

WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!

**ANDREI
ZHDANOV**

SELECTED WORKS

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ANDREI ZHDANOV

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AN OUTSTANDING BOLSHEVIK FORGED IN THE STEEL OF REVOLUTION

— *N. Ribar* —

*(Published in "Historic Mission" on the Occasion of
the 127th Anniversary of the Birth of Comrade
Zhdanov)*

Andrei Alexandrovich Zhdanov was born on February 26, 1896 in Mariupol — 127 years have passed since his birth. In such a great span of time, one must go back all those years to formulate a synthesis of his life's work and achievements.

At just 16 (1912), he joined the Russian revolutionary movement and at 19 (1915) became a member of the great Bolshevik Party to which he dedicated his life. On the eve of and throughout the October Revolution and Civil War, he was to distinguish himself for his outstanding capabilities as an organizer and disciple of the great Lenin — he became a member of the Tver committee of the Party in 1916, conducted rigorous Party work with the 139th Reserve Regiment of the Russian Army in Shadrinsk in 1917, became a member of the regimental committee and the chairman of the first Soviet in Shadrinsk after the February Revolution, became the chairman of the Shadrinsk committee of the Party in August 1917, did extensive political work among the Red Army in the Urals and Tver and was editor of the newspaper *Tverskaia Pravda* from 1918 to 1920, and became the chairman of the Tver provincial executive committee in 1922.

After the death of Lenin in 1924, he immediately sprung up as one of the most devoted cadres in support of the popular Soviet government against the unpopular and nihilistic Opposition, the Bloc of Trotskyites and Rights. From 1924 to 1934 he was secretary of the Nizhny Novgorod provincial Party committee and secretary of the Gorky regional committee of the CPSU(B). Recognized at once for his tireless work, he became a candidate member of the Central Committee of the CPSU(B) at the 14th Congress in 1925, and became a full member at the 16th Congress in 1930. Serving as Secretary of the CC of the CPSU(B) on ideology starting in 1934, he gave a speech at the 1st All-Union Congress of Soviet Writers that year — exposing bourgeois ideology in literature for its bankruptcy and elaborating some key tents of the new writer. He stated that there is nowhere to be inspired in bourgeois society, that the writer sees poverty, misery and unemployment, such a decline and decay also reflecting on the character of the work writers produce — they either accurately reflect what they are seeing, fixed in some sort of spirit of dread or conjure up some wild deformation of life to make it “tolerable.” The former represents the exploited intellectual who is by nature pessimistic, while the latter represents the higher strata that have sold out their pens even further, hiding the ills of a decaying mode of production. Seeing that all art is ideological art (as it reflects a certain social basis and formation in the individual regardless of one’s consciousness of it), the subject of the new literature must be the new

Soviet man, their productive and creative activity, etc., and, in the words of the great Stalin, only those writers can become “engineers of the human soul.” To the individuals who decry any deviation from “art for art’s sake,” arguing for an ideological-less art, it can only be said, as Comrade Zhdanov does, that the ideology of socialist art is merely the end of all exploitation, to free man from all yokes and class oppressions. See the real life, the real struggles, the real heroism, the real progressive class and its future successes, and only then can the individual be imbued with a socialist-oriented educational art. Can such a thing possibly be inferior to eclectic, unclear and “escapist” art? Hardly so. Lastly, Comrade Zhdanov makes clear that as bourgeois society has thrown all the artistic gains made against the medievalists asunder, it is the work of the worker and communist artists to lift that banner and carry it forward.

In February 1935, Comrade Zhdanov achieved the role of candidate member of the Political Bureau of the CC of the CPSU(B). In this position, he delivered a key report on February 27, 1937, one which has been subject to ruthless suppression since the day it was uttered by various enemies of the Bolshevik Party, both externally and internally. It was a session that took up the issue of bureaucracy inside the Party, and notably, not Stalin, but Zhdanov, delivered the main report. One section of the resolution published in the March 6, 1937 *Pravda* stemming from the final report stated:

“Whereas formerly the elections of the in-

intermediate and higher organs of Soviet power were indirect, now under the new Constitution all Soviets, from village and city Soviets to the Supreme Soviet, will be elected immediately by the citizens by direct elections.

“Whereas formerly deputies to the Soviets were elected by open ballot and by lists, now deputies will be elected by secret ballot, and not by lists but by individual candidatures nominated in each electoral area.”

That is, it would be the base that would choose all the candidates for election and not the Party, a truly democratic form of people’s power that would have enshrined the equal right of all to elect and be elected for the first time. Such a resolution faced stubborn resistance from the bureaucracy within the Bolshevik Party, and they soon found their pretext to never put it into place: the unveiling of Trotskyite and Right elements and the beginning of the so-called Yezhovschina. As is known, Yezhov later admitted to committing grave excesses, concealing facts from the Party leadership and actively deceiving them as to what the dangers were. In Comrade Zhdanov’s report to the 18th Congress on party building, he touches on this grave issue and how to rectify it, without using so many words as to name the main perpetrators. Still, that scare made the Soviet leaders back off this resolution and believe in the need for temporary stability with the Party at the head. But no doubt, if such a resolution was implemented it would have certainly meant the lessening of the chance for a negative event to occur

such as that after Stalin's death. When the power of the country lies with the absolute and equal right of each elector to be elected, it becomes much more difficult for a bureaucratic gang to impose usurpation of power from above. Nevertheless, this resolution authored by Comrade Zhdanov was a first in the history of the world, a watershed, and informed later socialist projects which have embarked on such a correct method of democracy and debureaucratization.

If before the Great Patriotic War Zhdanov's work was history-making, it would be during and after the war that would define his legacy. On the eve of the war in 1939, he became a full member of the Political Bureau of the CC of the CPSU(B). Since December 1934, being the secretary of the Leningrad regional and municipal Party committees, he led the city's defence through the military Soviet during the Great Patriotic War, earning the rank of Colonel General in 1944 for his militant spirit and leadership in smashing the nazi siege and crime against humanity in that city. After the war had been concluded, he once again returned to the all-important ideological question, revolutionizing the masses and invigorating the new generations with a communist uplifting culture.

His beloved Leningrad, which had just fought so hard and lost so much in obtaining victory, was immediately subject to the incredulous slanders which passed for "culture" in Mikhail Zoshchenko's *Adventures of a Monkey* story and various poems by Anna Akhmatova, both in Leningrad cultural journals. The former story has a mon-

key in the role of supreme judge of the Soviet people, their customs, heritage and life, slandering it and insisting that even the life of a monkey is superior to the new society free of exploitation of persons by persons. Is this any way to represent those heroic peoples who had just shed so much blood in the anti-fascist world war? Zoshchenko, being a well-known member of the literary group "Serapion Brothers," proclaimed to espouse no ideology, but such a claim was a cloak to sneak bourgeois ideology into the first socialist country. The latter, poems of Anna Akhmatova, were riddled with extreme hopelessness, the cult of "fate," stories written by an aristocrat longing for an age when art was the feast of "trained professionals" and not the masses. Such were her individualistic poems of sadness, death, longing and religious mysticism. She was a member of a similarly reactionary literary group, the Acmeists, whose aristocratic-Tsarist outlook went so far as an open call for going "back to the middle ages." What slanders against the high moral fabric and intelligence of the Soviet peoples were these two anti-people expressions of "culture." Unfortunately, this represented a much greater trend than these two individuals, and the whole framework of Leningrad culture needed to be completely uprooted and replaced.

Comrade Zhdanov, intervening in this situation on behalf of the CC of the CPSU(B) and with the backing of the whole working class, outlined a number of very important principles for literary works: that in bourgeois culture (of which there were not a few remnants) form is often overrated

and not enough attention is given to content; that people's social activity should guide literature and not one's personal feelings or sensations; that meaningless entertainment, without a high cultural content, is not worthy of the developed tastes of the socialist working class; that, seeing things from the new, literature should be imbued with a strong sense of optimism, the sense all the Soviet peoples felt in defeating nazi-fascism during the Great Patriotic War; that literature should always be political, social and educational in essence, because *all* literature is, whether or not it will admit so openly; that works must serve the people, since one cannot live in society and also be free of obligation to it; that in bourgeois society, culture gives the illusion of "artistic freedom" but in fact the intelligentsia is dependent on the capitalist class for sustenance and must follow its publishing standards to make a living, its culture being rotten at the base and filled with egomania; that when internal reactionaries are poisoning the youth with a pessimistic and hopeless view of life, there must be a political intervention; that the Party must always be in the processes of raising the people's tastes to a higher and higher level; that, like everything else in socialist society, disorder and anarchy cannot be tolerated in culture; that nobody can be afraid of criticism and must constantly self-criticize; and that writers must be in the forefront of developments, seeing things as they are playing out and will play out, being the vanguard of the people's expressions. These principles bring literature not down, but up, extending its character to the vast majority of people and not

simply a hide-bound elite.

On another occasion, he set out to criticize the very harmful output in musical production, naming various Soviet composers as offenders. Pre-war, music had been left behind, so to speak, in the USSR, and the trend of formalism took hold, the dictate of a certain elite with old ideas about organization and musical standards. This went so far that there was no such thing as criticism or discussion about music, they would simply applaud some “great composer,” as certainly he “knew best” because of his status and position. This led to stagnation; whenever you have no criticism and no discussion, you will produce haughty artists who think they have everything figured out and no progress can be made because no improvements are shared. Moreover, in combination with the trend of formalism, which stressed “individual tastes,” often vulgar and imported music became prominent. A very dangerous situation was created indeed. These composers openly bragged that their music was not for the people — the question must then be raised: who is it for?

Similar to literature, Comrade Zhdanov laid down many key principles of musical creation, some of which can be applied to other forms of culture: that the bourgeois “internationalization of culture” (cosmopolitanism) is nothing more than a cloaked foreign importation to displace national culture and to degenerate the people’s tastes with bourgeois culture in its last imperialist stage; that true internationalism, which is proletarian, has nothing in common with this cosmopolitanism;

that, on the contrary to accusations of nationalism, all that is progressive from other cultures must be shared; that folk music, which was created and treasured by the people for dozens of generations, must be utilized in modern music as it cannot be defined by narrow egoism by definition; that obscure or unsimple music that the masses cannot understand is worth less than the cost to produce it; that not all “innovations” conjured up in the minds of persons are always progressive; that the relationship between melody and rhythm should be dialectical, the latter should not be preferred as the bourgeoisie so often does; that too many clashes, noises and instruments should not be used, so as not to remind the audience more of a dentist’s drill than a rational expression of human intellect; and that vulgar, ugly and crude music actually cannot be considered music at all, for it ignores human emotion and is purely meant to jar the mind. In the last case, Zhdanov borrows Engels’ famous assertion in *Dialectics of Nature* that dialectics takes its revenge on those who turn against it — “Music has taken revenge on those who have attempted to mutilate it.” One can see just how important these principles are when one witnesses modern decadent bourgeois music.

Third in the set of post-war cultural interventions by Comrade Zhdanov was on philosophy, to criticize a certain textbook on the history of philosophy by “Comrade Alexandrov.” Here is it not necessary to draw out the particular problems with his book, but only take certain lessons from the criticisms. Some key principles from this criticism

are: that one must illuminate concepts with concrete examples and not leave anything up to the imagination; that opposing another class' ideas along philosophical lines is not harmful, rather the bourgeois "professionalization" of philosophy that sees others as associates is harmful, as therefore dangerous trends are not combatted; that analyses of society must not be dry and mechanical but full of life, grasping its full essence and describing it in rich details (meaning that it is not enough to say a situation is bad, one must describe the daily drudgery of the oppressed); that verbosity in explanations is not worthy of a textbook to have a mass character, and this is how all philosophy should be, as it is not only for some high-chair "philosophers" but for the masses themselves; that to cease criticism means to stagnate ideologically and thus rob Marxism of its greatest feature, its capacity for development, and to turn it into an ordinary bourgeois dogma; that in socialist society, development does not proceed by means of antagonisms but by means of criticism and self-criticism; that in the new period Anglo-American reaction has taken up all the reactionary philosophy, defends even medievalism and so on; and that new socialist philosophers needed to tackle the problems of the national liberation movement of the colonies as an emerging phenomenon. These general principles still hold true in our ideological-philosophy work today in building the new society.

Perhaps Comrade Zhdanov's most important contribution was to the formation of the Information Bureau of Communist and Workers' Par-

ties, shortened as Cominform, to coordinate the activities of the Marxist-Leninist parties closer after the dissolution of the Comintern. A key aspect of this was the report he delivered in September 1947 entitled *The International Situation*, a truly incredible document with tremendous foresight into the present. The report was divided into four sections from which I will take key relevant points: the current world situation, the formation of two camps — democratic and imperialist, the U.S. plan for world domination and the tasks of the communist parties.

On the world situation at the time, Comrade Zhdanov first outlined how the Anglo-Americans relied on the nazis in the pre-war situation in an attempt to destroy the USSR, the bastion of the new world and socialism. New developments stipulated that the bourgeois-democratic revolution was far outdated, that it could no longer even consider land reform, nationalization or confiscation of property from traitors; only the state power of the working class could effect such changes. British imperialism was losing its territories and was on the decline, while U.S. imperialism went on the ascent. The colonies no longer wished to live in the old way and launched national liberation movements, and therefore U.S. warmongering increased, enlarging war profits exponentially. It was out for the socialist camp, out for the peoples of the colonies, and did so in league with the nazi and fascist collaborationists in liberated countries. Towards the USSR specifically, Comrade Zhdanov pointed out:

“The feverish piling up of armaments, the

construction of new military bases and the creation of bridgeheads for the American armed forces in all parts of the world is justified on the false and pharisaical grounds of ‘defence’ against an imaginary threat of war...”

76 years later and this is still the case!

On the formation of two camps, Zhdanov noted that the imperialist and anti-democratic camp was headed by the U.S., and their allies Britain and France, while the anti-imperialist and democratic camp was led by the USSR, and their allies the countries of people’s democracy. This period was marked by the U.S. supporting all reaction around the world, no matter its crimes, violating international agreements blatantly, and subverting the principles outlined in the United Nations Charter. In all, they had departed from the peaceful path which Roosevelt idealistically envisioned, and they have not changed their direction in that departure whatsoever since, nor can they.

On the U.S. plan for world domination, not only was the U.S. striving and supporting all the most reactionary elements, but it was also beginning an offensive against the most elementary rights of the proletarians in its own country, a precursor to today’s anti-social offensive. It had already held total sway over Canada and the UK, advocated for a U.S.-led world government, issued the reactionary Truman Doctrine (stipulating that they would support anyone who opposed the Soviets), bound Europe hand and foot by enslaving credits issued in the Marshall Plan, interfered and decided basically

every ministerial appointment and decision within the Greek monarcho-fascist government, etc. In regards to aggression against the USSR and the democratic camp, they had already deployed their golden accusation, “totalitarianism”:

“...The American imperialists, who have no great insight into political questions, demonstrate their ignorance by laying primary stress on the allegation that the Soviet Union is undemocratic and totalitarian, while the United States and Great Britain and the whole capitalist world are democratic. On this platform of ideological struggle — on this defence of bourgeois pseudo-democracy and condemnation of communism as totalitarian — are united all the enemies of the working class without exception...”

They utilized, in this regard, the sold-out labour aristocratic leaders at the head of the social-democratic parties to slander the Soviet Union as being some sort of pseudo-socialism while western democracy was allegedly the greatest system ever achieved. Nor was this solely ideological — the U.S. even used blackmail to secure loyalty, such as insisting that France expel the communists from their government to receive loans. The path forward for the anti-imperialist and democratic world, Comrade Zhdanov stressed, was the primary insistence on internal accumulation and industrialization, and that U.S. credits could only provide enslavement. These statements, too, have borne out spectacularly in the period of a single superpower

striving for sole hegemony over all spheres of influence and markets.

On the unity of the communist parties in the face of imperialist dangers, Comrade Zhdanov observed that since the Comintern's dissolution, parties had been too far apart, worried that they would be seen as Moscow's agents. These errors were wholly incorrect, and while each party should have been more independent than they had been previously, they should never have forgotten proletarian internationalism as an indispensable principle of Marxism-Leninism. Thus, the parties which had already taken power needed to oppose imperialism more resolutely, and the ones who were not in power needed to take up the banner of the nation and struggle against those who were attempting to take away all their national sovereignty for U.S. imperialist profits.

With the Cominform's formation soon after, Comrade Zhdanov was chosen by the CPSU(B) to represent the Soviet view of the Yugoslav situation at the famous June 1948 Bucharest meeting. Ignoring the comradely criticisms of Stalin in his letters and showing arrogance in the extreme, departing from the socialist camp and joining the anti-democratic camp of U.S. imperialism, the fraternal communist and workers' parties had no choice but to expel the Yugoslav Titoites from the Cominform on account of their Trotskyite anti-Soviet and anti-communist activity. Shortly after, Comrade Zhdanov died under highly dubious circumstances.

Andrei Zhdanov's status both in his time and after, among all Marxist-Leninist communists, has

been among the most prestigious of all Bolsheviks. In the Stalin period, he was perhaps the second most significant figure at the head of the Party. He was, indeed, one of Comrade Stalin's closest comrades and most trusted functionaries, his second secretary. He was a peerless fighter for the new socialist order, for the end of exploitation and wage slavery, and for the end of imperialism. In his own time, he was awarded two orders of Lenin, four other orders and various medals. His tragic death came at a time when the world communist movement was making its most incredible gains, and indeed a year later People's China triumphed over the Kuomintang reactionaries and the socialist camp extended to a third of the world. In a short period of time, however, his beloved country turned against Marxism-Leninism and collaborated and colluded with U.S. imperialism. One of his main strengths in light of today's world was his correct evaluation of the ratio of forces in the world, never underestimating the power of imperialism and stating plainly what it would do if it got its grip over the entire world. We would be judicious to learn from this teaching. This is more than a matter of history, of remembering a good comrade; Comrade Zhdanov's works, whether it be in culture, philosophy, deepening democracy or the international situation are a sharp weapon for the proletarians of the world to wield against their oppressors. We can learn much about the new world outlook; how to build an all-round alternative to the present moribund situation. In Shadrinsk, Comrade Zhdanov carried out great Lenin's pre-

cept of dual power, building the new within the old, and was an integral part of that earth-shattering revolution which delivered a decisive blow to the imperialists, one which they have never fully recovered from. Let us carry Great October through to its end with Comrade Zhdanov's works representing bombs to smash the old!

Glory to proletarian culture!

Down with imperialism!

Long live Marxism-Leninism!

The work of A.A. Zhdanov will live forever!

A.A. ZHDANOV — OUTSTANDING FIGURE OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST AND WORKERS' MOVEMENT

— *For a Lasting Peace, For a People's Democracy!* —

September 15, 1948

The Communist and Workers' Parties of the world, the entire democratic and anti-imperialist camp have, in great sorrow, lowered their banners in memory of Andrei Alexandrovich Zhdanov.

A faithful disciple and fellow-worker of the great Stalin, Zhdanov was also an outstanding builder of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks) and of the Soviet state. He was a leading figure in the international working-class movement and was well known to the working people of all countries.

The death of A.A. Zhdanov — member of the Political Bureau and Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU(B) and a leading Marxist-Leninist theoretician — is a heavy loss not only to the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Soviet people but to the whole international working-class movement. Genuine democratic public opinion throughout the world and all forward-looking mankind warmly treasures the name of Andrei Alexandrovich Zhdanov. Zhdanov won their esteem by his irreconcilable struggle for the cause of peace against the instigators of a new war who want to hurl mankind once again into the horrors of their narrow egoistical class interests.

The working people of all countries know and remember Comrade Zhdanov's great service. With anxious hearts the peoples of the world followed the heroic defence of Leningrad which the nazis barbarously encircled in a starvation blockade. Supervising the defence of the city, Comrade Zhdanov brilliantly organized the execution of the Stalin plan to smash the Germans at Leningrad.

All Zhdanov's work was inspired by his boundless faith in the invincible strength of the great ideas of Lenin and Stalin. As a talented, ardent propagandist of Marxist-Leninist theory, he greatly helped the Soviet and other peoples to correctly master these great ideas.

Communists train themselves in the spirit of revolutionary vigilance on the example of Comrade Zhdanov's struggle against every attempt to distort the teachings of Lenin and Stalin, of his ruthlessness in exposing the covert and overt enemies of Marxism-Leninism and those traitors to the cause of international socialism who camouflage themselves with hypocritical phrases about loyalty to Marxist-Leninist theory. Comrade Zhdanov made an invaluable contribution in the strengthening of the democratic forces of peace in their struggle against imperialist reaction.

Comrade Zhdanov's report at the Information Conference of Nine Communist Parties held in Poland in September last year equipped the world communist movement with a profound Leninist-Stalinist analysis of the post-war international situation, disclosed the new, post-war alignment of political forces by clearly and precisely describing

the formation of two camps — the imperialist and anti-democratic camp on the one hand and the anti-imperialist and democratic camp on the other.

“The anti-imperialist camp,” said Comrade Zhdanov in this report,” is backed by the labour and democratic movement and by the fraternal communist parties in all countries, by the fighters for national liberation in the colonies and dependencies, by all progressive and democratic forces in every country. The purpose of this camp is to resist the threat of new wars and imperialist expansion, to strengthen democracy and to extirpate the vestiges of fascism.”

This noble aim which reflects the hopes and aspirations of all forward-looking mankind stimulates ever broader masses of the people in the capitalist countries who are vigorously fighting under the leadership of the communist parties against the machinations of the American and British imperialists. In the new democracies, the working people are devoting their efforts to strengthening their states which are genuine people’s democracies, to building a new, free life on the basis of the real national independence of the people and national sovereignty of the country.

“A.A. Zhdanov,” state the obituary signed by Comrade Stalin and the leaders of the CPSU(B) and Soviet government, “was in the front ranks of the leading figures of the international working-class movement. His labours are well known to the working people of all countries.

“A faithful disciple and fellow-worker of the great Stalin, Comrade Zhdanov fought tirelessly

for the cause of communism, sparing neither energy nor health. His active life and work are an example of selfless service to the Party and the people. His selfless devotion to the great cause of Lenin and Stalin, his sincere principles which allowed no deflection from the general line of the Party, won him the warm love of the Party and of all working people.”

The esteem in which Comrade Zhdanov was held was reflected in the numerous telegrams of condolence sent by the fraternal communist parties and progressive democratic circles throughout the world. In warm and moving words, communists, progressive organizations and people of science, culture and art voiced their sorrow at this heavy loss. They mourned the loss suffered by the great communist family, they spoke of the inestimable services of Comrade Zhdanov in strengthening the international solidarity of the working-class movement, in the struggle for a lasting peace, against imperialism, and pledged themselves to continue the struggle for national independence, for a lasting peace, for the victory of socialism.

Immeasurable, too, are Comrade Zhdanov's services in strengthening the bonds between the revolutionary workers' parties of the world and consolidating them. Zhdanov did much to organize cooperation between the communist parties, to strengthen the international solidarity of the working people, to consolidate the camp of peace, progress and socialism. Because of his consistent struggle for the cause of progressive mankind, because of his ability to combine practical work with

the further development of Marxist-Leninist theory and its correct application, Comrade Zhdanov will always be a great example to the Marxist parties in their work.

Comrade Zhdanov delivered a remarkable and inspired speech during the debate on philosophy in June of last year. He pointed out that socialism was the order of the day in life of the peoples; that the brilliant victory won by socialism in the Great Patriotic War, which was also a brilliant victory for Marxism, was a thorn in the flesh of the imperialists; that all the forces of obscurantism and reaction had been mobilized for the struggle against Marxism. Not only the Vatican and race theory, not only rabid nationalism and idealistic philosophy, the yellow press and corrupt bourgeois art, but also criminal writers such as Jean Genet and the reactionary mystical argumentation of contemporary bourgeois science, and so on, are all directed against the country of victorious socialism, against peace and toward the kindling of a new war in the interests of the big capitalist monopolies.

From these leading words of A.A. Zhdanov, people in the world of science, culture and art are drawing practical conclusions in their struggle against the proactive and disruptive activities of reaction, which is endeavouring ideologically to prepare the masses for a new war.

Andrei Alexandrovich Zhdanov was a man of great erudition, highly cultured and an outstanding Marxist-Leninist theoretician. He lectured and wrote on history, the theory of party-structure, world economy and politics, literature, art and phi-

losophy. He made valuable contributions to these and other questions, thus enriching Marxist-Leninist theory.

The memory of Comrade Zhdanov, true and staunch son of the Bolshevik Party — one of the Stalin mould of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, of those who, after Lenin's death, raised still higher the banner of Lenin under the leadership of Stalin, brought the Soviet land to the victory of socialism and is now leading it on to the final victory of communism — will live on in the hearts of the working people of the world as an outstanding personality in the international working-class movement, as a staunch champion of the great cause of Lenin and Stalin, of the ultimate triumph of communism...

The news of the untimely death of Comrade Andrei Alexandrovich Zhdanov has been received with deep sorrow by the working people of the world. The Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks) received numerous telegrams mourning the heavy loss suffered by the Bolshevik Party and the Soviet people from the Central Committees of the Communist Parties of France, Italy, Czechoslovakia, Britain, the Bulgarian Workers' Party, Romanian Workers' Party, Polish Workers' Party and other communist and workers' Parties.

“French communists,” reads the telegram of the Central Committee of the of the French Communist Party, “revere the memory of the great Bolshevik, Andrei Zhdanov, the valiant defender of

Leningrad, whose whole life was spent in unbroken and outstanding service to the cause of the working-class and the democratic movement, to the cause of peace and communism.”

From the Central Committee of the Italian Communist Party: “Communists, all working people and democrats of Italy, shocked by the news of the death of Comrade Zhdanov — a true son of the Party of Lenin and Stalin, a great leader of the Bolshevik Party — in deep sorrow lower their fighting banners in memory of a great fighter for the political and social emancipation of the working people, the heroic defender of Leningrad against the frenzied onslaught of the nazis, the inspirer of the united socialist anti-imperialist and democratic front in defence of peace, freedom and independence of the peoples.”

The messages sent by the Central Committees of the different communist and workers’ parties, the numerous letters and telegrams from democratic figures and working people as well as the tributes in the press, stress the tireless and varied activities of Comrade Zhdanov, his selfless devotion to the cause of Marxism-Leninism, his remarkable abilities as a Party leader and statesman.

The telegrams speak of the great role he played in the international working-class movement. The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Great Britain said: “the Soviet people and the working class of the world have lost a talented, courageous, outstanding and incorruptible leader of the communists in all countries.”

Zhdanov’s inestimable services in strengthen-

ing the international solidarity of the working-class movement and in the struggle for a lasting peace, against imperialism, were noted by the Central Committee of the Polish Workers' Party.

The loss suffered by the Bolshevik Party and the Soviet people, said the message from the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, is the loss of the international working-class movement.

“In the person of Comrade Zhdanov we have lost one of the finest and most talented figures of the world labour movement,” reads the telegram of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Workers' Party (Communists). The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Albania said: Comrade Zhdanov was a great defender of peace and democracy, a staunch fighter against the imperialist camp and for the rights and liberties of all peoples. The Hungarian newspaper “Szabadsag” wrote: “The news of Comrade Zhdanov's death came as a particularly heavy blow to the working people of the new democracies.”

Particular mention was made of Comrade Zhdanov's services as a leading theoretician and talented propagandist of the ideas of Lenin and Stalin, his ability to combine active daily work with profound work on problems of Marxist-Leninist theory. The Polish newspaper “Glos Ludu” wrote: “Comrade Zhdanov was not only a fighter and a soldier, but also a great revolutionary theoretician of the working class, the man who equipped communists with the weapon of the ideological struggle against idealistic philosophical doctrines.”

The life and work of Comrade Zhdanov are an example of selfless service to the people, to the Party of the working class, to the cause of communism. "Our Party will always be inspired by the wonderful example of the work of this unflinching champion for the triumph of the ideas of socialism throughout the world," reads the telegram of the Central Committee of the Romanian Workers' Party.

Deeply mourning this heavy loss, the communists and the working people led by them, declare their readiness to fight for the triumph of democracy and socialism with still greater energy and selflessness.

The memory of this outstanding figure of the Bolshevik Party and the international communist movement is revered by the working people of the world. Soviet embassies in different countries abroad have received many telegrams and letters expressing sympathy and fraternal solidarity with the working people of the Soviet Union.

In Japan and Norway, in India and Brazil, in Finland and Denmark, in Holland and Argentina, in Sweden, Germany and the United States — everywhere communists and democratic opinion received the news of Comrade Zhdanov's death with deep sorrow.

SOVIET LITERATURE — THE RICHEST IN IDEAS, THE MOST ADVANCED LITERATURE

*(Speech at the 1st All-Union Congress of Soviet
Writers)*

August 1934

Comrades, permit me to bring to the 1st Congress of Soviet Writers and through the Congress to all writers in the Soviet Union, at the head of whom stands the great proletarian writer Maxim Gorky, ardent Bolshevik greetings on behalf of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the USSR and of the Council of People's Commissars.

Comrades, your congress meets at a time when the fundamental difficulties facing us on the path of socialist construction have already been overcome, at a time when our country has finished laying the foundations of a socialist economy, all of which is linked with the victory of the policies of industrialization and the building up of state and collective farms.

Your congress meets at a time when the socialist way of life has incontrovertibly and finally triumphed, thanks to the leadership of the Communist Party, guided by Comrade Stalin, that genius and our leader and teacher.

Moving consistently from stage to stage, from victory to victory, from the fires of the civil war to the period of restoration and thence to the socialist reconstruction of the whole national economy, our Party has brought the country to victory over the

capitalist elements, which have been ousted from every sphere of the national economy.

The USSR has become an advanced industrial country and a country with the greatest socialist agriculture in the world. The USSR has become a country of advanced socialist culture, a country in which our Soviet culture is developing and growing, etched in brilliant colours.

The parasite classes have been done away with, unemployment and the pauperism of villages are non-existent, city slums have disappeared, because the socialist system has been victorious in our country. The entire face of the Soviet land has changed. People's consciousness has radically altered. Workers and collective farmers, the builders of socialism, have become the celebrities of our land.

The strengthening of the internal and external position of the Soviet Union, the growth of its international importance and authority, its significance as a shock-brigade for the world proletariat and a powerful bulwark of the coming world proletarian revolution, are all very closely linked with the victories of socialism in our country. At the 17th Party Congress, Comrade Stalin made an unsurpassed and brilliant analysis of our victories and the reasons for them, and of our position at the present time. He laid down a program of further work for completing the building of a classless socialist society.

Comrade Stalin made an extensive analysis of backward sectors of our work and of difficulties, to overcome which our Party carries on an unceasing

daily struggle, leading the many millions of the working class and of the collective farm peasantry. It is imperative to put an end to the backwardness of such important branches of the national economy as rail and water transport, goods turnover and non-ferrous metallurgy. Livestock breeding, being one of the most important branches of our socialist agriculture, must be developed.

Comrade Stalin thoroughly exposed the root causes of our difficulties and shortcomings. They derive from the fact that organizational and practical work are not keeping pace with the requirements of the Party's political line and the demands arising from the carrying out of the 2nd Five-Year Plan. That was why the 17th Party Congress raised in all its amplitude the task of bringing our organizational work to the level of the mighty political tasks facing us.

Under the leadership of Comrade Stalin, the Party is organizing the masses for the struggle to destroy capitalist elements once and for all, to eradicate the vestiges of capitalism in our economy and in people's minds, and to complete the technical reconstruction of our national economy. The eradication of vestiges of capitalism in people's consciousness means struggle against every vestige of bourgeois influence over the proletariat, against laxity, frivolity or idling, against petty-bourgeois licence and individualism, against graft and dishonesty towards social property.

We hold a trusty weapon to overcome all the difficulties in our path. This weapon is the great and invincible teaching of Marx, Engels, Lenin and

Stalin, now being put into practice by our Party. Their great banner is triumphant and it is to that triumph that we owe the assembly of this first congress of Soviet writers. Had there been no such victory, there would have been no congress. Only Bolsheviks could bring together such a congress.

The successes of Soviet literature are conditioned by the successes of socialist construction. The growth of Soviet literature reflects the successes and achievements of our socialist system. Our literature is the youngest of all the literatures of all countries and peoples. At the same time, it has the greatest idea-content and it is the most advanced and revolutionary.

There does not exist and never has existed any literature other than Soviet literature to organize the working people and the oppressed in a struggle to destroy utterly any and every kind of exploitation and to shake off the yoke of wage slavery.

There is not and never has been a literature making its basic subject-matter the life of the working class and the peasantry and their struggle for socialism. There does not exist in any country in the world a literature to defend and protect the equality of rights of the working people of all nations and the equality of rights of women. There is not, nor can there be in any bourgeois country, a literature to wage consistent war on all obscurantism, mysticism, hierarchic religious attitudes and threats of hell-fire, as our literature does.

Only Soviet literature could become and has in fact become such an advanced, thought-imbued literature. It is one flesh and blood with our socialist construction.

Soviet writers have already written a good number of talented books, correctly and truthfully depicting the life of our Soviet land. We already have several names of whom we may be justly proud. The great body of Soviet authors is now fused with the Soviet power and the Party, having the aid of Party guidance and the care and daily assistance of the Central Committee and the unceasing support of Comrade Stalin. All the contradictions between our system — that of victorious socialism — and the dying, decaying capitalist system, can be distinguished with the greatest clarity in the light of the successes of our Soviet literature.

What can the bourgeois writer write or think of, where can he find passion, if the worker in the capitalist countries is not sure of his tomorrow, does not know whether he will have work, if the peasant does not know whether he will be working on his bit of land or thrown on the scrap heap by a capitalist crisis, if the working intellectual is out of work today and does not know whether he will have work tomorrow?

What can the bourgeois author write about, what source of inspiration can there be for him, when the world, from one day to the next, may be plunged once more into the abyss of a new imperialist war?

The present position of bourgeois literature is such that it is already incapable of producing great works. *The decline and decay of bourgeois literature derive from the decline and decay of the capitalist system and are a feature and aspect characteristic of the present condition of bourgeois culture and literature.*

The days when bourgeois literature, reflecting the victories of the bourgeois system over feudalism, was in the heyday of capitalism capable of creating great works, have gone, never to return. Today a degeneration in subject matter, in talents, in authors and in heroes, is in progress.

Mortally afraid of the proletarian revolution, fascism is wreaking vengeance on civilization, dragging men back to the darkest and most barbaric periods of human history, throwing on to the bonfires and barbarically destroying the works of some of the finest men humanity has produced.

A riot of mysticism, religious mania and pornography is characteristic of the decline and decay of bourgeois culture. The "celebrities" of that bourgeois literature which has sold its pen to capital are today thieves, detectives, prostitutes, pimps and gangsters.

All this is characteristic of the section of literature that seeks to conceal the decay of the bourgeois system, seeks in vain to prove that nothing has happened, that everything is as it should be "in the state of Denmark" and that there is as yet no decay in the capitalist structure. The bourgeois writers who feel the state of affairs more acutely are steeped in pessimism, uncertainty as to the morrow, praising the dark night, and lauding pessimism as the theory and practice of art. And it is only a small section — the most honest and farsighted of the writers — who are seeking to find a way out along other paths, in other directions, linking their fate with the proletariat and its revolutionary struggle.

The proletariat of the capitalist countries is already forging its army of writers and artists — revolutionary writers, the representatives of whom we are glad to be able to welcome here today at the 1st Soviet Writers' Congress. The number of revolutionary writers in the capitalist countries is still small but it is growing and will grow with every day's sharpening of the class struggle, with the growing strength of the world proletarian revolution.

We are firmly convinced that the few dozen foreign comrades we have welcomed here constitute the kernel, the embryo, of a mighty army of proletarian writers to be created by the world proletarian revolution in foreign countries.

Such is the position in the capitalist countries. The opposite is true of our country. Our Soviet writer draws the material for his work, his subject matter and characters, his literary language and words, from the life and experience of the people of Dnieprostroi and Magnitostroi, from the heroic epic of the *Chelyuskin* expedition, from the experience of our collective farms, from the creative work now in full swing in the four corners of our land.

In our country the main heroes of a literary work are the active builders of the new life — men and women workers and collective farmers, Party and state workers, engineers, Komsomols, Pioneers. These are the main types and heroes of our Soviet literature. Our literature is imbued with enthusiasm and heroism. It is an optimistic literature, not, it should be said, in any purely physical sense of "inner" feeling. It is a fundamentally optimistic

literature, since it is the literature of the rising proletarian class, today the only progressive and advanced class. Our Soviet literature is strong because it serves a new cause — the cause of socialist construction.

Comrade Stalin has called our writers, “engineers of the human soul.” What does this mean? What obligations does such an appellation put upon you?

It means, in the first place, that you must know life to be able to depict it truthfully in artistic creations, to depict it neither “scholastically” nor lifelessly, nor simply as “objective reality,” but rather as reality in its revolutionary development. The truthfulness and historical exactitude of the artistic image must be linked with the task of ideological transformation, of the education of the working people in the spirit of socialism. This method in fiction and literary criticism is what we call the method of socialist realism.

Our Soviet literature is not afraid of being called tendentious, for in the epoch of class struggle there is not and cannot be any classless, non-tendentious and “apolitical” literature.

And it seems to me that any and every Soviet writer may say to any dull-witted bourgeois, to any philistine or to any bourgeois writers who speak of the tendentiousness of our literature: “Yes, our Soviet literature is tendentious and we are proud of it, for our tendentiousness is to free the working people — and the whole of mankind — from the yoke of capitalist slavery.”

To be an engineer of the human soul is to stand

foursquare on real life. And this in turn means a break with old-style romanticism, with the romanticism which depicted a non-existent life and non-existent heroes, drawing the reader away from the contradictions and shackles of life into an unrealizable and utopian world. Romanticism is not alien to our literature, a literature standing firmly on a materialist basis, but ours is a romanticism of a new type, revolutionary romanticism.

We say that socialist realism is the fundamental method of Soviet fiction and literary criticism, and this implies that revolutionary romanticism will appear as an integral part of any literary creation, since the whole life of our Party, of the working class and its struggle, is a fusion of the hardest, most matter-of-fact practical work, with the greatest heroism and the vastest perspectives. The strength of our Party has always lain in the fact that it has united and unites efficiency and practicality with broad vision, with an incessant forward striving and the struggle to build a communist society.

Soviet literature must be able to portray our heroes and to see our tomorrow. This will not be utopian since our tomorrow is being prepared by planned and conscious work today.

One cannot be an engineer of the human soul without skill in writing, and it is necessary to note that the writer's technique has many specific characteristics. You have many weapons at your disposal. Soviet literature has every opportunity of using all these weapons (genres, styles, forms and methods of literary creation) in all their variety and fullness, in seeking to make use of all the finest that

has been created in this sphere by *all previous epochs*. From this standpoint, mastery of technique and critical assimilation of the literary heritage of every epoch are tasks that must be executed if you are to become engineers of the human soul.

Comrades, the proletariat is the sole heir of the best in the treasure house of world literature, as in other spheres of material and spiritual culture. The bourgeoisie has squandered the literary heritage and we must bring it together again carefully, study it and then, having critically assimilated it, move forward.

To be an engineer of the human soul means fighting actively for craftsmanship in words, quality in work. Our literature is not yet meeting the demands of our epoch. The weaknesses in our literature reflect the fact that consciousness is lagging behind economic life, a state of affairs from which, obviously, our writers are not exempt. That is why unceasing work on educating themselves and improving their ideological weapons in the spirit of socialism are the indispensable conditions without which Soviet writers cannot change the consciousness of their readers and thus be engineers of the human soul.

We need great skill in our creative works and in this respect the help of Alexei Maximovich Gorky is invaluable — invaluable the help he gives the Party and the proletariat in the struggle for quality in literature, for craftsmanship in language.

Soviet writers have therefore all the necessary conditions for creating works worthy of our epoch, works from which contemporaries may learn, and

works for future generations to take pride in.

All the conditions for Soviet literature to produce works worthy of the adult and mature masses have now been created. After all, it is only our literature which is able to be so closely linked with its readers and with the whole life of the working people as is the case in the USSR. This present congress is particularly revealing. The congress was not prepared by writers alone. The whole country prepared it with them. In this preparatory work there were plainly apparent the true sympathy with which Soviet writers are surrounded by the Party, the workers and collective farm peasantry and also the demands the working class and the collective farmers make of Soviet writers.

In our country alone are literature and the writer raised to such heights.

Organize the work of your congress, and the future work of the Union of Soviet Writers, so that the work of the writers accords with the socialist victories achieved.

Create works of great craftsmanship, of profound ideological and artistic content,

Be the most active organizers of the remoulding of people's consciousness in the spirit of socialism,

Stand in the front ranks of the fighters for a classless socialist society!

**PREPARATION OF THE PARTY
ORGANIZATIONS FOR THE
ELECTIONS TO THE SUPREME
SOVIET OF THE USSR UNDER THE
NEW ELECTORAL SYSTEM AND
THE CORRESPONDING
REORGANIZATION OF PARTY
POLITICAL WORK**

*(Report to the Plenum of the Central Committee of the
Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks))*

February 26, 1937

**OUR TASKS IN CONNECTION WITH THE
CHANGE IN THE POLITICAL LIFE OF THE
COUNTRY**

Comrades, in connection with the adoption of the new Constitution of the USSR, elections will shortly be held to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and to all Soviets of Toilers Deputies, from top to bottom, under the new electoral system. Our Party is faced with the task of preparing for the elections.

The character of these preparations, their extent and scale, and the reorganization of Party work they entail, are determined by the profundity of the changes caused by the new Constitution in the political life of our country.

The introduction of the new Constitution implies a change in the political life of the country. The character of this change is the further democratization of the electoral system, as expressed in

the fact that not entirely equal suffrage in the elections to the Soviets is being replaced by equal suffrage, indirect elections by direct elections, and open ballot by secret ballot.

The introduction of the new Constitution eliminates all the restrictions that hitherto existed for the so-called "lishentsi," or disfranchised.

Whereas prior to the introduction of the new Constitution the suffrage in elections to the Soviets was not equal, now the necessity for any suffrage restrictions has disappeared and all citizens are entitled to take part in elections on an equal footing.

Whereas formerly elections to the intermediate and supreme organs of government were indirect, under the new Constitution all the Soviets will now be elected immediately by the citizens by direct elections.

Whereas formerly, under the old Constitution, balloting at the elections was open and voting was according to lists, under the new Constitution balloting at the elections will now be secret and the vote will be taken on the individual candidates nominated in each of the electoral districts.

Lastly, the Constitution introduces popular canvasses, or the referendum.

What do these changes in the electoral system imply?

They imply enhanced control of the masses over the Soviet organs and enhanced responsibility of the Soviet organs to the masses. The new electoral system will strengthen the contact between the elected representatives of the people and the mass of the electorate. It will provide a powerful stimu-

lus in improving the work of the Soviet organs and in eliminating bureaucratic shortcomings and perversions in the work of our Soviet organizations, which defects, as you know, are very substantial.

The result of the introduction of universal, direct and equal suffrage with secret ballot will be to enhance the political activity of the masses still further and to enlist new strata of the labouring population in the work of administering the state.

In this way the dictatorship of the proletariat will become a more flexible and, consequently, a more powerful system of state guidance of society by the working class; the base of the proletarian dictatorship will be broadened and its foundations will become firmer.

Leninism teaches:

“The dictatorship of the proletariat has its periods, its special forms and diversified methods of work. During the period of civil war, the coercive aspect of the dictatorship is especially conspicuous... On the other hand, during the period of socialist construction, the peaceful, organizational and cultural work of the dictatorship, revolutionary law, etc., are especially conspicuous. But here again it by no means follows that during the period of construction, the coercive side of the dictatorship has fallen away, or could do so. The organs of suppression, the army and other organizations, are as necessary now, in the period of construction, as they were during the civil war period. Without these institutions, constructive work by the dic-

tatorship with any degree of security would be impossible. It should not be forgotten that for the time being the revolution has been victorious in only one country.

“It should not be forgotten that as long as we live in a capitalist encirclement, so long will the danger of intervention, with all the resulting consequences, continue.”¹

That the necessity for the coercive sides of the dictatorship, apart from its peaceful organizational and cultural sides, has not fallen away, is clearly demonstrated by the case of Bukharin and Rykov which we have just discussed. The dictatorship of the working class must continue mercilessly to crush the resistance of the remnants of the hostile capitalist classes and the agents of the fascist bourgeoisie — the Trotskyites, Zinovievites, the Right and other enemies of the people.

Comrade Stalin has taught us that we need a strong and powerful dictatorship of the working class so as to demolish the last remnants of the dying classes and to defeat their villainous machinations.

The holding of democratic elections is a highly important matter. It is a very serious examination for our Party which will test its contacts with the masses and the efficiency and prestige of our Party organizations among the masses. The elections will demand a great exertion of effort by all the forces of our Party.

¹ J. Stalin, *Leninism*, Vol. 1, p. 274.

In order to meet this change in the political life of our Party fully prepared, our Party must assume charge of this change and ensure its guidance of the elections to the supreme organs of the country.

What is meant by the Party assuming charge of and insuring its guidance of the elections to the supreme organs? What tasks must the Party solve?

It must first of all be borne in mind that the situation will be a rather novel one for our Party workers. This is the first time elections will be held under the new electoral system. We have no practical experience in voting by individual candidates, secret ballot and so forth. This involves a certain difficulty for our Party organizations.

Second, assuming charge of the change in the political life of the country and guiding the elections mean that we must see to it that the new electoral system established by the Constitution is fully observed, i.e., that the principles of universal, direct and equal suffrage and secret ballot are strictly adhered to. This means that our Party organizations must protect our new electoral system as the apple of their eye, that they must protect it against all violations.

Third, our Party organizations must be prepared for the election campaign. In the elections we shall encounter hostile agitation and hostile candidates. That this is a real possibility is shown by the fact that there is already a certain reanimation among the anti-Soviet elements, precisely in connection with the forthcoming elections. Our Party organizations must be fully prepared to counter the attempts of hostile elements to take advantage of

the legal opportunities provided by the new Constitution.

While our people are dozing and only preparing to make a move, the enemy is already acting and energetically preparing for the elections.

Fourth, secret balloting and voting by individual candidates, as distinct from open voting by lists, will increase the responsibility of our Party for every candidate nominated. In order to be elected, our candidates must be well known to the electors in the district in which they are nominated, their activities must be well known to the electors.

The secret ballot will be a very thorough test for our people, because the secret ballot presents far greater opportunities than ever before of rejecting candidates whom the masses consider undesirable and unsuitable. This must be clearly realized.

Fifth, we must get rid of the harmful mentality of some of our Party and Soviet workers who assume that public confidence can be won without effort, that they can calmly go to sleep in expectation that their mandates will be delivered to them at their homes amidst thunders of applause because of their former services. Under the secret ballot confidence cannot be won without effort.

There are quite a number of workers in our Party and Soviet organizations who consider that their task is over, so to speak, once they have been elected to the Soviet. This is shown by the large number of responsible workers who fail to attend the plenary meetings of the Soviets, or the deputy groups and sections of our Soviets and who evade fulfilling their most elementary duties as deputies.

Such hangovers in the mentality of our people must be smashed; we must train our people to realize that they are answerable to the electors, bearing in mind that every elected representative will be examined and tested in the most thorough and comprehensive manner by the masses themselves.

It would be a gross mistake to postpone combatting these survivals until the moment the elections are held. We must begin without delay steadily to improve the work of our Soviet organizations and their contacts with the masses and to increase the answerability of our Soviet workers to the masses.

Sixth, we must at once begin to train our workers to realize that the new electoral system implies far greater publicity for the activities of the Soviet organizations, that their activities will proceed under the eyes of the masses, and that their answerability to the masses will be far more complete. Many Soviet deputies — members of our Party — are accustomed to give account only to their Party organizations. Many of our Soviet workers who are inclined to bureaucracy and whose work suffers from grave defects would ten times rather account for their work to the bureau of their Party committee, to a small family circle, than to get up at a plenary meeting of the Soviet, criticize themselves and hear the criticism of the masses. This practice of non-answerability must be put a stop to.

Seventh, assuming charge of the change in the political life of the country and ensuring democratic elections mean that our Party organizations must not wait to be jolted from below by the

masses in respect to criticizing and raising objections to our candidates, but must themselves lead the criticism and the rejection of unsuitable candidates without waiting for them to be outvoted in a secret ballot. In this connection our Party organizations must learn to distinguish friendly criticism from hostile criticism. It frequently happens that the discontent of workers over individual defects and perversions in the activities of Soviet organs is regarded as hostile criticism. The ability to distinguish friendly criticism, which is sometimes very pungent, from the criticism of the enemy demands of our Party organizations a high level of Party and political training and great discernment.

During the new elections there may be attempts by hostile elements to agitate against our candidates. Our people have to conduct many a difficult campaign in various fields, supply, construction work, etc., and such campaigns are bound to involve a certain amount of pressure. This is part of the concept of the dictatorship of the working class. We shall not renounce the exercise of such pressure in the future, and it would be absurd to renounce it. Demagogic attempts will be made to inflate various shortcomings of our people along this line. I am referring to our members of village Soviets, district executive committees, etc. The Party organizations must be able to take these people under their protection. This must not be lost sight of.

Eighth, there is the question of non-Party people. It would be highly prejudicial and dangerous if the mistake made under the old election system were repeated in the new elections, namely, inat-

tention to non-Party candidates, when, in order to ensure the Party influence in the Soviets, non-Party candidates were not given the attention and support which are demanded by the very fundamentals of the Bolshevik conception of leadership and contact with the masses. Bear in mind that there are 2,000,000 communists in our country, and that there are "rather" more non-Party people. Hence, if we want to guide the elections, we must enhance our influence and contact with non-Party people and support, instead of pushing aside, non-Party candidates who enjoy the confidence of the masses.

These are a few questions on the subject of leadership and organizing the preparations for the elections. They have arisen not as something in remote prospect, but as actual and absolutely urgent and essential tasks.

VIOLATION OF THE PRINCIPLE OF ELECTING PARTY ORGANS INCOMPATIBLE WITH BOLSHEVIK PRINCIPLES OF ORGANIZATION

What is required of the Party so that it may assume charge of the thoroughly democratic elections? What are the chief conditions which will ensure the Party's guidance of the change in the political life of the country?

What is required is that the Party itself should consistently practise democracy, that it should thoroughly apply the principles of democratic centralism in its internal life, as the Party rules demand, that the necessary conditions should exist within the Party for the election of all Party organs,

that criticism and self-criticism within the Party should be fully developed, that the answerability of Party organs to the members of the Party should be complete, and that the Party members themselves should be active to the highest degree.

Leninism teaches us that the enhanced activity of the working class we are seeking to bring about with the introduction of complete Soviet democracy is a serious and important matter. In order to enhance the activity of the working class we must first of all activize the Party itself. The Party itself must firmly and resolutely adopt internal Party democracy, so that our organizations may secure the participation of the broad membership of the Party, on whom the fate of our Party depends, in the discussion of our affairs. Without this there can be no hope of increasing the activity of the working class. This is what Comrade Stalin teaches us.

Can it be said that all our Party organizations are already prepared to fulfil these conditions and that they have already reorganized themselves on democratic lines?

Unfortunately, this cannot be said with absolute assurance.

What facts go to show that this cannot be said with absolute assurance?

It is shown by the violations of the Party rules and the principles of internal Party democracy practised in certain organizations. What are these violations?

The Party rules, as we know, prescribe the holding of elections to the committees of the primary organizations once a year, to the city and district

committees once a year, and to the regional and territorial committees and the Central Committees of the national communist parties once in eighteen months. This is what the Party rules demand.

But if we turn to the facts we find that this requirement of the Party rules is violated by a number of organizations. During the past two or three years elections to regional and territorial committees and to the Central Committees of the national communist parties were held only in the case of organizations which were newly formed as a result of the creation of new regions (the Kalinin, Krasnyorsk, Omsk, Orenburg and Yaroslavl organizations). The majority of our regional and territorial committees and Central Committees of national communist parties, city committees, district committees and primary Party committees have been in existence ever since the 17th Party Congress, that is, since the general election of Party organizations. The only exception to this, as I have said, are the new territories and regions, and also a few district and city organizations, chiefly in connection with the gross mismanagement of Party affairs.

This means that the laws of our Party have been violated, although we swear by the Party rules, learn them by rote in study circles, and during the verification and exchange of Party documents demand that Party members should know the rules. When we come to examine it, we find that we ourselves are intolerably liberal in our attitude to our own Party laws.

Further, the rules of our Party prescribe that all

leading organs of the Party, from the highest to the lowest, should be elected. This is demanded by the fundamental principle of organizational structure of our Party — the principle of democratic centralism.

Clause 18 of the Party rules reads as follows:

“The guiding principle of the organizational structure of the Party is democratic centralism, which signifies:

“(a) The application of the elective principle to all leading organs of the Party from the highest to the lowest;

“(b) Periodical reports of the Party organs to their respective Party organizations;

“(c) Strict Party discipline and subordination of the minority to the majority;

“(d) The absolutely binding character of the decisions of the higher organs upon the lower organs and upon all Party members.”

This fundamental organizational principle of our Party has been violated in a number of organizations. The members of the Plenum already know what harmful consequences to our Party affairs have resulted from the practice of violating the Party rules in the Kiev, Azov-Black Sea and other organizations, where non-compliance with the rules, as expressed in a departure from the elective principle, resulted in the extreme deterioration of Party work and facilitated the penetration of hostile elements into leading Party organs.

A similar gross violation of the Party rules with respect to the elective principle is the absolutely

unjustifiable prevalence of the practice of co-opting¹ leading workers as members of plenums of Party committees, district committees, city committees, regional committees, territorial committees and Central Committees of national communist parties.

Facts in the possession of the Central Committee of the CPSU(B) go to show that the noxious practice of co-option has taken firm root and has gone very far. The practice of co-option violates the legal right of Party members to take part in the election of their leading organs. In cases of co-option Party members are deprived of the opportunity of participating in elections and of objecting to unsuitable candidates, and generally their opinion is not asked, because the co-option takes place at plenums.

Co-option is very prevalent. It is a vice from which many organizations suffer.

We find that 11.6 per cent of the members of plenums of the regional and territorial committees and of the Central Committees of national communist parties have been co-opted. This is the average figure. In certain organizations the proportion of co-opted members is as high as 22.8 per cent (Kiev) and even 26.2 per cent (Byelorussia), that is to say, in the latter case more than one-quarter of the plenum members have been co-opted.

The proportion of co-opted members of district committees and city committees is as follows: in

¹ Co-opt: To add a member to an elected body without a regular election. — *Ed.*

the Moscow organization 17 per cent, in the Leningrad organization 17.2 per cent, in the Azov-Black Sea organization 17.5 per cent, in the Dnepropetrovsk organization 26.7 per cent, in the Byelorussian organization 28.9 per cent, in the Voronezh organization 29.8 per cent and in the Armenian organization 30 per cent, that is to say, in the latter case nearly one-third of the members have been co-opted.

The proportion of co-opted members of bureaus of district and city committees fluctuates in the various regional organizations from 14 to 59 per cent of the elected members. In the Western Region, Armenia and the Ivanovo and Karelian organization more than half the members of the bureaus of the district committees and city committees have been co-opted. It is difficult to make out which of the members who were originally elected still remain.

Co-option has assumed such wide scope that at the Plenum of the Kiev Regional Committee, for example, held on October 19, 1934, 14 persons were co-opted to the plenum at one stroke, among them Ashrafyan, Dzenis, Senchenko, Toder and others who have since been exposed as enemies of the Party.

In Kharkov, of the 158 members and 38 alternate members of the city committee elected at the 4th City Party Conference, only 59 remain. The composition of the city committee can hardly be regarded as legitimate since only one-third of the elected members remain. Since the last Party conference 61 persons have been co-opted to the city

committee. Moreover, with the exception of one comrade, the bureau of the city committee consists entirely of co-opted members.

You know the state of affairs in the Kharkov Party organization to which this has led.

If we now turn to various district Party committees, you yourselves apparently possess enough material on the subject of co-option. I think that there are dozens of district committees where the majority of the members have been co-opted and not elected. For instance, in the Malo-Archangelsk District (Kursk Region) eighteen members out of twenty-three were co-opted; in the Mtsensk district (Kursk Region) twenty-two out of twenty-six; in the Gomel city committee (Byelorussia) forty out of fifty-five; in the Oranienbaum District (Leningrad Region) fifteen out of twenty-two; in the Ust-yuga District (Leningrad Region) eleven out of twelve, and so on.

The practice of co-option is just as widespread in the case of the bureaus of certain city committees and district committees. Of the twelve members of the Ulyanovsk city committee eleven were co-opted. Shchuchansk district committee (Chelyabinsk Region) all members of the bureau co-opted. Semipalatinsk district committee (East Kazakhstan Region) — all members of the bureau co-opted. Asbestovsk city committee (Sverdlovsk Region) — all members of the bureau co-opted, and so on.

The methods of co-option have gone so far that co-option of members onto, or expulsion from, a plenum is sometimes decided by a minority, that is to say, when there can be no question of legitimate

quorum. This shows that in a number of places the idea of a quorum has been obliterated, forgotten. For example, in the Lenin district, city of Kharkov, a plenum of the district committee together with the active¹ was held on April 4, 1936, at which the question of expelling a whole crowd of people from the district committee was discussed. Notwithstanding the fact that some considerable time has elapsed since the well-known decision of the Central Committee that actives should meet separately from plenums, a plenum of the district committee was convened together with the active. Why was this necessary? Because there were not enough elected members at the plenum. Only ten or eleven members of the city committee were present at the plenum, yet it expelled twelve of its members. Ten men swallowed up twelve men.

The comrades have apparently forgotten that even in the days when the Party was illegal and when co-option was a necessity, it was hedged around by a number of restrictions.

There are organizations which do not rest at co-opting plenums. For instance, a plenum of the Tuzhinsk district committee, Kirov Region, adopted a decision instructing the new bureau to co-opt members onto the district committee. In accordance with this decision the plenum of the bureau of the district committee co-opted seven persons, and endorsed the co-options made at the plenum only after the lapse of five months; and, furthermore, only six legally elected members of the plenum of

¹ Leading members of the rank and file. — *Ed.*

the district committee were present when these seven members of the district committee were confirmed.

The practice of ignoring the elective principle and resorting to co-option instead has spread to very many leading organizations, and with their connivance the primary Party organizations have followed in their footsteps. In Leningrad, for example, the Party committee of the Kanonersky Factory was elected before the 17th Party Congress, and, with a Party committee consisting of only seven members, twenty-two members were co-opted in three years, that is to say, the Party committee replaced its members three times over without normal elections.

At the Kirov Works only three of the elected members of the Party committee remain; the rest have all been co-opted.

At the Zhdanov Works thirty-one persons were co-opted onto the Party committee at various times.

Owing to the fact that the established frequency of elections is ignored and that co-option has become a widespread phenomenon, a number of organizations have forgotten whom they elected. This alone can explain facts like the one you read about yesterday in *Pravda*, when the Odessa regional Party committee lost one of its members, Comrade Oleinikov, and remembered him only two years later when he himself was disturbed by the fact that nobody bothered about him or called upon him and went to see the regional committee.

In the Red Ceramics Works in Borovichi, Len-

ingrad Region, the Party organization on January 4, 1937 discussed the election of additional members to the Party committee. I quote from the minutes: "Comrade Rodionov, secretary of the Party committee, reported on the fulfilment of the instructions given him by the Party meeting to 'ascertain by documents' the composition of the Party committee. He stated that in accordance with the documents in the possession of the Party committee, Svidersky, Kuznetsova, Danilov and Rodionov were members of the Party committee. Cromov, Sokolov and Kalinin figured in the list of members of the Party committee, but their membership is not confirmed by documents. Resolved: To introduce clarity into the composition of the Party committee and to elect capable comrades to supplement it"

Incidentally, at the meeting itself, two members of the Party committee, who were regarded as having been legally elected, categorically denied this, and earnest attempts were made to persuade them that they were mistaken. The secretary of the Party committee subsequently related how difficult it was to fulfil the instructions given him to "find" the members of the Party committee: "Oh, I searched and searched for the members of the Party committee, and it was only with the greatest difficulty that I found them."

Such is the state of affairs with regard to the gross violations of the laws of our Party which prescribe the election of Party organs, and with regard to the supersession of the elective principle by the practice of co-option, a practice which is incompat-

ible with the spirit and traditions of our Party.

INTERNAL PARTY DEMOCRACY — AN UNBREAKABLE PARTY LAW

Regarding the way the elections themselves are practised.

The machinery of election is often such that Party members are deprived of the opportunity of freely expressing their opinion of the candidates or of exercising the right of objecting to and criticizing unsuitable candidates. The elections are not organized so as to ensure Party members a real opportunity to test every candidate, but so as to carry through the elections as quickly and as simply as possible and to escape irksome criticism of candidates by Party members. It is usually done as follows: several days before the conference the secretary of the Party committee jots down a preliminary list of candidates somewhere in his notebook. Then a meeting of secretaries is called at which the list is drawn up. Then the candidates are discussed in the council of seniors and at a delegate meeting. The discussion of the candidates is thus confined to various closed preliminary conferences of a "family" character, without any special "bother."

It is quite clear that if the conferences of secretaries and delegates have settled the question in advance, it is extremely difficult to secure the rejection of any particular candidate at a general meeting or conference. As a rule, at the conferences themselves no discussion of the candidates is opened, the vote is taken on the whole list and not on the individual candidates, and the election pro-

cedure is thus converted into a sheer formality. The idea at the conference is speed. A chairman is chosen who, tucking up his sleeves, can "run through" the election of the list in about twenty minutes. In this way we get a manifestation of complete unanimity, and at the same time there is no opportunity to raise any serious objections. Instead of enabling people at the conference itself to participate in the discussion, instead of opening the way for broad criticism and objections to the nominated candidates, the whole thing is reduced to a narrow organizational "technique" which has only one purpose — to build a barrier against criticism by the Party members.

Such practices are incompatible with the spirit and traditions of our Party and with the tasks that confront us. It is a violation of the legitimate rights of the Party members, a violation of Party democracy, in a veiled form.

On the subject of co-option I should like to make one more remark. I should like to refer to the experience of the Central Committee of our Party. If our local workers learned more from the Central Committee, we should not have permitted the unbridled co-option which has been practised in a number of organizations. During the whole course of its existence the Central Committee has not co-opted a single member or alternative member. This is a practice unknown to the Central Committee.

The next serious defect as far as respect for the principles of internal Party democracy is concerned is the widespread practice of appointing Party leaders to be secretaries of Party committees. This

practice must be altered in the following way: if a Party committee proposes to change the Party leadership of a lower organization and has selected a candidate for the purpose, it shall be obliged, before applying for confirmation of the candidature by the higher Party instance, to submit it for discussion to the organization to which the secretary is being recommended, and only then apply to the higher organization for confirmation.

We have many secretaries of Party committees who are not elected members of the Party committee. I could name several dozen people who are secretaries of Party committees but have not been elected to the Party committees. They were appointed, given a mandate, arrived, and immediately took up their job, while the old secretary, as a rule, gives no account of his term of office. "Self-reports" are very widely practised, but it is clear that reports of Party committees to the Party members are practised all too little.

With regard to self-reports. In the form in which the self-reports of communists are usually made they are a bureaucratic insult to Party members. In most cases self-reports are an occasion for delving into the private life, the family affairs of the communist, and not for ascertaining whether he is playing a vanguard role and what work he is performing among the masses. What do these self-reports consist of? This is shown by certain facts. The Party organization of the Dzerzhinsky collective farm, Matveyev District, Orenburg Region, hears the self-report of a Party member named Sidorov, and this is the record: "He does not read or sub-

scribe to newspapers. He lives on fairly good terms with his wife and also with his children... Note be taken that Sidorov does not do enough to educate his family." This is a typical self-report.

This same organization recorded the self-report of Party member Mazin, who was in the habit of beating his wife, as follows: "Prohibit domestic stupidities. He must create a good family spirit without delay."

The Party organization of the Amosov State Farm, Kazakhstan, heard the self-report of a Party member named Selirov and adopted the following trenchant decision: "Heard: self-report of Selirov. Resolved: That Selirov be arrested."

VOICE: What for?

ZHDANOV: It is another question we must ask here: has a Party organization the right to arrest its members? The fellow had to pay for his report with his skin!

In many Party organizations the importance of plenums, as organs of collective leadership, is lowered. Plenums meet very rarely, and mostly for the discussion of ceremonial or general questions, while local affairs are rarely discussed. Elections and similar questions, as I have already said, are discussed and decided in the absence of the necessary quorum.

In 1936, the Vachi district committee, Gorky Region, did not summon a single plenum. In the Veselov district, Dnepropetrovsk Region, no plenum was held for ten months. In 1936, not a single plenum was held in the Chelhinsk district and other district committees in the Tatar Republic for seven

or eight months. What sort of collective leadership is this?

A similar defect is to be observed in the primary Party organizations and results in lowering the importance of our elective organizations.

The draft resolution points out that we must create a state of affairs in the primary Party organizations which will guarantee strict observance of the procedure of electing Party committees at general meetings of the factory Party organization, and prevent the latter being superseded by conferences. The draft resolution also points to the necessity of putting a stop to the practice that prevails in a number of primary Party organizations whereby general meetings are virtually abolished and superseded by shop meetings and conferences.

Picture the situation in a large factory with 1,000 or 1,500 Party members. Instead of a general meeting of the Party organization of the factory being called for the purpose of electing the Party committee, a factory conference is called on the basis of one delegate for every three Party members. Thus the general Party meeting of the factory is replaced by a conference at which the elections are held; in other words, two out of every three persons are virtually deprived of the opportunity of voting. Can this be tolerated? Obviously, it cannot be tolerated under any circumstances.

The importance of general meetings is lowered. In a number of organizations general Party meetings are rarely held and very little attention is paid to local Party affairs.

The principles of internal Party democracy are

also violated by the way preparations are made for Party meetings, when the members of the Party are not duly informed of the questions to be discussed.

Regarding resolutions at Party meetings. Resolutions on certain questions are drawn up a long time ahead, or are scribbled at the meeting itself by people skilled in this sort of thing, without any reference to what is said in the discussion. Our people are very partial to the formula: a draft decision to be framed “on the basis of the opinions exchanged” — when in fact no attention whatever is paid to the “opinions exchanged.” This betrays a gross disrespect for the legitimate rights of the members, who are the masters of the Party.

Lack of order and unscrupulous negligence are displayed by our people with regard to Party documents and decisions. We should all learn from the attitude shown by the Central Committee to Party documents. While we have now enhanced the importance of the membership card and the respect it enjoys, this cannot be said of many other Party documents. How are they framed, executed, filed? Carelessly. We must learn from the Central Committee to handle every Party document with accuracy and care. Too much carelessness and negligence are displayed by our Party organizations in this respect.

It is by no means an unimportant matter, for instance, whether the members of the bureau of a Party committee have been supplied with material for the discussions at their sittings or not, or whether they receive it a day before or only at the sitting itself. This is also a way of ensuring internal

Party democracy.

These questions may seem trifling ones, but in the long run they do us harm because they hamper the growth of the active and prevent it taking an active and independent part in the life of the Party. This gives rise to hectoring and so on.

I should like to mention another example of violation of the principles of collective leadership. I am referring to what are known as the "triangles." In a number of our organizations, under the guise of the "triangle," consisting of the secretary of the Party committee, the director of the factory or institution and the chairman of the local trade union organization, there exists a peculiar organization which stands apart from the normal elected organs (the Party committee and trade union committee), which functions officially and regularly and which is not provided for by any Party or Soviet law. It meets, adopts decisions, issues instructions for executions, and so on. From the standpoint of collective leadership, from the standpoint of the maintenance of proper relations among the Party organization, the business organization and the trade union organization, the triangle is an absolutely impermissible form. It is a family circle, a mutual understanding to make it difficult to criticize. Once these three people have come to an understanding, just try to criticize them! It robs the Party and trade union organizations of their character, disarms them in combatting defects of business administration and, on the other hand, disarms the business administrator himself, because the triangle is something in the nature of a corporate managing

body, whereas our methods of business management are built on entirely different lines.

The triangles are a parody, a caricature, a substitute for collective leadership. What does this lead to? Take Leningrad, where at the Kalinin Factory they expelled a communist from the Party for criticizing the improper way the factory management directed the Stakhanov movement, for pointing to defects in leadership. He was listed as a troublemaker. We reinstated him in the Party and punished those who had treated him in this illegal and gross manner. But the fact itself was made possible by the existence of the triangle, which has come to an understanding beforehand. The factory manager came to the triangle and said: "This is intolerable, the management is being abused." He was seconded by the Party secretary and the chairman of the trade union committee. In this way criticism is stifled, which makes it difficult for the workers of such a factory to get at the truth.

It seems to me that the time has come to raise the question of abolishing the triangles.

Wherein lies the harm caused by the violations of the principles of democratic centralism I have mentioned? It lies in the fact that this practice hampers the growth of the activity and independent initiative of Party members, blunts the feeling of the members that they are the masters of the Party, hinders the ideological and political growth of Party members, deprives Party members of their legal right to control the activities of Party organs, and in this way prevents proper relations between the leaders and the members of the Party and weak-

ens the Party in the face of the tasks it has to accomplish.

ELIMINATE EVERYTHING THAT HINDERS THE GROWTH OF THE PARTY ACTIVE

Everybody realizes what vast cadres we require so as to accomplish successfully the tasks dictated by the development of socialist construction in all spheres, by the introduction of the new Constitution and by the further struggle for communism, what a large number of devoted and self-sacrificing comrades we need both within the Party and outside the Party, among non-Party people!

We must eliminate from our Party practice everything that hampers and prevents the growth of the active, the development of its independent initiative and the enhancement of its role in the leadership of Party life and the discussion of all questions of Party policy, as is enjoined by the principles of internal Party democracy.

Comrade Stalin is always teaching us that the Party active has a special political significance in the life of our Party. It is the vehicle by which the decisions of our Party are carried into effect. After a Party decision has been adopted its fate lies with the active. The Party active is the expression of the public opinion of the Party.

It is because our Party was able to forge and train a large active in the spirit of Lenin and Stalin that we succeeded in accomplishing the basic tasks of socialist construction and in securing such gigantic and fabulous victories.

It was precisely to further this that, on the initi-

ative of Comrade Stalin, the Central Committee adopted the decision to summon Party actives to discuss the decisions of the Central Committee of the CPSU(B).

And it is for this reason that we must eliminate everything that hinders the numerical increase of our active, its ideological and political growth, its Bolshevik steeling, its organizational consolidation. The tasks that confront us in the sphere of socialist construction and in connection with the forthcoming new democratic elections raise the important question of enhancing the activity of every communist.

Every one of the 2,000,000 members of our Party must be activized to the maximum degree, every communist must be an active organizer, agitator and propagandist for the cause of the Party. It is from this standpoint that our organizational, agitational and propaganda work must be reconstructed.

One remark on propaganda work. The chief defect of our propaganda work, a defect to which the Central Committee has repeatedly pointed, is that it is often conducted in a scholastic way, divorced from the current, the urgent daily tasks of the Party. Our propaganda must be so organized that the purpose of every propagandist circle and every school should be to train communists so that the increase in knowledge and perfection of Party members in the science of Marxism-Leninism should not be an aim in itself, but a means of training active propagandists for the cause of the Party. This must be borne in mind as one of the most im-

portant principles of our propaganda work.

Unless we get rid of the grave shortcomings in our internal Party practices and, in the first place, put a stop to the violations of internal Party democracy and the elective principle, we shall not be able to solve the new tasks of the Party that arise from the democratic elections, and the Party organizations may prove bankrupt in the face of these tasks. And if we want to carry out the elections under the new electoral system as is demanded by the Party and as is demanded by the Constitution, if we want our Soviet and Party workers to respect our laws and the masses to respect the Soviet Constitution, we must secure a reorganization of Party work based on the complete and unconditional observance of the principles of internal Party democracy laid down by the rules of our Party.

* * *

In pursuance of this, we must adopt the following measures:

First, we must unconditionally eliminate the practice of co-option and restore the principle of electing the leading organs of the Party organizations in accordance with the Party rules.

Second, we must forbid voting by lists in the election of Party organs and replace open voting by secret voting. In this connection the Party members must be ensured the unrestricted right to raise objections to the nominated candidates and the unrestricted right to criticize these candidates.

In this connection, in view of the serious violations of the elective principle by our Party organi-

zations, we must within the next two months hold elections of Party organs, from the Party committees of the primary organizations to the territorial and regional committees and the Central Committees of the national communist parties, the elections to be completed before the end of May. In future the frequency of elections of Party organs laid down in the Party rules must be observed: in the primary Party organizations, once a year; in the district and city organizations, once a year; in the territorial, regional and republican organizations, once every eighteen months.

As regards Party meetings, we must categorically condemn and prohibit the practice of replacing general Party meetings by shop meetings or conferences, and we must not allow two-stage elections in Party organizations, but must make it the practice that primary Party organs should be elected directly at general meetings.

Such are the proposals I was called upon to formulate here.

REPLY TO THE DISCUSSION

(Concluding Speech at the Plenum of the Central Committee of the CPSU(B))

February 27, 1937

Comrades, in the discussion the question of reconstructing the work of other organizations, chiefly Soviet organizations, was raised and discussed. Mention was made of the trade unions, the Young Communist League and other mass organizations. This is a very important matter and, of course, we shall have to reconstruct these organizations before the elections along the lines of the work we shall have to perform in the Party organization.

The condition for the reconstruction of the Soviet, trade union and Young Communist League organizations is the preliminary reconstruction of the Party organization itself, which is the principal guiding force and the leading nucleus of all our organizations, as is inscribed in our Constitution. I do not think that we should refrain even now from working for a decided improvement in the work of the mass organizations, trade unions, Soviets, Young Communist League and so forth; but a genuine reconstruction of the work will of course depend on the degree to which the Party organizations — which is the fundamental thing — succeed in reconstructing themselves.

Now, as to the violations of the elective principle by Party organizations, the prevalence of co-optation and other violations of internal Party democracy and the principles of democratic centralism. It

is apparent from the discussion that matters have gone very far, that the habits and survivals of the past are still firmly entrenched in the minds of our people, who have been carried away by our big achievements. These habits and survivals are undoubtedly associated with the non-Marxist views which were flayed by Comrade Stalin as early as 1924 at the 13th Party Conference and which are due to the absolutely non-Marxist idea that our Party is "not an independent organism living its own independent ideological and practical life, but something in the nature of a system of institutions, lower, intermediate and higher." Comrade Stalin pointed out at the time that it was the immediate task of the Party to combat these views. Comrade Stalin's recommendations should be recalled in connection with the bureaucratic perversions of the principles of democratic centralism.

A number of comrades, and Comrade Khatajevich most convincingly, spoke here of a certain divorcement of the responsible workers from Party life.

Citing the Dnepropetrovsk organization as an example, Comrade Khatayevich showed how overpreoccupation with current business affairs leads to a loss of taste for Party work and to a slackening of Party work. This situation is a typical one. It should be realized that when we become absorbed in petty business affairs to the detriment of Party work, we are forgetting that nobody will do the Party work for us. Guidance of Party work is the chief function of Party workers; the responsibility for the state of this work lies wholly and entirely on

them.

The speech of Comrade Kabakov shows that Party work is being seriously forgotten by a number of organizations. Comrade Kabakov spoke about everything except Party work. He spoke about the cinema, cinema equipment and the radio. These are all very important and very essential things. But when Comrade Molotov asked Comrade Kabakov point blank what the situation was in the Urals with regard to co-option, he evaded the question. Consequently, questions of Party work are not the chief thing that interests Comrade Kabakov. This shows that underestimation of Party work has not been overcome, that the necessary change of attitude in this matter has not yet been achieved, and that we must begin with the leaders. A change in attitude toward Party work depends entirely on the change in the attitude of the leaders of the Party organizations.

A few words about election procedure. Comrades spoke here about the necessity of issuing instructions on how to conduct the secret ballot — whether by the ballot box and ballot slip system, or by the ball system. This is a very important question, but what we need now is not instructions but to know whether the principle itself is approved. Nobody here objected to the principle of the secret ballot; on the contrary, comrades stressed the extreme importance and significance of the secret ballot in the matter of securing real freedom of election. The process of election itself will apparently be divided into two stages. The first stage will be an absolutely open discussion of the candidates.

Everybody will have the right to nominate and advocate any candidate for election to the Party committee. That is the first stage. Then after the candidates have been discussed, the vote will be taken by secret ballot.

The procedure practised in the election of the Central Committee at Party congresses, where voting is by secret ballot, may be taken as a model and example. I think that this procedure may be borrowed in its entirety by the Party organizations in the localities.

Now as regards co-option. Certain comrades pointed out that the extensive practice of co-option is due to the necessity of re-allocating secretaries and other responsible Party leaders, and consequently to adopt them onto the Party committees. If the elections in Party organizations are held precisely at the times established, no difficulty will arise from the fact that a man remains unelected for two or three months. He will fulfil the duties of secretary but will not be a member of the Party committee, and may be put up for election to the Party committee at the forthcoming conference. At present a Party leader becomes a member of the Party committee at the same time that he is assigned to a particular Party post. That is by no means obligatory. Let him fulfil the duties of secretary until the conference is held without being a member of the Party committee.

Another remark. Co-option was to a certain extent due to the turnover of responsible workers, to the frequent transfers of workers.

Comrades who spoke here referred to the "pau-

city" of cadres which, it was claimed, necessitates a constant regrouping and transfer of people. They forget that the reserves and possibilities we possess of advancing new cadres are exceptionally great. Just see how fast Party people and non-Party people develop, just see how rapidly the Stakhanovites develop, and not only the Stakhanovites. And take the movement of the wives of Red Army commanders and industrial executives, recall the recent all-Union conferences. In respect to the vividness, pithiness and value of their utterances, in respect to their selection of new forms and methods of agitation, in respect to the wealth of subjects they dealt with and the content and form of their speeches, I give you my word, many of them could teach a point or two to our stereotyped and humdrum agitators.

We have masses of people around us, people who should have been advanced long ago; but we fail to notice them because of our lack of democracy. Our lack of democracy prevents us noticing new people. And many people are kept waiting too long, and having been kept waiting too long, having been forgotten, they become a reserve of dissatisfied people within our Party. From this standpoint the adoption of the secret ballot and of the real elective principle in our Party organizations will help us to draw upon the vast reserve of cadres we possess. Lenin said, at a time when we really had very few cadres, that we must punish those who say that we have few cadres.

A word or two about agitation. Comrades were right when they said here that our agitation chiefly

embraces the foremost workers and individual collective farms. It absolutely does not extend to vast sections of people who are prepared to help us, who are prepared at any moment to respond to our call, to become our friends, to become non-Party Bolsheviks. I am alluding to the intellectuals, office workers, housewives, and not only to them. It must be bluntly stated that our agitational work does not embrace even all the workers in the large factories, while in the rural districts we are working only in a part of the collective farms. We have collective farms which are visited by district functionaries two or three times a year, but there are many collective farms, most of them weak ones — and that is the chief danger — in out-of-the-way places, to which Comrade Eiche referred, which nobody ever visits because they are ignored. This is absolutely wrong; we must intensify our work precisely among those workers, collective farmers, office employees and other members of the working population whom our political influence has not yet sufficiently embraced.

Our agitation frequently does not provide frank and direct answers to the questions raised by the workers. We receive a host of questions and responses in connection with every one of our measures. Lists of these questions are drawn up by the Party committees, but answers to the questions are very frequently not given, difficult questions are evaded. That is wrong; our agitation must be truthful, our agitation must furnish a reply to all the questions raised by the workers, and they must not be left without attention, without a reply, be-

cause if we do not reply to them, somebody else will — nature abhors a vacuum.

And, last, as to our agitational collectives, the work of which is also extremely neglected. They also for the most part serve the mills and factories. But as regards agitators who would work in dwelling houses, universities and technical colleges, among office workers and intellectuals — this is a matter which our Party organizations have not yet begun to tackle. We must acquire cadres of such people too. The opportunities here are exceptional. Everything is in our hands — radio, cinema, newspapers, and the devil only knows how many other means of agitation.

Are we utilizing these means? Quite inadequately. The question is to put this work on a proper footing, and that is a very big thing.

RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE PLENUM OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE CPSU(B) IN CONNECTION WITH THE REPORT OF COMRADE ZHDANOV

February 27, 1937

The introduction of the new Constitution of the USSR signifies a definite change in the political life of the country. The essence of this change is the further democratization of the electoral system, as expressed in the replacement of not entirely equal suffrage in elections to the Soviets by equal suffrage, indirect elections by direct elections and open ballot by secret ballot.

Whereas before the introduction of the new Constitution there were restrictions of suffrage in the case of the clergy, former White Guards, the former rich and persons not engaged in socially useful labour, the new Constitution eliminates all restrictions of suffrage for these categories of citizens and inaugurates universal suffrage in the elections of deputies.

Whereas formerly the elections of delegates were not equal, since there existed different rates of representation for the urban and rural populations, now the necessity of restricting the equality of elections has disappeared and all citizens are entitled to participate in the elections on an equal footing.

Whereas formerly the elections of the intermediate and higher organs of Soviet power were indi-

rect, now under the new Constitution all Soviets, from village and city Soviets to the Supreme Soviet, will be elected immediately by the citizens by direct elections.

Whereas formerly deputies to the Soviets were elected by open ballot and by lists, now deputies will be elected by secret ballot, and not by lists but by individual candidatures nominated in each electoral area.

Lastly, the Constitution introduces popular canvasses (referendums).

These changes in the electoral system signify increased control of the masses over the Soviet organs and increased responsibility of the Soviet organs to the masses.

The effect of the introduction of universal, equal and direct suffrage by secret ballot will be to enhance the political activity of the masses and to enlist new strata of the labouring population in the work of administering the state. The dictatorship of the proletariat will thus become a more flexible and, consequently, a more powerful system of state guidance of society by the working class, the base of the dictatorship of the working class will be broadened and its foundations will become firmer.

In order to meet this change fully prepared, the Party must assume charge of it and see to it that its leadership is fully insured in the forthcoming elections to the supreme organs of the country.

Are the Party organizations prepared for leadership of this kind?

What is required of the Party so that it may assume charge of this change, assume charge of the

new, thoroughly democratic elections?

What is required is that the Party itself should consistently practise democracy, that it should thoroughly apply the principles of democratic centralism in its internal life as the Party rules demand, that the necessary conditions should exist within the Party itself for the election of all Party organs, that criticism and self-criticism should be fully developed, that the responsibility of Party organs to the members of the Party should be complete, and that the Party members themselves should be active to the highest degree.

Can it be said that all the Party organizations are already prepared to fulfil these conditions, that they have completely reorganized themselves on democratic lines?

Unfortunately, this cannot be said with absolute assurance. This is shown by the violations of the Party rules and the principles of internal democracy practised in certain organizations.

What are these violations?

The principle of election of Party organs laid down in the Party rules has been violated by a number of organizations. The frequency of election of Party organs laid down in the Party rules is not observed by Party organizations. The entirely unjustifiable practice of co-opting leading workers as members of plenums of district committees, city committees, territorial committees, regional committees and central committees of national communist parties has become widespread.

The system laid down in the Party rules whereby secretaries of Party committees are en-

dorsed by superior bodies has virtually been transformed into a system of appointment in the case of a number of Party organizations. Secretaries of Party committees are frequently endorsed before their election by the local Party organizations, and the result of this is virtually to deprive local Party organizations of the opportunity of discussing the candidature of the recommended worker.

Endorsement of elected persons and removal of persons from posts are often decided by a canvass of the opinion of members of Party organizations and without the new workers being recommended to the plenum of the Party committee, and also without the motives for removing a given Party leader being explained to the Party organizations.

As regards election of Party organs, the practice still prevails of discussing the lists of candidates only at preliminary conferences, councils of seniors, or delegate meetings, and as a rule no discussion of the individual candidates is opened at the plenums and conferences themselves, voting is by list and not by individual candidates, and in this way the election procedure is converted into a mere formality.

All these instances of violation of the principles of democratic centralism are injurious to the Party, as they hamper the growth of the activity of the members of the Party, deprive the active, which has a special political significance in the life of our Party, of the opportunity of participating in the responsible work, deprive the Party members of their legitimate right to control the activities of the Party organs, and thereby disturb proper relations be-

tween the leaders and the masses of the Party.

Striking examples of such practices are provided by the cases recently disclosed by the Central Committee of the CPSU(B) of extreme deterioration of Party political work in the Azov-Black Sea Territorial Committee, the Kiev Regional Committee, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Ukraine and in other Party organizations, finding expression in gross violations of the Party rules and the principles of democratic centralism by departures from the principle of electing Party organs and the introduction of the intolerable practice of co-option.

The Plenum of the Central Committee of the CPSU(B) emphasizes the fact that the examples of incorrect leadership disclosed in the case of the Kiev Regional Committee and the Azov-Black Sea Territory are not isolated instances but are present in one degree or another in all the territorial and regional Party organizations.

The Plenum of the Central Committee of the CPSU(B) considers that the elimination of these and similar defects constitutes that indispensable condition without which the Party cannot accomplish the new tasks that confront it in connection with the change in the political life of the country, the adoption of the new Constitution and the forthcoming elections to the supreme organs of the country on the basis of universal, equal and direct suffrage by secret ballot.

It is therefore necessary to reorganize Party work from the standpoint of the complete and unconditional application of the principles of internal

Party democracy as prescribed in the Party rules.

The Plenum of the Central Committee of the CPSU(B) considers it necessary to adopt and enjoins all Party organizations to carry out the following measures:

1. To eliminate the practice of co-opting members of Party committees and to restore the principle of election of the leading organs of Party organizations in accordance with the Party rules.

2. To forbid voting by lists in elections of Party organs. Voting should be on individual candidates, and every member of the Party should be insured the unrestricted right to raise objections to candidates and to criticize them.

3. To introduce the secret ballot in election of candidates to Party organs.

4. To hold elections of Party organs in all Party organizations, from the Party committees of primary Party organizations to territorial and regional committees and the central committees of the national communist parties, the elections to be completed not later than May 20.

5. To enjoin all Party organizations strictly to observe the frequency of election of Party organs laid down in the Party rules: in the primary Party organizations once a year, in the district and city organizations once a year, in the regional, territorial and republican organizations once every eighteen months.

6. To insure that the primary Party organizations strictly observe the system of electing Party committees at general meetings of the factory organization and that the latter should not be super-

seded by conferences.

7. To eliminate the practice prevailing in a number of primary Party organizations of virtually abolishing general meetings and replacing general meetings by shop meetings and conferences.

SELF-CRITICISM AND CONTACT WITH THE MASSES!

*(Editorial in Pravda, Central Organ of the Communist
Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks))*

March 6, 1937

The recent Plenum of the Central Committee will constitute an important page in the history of our Party. The immense significance of the Plenum is due to a number of causes, first and foremost to the fact that it was held soon after the introduction of the Stalin Constitution, which marks a definite change in the political life of the country.

The task of the Plenum was to verify how far all links of the Party were really prepared to meet this change. The great significance of the Plenum lies in the decisions it adopted, which, with the sharpness and self-critical spirit characteristic of Bolsheviks, expose grave defects and mistakes in the work of the Party organizations and indicate effective measures for the elimination of these unhealthy manifestations and their consequences.

The Stalin Constitution registered the great achievements of the socialist state of workers and peasants. The successes gained in the cause of the Party and in the cause of communism are indeed great. Their positive significance is immense. But there is also a seamy side to these successes. In the case of people who are not sufficiently tried and experienced, success, as Comrade Stalin has frequently pointed out, engenders boastfulness, pride, lack of vigilance and an idiotic devil-may-care atti-

tude.

Many leaders of Party organizations have forgotten that the Soviet power has so far been established only on one-sixth of the surface of the globe and that our country is encircled by capitalism. And capitalist encirclement is not an empty phrase. Bourgeois countries have always sent scouts, spies and wreckers even into each other's territories with the object of disorganizing and undermining the power of neighbouring states. The bourgeoisie, which dominates five-sixths of the world's surface, cannot and never will reconcile itself to the success of the socialist state of workers and peasants. And the fascist states in particular rage against the Soviet Union. The capitalists send considerably more spies into our country than into other bourgeois countries. The Trotskyites are a real find for international fascism; they serve conveniently to screen the formation of anti-Soviet espionage and terrorist groups. Trotskyism has long ceased to be a political current within the working class; the Trotskyites have become a gang of murderers and fascist hirelings. We should not allow ourselves to be lulled to sleep by the numerical insignificance of this gang. We must be ten times as vigilant as ever before!

The Stalin Constitution of the USSR, which introduces universal, equal and direct suffrage by secret ballot, is an example of genuine, socialist democracy which has no parallel in history. And in the resolution (published today) adopted by the Plenum of the Central Committee of the CPSU(B), in connection with the report, the Party emphasizes

the fact that under the new electoral system

“...the dictatorship of the proletariat will thus become a more flexible and, consequently, a more powerful system of state guidance of society by the working class, the base of the dictatorship of the working class will be broadened and its foundations will become firmer.”

But the fact that the foundations of the dictatorship of the working class are being strengthened complicates rather than simplifies the tasks of the Party as the leader of socialist construction. The new elections will tremendously enhance the political activity of the population all over the country — in every territory, in every city and in every district. The Bolshevik Party organization must lead this activity. And this means in the first place that the whole membership of our Party must be made active. It means that every Party organization must strictly observe the rules of internal Party democracy, which is one of the fundamental organizational principles of Bolshevism.

Yet we find the principle of internal Party democracy frequently violated in various ways. It is violated by the fact that the stipulated periods of election of Party organs are not observed and by the fact that, instead of being elected, various leading workers are often co-opted onto district, city and regional Party committees, while secretaries of Party committees are at times simply appointed. The Plenum of the Central Committee of the CPSU(B) sharply condemned such infractions of the Party rules and violations of the principles of

Bolshevism and pointed to the harm and danger of such violations.

The Plenum of the Central Committee pointed out that such violations of the principles of democratic centralism are harmful to the Party first of all because they

“...hamper the growth of the activity of the members of the Party, deprive the active, which has a special political significance in the life of our Party, of the opportunity of participating in responsible work, deprive the Party members of their legitimate right to control the activities of the Party organs, and thereby disturb proper relations between the leaders and the masses of the Party.”

And our Party, through Lenin and Stalin, has always demanded not only that the leaders should teach the masses, but that they should themselves learn from the masses, that they should be able to make use of the vast practical experience of the masses and should always be under the control of the masses.

The chief danger of the violations of the Party rules disclosed by the Plenum of the Central Committee of the CPSU(B) is that leading Party workers may become divorced from the masses, that a number of Party workers may become bureaucratic and virtually escape the control of the Party masses. And in its decisions the Plenum of the Central Committee, after making a profound analysis of the defects in the work of the Party organizations, indicated measures for the elimination of

these defects and violations. The chief of these measures is the decision of the Plenum of the Central Committee,

“To introduce the secret ballot in election of candidates to Party organs.

“To hold elections of Party organs in all Party organizations, from the Party committees of primary Party organizations to territorial and regional committees and the central committees of the national communist parties, the elections to be completed not later than May 20.”

The importance of these decisions of the Plenum of the Central Committee to the whole life of the Party can hardly be exaggerated. The feature of the next few months will be the election of Party committees and extensive Bolshevik self-criticism. The Central Committee calls upon all members of the Party to enhance self-criticism, creative self-criticism, self-criticism which will help to rid the Party of all elements alien to Bolshevism.

Secret ballot in the election of candidates to Party organs will play a very important part. It will enhance the feeling of responsibility of the leaders to the Party masses. It will create the fullest opportunity in the Party organizations for wide self-criticism, without respect for persons. It will rouse the activity of all Party members and enhance their political discernment and vigilance.

And vigilance is a quality of indispensable importance to Bolsheviks at the present time. This has once more been demonstrated by the anti-Party, double-dealing activities not only of the

Trotskyite bandits, but also of the Rights, whose ringleaders — Bukharin and Rykov — the Plenum of the Central Committee expelled from the ranks of the Party.

The decisions of the Plenum of the Central Committee will put an end to the unpardonable, idiotic, devil-may-care attitude of certain leaders, among whom the rotten theory was current that every success gained in socialist construction means that the struggle of the agents of capitalism against socialism becomes less and less acute. The decisions of the Plenum will be effective in directing the attention of the Party organization to Party educational work. The Party has done not a little to help our cadres to master technique. We have done not a little for the technical education of the masses. The Central Committee and Comrade Stalin definitely demand that the old slogan of technical education should be supplemented by a new slogan — the mastering of Bolshevism, the political education of cadres. This will help them to detect the enemy no matter how he may mask himself.

The decisions of the Plenum of the Central Committee will be a program for the whole Party for a long time to come. This program must be rapidly brought to the knowledge of every Party worker and of every member of our great Party. We must rapidly change our methods and begin to work and act on new lines.

The primary task now is to make a careful and profound study of the decisions of the Plenum of the Central Committee and make them known to every Bolshevik. In these decisions the Plenum of

the Central Committee has provided the Party with a powerful instrument which will help the Party organizations to reorganize their methods of work, so that they may with greater assurance, strength and harmony lead the masses of the working class, the masses of the people, to fight the new battles for communism.

THERE MUST BE NO RESTRICTION OF RIGHTS OF PARTY MEMBERS!

(Editorial in Pravda)

March 7, 1937

The activities of all government organs and of all Party and public organizations must now be concentrated on putting the Stalin Constitution into effect. This most important historical document signifies a tremendous change in the political life of the country.

The preparations for the forthcoming elections to the Supreme Soviet of the country will undoubtedly stimulate the Soviet people to a new and higher level of political activity and give rise to an unprecedented movement among all strata of the population. It is the duty of our Party, which is the vanguard of the working population, to assume charge of this movement and of this change in the political life of the country. It must direct the activity of the people into channels which will still further strengthen the dictatorship of the working class and the might of the great socialist fatherland.

Our Party is the sole and genuine party of the working class. In the gloomy days of underground life under the Tsar, in the stormy days of the Civil War and in the strenuous fight against every enemy of socialism it became steeled, acquired militant traditions, strengthened and multiplied its contacts with the masses, and perfected itself in the art of leading and triumphing together with the masses and at the head of the masses. The Bolshevik Party,

which gave mankind Lenin and Stalin and which opened up a new socialist world, enjoys great popularity and an immense prestige.

The confidence and love of the Soviet people for their Party, for their leader, recognized, tested and steeled in the battles of socialism, are unlimited. All the greater is the responsibility of the Party, all the more complex are its tasks, and all the more exacting are the demands made of every communist. The Party must meet the change in the political life of the country fully prepared and completely ensure its leadership in the new elections. How this is to be done and what it entails have been set forth with exceptional clarity in the resolution of the Plenum of the Central Committee of the CPSU(B) published yesterday:

“What is required is that the Party itself should consistently practice democracy, that it should thoroughly apply the principles of democratic centralism in its internal life as the Party rules demand, that the necessary conditions should exist within the Party itself for the election of all Party organs, that criticism and self-criticism should be fully developed, that the responsibility of Party organs to the members of the Party should be complete, and that the Party members themselves should be active to the highest degree.”

The Plenum of the Central Committee noted the fact that in many Party organizations the Party rules are grossly violated and that democratic centralism is frequently replaced by bureaucratic cen-

tralism. The very dangerous practice of co-opting various responsible workers, appointing secretaries, restricting the right of communists and stifling self-criticism is widely prevalent. Certain leaders of Party organizations have replaced the Bolshevik principles of selecting and promoting cadres by petty-bourgeois, family-circle principles. It is already the practice that when a responsible Party worker goes to take up a post in a new region he invariably drags with him an "entourage" of his own, supposedly tested workers.

For example, Comrade Vainov, secretary of the Yaroslavl Regional Committee, had scarcely taken up his duties in a new region when he began to gather as his assistants acquaintances and friends from all parts of the country. His own people, of whom the organization had no knowledge whatever, who were selected purely on the ground of acquaintanceship and former ties, were appointed to the managership of many of the departments of the Regional Committee, to the secretaryship of the Yaroslavl city committee, to the secretaryship of district committees and even to the managership of the City Trading Department.

The danger of this reprehensible practice consists in the fact that it engenders a spirit of toadyism and servility in the organization, hampers the growth of local cadres, tends to divorce the leadership from the masses and facilitates the violation of the fundamental principles laid down in the Party rules. All this is corroborated by the state of affairs, for instance, in the Yaroslavl organization itself, where even the Regional Party Conference was

marked by a spirit of toadyism, where co-option, decision of questions by private canvasses of opinion, and so on are markedly developed.

Forgetfulness of the basic demands of Party life, and the violation of internal Party democracy inevitably tend to divorce the Party organs from the masses and create a state of affairs in which the Party leader surrounds himself by people who in their sycophantic zeal create a stifling atmosphere of flattery and blunt the spirit of Bolshevik vigilance. And this is taken advantage of by the enemies, the agents of fascism — the utterly vile Trotskyites and the Right scum. And it is not without good reason that precisely in those organizations where the fundamentals of internal Party democracy were most grossly violated and where self-criticism was stifled the vile Trotskyites and Right scum found it easy to entrench themselves.

Striking examples of this reprehensible practice are provided by the facts of outrageous deterioration of Party work and violations of internal Party democracy recently disclosed by the Central Committee of the CPSU(B) in the Azov-Black Sea and Kiev organizations, and in the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Ukraine. Unfortunately, these are not isolated instances but are present in one degree or another in every Party organization. The Plenum of the Central Committee of the CPSU(B) severely condemned the perversions and defects of Party work and demanded that every Party organization should strictly adhere to the Party rules and the principles of democratic centralism.

This is now the chief thing, for every one of us must realize that

“...these instances of violation of the principles of democratic centralism are injurious to the Party, as they hamper the growth of the activity of the members of the Party, deprive the active, which has a special political significance in the life of our Party, of the opportunity of participating in the responsible work, deprive the Party members of their legitimate right to control the activities of the Party organs, and thereby disturb proper relations between the leaders and the masses of the Party.”

We must create a state of affairs in which all communists without exception actively participate in Party life and all Party organizations work actively. This is what Lenin taught us, and this is what Comrade Stalin teaches us. We must see to it that

“...the Party masses should decide both Party and general practical questions, that the Party masses should adopt their *own resolutions* and oblige their organizations to carry out these resolutions... It is a question of democracy *in action*, when the Party masses decide questions themselves and act themselves.” (*Stalin.*)

Self-criticism is an inalienable and permanently functioning instrument of Bolshevism. The secret ballot in the election of candidates to Party organs established by the Plenum of the Central Committee will achieve the required results only if there is a new wave of Bolshevik self-criticism, without re-

spect for persons, in the Party organization. A Party functionary who is unable to utilize self-criticism, let alone stifles it, is not a Bolshevik, but a bureaucrat who should be driven out of the Party apparatus. The widest development of self-criticism will raise the ideological level of our cadres and will enable the Party masses to advance to responsible work from their ranks people who have been really tested in the struggle against the enemies of the working class, people who are staunch and thoroughly devoted to the Party of Lenin and Stalin and to its Central Committee.

And it should not be forgotten that when speaking of self-criticism we mean proletarian, Bolshevik self-criticism, which helps to expose and correct our shortcomings and which tends to raise the level of our whole work. This self-criticism has nothing in common with the "criticism" which proceeds from the hostile camp and which is directed against our Party and the Soviet power. In fighting the enemies of the working class we shall keep our powder dry!

The decisions adopted by the Plenum of the Central Committee of the CPSU(B) in connection with the report constitute a big and important program for all the organizations of the Party. We must proceed to carry out this program immediately. This will be a powerful stimulus to the political activity of the Party masses and will facilitate the growth of Bolshevik cadres.

The militant vanguard of the working people, the Party of Lenin and Stalin, must meet the historic change in the political life of the country fully

prepared and ensure an even more powerful growth of our country and of our people!

THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE SOVIET UNION (BOLSHEVIKS)

*(Report on Party Building to the 18th Congress of the
Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks))*

March 18, 1939

INTRODUCTION

Comrades, in his report to the 18th Congress, Comrade Stalin summed up the magnificent socialist victories achieved by our Party in the period of the 2nd Five-Year Plan. He made an exceedingly profound and sagacious analysis of the circumstances of our victories and outlined a great program of work connected with the gradual transition of the USSR from socialism to communism.

The victory of socialism is a triumph for our Party, a triumph for its Leninist-Stalinist leadership.

It is a victory for the policy of the Party, for its theory, its ideology and its organizational principles.

The millions of working people of our country have rallied around our Party. Its ideas, the ideas of communism, have become the banner of the Soviet people.

In order to accomplish the historic tasks involved in the building of socialism, and in order to protect the gains of victorious socialism from the surrounding capitalist world and its agents inside the USSR, the Party had to effect a radical readjustment of its political and organizational work.

By purging its ranks of the enemy scum and

thus consolidating the Bolshevik unity and firmness of its ranks, and by readjusting its political and organizational work, the Party immensely enhanced its strength and power and its ideological and organizational armament.

The Party is now stronger than ever before!

And this we owe to the leadership of Comrade Stalin! (*Stormy applause and cheers. All rise.*)

The source of our Party's strength, the source of its epoch-making victories lies in the fact that it is a party of a new type, the Leninist-Stalinist type, a party which is irreconcilable towards opportunists and towards all enemies of the working class. Our Party is the party of social revolution; it has grown up on the firm foundation of the theory of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin. Its program, tactics and organizational principles are based on the granite foundation of Marxism-Leninism. In its ranks are the finest representatives of the working class, the most devoted of its sons, the most class-conscious, revolutionary, courageous and disciplined. Thanks to this, the Bolshevik Party has become the militant staff of the working class, its revolutionary vanguard, a Party

“...bold enough to lead the proletarians in the struggle for power, experienced enough to find its bearings amidst the complex conditions of a revolutionary situation, and flexible enough to steer clear of all submerged rocks in the path to its goal.” (Stalin, *Leninism.*)

The Bolshevik Party performs its role of vanguard of the working class not only through its con-

sistent revolutionary and scientific program and tactics, but also through its organization. A distinguishing feature of our Party is that it has attributed exclusive importance to organization at every stage of its revolutionary activities. It has been relentless towards opportunism in matters of organization and has always devised organizational forms, and rules and laws for the government of its internal life that corresponded to the historical conditions of the Party's activities and ensured the performance of its political tasks.

The organizational principles of Bolshevism are an instrument for the carrying out of a consistently revolutionary program and tactics, for a revolutionary program cannot be carried out without a firm, centralized organization. The Leninist-Stalinist organizational principles of Party structure have been embodied in the Party rules, which define the methods of practical activity of the Party organizations, the forms of the Party's structure and the rules governing its internal life. The historic mission of our Party, as the organizer and leader of the socialist revolution and of the realization of the dictatorship of the working class determined the basic principles of its organizational structure, namely: strict centralism in the activities of the Party organizations; a conscious inner discipline; unity of purpose and unity of action; prohibition of factions and groupings; careful selection of new members of the Party; protection of the Party from the penetration of opportunist petty-bourgeois elements into its ranks; constant care to increase the activity of Party members and to develop inner-

party democracy. These principles, which are embodied in the Party rules, constitute the unshakable foundation of the Party.

The Party has always regarded its rules as the inviolable basis of Party life and Party structure. It has always fought for the strict observance of all the provisions of the rules. Knowing the tremendous power contained in the Bolshevik principles of organization and in their concentrated expression — the rules of the CPSU(B) — bourgeois henchmen and double-dealers of every kind have time and again used the great name of Party member as a screen in their attempts to undermine the Party rules, to destroy the unity of the Party and to weaken it, with the object of paving the way for the restoration of capitalism in the USSR. The events of the past few years have shown what wide use the vile enemies of the people — the Trotsky-Bukharin and bourgeois-nationalist agents of fascism, spies and diversionists — made of violations of Party rules for their own subversive ends. These violations — departures from the principles of democratic centralism, wholesale admissions into the Party, chaos in the conduct of Party business, etc. — were due to a blunting of Bolshevik vigilance and forgetfulness of the organizational principles of our Party. That is why departures from the Party rules, violations of their provisions and laws, are a violation of the Leninist-Stalinist doctrine of the Party and injurious to the Party.

The Party of revolutionary Marxism determines the organizational forms and methods of its work in conformity with the concrete conditions. On

these grounds, the Bolshevik Party has never converted the established forms of Party structure into a dogma, into a lifeless stereotype. As in the development of Marxist theory, so in the organizational forms laid down in its rules, our Party bases itself on creative Marxism and enriches these organizational forms with new experience as the conditions of the class struggle develop and new political tasks arise.

Allow me to remind you of the following precepts laid down on this subject by the 10th Party Congress in its resolution on "Party Affairs":

"1. The party of revolutionary Marxism utterly rejects the quest for an absolutely correct form of party organization and methods of work suited to all stages of the revolutionary process. On the contrary, the form of organization and the methods of work must be entirely determined by the specific features of the given concrete historical situation and by the tasks directly arising from this situation.

"2. From this standpoint it is clear that, with a change in the objective conditions of the development of the revolution, any organizational form, and the methods of work corresponding to it, may become converted from forms of development of the Party into a fetter on its development; and, vice versa, an organizational form which has grown unsuitable may again become an essential, and the only expedient, form should there be a recurrence of the corresponding objective conditions.

“3. The contradiction between the requirements of a newly arising situation, on the one hand, and the established form of an organization and its methods of work, on the other, generally become evident before the necessity for a change of line is definitely felt. The line should be changed only when the task that gave rise to the preceding type of organization and the corresponding method of work has in general — on the whole and in the main — been accomplished.”

There have been numerous instances of changes in the forms and methods of organizational activity in the history of our Party. While holding its basic and fundamental organizational principles inviolate, the Party has always established such organizational forms as facilitate the development of the content of its work, ensure the performance of its political tasks, the unity of word and deed. On this basis, the Party has repeatedly altered its rules in conformity with changes in the situation, new tasks and the experience gained in its work. It is not by chance that big changes and turns in the political life of the country and the rise of new political tasks for our Party have been accompanied by changes in the Party rules. I would remind you that the principal amendments to the Party rules were made in 1922 — the period of development of the New Economic Policy; in 1925 — when the Party, at its 14th Congress, faced the task of socialist industrialization; and in 1934 — the period of the 17th Party Congress, when the Party proceeded to tackle the

historic tasks of the 2nd Five-Year Plan.

Questions of party work and party structure have acquired particular significance during the past few years. The tremendous scope of the socialist transformations, the swift rate at which the Party and state are developing, and the enlistment of the millions of Soviet people in the work of socialist construction increase the demands on the Party and on its leadership.

The enhanced importance of the question of organization denotes an enhancement of the role of the vanguard of the working class, which our Party is.

At the 17th Party Congress, questions of organization, of bringing organizational work into conformity with the demands of the political line, were dealt with in their full scope in the report of Comrade Stalin, the report of Comrade Kaganovich and the resolutions of the Congress.

The role of vanguard of the working class, of the advanced detachment of the working people, such as our Party is, becomes all the greater with the victory of socialism, when the USSR has entered a new phase of development — the phase of completion of the building of classless, socialist society and of gradual transition from socialism to communism.

The past few years have been a period in which the Party has constantly armed itself and sharpened its organizational weapon. Whereas Lenin, in his remarkable work *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back*, developed the organizational precepts which later became the organizational principles of the

party of the new type, the Bolshevik Party, Comrade Stalin — both as regards theory, ideology and tactics, and as regards placing our whole organizational work on a scientific footing — has developed still further the organizational principles of Lenin's doctrine of the Party, has supplemented the doctrine of the Party on organization by new precepts and new laws, and has advanced the Bolshevik science of organization, thus arming the Party and the working class for the accomplishment of the historic task of building socialism in our country. (*Applause.*)

Here I would only like to stress the tremendous importance of the interval between the 17th Congress and the 18th Congress of the Party as regards the enrichment of the latter's organizational experience.

Comrade Stalin has given the Party brilliant examples of creative Marxism on the subject of the organizational structure of the Party. I refer to the doctrine of the interrelation between the political line and organizational work; regarding the scientific organization of the selection, training, promotion and allocation of cadres; regarding the Bolshevik organization of the work of keeping a check on the fulfilment of decisions; regarding the Party's methods of combatting enemies who have penetrated its ranks, and its methods of purging its ranks of degenerates and double-dealers; and regarding vigilance and the mastering of Bolshevism.

On all these questions Comrade Stalin has armed the Party with wise and far-sighted precepts which constitute a most valuable contribution to

the treasure-store of the Bolshevik theory of organization and a guide to action.

Why is it necessary to amend the rules of the CPSU(B)?

The 18th Party Congress has met at a time when fundamental changes have taken place in the economic life and class structure of the USSR.

There is no need for me to dwell in detail on these questions as they have been treated with exhaustive fulness and clarity in the reports of Comrade Stalin and Comrade Molotov.

The victory of socialism in the USSR has ensured the dominance of the socialist economic system. The class composition of the USSR has changed in conformity with the profound changes in the economic sphere. All exploiting elements — capitalists, merchants, kulaks and profiteers — have been eliminated in the period of socialist construction. The working people of the USSR — the workers, peasants and intellectuals — have undergone profound change in the period of socialist construction.

The class boundaries dividing the working people are being obliterated; the economic and political contradictions between workers, peasants and intellectuals are disappearing — becoming obliterated. It is this that has formed the basis for the moral and political unity of Soviet society. This moral and political unity of Soviet society has been brilliantly confirmed in the creation and complete victory of the Communist and non-Party bloc in the elections to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and the Supreme Soviets of the Union Republics.

A numerous body of non-Party Bolsheviks has grown up around the Party, consisting of advanced workers, peasants and intellectuals, active and conscious fighters in the cause of the Party and vehicles of its policy among the masses.

In view of these fundamental changes in the economic and class structure of the USSR the time is ripe to amend the conditions of admission to the Party laid down in the rules of the CPSU(B).

ABOLITION OF THE CATEGORIES OF ADMISSION TO THE PARTY

The existing system, as prescribed in the Party rules, of admitting new members into the Party in accordance with four different categories, depending upon the social status of the applicant, is obviously incompatible with the changes in the class structure of Soviet society resulting from the victory of socialism in the USSR. The need for different categories of admission of new members and of varying probationary periods has disappeared.

The different categories of admission, depending upon the social status of the applicants for Party membership, were established, as you know, at the 11th Party Congress in 1922, at the beginning of the New Economic Policy, with the object of making it difficult for non-proletarian elements to enter our Party. The situation at that time was entirely different from what it is now. At that time the proletariat was in part declassed. The peasants farmed individually. The exploiting classes had not yet been fully abolished. The New Economic Policy was exercising a demoralizing influence on a

section of the Party members, especially its non-proletarian elements. Under those conditions, if the Party was to exercise its role of vanguard with success, such a barrier to the penetration of unstable, petty-bourgeois elements into its ranks as the establishment of different categories of admission was essential. It played a big part in strengthening our Party and in helping it to perform its historical mission.

However, in view of the victory of socialism in our country, the need for these restrictions has disappeared. These restrictions are already hindering and hampering the reinforcement of the ranks of the Party with advanced workers, peasants and intellectuals devoted to the cause of the working class. The Party can no longer adhere to its old framework, to its old standards. The need for the different categories of admission has disappeared.

To what incongruities and anomalies the existing system of admission into the Party leads in practice may be illustrated by numerous examples to be found in any Party organization.

Our best Stakhanovites, once they become foremen or directors, that is, have been promoted to executive posts because of their abilities and services, find themselves, when applying to join the Party, in the position of second-rate people.

The worker, or son of a worker, who has received an education is classed in the fourth category when applying for admission to the Party.

Take, for example, Comrade Smetanin, one of the finest Stakhanovites in Leningrad, a former laster in the Skorokhod Shoe Factory and now As-

sistant People's Commissar of Light Industry of the USSR. As one of the finest Stakhanovites, he was promoted to shop superintendent, and as shop superintendent he was admitted to the Party as a candidate member under the second category. Then, because of his services and capabilities, he was appointed director of the factory, and when, in February 1939, the question arose of transferring him from candidate membership to full membership, he was obliged to enter the Party under the fourth category.

Here is a man who advances and develops, yet the conditions of his admission into the Party become more complex and difficult. Comrade Smetanin, and all comrades in his position, are perplexed why admission to the Party should be made more difficult as they advance. Comrade Smetanin protested, and quite rightly. "Did I become worse," he asked, "when I was promoted from worker to shop superintendent? Did I become worse when they made me director of the factory? Why should I now have to find a larger number of 'recommenders,' with a longer Party standing, than when I was an ordinary worker?"

Or take the case of Comrade Kartashev, who spoke here bringing greetings to the Congress from Leningrad. Not a bad worker, one would think, and it was not a bad speech he made. He came to the fore as a non-Party agitator during the elections to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. Comrade Kartashev is a fitter by trade; he was a Stakhanovite, and he has now been promoted along the lines of the Engineers and Technicians Organization.

When he applied for membership in the Party, he was admitted under the second category. What is the sense of this? One might think the Party has to “protect” itself from men like Kartashev.

Here is another example which was cited at a conference of the Stalin District of the Stalingrad Region. Comrade Mussin, a first-class worker, who was promoted to an executive post, went back to work in the shop in order to be admitted into the Party under the first category.

Such examples could be quoted by the thousand. They give rise to a legitimate feeling of perplexity and sense of injury in comrades whose only crime is that they have been promoted. All this shows that the existing requirements of admission are antiquated and have begun to act as a hindrance to really advanced workers, peasants and intellectuals joining the Party.

You know what the practice of admission under various categories led to: people began to rack their brains trying to decide under what category to class a mechanic, foreman, and so on. Regular “rate cards” were devised to show under what category various professions should be classed. But whichever way you turn, whatever “rate cards” you devise, one thing is clear — the requirements are antiquated, they have ceased to answer the purpose for which they were introduced. These requirements of the rules are out-of-date; they are a cracked mould, as the foundrymen say. (*Laughter.*)

These antiquated requirements are clung to by retrograde people who are not anxious for the advancement of new and young forces.

The antiquated standards furnish a pretext for the cultivation of retrograde, essentially anti-Marxist, anti-Leninist tendencies with regard to the new, Soviet intelligentsia, with regard to foremost people of the working class and the peasantry; they furnish a pretext for the cultivation of an attitude of disdain towards advanced people who because of their education or services have been promoted to leading posts.

All this goes to show that a form which was once essential has now become antiquated, a form without content. A thing of value has been transformed into its own antithesis, into a defect. The organizational form should correspond with the content; and our content will proceed along the line of bringing the classes closer together and abolishing class distinctions.

Accordingly, the theses submitted to the Congress propose to amend the existing system of admission of new members to the Party under different categories and to establish uniform conditions of admission and a uniform period of probation, irrespective of whether the applicants belong to the working class, the peasantry or the intelligentsia.

The amendments to the conditions of admission proposed in the theses are a direct result of the victory of socialism.

The theses propose to establish a one-year probationary period as candidate members for all persons joining the Party. This period is quite sufficient to enable the candidate member to become thoroughly acquainted with the rules, program and tactics of the Party and to enable the Party organi-

zation to test the personal qualities of the candidate member.

It must not be forgotten that it is the foremost people, people who have been tested in various sectors of the fight for socialism, who are now joining our Party.

As you know, admission to the Party was at one time suspended. It was not resumed until November 1, 1936. It is the active body of people that grew up around the Party when admission to its ranks was suspended who constitute the principal source of the present influx of new members into the Party.

The existing system of probationary membership suffers from very serious defects. The most serious is that the work of many Party organizations in educating candidate members is absolutely unsatisfactory, the result being what is known as "eternal probationers," people who remain candidate members for six, seven or eight years, and more. (*Animation and laughter.*) Instead of the body of candidate members serving as a living reservoir from which the Party constantly draws fresh reinforcements, it has, in the case of many organizations, become a sort of "permanent reserve."

Latterly, just before the Congress, the Party organizations have shown some improvement in the matter of advancing candidate members to full membership. But even so, there are still quite a number of candidate members whose probationary period has lasted many years. And if we bear in mind that in the sympathizers' groups, too, there are people who have been waiting for years to be

accepted as candidate members, the question arises, when will they be admitted into the Party? Some four years in the sympathizers' groups, another seven or eight years as candidate members — when will they become full-fledged members of the Party? (*Animation.*) There is no need to show that this obnoxious practice arises from that formal and bureaucratic attitude to people, to Party members, which the Party has condemned.

The purpose of the proposal to establish a one-year probation period is to put a stop to this obnoxious practice and to compel Party organizations to get busy, to improve educational and organizational work among candidate members and to make the probation period something more than a mere formality.

According to the theses, all persons wishing to join the Party must obtain recommendations from three Party members who have been in the Party for at least three years and who know the applicants from having worked together with them for not less than one year.

This proposal springs from what Comrade Lenin proposed in a note to Comrade Molotov on September 15, 1921, in which he said:

“Recommendations may be given only by those who have personally observed the work of the person recommended for a period of not less than one year from having worked with him in one or another Party organization.”

This proposal should increase the responsibility of the recommender for the person he recom-

mends.

As to the number of recommenders and their period of membership, the formulation proposed in the theses has the object of enabling members who have joined the Party in the last few years to give recommendations. This proposal is undoubtedly timely and advisable.

The ranks of the Party have been reinforced by active and advanced people who have received a solid political education. It would be wrong to deprive these new Party members of the right to give recommendations.

Comrades, the existing system of different categories in the matter of recommendations has, as you know, created unnecessary difficulties and excessive obstacles.

You know that it is no easy matter to obtain recommendations, especially in the case of persons who join the Party under the fourth category. A man sometimes wears himself out trying to find the requisite number of recommendations. (*Anima-tion.*)

The new system with regard to recommendations proposed in the theses would remove these restrictive and unnecessary obstacles.

The new conditions of admission into the Party provide that district committees, or city committees in towns with no district divisions, are to be the final instance to confirm the decision of a primary Party organization to admit a new member. This will place a great responsibility on our district committees and city committees for the selection and admission into the Party of really the best

members among the working class, the collective farm peasantry and the intelligentsia.

The new system will facilitate the selection of the best people for the Party; it will facilitate the creation of full-blooded Party organizations, especially in the rural localities, where the number of Party organizations is particularly inadequate. There are no primary Party organizations in a large number of collective farms. The formation of strong Party organizations in the rural localities will be of great value in improving Party work in the collective farms and state farms.

RIGHTS OF PARTY MEMBERS

The next proposal for the amendment of the rules is to add to the section on Party members and their duties a clause on the rights of Party members, rights which are taken for granted but are not mentioned in the rules.

The theses provide that the rules should specify the following rights of Party members:

a) The right of Party members to criticize any Party worker at Party meetings;

b) The right of Party members to elect and be elected to Party organs;

c) The right of Party members to demand to be present on all occasions when decisions are adopted regarding their activities or conduct;

d) The right of Party members to address any question or statement to any Party body up to and including the Central Committee of the CPSU(B).

The inclusion in the rules of these additions regarding the rights of Party members will have a tre-

mendous effect in increasing the activity of Party members, in heightening the responsibility of Party members for the cause of the Party, and in protecting Party members from bureaucracy.

Experience has shown that in practice the rights of Party members are often violated. There have been frequent cases of bureaucratic and hostile elements hounding and persecuting members for criticism and self-criticism. There have been frequent cases of decisions concerning the activities or conduct of Party members being adopted in their absence.

We know of quite a number of cases of hostile and bureaucratic elements forbidding Party members to address certain given statements to the higher Party bodies. Hostile elements widely cultivated the practice of setting official discipline up against and higher than Party discipline, thus demoralizing honest Party members.

The theses proceed from the premise that there is no higher discipline than Party discipline.

There have also been cases of infringement of the rights of Party members to elect and be elected.

You all remember the explanation given by the Central Committee prior to the elections of Party bodies last year in correction of the false practice of not allowing comrades who had already been transferred from candidate membership to full membership, but had not yet received their Party cards, to take part in the election of Party bodies.

In order to illustrate the infringement of the rights of Party members that have taken place in practice, I will cite a few examples.

Comrade Sedenkov is employed in the Barricade Works in Stalingrad; he has been a member of the CPSU(B) since 1924, and has been a worker for twenty-eight years. He repeatedly pointed to defects in the work of his shop, but the shop management and the social organizations would not listen to him. Comrade Sedenkov then decided to send a statement to the Central Committee of the CPSU(B) describing certain shortcomings in the work of his shop. He handed this statement to the secretary of the shop Party organization to be transmitted to the Central Committee. Instead of complying with the request of the Party member and transmitting the letter, the bureau of the shop nucleus preferred to discuss Comrade Sedenkov's "offence" and compelled him to admit that he had made a mistake in writing to the Central Committee and to promise not to commit such "mistakes" in future. And so the letter was never sent to the Central Committee. During the verification of Party records this incident was recalled and the Party organization of the works expelled Comrade Sedenkov from the Party for "instability." (*Animation.*)

On January 9, 1936, the Stalingrad Regional Committee endorsed the expulsion of Comrade Sedenkov. He had been so intimidated by the local Party organizations that when appealing to the Party Control Commission in 1937 he again wrote repenting his "mistakes" — so "convincing" had been the influence brought to bear on him. The Party Collegium of the Party Control Commission reinstated Comrade Sedenkov in the Party.

There was a similar case with regard to Comrade Tolstikov, director of the Ikoretsk Machine and Tractor Station, Liskinsk District, Voronezh Region. Comrade Tolstikov sent a letter to Comrades Stalin and Molotov complaining that he was being unjustly persecuted by the secretaries of his district committee, who were themselves guilty of distortions of policy with regard to grain deliveries.

An investigation made on the spot by representatives of the Party Control Commission fully confirmed Comrade Tolstikov's statement, and the secretaries of the district committee were exposed as enemies of the people. But even after they were arrested, the district committee continued to persecute Comrade Tolstikov and secured his expulsion from the Party and even his arrest.

He lodged numerous complaints with the Voronezh Regional Committee of the Party, but they received no attention for three months, despite repeated reminders from the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the CPSU(B). Only when the Party Control Commission again intervened, in August 1938, was Comrade Tolstikov fully rehabilitated and penalties imposed on those guilty of persecution and tyranny.

There are frequent violations of the right of Party members to be present on all occasions when their activities or conduct are being examined. Unfortunately, expulsions of members in their absence are no rare thing in many Party organizations.

Mention of the rights of Party members in the rules will also be of great value in respect to the

observance of one of the most important precepts of Leninism, namely, that we must not only teach the masses, but learn from the masses.

At the Plenum of the Central Committee held in February-March 1937, Comrade Stalin said:

“Our experience alone, the experience of the leaders, is far from enough... In order to lead properly the experience of the leaders must be supplemented by the experience of the Party membership, the experience of the working class, the experience of the working people, the experience of the so-called ‘little people.’”

This means that we must not weaken, still less sever, our connections with the masses even for a single minute.

Hence the necessity for a special clause in the rules on the right of Party members to address any question or statement to any Party body, up to and including the Central Committee of the CPSU(B). State and Party questions of major importance, facts of exclusive value in the disclosure of abnormalities in Party or Soviet organizations, frequently come to light just as the result of statements made by “little people.”

It has been repeatedly pointed out by Lenin and Stalin that a bureaucrat with a Party card in his pocket is the most dangerous and pernicious kind of bureaucrat, because, possessing a Party card, he imagines that he may ignore Party and Soviet laws and the needs and interests of the working people.

By inscribing the rights of Party members in the rules we shall place in the hands of the Party a pow-

erful weapon for combatting swell-headedness, bureaucratic self-importance and conceit, and for improving the contacts between leaders and led, and, consequently, for improving the whole work of the Party and the state.

ABOLITION OF MASS PURGES

The theses further propose to abolish mass Party purges. Experience has shown that they now can be, and should be, dispensed with, for the following reasons.

The method of the mass purge, which was introduced at the beginning of the New Economic Policy, when capitalist elements had received a new spurt of life, in order to guard the ranks of the Party from people who had been demoralized owing to the New Economic Policy, has lost its purpose under present conditions when capitalist elements have been eliminated.

The point must be stressed that mass purges have played a tremendous part in strengthening the Party. If our Party now represents a far more organized force than ever before, if the Party has increased its strength by purifying its ranks of every kind of dross, this is to a large extent due to the mass purges.

However, now that the capitalist elements have been eliminated, now that Bolshevik order has been introduced in Party affairs, now that the Party has already rid itself of unreliable and dubious elements, the method of the mass purge obviously no longer conforms to the new conditions and no longer achieves its purpose.

The Party can apply the ordinary procedure to rid its ranks of people who violate its program and rules.

The objectionable feature of the mass purges is that, bearing as they do the character of a campaign, they are attended by many mistakes, primarily by the infringement of the Leninist principle of an individual approach to people.

By establishing a definite standard and measuring everybody by one criterion, the method of the mass purge encourages a formal approach and does not permit the full observance of the Party principle that Party members, people, must be treated with careful attention, and in practice it often leads to the infringement of the rights of Party members.

The result of this was that during mass purges there were numerous cases of unwarranted expulsion from the Party, and of hostile elements who had wormed their way into the Party taking advantage of the purges to persecute and ruin honest people.

Hence, now that the Party has done so much to purify its ranks, there is no necessity for the method of the mass purge. This is shown by the fact that by far the most important work of purifying the ranks of the Party of enemies of the people, traitors, treason-mongers and fascist agents was performed after the mass purges. And there is good reason for this. The new methods of subversive activities practised by hostile elements who had insinuated themselves into the ranks of the Party were double-dealing, masking their subversive activities by an external show of agreement with the

line of the Party, feigning a readiness to fight in support of its decisions. We know that the hostile elements made wide use of noisy displays, sham activity, toadying, creating an atmosphere of flattery, pompous speeches, greetings and so on, in order to deceive and lull the vigilance of certain of our leaders.

Consequently, the method of the mass purge was of very little effect and did not achieve its purpose with regard to hostile elements who had wormed their way into the Party and who masked their true character by double-dealing and deceiving the Party.

It was found that the method of the mass purge was chiefly turned against the so-called passive Party members and led to the expulsion of honest and conscientious members on the alleged grounds of passivity.

During the purge of 1933 the largest group of persons expelled from the Party comprised the so-called passive elements. It was in respect to them that most mistakes were committed by the Party organizations. It frequently happened that honest and devoted people, exemplary workers in their factories, were classed among the passive elements. Under this category were comrades who did not have some trifling and futile assignment of duty, who were tied by large families, or who several times missed attending a study circle, or who failed to answer some brainracking or pigheaded question at a political examination.

There is no need to cite instances of unwarranted expulsions on the ground of passivity.

Plenty of them can be found in any organization.

Hence, with the consolidation of the Party, the need for mass purges has disappeared.

At the Plenum of the Central Committee of February-March 1937 and the Plenum of January 1938, the Party condemned the formal and heartlessly bureaucratic attitude to the fate of Party members, to the question of expulsion from the Party and reinstatement in the Party. As we know this was a practice which was made wide use of by careerist elements who had made their way into the Party and who tried to distinguish and advance themselves by expelling people from its ranks, as well as by masked enemies within the Party who endeavoured by the wholesale infliction of penalties to ruin honest Party members and to sow unnecessary suspicion in the Party ranks. Changing his tactics, the enemy fastened on the question of vigilance and made capital out of it, endeavouring under a mask of hypocritical talk about vigilance to victimize as many honest communists as possible with the object of fostering mutual distrust and disorganizing our ranks.

The slandering of honest people under the guise of “vigilance” is at the present time the most widespread method used to mask and screen hostile activities. If you want to discover still unexposed enemy wasps’ nests, look for them above all among the slanderers.

The Plenum of the Central Committee of the CPSU(B) held in January 1938 adopted a number of measures to put a stop to the practice of wholesale expulsions from the Party and to really ensure

a differentiated approach in deciding whether members should be expelled or expelled members reinstated.

The Central Committee based itself on the well-known precept laid down by Comrade Stalin at the Plenum of the Central Committee in February-March 1937:

“...Some of our Party leaders suffer from a lack of concern for people, for members of the Party, for workers. More than that, they do not study members of the Party, do not know what interests they have, how they are developing; generally, they do not know their workers. That is why they have no individual approach to Party members, to Party workers. And because they have no individual approach in appraising Party members and Party workers they usually act in a haphazard way: either they praise them wholesale, without measure, or roundly abuse them, also wholesale and without measure, and expel thousands and tens of thousands of members from the Party. Such leaders generally try to think in tens of thousands, not caring about ‘units,’ about individual members of the Party, about their fate. They regard the expulsion of thousands and tens of thousands of people from the Party as a mere trifle and console themselves with the thought that our Party has two million members and that the expulsion of tens of thousands cannot in any way affect the Party’s position. But only those who are in fact profoundly anti-Party can have such an ap-

proach to members of the Party.

“As a result of this heartless attitude towards people, towards members of the Party and Party workers, discontent and bitterness are artificially created among a section of the Party, and the Trotskyite double-dealers artfully hook on to such embittered comrades and skilfully drag them into the bog of Trotskyite wrecking.”

Comrades, you have apparently noticed that in the discussion of the theses on amendments to the rules of the CPSU(B) by no means the least attention was paid to the question of measures to prevent the vilification of honest Party members. The Central Committee and *Pravda* have also received a large number of letters on this subject.

I will cite a few examples of hostile activities under the flag of “vigilance.”

A certain Kalyakaikin was secretary of the district Party committee of Isinsk, Tambov Region. Out of a total of one hundred and seventy-five members of the Party organization, he managed in a short period to have fifty-eight expelled. Kalyakaikin acted as follows: when he had somebody expelled, he at once raised the question of calling to account before the Party all communists who had had any relations whatever with the expelled person. He operated on a sort of “belt” system. For example, Kalyakaikin had a certain Nazarov expelled from the Party. Nazarov was later arrested at the demand of the district committee. He was under remand for about seven months and was

then released by the investigating authorities because the charges brought against him were not proved. But while Nazarov was in custody, his wife and seven other communists were expelled from the Party for having had connections with him; furthermore, twenty-eight Young Communist Leaguers were expelled from the League and ten teachers, not members of the Party, were dismissed from their posts. In the end, as was to be expected, Kalyakaikin was exposed as an enemy of the people, expelled from the Party and arrested.

In the Archangel Party organization, for example, there was exposed a malicious slanderer by the name of Priluchny, who had filed statements against one hundred and forty-two communists, not a single one of which was substantiated.

In Leningrad, an anti-Party group headed by one Napol'skaya was active for a long time; this group zealously fabricated compromising material against honest communists, sent in statements about them to the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs and tried to cause the ruin of honest people. This group calumniated scores of honest people.

Gladkikh, former secretary of the district committee of the CPSU(B) in Rodvino, Archangel Region, instructed every communist to discover an enemy of the people, and announced in advance that "there will be no distortion of policy here."

Peskovskaya, an enemy of the people in the Kluchi district, Aktyubinsk Region, brought about the expulsion from the Party of one hundred and fifty-six communists, or sixty-four per cent of the

membership of the organization. In the Progress Collective Farm, in this same district, the whole Party organization, consisting of thirteen members, was expelled.

The enemies directed their main efforts to ruining honest Bolshevik cadres. Kudryavtsev, an enemy of the people, who before his exposure held an important post in one of the Ukrainian Party organizations, stated in his testimony as follows:

“We endeavoured to expel as many people from the Party as possible. We expelled people when there were no grounds for expulsion. We had one aim in view — to increase the number of embittered people and thus increase the number of our allies.”

It was also part of the plan of subversive activities of the enemies of the people to destroy the Party apparatus. Here is the testimony of another enemy of the people who had wormed his way by deceit on to one of the regional Party committees in the Ukraine.

“In the course of five or six days I dispersed the apparatus of the regional committee, dismissed nearly every one of the departmental managers of the committee, discharged twelve or fifteen instructors and also took on a new office staff.

“I did all this on the pretence of combatting enemies and purging the Regional Committee of the CPU(B) of people who had lost vigilance. Having ‘purged’ the apparatus of the regional

committee, I proceeded to disperse the city committees and district committees on the same pretext. In a very short time, I dismissed fifteen secretaries and a large number of other functionaries against whom I had no compromising material whatever. I made a pretence of combatting enemies, thus incensing against the Party a number of communists who had been dismissed by me without any good reason. In addition, I demoted a number of members of our counter-revolutionary organization to lower posts, thus saving them from detection.”

In some organizations the slanderers lost all sense of restraint and simply put their feet on the table.

For example, a slanderer by the name of Khanevsky was exposed in one of the districts of the Kiev Region. Not a single one of the numerous charges brought by Khanevsky against communists was substantiated. Nevertheless, this calumniator was not in the least perturbed, and in one of his denunciatory epistles to the regional committee of the CPU(B) he inserted the following request: “I have worn myself out fighting the enemies, and therefore request to be sent to a health resort to rest up.” (*Loud laughter.*)

In line with this was the statement made by one Nefedov, secretary of the Party committee of the Regional Land Department, at a meeting of the active members of Irkutsk. He divides Party members into three groups. “The first type is the fellow who shows a lot of activity; that means he is worth

checking up; you may be certain the trail will lead to the enemy. The second type is the fellow with a 'past,' the fellow with a load on his mind. He's bound to lag — the load will tell; keep an eye on him, check him up; this trail will also most likely lead to the enemy. And the third type is the man who works because he's got to; there too you can't go wrong — he's an enemy." (*Loud laughter.*)

A regular "theory," you see.

The "activities" of some of the slanderers became so extensive that they found it necessary to introduce a certain amount of "rationalization."

There is the case of Alexeyev, for example, a member of the Party since 1925, manager of the district Party consultation centre in Irbeiskoye, Krasnoyarsk Territory. He was not much of a worker; he spent all his time writing calumnies against honest communists and non-Party teachers. His "business" was so big that he made a list for himself with several columns: "big enemy"; "little enemy"; "wee enemy"; "tiny enemy." (*Loud laughter.*) It need hardly be said that he created an absolutely intolerable situation in the district. In the end, he was expelled from the Party as a slanderer.

This Alexeyev made me wonder where I had read of such a type, and I at last recalled Sobakevich in Gogol's *Dead Souls*. Sobakevich, you know, considered everybody a thief and swindler. When Chichikov admitted to him that the man he liked most in the provincial town was the chief of police, because of his bluntness and simplicity, Sobakevich nonchalantly remarked:

“A rascal! He’ll cheat you, give you away, and then go and dine with you! I know them all: they are all scoundrels, every one of them. A pack of thoroughgoing rascals from top to bottom. All Judases. There’s only one decent fellow among them, that’s the public prosecutor. But if the truth be told, he is a swine too.”
(*Laughter.*)

Apparently, some of Sobakevich’s great-great-grandchildren are alive to this day, and have even managed here and there to get into the Party. We must get an iron broom and sweep our Party house clean of this garbage. (*Loud applause.*)

The refusal to be worried about human beings, the reluctance to investigate the charges brought against a man on their merits, is a malady which still ails a good many leaders of our Party organizations. There are still quite a number of people in our organizations who like to insure themselves and be on the safe side.

Expulsions from the Party on the grounds of “connections” with enemies at one time assumed very large proportions, and are still to be met with.

On these grounds honest people were expelled from the Party wholesale, their only fault being that they were brought into contact with enemies of the people by their work — “passed them on the street,” so to speak.

This fashionable formula — “connections with enemies of the people” — was made wide use of by anti-Party elements to cause the ruin of honest communists. It was employed in such a broad and

vague sense as to include all sorts of things — ordinary acquaintanceship, contact with enemies at work owing to official duties, actual connections with enemies, and participation in counter-revolutionary activities — without any graduation whatever, all covered by one general formula.

A great many mistakes were made, and are still being made, on these grounds.

Because of such wholesale condemnations on purely formal grounds, real out-and-out enemies of the people, first-class scoundrels, managed to escape justice.

Slanderers are active wherever they are assisted by self-insurers.

Here is an example of self-insurance of this kind. The manager and chief engineer of one of the collieries of the Sverdlovsk Coal Trust gave one of the section chiefs the following character:

“Knows his job. Chronic drinker. Quite capable of drinking with his subordinates. Has recently been fulfilling his program of output. Good organizer. Runs his section well. Does not like big jobs. Thorough conservative and opportunist with regard to output. Tries to get as light a program as possible, to work as little as he can and to earn as much as he can.”
(*Laughter.*)

Certain Party members have resorted to the aid of medical institutions in the effort to insure themselves. Here is a medical certificate issued to one of these citizens:

“Owing to his state of health and mind Comrade (so and so) is not fit to be used as a tool by any class enemy.”

“District Psychiatrist,

“October District, City of Kiev
(signature).”

(Loud laughter.)

A sort of “biological” approach to people, to Party members, has become quite a widespread practice. This is a theory by which communists are judged not by their own deeds, but by the deeds of their relatives, near and distant. An unsound ideology or social preferences in some great-grandmother may spoil the careers of many generations of her descendants. *(Laughter.)*

Such an attitude is absolutely alien to Marxism. We must proceed from the principle repeatedly enunciated and stressed by Comrade Stalin, namely, that the son is not answerable for his father, and that a Party member must be judged by *his own* deeds. Unfortunately, it is a widespread practice among us to judge the business and political character of a man not by his own work, but by the character of his relatives and ancestors, near and distant.

It must not be thought that the upholders of this “theory” come out into the open. Nevertheless, they steadily work away on the quiet and judge people not by their deeds but by their genealogy.

This “biological” approach must be put a stop to. *(Loud applause.)*

There is quite a breed of people in our ranks

whom I would call pseudo-moralists. They see only the bad sides of a Party member and refuse to consider and assess his whole life's career, to learn his merits and demerits. These people regard a man as something set and fixed for all time, as a lifeless and unchangeable pattern.

These people are great inventors of shibboleths and schemes which they apply to individuals to judge whether they are good or bad, whether they fit into the scheme or not. (*Laughter.*)

These people forget that our whole work of building socialism, our whole educational work, is designed to remould the minds of men. That is what our Party exists for, that is why we strove for and achieved the victory of socialism, that is why we are undertaking the tasks of communist development, namely, to remould people, their ego. If there are some who think that remoulding the minds of men does not apply to Party members, that communists are born free of all prejudices and absolutely require no re-education, this is nothing but an idealistic and schematic view of people. This way of judging people abstractly, in accordance with a ready-made standard, instead of studying them in all their connections and manifestations, condemns one to passivity, to a pessimistic view of people. This pessimistic view looks back on the past. This way of judging people has nothing in common with Bolshevism. Its method is profoundly hostile to Bolshevism.

It seems to me that all this is a Menshevik back-sliding, a peculiar form of opportunism in relation to living people, which does not try to lead people

forward, to correct their defects and to re-educate them, but exaggerates, over-emphasizes their defects and does not perceive the valuable qualities in people which should be developed and encouraged in every way. If you scratch these pseudo-moralists, you will find plenty of hypocrites and humbugs among them. You'll never cook your porridge with a lot of gravediggers like this. (*Loud applause.*)

At the same time, we must stop the practice of half-hearted rehabilitation of reinstated members. There is a fairly widespread type of Party official who to insure himself, to be on the safe side, "not to run any risks," leaves a tag or taglet attached to a rehabilitated Party member or candidate member: if a man has been expelled, and they then have to reinstate him, they give him a reprimand, though nobody knows why; if he had a reprimand, they put an admonishment in his record — for no reason at all, just as a reminder. (*Laughter.*)

A definite stop must be put to this practice of half-hearted rehabilitation. If a man deserves to be fully rehabilitated, all penalties should be expunged from his record.

These facts make it clear that the decision of the January Plenum of the Central Committee which spoke of the necessity of completely eradicating masked enemies who have wormed their way into our ranks and who strive to conceal their hostility to the Party under a disguise of hypocritical talk about vigilance, is not yet being carried out by some of the organizations with sufficient vigour.

The method of an individual approach to Party

members has not yet been fully restored. Wholesale and unwarranted expulsions from the Party are still practised.

The decision of the January Plenum of the Central Committee was designed to create the maximum guarantees in combatting unwarranted expulsions, to completely restore the method of individual approach, to ensure the utmost care in matters concerning the fate of Party members.

In view of the extreme importance of this question, the rules should be supplemented by a number of clauses to ensure an attentive approach and careful investigation of accusations brought against Party members, to protect the rights of Party members from all arbitrary procedure and to abolish the resort to expulsion from the Party — which is the supreme Party penalty — for trifling misdemeanours.

We must recall what Comrade Stalin said:

“The Party has become a big and serious thing to Party members, and joining the Party or being expelled from the Party is a crucial event in a man’s life.”

“Whether he remains in the Party or is expelled from the Party is a matter of life and death to the ordinary Party member.”

Comrade Stalin says in another place that the supreme Party penalty is expulsion from its ranks, just as the supreme penalty in the army is shooting. (See Stalin, *On the Opposition*.)

The decisions of the Plenum of the Central Committee of February-March 1937, and of the

Plenum of the Central Committee of January 1938 on the subject of expulsion from the Party resolve themselves to this, that *expulsions from the Party must be reduced to a minimum*. If expulsion from the Party is equivalent to the supreme penalty in the army, that is, shooting, it cannot be imposed right and left.

We must restore to their full use the measures of Party punishment laid down in the Party rules for various offences. You cannot judge all offences in the same way, without discriminating between grave and unimportant. Expulsions from the Party at one time became a sort of small change in many Party organizations, while such measures of Party punishment as caution, rebuke, admonition, reprimand, strict reprimand and final warning — all that fairly flexible scale of measures of Party influence provided for in our rules and corresponding to various kinds and degrees of Party offences, was forgotten.

The measures of Party education and influence laid down in the rules must be restored to their full use.

A few words must be said on the subject of old penalties which have been withdrawn. Much has been said about this subject too at Party meetings before the Congress. If a man has reformed and the penalty inflicted on him has been withdrawn, there is no need to be constantly recalling it, to exact revenge for old mistakes which have been corrected, to exercise moral repression on the Party member.

There are many cases like the following: a man may have committed an offence ten years ago and

received a penalty; then he mends his ways and the penalty is withdrawn. Nevertheless, this penalty is unfailingly brought up every time the man comes under discussion. This does a lot of harm, from the standpoint, for example, of the right to be elected to Party bodies. We know that when candidates are discussed in elections to Party bodies, the nomination of such comrades is often rejected. That is wrong: if a man has mended his ways, why should he go about with a stain on his character all his life? It is wrong to avenge old faults. (“*Hear, hear!*”)

MASTERING OR ACCEPTING THE PARTY PROGRAM

The theses point to the necessity of abolishing the demand contained in the rules that new members, on joining the Party, in addition to *accepting* the program and rules of the Party and going through a specified probationary period as candidate members, must also have *mastered* the program.

In his report at the Plenum of the Central Committee of the CPSU(B) in February-March 1937, Comrade Stalin said:

“In order to master the Party program one must be a real Marxist, a tried and theoretically trained Marxist. I do not know whether we have many members of the Party who have mastered our program, who have become real Marxists, theoretically trained and tried. If we continue further along this path we would have to leave only intellectuals and learned people generally

in our Party. Who wants such a Party? We have Lenin's thoroughly tried and tested formula defining a member of the Party. According to this formula a member of the Party is one who *accepts* the program of the Party, pays membership dues and works in one of its organizations. Please note: Lenin's formula does not speak about *mastering* the program, but about *accepting* the program. These are two very different things. It is not necessary to prove that Lenin is right here and not our Party comrades who chatter idly about mastering the program. That should be clear. If the Party had proceeded from the assumption that only those comrades who have mastered the program and have become theoretically trained Marxists could be members of the Party it would not have created thousands of Party circles, hundreds of Party schools where the members of the Party are taught Marxism, and where they are assisted to master our program. It is quite clear that if our Party organizes such schools and circles for members of the Party it is because it knows that the members of the Party have not yet mastered the Party program, have not yet become theoretically trained Marxists."

Mastery of the program implies the ability to explain its underlying principles. Accepting the program means subscribing to its principles, agreeing with it and being ready to defend it. It is clear that by demanding that candidates for membership should *master* the program, that is, should be able

to *explain its underlying principles*, we frighten people away from the Party. There is no theoretical justification for such a demand, and in practice it has led to an incorrect attitude towards applicants for membership. Many candidate members have hesitated to apply for full membership of the Party from fear of being subjected to a political examination and, what is more, often by ignorant people. This unwarranted demand has in practice led to violations of the fundamental principles of the Party and created a vagueness and uncertainty about the status of many Party members.

Of course, comrades, this does not mean that a candidate member is forbidden to master the program during his probationary period. What we are talking about is whether there should be such a demand *in the rules*. It is quite clear that by demanding that a candidate member shall have mastered the program we frighten people away from the Party.

Acceptance of the program and rules of the Party, payment of membership dues, and work in one of the Party organizations — that is what the rules demand of a Party member. The tried and tested Leninist-Stalinist definition of a Party member stands in no need of improvement. That is why the demand in the present Party rules about *mastering* the program should be abolished.

INNER-PARTY DEMOCRACY

Comrades, the turn in the political life of the country brought about by the new Constitution of the USSR faced the Party with new tasks. This turn meant the complete democratization of the elec-

toral system, the substitution of universal suffrage for restricted suffrage, equal suffrage for not entirely equal suffrage, direct elections for indirect elections and secret ballot for open ballot.

The new electoral system was bound to result, and actually did result, in an enhancement of the political activity of the people, in greater control by the masses over the organs of Soviet power, and in the increased responsibility of the organs of Soviet power to the people.

In order to be fully prepared for this turn in the political life of the country, the Party had to be its moving spirit, and the leading role of the Party in the forthcoming elections to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and the Supreme Soviets of the Union Republics had to be fully ensured. But this could be done only if the Party organizations themselves became thoroughly democratic in their everyday work, only if they fully observed the principles of democratic centralism in their inner-party life, as the Party rules demand, only if all the organs of the Party were elected, only if criticism and self-criticism in the Party developed to the full, only if the responsibility of the Party bodies to the members of the Party were complete, and if the members of the Party themselves became thoroughly active.

At the February-March Plenum of the Central Committee it was established that quite a number of Party organizations were systematically violating the Party rules and the principles of democratic centralism in their everyday work, substituting cooption for election, voting by lists for voting for individual candidates, and so forth. It was therefore

first of all necessary to put a stop to the anti-democratic practices of Party organizations and to reorganize Party work on the broad lines of inner-party democracy.

What is the essence of Bolshevik inner-party democracy? The essence of Bolshevik inner-party democracy, as Comrade Stalin has repeatedly told us, resolves itself to the independent initiative, the active participation of Party members in the work of Party leadership. "Inner-party democracy means heightening the activity of the Party membership and strengthening the unity of the Party, strengthening conscious proletarian discipline within the Party" — so Comrade Stalin teaches us.

It was with this purpose in view that the Party put an end to the violations of the principles of democratic centralism which formerly prevailed in the Party and re-established the system of electing the leading bodies of Party organizations, as laid down in the Party rules.

The Party adopted a number of additional measures to ensure the observance of consistent democracy: it abolished the practice of co-option; it forbade voting by lists in elections of Party bodies and introduced voting for individual candidates; it ensured for all Party members the unlimited right to challenge candidates and criticize them; it introduced the secret ballot in the election of Party bodies; and it made the periodical summoning of city meetings of the Party active, and, in large cities, of district meetings of the Party active, a compulsory rule.

The rules should reflect these new measures of

the Party, for they have been tested in practice and ensure the further development of criticism and self-criticism, increased responsibility of Party bodies to the Party membership, and greater activity of the Party membership, and have thus helped to arm the Party for the successful performance of the new tasks of political leadership.

We know that in the elections to the Supreme Soviets of the USSR and the Union Republics, the Party achieved a complete victory for the Communist and non-Party bloc just because Party work was reorganized on the principles of inner-party democracy.

The consistent application of democratic principles has had a fruitful influence on the whole life of the Party organizations. The increased activity and knowledge of Party members and their heightened sense of responsibility for the cause of the Party were epitomized in the pre-Congress discussion and in the results of the elections to Party bodies, which demonstrated that Party democracy is in full flower. (*Applause.*) This has stimulated immense new strata of Party members to take an active share in Party life.

During the elections of Party bodies in 1938 criticism of the work of poorly functioning Party bodies assumed wide proportions. This criticism revealed the unsatisfactory state of the work of a large number of committees and organizers of primary Party organizations, of district committees, city committees, regional committees and territorial committees.

Many new people were elected to leading Party

bodies in the 1938 elections, a large number of them for the first time. This is the younger generation. In all, 35 per cent of the members of committees of primary Party organizations, 41 per cent of the members of district committees, 46 per cent of the members of city committees, and 60 per cent of the members of regional committees, territorial committees and Central Committees of the communist parties of the national republics were elected for the first time.

Reports received from local Party organizations show that over two million members and candidate members attended the discussion at Party meetings of the theses for the 18th Party Congress. About one million comrades took part in the discussions at these meetings. (*Applause.*)

Comrades, our Party has never known a discussion like the one that preceded the 18th Congress. It was marked by unprecedented solidarity and unity of our Party, and an exceptional growth in the activity of Party members.

Everybody who took part in the discussion made some amendment or suggestion to help the Party and to strengthen the common Party cause.

The results of the discussion bear out that inner-party democracy is in full flower, that there is an unprecedented increase of activity and initiative among Party members.

The work performed by the Party on the basis of the well-known decisions of the Plenum of the Central Committee of February-March 1937, and of the recommendations made to the Party by Comrade Stalin at this plenum, has borne valuable

fruit. Every member feels that his contact with the Party and its work has grown stronger; every Party member has come to feel his full value as one who is bound up with the general body of the Party and responsible for the common entity. This is a most important and valuable result of the development of inner-party democracy.

And, secondly, what is no less important and what we must note as a result of the development of the Party in the last few years, is that new relations have taken root between the leaders and the masses; the confidence of the masses in the leaders has increased tremendously, and so has their mutual contact and closeness. The masses have become accustomed to regard the leaders as their emissaries, their own kith and kin, who at the same time are responsible to the Party, to the masses, to the people. That is the second highly valuable result of the work of the Party during the past few years. (*Loud applause.*)

The *conclusion* to be drawn is that the new methods of political work of the Party, based on the consistent application of the principles of Bolshevik inner-party democracy, have increased the strength of our Party. The Party is on the way to the complete activization of its membership, and that is an important condition for the performance by the Party as a whole and by each communist in particular of their vanguard role among the masses, and, consequently, for further victories of socialist construction.

The Party will continue to develop and ensure inner-party democracy as a means of increasing the

activity and initiative of Party members and of cleansing the ranks of the Party of inimical dross and scum. (*Prolonged applause.*)

SELECTION OF CADRES. CHECKING THE FULFILMENT OF DECISIONS. PROMOTION OF NEW PARTY WORKERS

I shall now deal with the reorganization of the Party apparatus, the selection of cadres and the check on the fulfilment of decisions.

In his report to this Congress, Comrade Stalin gave an exhaustive definition of the importance of cadres and of their proper selection.

“The proper selection of cadres means:

“Firstly, valuing cadres as the gold reserve of the Party and the state, treasuring them, respecting them.

“Secondly, knowing cadres, carefully studying their individual merits and shortcomings, knowing in what post the capacities of a given worker are most likely to develop.

“Thirdly, carefully fostering cadres, helping every promising worker to advance, not grudging time on patiently ‘bothering’ with such workers and accelerating their development.

“Fourthly, boldly promoting new and young cadres in time, so as not to allow them to stagnate in their old posts and grow stale.

“Fifthly, allocating workers to posts in such a way that each feels he is in the right place, that each may contribute to our common cause the maximum his personal capacities enable him to

contribute, and that the general trend of the work of allocating cadres may fully answer to the demands of the political line for the carrying out of which this, allocation of cadres is designed.”

Comrade Stalin further indicated what is the task of the Party now with regard to the proper selection of cadres:

“Our task now is to concentrate the work of selecting cadres, from top to bottom, in the hands of one body and to raise it to a proper, scientific, Bolshevik level.

“This entails putting an end to the division of the work of studying, promoting and selecting cadres among various departments and sectors, and concentrating it in one body.

“This body should be the Cadres Administration of the Central Committee of the CPSU(B) and a corresponding cadres department in each of the republican, territorial and regional Party organizations.”

From this point of view the existing organization of the Party apparatus has proven inadequate.

In accordance with the Party rules, industrial-branch departments were set up in the regional committees, territorial committees, Central Committees of the Communist Parties of the national republics and the Central Committee of the CPSU(B) to perform the practical work involved in carrying out Party resolutions and decisions and to keep a check on the way they are fulfilled by Soviet

bodies, business organizations and the lower Party organizations. The idea was to concentrate in each industrial-branch department all the work relating to the given branch, namely, Party organizational work, training and allocation of cadres, mass educational work, industrial propaganda, and supervision of the way Party decisions are fulfilled by the appropriate Soviet and business organs and Party organizations.

The defect of the existing organization was that the selection of cadres, which should be directed from one centre — for the selection of cadres necessitates the concentration of the entire experience and knowledge of cadres in one place, that being the art of Bolshevik leadership — was divided up among numerous industrial-branch departments. This resulted in an incorrect utilization of cadres, the absence of uniform methods of studying cadres, and, consequently, in serious defects in the selection of people. The division of the work of selecting cadres among different industrial-branch departments also resulted in artificially pigeon-holing cadres under separate departments, whereas the proper selection of cadres demands skilful and flexible manoeuvring.

Comrades, many of you know from experience how divided and split up the work of selecting cadres is. The regional committees and territorial committees have their industrial departments, Soviet and trading departments, educational and cultural departments, and so forth. These departments fight and contend among themselves for people. This militates against the proper study, selection

and promotion of cadres.

This functional division of the work of selecting cadres makes it impossible to utilize people properly in accordance with their capacities and the demands of the work.

Experience has taught us that such an organization of the Party apparatus does not answer our requirements.

It is this that makes it necessary to create a strong cadre apparatus of the Central Committee — the Cadres Administration — which would be able properly and scientifically, as Comrade Stalin puts it, to perform the job of selecting and allocating cadres, the work of Party organizational leadership being assigned to a special Organization and Instruction Department.

The Central Committee has already adopted certain measures in the last year or two with the object of more and more centralizing in the present Leading Party Organs Department of the Central Committee the work of selecting and promoting leading cadres not only for Party bodies but also for Soviet and business organizations and all People's Commissariats.

This reconstruction of the work of selecting, studying and allocating cadres must be carried out in the spirit of the directions given by Comrade Stalin in his report on the work of the Central Committee of the CPSU(B) at the 18th Party Congress.

I should like, further, to dwell on one more amendment to the rules submitted by the Central Committee to the 18th Party Congress. I refer to the proposal to reduce the length of Party member-

ship required of comrades nominated to leading Party posts, such as secretaries of regional committees, city committees, district committees, etc. The Central Committee proposes to amend this clause in the Party rules and to reduce the required length of Party membership. This proposal arises from the aim of creating suitable conditions for the promotion of new cadres to leading Party posts.

This proposal is of the highest importance from the point of view of principle and practice.

In his report to our Congress, Comrade Stalin gave a brilliant formulation of the task of promoting new cadres:

“The thing is not,” he said, “whether to rely on the old cadres or on the new cadres, but to steer for a combination, a union of the old and the young cadres in one common symphony of leadership of the Party and the state.”

That is why we must boldly and in good time promote young cadres to leading posts.

It was precisely by promoting young cadres to leading posts boldly and in good time that our Party gained one of its most important successes, namely, the promotion to leading state and Party posts of over 500,000 young Bolsheviks, members of the Party and people standing close to the Party.

Mention should be made of the improvement in the quality of our leading cadres. Our Party cadres now include quite a number of people with a higher education, people of culture, knowledge and education.

SOME STATISTICS REGARDING LEADING

PARTY CADRES

	Total	With higher, incomplete higher, or secondary education ¹	Workers by social status before appointment	Under 40 years of age	From 31 to 35 years of age	Party members since 1924
Secretaries of regional committees, territorial committees and Central Committees of communist parties of national republics	333	196 (58.9%)	175 (52.6%)	303 (91%)	177 (53.2%)	268 (80.5%)
Secretaries of district committees, city committees and area committees	10,902	3,115 (28.6%)	5,248 (48.1%)	10,020 (92%)	5,649 (52.7%)	10,193 (93.6%)
Managers of departments of regional committees, territorial committees, and Central Committees of communist parties of national republics	610	327 (64.1%)	231 (45.3%)	469 (92%)	263 (51.6%)	431 (84.5%)

Whereas several years ago there was a tendency to shrink from promoting educated people and young people to leading Party posts, while the wreckers put a regular strangle-hold on young cadres, not allowing them to rise, it is the most important achievement of the Party that, having rid itself of wreckers, it has been able to clear the way for the advancement of cadres who have grown up

¹ The majority of persons with higher education graduated from university or technical college in the years 1934-38.

in recent years and to promote them to leading posts. That is a pledge of the strength and invincibility of our Party (*Stormy applause.*)

The work of keeping a practical check on the fulfilment of Party directions has also been unsatisfactory. This function is divided among the various industrial-branch departments. It, too, must be centralized and the character of the work of the Party Control Commission altered accordingly. The Party's control must be effective, it must prevent mistakes in good time.

Proper control presumes not only keeping a check on the fulfilment of directions, but also testing their correctness and ascertaining whether any of them need to be replaced by others.

Comrade Stalin has repeatedly and insistently explained to us that

“leadership does not just mean writing resolutions and issuing directions. Leadership means keeping a check on the fulfilment of directions; and not only keeping a check on the fulfilment of directions, but verifying the directions themselves, whether they are correct or mistaken. It would be absurd to think that all our directions are correct one hundred per cent. That is not, and cannot be, the case, comrades. *Keeping a check on fulfilment precisely means that our workers must test in the fire of practical experience not only the fulfilment of our directions, but the correctness of the directions themselves* (my italics — A.Z.). Shortcomings in this respect are shortcomings in our whole work of leadership.” (J.

Stalin, "The Work of the April Joint Plenum of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission," 1928.)

Checking up on fulfilment of decisions is a most valuable antidote to stagnation, to the gathering of rust in our work. It is a highly valuable means of preventing the activities of wreckers. Where a proper check is kept on fulfilment, there the wrecker is paralysed.

It will now be the chief task of the Party Control Commission to improve the work of keeping a check on the fulfilment of Party instructions.

In view of this, it must be decided that the Party Control Commission shall work under the auspices of the Central Committee of the CPSU(B). In that case it will be unnecessary for the Party Control Commission to be elected directly at Party congresses. The Party Control Commission should be elected at a Plenum of the Central Committee of the CPSU(B) and function under the guidance and direction of the Central Committee.

REMEDYING THE THEORETICAL AND POLITICAL DEFICIENCIES OF CADRES

Comrade Stalin has given us in his report a very clear and precise formulation of our tasks in the sphere of Party propaganda, in the sphere of the Marxist-Leninist education of our cadres.

He said:

"The work of regulating the composition of the Party and of bringing the leading bodies closer to the activities of the lower bodies may

be organized satisfactorily; the work of promoting, selecting and allocating cadres may be organized satisfactorily; but, with all this, if our Party propaganda for some reason or other goes lame, if the Marxist-Leninist training of our cadres begins to languish, if our work of raising the political and theoretical level of these cadres flags, and the cadres themselves cease on account of this to show interest in the prospect of our further progress, cease to understand the truth of our cause and are transformed into narrow plodders with no outlook, blindly and mechanically carrying out instructions from above — then our entire state and Party work must inevitably languish. It must be accepted as an axiom that the higher the political level and the Marxist-Leninist knowledge of the workers in any branch of state or Party work, the better and more fruitful will be the work itself, and the more effective the results of the work; and, vice versa, the lower the political level of the workers, and the less they are imbued with the knowledge of Marxism-Leninism, the greater will be the likelihood of disruption and failure in the work, of the workers themselves becoming shallow and deteriorating into paltry plodders, of their degenerating altogether.”

Comrade Stalin pointed out that we possess all the means and opportunities required for training our cadres ideologically and schooling them politically, and that on this nine-tenths of the fulfilment of our practical tasks will depend.

The task of remedying the theoretical and political deficiencies of our Party cadres, of arming our Party members with the theory of Marxism-Leninism and helping them to master Bolshevism demands that the work of Party propaganda and education should be raised to a proper level, in accordance with the decision of the Central Committee "On the Organization of Party Propaganda in Connection with the Publication of the *History of the CPSU(B): Short Course*" and with the indications given on this subject by Comrade Stalin in his report at our Congress.

The task of mastering Bolshevism arises directly from the tasks of the present stage of socialist construction.

In order to successfully cope with the principal task of the 3rd Five-Year Plan, namely, the communist education of the people and the elimination of the survivals of capitalism in the minds of men, in order to successfully cope with the practical problems of socialist construction, and in order to be properly equipped for the struggle against the surrounding capitalist world and its agents, our cadres must be armed with theory, that is, with a knowledge of the laws of social development and of the political struggle.

The basic defects of Party propaganda are enumerated in the well-known decision of the Central Committee. This decision also indicates the methods of reorganizing Party propaganda in connection with the publication of the *History of the CPSU(B): Short Course*.

The reorganization of propaganda work has al-

ready begun. The first steps in this direction show that the publication of the *History of the CPSU(B): Short Course* and the decision of the Central Committee have given a mighty impetus to the raising of the entire ideological and political work to a new level. Millions of people have begun to study Marxism-Leninism, the *History of the CPSU(B): Short Course*. This is an immense achievement for our Party. About twelve million copies have been sold of the *History of the CPSU(B): Short Course* in Russian (*loud applause*) and about two million copies in other languages of the nations of the USSR. It has been translated into twenty-eight foreign languages and has already been published in over 673,000 copies. It may quite definitely be said that this is the first Marxist book in all the existence of Marxism to have been disseminated so widely. (*Applause.*)

Party members have begun to study independently. The demand for Marxist-Leninist literature has grown tremendously. The attention of all Party organizations is now focussed on the propaganda of Marxism-Leninism.

A certain amount of experience in new forms of work has already been gained.

Since the decision of the Central Committee the best theoreticians and propagandists in the Party have been enlisted for the oral and printed propaganda of Marxism-Leninism. A body of experienced professional propagandists is being formed.

Before the reorganization of Party propaganda there were over 112,000 propagandists in the Party. It goes without saying that there were quite a num-

ber of people among them who were poorly fitted for the job. This number has now been considerably reduced. The Party organizations now select as propagandists people who are really fitted for the work.

The number of study circles has also diminished. For example, before the decision of the Central Committee there were over 9,000 study circles in Moscow and over 5,000 in Leningrad; now there are a little over 500 in Moscow and about 300 in Leningrad.

Independent study has now become the principal method.

Printed propaganda, which is of decisive importance in this work, is being extended.

All this, however, is only the beginning of that development of propaganda work which our Party is striving for. In this a decisive part will be played by our Bolshevik press. The demand for printed literature has grown enormously and will continue to grow.

We are on the eve of a tremendous development of all forms of propaganda work of our Party. Wide use must be made of such powerful instruments as the cinema, radio and art for propaganda purposes.

In order to be able properly to lead the work of Marxist-Leninist propaganda in Party and state, and to successfully cope with the task of remedying the theoretical and political deficiencies of Party cadres, the Central Committee needs a powerful apparatus of propaganda and agitation, in the shape of a Propaganda and Agitation Administration, in which all the work of printed and oral prop-

aganda and agitation would be centralized.

Ideological schooling fosters in Soviet people a consciousness of the dignity of the Soviet citizen and confidence in their own strength. More impressively than ever before ring the words of Comrade Stalin that theory endows practical workers with the power of orientation, with confidence in themselves, with a perspective, with the ability not only to see events but to foresee them.

The reorganization of our Party propaganda work will ensure the flourishing progress of our theoretical work and will even more thoroughly arm our Party ideologically. (*Stormy applause.*)

RECONSTRUCTION OF THE PARTY APPARATUS. ALL-UNION CONFERENCES

Comrades, the theses on amendments to the rules of the CPSU(B) propose to reorganize the apparatus of the departments both in the Central Committee and in the localities.

Today, the industrial-branch departments do not know what their functions are, properly speaking; they encroach on the functions of the business organizations, compete with them, and this gives rise to a vagueness as to who is responsible for a job, or kills responsibility altogether.

The industrial-branch departments of the Central Committee should be abolished. An exception should be made in the case of the Agricultural Department, in view of the particular importance of controlling and supervising the activities of the Soviet and Party organizations in the sphere of agriculture.

The urgent task now faces the Party of strengthening organization in the collective farms, of guiding their business affairs, and of organizing work in the collective farms, state farms and machine and tractor stations. Comrade Andreyev has spoken very forcibly and convincingly of these tasks at this Congress.

In view of a certain weakness in the work of the People's Commissariat of Agriculture and the People's Commissariat of State Farms, and in view of the fact that agriculture demands the exclusive attention and care of the local Party organizations, the Agricultural Departments of the Central Committee, the territorial committees and the regional committees must be preserved.

The School Department of the Central Committee should also be preserved, in view of the fact that we have no People's Commissariat of Education for the USSR, and in view of the necessity of controlling the work of public education in all the republics, territories and regions.

The following departments should be set up in the regional committees, territorial committees and Central Committees of the communist parties in the national republics: cadres, propaganda and agitation, organization and instruction, and agricultural. All the other industrial-branch departments should be abolished.

The district committees and city committees should have the following departments: cadres, propaganda and agitation, and organization and instruction.

The direction of the propaganda and agitation

departments and the cadre departments in the regional committees, territorial committees and Central Committees of the communist parties of the national republics should be entrusted to special secretaries.

Comrades, after what I have already said about our tasks in relation to the selection of cadres and the checking up on fulfilment of decisions, and in relation to propaganda work, I think there is no necessity for me to explain why such a reorganization of the apparatuses of the Central Committee and of the local Party bodies is necessary. The structure of the apparatus of the Central Committee and of the local Party organs proposed to the 18th Party Congress will make it possible to strengthen Party leadership of the various branches of our work

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With the rapid progress of the socialist economic system and the rapid political and cultural development of the workers, peasants and intellectuals, the pace of Party and state life has markedly increased. In order to be able to guide state and Party affairs, to react rapidly to new demands as they arise, and to provide timely solutions for new problems, the existing scheme of central organizations of the Party — the Party Congress and the Central Committee — should be supplemented by a new body, namely, the All-Union Party Conference. This is rendered all the more necessary by the fact that the long interval between Party congresses limits the possibility of advancing to leading posts, and especially to the Central Committee, people

who have developed in Party work, whereas a conference would provide this opportunity. The time is therefore ripe to supplement the scheme of central Party organizations — Party Congress and Central Committee — by an All-Union Party Conference, to be summoned not less than once a year and to consist of representatives of the local organizations; the chief purpose of the All-Union Conference being to discuss urgent problems of Party policy.

The All-Union Party Conference should be invested with the right to replace part of the membership of the Central Committee, that is, to remove such members of the Central Committee as are unable to cope with their duties as members of that body, and to replace them by others, in the number, however, of not more than one-fifth of the membership of the Central Committee elected by the Party Congress. The conference shall replenish the membership of the Central Committee from among the alternate members of that body elected by the Party Congress, and elect in their place a corresponding number of new alternate members.

The decisions of the Conference shall be subject to endorsement by the Central Committee, with the exception of decisions to elect new members and alternate members of the Central Committee. Decisions of Conferences endorsed by the Central Committee shall be binding on all Party organizations. The delegates to the Conference shall be elected at plenary meetings of the regional committees, territorial committees and the Central Committees of the communist parties of the na-

tional republics. Members of the Central Committee who have not been elected as delegates from local organizations shall have a voice at the Conference, but no vote.

THE DUTIES OF PRIMARY ORGANIZATIONS IN INDUSTRY AND IN SOVIET INSTITUTIONS

Comrades, during this period the primary organizations, which constitute the foundation of our Party, have grown stronger, their contacts with the masses have improved, the vanguard role of the communists has been enhanced, and Party life has risen to a higher plane. The Party organizations are taking a closer interest in the practical economic and cultural problems of socialist construction.

Experience has shown that the Party organizations have worked well wherever they have been able to combine Party political work with the fight for the fulfilment of production plans, for the improvement of the work of the state apparatus, for the mastery of new technique, for strict labour discipline, for the development of the Stakhanov movement, and for the promotion of new cadres to Party and business posts. And, vice versa, wherever the Party organizations have held aloof from production, confining their duties to propaganda and agitation, or wherever the Party organizations have taken upon themselves the unwarranted function of *directing* business affairs, assuming the duties of the business bodies and detracting from their responsibility, there the work has inevitably found itself in difficulties.

Comrade Stalin has repeatedly pointed to the necessity for a correct combination of Party political work and business work. He said as far back as 1923:

“Our industrial nuclei must be brought to take an interest in the questions arising from the course of affairs in the factories and trusts. Matters must be so arranged as to enable the nuclei to keep in touch with the work of the managerial bodies of our factories and trusts, so that they may be in a position to influence this work. You, as representatives of nuclei, know how great is the moral responsibility of our industrial nuclei to the non-Party masses for the course of affairs in the factories. If a nucleus is to be in a position to guide and lead the non-Party masses in its factory, if it is to be in a position to bear responsibility for the course of affairs in the factory — and that it is morally responsible to the non-Party masses for any shortcomings in the factory is unquestionable — it must be in touch with the course of affairs, it must have the opportunity to influence them one way or another. It is therefore necessary that the nuclei should be drawn into the discussion of the business problems of the factory, that business conferences of representatives of the nuclei in the factories forming part of a trust should be summoned from time to time for the discussion of questions affecting the affairs of the trust. This is a sure and necessary means of enriching our Party masses with business expe-

rience and of organizing control from below.”
(J. Stalin, “The Tasks of the Party.”)

I shall mention, by way of example, the experience of the Party organization at the huge Kirov Works in Leningrad. The Trotsky-Bukharin bandits who at one time had charge of this plant did it a lot of damage and reduced it to such a plight that in the middle of 1937 it was scarcely fulfilling its program 45-50 per cent in many branches.

Now the plant is being managed by new people who have risen from the ranks of its technical intelligentsia, from the ranks of its Stakhanovites and shock workers.

In the past year there has been a marked improvement in the work of the Kirov plant, and in this a big part was played by the Party organization and its committee, who succeeded in correctly combining Party political work with production work.

The experience of the communists of the Kirov Works shows that a correct combination of Party political work and production work does not result either in violating the principle of one-man management, or in forgetting Party mass work.

What largely contributed to this was the advancement to the leadership of the Party organization of people well acquainted with the technical and business affairs of the plant, people from the shops, from the various sections of the plant, people closely connected with the whole body of workers, technicians and engineers.

The Party organization of the Kirov Works

boldly rooted out the hostile elements in the plant and promoted new cadres — about five hundred of the best Stakhanovites, engineers and technicians, who are now managing the plant, and managing it not at all badly.

Paying attentive heed to the signals coming from the rank-and-file workers and office employees, the Party organization was able to contribute to the solution of a number of important business problems of the plant. The Party organization took a lively part in the reform of the wages system in the plant, which had been reduced to chaos by the wreckers. Instead of one hundred different rate categories there are now only four, and hundreds of thousands of rates have been revised. This was of the greatest significance for the proper organization of labour and for the improvement of productivity of labour.

During the past six months the plant has been fulfilling its production programs without excess expenditure on wages, and the new standards of output have been greatly exceeded.

The Party committee of the Kirov Works helped the management to regulate power consumption at the plant, recommending fresh people for this job and helping to work out practical measures of improvement. As a result, the plant has successfully coped with the government program of doubling the output of tractors by the spring sowing of 1939.

Here is another example. The Yaroslavl Rubber Works had not been fulfilling its production program for seven years running. The whole country

suffered from the unsatisfactory work of the Rubber Works, whose management had at one time fallen into the hands of enemies of the people.

The Central Committee of the CPSU(B) helped the Bolsheviks of the Rubber Works to expose and eliminate the enemies of the people and demanded that the plant should at an early date be made one of the foremost in the country in respect to fulfilment of program. The Party organization of the Yaroslavl Rubber Works has fulfilled the demand of the Central Committee with honour. The plant carried out its program of output of automobile tyres 100 per cent in the fourth quarter of 1938, 106 per cent in January 1939, and 108 per cent in February. Success in production was accompanied by the growth of the Party organization, the membership of which increased more in the fourth quarter of 1938 than in the preceding two years.

What did the Party organization of the Rubber Works owe its success to? To the fact that it correctly combined production work with political work. It arranged its work in such a way as to make the fulfilment of the production program a high political duty, and the whole body of employees of the works was imbued with this spirit. The Party organization distributed its Party cadres in a way that enabled it to keep in touch with what was being done in every part of the plant. Neither the district committee of the CPSU(B) nor the Party organization encroached on the functions of the plant management. On the contrary, they created the conditions to enable the management to display independence and initiative; but the Party organization

kept in touch with every step of the management, and, being well informed of the state of affairs in the plant, when necessary guided, taught and assisted the management.

While vigorously criticizing the chaos and irresponsibility which the enemies of the people had fostered over a long period of time, the Party organization gave moral and political support to every executive, to every worker and office employee in the plant who worked with a will.

Scores and hundreds of examples like that of the Kirov Works and the Yaroslavl Rubber Works could be cited. The Calibre Works and the First Watch and Clock Factory in Moscow, a number of aircraft factories, a number of iron and steel works, the Svet Shakhtyora Works in Kharkov, the New Sormovo Works in the Gorky Region and many other plants are also setting an example of correct combination of Party and production work in the life of the primary Party organizations.

In all the republics, territories and regions numbers of Party organizations are to be found which have succeeded in adopting a correct attitude to production questions, in instituting control over the work of their plants and in helping the managements to fulfil and overfulfil the programs of output.

I also want to mention the experience of the Central Committee Party organizers in the munitions plants. Comrade Stalin attributes the greatest importance to this matter. He proposed the institution in the munitions plants of a system of Party organizers subordinated to the Central Committee,

and the selection of skilled engineers, experts at their job and good Party men, for this purpose. This measure has proved its value and has yielded very good results. We now have a new type of functionary in the munitions plants, men who combine Party work with the ability to form an opinion about any particular business or technical problem.

We know that the ignorance of technical and business matters displayed by certain Party functionaries played into the hands of the wreckers. Our primary Party organizations constitute the vanguard in our factories, the flower of the personnel. We must benefit by the experience of that vanguard body which communists represent in the factories. If you want to ascertain the state of affairs with regard to the fulfilment of an important order, or the way the director's fund is being expended, or the housing conditions of the workers, or the state of the workers' dining rooms, you must throw into the scales the whole experience of the Party organizations, you must illuminate every side of the production life of the factories with the Bolshevik searchlight. In this way we shall render real service to the whole cause of socialist economic development.

During the discussion voices were raised claiming that to grant the right of control to primary Party organizations in production units would be a blow to the principle of one-man management. It seems to me that those who think that one-man management just means commanding a factory without relying on the active personnel have no conception of what one-man management means.

Our Soviet, Bolshevik principle of one-man management implies the ability to direct, to organize, to select cadres, to issue correct orders, to demand a report of work done, and to eliminate irresponsibility and divided responsibility. But it also implies the ability to secure the support in this work of the Party organization, the active of the factory, and of its whole personnel.

It is therefore wrong to say that we can dispense with control by the primary Party organizations. Those executives who fear this kind of control are making a mistake.

In this connection, the time is ripe for precisely defining the duties of the various types of primary Party organizations, and, in particular, of those in production units (factories, mills, state farms and collective farms) and those in People's Commissariats.

Party organizations of the production type should be given the right to exercise control over the state of affairs in factories, state farms and collective farms. This should result in enhancing the role and sense of responsibility of primary Party organizations in production units.

As to the Party organizations of the People's Commissariat type, inasmuch as they cannot exercise functions of control, owing to the specific conditions of their work, they should play a greater part in improving the work of the apparatus. It is their duty to draw attention to defects in their particular People's Commissariat, to note shortcomings in the work of any of the personnel, and to inform the Central Committee and the heads of the

People's Commissariat of them.

Comrade Stalin defined the duties of nuclei in Soviet institutions at a meeting of the Organization Bureau of the Central Committee on March 15, 1926, when he said:

“Our nuclei in Soviet institutions must be the guardians of real Soviet order in our institutions... The nuclei must see that at least elementary order, elementary responsiveness, a readiness to listen to people, and less bureaucracy are displayed in Soviet institutions, both government and business... We must see to it that the nuclei in Soviet institutions live the life of the whole Party, help the Party to improve and simplify the Soviet and business apparatus and bring it closer to the people, to make it honest and economical.” (See *Izvestia of the CC of the CPSU(B)*, No. 16-17, 1926.)

All Party members working in a given People's Commissariat should be united in one general Party organization of that People's Commissariat. The secretary of the Party organization of a People's Commissariat should be endorsed by the Central Committee of the CPSU(B). It is hardly necessary to go into long explanations of the necessity for this latter proposal — it is self-evident.

* * *

Comrades, I have set forth the principal amendments and additions to the rules of the CPSU(B) proposed in the theses.

Besides these amendments and additions, men-

tion should be made of other additions that are prompted by the experience of the Party, such as, that regional committees and territorial committees should have four or five secretaries; that the rights of area Party organizations should be defined in the rules; that the clauses in the rules relating to Party organizations in the Red Army should be extended to Party organizations in the Navy. These additions, I believe, do not need explanation.

In amendment of the existing rule, it is proposed henceforth to call the elected organs of primary organizations bureaus instead of committees.

The reason for this change is that committees are formed to unite several Party organizations of equal status. That is the tradition in our Party and it is an expedient one. As for the elected organs of the primary Party organizations, it is more advisable to call them bureaus to distinguish them from committees.

The Central Committee also attributes great importance to granting Party organizations in factory shops the right — under certain conditions, namely, if they have not less than fifteen members — to elect a bureau. You know that, by decision of the Central Committee, shop committees were set up in the larger industrial plants. Experience has fully justified their formation.

**SUMMARY OF THE DISCUSSION OF THE
THESES OF THE REPORT ON “PARTY
BUILDING TO THE 18th CONGRESS OF THE
CPSU(B)”**

I shall now proceed to discuss the corrections and amendments which were proposed during the discussion in the Party organizations of the theses of the report on amendments to the rules of the CPSU(B).

A very wide discussion developed over the theses, the result of which was that the theses were approved by the vast majority of Party members and by all Party organizations. (*Stormy applause.*)

The discussion yielded a fairly large number of corrections and amendments both to the theses themselves and to a number of clauses of the existing rules to which no amendments were proposed in the theses.

In view of the great variety of the amendments, it would be fitting to divide them into several categories.

There are a number of meaningless corrections of no practical value, as, for example, that Party organs should be elected once in five years; that secretaries of Party organizations should be elected at general meetings and not by the committees or bureaus, that is, that the secretaries should be made independent of the committees or bureaus; that new members should be admitted into the Party at ceremonial meetings, and so on.

The uselessness of these corrections and amendments are self-evident, and there is no need to argue against them. They fall to the ground as worthless. (*Laughter and applause.*)

Secondly, there are a large number of corrections, amendments and comments which do not relate directly to the rules of the CPSU(B) but to the

current work of Party organization.

Such, for example, are the proposals that at least three evenings in five be kept free of all meetings and conferences, so that comrades might rest and study theory; to institute Party days; to forbid the adoption of decisions by a canvass of opinion; that a bureau of the district committee should be elected in districts where the Party organizations are small; that the Party organizations of machine and tractor stations should register tractor drivers and harvester combine operators; that Party committees of railway junctions should be abolished, and so on and so forth.

The subject of all these corrections and amendments relate, as you see, to practical Party affairs. The authors of these corrections have apparently not grasped the difference between the rules and current Party affairs, and therefore try to squeeze into the rules as large a number of clauses as possible, forgetting that the rules only lay down the general framework, the basic forms of organizational activity of the Party, and that they do not preclude, but on the contrary presume, current activity by Party bodies.

The rules of the CPSU(B) which the 18th Party Congress will endorse lay down the organizational basis for the future activities of the directing Party bodies. Corrections and amendments of this kind should be submitted to the new Central Committee of the CPSU(B) to be elected.

The third group of amendments relate directly to the rules of the CPSU(B). A large number of them concern questions of formulation and should

be submitted to the Rules Commission of the 18th Congress which I presume the Congress will set up and instruct to draft the rules in their final form.

As to the corrections and amendments of real importance, it is advisable to divide them into three categories: those that are unacceptable and should be rejected; those whose advisability should be ventilated at the Congress; and, lastly, those that should be adopted.

I shall first deal with the unacceptable proposals.

1. There are amendments designed to preserve the categories of admission in one form or another. They include proposals of the most varied kind. They are all based on the belief of their authors that the abolition of the different categories is untimely. It is proposed to establish two or three categories: one for workers, another for peasants and intellectuals, or to set up a special category for members of the old intelligentsia, and so on. These proposals should not be adopted.

The feature of these amendments is that their authors either ignore or have failed to grasp the essence of the fundamental changes in the relations of classes that have taken place in the USSR. They either cling to the old and fail to see the new, or they are simply dead asleep and do not notice what is going on around them. (*Applause.*)

2. There are a number of amendments of a diametrically opposite type, amendments which go further than the requirements for admission to the Party proposed in the theses. Whereas the first group of amendments, as we have just seen, pro-

posed to preserve the old conditions of admission, the second group proposes to go much further than the requirements proposed in the theses. For example, it is proposed that the period of probation membership should be not one year, but nine months, six months or even three months; that the requirements regarding the length of Party membership of recommenders should be abolished; that the number of recommenders should be reduced, and so on and so forth. I think that amendments of this kind spring from the failure of certain Party members to understand the character of our Party and show that some Party members have forgotten the basic principle that the strength of our Party does not lie in abolishing the boundaries between Party and non-Party, between Party members and non-Party people, and in dissolving itself, diffusing itself among the masses, but in the fact that, acting as a rallying ground for the foremost people of the working class, the peasantry and the intelligentsia, it does not strive for size of membership but for quality of membership, is concerned for the high title of Party member, for the staunchness of Party members and their devotion to the cause of the working class.

The authors of such amendments have the wrong idea that the Party does not intend to show any further concern for the quality of its members and is throwing its doors wide open to all who want to join it. This mistaken view has nothing in common with the Party's policy of a strictly individual selection of really foremost people for the ranks of the Party.

Do the substantial changes in the procedure of admission of new members imply that the Party is in any way relaxing the tried and tested Leninist principle of individual selection for the ranks to the Party? Not in the least.

The Central Committee and Comrade Stalin have many times made it absolutely clear that what is important for the Party is not so much the number of its members as their quality, their staunchness. Here, for example, is what Comrade Stalin said on July 6, 1921, in his report at a general meeting of the Tiflis Organization of the Communist Party of Georgia:

“It should be remembered once and for all that the strength and weight of a party, and especially of the communist party, depends not so much on the number of its members as on their quality, their staunchness and devotion to the cause of the proletariat.”

In the solemn vow Comrade Stalin made at the 2nd All-Union Congress of Soviets on January 26, 1924, at the time of Lenin’s death, he said:

“It is not given to everyone to be a member of such a party. It is not given to everyone to withstand the hardships and storms connected with membership of such a party. It is the sons of the working class, the sons of want and struggle, the sons of incredible privation and heroic efforts who before all should be members of such a party. That is why the party of the Leninists, the party of the communists, is also

called the party of the working class.”

In the resolution of the 13th Party Congress on “The Immediate Tasks of Party Development,” the Party pointed out that what was important when admitting new members was not formalities, but essentials. This resolution stated:

“Not only must the established formal requirements be observed when admitting a new member into the Party, but it is essential to ascertain his *real* capacity to help the Party and the organs of the proletarian dictatorship in practice.”

This principle of strict individual approach to applicants for membership of the Party is an immutable law of our Party. It is not subject to change.

In the interval between the 17th and 18th Party Congresses the Central Committee of the Party has repeatedly pointed to the danger of forgetting the principle of individual admission into the Party.

Alien and hostile elements have always striven to enter the ranks of the CPSU(B) so as to use the title of Party member as a screen in their work of undermining the great cause of the working class.

The Central Committee has done immense work to combat violations of the principle of individual selection of new members of the Party.

The Central Committee has vigorously fought attempts to ignore Lenin’s precept that ours is the only Party in the world which is concerned not so much to increase the number of its members as to improve their quality.

The Central Committee of the Party has strictly warned Party organizations of the danger of distortions of policy and of repetitions of mistakes, of the danger of substituting for a careful individual selection of new members for the Party a pernicious wholesale campaign for new members, which in the past has contaminated the ranks of the CPSU(B) with alien and hostile elements.

The verification of Party records and exchange of Party cards disclosed the extreme neglect and chaos that reigned in this respect. It is therefore clear that the principle of individually selecting for the Party the really foremost people, people really devoted to the cause of the working class, the best people of our country among the ranks of the workers, peasants and working intelligentsia, people who have been tested on various sectors of the struggle for socialism, who do not shrink from difficulties but become steeled in the fight to overcome them, was, is and will be the decisive principle of our Party in the matter of admitting new members into its ranks.

At the same time the Party is interested in creating all the conditions to enable the really foremost people to enter its ranks. The amendments to the rules will in fact create these conditions.

3. A number of comrades propose to establish a special category for persons who have once been Party members. This seems to me unnecessary. If, while they were outside the ranks of the Party, such comrades proved that they are devoted and active workers, they can be accepted on the same terms as comrades newly entering the Party. If, however,

while they were outside the ranks of the Party they did not prove their devotion, they will evidently not be accepted and nobody will give them a recommendation.

4. Further, amendments are proposed with regard to the requirement that the recommender should have known the person he recommends from having worked with him. It is proposed in the case of persons in the ranks of the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army to fix the period at six months, on the grounds of the specific conditions of life prevailing in the Red Army. I think we should reject this proposal. Firstly, it creates different conditions for territorial Party organizations and for army Party organizations, which is undesirable. Secondly, recommendations may be given not only by comrades who know the applicant from working with him in his present factory or institution, but by those who worked with him in other places; and, furthermore, there is no need to make the attendance of the recommender obligatory when the application for membership is being discussed. Finally, a Party organization may, if necessary, when sufficient recommendations cannot be obtained locally, make enquiries about the applicant for membership at the organizations where he previously worked, or of comrades who could recommend him from having worked with him before.

I think the proposal we should here adopt is as follows: large factory Party organizations of over five hundred or seven hundred members (this should be discussed at the Congress) should be allowed to form a factory committee instead of a bu-

reau of the primary organization.

Some comrades have proposed that district committees should be formed in such factories. In my opinion this would be wrong, for we should then have two different kinds of district committees — territorial district committees and industrial district committees. In factory Party organizations with over five hundred or seven hundred members it would be advisable to form factory Party committees and to give the shop Party organizations in such large factories rights under the rules.

As to the proposal to grant the right of admitting new members into the Party to *all* shop organizations, that is, to extend to all shop primary organizations rights under the rules, it should be rejected, because it tends to diminish the importance of the general factory organization. It is the factory above all that is our fortress, and it would be wrong to split up the general Party organization in the factory by giving prime importance to the shop. We must not minimize the educational role of the general Party organization in the factory and the significance of the general factory Party meeting in the matter of admitting new members into the Party.

6. A number of proposals have been made to set up various new departments in Party organs. The theses of the Central Committee, as you know, aim at reducing the number of departments, and propose that the chief departments should be the Cadres Administration and the Propaganda and Agitation Administration of the Central Committee and the corresponding departments in the locali-

ties. But these comrades want just the opposite and would have the number of departments enlarged. They propose to set up new departments like a Health Department, Stakhanov Movement Department, and so on. (*Laughter.*)

This proposal should be rejected. Only in the case of one department is the matter debatable: I am referring to the proposal to set up Defence Departments, which is worth discussing at the Congress.

7. It is proposed to extend the clause concerning Party actives to rural organizations. I think this is also a question which the Congress should discuss, for there are arguments for and against it.

What are the arguments for? That in rural districts, especially large ones, it is not always convenient to call general district meetings of communists, and that meetings of the Party active should be called, as in the case of the towns, to discuss current questions of Party policy. As to the arguments against, they are that in the majority of the rural districts general meetings of the organizations can be called whenever necessary. We know that general meetings are of great educational and organizational value. Some comrades fear that the actives might encroach on the functions of the general Party meeting, and point out that the summoning of actives should not be abused. As you see, it would be advisable to ventilate the question at the Congress.

8. It is proposed to establish secretariats, in addition to bureaus, in all regional committees and city committees. This is also a proposal which

needs to be discussed at the Congress. There are arguments for and against it. The arguments for are that when the leadership has to discuss a large number of questions of organization, some supplementary body like a secretariat is required. There is no need to summon a bureau for every question, it is claimed. At a first glance, this seems a very alluring and practical proposal. But on the other hand, there are fears that the creation of secretariats might minimize the role of the bureau, the role of collective leadership! Might it not lead to a certain shifting of the centre of leadership from the bureau to a narrower body, the secretariat? I think that this is also a question that requires discussion at the Congress.

9. It is proposed to reduce the length of Party membership required of leading Party officials, and some even propose not to make any length of membership a requirement when electing comrades to leading Party posts. I think this proposal is wrong because length of membership is required not only as a formal criterion but as a testimony of a certain experience in Party work. We must not forget what Comrade Stalin said about the necessity of combining the experience of young and old Party members. Hence the proposal to amend the requirements of the rules in respect to the length of membership of leading Party workers which is contained in the theses of the Central Committee should be sufficient to ensure the promotion of young cadres, and to go to greater lengths in the way of reduction would be inexpedient.

10. It is proposed that the right of control

should be granted to Soviet nuclei as well as production nuclei. I consider this proposal unacceptable, for it springs from a forgetfulness of the specific conditions in which the Soviet nuclei work.

To what extremes this forgetfulness may lead is shown by the case of the Party organizations in the People's Commissariat of Agriculture of the USSR and the People's Commissariat of State Farms of the USSR.

These Party organizations became obsessed with the idea of controlling the activities of the heads of the People's Commissariats. They set up within the People's Commissariats what was essentially a second centre, which established connections with the provincial organizations, giving them instructions, and so on. And just see what questions these Party organizations took upon themselves to discuss. The Party organization of the People's Commissariat of Agriculture discussed the state of sowing in the USSR! (*Laughter.*) Why, this is ludicrous! As if it can judge from here how the sowing is going in the Kuban or in Central Asia. Yet it presumes to issue "directives"! It discussed preparations for the harvesting season, supply of fuel to machine and tractor stations, normal financing of the machine and tractor stations, and so on and so forth — that is to say, it tried to duplicate and assume the functions of the People's Commissariat. No good can come of that.

The Party organization of the People's Commissariat of State Farms discussed the state of hay-making in the eastern state farms. (*Laughter.*) What on earth can it know about this subject? Yet it, too,

tried to issue “directives.”

Instead of taking measures to ensure that Party and state discipline are observed and to keep a proper check on the fulfilment of government instructions, instead of interesting themselves in the state of the apparatus and the ability and political fitness of its personnel, and drawing attention to defects in the work of the People’s Commissariat, they tried to assume the functions of the heads of the People’s Commissariat and to direct the provincial organizations.

This is a vicious practice and should not be encouraged. It is a sample of confusion of elementary concepts regarding the duties of Soviet nuclei. It is a parody on leadership, an attempt to create a People’s Commissariat within a People’s Commissariat.

It is a specific feature of the Soviet nuclei that they cannot undertake functions of control over the work of the Soviet institutions as such — that is a matter for higher Party and Soviet bodies.

But this does not mean that the primary Party organizations in Soviet institutions have no opportunity of influencing affairs. On the contrary, the role of these Party organizations is an extremely important one. If the Party organization in a Soviet institution notices defects in the work of the institution in good time — for example, in relation to the examination of complaints and applications from the public, the treatment of visitors (which are matters of utmost importance in the work of Soviet institutions), labour discipline, the work of the apparatus, etc. — if the Party nucleus draws the atten-

tion of the Central Committee of the CPSU(B) and of the heads of the People's Commissariat to such defects, it will be performing an important function in improving the government apparatus.

11. It is proposed to sanction the formation of bureaus in primary Party organizations and in shop Party organizations with seven to ten members.

Seven members are to elect a bureau of three! This would be substituting bureau meetings for the general meetings of the Party organization, which would be wrong.

Such are the proposals and additions which directly relate to the rules, but which in my opinion are unacceptable.

I shall now pass to the proposals which in my opinion are acceptable.

1. A number of comrades point to the necessity of revising the preamble to the rules of the CPSU(B) so as to make it conform with the changes in the situation in the country.

I think this proposal is a right one and should be adopted.

2. There was a very lively exchange of opinions during the discussion over the question of the sympathizers' groups. Judging by the most prevalent opinion, the sympathizers' groups should be abolished.

Comrades point out that in view of the growth of a large non-Party active around the Party, and in view of the resumption of the admission of new members, the sympathizers' groups have outlived their function. Admissions into the Party do not proceed in the main by way of the sympathizers'

groups. This is borne out by the fact, for example, that of the new candidate members accepted during the past two years only twenty-one per cent came from the sympathizers' groups.

Are we not bound to draw the lesson from this practical experience? I think we are.

There are a large number of organizations around the Party which connect it with the masses. I am referring to an organization like the trade unions, the effect of whose work in educating its members should be to raise them to an understanding of the tasks of the communist vanguard, that is, to a Party level, and to prepare its best people to join the Party.

Unfortunately, our trade unions do not set themselves this aim quite as much as they should; yet it is the direct duty of communists working in trade unions to carry on educational work within them in such a way as to raise the level of the foremost, the most active people in the trade unions, to a Party level.

We have a ramified system of social organizations of various kinds — Soviets, the Young Communist League, the cooperative societies, the Chemical and Air Defence Society, etc. — each of which has a large number of active non-Party workers, the best of whom could be selected for admission to the Party.

From this point of view, the sympathizers' groups narrow the field in preparing the best people among the working class, the collective farm peasantry and the intelligentsia to join the Party.

I think it would be better to accept the best,

most prepared, foremost people not into sympathizers' groups, but directly into the Party as candidate members. (*Hear, hear! Applause.*)

3. It is proposed that the reinstatement of persons wrongfully expelled from the Party should be announced in the press.

This is a good suggestion and should be adopted.

4. It is proposed to delete from the rules the clause concerning the Soviet Control Commission, in view of the fact that the proposal to change the character of the work of the Party Control Commission must lead to a change in the character of the activities of the Soviet Control Commission, and that the regulations governing that body have to be confirmed by the government.

I consider the proposal a correct one, inasmuch as constitutional changes in the structure of our legislative and executive organs of Soviet government undoubtedly demand corresponding changes in the case of the Soviet Control Commission.

5. Next, there is another addition to the rules which should be accepted. It is proposed to state in the rules that comrades may be admitted to the Party from the age of eighteen. (*Applause.*)

6. Very important additions have been proposed designed to give a more precise definition in the rules of a number of points concerning the Young Communist League. The question of the Young Communist League is not sufficiently reflected in our rules, where there are three clauses relating to the League. The first provides that young people up to the age of twenty are admitted

to the Party only through the YCL. The second clause states that the recommendation of a district committee of the YCL is equivalent to two recommendations of Party members; and the third clause relates to the formation of joint Party-YCL groups where there are no primary Party organizations.

These clauses in the rules defining the relations between the Party and the YCL are no longer adequate. I think it necessary to discuss two proposals at the Congress.

The first is that YCL members who join the Party and do not belong to the “commanding” staff of the YCL — I am referring to rank-and-file members — should not be obliged to belong to the two organizations, the Party and the YCL. If they are not performing important duties on leading bodies of the YCL on the instructions of the Party, it would be better if they belonged only to the Party organization. (*Applause.*)

The practice (and it is not altogether a right one) is to begin to transfer to the Party YCL members of the age of twenty-five or twenty-six; i.e., chiefly over-aged YCL members. And it is now the common thing in the YCL to say: “We will first select for the Party the over-aged, and then we will tackle the younger members.” The proposed addendum to the rules that persons of the age of eighteen may be admitted to the Party will help greatly to strengthen educational work in the YCL. The “twenty-year olders” (*laughter*) are in a bad way, because they are kept to “mature” in the YCL and no hurry is shown to transfer them to the Party; yet they are people in the flush of life and health and

enjoy full civil rights. I think it would be inadvisable to keep these people five or six extra years in the YCL by making it difficult for them to join the Party.

YCL members not holding leading posts in that organization should be allowed, on joining the Party, to belong to only one organization, namely, the Party organization. They will then receive their training in both educational and organizational work wholly in the Party. Why should they be under two district committees and two primary organizations? Why should they have to think about what study circle to join — YCL or Party? I think the position of YCL members who belong to the Party should be clearly defined. A man has passed through the preparatory school of the YCL is worthy of joining the Party and has been accepted into its ranks. Let him then work in its organization. I think this will clarify the position of communists of YCL age and at the same time will help to improve the whole work of the YCL in educating and preparing its best people to join the Party. (*Applause.*)

Secondly, I think the time has also come to strengthen the role of the YCL in state and economic affairs, and to have this reflected in the Party rules.

Comrades, in spite of the immense importance of the YCL, and in spite of the immense assistance it renders the Party, it suffers from one defect to which the attention both of the YCL and of our Party organizations should be drawn, and that is that it does not take a sufficient part in the life of the state and is too prone to confine itself to its own

YCL affairs.

We must now examine the matter from another aspect: as far as the agitation and propaganda work of the YCL is concerned, it is perfectly clear, in the light of the recent decision of the Central Committee of the CPSU(B), that this work will to a considerable extent be conducted by the Party. We must give the utmost help to the YCL in this respect both in the way of forces and experience. It would be unthinkable otherwise.

The internal work of the YCL is very important. But what is its purpose? It obviously must not be an aim in itself. I think the whole work of the YCL should be radically switched over to training its members to take an active part in state and Party affairs, to the performance of those important tasks of the YCL which arise from its role of *helper* of the Party.

And what does this mean practically? It means, for example, that where there is no primary Party organization, but there is a primary YCL organization, it should assume the function of an active vehicle of the Party's directions. Why should it not take part in the discussion and decision of economic questions? Let us say, for example, that there is chaos in the administration of a collective farm, that the sowing is going badly, that labour discipline is at a low level — what is to prevent the YCL organization discussing these questions? Why cannot a YCL organization take up the question of incompetent work of the management board of a collective farm and set to work to have a bad board replaced by a good one? Why cannot a YCL organ-

ization discuss the shortcomings of a village Soviet? Why cannot it, on the instructions of the Party district committee, undertake to carry out the Party's instructions and directions if they are not being attended to simply because there is no primary Party organization? I consider that the YCL organization can do this and should do it. The YCL organizations should have the right of initiative in submitting to Party organizations big and little questions affecting state and economic affairs, questions concerning the improvement of production work in factory or collective farm, the Stakhanov movement, the state of public baths or public laundries, bad traffic regulation, disorderliness in schools, and so on — I will not enumerate all the big and little problems of our Soviet and economic affairs. Are YCL organizations paying much attention to these questions now? I affirm that they are not. If the YCL organizations set to work on these questions, and do not only discuss internal YCL affairs, do not stew in their own juice, they will enter the broad field of more active participation in all our work of socialist construction. The growth of the cadres of future Party and state workers will be greatly accelerated. The YCL members will receive a real schooling. (*Applause.*)

In view of this, I do not think that we should adopt the proposal to abolish joint Party-YCL groups, a proposal which is based on the alleged grounds that these groups have no virility. They have no virility just now because they do not know what to do. If we put a new content into the work of the Party-YCL groups, if, for example, com-

munists in the rural localities, wherever there are not enough of them to form a Party organization, get together with the YCL members to discuss how to improve the affairs of the collective farm, how to improve cultural and political work, to work out a general line of conduct with regard to important political, economic and cultural affairs in their locality, such Party-YCL groups should be preserved and not abolished. (*Applause.*)

7. The next proposal is that Party cards should not be taken away from persons when expelled from the Party until the expulsion has been endorsed by the regional committee. This proposal is a right one and should be adopted.

8. There was a proposal that plenary meetings of city committees and district committees should be held not less than once in six weeks. It would be advisable to adopt this proposal too.

9. It has been proposed, in amendment of the existing clause of the rules, to sanction the formation of Party groups in Party organizations with less than one hundred communists. As you know, the rules provide for the formation of Party groups only where there are one hundred communists and over. I think that this is also a proposal that should be accepted.

10. There is one other amendment suggested to the rules; it is that the opinion of social organizations regarding an applicant for membership in the Party should not be demanded. I think this proposal is advisable. The recommendations of Party comrades are quite sufficient when a person applies to join the Party.

Such are the proposals and additions to the rules which it would be advisable to adopt.

* * *

Comrades, the discussion of the rules has been of great benefit to the Party. It has revealed a heightened sense of responsibility in Party members for the affairs of the Party, an increased concern of every Party member for his mother, the Party. The discussion has revealed a tremendous growth in the ideological solidarity of the members of our Party.

For its dimensions, the discussion was an absolutely unprecedented event in the life of our Party. It revealed that the Party is moving at full speed to the complete activization of its ranks, denoting a hitherto unprecedented scope of Party activity.

The USSR has entered a new phase of development — the phase of the completion of the building of socialism and of gradual transition from socialism to communism.

This new phase of our historic cause still more enhances the role and significance of our Party.

New grand and impressive prospects are opening up before our Party; new great and complex tasks are confronting it. If it is to accomplish these tasks and perform its role of vanguard fighter in the building of a communist society, our Party must ceaselessly sharpen its organizational weapon. The Party rules adopted by our Congress will be the rules of the Party of victorious socialism, rules which will arm our Party members for the successful accomplishment of the task of gradual transi-

tion to communism. (*Stormy applause.*)

Armed with the advanced theory, armed with the advanced policy, organization and ideology of the foremost class, and having rallied around itself the great and vast Soviet people, our Party is entering the fight for the gradual transition to communism. (*Stormy applause.*)

Many a time have the forces of decaying capitalism attempted to halt our victorious advance, and they will try to many a time again.

We know that difficulties await us. We realize the complexity of the new tasks we have taken upon ourselves. But we know both the means and conditions of our ultimate victory.

Comrade Stalin said at the 16th Party Congress that our Party will be invincible if it does not fear difficulties and knows how to shape its course. Our great Bolshevik Party is such an invincible Party. (*Stormy applause. All rise.*)

Comrades, we, the warriors in the army of the great proletarian strategists, the army of Lenin and Stalin, solidly welded around the Leninist-Stalinist Central Committee, around our teacher and leader, Comrade Stalin, will carry forward our glory-wreathed banner, the banner of Bolshevism, to the complete victory of communism. (*Stormy applause.*)

Long live our great Party!

Long live the genius, the brain, the heart of the Bolshevik Party, of the whole Soviet people, of the whole of progressive and advanced humanity — our Stalin! (*Loud and prolonged applause and cheers. All rise.*)

REPORT ON THE JOURNALS “ZVEZDA” AND “LENINGRAD”

(Speech to a Meeting of Party Activists and Writers in
Leningrad)

August 14, 1946

MISTAKES OF TWO LENINGRAD JOURNALS

It is clear from the Central Committee's decision that *Zvezda's* worst mistake has been that of allowing the writings of Zoshchenko and Akhmatova to appear in its pages. It is, I think, hardly necessary for me to instance Zoshchenko's "work" *The Adventures of a Monkey*. You have certainly all read it and know it better than I do. The point of this "work" of Zoshchenko's is that in it he portrays Soviet people as lazy, unattractive, stupid and crude. He is in no way concerned with their labour, their efforts, their heroism, their high social and moral qualities. He never so much as mentions these. He chooses, like the cheap philistine he is, to scratch about in life's basenesses and pettinesses. This is no accident. It is intrinsic in all cheap philistine writers, of whom Zoshchenko is one. Gorky often used to speak of this; you will remember how, at the 1934 Congress of Soviet Writers, he stigmatized the so-called *literati* who can see no further than the soot on the kitchen range and in the boiler room.

The Adventures of a Monkey is not a thing apart from the general run of Zoshchenko's stories. It is merely as the most vivid expression of all the neg-

ative qualities in his "literary work" that it has attracted the critics' attention. Since he returned to Leningrad after the evacuation, he has, we know, written several things demonstrating his inability to find anything positive whatever in the life of Soviet people or any positive character among them. He is in the habit of jeering at Soviet life, ways and people, as he does in *The Adventures of a Monkey*, and of concealing his jeers behind a mask of empty-headed entertainment and pointless humour.

If you take the trouble to read his *Adventures of a Monkey* more closely you will find that he makes the monkey act as a supreme judge of our social customs, a dictator of morality to Soviet people. The monkey is depicted as an intelligent creature capable of assessing human behaviour. The writer deliberately caricatures the life of Soviet people as unattractive and cheap, so as to have the monkey pass the judgement, filthy, poisonous and anti-Soviet as it is, that living in the zoo is better than being at liberty, that you can draw your breath more freely in a cage than among Soviet people.

Is it possible to fall morally and politically lower than this? How can the people of Leningrad tolerate such rubbish and vulgarity in the pages of their journals?

The Leningraders in charge of *Zvezda* must indeed be lacking in vigilance if a "work" of this sort is offered to the journal's Soviet readers, if it is found possible to publish works steeped in the venom of bestial enmity towards the Soviet order. Only the scum of the literary world could write such "works," and only the blind, the apolitical

could allow them to appear.

Zoshchenko's story is said to have gone the rounds of Leningrad's variety halls, The leadership of educational work in Leningrad must have fallen to a low level indeed for such a thing to be possible.

Zoshchenko has managed to find a niche for himself in the pages of an important Leningrad journal and to popularize his loathsome "moral lessons" there. And yet *Zvezda* is a journal purporting to educate our young people. Is that a task to be coped with by a journal that has taken a low un-Soviet writer like Zoshchenko to its heart? Is *Zvezda's* editorial board unaware of what he is?

It is not so long ago — early 1944, in fact — that *Bolshevik* published an article sharply critical of Zoshchenko's book *Before Sunrise*, which was written at the height of the Soviet people's war of liberation against the German invaders. In this book Zoshchenko turns his low, cheap little self inside out, and delights to exhibit himself to the public gaze; indeed, he does it with gusto, crying: See what an oaf I am!

It would be hard to find in our literature anything more revolting than the "lesson" Zoshchenko teaches in this book, *Before Sunrise*, where he portrays himself and others as lewd and repulsive beasts with neither shame nor conscience. Such was the "lesson" he offered Soviet readers when our people were shedding their blood in an unprecedentedly bitter war, when the life of the Soviet state hung by a thread, when the Soviet people were making countless sacrifices to defeat the Germans. Far in the rear, entrenched in Alma-Ata,

Zoshchenko was doing nothing to help. *Bolshevik* publicly castigated him, and rightly, as a low slanderer having no place in Soviet literature.

But he snapped his fingers at public opinion. Less than two years later, friend Zoshchenko struts back to Leningrad and starts making free use of the pages of the Leningrad journals. Not only *Zvezda* but *Leningrad*, too, welcomed his stories. Variety concert halls were rapidly made available. Moreover, he was allowed to occupy a leading position in the Leningrad section of the Union of Soviet Writers and to play an active part in the literary affairs of Leningrad.

What grounds have you for letting him roam at will through the parks and gardens of Leningrad literature? Why have Leningrad's active Party workers and the Leningrad Writers' Union allowed such shameful things to occur?

Zoshchenko's thoroughly rotten and corrupt social, political and literary attitude does not result from any recent transformation. There is nothing accidental about his latest "works." They are simply the continuation of his literary "legacy" dating from the twenties.

Who was he in the past? He was one of the organizers of the literary group known as the Serapion Brothers. And when the Serapion Brothers group was formed, what was he like socially and politically? Let me turn to *Literaturniye Zapiski* (3, 1922) where the founders of this group expounded their creed. This journal contains, among other things, Zoshchenko's *credo*, in an article entitled "About Myself and a Few Other Things." Quite

unashamed, he publicly exposes himself and states his political and literary "views" with the utmost frankness. Listen to what he says:

"...It is very difficult to be a writer, on the whole. Take this business of ideology... Writers are expected to have an ideology nowadays... What a bore! How can I have any 'definite ideology', tell me, when no Party really attracts me? From the Party members' point of view I am not a man of principle. What of it? For my part, I may say: I am not a Communist, nor a Socialist-Revolutionary, nor a Monarchist, but merely a Russian, and a politically amoral one, at that... Honest to God, I don't know to this day what Party, well, Guchkov... say, belongs to. Heaven knows what party he's in; I know he isn't a Bolshevik, but whether he's a Socialist-Revolutionary or a Cadet I neither know nor care." And so on and so forth.

What do you make of that sort of "ideology"? Twenty-five years have passed since Zoshchenko published this "confession" of his. Has he changed since? Not so that you would notice it. Not only has he neither learned anything nor changed in any way in the last two and a half decades, but with cynical frankness he continues, on the contrary, to remain the apostle of empty-headedness and cheapness, a literary slum-rat, unprincipled and conscienceless. That is to say, now as then he cares nothing for Soviet ways, now as then he has no place in Soviet literature and opposes it.

If he has nevertheless become something approaching a literary star in Leningrad, if his praises are sung on Leningrad's Parnassus, we can but marvel at the lack of principle, of strictness, of discrimination, in the people who paved the way for him and applauded him.

Allow me to instance one more illustration of what the Serapion Brothers, so-called, were like. In the same issue of *Literaturniye Zapiski* (3, 1922) another Serapionist, Lev Lunts, also tried to expound the ideological basis of the harmful trend represented by the Serapion Brothers, which is alien to the spirit of Soviet literature. Lunts wrote:

“We gathered together at a time of great political and revolutionary tension. ‘He who is not with us is against us’, we were told on all hands ‘Who are you with, Serapion Brothers’, we were asked, ‘with the Communists or against them, for the revolution or against it?’ And so, who are we with, Serapion Brothers? We are with the hermit Serapion. Officialdom has ruled Russian literature too long and too painfully. We do not want utilitarianism. We do not write for propaganda purposes. Art is real, like life itself, and like life it exists because it must, without purpose or meaning.”

Such was the role allotted to art by the Serapion Brothers, depriving it of all ideological content or social significance; they proclaimed the non-ideological nature of art, demanding art for art's sake, without purpose or meaning. This is nothing but a

plea for philistinism, superficiality and lack of political belief.

What conclusion does this lead to? Zoshchenko does not like Soviet ways: so what would you advise us to do? Adapt ourselves to him? It is not for us to change our tastes. It is not for us to alter our life and our order to suit him. Let him change; and if he will not, let him get out of Soviet literature, in which there can be no place for meaningless, cheap, empty-headed works.

This was the Central Committee's starting point in adopting its decisions on *Zvezda* and *Leningrad*.

I will now turn to the literary "work" of Anna Akhmatova. Her works have been appearing in the Leningrad journals recently as an example of "increased output." This is as surprising and unnatural as it would be if someone were to start issuing new editions of the works of Merezhkovsky, Vyacheslav Ivanov, Mikhail Kuzmin, Andrei Bely, Zinaida Hippus, Fyodor Sologub, Zinovyeva-Anibal, and so on and so forth; that is, of all the writers whom our advanced public and literary circles have always considered to be representatives of reactionary obscurantism and perfidy in art and politics.

Gorky once said that the ten years from 1907 to 1917 might well be called the most shameful, the most barren decade in the history of Russian intellectuals; in this decade, after the 1905 Revolution, a great many of the intellectuals spurned the revolution and slid down into a morass of pornography and reactionary mysticism, screening their perfidy with the "pretty" phrase: "I too have burned all I

revered and have revered what I burned.”

It was during these ten years that there appeared such perfidious works as Ropshin's *The Pale Horse* and the writings of Vinnichenko and other deserters from the camp of revolution to that of reaction, hastening to dethrone the lofty ideals that the best and most progressive representatives of Russian society were fighting for. It was then that there rose to the surface Symbolists, Imagists and decadents of every shape and hue, disowning the people and proclaiming the thesis of “art for art's sake,” preaching the meaninglessness of literature and screening their ideological and moral corruption behind a pursuit of beauty of form without content. All of them were united in their brutish fear of the coming workers' revolution. Suffice it to recall that one of the most notable “theoreticians” in these reactionary literary movements was Merezhkovsky, who called the coming workers' revolution “the approaching rabble” and greeted the October Revolution with bestial malice.

Anna Akhmatova is one of the representatives of this idea-less reactionary morass in literature. She belongs to the “Acmeist” literary group, who in their day emerged from the ranks of the Symbolists, and she is one of the standard-bearers of the meaningless, empty-headed, aristocratic-salon school of poetry, which has no place whatever in Soviet literature. The Acmeists represented an extremely individualistic trend in art. They preached “art for art's sake,” “beauty for beauty's sake,” and had no wish to know anything about the people and the people's needs and interests, or about social

life.

This was a bourgeois-aristocratic trend in literature, appearing at a time when the days of the bourgeoisie and of the aristocracy were numbered, when the poets and theoreticians of the ruling classes were trying to hide from harsh reality in the mists and clouds of religious mysticism, in paltry personal experiences and in absorption in their own petty souls. The Acmeists, like the symbolists, decadents and other representatives of the disintegrating bourgeois-aristocratic ideology, were preachers of defeatism, pessimism and faith in a hereafter.

Akhmatova's subject-matter is individualistic to the core. The range of her poetry is sadly limited; it is the poetry of a spoiled woman-aristocrat, frenziedly vacillating between boudoir and chapel. Her main emphasis is on erotic love-themes interwoven with notes of sadness, longing, death, mysticism, fatality. A sense of fatality (quite comprehensible in a dying group), the dismal tones of a deathbed hopelessness, mystical experiences shot with eroticism, make up Akhmatova's spiritual world; she is a left-over from the world of the old aristocracy now irrevocably past and gone, the world of "Catherine's good old days." It would be hard to say whether she is a nun or a fallen woman; better perhaps say she is a bit of each, her desires and her prayers intertwined.

*"But I vow by the garden of angels,
By the miraculous icon I vow,
I vow by the child of our passion..."*

— from *Anno Domini*, by Anna Akhmatova.

Such is Akhmatova, with her petty, narrow personal life, her paltry experiences, and her religiously mystical eroticism.

Her poetry is far removed from the people. It is the poetry of the ten thousand members of the elite society of the old aristocratic Russia, whose hour has long since struck and left them with nothing to do but sigh for “the good old days,” for the country estates of Catherine’s time, with their avenues of ancient lime trees, their fountains, their statues, their arches, their greenhouses, summerhouses and crumbling coats of arms, for aristocratic St. Petersburg, for Tsarskoye Selo, for the railway station in Pavlovsk, and for other relics of the nobility’s culture. All of these have vanished into the irredeemable past. The few representatives of this culture, so foreign to the spirit of the people, who have by some miracle lived on into our own times, can do nothing but shut themselves up in themselves and live with chimeras. “*All has been plundered, betrayed and sold,*” writes Akhmatova.

Osip Mandelstam, a prominent Acmeist, wrote this, not long before the revolution, on the social, political and literary ideals of this little group: “The Acmeists share their love of organism and organization with the physiologically perfect Middle Ages...” “The Middle Ages, with their own peculiar way of estimating a man’s relative weight, felt and recognized it in every individual irrespective of merit...” “Yes, Europe once passed through a labyrinth of filigree-fine culture, when abstract being,

personal existence, wholly unadorned, was valued as an outstanding achievement. This gave rise to the aristocratic intimacy binding everybody, so foreign to the spirit of 'equality and fraternity' of the great revolution..." "The Middle Ages are dear to us because they had so highly developed a sense of boundaries and dividing lines..." "A noble mixture of rationality and mysticism, and a perception of the world as a living equilibrium, make us feel a kinship with this age and prompt us to draw strength from the works that appeared on Romance soil about the year 1200."

These statements of Mandelstam's contain the Acmeists' hopes and ideals. "Back to the Middle Ages" was the social idea of this aristocratic-salon group. "Back to the monkey" choruses Zoshchenko. Incidentally, the Acmeists and the Serapion Brothers are of the same descent. Their common ancestor was Hoffman, one of the founders of aristocratic-salon decadence and mysticism.

Where was the need to popularize Akhmatova's poetry all of a sudden? What has she to do with Soviet people? What need is there to offer a literary pulpit to all these defeatist and un-Soviet literary trends?

We know from the history of Russian literature that the reactionary literary trends to which the Symbolists and the Acmeists belonged tried time and time again to start a crusade against the great revolutionary-democratic traditions of Russian literature and against its foremost representatives, tried to deprive literature of its high ideological and social significance and to drag it down into the

morass of meaninglessness and cheapness.

All these “fashionable” trends have been engulfed and buried with the classes whose ideology they reflected. What, in our Soviet literature, has remained of all these Symbolists, Acmeists, Yellow Shirts, Jacks-o’-Diamonds and *Nichevoki* (“Nothings”)? Nothing whatever, though their crusades against the great representatives of Russian revolutionary-democratic literature, Belinsky, Dobrolyubov, Chernyshevsky, Herzen, Saltykov-Shchedrin, were launched noisily and pretentiously and just as noisily failed.

The Acmeists proclaimed it their motto “not to improve life in any way whatever nor to indulge in criticism of it.” Why were they against improving life in any way whatever? Because they liked the old bourgeois-aristocratic life, whereas the revolutionary people were preparing to disturb this life of theirs. In November 1917 both the ruling classes and their theoreticians and singers were pitched into the dustbin of history.

And now, in the twenty-ninth year of the socialist revolution, certain museum specimens reappear all of a sudden and start teaching our young people how to live. The pages of a Leningrad journal are thrown wide open to Akhmatova and she is given *carte blanche* to poison the minds of the young people with the harmful spirit of her poetry.

One of the issues of *Leningrad* contains a kind of digest of the works written by Akhmatova between 1909 and 1944. Among the rest of the rubbish, there is a poem she wrote during evacuation in the Great Patriotic War. In this poem she de-

scribes her loneliness, the solitude she has to share with a black cat, whose eyes looking at her are like the eyes of the centuries. This is no new theme: Akhmatova wrote about a black cat in 1909, too. This mood of solitude and hopelessness, which is foreign to the spirit of Soviet literature, runs through the whole of Akhmatova's work.

What has this poetry in common with the interests of our state and people? Nothing whatever. Akhmatova's work is a matter of the distant past; it is foreign to Soviet life and cannot be tolerated in the pages of our journals. Our literature is no private enterprise designed to please the fluctuating tastes of the literary market. We are certainly under no obligation to find a place in our literature for tastes and ways that have nothing in common with the moral qualities and attributes of Soviet people. What instructive value can the works of Akhmatova have for our young people? They can do them nothing but harm. These works can sow nothing but gloom, low spirits, pessimism, a desire to escape the vital problems of social life and turn away from the broad highway of social life and activity into a narrow little world of personal experiences. How can the upbringing of our young people be entrusted to her? Yet her poems were readily printed, sometimes in *Zvezda* and sometimes in *Leningrad*, and were published in volume form. This was a serious political error.

It is only natural, in view of all this, that the works of other writers, who were also beginning to adopt an empty-headed and defeatist tone, should have started to appear in the Leningrad journals. I

am thinking of works such as those of Sadofyev and Komissarova. In some of their poems they imitate Akhmatova, cultivating the mood of despondency, boredom and loneliness so dear to her.

Needless to say, such moods, or the extolling of them, can exert only a negative influence on our young people and are bound to poison their minds with a vicious spirit of empty-headedness, despondency and lack of political consciousness.

What would have happened if we had brought our young people up in a spirit of despondency and of disbelief in our cause? We should not have won the Great Patriotic War. It is precisely because the Soviet State, and our Party, with the help of Soviet literature, had brought our young people up in a spirit of optimism and with confidence in their own strength, that we were able to surmount the tremendous difficulties that faced us in the building of socialism and in defeating the Germans and the Japanese.

What does this mean? It means that by printing in its pages cheap and reactionary works devoid of proper ideas, side by side with good works of rich content and cheerful tone, *Zvezda* became a journal having no clear policy, a journal helping our enemies to corrupt our young people. The strength of our journals has always lain in their optimistic revolutionary trend, not in eclecticism, empty-headedness and lack of political understanding. *Zvezda* gave its full sanction to propaganda in favour of doing nothing.

To make matters worse, Zoshchenko seems to have acquired so much power in the Leningrad

writers' organization that he even used to shout down those who disagreed with him and threaten to lampoon his critics in one of his forthcoming works. He became a sort of literary dictator surrounded by a group of admirers singing his praises.

Well may one ask, on what grounds? Why did you allow such an unnatural and reactionary thing as this to occur?

No wonder Leningrad's literary journals started giving space to cheap modern bourgeois literature from the West. Some of our men of letters began looking on themselves as not the teachers but the pupils of petty-bourgeois writers, and began to adopt an obsequious and awestruck attitude towards foreign literature. Is such obsequiousness becoming in us Soviet patriots who have built up the Soviet order, which towers higher a hundred-fold, and is better a hundredfold, than any bourgeois order? Is obsequiousness towards the cheap and philistine bourgeois literature of the West becoming in our advanced Soviet literature, the most revolutionary in the world?

Another serious failing in the work of our writers is their ignoring of modern Soviet subjects, which betrays on the one hand a one-sided interest in historical subjects and on the other an attempt to write on meaningless, purely amusing subjects. To justify their failure to keep pace with great modern Soviet themes, some writers maintain that the time has come to give the people meaningless and "entertaining" literature, to stop bothering about literature's ideological content.

This conception of our people, of their interests

and requirements, is entirely wrong. Our people expect Soviet writers to understand and integrate the vast experience they gained in the Great Patriotic War, to portray and integrate the heroism with which they are now working to rehabilitate the country's national economy.

A few words on the journal *Leningrad*: Zoshchenko's position is even stronger here than in *Zvezda*, as is Akhmatova's too. Both of them have become active powers in both journals. Thus *Leningrad* is responsible for having put its pages at the disposal of such cheap writers as Zoshchenko and such salon poetesses as Akhmatova.

The journal *Leningrad* has, however, made other mistakes also.

For instance, take the parody of *Evgeny Onegin* written by one Khazin. This piece is called *The Return of Onegin*. It is said to be frequently recited on the variety concert platforms of Leningrad.

It is hard to understand why the people of Leningrad allow their city to be vilified from a public platform in such a way as Khazin vilifies it. The purpose of this "satire" is not simple ridicule of the things that happen to Onegin on finding himself in modern Leningrad. The point is that Khazin essays to compare our modern Leningrad with the St. Petersburg of Pushkin's day, and for the worse. Read just a few lines of this "parody" attentively. Nothing in our modern Leningrad pleases the author. Sneering in malice and derision, he slanders Leningrad and Soviet people. In his opinion, Onegin's day was a golden age. Everything is different now: a housing department has appeared, and ration

cards and permits. Girls, those ethereal creatures so much admired of Onegin, now regulate the traffic and repair the Leningrad houses and so on and so forth. Let me quote just one passage from this "parody":

Our poor dear Evgeny
Boarded a tram.
Never had his benighted age known
Such a means of transportation.
But fate was kind to Evgeny;
He escaped with only a foot crushed,
And only once, when someone jabbed him
In the stomach, was he called an idiot.
Remembering ancient customs,
He resolved to seek satisfaction in a duel:
He felt in his pocket, but
Someone had taken his gloves,
A frustration that reduced
Onegin to silence and docility.

That is what Leningrad was like before, and what it has turned into: a wretched, uncouth, coarse city; and that is the aspect it presented to poor dear Onegin. It is in this vulgar way that Khazin describes Leningrad and its people.

The idea behind this slanderous parody is harmful, vicious and false.

How could the editorial board of *Leningrad* have accepted this malicious slander on Leningrad and its magnificent people? How could Khazin have been allowed to appear in the pages of the Leningrad journals?

Take another work, a parody on a parody by Nekrasov, so written as to be a direct insult to the memory of the great poet and public figure Nekrasov, an insult that ought to arouse the indignation of every educated person. Yet *Leningrad's* editorial board did not hesitate to print this sordid concoction in its columns.

What else do we find in *Leningrad*? A foreign anecdote, dull and shallow, apparently lifted from hackneyed anecdote-books dating from the late nineteenth century. Is there nothing else for *Leningrad* to fill its pages with? Is there really nothing to write about in *Leningrad*? What about such a subject as the rehabilitation of the city? Wonderful work is being done in Leningrad; the city is healing the wounds inflicted during the siege; the people of Leningrad are imbued with the enthusiasm and emotion of post-war rehabilitation. Has anything on this appeared in *Leningrad*? Will the people of the city ever live to see the day when their feats of labour are reflected in the pages of this journal?

Further, let us take the subject of Soviet woman. Is it permissible to cultivate in Soviet readers the disgraceful views on the role and mission of women that are typical of Akhmatova, and not to give a really truthful concept of modern Soviet woman in general and the heroic girls and women of Leningrad in particular, who unflinchingly shouldered the heavy burden of the war years and are now self-sacrificingly working to carry out the difficult tasks presented by the rehabilitation of the city's economic life?

The situation in the Leningrad section of the

Union of Soviet Writers is obviously such that the supply of good work is now insufficient to fill two literary journals. The Central Committee of the Party has therefore decided to cease publication of *Leningrad*, so as to concentrate all the best literary forces in *Zvezda*. This does not mean that Leningrad will not, in suitable circumstances, have a second or even a third journal. The question will be settled by the supply of notable literary works. Should so many appear that there is no room for them in one journal, a second and even a third may be started; it all depends on the intellectual and artistic quality of the works produced by our Leningrad writers.

Such are the grave errors and failings laid bare and detailed in the resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party on the work of *Zvezda* and *Leningrad*.

LENINISM AND LITERATURE

What is the cause of these errors and failings?

It is that the editors of the said journals, our Soviet men of letters, and the leaders of our ideological front in Leningrad, have forgotten some of the principal tenets of Leninism as regards literature. Many writers, and many of those working as responsible editors, or holding important posts in the Writers' Union, consider politics to be the business of the government or of the Central Committee. When it comes to men of letters, engaging in politics is no business of theirs. If a man has done a good, artistic, fine piece of writing, his work should be published even though it contains vicious ele-

ments liable to confuse and poison the minds of our young people.

We demand that our comrades, both practising writers and those in positions of literary leadership, should be guided by that without which the Soviet order cannot live, that is to say, by politics, so that our young people may be brought up not in the spirit of do-nothing and don't-care, but in an optimistic revolutionary spirit.

We know that Leninism embodies all the finest traditions of the Russian nineteenth-century revolutionary democrats and that our Soviet culture derives from and is nourished by the critically assimilated cultural heritage of the past.

Through the lips of Lenin and Stalin our Party has repeatedly recognized the tremendous significance in the field of literature of the great Russian revolutionary democratic writers and critics Belinsky, Dobrolyubov, Chernyshevsky, Saltykov-Shchedrin and Plekhanov. From Belinsky onward, all the best representatives of the revolutionary democratic Russian intellectuals have denounced "pure art" and "art for art's sake," and have been the spokesmen of art for the people, demanding that art should have a worthy educational and social significance.

Art cannot cut itself off from the fate of the people. Remember Belinsky's famous *Letter to Gogol*, in which the great critic, with all his native passion, castigated Gogol for his attempt to betray the cause of the people and go over to the side of the Tsar. Lenin called this letter one of the finest works of the uncensored democratic press, one that has pre-

served its tremendous literary significance to this day.

Remember Dobrolyubov's articles, in which the social significance of literature is so powerfully shown. The whole of our Russian revolutionary democratic journalism is imbued with a deadly hatred of the Tsarist order and with the noble aspiration to fight for the people's fundamental interests, their enlightenment, their culture, their liberation from the fetters of the Tsarist regime. A militant art fighting for the people's finest ideals, that is how the great representatives of Russian literature envisaged art and literature.

Chernyshevsky, who comes nearest of all the utopian socialists to scientific socialism and whose works were, as Lenin pointed out, "indicative of the spirit of the class struggle," taught us that the task of art was, besides affording a knowledge of life, to teach people how to assess correctly varying social phenomena. Dobrolyubov, his companion-in-arms and closest friend, remarked that "it is not life that follows literary standards, but literature that adapts itself to the trends of life," and strongly supported the principles of realism, and the national element, in literature, on the grounds that the basis of art is life, that life is the source of creative achievement and that art plays an active part in social life and in shaping social consciousness. Literature, according to Dobrolyubov, should serve society, should give the people answers to the most urgent problems of the day, should keep abreast of the ideas of its epoch.

Marxist literary criticism, which carries on the

great traditions of Belinsky, Chernyshevsky and Dobrolyubov, has always supported realistic art with a social stand. Plekhanov did a great deal to show up the idealistic and unscientific concept of art and literature and to defend the basic tenets of our great Russian revolutionary democrats, who taught us to regard literature as a means of serving the people.

Lenin was the first to state clearly what attitude towards art and literature advanced social thought should take. Let me remind you of the well-known article, *Party Organization and Party Literature*, which he wrote at the end of 1905, and in which he demonstrated with characteristic forcefulness that literature cannot but have a partisan adherence and that it must form an important part of the general proletarian cause. All the principles on which the development of our Soviet literature is based are to be found in this article.

“Literature must become partisan literature,” wrote Lenin. “To offset bourgeois customs, to offset the commercial bourgeois press, to offset bourgeois literary careerism and self-seeking, to offset ‘gentlemanly anarchism’ and profit-seeking, the socialist proletariat must put forward the principle of *partisan* literature, must develop this principle and carry it out in the completest and most integral form.

“What is this principle of partisan literature? It is not merely that literature cannot, to the socialist proletariat, be a means of profit to individuals or groups; all in all, literature cannot be an individual matter divorced from the general proletarian cause.

Down with the writers who think themselves supermen! Down with non-partisan writers! Literature must become *part and parcel* of the general proletarian cause..."

And further, from the same article: "It is not possible to live in society and remain free of it. The freedom of the bourgeois writer, artist or actor is merely a masked dependence (hypocritically masked perhaps) on the moneybags, on bribes, on allowances."

Leninism starts from the premise that our literature cannot be apolitical, cannot be "art for art's sake," but is called upon to play an important and leading part in social life. Hence derives the Leninist principle of partisanship in literature, one of Lenin's most important contributions to the study of literature.

It follows that the finest aspect of Soviet literature is its carrying on of the best traditions of nineteenth-century Russian literature, traditions established by our great revolutionary democrats Belinsky, Dobrolyubov, Chernyshevsky and Saltykov-Shchedrin, continued by Plekhanov and scientifically elaborated and substantiated by Lenin and Stalin.

Nekrasov declared his poetry to be inspired by "the Muse of sorrow and vengeance." Chernyshevsky and Dobrolyubov regarded literature as sacred service to the people. Under the Tsarist system, the finest representatives among the democratic Russian intellectuals perished for these high and noble ideas, or willingly risked sentences of exile and hard labour.

How can these glorious traditions be forgotten? How can we pass them over, how can we let the Akhmatovas and the Zoshchenkos disseminate the reactionary catchword "art for art's sake," how can we let them, behind their mask of impartiality, impose ideas on us that are alien to the spirit of the Soviet people?

Leninism recognizes the tremendous significance of our literature as a means of reforming society. Were our Soviet literature to allow any falling off in its tremendous educational role, the result would be retrogression, a return "to the Stone Age."

Comrade Stalin has called our writers engineers of the human soul. This definition has a profound meaning. It speaks of the enormous educational responsibility Soviet writers bear, responsibility for the training of Soviet youth, responsibility for seeing to it that bad literary work is not tolerated.

There are people who find it strange that the Central Committee should have taken such stringent measures as regards literature. It is not what we are accustomed to. If mistakes have been allowed to occur in industrial production, or if the production program for consumer goods has not been carried out, or if the supply of timber falls behind schedule, then it is considered natural for the people responsible to be publicly reprimanded. But if mistakes have been allowed to occur as regards the proper influencing of human souls, as regards the upbringing of the young, then such mistakes may be tolerated. And yet, is not this a bitterer pill to swallow than the non-fulfilment of a production

program or the failure to carry out a production task? The purpose of the Central Committee's resolution is to bring the ideological front into line with all the other sectors of our work.

On the ideological front, serious gaps and failings have recently become apparent. Suffice it to remind you of the backwardness of our cinematic art, and of the way our theatre repertoires have got cluttered up with poor dramatic works, not to mention what has been going on in *Zvezda* and *Lenin-grad*. The Central Committee has been compelled to interfere and firmly to set matters right. It has no right to deal gently with those who forget their duties with regard to the people, to the upbringing of our young people. If we wish to draw our members' attention to questions relating to ideological work and to set matters right in this field, to establish a clear line in this work, then we must criticize the mistakes and failings in ideological work severely, as befits Soviet people, as befits Bolsheviki. Only then shall we be able to set matters right.

There are men of letters who reason thus: since during the war, when few books were printed, the people were hungry for reading matter, the reader will now swallow anything, even though the flavour be a trifle tainted. This is not in fact true, and we cannot put up with any old literature that may be palmed off on us by indiscriminating authors, editors and publishers. From Soviet writers the Soviet people expect reliable ideological armament, spiritual food to further the fulfilment of construction and rehabilitation plans and to promote the development of our country's national economy. The

Soviet people desire the satisfaction of their cultural and ideological needs, and make great demands on men of letters.

During the war force of circumstances prevented us from satisfying these vital needs. The people want to understand current events. Their cultural and intellectual level has risen. They are often dissatisfied with the quality of the works of art and literature appearing in our country. Certain literary workers on the ideological front have not understood this and are unwilling to do so.

The tastes and demands of our people have risen to a very high level, and anyone who cannot or will not rise to this level is going to be left behind. The mission of literature is not merely to keep abreast of the people's demands but to be always in the vanguard. It is essential that literature should develop the people's tastes, raise their demands higher and higher still, enrich them with new ideas and lead them forward. Anyone who cannot keep pace with the people, satisfy their growing demands and cope with the task of developing Soviet culture, will inevitably find himself no longer in demand.

The lack of ideological principles shown by leading workers on *Zvezda* and *Leningrad* has led to a second serious mistake. Certain of our leading workers have, in their relations with various authors, set personal interests, the interests of friendship, above those of the political education of the Soviet people or these authors' political tendencies. It is said that many ideologically harmful and from a literary point of view weak productions are

allowed to be published because the editor does not like to hurt the author's feelings. In the eyes of such workers it is better to sacrifice the interests of the people and of the state than to hurt some author's feelings. This is an entirely wrong and politically dangerous principle. It is like swopping a million rubles for a kopeck.

The Central Committee of the Party points out in its resolution the grave danger in substituting for relations based on principle those based on personal friendship. The relations of personal friendship regardless of principle prevailing among certain of our men of letters have played a profoundly negative part, led to a falling off in the ideological level of many literary works and made it easier for this field to be entered by persons foreign to the spirit of Soviet literature. The absence of any criticism on the part of the leaders of the Leningrad ideological front or of the editors of the Leningrad journals has done a great deal of harm; the substitution of relations of friendship for those based on principle has been made at the expense of the people's interests.

Comrade Stalin teaches us that if we wish to conserve our human resources, to guide and teach the people, we must not be afraid of hurting the feelings of single individuals or fear bold, frank, objective criticism founded on principle. Any organization, literary or other, is liable to degenerate without criticism, any ailment is liable to be driven deeper in and become harder to cope with. Only bold frank criticism can help our people and overcome any failings in their work. Where criticism is

lacking, stagnation and inertia set in, leaving no room for progress.

Comrade Stalin has repeatedly pointed out that one of the most important conditions for our development is for every Soviet citizen to sum up the results of his work every day, to assess himself fearlessly, to analyse his work bravely, and to criticize his own mistakes and failings, pondering how to achieve better results and constantly striving for self-improvement. This applies just as much to men of letters as to any other workers. The man who is afraid of any criticism of his work is a despicable coward deserving no respect from the people.

An uncritical attitude, and the substitution of relations of personal friendship for those based on principle, are very prevalent on the Board of the Union of Soviet Writers. The Board, and its chairman Comrade Tikhonov in particular, are to blame for the bad state of affairs revealed in *Zvezda* and *Leningrad*, in that they not only made no attempt to prevent the harmful influence of Zoshchenko, Akhmatova and other un-Soviet writers penetrating into Soviet literature, but even readily permitted styles and tendencies alien to the spirit of Soviet literature to find a place in our journals.

Another factor contributing to the failings of the Leningrad journals was the state of irresponsibility that developed among the editors of these journals, the situation being such that no one knew who had the overall responsibility for the journal or for its various departments, so that any sort of order, even the most rudimentary, was impossible.

The Central Committee has, therefore, in its resolution, appointed to *Zvezda* an editor-in-chief, who is to be held responsible for the journal's policy and for the ideological level and literary quality of its contents.

Disorder and anarchy are no more to be tolerated in the issuing of literary publications than in any other enterprise. A clear-cut responsibility for the journal's policy and contents must be established.

You must restore the glorious traditions of Leningrad's literature and ideological front. It is a sad and painful thing to have to admit that the Leningrad journals, which had always sponsored the most advanced ideas, have come to harbour empty-headedness and cheapness. The honour of Leningrad as a leading ideological and cultural centre must be restored. We must remember that Leningrad was the cradle of the Bolshevik Leninist organizations. It was here that Lenin and Stalin laid the foundations of the Bolshevik Party, the Bolshevik world outlook and Bolshevik culture.

It is a point of honour for Leningrad writers and Party members to restore and carry further these glorious traditions. It is the task of the Leningrad workers on the ideological front, and of the writers above all, to drive empty-headedness and cheapness out of Leningrad literature, to raise aloft the banner of Soviet literature, to seize every opportunity for ideological and literary development, not to leave up-to-date themes untreated, to keep pace with the people's demands, to encourage in every possible way the bold criticism of their own fail-

ings, criticism containing no element of toadying and not based on friendships and group-loyalties — a genuine, bold, independent, ideological, Bolshevik criticism.

By now it should be clear to you what a serious oversight the Leningrad City Committee of the Party, and particularly its propaganda department and propaganda secretary Comrade Shirokov (who was put in charge of ideological work and bears the main responsibility for the failure of these journals), have been guilty of.

The Leningrad Committee of the Party committed a grave political error when it passed its resolution at the end of June on *Zvezda's* new editorial board, in which Zoshchenko was included. Political blindness is the only possible explanation of the fact that Comrades Kapustin (Secretary of the City Committee of the Party) and Shirokov (the City Committee's propaganda secretary) should have agreed to such an erroneous decision. All these mistakes must, I repeat, be set right as quickly and firmly as possible, to enable Leningrad to resume its participation in the ideological life of our Party.

We all love Leningrad; we all love our Leningrad Party organization as being one of our Party's leading detachments. Literary adventurers of all sorts who would like to make use of Leningrad for their own ends must find no refuge here. Zoshchenko, Akhmatova and the like have no fondness for Soviet Leningrad. It is other social and political ways and another ideology that they would like to see entrenched here. The visions dazzling their eyes are those of old St. Petersburg, with

the Bronze Horseman as its symbol. We, on the contrary, love Soviet Leningrad, Leningrad as the foremost centre of Soviet culture. Our ancestors are the glorious band of great revolutionary and democratic figures who came from Leningrad and whose direct descendants we are. Modern Leningrad's glorious traditions are a continuation of those great revolutionary-democratic traditions, which we would not exchange for anything else in the world.

Let the Leningrad Party members analyse their mistakes boldly, with no backward glances, no taking it easy, so as to straighten things out in the best and quickest way possible and to carry our ideological work forward. The Leningrad Bolsheviks must once more take their place in the ranks of the initiators, of the leaders in the shaping of Soviet ideology and Soviet social consciousness.

How could the Leningrad City Committee of the Party have permitted such a situation to arise on the ideological front? It had evidently become so engrossed in day-to-day practical work on the rehabilitation of the city and the development of its industry that it forgot the importance of ideological and educational work.

This forgetfulness has cost the Leningrad organization dear. Ideological work must not be forgotten. Our people's spiritual wealth is no less important than their material wealth. We cannot live blindly, taking no thought for the morrow, either in the field of material production or in the ideological field. To such an extent have our Soviet people developed that they are not going to swallow what-

soever spiritual food may be dumped on them. Such workers in art and culture as do not change and cannot satisfy the people's growing needs may forfeit the people's confidence before long.

Our Soviet literature lives and must live in the interests of our country and of our people alone. Literature is a concern near and dear to the people. So the people consider our every success, every important work of literature, as a victory of their own. Every successful work may therefore be compared with a battle won, or with a great victory on the economic front. And conversely, every failure of Soviet literature hurts and wounds the people, the Party and the state profoundly. This is what the Central Committee was thinking of in passing its resolution, for the Central Committee watches over the interests of the people and of their literature, and is very greatly concerned about the present state of affairs among Leningrad writers.

People who have not taken up any ideological stand would like to cut away the foundations from under the Leningrad detachment of literary workers, demolish their work's ideological aspect and deprive the Leningrad writers' work of its significance as a means of social reform. But the Central Committee is confident that Leningrad's men of letters will nevertheless find in themselves the strength to put a stop to any attempts to divert Leningrad's literary detachment and journals into a groove of empty-headedness and lack of principle and political consciousness. You have been set in the foremost line of the ideological front, you are facing tremendous and internationally significant

tasks; and this should intensify every genuine Soviet writer's sense of responsibility to his people, his state and his Party, and his sense of the importance of the duty he is carrying out.

Whether our successes are won within our own country or in the international arena, the bourgeois world does not like them.

As a result of the Second World War the position of socialism has been strengthened. The question of socialism has been put down on the agenda of many countries in Europe. This displeases the imperialists of every hue: they fear socialism and our socialist country, an example to the whole of progressive mankind. The imperialists and their ideological henchmen, writers, journalists, politicians and diplomats, are trying to slander our country in every way open to them, to put it in a false light, to vilify socialism. The task of Soviet literature in these conditions is not only to return blow for blow to all this vile slander and all these attacks on our Soviet culture and on socialism, but also to make a frontal attack on degenerating and decaying bourgeois culture.

However fine may be the external appearance of the work of the fashionable modern bourgeois writers in America and Western Europe, and of their film directors and theatrical producers, they can neither save nor better their bourgeois culture, for its moral basis is rotten and decaying. It has been placed at the service of capitalist private ownership, of the selfish and egocentric interests of the top layer of bourgeois society. A swarm of bourgeois writers, film directors and theatrical produc-

ers are trying to draw the attention of the progressive strata of society away from the acute problems of social and political struggle and to divert it into a groove of cheap meaningless art and literature, treating of gangsters and show-girls and glorifying the adulterer and the adventures of crooks and gamblers.

Is it fitting for us Soviet patriots, the representatives of advanced Soviet culture, to play the part of admirers or disciples of bourgeois culture? Our literature, reflecting an order on a higher level than any bourgeois-democratic order and a culture manifoldly superior to bourgeois culture, has, it goes without saying, the right to teach the new universal morals to others.

Where is another such people or country as ours to be found? Where are such splendid human qualities to be found as our Soviet people displayed in the Great Patriotic War and are displaying every day in the labour of converting our economy to peaceful development and material and cultural rehabilitation? Our people are climbing higher and higher every day. No longer are we the Russians we were before 1917; no longer is our Russia the same, no longer is our character the same. We have changed and grown along with the great changes that have transfigured our country from its very foundations.

Showing these great new qualities of the Soviet people, not only showing our people as they are today, but glancing into their future and helping to light up the way ahead, is the task of every conscientious Soviet writer. A writer cannot tag along in

the wake of events; it is for him to march in the foremost ranks of the people and point out to them the path of their development. He must educate the people and arm them ideologically, guiding himself by the method of socialist realism, studying our life attentively and conscientiously and trying to gain a deeper understanding of the processes of our development.

At the same time as we select Soviet man's finest feelings and qualities and reveal his future to him, we must show our people what they should not be like and castigate the survivals from yesterday that are hindering the Soviet people's progress. Soviet writers must help the people, the state and the Party to educate our young people to be optimistic, to have confidence in their own strength and to fear no difficulties.

Hard as bourgeois politicians and writers may strive to conceal the truth of the achievements of the Soviet order and Soviet culture, hard as they may strive to erect an iron curtain to keep the truth about the Soviet Union from penetrating abroad, hard as they may strive to belittle the genuine growth and scope of Soviet culture, all their efforts are foredoomed to failure. We know our culture's strength and advantages very well. Suffice it to recall the great success of our cultural delegations abroad, of our physical culture parades and so on. It is not for us to kowtow to all things foreign or to stand passively on the defensive.

If in their heyday the feudal order and then the bourgeoisie were able to create art and literature asserting the establishment of the new order and

singing its praises, then we who form a new socialist order embodying all that is best in the history of civilization and culture are yet fitter to create the most advanced literature in the world, far surpassing the finest literary examples of former times.

What is it that the Central Committee requests and wishes?

The Central Committee of the Party wishes the Leningrad Party members and writers to understand clearly that the time has come for us to raise our ideological work to a high level. The young Soviet generation will be called upon to consolidate the strength and power of the socialist Soviet order, to make full use of the motive forces of Soviet society to promote our material and cultural progress. To carry out these great tasks, the young generation must be brought up to be steadfast and cheerful, not to balk at difficulties but to meet and know how to surmount them. Our people must be educated people of high ideals, tastes and moral and cultural demands. It is necessary to this end that our literature, our journals, should not hold aloof from the tasks of the day but should help the Party and the people to educate our young people in the spirit of supreme devotion to the Soviet order and service in the interests of the people.

Soviet writers, and all our ideological workers, are now standing in the foremost fighting line; for our tasks on the ideological front, and those of literature above all, have not been removed but, on the contrary, are growing more important in conditions of peaceful development.

It is not a removal of literature from contempo-

rary problems that the people, the state and the Party want, but the active incursion of literature into every aspect of Soviet life. Bolsheviks set a high value on literature and have a clear perception of its great historical mission of reinforcing the people's moral and political unity, educating them and consolidating their ranks. The Central Committee wishes us to feed the human spirit abundantly, regarding the attainment of cultural wealth as a chief task of socialism.

The Central Committee of the Party feels sure the Leningrad detachment of Soviet literature is morally and politically sound and will quickly set its mistakes right and take its due place in the ranks of Soviet literature.

The Central Committee feels sure the failings in the work of Leningrad writers will be overcome and the ideological work of the Leningrad Party organization soon raised to the level now required in the interests of the Party, the people and the state.

ON THE HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY

(Speech at a Conference of Soviet Philosophical Workers)

June 24, 1947

Comrades, the discussion of the book by Comrade Alexandrov has not been confined to the subject under debate. It has transcended it in breadth and depth, posing also more general questions of the situation of the philosophical front. The discussion has been transformed into a kind of all-Union conference on the condition of our scientific work in philosophy. This, of course, is quite natural and legitimate. The creation of a textbook on the history of philosophy, the first Marxist textbook in this sphere, represents a task of enormous scientific and political significance. It is therefore not accidental that the Central Committee has given so much attention to the question and has organized the present discussion.

To prepare and write a good textbook on the history of philosophy means to equip our intellectuals, our cadres, our youth with a new, powerful ideological weapon and at the same time to take a great step forward in the development of Marxist-Leninist philosophy. Hence, the high level of the requirements for such a textbook was expressed in the discussion. The extension of the range of the discussion has, therefore, been profitable. Its results will, without doubt, be great, the more so since we have here dealt not only with questions connected with the evaluation of the textbook, but also with the broader problems of philosophical

work.

I shall permit myself to discuss both themes. It is not at all my intention to summarize the discussion — this is the task of the author. I speak as a participant in the debate.

I ask in advance to be excused if I have recourse to quotations, although Comrade Baskin has repeatedly warned all of us against this procedure. Of course, it is easy for him, an old philosophical sea wolf, to plough through seas and oceans without navigation instruments, by the eye of inspiration, as sailors say. But you will have to permit me, a novice, treading for the first time the unsteady deck of the philosophical ship in time of terrible storm, to use quotations as a sort of compass which will prevent me from being driven off my correct course.

I now pass to the remarks on the textbook.

I. THE SHORTCOMINGS OF COMRADE ALEXANDROV'S BOOK

I believe that from a textbook on the history of philosophy we have a right to demand the fulfilment of the following conditions, which, in my opinion, are elementary.

(1) It is necessary that the subject — the history of philosophy as a science — be precisely defined.

(2) The textbook should be scientific — i.e., based on fundamental present-day achievements of dialectical and historical materialism.

(3) It is essential that the exposition of the history of philosophy be a creative and not a scholastic work; it should be directly linked with the tasks

of the present, should lead to their elucidation, and should give the perspective for the further development of philosophy.

(4) The facts cited should be fully verified.

(5) The style should be clear, precise and convincing.

I consider that this textbook does not meet these demands.

Let us begin with the subject of science.

Comrade Kivenko has pointed out that Comrade Alexandrov does not present a clear idea of the subject of the science, and that although the book contains a large number of definitions having individual importance, in that they illuminate only individual aspects of the question, one does not find in the work an exhaustive general definition. That observation is entirely correct.

Neither is the subject of the history of philosophy as a science defined. The definition given on page 14 is incomplete. The definition on page 22, italicized, apparently as a basic definition, is essentially incorrect. Should one agree with the author that "the history of philosophy is the history of the progressive, ascending development of man's knowledge of the surrounding world," it would mean that the subject of the history of philosophy coincides with that of the history of science in general, in which case philosophy itself would appear as the science of sciences. This conception was long ago rejected by Marxism.

Materialism versus Idealism

The author's assertion that the history of phi-

losophy is also the history of the rise and development of many contemporary ideas is likewise incorrect because the concept "contemporary" is here identified with the concept "scientific," which, naturally, is erroneous. In defining the subject of the history of philosophy it is necessary to proceed from the definition of philosophical science given by Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin.

"This revolutionary side of Hegel's philosophy was adopted and developed by Marx. Dialectical materialism no longer needs any philosophy standing above the other sciences. Of former philosophy there remains the science of thought and its laws — formal logic and dialectics. And dialectics, as understood by Marx, and in conformity with Hegel, includes what is now called the theory of knowledge, or epistemology, which, too, must regard its subject matter historically, studying and generalizing the origin and development of knowledge, the transition from non-knowledge to knowledge." — (Lenin, *Karl Marx*.)

Consequently the scientific history of philosophy is the history of the birth, rise and development of the scientific materialist world outlook and its laws. Inasmuch as materialism grew and developed in the struggle with idealist trends, the history of philosophy is at the same time the history of the struggle of materialism with idealism.

As to the scientific character, depth and breadth of the book from the standpoint of its utilizing contemporary attainments of dialectical and historical

materialism, in this respect, too, it suffers from many serious inadequacies.

A Revolution in Philosophy

The author describes the history of philosophy and the development of philosophical ideas and systems as a smooth, evolutionary process through the accumulation of quantitative changes. The impression is created that Marxism arose simply as the successor to preceding progressive teachings — primarily the teachings of the French materialists, of English political economy, and the idealist school of Hegel.

On page 475 the author states that the philosophical theories formulated before Marx and Engels, although occasionally containing great discoveries, were not fully consistent and scientific in all their conclusions. Such a definition distinguishes Marxism from pre-Marxist philosophical systems only as a theory fully consistent and scientific in all its conclusions. Consequently, the difference between Marxism and pre-Marxist philosophical teachings consists only in that the latter were not fully consistent and scientific; the old philosophers merely “erred.”

As you see, it is a question here only of quantitative changes. But that is metaphysics. The rise of Marxism was a genuine discovery, a revolution in philosophy. Like every discovery, like every leap, like every break in gradualness, like every transition into a new condition, the rise of Marxism could not have occurred without the previous accumulation of quantitative changes — in the given in-

stance, the stages of development of philosophy prior to the discovery of Marx and Engels. But the author obviously does not understand that Marx and Engels created a new philosophy, differing qualitatively from all previous philosophical systems, however progressive they were.

The relation of Marxist philosophy to all preceding philosophies and the basic change which Marxism effected in philosophy, transforming it into a science, is well known to all. All the more strange, therefore, is the fact that the author focuses his attention, not on that which is new and revolutionary in Marxism, but on that which united it with the development of pre-Marxist philosophy. And yet Marx and Engels stated that their discovery meant the end of the old philosophy.

Marxism and the End of the Old Philosophy

Evidently the author does not understand the historical process of the development of philosophy. One of the essential shortcomings of the book, if not the principal one, is its ignoring of the fact that in the course of history, not only do views on this or that philosophical question undergo change, but the very range of these questions, the very subject of philosophy, undergoes a constant change, which is in complete conformity with the dialectical nature of human cognition and should be clear to all real dialecticians.

On page 24 of his book, expounding the philosophy of the ancient Greeks, Comrade Alexandrov writes: "Philosophy as an independent sphere of knowledge arose in the slave society of ancient

Greece.” And further: “Philosophy, arising in the sixth century B.C. as a special sphere of knowledge, became widely diffused.”

But can we speak of the philosophy of the ancient Greeks as a special, differentiated sphere of knowledge? On no account. The philosophical views of the Greeks were so closely interwoven with their natural science and with their political views that we should not, and have no right to, transfer to Greek science our own division of the sciences, the classification of the sciences which came later. Essentially, the Greeks knew only one, undifferentiated science, into which there entered also their philosophical conceptions. Whether we take Democritus, Epicurus or Aristotle — all of them in equal degree confirm the thought of Engels that “the oldest Greek philosophers were at the same time investigators of nature.” (Frederick Engels, *Dialectics of Nature*, p. 245.)

The unique character of the development of philosophy resides in the fact that from it, as the scientific knowledge of nature and society developed, the positive sciences branched off one after another. Consequently, the domain of philosophy was continually reduced on account of the development of the positive sciences. (I might add that this process has not ended even up to the present time.) This emancipation of the natural and social sciences from the aegis of philosophy constitutes a progressive process, for the natural and social sciences as well as for philosophy itself.

The creators of the philosophical systems of the past, who laid claim to the knowledge of absolute

truth in the ultimate sense, were unable to further the development of the natural sciences, since aspiring to stand above the sciences, they swaddled them with their schemes, imposing on living human understanding conclusions dictated, not by real life, but by the requirements of their philosophic system. And so philosophy was transformed into a museum in which were piled the most diverse facts, conclusions, hypotheses, and simply fantasies. If philosophy was nevertheless able to serve as a means of surveying phenomena, of contemplation, it still was not suitable as an instrument for practical influence on the world, as an instrument for understanding the world.

The last system of this kind was the system of Hegel, who attempted to erect a philosophical structure, subordinating all other sciences, pressing them into the Procrustean bed of its own categories. Hegel counted on solving all contradictions, but fell into a hopeless contradiction with the dialectical method which he himself had divined but not understood, and hence applied incorrectly. But:

“...As soon as we have once realized... that the task of philosophy thus stated means nothing but the task that a single philosopher should accomplish that which can only be accomplished by the entire human race in its progressive development — as soon as we realized that, there is an end of all philosophy in the hitherto accepted sense of the word. One leaves alone ‘absolute truth’, which is unattainable along

this path or by any single individual; instead, one pursues attainable, relative truths along the path of the positive sciences, and the summation of their results by means of dialectical thinking.” (Frederick Engels, *Ludwig Feuerbach*, p. 25.)

The discovery of Marx and Engels represents the end of the old philosophy, i.e., the end of that philosophy which claimed to give a universal explanation of the world.

Comrade Alexandrov’s vague formulations blur the great revolutionary significance of the philosophical discoveries of Marx and Engels, since he emphasizes that which connected Marx with the antecedent philosophers, but fails to show that with Marx there begins a completely new period in the history of philosophy — philosophy which for the first time has become science.

A Scientific Philosophy of the Proletariat

In close connection with this error, we find in Alexandrov’s book a non-Marxist treatment of the history of philosophy as the gradual change from one philosophical school to another. With the appearance of Marxism as the scientific world outlook of the proletariat ends the old period in the history of philosophy, when philosophy was the occupation of isolated individuals, the possession of philosophical schools consisting of a small number of philosophers and their disciples, detached from life and the people, and alien to the people.

Marxism is not such a philosophical school. On the contrary, it supersedes the old philosophy — philosophy that was the property of a small elite, the aristocracy of the intellect. It marked the beginning of a completely new period in the history of philosophy, when it became a scientific weapon in the hands of the proletarian masses in their struggle for emancipation from capitalism.

Marxist philosophy, as distinguished from preceding philosophical systems, is not a science above other sciences; rather, it is an instrument of scientific investigation, a method, penetrating all natural and social sciences, enriching itself with their attainments in the course of their development. In this sense Marxist philosophy is the most complete and decisive negation of all preceding philosophy. But to negate, as Engels emphasized, does not mean merely to say “no.” Negation includes continuity, signifies absorption, the critical reforming and unification in a new and higher synthesis of everything advanced and progressive that has been achieved in the history of human thought.

Hence it follows that the history of philosophy, inasmuch as there exists the Marxist dialectical method, must include the history of the preparatory development of that method, showing that which conditioned its rise. Alexandrov’s book does not give the history of logic and dialectics, does not show the development of the logical categories as the reflection of human practice; because of this the quotation from Lenin in the introduction to the book, to the effect that every category of dialectical logic should be considered a nodal point in the his-

tory of human thought, hangs in the air.

Entirely indefensible is the fact that the book brings the history of philosophy only up to the rise of Marxist philosophy, that is, to 1848. Without presenting the history of philosophy during the last hundred years, the work naturally cannot be considered a textbook. Why the author has so pitilessly wronged this period remains a mystery, and no explanation is to be found either in the preface or in the introduction.

Nor is the reason indicated for the failure to include the history of the development of Russian philosophy. It is not necessary to emphasize that this omission involves principle. Whatever the author's motives for excluding the history of Russian philosophy from a general history of philosophy, its omission objectively means belittlement of the role of Russian philosophy; it artificially divides the history of philosophy into the history of Western European and of Russian philosophy. The author makes no attempt to explain the necessity for such a division. This separation perpetuates the bourgeois division into "Western" and "Eastern" culture and presents Marxism as a regional "Western" current.

On page 6 of the introduction, the author ardently argues the reverse position:

"Without studying diligently and utilizing the profound criticism of the philosophical systems of the past given by the classics of Russian philosophy, it is impossible to achieve a scientific understanding of the development of phil-

sophic thought in Western European countries.”

Why, then, did the author fail to adhere to this correct position in his book? This remains absolutely incomprehensible and, taken together with the arbitrary termination at 1848, it produces a vexing impression.

The comrades who spoke in the discussion have also pointed out the gaps in the presentation of the history of the philosophy of the East.

It is clear that for this reason as well the book requires radical revision.

Some comrades have indicated that the introduction to the book, which obviously should present the author's *credo*, correctly defines the tasks and methods of the investigation of the subject, but that the author somehow has not fulfilled his promises. I believe that this criticism is inadequate; for the introduction itself is faulty and cannot stand up to criticism.

I have already mentioned the incorrect and inaccurate definition of the subject of the history of philosophy. But that is not all. The introduction contains other theoretical errors. Some comrades have pointed out the strained manner in which the author, dealing with the foundations of the Marxist-Leninist history of philosophy, refers to Chernyshevsky, Dobrolyubov and Lomonosov, who, of course, have no direct relation to the question under discussion. The question, however, involves more than this. The quotations from the works of these great Russian scientists and philosophers

were badly selected. The theoretical propositions which they contain are from the Marxist point of view incorrect and, I would add, even dangerous. I have not the slightest intention of casting any aspersion on the quoted authors, since the quotations were selected arbitrarily and are related to questions that have nothing in common with the subject with which the author is dealing. The point is that the author refers to Chernyshevsky in order to show that the founders of different, although contradictory, philosophic systems must regard one another tolerantly.

Allow me to cite the quotation from Chernyshevsky:

“The heirs of scientific work rise against their predecessors whose work served as the point of departure for their own labours. Thus, Aristotle took a hostile view of Plato, thus Socrates thoroughly humiliated the Sophists, whose heir he was. In modern times there are also many examples of this. But there are happy instances when founders of a new system understand clearly the connection of their judgements with the ideas of their predecessors and modestly consider themselves their disciples; when in disclosing the inadequacy in the ideas of their predecessors, they at the same time clearly manifest how much these ideas contributed to the development of their own. Such was the case, for instance, in the relation of Spinoza to Descartes. To the honour of the founders of modern science, it must be said that they look

upon their predecessors with respect and almost filial affection, fully acknowledging the greatness of their genius and the noble character of their teaching, in which they indicate the germs of their own views.”

Inasmuch as the author offers this quotation without reservation, it obviously appears to be his own point of view. If that is so, the author actually takes the position of denying the principle of the party character of philosophy, inherent in Marxism-Leninism.

It is well known with what passion and irreconcilability Marxism-Leninism has always conducted the sharpest struggle against all enemies of materialism. In this struggle Marxist-Leninists subject their opponents to ruthless criticism. An example of Bolshevik struggle against the opponents of materialism is Lenin's book, *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, in which every sentence is like a piercing sword, annihilating an opponent. Lenin wrote:

“The genius of Marx and Engels consisted in the very fact that over a long period, nearly half a century, they developed materialism, that they further advanced one fundamental trend in philosophy, that they did not confine themselves to reiterating epistemological problems that had already been solved, but consistently applied — and showed *how* to apply — *this same* materialism in the sphere of the social sciences, mercilessly brushing aside as litter and rubbish the pretentious rigmarole, the innumerable attempts to ‘discover’ a ‘new’ line in philosophy,

to invent a 'new' trend and so forth...

“And finally, take the various philosophical utterances by Marx in *Capital* and other works, and you will find an *invariable* basic motif, viz., insistence upon *materialism* and contemptuous derision of all obscurantism, of all confusion and all deviations towards *idealism*. All Marx's philosophical utterances revolve within these fundamental opposites, and, in the eyes of professional philosophy, their defect lies in this 'narrowness' and 'one-sidedness'.” (V.I. Lenin, *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*.)

Lenin, we know, did not spare his opponents. In all attempts to blur and reconcile the contradictions between philosophical tendencies, Lenin always saw the manoeuvre of reactionary professorial philosophy. How then after that could Comrade Alexandrov appear in his book as a preacher of toothless vegetarianism in relation to philosophical opponents, presenting unqualified tribute to professorial quasi-objectivism, when Marxism arose, developed and triumphed in a merciless struggle against all representatives of the idealist tendency?

Comrade Alexandrov does not confine himself to this. He constantly applies his objectivist ideas throughout the book. It is not accidental, therefore, that Comrade Alexandrov, before criticizing some bourgeois philosopher, pays “tribute” to his merits and burns incense to him. Let us take, for example, the teaching of Fourier on the four phases in the development of mankind.

The great achievement of the social philosophy of Fourier, says Comrade Alexandrov,

“...is his theory of the development of mankind. In its development society passes, according to Fourier, through four phases: (1) ascending disintegration; (2) ascending harmony; (3) descending harmony; (4) descending disintegration. In the last stage mankind experiences a period of senility, after which all life on earth comes to an end. Inasmuch as the development of society proceeds independently of human will, a higher stage of development arises just as unfaillingly as the change of seasons. From this Fourier drew the conclusion of the inevitable transformation of the bourgeois system into society in which free and collective labour would prevail. True, Fourier’s theory of development of society was limited by the conception of the four phases, but for that period it represents a great step forward.”

There is not a trace of Marxist analysis in this. By comparison with what does the theory of Fourier represent a step forward? If its limitation consisted in that it spoke of four phases of the development of mankind, with the fourth phase constituting descending disintegration, as a result of which all life on earth comes to an end, then how shall we understand the author’s criticism of Fourier that his theory of social development is limited within the confines of the four phases, when the fifth phase for mankind could consist only of life in the hereafter?

Comrade Alexandrov finds it possible to say something good about almost every philosopher of the past. The more eminent the bourgeois philosopher, the greater the flattery that is offered him. All of this shows that Comrade Alexandrov, perhaps without being aware of it, is himself a captive of bourgeois historians, who proceed from the assumption that every philosopher is first of all a professional associate, and only secondarily an opponent. Such conceptions, if they should take hold among us, would lead inevitably to objectivism, to subservience to bourgeois philosophers and exaggeration of their services, towards depriving our philosophy of its militant offensive spirit. And that would signify the departure from the basic principle of materialism — its principle of direction, its partisanship. Well did Lenin teach us that “materialism includes, so to speak, partisanship, i.e. the obligation when estimating any event to adopt directly and frankly the viewpoint of a definite social group.”

The exposition of philosophical views in Alexandrov's book is abstract, objectivist, neutral. Philosophical schools are placed one after another or one near the other in the book, but are not shown in struggle against one another. That, too, is a “tribute” to the academic professorial “tendency.” In this connection, it is apparently not accidental that the author's exposition of the principle of partisanship in philosophy is not satisfactory. The author refers to the philosophy of Hegel as an example of partisanship in philosophy; and the struggle of antagonistic philosophies has for

him its illustration in the struggle of the reactionary and progressive principles within Hegel himself. Such a method of demonstration is not only objectivist eclecticism, but it clearly embellishes Hegel, inasmuch as in this way one wants to show that in Hegel's philosophy there is as much progressive as there is reactionary content.

To conclude on this point, I may add that Comrade Alexandrov's method of evaluating various philosophical systems — "along with merits there are also shortcomings," or "the following theory is also of importance" — is extremely vague, is metaphysical, and can only confuse the issue. It is incomprehensible why Comrade Alexandrov chose to pay tribute to the academic scientific traditions of the old bourgeois schools, forgetting the fundamental principle of materialism which demands irreconcilability in the struggle against one's opponents.

A further remark. A critical study of philosophical systems must have an orientation. Philosophical views and ideas long slain and buried should not attract much attention. On the other hand, philosophical systems and ideas still current, which, their reactionary characters notwithstanding, are being utilized today by the enemies of Marxism, demand especially sharp criticism. This includes particularly neo-Kantianism, theology, old and new editions of agnosticism, the attempts to smuggle God into modern natural science, and every other cookery that has for its aim the freshening up of stale idealist merchandise for the market. That is the arsenal which the philosopher lackeys of im-

perialism make use of at the present time in order to give support to their frightened masters.

On the Method of Dialectical Materialism

The introduction to the book also contains an incorrect treatment of the notions of reactionary and progressive ideas and philosophical systems. The author states that the question of the reactionary or progressive character of one or another idea or philosophical system should be determined on the basis of historical conditions. Time and again, however, he ignores the established position of Marxism that the same idea can be reactionary or progressive under different concrete historical conditions. By obscuring this point, he creates an opening for the smuggling in of the idealist conception of ideas as independent history.

While the author correctly notes that the development of philosophical thought in the final analysis is determined by the material conditions of social life and that the development of philosophical thought has only relative independence, he repeatedly violates that basic position of scientific materialism. Time and again he presents the various philosophical systems without relating them to their actual historical environment, and without showing the social and class roots of this or that philosopher.

That is the case, for instance, with his exposition of the philosophical views of Socrates, Democritus, Spinoza, Leibniz, Feuerbach and others. Such a method is clearly not scientific; it justifies the assumption that the author has slipped into

the habit of treating the development of philosophical ideas as independent of history, a distinguishing characteristic of idealist philosophy.

The failure to show the organic connection of this or that philosophical system with its historical environment is evident even where the author attempts to give an analysis of that environment. What we have in those instances is a purely mechanical, formal, and not a living organic connection. The divisions and chapters dealing with the philosophical views of a particular epoch, and those discussing the historical circumstances, revolve upon parallel planes, while the presentation of the historical data — the link of causation between the basis and superstructure — is given as a rule unscientifically, and in a slipshod manner. It does not provide material for analysis but rather presents an inadequate frame of reference.

Such, for example, is the introduction to Chapter VI, entitled "Eighteenth-Century France," which is utterly irrelevant and which in no way elucidates the sources of the ideas of French philosophy in the eighteenth and at the beginning of the nineteenth centuries. Consequently, the ideas of the French philosophers lose their connection with the epoch and begin to appear as independent phenomena of some kind. Allow me to quote this:

"Beginning with the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, France, after England, gradually takes the road of bourgeois development, experiencing radical changes in a hundred years in its economy, politics and ideology. Although

still backward, the country began to free itself of its feudal inertia. Like many other European states of that time, France entered the period of primary capitalist accumulation.

“The new bourgeois social structure was rapidly taking shape in all spheres of social life, quickly giving rise to a new ideology, a new culture. About that time we witness in France the beginning of a rapid growth of such cities as Paris, Lyons, Marseilles and Havre, and of the development of a strong merchant fleet. International trading companies arose one after another, and military expeditions were organized which conquered a number of colonies. Trade grew rapidly. In the years 1784-1788 the turnover of external trade reached 1,011,600 livres, exceeding more than four times the trade of 1716-1720. The growth of trade was facilitated by the Treaty of Aachen (Aix-la-Chapelle) (1748) and the Treaty of Paris (1763). Especially significant was the trade in books. Thus, for instance, in 1774 the turnover in the book trade in France reached 45 million francs, while in England it stood only at 12-13 million francs. France held nearly half the gold supply of Europe. At the same time France still remained an agrarian country. The overwhelming majority of the population was agrarian.”

That, of course, is no analysis; it is merely an enumeration of a number of facts set forth without relation to one another, but simply in juxtaposition. It is obvious that from these data as “basis”

one cannot derive any characteristic of French philosophy, the development of which appears detached from the historical conditions of the France of that period.

Let us take as a further example the description of the rise of German idealist philosophy. Alexandrov writes:

“Germany in the eighteenth and first half of the nineteenth centuries was a backward country with a reactionary political regime. Feudal-serf and artisan-guild relations prevailed in it. At the end of the eighteenth century the urban population was less than 25 per cent of the total, while the artisans constituted only 4 per cent. Corvée, quit-rent, serfdom and guild restrictions hindered the development of embryonic capitalist relations. Moreover, the country was split up into excessively numerous political divisions.”

Comrade Alexandrov cites the percentage of urban population in Germany to illustrate the backwardness of that country and the reactionary character of its state and social political structure. But in that same period the urban population of France was less than 10 per cent of the whole; nevertheless, France was not a backward feudal land, as was Germany, but the centre of the bourgeois revolutionary movement in Europe. Consequently, the percentage of urban population itself does not explain anything. More than that, the fact itself must be explained by the concrete historical conditions. This, too, is an example of the inept use of histori-

cal material to explain the rise and development of one or another form of ideology.

Alexandrov writes further:

“The most prominent ideologists of the German bourgeoisie of that period — Kant, and later Fichte and Hegel — expressed through their idealist philosophies, in an abstract form, conditioned by the narrowness of German reality, the ideology of the German bourgeoisie of that epoch.”

Let us compare this cold, indifferent, objectivist statement of facts, from which it is impossible to understand the causes for the rise of German idealism, with the Marxist analysis of the conditions of that time in Germany, presented in a living, militant style, which stirs and convinces the reader. This is how Engels characterizes the situation in Germany:

“...It was all one living mass of putrefaction and repulsive decay. Nobody felt himself at ease. The trade, commerce, industry and agriculture of the country were reduced to almost nothing; peasantry, tradesmen and manufacturers felt the double pressure of a blood-sucking government and bad trade; the nobility and princes found that their incomes, in spite of the squeezing of their inferiors, could not be made to keep pace with their increasing expenditures; everything was wrong, and a general uneasiness prevailed throughout the country. No education, no means of operating upon the minds of

the masses, no free press, no public spirit, not even an extended commerce with other countries — nothing but meanness and selfishness — a mean, sneaking, miserable shopkeeping spirit pervading the whole people. Everything worn out, crumbling down, going fast to ruin, and not even the slightest hope of a beneficial change, not even so much strength in the nation as might have sufficed for carrying away the putrid corpses of dead institutions.” (Frederick Engels, *The State of Germany in the Northern Star*, October 25, 1845; Marx-Engels, *Gesamtausgabe*, Erste Abteilung, Band IV, p. 482.)

Compare this clear, sharp, exact, profoundly scientific characterization given by Engels with that which Alexandrov gives and you will see how badly Comrade Alexandrov utilizes the material already available in the inexhaustible wealth left us by the founders of Marxism.

The author has failed to apply the materialist method to the exposition of the history of philosophy. This deprives the book of scientific character, making of it, to a considerable extent, an account of the biographies of the philosophers and their philosophic systems, unrelated to historical conditions. This violates the principle of historical materialism:

“All history must be studied afresh, the conditions of existence of the different formations of society must be individually examined before the attempt is made to deduce from them the political, civil-legal, aesthetic, philosophic, reli-

gious, etc., notions corresponding to them.”
(Engels to Conrad Schmidt, August 5, 1890.)

The author, further, sets forth unclearly and inadequately the purpose of the study of the history of philosophy. Nowhere does he emphasize that one of the fundamental tasks of philosophy and its history is to continue the development of philosophy as a science, to deduce new laws, to verify its propositions in practice, to replace old theses with new ones. The author proceeds chiefly from the pedagogical aspects of the history of philosophy, from the cultural-educational task. And so he gives to the whole study of the history of philosophy a passive, contemplative, academic character. That, of course, does not correspond to the Marxist-Leninist definition of philosophical science, which, like every science, must continuously be developed, perfected, enriched by new propositions, while it discards the obsolete.

The author concentrates on the pedagogical aspects, thus placing limitations on the development of the science, as though Marxism-Leninism had already reached its apex and as though the task of developing our theory were no longer a main task. Such reasoning is inconsistent with the spirit of Marxism-Leninism inasmuch as it introduces the metaphysical idea of Marxism as a completed and perfected theory; it can lead only to the drying up of living and penetrating philosophical thought.

Philosophy and the Natural Sciences

Likewise unsatisfactory is the author's treatment of the development of the natural sciences in that period when the history of philosophy could not be expounded apart from the successes of the natural sciences without direct harm to science. Thus, Comrade Alexandrov fails to clarify the conditions for the rise and development of scientific materialism on the granite foundation of the achievements of modern natural science.

In expounding the history of philosophy, Alexandrov managed to sever it from the history of the natural sciences. It is characteristic that the introduction, which sets forth the main premises of the book, fails to mention the interrelation of philosophy and the natural sciences. The author does not refer to the natural sciences even when such silence would seem impossible. Thus, on page 9, he writes: "Lenin in his works, particularly in *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, studied the Marxist theory of society in all its aspects and further developed it." In speaking of *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, Comrade Alexandrov managed to say nothing about the problems of natural science and its connection with philosophy.

One is struck by the extremely poor and abstract characterization of the level of natural science at various periods. Thus, with regard to the natural science of the ancient Greeks, we read that there took place "the birth of the sciences of nature." With regard to the epoch of the later scholasticism (twelfth to thirteenth centuries) we read that "there appeared many inventions and technical improvements."

Where the author attempts to clarify such vague formulations, we get only an inadequately connected enumeration of discoveries. Moreover, the book contains flagrant errors, disclosing an amazing ignorance of questions of natural science. Of what value, for instance, is this description of the development of science in the epoch of the Renaissance:

“The learned Guericke constructed his famous pneumatic pump, and the existence of atmospheric pressure which replaced the notion of vacuum, was demonstrated practically at first through the experiment with hemispheres at Magdeburg. In the course of centuries people argued about the location of the centre of the universe, and whether our planet was to be considered that centre. But then Copernicus made his entrance into science, and later Galileo. The latter proved the existence of spots on the sun and their change of position. He saw in this, and other discoveries, confirmation of the teaching of Copernicus on the heliocentric structure of our solar system. The barometer taught people to forecast the weather. The microscope replaced the system of conjectures regarding the life of the minutest organisms and played a large part in the development of biology. The compass helped Columbus to prove by experience the spherical structure of our planet.”

Nearly every one of these sentences is absurd. How could atmospheric pressure replace the notion of vacuum? Does the existence of atmosphere

negate the existence of vacuum? In what way did the movement of the sunspots confirm the teaching of Copernicus?

The idea that the barometer forecasts weather is in the same unscientific vein. Unfortunately, even today people have not yet fully learned how to forecast the weather, as is well known to all of you from the practices of our own Weather Bureau.

Further, can the microscope replace the system of conjecture? And, finally, what is this "spherical structure of our planet"? Until now it has seemed that "spherical" could refer only to shape.

Alexandrov's book is full of such pearls.

But the author is guilty of even more fundamental errors of principle. He states that the way was prepared for the dialectical method by the advances of natural science "as early as the second half of the eighteenth century." This basically contradicts Engels' well-known statement that the dialectical method was prepared for by the discovery of the cellular structure of organisms, by the theory of the conservation and transformation of energy, by the theory of Darwin. All these discoveries date from the nineteenth century. On this false assumption, the author proceeds to enumerate the discoveries of the eighteenth century and speaks extensively of Galvani, Laplace and Lyell, but as regards the three great discoveries indicated by Engels he limits himself to the following:

"Thus, for instance, already during the life of Feuerbach, there was established the cellular theory, the theory of the transformation of en-

ergy, and there appeared the theory of Darwin on the origin of species through natural selection.”

Such are the basic weaknesses of the book. I shall not digress upon incidental and secondary weaknesses; neither will I repeat the highly valuable remarks of criticism, from the theoretical and the practical standpoint, which have been made during the discussion.

The conclusion is that the textbook is bad, that it must be basically revised. But such revision means first of all overcoming the false and confused conceptions which are manifestly current among our philosophers, including leading ones. I now pass to the second question, the question of the situation on our philosophical front.

II. THE SITUATION ON THE PHILOSOPHICAL FRONT

The fact that Comrade Alexandrov's book was accepted by the majority of our leading philosophical workers, that it was presented for a Stalin prize, that it was recommended as a textbook and received many laudatory reviews, shows that other philosophical workers obviously share the mistakes of Comrade Alexandrov. This bespeaks a most unsatisfactory situation on our theoretical front.

The fact that the book did not evoke any considerable protest, that it required the intervention of the Central Committee, and particularly Comrade Stalin, to expose its inadequacies, shows the

absence of developed Bolshevik criticism and self-criticism on the philosophical front. The lack of creative discussions, of criticism and self-criticism, could not but have a harmful effect upon our scientific work in philosophy. It is known that philosophical works are entirely insufficient in quantity and weak in quality. Monographs and articles on philosophy are a rare occurrence.

Many have spoken here of the need for a philosophical journal. The need for such a journal is questionable. We have not yet forgotten the deplorable experience with the periodical *Under the Banner of Marxism*. It seems to me that the present possibilities for publishing original monographs and articles are not utilized adequately.

Comrade Svetlov stated here that the reading public of *Bolshevik* is not the public for theoretical works of a special character. I think that this is entirely incorrect and proceeds from an obvious underestimation of the high level of our readers and their demands. Such an opinion, it seems to me, comes from a failure to understand that our philosophy is not the property merely of a group of professional philosophers, but belongs to our entire Soviet intelligentsia. There was definitely nothing bad in the tradition of the advanced Russian magazines of the pre-revolutionary epoch, which published, along with articles on literature and art, scientific works, including philosophical studies. Our magazine *Bolshevik* speaks to a far larger audience than any philosophical journal, and to enclose the creative work of our philosophers in a specialized philosophical journal, it seems to me, would create

the danger of narrowing the basis of our philosophical work. Please do not take me for an opponent of a journal. It seems to me that the paucity of philosophical studies in our journals and in *Bolshevik* invites us to begin to overcome this weakness in their pages first, especially in the journals which from time to time even now publish philosophical articles of scientific and social interest.

Our leading philosophical institute — the Institute of Philosophy of the Academy of Sciences — in my opinion, presents a rather unsatisfactory picture, too. It does not gather to itself the workers in the periphery, and, having no connection with them is therefore not in reality an institution of an All-Union character. Philosophers in the provinces are left to themselves, although they represent a great force which unfortunately is not utilized. Philosophical studies, including works submitted for university degrees, turn for their themes toward the past, toward quiet and less responsible historical subjects of the type of “The Copernican Heresy — Past and Present.” This leads toward a certain reviving of scholasticism.

From this point of view the dispute about Hegel which took place here appears strange. The participants in that dispute forced an open door. The question of Hegel was settled long ago. There is no reason whatsoever to pose it anew. No material was presented here beyond that which had already been analysed and evaluated. The discussion itself was irritating in its scholasticism and as unproductive as the probings at one time in certain circles into such questions as to whether one should cross

oneself with two or with three fingers, or whether God can create a stone which he cannot lift, or whether the mother of God was a virgin. Urgent present-day problems are hardly dealt with at all.

All this taken together is pregnant with great dangers, much greater than you imagine. The gravest danger is the fact that some of you have already fallen into the habit of accepting these weaknesses.

Advancing Our Philosophical Front

Our philosophical work does not manifest either a militant spirit or a Bolshevik tempo. Considered in that light, some of the erroneous theses of Alexandrov's textbook reflect the lag on the entire philosophical front, thus constituting, not an isolated accidental event, but an entire phenomenon.

We have often used in our discussion the term "philosophical front." But where is this front? When we speak of the philosophical front, it immediately suggests an organized detachment of militant philosophers, perfectly equipped with Marxist theory, waging a determined offensive against hostile ideology abroad and against the survivals of bourgeois ideology in the consciousness of Soviet people within our country — a detachment ceaselessly advancing our science, arming the working people of our socialist society with the consciousness of the correctness of our path, and with scientifically grounded confidence in the ultimate victory of our cause.

But does our philosophical front resemble a real front? It resembles rather a stagnant creek, or a bivouac far from the battlefield. The field has not yet

been conquered, for the most part contact with the enemy has not been established, there is no reconnaissance, the weapons are rusting, the soldiers are fighting at their own risk and peril; while the commanders are either intoxicated with past victories, or are debating whether they have sufficient forces for an offensive or should ask for aid from the outside, or are discussing to what extent consciousness can lag behind daily life without appearing to lag too far.

At the same time our Party urgently needs an upswing of philosophical work. The rapid changes which every new day brings into our socialist life are not generalized by our philosophers, not illuminated from the viewpoint of Marxist dialectics. This only renders more difficult the conditions for the further development of philosophical science. As a result, the development of philosophical thought proceeds to a considerable extent apart from our professional philosophers. This is entirely impermissible.

The cause for the lag on the philosophical front is not, of course, connected with any objective conditions. The objective conditions are more favourable than ever. The material awaiting scientific analysis and generalization is unlimited. The causes for the lag on the philosophical front must be sought in the subjective sphere. These causes are basically the same as those disclosed by the Central Committee in analysing the lag in other sectors of the ideological front.

As you will remember, the decisions of the Central Committee on ideological problems were di-

rected against formalist and apolitical attitudes in literature and art, against bowing before foreign influences and for militant Bolshevik partisanship in literature and art. It is known that many groups of workers on our ideological front have already drawn proper conclusions from the decisions of the Central Committee and have achieved considerable successes along these lines.

But our philosophers have lagged behind. Apparently they have not taken note of the absence of principle and idea-content in philosophical work, of the neglect of present-day themes, the existence of servility and fawning before bourgeois philosophy. Apparently they believe that a turn on the ideological front does not concern them. It is clear now that the turn is necessary.

A considerable share of responsibility for the fact that the philosophical front does not stand in the first ranks of our ideological work rests, unfortunately, upon Comrade Alexandrov. He does not possess, unfortunately, the ability for sharply critical disclosure of the weaknesses of his own work. He evidently overestimates his own powers and does not rely on the experience and knowledge of the collective body of philosophers. Moreover, he relies too much in his work on a narrow circle of intimate collaborators and admirers. Philosophical activity has somehow been monopolized by a small group of philosophers, while a larger number, especially in the provinces, have not been brought into leading work.

Correct mutual relations among philosophers have thus proved themselves infringed upon.

It is clear that the creation of such a work as a textbook on the history of philosophy is beyond the capacity of one man and that Comrade Alexandrov from the very beginning should have drawn upon a wide circle of authors — dialectical materialists, historical materialists, historians, natural scientists, and economists. In thus failing to rely upon a large group of competent people, Comrade Alexandrov chose an incorrect method of preparing his book.

This fault must be corrected. Philosophical knowledge naturally is the property of the whole collective body of Soviet philosophers. The method of drawing in a large number of authors is now being applied to the editing of the textbook on political economy which should be ready in the near future. Into this work there have been drawn wide circles, not only of economists, but also of historians and philosophers. Such a method of creative work is the most reliable.

This implies also another idea — that of uniting the efforts of ideological workers in various fields, who at present have insufficient contact with each other, for the solution of large problems of general scientific significance. Thus we secure reciprocal activity among the workers in various branches of ideology and are assured that we will advance, not helter-skelter, but in an organized and unified manner, and consequently with the greatest guarantee of success.

*Criticism and Self-Criticism — The Special Form of
Struggle Between the Old and the New*

What are the roots of the subjective errors of a number of leading workers on the philosophical front? Why did the representatives of the older generation of philosophers in the course of the discussion justly reproach some of the young philosophers for their premature senility, for their lack of militant tone, of combativeness? Obviously, there can be only one answer to this question — insufficient knowledge of the foundations of Marxism-Leninism and the presence of remnants of the influence of bourgeois ideology.

This expresses itself also in the fact that many of our workers still do not understand that Marxism-Leninism is a living, creative theory, continuously developing, continuously enriching itself on the basis of the experience of socialist construction and the achievements of contemporary natural science. Such underestimation of this living revolutionary aspect of our theory cannot but lead to the abasement of philosophy and its role.

It is precisely in this lack of militancy and fighting spirit that we must look for the reasons some of our philosophers fear to apply themselves to new problems — to present-day questions, to the solution of problems which are daily posed by practice, and for which philosophy must provide an answer. It is time to advance more courageously the theory of Soviet society, of the Soviet state, of contemporary natural science, of ethics and aesthetics. It is necessary to put an end to a cowardice alien to Bolshevism. To permit stagnation in the development of theory means to dry up our philosophy, to deprive it of its most valuable feature —

its capacity for development, and to transform it into a dead and barren dogma.

The question of Bolshevik criticism and self-criticism is for our philosophers not only a practical but a profoundly theoretical matter.

Since the inner content of the process of development is the struggle of opposites, as dialectics teach us, the struggle between the old and the new, between the dying and the rising, between the decaying and the developing, our Soviet philosophy must show how this law of dialectics operates in conditions of socialist society and wherein lie the specific characteristics of its operation. We know that in a society divided into classes the operation of this law is different from its operation in our Soviet society. Here is a broad field for scientific investigation, and none of our philosophers has cultivated that field. This notwithstanding the fact that our Party long ago discovered and placed at the service of socialism that particular form of revealing and overcoming the contradictions of socialist society (such contradictions exist and philosophy cannot avoid dealing with them) — that particular form of struggle between the old and the new, between the dying and the rising, in our Soviet society, which is known as criticism and self-criticism.

In our Soviet society, where antagonistic classes have been eliminated, the struggle between the old and the new, and consequently the development from the lower to the higher, proceeds not in the form of struggle between antagonistic classes and of cataclysms, as is the case under capitalism, but in the form of criticism and self-criticism,

which is the real motive force of our development, a powerful instrument in the hands of the Party. This is incontestably a new form of movement, a new type of development, a new dialectical law.

Marx stated that earlier philosophers only explained the world, while the task today is to change the world. We have changed the old world and built a new one, but our philosophers, unfortunately, do not adequately explain this new world, nor do they adequately participate in transforming it. In the discussion there were several attempts, as it were, "theoretically" to explain the causes of that lag. It was stated, for instance, that the philosophers worked too long as commentators, and for this reason did not pass in due time to original monographs. This explanation may sound well, but it is not convincing. Of course, the philosophers must now place creative work in the forefront, but that does not mean that the work of commentary, or rather of popularization, should be given up. Our people need it just as much.

The Corrupt Ideology of the Bourgeoisie

We must now quickly make up for lost time. Problems do not wait. The brilliant victory of socialism, achieved in the Great Patriotic War, which was at the same time a brilliant victory for Marxism, sticks in the throat of the imperialists.

Today the centre of the struggle against Marxism has shifted to America and Britain. All the forces of obscurantism and reaction have today been placed at the service of the struggle against Marxism. Brought out anew and placed at the ser-

vice of bourgeois philosophy are the instruments of atom-dollar democracy, the outworn armour of obscurantism and clericalism: the Vatican and racist theory, rabid nationalism and decayed idealist philosophy, the mercenary yellow press and depraved bourgeois art.

But apparently all these are not enough. Today, under the banner of “ideological” struggle against Marxism, large reserves are being mobilized. Gangsters, pimps, spies and criminal elements are recruited.

Let me take, at random, a recent example. As was reported a few days ago in *Izvestia*, the journal *Les Temps Modernes*, edited by the existentialist, Sartre, lauds as some new revelation a book by the writer Jean Genet, *The Diary of a Thief*, which opens with the words: “Treason, theft and homosexuality — these will be my key topics. There exists an organic connection between my taste for treason, the occupation of the thief, and my amorous adventures.” The author manifestly knows his business. The plays of this Jean Genet are presented with much glitter on the Parisian stage and Jean Genet himself is showered with invitations to visit America. Such is the “last word” of bourgeois culture.

We know from the experience of our victory over fascism into what a blind alley idealist philosophy has led whole nations. Now it appears in its new, repulsively ugly character which reflects the whole depth, baseness and loathsomeness of the decay of the bourgeoisie. Pimps and depraved criminals as philosophers — this is indeed the limit

of decay and ruin. Nevertheless, these forces still have life, are still capable of poisoning the consciousness of the masses.

Contemporary bourgeois science supplies clericalism and fideism with new arguments which must be mercilessly exposed. We can take as an example the English astronomer Eddington's theory of the physical constants of the universe, which leads directly to the Pythagorean mysticism of numbers which, from mathematical formulae, deduces such "essential constants" as the apocalyptic number 666, etc. Many followers of Einstein, in their failure to understand the dialectical process of knowledge, the relationship of absolute and relative truth, transpose the results of the study of the laws of motion of the finite, limited sphere of the universe to the whole infinite universe and arrive at the idea of the finite nature of the world, its limit-edness in time and space. The astronomer Milne has even "calculated" that the world was created 2 billion years ago. It would probably be correct to apply to those English scientists the words of their great countryman, the philosopher Bacon, about those who turn the impotence of their science into a libel against nature.

In like measure, the Kantian subterfuges of contemporary bourgeois atomic physicists lead them to deductions of the "free will" of the electron and to attempts to represent matter as only some combination of waves and other such nonsense.

Here is a colossal field of activity for our philosophers, who should analyse and generalize the results of contemporary natural science, remem-

bering the advice of Engels that materialism “with each epoch-making discovery, even in the sphere of natural science... has to change its form...” (Frederick Engels, *Ludwig Feuerbach*, p. 36.)

Upon whom, if not upon us — the land of victorious Marxism and its philosophers — devolves the task of heading the struggle against corrupt and base bourgeois ideology? Who if not we should strike crushing blows against it?

The Triumph of Marxism

From the ashes of the war have arisen the new democracies and the national liberation movement of the colonial peoples. Socialism is on the agenda in the life of the peoples. Who, if not we — the land of victorious socialism and its philosophers — should help our friends and brothers beyond our borders to illuminate their struggle for a new society with the light of scientific socialist understanding? Who if not we should enlighten them with the ideological weapon of Marxism?

In our country the vast expansion of socialist economy and culture is in progress. The steadfast growth of the socialist understanding of the masses makes ever greater demands upon our ideological work. What is taking place is a broad assault upon the vestiges of capitalism in the consciousness of the people. Who but our philosophers should head the ranks of the workers on the ideological front, applying in full measure the Marxist theory of knowledge in generalizing the vast experience of socialist construction and in solving the new tasks of socialism?

In the face of these great tasks one might ask: Are our philosophers capable of undertaking these new obligations? Is there enough powder in our philosophical powder-horns? Has our philosophical power weakened? Are our philosophical cadres capable, with their own inner strength, of overcoming the defects of their development and reconstructing their work anew?

There can be but one answer to this question. The philosophical discussion has shown that we have these forces, that they are by no means small, that they are capable of exposing their own errors in order to overcome them. We need only more confidence in our forces, more testing of our forces in active battles, in posing and solving burning present-day problems. It is time to put an end to the non-militant tempo of our work, to shake off the old Adam and to begin to work as Marx, Engels and Lenin worked, as Stalin works.

Comrades, as you may remember, Engels in the past greeted the appearance of a Marxist pamphlet in 2,000 or 3,000 copies and characterized this as a great political event of vast significance. From such a fact, insignificant by our standards, Engels drew the conclusion that Marxist philosophy had taken deep roots in the working class. What are we to say of the penetration of Marxist philosophy into broad strata of our people; what would Marx and Engels have said if they knew that in our country philosophical works are distributed among the people in tens of millions of copies? This is a real triumph of Marxism, and it is a living testimony to the fact that the great teachings of Marx, Engels,

Lenin and Stalin have become in our land the teaching of the entire people. On this foundation, which has no equal in the world, our philosophy should flourish. May you be worthy of our epoch, the epoch of Lenin and Stalin, the epoch of our people, our victorious people.

THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION

*(Speech Delivered at the Information Conference of
the Representatives of Nine Communist Parties Held
in Poland)*

September 1947

I. THE POST-WAR WORLD SITUATION

The end of the Second World War brought with it big changes in the world situation. The military defeat of the bloc of fascist states, the character of the war as a war of liberation from fascism, and the decisive role played by the Soviet Union in the vanquishing of the fascist aggressors, sharply altered the alignment of forces between the two systems — the socialist and the capitalist — in favour of socialism.

What is the essential nature of these changes?

The principal outcome of World War II was the military defeat of Germany and Japan — the two most militaristic and aggressive of the capitalist countries. The reactionary imperialist elements all over the world, notably in Britain, America and France, had reposed great hopes in Germany and Japan, and chiefly in Hitler Germany: firstly, as the force most capable of striking a blow at the Soviet Union which, if it did not destroy it altogether, would at least weaken it and undermine its influence; secondly, as a force capable of smashing the revolutionary labour and democratic movement in Germany itself and in all countries singled out for nazi aggression, and thereby strengthening capitalism generally. This was the chief reason for the pre-

war policy of "appeasement" and encouragement of fascist aggression, the so-called Munich policy, consistently pursued by the imperialist ruling circles of Britain, France and the United States.

But the hopes reposed by the British, French and American imperialists in the Hitlerites were not realized. The Hitlerites proved to be weaker, and the Soviet Union and the freedom-loving nations stronger than the Munich-men had anticipated. The effect of World War II was to smash the major forces of bellicose international fascist reaction and to put them out of commission for a long time to come.

This was accompanied by another serious loss to the world capitalist system generally. Whereas the principal result of World War I had been that the united imperialist front was breached and that Russia dropped out of the world capitalist system, and whereas, as a consequence of the triumph of the socialist system in the USSR, capitalism ceased to be an integral, worldwide economic system, World War II and the defeat of fascism, the weakening of the world position of capitalism and the enhanced strength of the anti-fascist movement resulted in a number of countries in Central and Southeastern Europe dropping out of the imperialist system. In these countries new, popular democratic regimes arose. The impressive lesson given by the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union and the liberating role of the Soviet Army were accompanied by a mass struggle of the freedom-loving countries for national liberation from the fascist invaders and their accomplices. In the course of this

struggle the pro-fascist elements, the collaborators with Hitler — the most influential of the big capitalists, large landowners, high officials and monarchist officers — were exposed as betrayers of the national interests. In the Danubian countries, liberation from German fascist slavery was accompanied by the removal from power of the top bourgeoisie and landlords, who had compromised themselves by collaborating with German fascism, and the rise to power of new forces from among the people who had proved their worth in the struggle against the Hitlerite conquerors. In these countries, representatives of the workers, the peasants and the progressive intellectuals took over power. Since the working class had everywhere displayed the greatest heroism, the greatest consistency and implacability in the struggle against fascism, its prestige and influence among the people had increased immensely.

The new democratic governments in Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Romania, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Albania, backed by the mass of the people, were able within a minimum period to carry through progressive democratic reforms such as bourgeois democracy is no longer capable of effecting. Agrarian reform turned over the land to the peasants and led to the elimination of the landlord class. Nationalization of large-scale industry and the banks, and the confiscation of the property of traitors who had collaborated with the Germans, radically undermined the position of monopoly capital in these countries and redeemed the masses from imperialist bondage. Together with this, the

foundation was laid of government, national ownership, and a new type of state was created — the *people's republic*, where the power belongs to the people, where large-scale industry, transport and the banks are owned by the state, and where a bloc of the labouring classes of the population, headed by the working class, constitute the leading force. As a result, the peoples of these countries have not only torn themselves from the clutches of imperialism, but are paving the way for entry on to the path of socialist development.

The war immensely enhanced the international significance and prestige of the USSR. The USSR was the leading force and the guiding spirit in the military defeat of Germany and Japan. The progressive democratic forces of the whole world rallied around the Soviet Union. The socialist state successfully stood the strenuous test of the war and emerged victorious from the mortal struggle with a most powerful enemy. Instead of being enfeebled, the USSR became stronger.

The capitalist world has also undergone substantial change. Of the six so-called great imperialist powers (Germany, Japan, Great Britain, the USA, France and Italy), three have been eliminated by military defeat (Germany, Italy and Japan). France has also been weakened and has lost her significance as a great power. As a result, only two “great” imperialist world powers remain — the United States and Great Britain. But the position of one of them, Great Britain, is undermined. The war revealed that, militarily and politically, British imperialism was not as strong as it had been. In Eu-

rope, Britain was helpless against German aggression. In Asia, Britain, one of the biggest of the imperialist powers, was unable to retain hold of her colonial possessions without outside aid. Temporarily cut off from colonies that supplied her with food and raw materials and absorbed a large part of her industrial products, Britain found herself dependent, militarily and economically, upon American supplies of food and manufactured goods. After the war, Britain became increasingly dependent, financially and economically, on the United States. Although she succeeded in recovering her colonics after the war, Britain found herself faced there with the enhanced influence of American imperialism, which during the war had invaded all the regions that before the war had been regarded as exclusive spheres of influence of British capital (the Arab East, Southeast Asia). America has also increased her influence in the British dominions and in South America, where the former role of Britain is very largely and to an ever-increasing extent passing to the United States.

World War II aggravated the crisis of the colonial system, as expressed in the rise of a powerful movement for national liberation in the colonics and dependencies. This has placed the rear of the capitalist system in jeopardy. The peoples of the colonies no longer wish to live in the old way. The ruling classes of the metropolitan countries can no longer govern the colonies on the old lines. Attempts to crush the national liberation movement by military force increasingly encounter armed resistance on the part of the colonial peoples and lead

to protracted colonial wars (Holland-Indonesia, France-Viet Nam).

The war — itself a product of the unevenness of capitalist development in the different countries — still further intensified this unevenness. Of all the capitalist powers, only one — the United States — emerged from the war not only unweakened, but even considerably stronger economically and militarily. The war greatly enriched the American capitalists. The American people, on the other hand, did not experience the privations that accompany war, the hardship of occupation or aerial bombardment; and since America entered the war practically in its concluding stage, when the issue was already decided, her human casualties were relatively small. For the USA, the war was primarily and chiefly a spur to extensive industrial development and to a substantial increase of exports (principally to Europe).

But the end of the war confronted the United States with a number of new problems. The capitalist monopolies were anxious to maintain their profits at the former high level, and accordingly pressed hard to prevent a reduction of the wartime volume of deliveries. But this meant that the United States must retain the foreign markets which had absorbed American products during the war, and moreover acquire new markets, inasmuch as the war had substantially lowered the purchasing power of most of the countries. The financial and economic dependence of these countries on the USA had likewise increased. The United States extended credits abroad to a sum of 19,000,000,000

dollars, not counting investments in the International Bank and the International Currency Fund. America's principal competitors, Germany and Japan, have disappeared from the world market, and this has opened up new and very considerable opportunities for the United States.

Whereas before World War II the more influential reactionary circles of American imperialism had adhered to an isolationist policy and had refrained from active interference in the affairs of Europe and Asia, in the new, post-war conditions the Wall Street bosses adopted a new policy. They advanced a program of utilizing America's military and economic might, not only to retain and consolidate the positions won abroad during the war, but to expand them to the maximum and to replace Germany, Japan and Italy in the world market. The sharp decline of the economic power of the other capitalist states makes it possible to speculate on their post-war economic difficulties, and, in particular, on the post-war economic difficulties of Great Britain, which makes it easier to bring these countries under American control. The United States proclaimed a new, frankly predatory and expansionist course.

The purpose of this new, frankly expansionist course is to establish the world supremacy of American imperialism. With a view to consolidating America's monopoly position in the markets gained as a result of the disappearance of two of her biggest competitors, Germany and Japan, and the weakening of her capitalist partners, Great Britain and France, the new course of United

States policy envisages a broad program of military, economic and political measures designed to establish United States political and economic domination in all countries marked out for American expansion, to reduce these countries to the status of satellites of the United States, and to set up regimes within them which would eliminate all obstacles on the part of the labour and democratic movement to the exploitation of these countries by American capital. The United States is now endeavouring to extend this new line of policy not only to its enemies in the war and to neutral countries, but in an increasing degree to its wartime allies.

Special attention is being paid to the exploitation of the economic difficulties of Great Britain, which is not only America's ally but also a long-standing capitalist rival and competitor. It is the design of America's expansionist policy not only to prevent Britain from escaping from the vice of economic dependence on the United States in which she was gripped during the war, but, on the contrary, to increase the pressure, with a view to gradually depriving her of control over her colonies, ousting her from her spheres of influence, and reducing her to the status of a vassal state.

Thus, the new policy of the United States is designed to consolidate its monopoly position and to reduce its capitalist partners to a state of subordination and dependence on America.

But America's aspirations to world supremacy encountered an obstacle in the USSR, the stronghold of anti-imperialist and anti-fascist policy and

in its growing international influence; in the new democracies, which have escaped from the control of British and American imperialism; and in the workers of all countries, including America itself, who do not want a new war for the supremacy of their oppressors. Accordingly, the new expansionist and reactionary policy of the United States envisages a struggle against the USSR, against the new democracies, against the labour movement in all countries, including the United States, and against the emancipationist, anti-imperialist forces in all countries.

Alarmed by the achievements of socialism in the USSR, by the achievements of the new democracies, and by the post-war growth of the labour and democratic movement in all countries, the American reactionaries are disposed to take upon themselves the mission of "saviours" of the capitalist system from communism.

The frankly expansionist program of the United States is therefore highly reminiscent of the reckless program, which failed so ignominiously, of the fascist aggressors, who, as we know, also made a bid for world supremacy.

Just as the Hitlerites, when they were making their preparations for political aggression, adopted the camouflage of anti-communism in order to make it possible to oppress and enslave all peoples, and primarily and chiefly their own people, America's present-day ruling circles mask their expansionist policy, and even their offensive against the vital interests of their weaker imperialist rival, Great Britain, by fictitious considerations of de-

fence against communism. The feverish piling up of armaments, the construction of new military bases and the creation of bridgeheads for the American armed forces in all parts of the world is justified on the false and pharisaical grounds of "defence" against an imaginary threat of war on the part of the USSR. With the help of intimidation, bribery and chicanery, American diplomacy finds it easy to extort from other capitalist countries, and primarily from Great Britain, consent to the legitimization of America's superior position in Europe and Asia — in the Western Zones of Germany, in Austria, Italy, Greece, Turkey, Egypt, Iran, Afghanistan, China, Japan, and so forth.

The American imperialists regard themselves as the principal force opposed to the USSR, the new democracies and the labour and democratic movement in all countries of the world, as the bulwark of the reactionary, anti-democratic forces in all parts of the globe. Accordingly, literally on the day following the conclusion of World War II, they set to work to build up a front hostile to the USSR and world democracy, and to encourage the anti-popular reactionary forces — collaborationists and former capitalist stooges — in the European countries which had been liberated from the nazi yoke and which were beginning to arrange their affairs according to their own choice.

The more malignant and unbalanced imperialist politicians followed the lead of Churchill in hatching plans for the speedy launching of a preventive war against the USSR and openly called for the employment of America's temporary monopoly

of the atomic weapon against the Soviet people. The incendiaries of a new war are trying to intimidate and browbeat not only the USSR, but other countries as well, notably China and India, by libellously depicting the USSR as a potential aggressor, while they themselves pose as "friends" of China and India, as "saviours" from the communist peril, whose mission it is to help the weak. By these means they are seeking to keep India and China under the sway of imperialism and in continued political and economic bondage.

II. THE NEW POST-WAR ALIGNMENT OF POLITICAL FORCES AND THE FORMATION OF TWO CAMPS: IMPERIALIST AND ANTI-DEMOCRATIC, AND ANTI-IMPERIALIST AND DEMOCRATIC

The fundamental changes caused by the war in the international scene and in the position of individual countries has entirely changed the political landscape of the world. A new alignment of political forces has arisen. The more the war recedes into the past, the more distinct become two major trends in post-war international policy, corresponding to the division of the political forces operating in the international arena into two major camps: the imperialist and anti-democratic camp, on the one hand, and the anti-imperialist and democratic camp, on the other. The principal driving force of the imperialist camp is the USA. Allied with it are Great Britain and France. The existence of the Attlee-Bevin labour government in Britain

and the Ramadier socialist government in France does not hinder these countries from playing the part of satellites of the United States and following the lead of its imperialist policy on all major questions. The imperialist camp is also supported by colony-owning countries such as Belgium and Holland, by countries with reactionary anti-democratic regimes such as Turkey and Greece, and by countries politically and economically dependent on the United States, such as the Near-Eastern and South American countries and China.

The cardinal purpose of the imperialist camp is to strengthen imperialism, to hatch a new imperialist war, to combat socialism and democracy, and to support reactionary and anti-democratic pro-fascist regimes and movements everywhere.

In the pursuit of these ends the imperialist camp is prepared to rely on reactionary and anti-democratic forces in all countries, and to support its former adversaries in the war against its wartime allies.

The anti-imperialist and anti-fascist forces comprise the second camp. This camp is based on the USSR and the new democracies. It also includes countries that have broken with imperialism and have firmly set foot on the path of democratic development, such as Romania, Hungary and Finland. Indonesia and Viet Nam are associated with it; it has the sympathy of India, Egypt and Syria. The anti-imperialist camp is backed by the labour and democratic movement and by the fraternal communist parties in all countries, by the fighters for national liberation in the colonies and depend-

encies, by all progressive and democratic forces in every country. The purpose of this camp is to resist the threat of new wars and imperialist expansion, to strengthen democracy and to extirpate the vestiges of fascism.

The end of the Second World War confronted all the freedom-loving nations with the cardinal task of securing a lasting democratic peace sealing the victory over fascism. In the accomplishment of this fundamental task of the post-war period the Soviet Union and its foreign policy are playing a leading role. This follows from the very nature of the Soviet socialist state, to which motives of aggression and exploitation are utterly alien, and which is interested in creating the most favourable conditions for the building of a communist society. One of these conditions is external peace. As the embodiment of a new and superior social system, the Soviet Union reflects in its foreign policy the aspirations of progressive mankind, which desires enduring peace and has nothing to gain from a new war hatched by capitalism. The Soviet Union is a staunch champion of the liberty and independence of all nations, and a foe of national and racial oppression and colonial exploitation in any shape or form. The change in the general alignment of forces between the capitalist world and the socialist world brought about by the war has still further enhanced the significance of the foreign policy of the Soviet state and enlarged the scope of its activity in the international arena.

All the forces of the anti-imperialist and anti-fascist camp are united in the effort to secure a just

and democratic peace. It is this united effort that has brought about and strengthened friendly cooperation between the USSR and the democratic countries on all questions of foreign policy. These countries, and in the first place the new democracies — Yugoslavia, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Albania, which played a big part in the war of liberation from fascism, as well as Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary and to some extent Finland, which have joined the anti-fascist front — have proved themselves in the post-war period staunch defenders of peace, democracy and their own liberty and independence against all attempts on the part of the United States and Great Britain to turn them back onto their course and to bring them again under the imperialist yoke.

The successes and the growing international prestige of the democratic camp were not to the liking of the imperialists. Even while World War II was still ongoing, reactionary forces in Great Britain and the United States became increasingly active, striving to prevent concerted action by the Allied powers, to protract the war, to bleed the USSR and to save the fascist aggressors from utter defeat. The sabotage of the second front by the Anglo-Saxon imperialists, headed by Churchill, was a clear reflection of this tendency, which was in point of fact a continuation of the Munich policy in the new and changed conditions. But while the war was still in progress, British and American reactionary circles did not venture to come out openly against the Soviet Union and the democratic countries, realizing that they had the undivided sympathy of the

masses all over the world. But in the concluding months of the war the situation began to change. The British and American imperialists already manifested their unwillingness to respect the legitimate interests of the Soviet Union and the democratic countries at the Potsdam tripartite conference in July 1945.

The foreign policy of the Soviet Union and the democratic countries in these two past years has been a policy of consistently working for the observance of democratic principles in the post-war settlement. The countries of the anti-imperialist camp have loyally and consistently striven for the implementation of these principles, without deviating from them one iota. Consequently, the major objective of the post-war foreign policy of the democratic states has been a democratic peace, the eradication of the vestiges of fascism and the prevention of a resurgence of fascist imperialist aggression, the recognition of the principle of the equality of nations and respect for their sovereignty, and a general reduction of all armaments and the outlawing of the most destructive weapons, those designed for the mass slaughter of the civilian population. In their effort to secure these objectives, Soviet diplomacy and the diplomacy of the democratic countries met with the resistance of Anglo-American diplomacy, which since the war has persistently and unswervingly striven for the rejection of the general principles of the post-war settlement proclaimed by the Allies during the war, and to replace the policy of peace and consolidation of democracy by a new policy, a policy aiming

at violating general peace, protecting fascist elements, and persecuting democracy in all countries.

Of immense importance are the joint efforts of the diplomacy of the USSR and the other democratic countries to secure a reduction of armaments and the outlawing of the most destructive of them — the atomic bomb.

On the initiative of the Soviet Union, a resolution was moved in the United Nations calling for a general reduction of armaments and the recognition, as a primary task, of the necessity to prohibit the production and use of atomic energy for warlike purposes. This motion of the Soviet government was fiercely resisted by the United States and Great Britain. All the efforts of the imperialist elements were concentrated on sabotaging this decision by erecting endless and fruitless obstacles and barriers, with the object of preventing the adoption of any effective practical measures. The activities of the delegates of the USSR and the other democratic countries in the agencies of the United Nations bear the character of a systematic, stubborn, day-to-day struggle for democratic principles of international cooperation, for the exposure of the intrigues of the imperialist plotters against the peace and security of the nations.

This was very graphically demonstrated, for example, in the discussion of the situation on Greece's northern frontiers. The Soviet Union and Poland vigorously objected to the Security Council being used as a means of discrediting Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Albania, who are falsely accused by the imperialists of aggressive acts against Greece.

Soviet foreign policy proceeds from the premise that the two systems — capitalism and socialism — will exist side by side for a long time. From this it follows that cooperation between the USSR and countries with other systems is possible, provided that the principle of reciprocity is observed and that obligations once assumed are honoured. Everyone knows that the USSR has always honoured the obligations it has assumed. The Soviet Union has demonstrated its will and desire for cooperation.

Britain and America are pursuing the very opposite policy in the United Nations. They are doing everything they can to renounce their commitments and to secure a free hand for the prosecution of a new policy, a policy which envisages not cooperation among the nations, but the hounding of one against the other, violation of the rights and interests of democratic nations, and the isolation of the USSR.

Soviet policy follows the line of maintaining loyal, good-neighbour relations with all states that display the desire for cooperation. As to the countries that are its genuine friends and allies, the Soviet Union has always behaved, and will always behave, as their true friend and ally. Soviet foreign policy envisages a further extension of friendly aid by the Soviet Union to these countries.

Soviet foreign policy, defending the cause of peace, discountenances a policy of vengeance towards the vanquished countries.

We know that the USSR is in favour of a united, peace-loving, demilitarized and democratic Ger-

many. Comrade Stalin formulated the Soviet policy towards Germany when he said: "In short, the policy of the Soviet Union on the German question reduces itself to the demilitarization and democratization of Germany... The demilitarization and democratization of Germany form one of the most important guarantees for the establishment of a stable and lasting peace." However, this policy of the Soviet Union towards Germany is encountering frantic opposition from the imperialist circles in the United States and Great Britain.

The meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers in Moscow in March and April 1947 demonstrated that the United States, Great Britain and France are prepared not only to prevent the democratic reconstruction and demilitarization of Germany, but even to liquidate her as an integral state, to dismember her and to settle the question of peace separately.

Today this policy is being conducted under new conditions, now that America has abandoned the old course of Roosevelt and is passing to a new policy, a policy of preparing for new military adventures.

III. THE AMERICAN PLAN FOR THE ENTHRALMENT OF EUROPE

The aggressive and frankly expansionist course to which American imperialism has committed itself since the end of World War II finds expression in both the foreign and home policy of the United States. The active support rendered to the reactionary, anti-democratic forces all over the world, the

sabotage of the Potsdam decisions which call for the democratic reconstruction and demilitarization of Germany, the protection given to Japanese reactionaries, the extensive war preparations and the accumulation of atomic bombs — all this goes hand in hand with an offensive against the elementary democratic rights of the working people in the United States itself.

Although the USA suffered comparatively little from the war, the vast majority of the Americans do not want another war, with its accompanying sacrifices and limitations. This has induced monopoly capital and its servitors among the ruling circles in the United States to resort to extraordinary means in order to crush the opposition at home to the aggressive expansionist course and to secure a free hand for the further prosecution of this dangerous policy.

But the campaign against communism proclaimed by America's ruling circles with the backing of the capitalist monopolies leads as a logical consequence to attacks on the fundamental rights and interests of the American working people, to the fascization of America's political life, and to the dissemination of the most savage and misanthropic "theories" and views. Obsessed with the idea of preparing for a new, third world war, American expansionist circles are vitally interested in stifling all possible resistance within the country to adventures abroad, in poisoning the minds of the politically backward and unenlightened American masses with the virus of chauvinism and militarism, and in stultifying the average American with

the help of all the diverse means of anti-Soviet and anti-communist propaganda — the cinema, the radio, the church and the press. The expansionist foreign policy inspired and conducted by the American reactionaries envisages simultaneous action along all lines:

1. Strategical military measures;
2. Economic expansion; and
3. Ideological struggle.

The strategical plans for future aggression are connected with the desire to utilize to the maximum the war production facilities of the United States, which had grown to enormous proportions by the end of World War II. American imperialism is persistently pursuing a policy of militarizing the country. Expenditure on the U.S. army and navy exceeds 11,000,000,000 dollars per annum. In 1947-48, 35 per cent of America's budget was appropriated for the armed forces, or eleven times more than in 1937-38.

On the outbreak of World War II, the American army was the seventeenth largest in the capitalist world; today it is the largest. The United States is not only accumulating stocks of atomic bombs; American strategists say quite openly that it is preparing bacteriological weapons.

The strategical plans of the United States envisage the creation in peacetime of numerous bases and vantage grounds situated at great distances from the American continent and designed to be used for aggressive purposes against the USSR and the new democracies. America has, or is building, air and naval bases in Alaska, Japan, Italy, south

Korea, China, Egypt, Iran, Turkey, Greece, Austria and Western Germany. There are American military missions in Afghanistan and even in Nepal. Feverish preparations are being made to use the Arctic for purposes of military aggression.

Although the war has long since ended, the military alliance between Britain and the United States and even a combined Anglo-American military staff continue to exist. Under the guise of agreements for the standardization of weapons, the United States has established its control over the armed forces and military plans of other countries, notably of Great Britain and Canada. Under the guise of joint defence of the Western Hemisphere, the countries of Latin America are being brought into the orbit of America's plans of military expansion. The American government has officially declared that it has committed itself to assist in the modernization of the Turkish army. The army of the reactionary Kuomintang is being trained by American instructors and armed with American materiel. The military is becoming an active political force in the United States, supplying large numbers of government officials and diplomats who are directing the whole policy of the country into an aggressive military course.

Economic expansion is an important supplement to the realization of America's strategical plan. American imperialism is endeavouring, like a usurer, to take advantage of the post-war difficulties of the European countries, in particular of the shortage of raw materials, fuel and food in the Allied countries that suffered most from the war, to

dictate to them extortionate terms for any assistance rendered. With an eye to the impending economic crisis, the United States is in a hurry to find new monopoly spheres of capital investment and markets for its goods. American economic "assistance" pursues the broad aim of bringing Europe into bondage to American capital. The more drastic the economic situation of a country is, the harsher are the terms which the American monopolies endeavour to dictate to it.

But economic control logically leads to political subjugation to American imperialism. Thus, the United States combines the extension of monopoly markets for its goods with the acquisition of new bridgeheads for its fight against the new democratic forces of Europe. In "saving" a country from starvation and collapse, the American monopolies at the same time seek to rob it of all vestige of independence. American "assistance" almost automatically involves a change in the political line of the country to which it is rendered: parties and individuals come to power that are prepared, on directions from Washington, to carry out a program of home and foreign policy suitable to the United States (France, Italy, and so on).

Lastly, the aspiration to world supremacy and the anti-democratic policy of the United States involves an ideological struggle. The principal purpose of the ideological part of the American strategical plan is to deceive public opinion by slanderously accusing the Soviet Union and the new democracies of aggressive intentions, and thus representing the Anglo-Saxon bloc in a defensive role

and absolving it of responsibility for preparing a new war. During the Second World War the popularity of the Soviet Union in foreign countries was enormously enhanced. Its devoted and heroic struggle against imperialism earned it the affection and respect of working people in all countries. The military and economic might of the socialist state, the invincible strength of the moral and political unity of Soviet society were graphically demonstrated to the whole world. The reactionary circles in the United States and Great Britain are anxious to erase the deep impression made by the socialist system on the working people of the world. The warmongers fully realize that long ideological preparation is necessary before they can get their soldiers to fight the Soviet Union.

In their ideological struggle against the USSR, the American imperialists, who have no great insight into political questions, demonstrate their ignorance by laying primary stress on the allegation that the Soviet Union is undemocratic and totalitarian, while the United States and Great Britain and the whole capitalist world are democratic. On this platform of ideological struggle — on this defence of bourgeois pseudo-democracy and condemnation of communism as totalitarian — are united all the enemies of the working class without exception, from the capitalist magnates to the right socialist leaders, who seize with the greatest eagerness on any slanderous imputations against the USSR suggested to them by their imperialist masters. The pith and substance of this fraudulent propaganda is the claim that the earmark of true

democracy is the existence of a plurality of parties and of an organized opposition minority. On these grounds the British labourites, who spare no effort in their fight against communism, would like to discover antagonistic classes and a corresponding struggle of parties in the USSR. Political ignoramuses that they are, they cannot understand that capitalists and landlords, antagonistic classes; and hence a plurality of parties, have long ceased to exist in the USSR. They would like to have in the USSR the bourgeois parties which are so dear to their hearts, including pseudo-socialistic parties, as an agency of imperialism. But to their bitter regret, these parties of the exploiting bourgeoisie have been doomed by history to disappear from the scene.

The labourites and other advocates of bourgeois democracy will go to any length to slander the Soviet regime, but at the same time they regard the bloody dictatorship of the fascist minority over the people in Greece and Turkey as perfectly normal, they close their eyes to many crying violations even of formal democracy in the bourgeois countries and say nothing about the national and racial oppression, the corruption and the unceremonious abrogation of democratic rights in the United States of America.

One of the lines taken by the ideological campaign that goes hand in hand with the plans for the enslavement of Europe is an attack on the principle of national sovereignty, an appeal for the renouncement of the sovereign rights of nations, to which is opposed the idea of a "world govern-

ment." The purpose of this campaign is to mask the unbridled expansion of American imperialism, which is ruthlessly violating the sovereign rights of nations, to represent the United States as a champion of universal laws, and those who resist American penetration as believers in an obsolete and "selfish" nationalism. The idea of a "world government" has been taken up by bourgeois intellectual cranks and pacifists, and is being exploited not only as a means of pressure, with the purpose of ideologically disarming the nations that defend their independence against the encroachments of American imperialism, but also as a slogan specially directed against the Soviet Union, which indefatigably and consistently upholds the principle of real equality and protection of the sovereign rights of all nations, big and small. Under present conditions imperialist countries like the USA, Great Britain and the states closely associated with them become dangerous enemies of national independence and the self-determination of nations, while the Soviet Union and the new democracies are a reliable bulwark against encroachments on the equality and self-determination of nations.

It is a noteworthy fact that American military-political intelligence agents of the Bullitt breed, yellow trade union leaders of the Green brand, the French socialists headed by that inveterate apologist of capitalism, Blum, the German social-democrat Schumacher and labour leaders of the Bevin type are all united in close fellowship in carrying out the ideological plan of American imperialism.

At this present juncture the expansionist ambi-

tions of the United States find concrete expression in the "Truman Doctrine" and the "Marshall Plan." Although they differ in form of presentation, both are an expression of a single policy, they are both an embodiment of the American design to enslave Europe.

The main features of the "Truman Doctrine" as applied to Europe are as follows:

1. Creation of American bases in the Eastern Mediterranean with the purpose of establishing American supremacy in that area.

2. Demonstrative support of the reactionary regimes in Greece and Turkey as bastions of American imperialism against the new democracies in the Balkans (military and technical assistance to Greece and Turkey, the granting of loans).

3. Unintermittent pressure on the new democracies, as expressed in false accusations of totalitarianism and expansionist ambitions, in attacks on the foundations of the democratic regime, in constant interference in their domestic affairs, in support of all anti-national, anti-democratic elements within these countries, and in the demonstrative breaking off of economic relations with these countries with the idea of creating economic difficulties, retarding their economic development, preventing their industrialization, and so on.

The "Truman Doctrine," which provides for the rendering of American assistance to all reactionary regimes which actively oppose the democratic peoples, bears a frankly aggressive character. Its announcement caused some dismay even among circles of American capitalists that are accustomed to

everything. Progressive public elements in the USA and other countries vigorously protested against the provocative and frankly imperialistic character of Truman's announcement.

The unfavourable reception which the "Truman Doctrine" met with accounts for the necessity of the appearance of the "Marshall Plan," which is a more carefully veiled attempt to carry through the same expansionist policy.

The vague and deliberately guarded formulations of the "Marshall Plan" amount in essence to a scheme to create a bloc of states bound by obligations to the United States, and to grant American credits to European countries as a recompense for their renunciation of economic, and then of political, independence. Moreover, the cornerstone of the "Marshall Plan" is the restoration of the industrial areas of Western Germany controlled by the American monopolies.

It is the design of the "Marshall Plan," as transpired from the subsequent talks and statements of American leaders, to render aid in the first place, not to the impoverished victor countries, America's allies in the fight against Germany, but to the German capitalists, with the idea of bringing under American sway the major sources of coal and iron needed by Europe and by Germany, and of making the countries which are in need of coal and iron dependent on the restored economic might of Germany.

In spite of the fact that the "Marshall Plan" envisages the ultimate reduction of Britain and France to the status of second-rate powers, the Att-

lee labour government in Britain and the Ramadier socialist government in France clutched at the "Marshall Plan" as at an anchor of salvation. Britain, as we know, has already practically used up the American loan of 3,750,000,000 dollars granted to her in 1946. We also know that the terms of this loan were so onerous as to bind Britain hand and foot. Even when already caught in the noose of financial dependence on the USA the British labour government could conceive of no other alternative than the receipt of new loans. It therefore hailed the "Marshall Plan" as a way out of the economic impasse, as a chance of securing fresh credits. The British politicians, moreover, hoped to take advantage of the creation of a bloc of Western European debtor countries of the United States to play within this bloc the role of America's chief agent, who might perhaps profit at the expense of weaker countries. The British bourgeoisie hoped, by using the "Marshall Plan," by rendering service to the American monopolies and submitting to their control, to recover its lost positions in a number of countries, in particular in the countries of the Balkan-Danubian area.

In order to lend the American proposals a specious gloss of "impartiality," it was decided to enlist as one of the sponsors of the implementation of the "Marshall Plan" France as well, which had already half sacrificed her sovereignty to the United States, inasmuch as the credit she obtained from America in May 1947 was granted on the stipulation that the communists would be eliminated from the French government.

Acting on instructions from Washington, the British and French governments invited the Soviet Union to take part in a discussion of the Marshall proposals. This step was taken in order to mask the hostile nature of the proposals with respect to the USSR. The calculation was that, since it was well known beforehand that the USSR would refuse American assistance on the terms proposed by Marshall, it might be possible to shift the responsibility on it for "declining to assist the economic restoration of Europe," and thus incite the European countries that are in need of real assistance against the USSR. If, on the other hand, the Soviet Union should consent to be part in the talks, it would be easier to lure the countries of East and Southeast Europe into the trap of the "economic restoration of Europe with American assistance." Whereas the Truman Doctrine was designed to terrorize and intimidate these countries, the "Marshall Plan" was designed to test their economic staunchness, to lure them into a trap and then shackle them in the fetters of dollar "assistance."

In that case, the "Marshall Plan" would facilitate one of the most important objectives of the general American program, namely, to restore the power of imperialism in the new democracies and to compel them to renounce close economic and political cooperation with the Soviet Union.

The representatives of the USSR, having agreed to discuss the Marshall proposals in Paris with the governments of Great Britain and France, exposed at the Paris talks the unsoundness of attempting to work out an economic program for the whole of

Europe, and showed that the attempt to create a new European organization under the aegis of France and Britain was a threat to interfere in the internal affairs of the European countries and to violate their sovereignty. They showed that the "Marshall Plan" was in contradiction to the normal principles of international cooperation, that it harboured the danger of splitting Europe and the threat of subjugating a number of European countries to American capitalist interests, that it was designed to give priority of assistance to the monopolistic concerns of Germany over the allies, and that the restoration of these concerns was obviously designated in the "Marshall Plan" to play a special role in Europe.

This clear position of the Soviet Union stripped the mask from the plan of the American imperialists and their British and French coadjutors.

The all-European conference was a resounding failure. Nine European states refused to take part in it. But even in the countries that consented to participate in the discussion of the "Marshall Plan" and in working out concrete measures for its realization, it was not greeted with any special enthusiasm, all the more so since it was soon discovered that the USSR was fully justified in its supposition that what the plan envisaged was far from real assistance. It transpired that, in general, the U.S. government was in no hurry to carry out Marshall's promises. U.S. Congress leaders admitted that Congress would not examine the question of granting new credits to European countries before 1948.

It thus became evident that in accepting the

Paris scheme for the implementation of the "Marshall Plan," Britain, France and other Western European states themselves fell dupes to American chicanery.

Nevertheless, the efforts to build up a Western bloc under the aegis of America are being continued.

It should be noted that the American variant of the Western bloc is bound to encounter serious resistance even in countries already so dependent on the United States as Britain and France. The prospect of the restoration of German imperialism, as an effective force capable of opposing democracy and communism in Europe, cannot be very alluring either to Britain or to France. Here we have one of the major contradictions within the Anglo-American-French bloc. Evidently the American monopolies, and the international reactionaries generally, do not regard Franco and the Greek fascists as a very reliable bulwark of the United States against the USSR and the new democracies in Europe. They are therefore staking their main hopes on the restoration of capitalist Germany, which they consider would be a major guarantee of the success of the fight against the democratic forces of Europe. They trust neither the British labourites nor the French socialists, whom, in spite of their manifest desire to please, they regard as "semi-communists," insufficiently worthy of confidence.

It is for this reason that the question of Germany and, in particular, of the Ruhr, as a potential war-industrial base of a bloc hostile to the USSR, is playing such an important part in international

politics and is an apple of discord between the USA and Britain and France.

The appetites of the American imperialists cannot but cause serious uneasiness in Britain and France. The United States has unambiguously given it to be understood that it wants to take the Ruhr out of the hands of the British. The American imperialists are also demanding that the three occupation zones be merged, and that the political separation of Western Germany under American control be openly implemented. The United States insists that the level of steel output in the Ruhr must be increased, with the capitalist firms under American aegis. Marshall's promise of credits for European rehabilitation is interpreted in Washington as a promise of priority assistance to the German capitalists.

We thus see that America is endeavouring to build a "Western bloc" not on the pattern of Churchill's plan for a United States of Europe, which was conceived as an instrument of British policy, but as an American protectorate, in which sovereign European states, not excluding Britain itself, are to be assigned a role not very far removed from that of a "49th state of America." American imperialism is becoming more and more arrogant and unceremonious in its treatment of Britain and France. The bilateral, and trilateral, talks regarding the level of industrial production in Western Germany (Great Britain-USA, USA-France), apart from constituting an arbitrary violation of the Potsdam decisions, are a demonstration of the complete indifference of the United States to the vital inter-

ests of its partners in the negotiations. Britain, and especially France, are compelled to listen to America's dictates and to obey them without a murmur. The behaviour of American diplomats in London and Paris has come to be highly reminiscent of their behaviour in Greece, where American representatives already consider it quite unnecessary to observe the elementary decencies, appoint and dismiss Greek ministers at will and conduct themselves as conquerors. Thus, the new plan for the Dawesization of Europe essentially strikes at the vital interests of the peoples of Europe, and represents a plan for the enthrallment and enslavement of Europe by the United States.

The "Marshall Plan" strikes at the industrialization of the democratic countries of Europe, and hence at the foundations of their integrity and independence. And if the plan for the Dawesization of Europe was doomed to failure, at a time when the forces of resistance to the Dawes Plan were much weaker than they are now, today, in post-war Europe, there are quite sufficient forces, even leaving aside the Soviet Union, and if they display the will and determination, they can foil this plan of enslavement. All that is needed is the determination and readiness of the peoples of Europe to resist. As to the USSR, it will bend every effort in order that this plan be doomed to failure.

The assessment of the "Marshall Plan" given by the countries of the anti-imperialist camp has been completely confirmed by the whole course of developments. In relation to the "Marshall Plan," the camp of democratic countries have proved that

they are a mighty force standing guard over the independence and sovereignty of all European nations, that they refuse to yield to browbeating and intimidation, just as they refuse to be deceived by the hypocritical manoeuvres of dollar diplomacy.

The Soviet government has never objected to using foreign, and in particular American, credits as a means capable of expediting the process of economic rehabilitation. However, the Soviet Union has always taken the stand that the terms of credits must not be extortionate, and must not result in the economic and political subjugation of the debtor country to the creditor country. From this political stand, the Soviet Union has always held that foreign credits must not be the principal means of restoring a country's economy. The chief and paramount condition of a country's economic rehabilitation must be the utilization of its own internal forces and resources and the creation of its own industry. Only in this way can its independence be guaranteed against encroachments on the part of foreign capital, which constantly displays a tendency to utilize credits as an instrument of political and economic enthrallment. Such precisely is the "Marshall Plan," which would strike at the industrialization of the European countries and is consequently designed to undermine their independence.

The Soviet Union unswervingly holds the position that political and economic relations between states must be built exclusively on the basis of equality of the parties and mutual respect for their sovereign rights. Soviet foreign policy and, in par-

ticular, Soviet economic relations with foreign countries, are based on the principle of equality, on the principle that agreements must be of advantage to both parties. Treaties with the USSR are agreements that are of mutual advantage to both parties, and never contain anything that encroaches on the national independence and sovereignty of the contracting parties. This fundamental feature of the agreements of the USSR with other states stands out particularly vividly just now, in the light of the unfair and unequal treaties being concluded or planned by the United States. Unequal agreements are alien to Soviet foreign trade policy. More, the development of the Soviet Union's economic relations with all countries interested in such relations demonstrates on what principles normal relations between states should be built. Suffice it to recall the treaties recently concluded by the USSR with Poland, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria and Finland. By this way the USSR has clearly shown along what lines Europe may find the way out of its present economic plight. Britain might have had a similar treaty, if the labour government had not, under outside pressure, disrupted the agreement with the USSR which was already on its way to achievement.

The exposure of the American plan for the economic enslavement of the European countries is an indisputable service rendered by the foreign policy of the USSR and the new democracies.

It should be borne in mind that America herself is threatened with an economic crisis. There are weighty reasons for Marshall's official generosity.

If the European countries do not receive American credits, their demand for American goods will diminish, and this will tend to accelerate and intensify the approaching economic crisis in the United States. Accordingly, if the European countries display the necessary fortitude and readiness to resist the enthralling American credit terms, America may find herself compelled to beat a retreat.

IV. THE TASKS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTIES IN UNITING THE DEMOCRATIC, ANTI-FASCIST, PEACE-LOVING ELEMENTS TO RESIST THE NEW PLANS OF WAR AND AGGRESSION

The dissolution of the Comintern, which conformed to the demands of the development of the labour movement in the new historical situation, played a positive role. The dissolution of the Comintern once and for all disposed of the slanderous allegation of the enemies of communism and the labour movement that Moscow was interfering in the internal affairs of other states, and that the communist parties in the various countries were acting not in the interests of their nations, but on orders from outside.

The Comintern was founded after the First World War, when the communist parties were still weak, when practically no ties existed between the working classes of the different countries, and when the communist parties had not yet produced generally recognized leaders of the labour movement. The service performed by the Comintern was that it restored and strengthened the ties between

the working people of the different countries, that it provided the answers to theoretical questions of the labour movement in the new, post-war conditions of development, that it established general standards of propaganda of the ideas of communism and that it helped to train leaders of the labour movement. This created the conditions for the conversion of the young communist parties into mass labour parties. But once the young communist parties had become mass labour parties, the direction of these parties from one centre became impossible and inexpedient. As a result, the Comintern, from a factor promoting the development of the communist parties, began to turn into a factor hindering their development. The new stage in the development of the communist parties demanded new forms of connection between the parties. It was these considerations that made it necessary to dissolve the Comintern and to devise new forms of connection between the parties.

In the four years that have elapsed since the dissolution of the Comintern, the communist parties have grown considerably in strength and influence in nearly all the countries of Europe and Asia. The influence of the communist parties has increased not only in Eastern Europe, but in practically all the European countries where fascism held sway, as well as in those which were occupied by the German fascists — France, Belgium, Holland, Norway, Denmark, Finland, etc. The influence of the communists has increased especially in the new democracies, where the communist parties are among the most influential parties in the state.

But the present position of the communist parties has its drawbacks. Some comrades understood the dissolution of the Comintern to imply the elimination of all ties, of all contact, between the fraternal communist parties. But experience has shown that such mutual isolation of the communist parties is wrong, harmful and, in point of fact, unnatural. The communist movement develops within national frameworks, but there are tasks and interests common to the parties of various countries. We get a rather curious state of affairs: the socialists, who stopped at nothing to prove that the Comintern dictated directives from Moscow to the communists of all countries, have restored their international; yet the communists even refrain from meeting one another, let alone consulting with one another on questions of mutual interest to them, from fear of the slanderous talk of their enemies regarding the "hand of Moscow." Representatives of the most diverse fields of endeavour — scientists, cooperators, trade unionists, the youth, students — deem it possible to maintain international contact, to exchange experience and consult with one another on matters relating to their work, to arrange international congresses and conferences; yet the communists, even of countries that are bound together as allies, hesitate to establish friendly ties. There can be no doubt that if the situation were to continue it would be fraught with most serious consequences to the development of the work of the fraternal parties. The need for mutual consultation and voluntary coordination of action between individual parties has become particularly urgent at the present juncture

when continued isolation may lead to a slackening of mutual understanding, and at times, even to serious blunders.

A lack of communication leading to mutual isolation undoubtedly weakens our forces. In particular, when discussing mistakes, it is necessary to touch upon the mistakes of the leadership of the communist parties of France and Italy in connection with the new offensive against the working class by American imperialism. The leadership of the French Communist Party did not and does not sufficiently expose the Truman-Marshall plan, the American plan for the enslavement of Europe and, in particular, France, to the masses of its people. The departure of the communists from the Ramadier government was viewed by the communist party as a mere internal matter, while the real reason for the communists' removal from the government was America's demand. Now it has become absolutely clear that the removal of communists from the French government was a prerequisite to receive American credits. The subsequent credit of \$250 million was a cheap price for France to renounce its national sovereignty.

How did the French Communist Party react to this shameful act of selling off France's national sovereignty by its country's ruling circles? Instead of condemning the behaviour of other parties, including the socialists, as a betrayal of the cause of defending the honour and independence of the homeland, the French Communist Party reduced the matter to complaints about a violation of democracy, expressed through the infringement of

the rights of the most numerous party in the French parliament. However, the violation of parliamentary tradition in this case was only a pretext, not a cause. Silencing the real reasons behind the removal of the communists from the government undoubtedly represents a serious mistake by the leadership of the French Communist Party. This is either based on a misunderstanding of the situation, which is difficult to imagine, or because the French communists allowed themselves to be intimidated by arguments about the “national” interests of France. The communists were apparently afraid of being accused of hindering America from granting credit to France and allegedly harming France’s interests. Thus, the Communists allowed themselves to be blackmailed with accusations of insufficient patriotism, while the only truly patriotic force in France would have been the communist party if it had exposed the underlying reasons behind the American credit, which was conditioned by the demand for changing the government by removing the communists and thereby weakening French sovereignty. The French Communist Party yielded to pressure from the reactionary forces, even though it knew that this pressure was dictated by those hostile imperialists opposed to the French people. The French communists should have courageously addressed the people and exposed the role of American imperialism, which blatantly dictated the removal of communists from the government, explaining to the people that this was not just another “governmental crisis” or a simple violation of parliamentary traditions, although this is signif-

icant for characterizing the crisis of bourgeois democracy, but rather a foreign intervention in French affairs, the liquidation of France's political independence and the sale of its national sovereignty by the socialists. It is regrettable that the responsible leaders of the French communists have not yet explained to the French people and world public opinion the underlying reasons behind the events that occurred in France and the shameful role of the socialists in this matter.

The French communists accuse the socialists of "sliding to the right." But what kind of rightward slide can be talked about? Was Blum ever on the left? It is known that Blum was neither right nor left, but always was, is and remains a faithful servant of the bourgeoisie, a conduit of its influence on the labour movement. Therefore, he has nowhere to slide, and the French comrades apparently did not decipher the manoeuvres of the socialist leaders sufficiently.

The sad experience of France served as a signal for a "governmental crisis" in Italy. According to the same proceedings in France, the mainspring of the artificially created "governmental crisis" was the question of American credit and the demand by American imperialist circles to remove communists from the government as a preliminary measure associated with its provision.

The Italian right-wing press openly revealed this secret. "If we want to live," wrote the right-wing Italian newspaper *Buon Senso*, "we need to get a loan from the United States." Hence, the newspaper concluded: "The crisis must be resolved so

that we can have the necessary credit. Disputes are unnecessary. We must understand what happened in France, where the socialists broke with the communists and the latter allowed themselves to be expelled from ministerial positions without scandal.”

The announcement of De Gasperi’s decision to expel the representatives of the working class from the government aroused the masses and caused numerous protests. Unfortunately, this initiative of the masses was not properly supported and led.

Thus, in Italy, as in France, the communists overestimated the strength of reaction, became victims of imperialist intimidation and blackmail, underestimated their own strength, the strength of democracy, the will of the people to protect their fundamental national rights and interests of their country.

This is all the more regrettable because both the French and Italian communist parties have shown their ability to rally broad masses of the working class, labouring peasantry and intelligentsia around the communist banner in difficult conditions of work.

In view of the fact that the majority of the leaders of the socialist parties (especially the British labourites and the French socialists) are acting as agents of United States imperialist circles, upon the communists devolves the special historical task of leading the resistance to the American plan for the enthrallment of Europe, and of boldly denouncing all coadjutors of American imperialism in their own countries. At the same time, communists must support all the really patriotic elements who do not

want their countries to be imposed upon, who want to resist their enthrallment to foreign capital, and to uphold their national sovereignty. The communists must be the leaders in enlisting all anti-fascist and freedom-loving elements in the struggle against the new American expansionist plans for the enslavement of Europe.

It is also necessary to mention the "leftist" mistakes, if one can put it that way, related to the criticism of the supposedly insufficient aid provided by the Soviet Union to friendly states and the presentation of unfounded claims about the size of this aid. Such mistakes occurred, in particular, in the countries of new democracy, such as Yugoslavia, and consisted of statements that the USSR supposedly, for reasons of great politics and reluctance to spoil its relations with the great powers, is not energetically fighting for the support of the demands of small countries and, in particular, Yugoslavia. This kind of criticism comes from underestimating the great importance and role of the Soviet Union, which cannot and should not waste its energy on small battles. Claims against the Soviet Union, expressed in the form of demands that it support every requirement everywhere and at all times, even at the cost of worsening its own positions, are unfounded.

Since the Soviet Union is leading the resistance against new attempts of imperialistic expansion, fraternal communist parties should operate under the assumption that strengthening their political position in their own countries is simultaneously linked to strengthening the power of the Soviet Un-

ion, the main support of democracy and socialism. Fraternal parties should openly and honestly support the policy of the Soviet Union as the leading force in the struggle for a strong and lasting peace, and in the fight for democracy. It is important to emphasize that efforts to strengthen the Soviet Union by fraternal communist parties coincide with the fundamental interests of their countries. It is not acceptable for some leaders of fraternal communist parties to constantly emphasize their independence from Moscow. It is not about independence since Moscow does not want to make anyone dependent on it. This emphasis on "independence" from Moscow essentially means servility, adaptability and pandering to those who see Moscow as an enemy. Communist parties should not be afraid to declare loudly and clearly that they support Moscow's peaceful and democratic policy and that the policy of the Soviet Union corresponds to the interests of other peace-loving peoples.

It must be borne in mind that a great gulf lies between the desire of the imperialists to unleash a new war and the possibility of engineering such a war. The peoples of the world do not want war. The forces that stand for peace are so big and influential that if they are staunch and determined in defence of peace, if they display fortitude and firmness, the plans of the aggressors will come to grief. It should not be forgotten that all the hullabaloo of the imperialist agents about the danger of war is designed to frighten the weak-nerved and unstable and to extort concessions to the aggressor by means of intimidation.

The chief danger to the working class at this present juncture lies in underrating its own strength and overrating the strength of the enemy. Just as in the past the Munich policy untied the hands of the nazi aggressors, so today concessions to the new course of the United States and the imperialist camp may encourage its inspirers to be even more insolent and aggressive. The communist parties must therefore head the resistance to the plans of imperialist expansion and aggression along every line — government, economic and ideological; they must rally their ranks and unite their efforts on the basis of a common anti-imperialist and democratic platform, and gather around them all the democratic and patriotic forces of the people.

A special task devolves on the fraternal communist parties of France, Italy, Great Britain and other countries. They must take up the standard in defence of the national independence and sovereignty of their countries. If the communist parties firmly stick to their position, if they do not allow themselves to be intimidated and blackmailed, if they act as courageous sentinels of enduring peace and popular democracy, of the national sovereignty, liberty and independence of their countries, if, in their struggle against the attempts to economically and politically enthrall their countries, they are able to take the lead of all the forces prepared to uphold the national honour and independence, no plans for the enthrallment of Europe can possibly succeed.

PROBLEMS OF SOVIET MUSIC

(Concluding Speech at a Conference of Soviet Music Workers)

January 1948

TWO TRENDS IN MUSIC

Comrades, allow me first of all to make some remarks about the character of the discussion which has developed here.

A general appraisal of the situation in music shows that matters are unsatisfactory. It is true that various shades of opinion became apparent during discussion. Some speakers said that the weakness lay in organizational matters and pointed out the poor state of affairs in criticism and self-criticism, and the incorrect methods of leadership in music matters, especially in the Union of Composers. Others, while endorsing criticism of organization, pointed also to weaknesses in the ideological direction of Soviet music. Still others tried to minimize the acuteness of the situation or attempted to remain silent on unpleasant questions. But however varied the details, the general tone of the discussion shows that things are unsatisfactory.

I do not wish to bring "dissonance" or "atonality" into this appraisal, although atonality is now the fashion. I do not wish to deny the achievements of Soviet music. They exist, of course; but it must be admitted that our achievements in music are altogether insignificant by comparison with achievements in other spheres. Take literature, for example. Some of the big journals are experiencing real

difficulties in using all the material in their editorial files which is well worth publishing. No such "output" can be boasted of in music. We note progress in films and plays too, but nothing in music.

Music has got left behind — that is the general tone of the contributions to the discussion.

It is clear that things are not normal either in the Union of Composers or in the Committee for Art Affairs. The Committee has not been mentioned much and has been insufficiently criticized. At any rate, more was said about the Union and criticism of it was sharper. Yet the role which the Committee played was a sorry one. Behind the pretence of standing wholeheartedly for the realist trend in music it has in every way abetted the formalist trend. By putting the representatives of the formalist trend on a pedestal it has greatly contributed to the disorganization and ideological confusion among the ranks of our composers. Being, moreover, ignorant and incompetent in music matters the Committee just drifted along with the formalist sect of composers.

The Organizational Committee of the Union of Composers has been compared both to a monastery and to a GHQ without an army. There is no need to dispute either comparison. If the destiny of Soviet music is to be in the privileged hands of a select circle of leading composers and critics — critics chosen for their servility and the atmosphere of adulation with which they surround the composers; if there is a lack of creative discussion in the Union and a stale, stuffy atmosphere which segregates the composers into top-grade and second-

rate; and if the fashion at Union conferences is either respectful silence or awe-struck praise of the chosen few, then it is clear that the situation on the musical Olympus is indeed alarming.

The harmful trend in criticism and the absence of discussions in the Union must be gone into. Lack of creative discussions, criticism and self-criticism means that there is no advance, and that the sources of development are drying up and stagnation is setting in.

It is no accident that people taking part for the first time in a conference on questions of music are astonished at the presence of such irreconcilable contradictions within the Union of Composers, with its conservative organizational system and the allegedly ultra-progressive views of its present leadership in the creative sphere. We know that the Union leadership has inscribed upon its banner such promising slogans as an appeal for innovation and for the renunciation of archaic traditions, and a call to struggle against “epigonism”¹ and so on.

It is curious, however, that the very people who wish to appear the extreme radicals and even arch-revolutionaries in their work and who aspire to the role of overthrowers of antiquated criteria — these same people, in so far as they participate in the activity of the Union of Composers, prove to be extremely backward and recalcitrant when it comes to introducing something new or making changes; they are conservative in their methods of work and leadership and frequently and willingly bow to bad

¹ *Epigonism*, from *epigone*, an inferior follower or imitator.

traditions in organizational questions. The reason for this is not far to seek. When pompous phraseology about an alleged new trend in Soviet music is combined with by no means progressive action, then that fact alone is enough to cause legitimate doubt as to the progressive character of the ideological and creative tendencies resulting from such reactionary methods.

All of you realized very well that the organizational aspect of any matter is of great importance. It is clear that a serious spring-cleaning is needed, a fresh wind to purify the air in the composers' and musicians' organization, so that a normal atmosphere may be established for the development of creative work.

The fundamental problem is nevertheless not that of organization — important as it is — but that of the trend of Soviet music. The discussion which has developed here tends to blur that problem. We must bring clarity into the question of the development of music, just as you are aiming at clarity in musical phrasing. The discussion has definitely brought out in relief two trends in music, and although some comrades tried not to call a spade a spade and the game is being played only partly in the open, it is clear nevertheless that a struggle between the trends is taking place, and that attempts are being made to substitute one for another.

Moreover, some of the comrades have asserted that there is no need to raise the question of a struggle between trends since there has been no qualitative change, and that we have here merely a development of the classical school in Soviet conditions.

They said that the principles of classical music are undergoing no revision and that there is consequently nothing to argue or make a fuss about. The entire problem is being reduced by them to a matter of individuals mending their ways, of isolated cases of enthusiasm for technique, of naturalist lapses here and there, and so on.

The fact that such an evasion of the issue is taking place calls for a closer examination of this struggle between two trends, since it is, of course, not only a case of the roof of the Conservatoire leaking and needing repair, as Comrade Shebalin has put it so aptly. That would be a matter which could be quickly rectified. It is a case of a far larger crack having appeared in the foundations of Soviet music.

All the speakers have shown that the leading part in the creative activities of the Union of Composers is being played at present by a definite group. The names of the following comrades have been mentioned: Shostakovich, Prokofiev, Myaskovsky, Khachaturyan, Popov, Kabalevsky and Shebalin. Is there any other name you would like to add?

VOICE: Shaporin.

ZHDANOV: When mention is made of any leading group holding the reins, those are the names most frequently cited. Let us consider these comrades, who are also the leading figures of the formalist trend in music, a trend which is fundamentally wrong.

The comrades in question have contributed to the discussion and have stated that they, too, are

dissatisfied with the lack of criticism in the Union of Composers, with the fact that they are being overpraised, that they feel a certain loss of contact with the main body of composers and with concert audiences. It was hardly necessary, however, to wait for the production of a not very successful — or not at all successful — opera, before stating such truths. These admissions could have been made much earlier, but the crux of the matter is that the regime of the formalist sect in the musical organizations has not been entirely unpleasant, to put it mildly, for the leading group of our composers. It has required a discussion in the Central Committee of the Party for the comrades to discover the fact that this regime has its negative side. However that may be, before the conference not one of them thought of changing the state of affairs in the Union of Composers.

It has been said here that the time has come for radical changes. One cannot but agree. Inasmuch as the dominating positions in Soviet music are held by the comrades I have named, and inasmuch as any attempts to criticize them would have brought about an explosion and an immediate rallying against such criticism, in Comrade Zakharov's words, the conclusion must be drawn that the "cosy" atmosphere of stagnation and personal relations which they now wish to condemn as undesirable was in fact created by them.

Some leading comrades of the Union of Composers have asserted here that there is no oligarchy in the Union. But then the question arises: Why do they cling to the leading positions in the Union? Do

they like power for its own sake? Have they developed a sort of administrative itch, so that they merely want to rule a little, like Vladimir Galitsky in *Prince Igor*? Or has this domination been established in the interests of a definite trend? I think that the first conjecture can be discarded and that the last is nearer the truth. We have no reason to say that the management of the Union has no connections with a trend. We cannot bring such a charge against Shostakovich, for instance.

It follows, then, that domination was maintained in the interests of a trend.

There is in fact, then, a sharp though hidden struggle between two trends taking place in Soviet music. One trend represents the healthy, progressive principles in Soviet music, based on the acceptance of the immense role to be played by the classical heritage, and in particular, by the Russian school, in the creation of a music which is realist and of truthful content and is closely and organically linked with the people and their folk music and folk song — all this combined with a high degree of professional mastery. The other trend represents a formalism alien to Soviet art, a rejection of the classical heritage under the banner of innovation, a rejection of the idea of the popular origin of music and of service to the people, in order to gratify the individualistic emotions of a small group of select aesthetes.

The formalist trend brings about the substitution of a music which is false, vulgar and often purely pathological, for natural, beautiful, human music. Furthermore, it is characteristic of this

trend to avoid a frontal attack and to screen its revisionist activities by formally agreeing with the basic principles of socialist realism. This sort of underhand method is, of course, nothing new. History can show many instances of revisionism behind the label of sham agreement with a given teaching. This makes it all the more necessary to reveal the real essence of the formalist trend and the damage it has done to the development of Soviet music.

As an example, there is the attitude towards the classical heritage. There is no indication whatever that the supporters of the formalist school are carrying on and developing the traditions of classical music, however much they may protest to the contrary. Any listener will tell you that the works of Soviet composers of the formalist type differ fundamentally from classical music. Classical music is marked by its truthfulness and realism, its ability to blend brilliant artistic form with profound content, and to combine the highest technical achievement with simplicity and intelligibility. Formalism and crude naturalism are alien to classical music in general and to Russian classical music in particular. The high level of the idea content in classical music springs from the recognition of the fact that classical music has its sources in the musical creative powers of the people, in a deep respect and love for the people, their music and song.

What a step backward it is along the highroad of musical development when our formalists, undermining the foundations of true music, compose music which is ugly and false, permeated with idealist sentiment, alien to the broad masses of the

people, and created not for the millions of Soviet people, but for chosen individuals and small groups, for an elite. How unlike Glinka, Tchaikovsky, Rimsky-Korsakov, Dargomyzhsky, Mussorgsky, who considered the basis for development of their creative power to be the ability to express in their works the spirit and character of the people. By ignoring the wants of the people and its spirit and creative genius, the formalist trend in music has clearly demonstrated its anti-popular character.

If a certain section of Soviet composers favour the theory that they will be appreciated in fifty or a hundred years' time, and that their descendants, if not their contemporaries, will understand them, then the situation is really terrifying. To become accustomed to such an attitude is extremely dangerous. Such a theory indicates an estrangement from the people. If I, a writer, an artist, a critic, or a Party worker, do not count on being understood by my contemporaries, for whom then do I live and work? Would this not lead to spiritual sterility and a dead end? We hear that the theory is offered as consolation to our composers by certain toadying music critics. How can composers remain indifferent to counsel of that sort and not at least haul its advocates before a court of honour?

Half-forgotten by us seem to be the clear statements about the popular roots of music by the "Mighty Few"¹ and subsequently too by V.V.

¹ The "Mighty Few" was a group of Russian musicians formed in 1861 by M.A. Balakirev. Others associated in the

Stasov, the great music scholar, when he associated himself with them. Half-forgotten is Glinka's "The people create the music — we, the artists, merely arrange." We forget, too, that the classical composers never disdained any genres as long as they helped to spread the art of music among the broad masses of the people. Yet you even shun opera as a musical genre and consider it secondary to instrumental and symphonic music, and in your supercilious attitude towards song, choral and concert music you deemed it beneath your dignity to satisfy the demands of the people in this respect. But Musorgsky set the "Gopak" to music, and Glinka used the "Komarinsky" for one of his best works. It has, in fact, to be admitted that Glinka, the landowner, Serov, the civil servant, and Stasov, the nobleman, were more democratic than you.

It is not enough to give glowing assurances that you are all for popular music; if you are, then why is so little folk music used in your compositions? Why do deficiencies still crop up which Serov already criticized when he pointed out that "academic," i.e. professional, music was developing parallel with, and independent of, folk music? Is our instrumental and symphonic music developing in close interplay with folk music? No. On the contrary. There is an undoubted gulf, created by the lack of appreciation of folk music by our symphony writers. Let us recall how Serov described his attitude to folk music. I have in mind his article *The*

group were Cui, Mussorgsky, Rimsky-Korsakov, Borodin and, to a limited extent, Tchaikovsky.

Music of South Russian Song in which he says:

“Folk songs are musical organisms which are in no way the work of individual creative talent but compositions of the whole people, and by all their attributes far removed from artificial music. These flowers break through the soil into the light quite of their own, as it were, and grow to full resplendence without the slightest thought about authorship and composers’ rights and therefore little resemble the hothouse products of the learned composers’ activity. So it is that, above all, in folk song we find unaffected creative genius and the wisdom of simplicity, as Gogol puts it so aptly in *Dead Souls*, which is the supreme charm and secret of any work of art.

“As a lily in its magnificent raiment of purity puts to shame the glitter of brocade and precious stones, so is folk music, in its child-like simplicity, a thousand times richer and stronger than all the complexities of scholastic invention taught by pedants in conservatoires and music academies.”

How well and forcefully this is said! How true the formulation of the main issue: that the development of music must proceed on a foundation of interplay, that is by enriching “academic” music from folk music. This theme has practically disappeared from our theoretical and critical articles today.

NATIONAL MUSIC

Let me now deal with the relationship between national and foreign music. Some comrades here have quite correctly stated that there is a passion for, and even a certain orientation towards, con-

temporary Western bourgeois music, the music of decadence; and that this represents one of the basic features of the formalist trend in Soviet music.

The relationship between Russian music and the music of Western Europe was dealt with very well by Stasov in his article *Drag-chains on the New Russian Art*, in which he says:

“It would be ridiculous to disavow science and knowledge in any sphere, including that of music. But only the new Russian musicians, who are not burdened down by the long series of scholastic periods of the Europe of previous centuries, are able to look science full in the face: they honour it and make use of its blessings, but they do so without exaggerated deference. They repudiate the inevitability of dry and pedantic excess, and reject the acrobatic diversions of science to which thousands of people in Europe attach so much significance. And they do not believe that it is necessary to remain long years in passive submission before its sacred ritual mysteries.”

That is what Stasov said about West European classical music. As regards contemporary bourgeois music, it would be useless to try and profit from it, since it is in a state of decay and degradation and the grovelling attitude towards it is therefore ridiculous.

Research in our Russian, and later, Soviet music must lead to the conclusion that it grew and developed into a mighty force because it managed to stand on its own feet and find its own particular roads of development, which enabled it to disclose the wealth of the inner world of our people.

Those who consider that the full flowering of national music, whether Russian music or that of the other peoples of the Soviet Union, indicates any diminution in the internationalism of art, are making a serious mistake. Internationalism in art does not spring from the depletion and impoverishment of national art; on the contrary, internationalism grows where national culture flourishes. To forget this is to lose one's individuality and become a cosmopolitan without a country.

Only a people that has a highly developed musical culture of its own can appreciate the musical riches of other nations. It is impossible to be an internationalist in music or in anything else unless one loves and respects one's own people. All the experience of the USSR testifies to that. Our internationalism in music and respect for the creative genius of other nations is therefore based on the enrichment and development of our national musical culture which we can then share with other nations, and is not based on an impoverishment of national art, blind imitation of foreign styles, and the eradication of all national characteristics in music. All this should be borne in mind when dealing with the relationship between Soviet and foreign music.

When we speak of the formalist trend having broken with the principles of the classical heritage we must also mention the minimizing of the role of program music. This has already been mentioned here, but the principal point of the problem has not been properly clarified.

It is quite obvious that program music has be-

come so rare that it is almost non-existent. Matters have reached a point where the content of a composition is elucidated only after its publication. A whole new profession has come into being among the critics — that of the interpreters of new compositions, who try to decipher *post factum* and on the basis of personal intuition the content of newly published compositions, the obscure meaning of which is said to be not always clear to the composers themselves. The neglect of program music is also a departure from progressive traditions. It is well known that Russian classical music was as a rule program music.

The question of innovation has been raised here. Innovation has been shown to be one of the main characteristics of formalism. But innovation is not an end in itself. The new must be better than the old, otherwise it is meaningless. It seems to me that the disciples of formalism use this word chiefly to make propaganda for bad music.

The term innovation must not be applied to any and all cases of eccentricity and distortion. If one does not want merely to use big words, then one must be clear about that from which it is necessary to break away in the old, and that which should be attained in the new. If that is not done, then talk about innovation can have only one meaning: revision of the foundations of music and a breaking away from laws and standards of music which must not be abandoned, not because of any conservative attitude, but because a breakaway does not in any way represent innovation.

Moreover, innovation does not always imply

progress. Many young musicians are being confused by being told that unless they are original they are not new and would become imprisoned in conservative traditions. Since, however, innovation is not synonymous with progress, the spreading of ideas of this sort means gross delusion, if not deceit. Furthermore, the “innovations” of the formalists are not new at all, since all their “novelty” brings to mind contemporary decadent bourgeois music of Europe and America. This is where we should look for the real “epigones.”

You will remember that at one time in all primary and secondary schools there was a passion for “experimental” methods and the “Dalton Plan,” according to which the part of the teacher was reduced to a minimum, and every pupil had the right to decide upon the subject of a lesson. The teacher would arrive in class and say: “Now, what shall we take today?” The pupils would reply: “Tell us about the Arctic” — “Tell us about the Antarctic” — “Tell us about Chapayev” — “Tell us about Dnieprostroy.”

This was called an “experimental” method, but meant in fact that the whole organization of study went topsy-turvy: the pupils came to dominate the teacher, textbooks were treated in helter-skelter fashion, there was no system of marking. All this was innovation, but I ask you, was this innovation progressive?

We know that the Party has abolished these “innovations.” Why? Because, although very “left” in form, they were reactionary through and through and were leading to the nullification of the school.

Take another example. The Academy of Arts was established not long ago. Painting is your sister-muse. As you know, at one time there were strong bourgeois influences at work in painting which came to the surface now and again under extremely "left" flags and attached to themselves names like futurism, cubism and modernism. Under the slogan of "Overthrow rotten academism" they called for innovation, and this innovation reached its most insane point when a girl, for instance, would be portrayed with one head and forty legs, one eye looking at you and the other at the North Pole.

How did all that end? With a complete fiasco of the new trend. The Party fully re-established the significance of the classical heritage of Repin, Bryullov, Vereshchagin, Vasnetsov and Surikov. Did we act correctly when we defended the treasure-house of classical painting and destroyed the liquidators of painting? Perhaps the continued existence of "schools" of this kind did not mean the liquidation of painting? Or did the Central Committee, in saving the classical heritage in painting, act in a conservative manner and under the influence of "traditionalism" and "epigonism" and so on? Utter nonsense, of course!

Thus it is in music, too. We do not assert that the classical heritage represents the absolute peak of musical culture. If we said that it would be tantamount to admitting that progress came to an end with the classics. Up to now, however, the classics remain unsurpassed. This means that we must learn and continue to learn, and that we must adopt

all that is best in the classics and all that is essential for the further development of Soviet music.

Our young people are frightened away from learning from the classics by a lot of chatter about "epigonism." The slogan now has it that the classics must be outdone. That would be very good, of course. But in order to outdo the classics they must first be equalled, yet you dismiss the stage of equaling them as though it were a stage already reached. But to give frank expression to what goes on in the minds of a Soviet audience one would have to say that it would do no harm if more compositions appeared among us which approached classical music with regard to content, form, polish and beauty of melody. If that be "epigonism" then I suggest that there would be nothing discreditable in being an "epigone."

NATURALISM

Now to go on to the subject of naturalist distortion: it has become clear here that departures from the natural and healthy standards of music are on the increase. Elements of crude naturalism are penetrating more and more into our music. Ninety years ago Serov warned against the passion for crude naturalism in the following words:

"In nature there is an infinity of sound of the most diverse and varied description. In some cases they can be given names like noise, thunder, rumble, crackle, splashing, droning, humming, tinkling, howling, creaking, whistling, talking, whispering, rustling and so on; in others they cannot be expressed in speech. Any of these sounds are used

as material in the musical language only in exceptional cases as, for example, the ringing of bells, the clashing of cymbals, the tinkling of a triangle, or the sound of drums and tambourines and so on. The musical material proper is sound of a special character.”

Is it not true and right that in musical compositions the sound of cymbals and drums should be the exception and not the rule? Is it not clear that not every natural sound should be taken into musical creations? Yet how frequent among us is this unforgivable passion for vulgar naturalism, which to all intents and purposes is a step backwards.

It has to be said frankly that a great number of works by contemporary composers are so saturated with naturalistic sounds that they remind one either of a dentist's drill or a musical murder, if you will excuse the expression. Only, mind you, there is no force whatever behind it all.

This is the first step beyond the limits of the rational, beyond the limits not only of normal human emotions but of normal human intellect. There are, it is true, fashionable “theories” to the effect that a pathological condition is a higher state, and that schizophrenics and paranoiacs can attain spiritual heights in their ravings unattainable by an ordinary person in a normal state. These “theories” are not, of course, fortuitous. They are very characteristic of the period of decay and corruption of bourgeois culture. But let us leave all these “experiments” to the insane and let us ask for normal, human music from our composers.

What has been the result of the disregard of the

laws and standards of musical creation? Music has taken revenge on those who attempted to mutilate it. When music ceases to have content and to be highly artistic, and becomes crude, ugly and vulgar, it ceases to fulfil the demands which are the reasons for its existence. It ceases to be music.

You may be surprised that the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party asks for beauty and grace in music. Yes, we declare that we are for beautiful and graceful music, for a music which is capable of satisfying the aesthetic requirements and artistic tastes of the Soviet people; and these requirements and tastes have developed to an incredible extent. The people assesses a musical composition according to how profoundly it reflects the spirit of our epoch and people, and according to how intelligible it is to the wide masses.

For what is it in music that is proof of genius? It is not something that can only be grasped by a small group of aesthetes: a musical work is proved to be a work of genius by the scope of its content and depth, by its skill, and by the number of people who appreciate it, by the number of people it is able to inspire. Not all that is readily grasped is a work of genius, but all that is real genius is readily grasped, and the greater the genius the more intelligible is it to the broad masses of the people.

A.N. Serov was profoundly right when he said that "but for the genuinely and timelessly beautiful in their art there would be admiration neither for Homer, Dante and Shakespeare, nor for Raphael, Titian and Poussin, nor for Palestrina, Handel and Gluck..."

The greater a work of music, the more responsive the chords it strikes in the human spirit. From the point of view of musical perception man is such a miraculous receiver, working on thousands of wavelengths — I daresay there are better comparisons — that for him the tone of one note, the sound from one string, or a single emotion, is insufficient. A composer capable of striking only one answering note, or only a few strings, is inadequate, since modern man — and particularly our Soviet man — is a highly complex organ of receptivity. Glinka, Tchaikovsky and Serov wrote of the Russian people as being highly developed musically, and this at a time when classical music had not yet found a wide understanding among them. In the years of Soviet power the people's musical culture has developed to an extraordinary degree. The artistic tastes of our previously merely musical people have become greatly enriched, thanks to a wide dissemination of classical music.

If you have allowed music to become impoverished, and if, as in Muradeli's opera, the full possibilities of an orchestra and abilities of singers are not utilized, then you have ceased to satisfy the musical demands of your audience. As you sow, so you shall reap. Do not let composers who have written works unintelligible to the people think that, while the people may not understand this music now, they will do so when they have become more mature. The people do not need music which they cannot understand. The composers ought to reproach themselves instead of the people; they should subject their work to a critical appraisal in

order to understand why they did not please their people, why they did not merit approval, and in order to understand what they have to do to make themselves understood by the people and win their approval. That is the foundation upon which one's creative work must be reorganized.

PROFESSIONAL SKILL

Now I want to go on to deal with the danger of losing professional skill. Formalist distortion impoverishes music and at the same time brings with it the danger of professional skill being lost. In this connection we must examine another widespread error — that of believing that classical music is rather simple, and that modern music is more complex; of believing that the complication in technique of modern music represents a step forward, since all development proceeds from the simple to the more complex and from the particular to the general.

It is not true that complication of any kind whatever is the equivalent to a growth in skill. Whoever thinks that any kind of complication represents progress makes a profound mistake. Here is an example. We know that literary Russian makes use of a great number of foreign words, and we know that Lenin ridiculed the misuse of foreign words and that he came out strongly for a cleansing of the native language of foreign-bred impurities. A complication of the language by way of introducing a foreign word for which there is a full equivalent in the Russian language never did represent a progressive step. For instance, the foreign word

losung [German for "slogan"] has now been replaced by the Russian word *prizyv*, and does not an exchange of this kind represent a step forward? So it is in music, too. A purely superficial complication of composition methods camouflages a tendency to impoverish music.

Musical language is becoming inexpressive. So much that is crude and vulgar and false is being introduced into music that it is beginning to fail in its function, which is to provide pleasure.

Or is the aesthetic significance of music to be abolished? Is that what innovation means? Is music a soliloquy — the composer talking to himself? And if that is the case, why inflict it on the people? This music becomes anti-popular and super-individualist, and the people have every right to be indifferent to its fate and are indifferent to it. If an audience is expected to praise music which is crude, ugly and vulgar, and based on atonality and continuous dissonance, and if false notes and combinations of false notes become the rule, and assonance the exception, then the fundamental standards of music are being abandoned.

The sum total of this represents a threat to the existence of music, just as cubism and futurism have as their aim nothing more nor less than the decay of painting. Music which deliberately ignores the normal human emotions and jars the mind and nervous system can never be popular, or of use to society.

The narrow passion for symphonic music without text has been mentioned here. It is incorrect to ignore all the many genres of music. What it leads

to can again be seen in the example of Muradeli's opera. Just call to mind how liberal the great masters of the art were in this respect. They well understood that the people demanded music in a variety of genres. Why are you so unlike your great predecessors? You are far more hard-hearted in this than those who occupied the summit of their art and yet wrote songs for the people — solo, choral and orchestral.

Melodiousness is beginning to disappear. A passionate emphasis on rhythm at the expense of melody is characteristic of modern music. Yet we know that music can give pleasure only if it contains the essential elements in a specific harmonic combination. One-sided emphasis leads to a violation of the correct interaction of the various elements of music and cannot, of course, be accepted by the normal human ear.

The use of instruments for purposes outside their functions also comes under the heading of distortion; when, for example, the piano is turned into a percussion instrument. The role of vocal music is being curtailed for the benefit of a one-sided development of instrumental music. Vocal music itself concerns itself less and less with the demands of the normal standards of singing. The criticisms from the vocalists, expressed here by Comrades Derzhinskaya and Katulskaya, must be taken into the fullest consideration.

All these and similar departures from the standards of the art of music represent not only a violation of the fundamentals of musical sound but also an assault upon the fundamental physiology of nor-

mal human hearing. Unfortunately the theory which deals with the physiological effect of music on the human organism has been insufficiently developed. It should be borne in mind, however, that bad, unharmonious music undoubtedly disturbs the balance of mental and physiological functions.

TASKS OF SOVIET MUSIC

What conclusions can be drawn? The significance of the classical heritage must be fully restored. The danger of destruction threatening music from the formalist trend must be stressed and this trend must be condemned as an assault upon the edifice of the art created by the great masters of musical culture. Our composers must reorientate themselves and turn towards their people. All of them must realize that our Party, expressing the interests of our state and our people, will support only a healthy and progressive trend in music, the trend of Soviet socialist realism.

Comrades, if you value the lofty calling of Soviet composer, you must prove yourselves capable of serving your people better than you have done up to the present. You are facing a serious test. The formalist trend in music was condemned by the Party twelve years ago. Since then the government has awarded Stalin prizes to many of you, among them those guilty of formalism. The rewards you received were in the nature of a substantial advance payment. We did not consider that your compositions were free of defects, but we were patient, expecting our composers to find within themselves the strength to choose the right road. But it is now

clear to everybody that the intervention of the Party was necessary. The Central Committee tells you bluntly that our music will never win glory along the road you have chosen.

Soviet composers have two highly responsible tasks. The chief one is to develop and perfect Soviet music. The other is to protect Soviet music against penetration by elements of bourgeois decay. We must not forget that the USSR is now the true custodian of the musical culture of mankind just as she is in all other fields, too, a bulwark of human civilization and culture against bourgeois corruption and decay.

We must take into account the fact that alien bourgeois influences from abroad will muster what remains of a capitalist outlook in the minds of some Soviet intellectuals in frivolous and crazy attempts to replace the treasures of Soviet musical culture by the pitiful tatters of modern bourgeois art. For this reason not only the musical but also the political ear of Soviet composers must be very sensitive. Your contact with the people must be closer than ever before. The ear for music must be an "ear for criticism" too. You should keep track of the various stages through which art is passing in the West. But it is your task not only to prevent the penetration of bourgeois influences into Soviet music: it is your task, too, to consolidate the supremacy of Soviet music and to create a mighty Soviet musical culture which will embody all that is best from the past, and which will reflect Soviet society of today and enable the culture and the communist consciousness of our people to attain still

greater heights.

We Bolsheviks do not deny our cultural heritage. On the contrary, we subject to a critical study the cultural heritage of all peoples and all ages in order to draw from it all that can inspire the working people of Soviet society to great achievements in labour, science and culture. You must help the people in this; and if you do not set yourselves this task and devote yourselves wholeheartedly to it and give to it all your enthusiasm and creative ardour, you are not fulfilling your historic role.

Comrades, we would very much like — we fervently wish — to have in existence among us our own “Mighty Few,” a group which would be more numerous and more influential still than that which in its day sent the fame of its talents around the world and glorified our people. In order to achieve this you must clear out of your path all that might weaken you and select only the means and equipment which will make you strong and mighty. If you use to the full our great musical heritage and at the same time develop it in the spirit of the new demands of our great epoch, you will become a Soviet “Mighty Few.” We want to see this backwardness through which you are passing overcome as quickly as possible, so that you can the sooner re-orientate yourselves and become a glorious cohort of Soviet composers, the pride of the entire Soviet people.



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