ways of committing murder and who the great figures of history are (Davy Crockett and Eisenhower) is it not much closer to the truth to say that the TV generation may become a passive generation? A generation acted upon but impaired in its ability to act?

Before the advent of Disney, children could outgrow the nonsense of plain stupid TV. But *Disneyland,* together with the *Mickey Mouse Club,* and many more Hollywood slick productions to come along the Disney trail, will keep the kids sitting on the floor. Living in this kind of electronic fantasy, children will be in the position of Alice after she went through the looking glass. There is no way to go forwards unless you go backwards. Parents will have to start helping their children discover experience. As tough as it may be, Daddy and Mommy will have to go fishing, play ball, develop hobbies and read books and involve the children. (Will they?)

Disney has improved TV, no doubt

about it. The Mickey Mouse culture has come. It almost seems that a great tender concern for the welfare of the children has sprung up spontaneously. Keep 'em laughing, keep 'em happy, keep 'em out of the kitchen, while somebody tries to cook up a great big war.

Anyway, as the boys on Madison Avenue say, it's free. But, without any fruitless notion that we can turn our backs on this seductive medium, which were it in the hands of the people could be of such enormous value, can the American family merely resign itself to the Mickey Mouse revolution?

V.H.F.

Two Opinions on a Novel

Editors, *M&M:*

Unanimity of opinion on a novel cannot be expected. Sometimes, however, one feels impelled to defend a novel that has been reviewed in an unsatisfactory manner. Phillip Bonosky's review of *Morning, Noon and Night* was, for me, a review of that sort. Honest novels of working class life are rare and should be cherished. Novels of human struggle, novels impregnated with the worth of human beings, are equally rare.*

Despite the high respect with which Bonosky regards most of *Morning, Noon and Night,* he belabored it for fully half his review in a manner I found both astonishing and confusing. The author's use of interior monologue, Bonosky asserted, may be a sound literary method for revealing the interior thoughts of middle class characters or complicated characters, or neurotic characters, but not Communists. This is less than enlightening! Are Communists without complications, or a flow of inner consciousness? Why may not an author, presenting Communist characters, describe their thinking?

Moreover, Bonosky asserts, the use of interior monologue is "naturalistic." Without explaining why, he uses the word naturalistic as a stick with which to beat half to death a book that he previously asserted was only "the first volume of what promises to be a remarkable work."

Indeed, in my own opinion also, *Morning, Noon and Night* promises to be a very remarkable work. It is clearly the nature of present

* *Morning, Noon and Night,* by Lars Lawrence (G. P. Putnam's Sons, $3.95) was reviewed by Phillip Bonosky in the December, 1954, issue.

day commercial publishing that caused it to be published, not as a whole, with its characters and narrative fully unfolded, but piece-meal, with several volumes yet to come. But what a beginning! In my opinion, the only successful collective novel ever written. In the opinion of Dalton Trumbo "a fine, moving, and wholly admirable work of art." It deserved better, much better, of the reviewer of *M&M*. The negative criticism was out of proportion for as fine and extraordinary a novel of class struggle as this!

Albert Maltz

Editors, *M&M:*

I welcome Albert Maltz' letter and hope it will stimulate further discussion about the very real and important questions which I think the book raises. With Maltz' comments in mind I reread the book, and though I continue to share with all readers their satisfaction that the book appeared, I still feel that my previous criticisms expressed in my review are essentially valid. What were my criticisms?

1) The language which the Mexican-Americans are presumed to speak and think in is an invented English, characterized primarily by including the article "the" where normally it would not be, as in "He had the weakness." This patois has become standard now, and only feeds the stereotype. The Mexicans we see in the book are gentle, quaint, "earthy," unspoiled children, speaking a colorful patois.

2) the synthetic hardboiled narrative prose, "documentary" in form, but inhuman in essence, which one is led to accept at first since it is used to serve up the villains and so is suited to them. But when it comes to the "good" people it finds itself a bit embarrassed.

3) Of course, I have no objection a priori to the use of the "interior monologue," only to the actual content. In my review I cited an example of what I meant. To cite another example, I refer to the "monologue" which the author uses to convey the inner life of Tranquilino, a leading Communist character. The author, in my view, fails here as in other places to convey the essential truth of Communist character. I say this not because, as some assert, I believe in idealized, that is to say falsified, characters in novels, but because I believe the author's naturalistic method, using coarse images echoed from the prevailing commercialized style of the "tough school," cannot convey a truthful literary image of what typifies Communists.

The whole picture of Ham Turner is another case in point. Perhaps, as I suggested in my review, Ham Turner is destined for another role in

a later volume. I don't know. As I meet him in this volume, he's a pathetic, cowardly, helpless person whom it is difficult to see seriously in the role of a Communist Section Organizer in Reata or anywhere.

But perhaps these two are exceptions? Ramon, the Mexican "romantic" Communist, who is a fugitive, also meditates: "Privately Ramon thought heroes were a lot of mierda. But maybe they were necessary too, to make the people weep, to make them laugh, to make grow the party—as mierda was necessary to grow the corn."

How is this "mierda" conception of heroes to be taken? Merely as the opinion of Ramon—a sympathetic and leading Communist?

4) Maltz says I use the word "naturalistic" to beat the book half to death. It's not my method, it's Lawrence's. *He* beat the book half to death with it. I was prepared in advance to receive the book sympathetically because of its subject matter. Lawrence had a receptive reader. But he lost him, for he constantly outrages his ideas about Communists, working people, oppressed people and how they think and talk, and —finally—the mannered prose which speaks in its own way about life.

Despite these weaknesses, I want to repeat what I said in my original review: that I consider this an important book, which merits a wide audience.

Phillip Bonosky