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Translation

Miscellaneous
(Vienna Festival)

*Submitted by S. Olynyk

1. During the seminar, "Present Problems in Literature" I met three Russian writers and we engaged in a short conversation. They asked me what my opinion was of the matters under discussion, whether I agreed with the other Americans and Britishers (who were very critical of Soviet literature). In answer to my statement that I have my own opinions, my own ideas, that in America we have complete freedom of thought and expression, they replied, "Yes, you have complete freedom in this regard, think independently, you are still young."

On departing, one of them (Russian writer) stated, "Well, goodbye Steven, grow ~~up~~." Later, from a distance he added, "Remember that you are a Ukrainian!"

2. During opening of the festival at the stadium, I talked with two young Russian writers. As I always did later, I told them I was of Ukrainian extraction. After a short while of conversing, I purposely asked, "Tell me, what of you are KHAKHLI. I would like to talk with them." One of them replied, "We have no khakhhlis. We have only Ukrainians. We have no such nationality as khakli."

3. During a conversation with a young Ukrainian artist and a sculptor it became evident that they were more familiar with the Russian language, although they spoke with me in Ukrainian. The sculptor did not know the Ukrainian language well. Neither one of them had heard of Archipenko or other Ukrainian artists in America or Europe. During the conversation there were Russians and a young British journalist-writer present. Only the Russians countered the arguments of the Britisher. The two Ukrainians only listened. They didn't want to participate in the defense of the USSR.

4. During the concerts, a large percentage of Ukrainians, and especially the girls, made frequent written notes. They even noted the amount of applause, etc.

5. During the last night and the last performance by the Soviet group, BORYSYUK left the concert hall together with me and in a provocative manner stated, "there you have the development of culture. There's an Army for you! They sing lively and with pride. That's a sign of a healthy body, youth, a sign of life. Where else do they sing and dance as we do?"

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My reply: "In America, They sing and dance even more ~~and~~ and *there is more* life ~~in those dances~~ in those dances. Today, modern nations - civilized, mature nations not only dance and sing but express themselves politically as well. That is the difference between primitive nations - tribes (their culture also develops in song and dance) and modern nations, nations politically developed."

X BORYSYUK listened, thought for a while and then countered with the following reply: "We also have political development; we are not so bad off in the political sense." (He must have been thinking of the USSR as a whole.)

X STETSIUK made similar comments that evening. Referring to the group of Ukrainian "tourists" who were singing Moscow Evenings he said: "There's where the future is. That is our future. The youth full of ideals which will bring victory."

6. It was difficult to tell what nationality one was, except by one's dress. Ukrainian embroidered shirts also were being worn by Russians and even by one Uzbek. When I asked one individual if he was a Ukrainian since he was wearing a Ukrainian shirt he answered that even non-Ukrainians in the USSR wear Ukrainian embroidered shirts. The Uzbek said, "Yes, the shirt is Ukrainian but I am an Uzbek."

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Conversations with Poles at the Vienna Festival

I. In conversations with Poles I posed as an "American Pole from Polonia" and most of those I encountered believed me. They were very friendly toward me. I was something new to them because so far as I knew, there were no Poles in the American delegation. However, there were some of them in the operative groups in the city of Vienna itself; i.e., Independent Service, etc.

The Polish delegation was one of the satellite groups which joined with other non-communist delegations at the MESSEGELENDE, and their's was the only arts group represented in the city, probably in the Polish consulate. In this manner the Poles had opportunity to meet with all non-communist participants, to talk with them and travel freely in the city. They had their own "observers" into which category you could place the greater percentage of their older delegates who were a bit too old to be delegates. They lived separately in one of the better living quarters.

In general, they were quite cautious, although they were very happy to converse with one once they heard you speak in Polish.

II. The youth and the older delegates were divided into two groups, those who praised everything about present day Poland and those who were somewhat critical of past and present circumstances in Poland.

They all stated that conditions improved under Gomułka and talked about the destruction of Warsaw and other cities in Poland during World War II which they blamed for some of the present weaknesses in the economical-sociological aspects. Similarly they were all optimistic about the future.

In general they spoke favorably of the United States, with the exception of three "superiors" who poured all their abuses on America during our conversations, calling her imperialistic, deceiving and used many other epithets characteristic of Communists. They praised life in Poland so highly that it was obvious things weren't so rosy. For instance, one of them was boasting that in Poland they now have free vacations for the workers' children and his wife interrupted saying, "Yanek, that is not true because the last time we paid 80 sloty." Yanek paid no attention to her and continued his extreme boasting in which his wife corrected him on two more occasions. With the exception of this one man, everyone with whom I talked was favorably inclined toward West Germany and Adenaur.

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Attitude Toward Ukrainians:

The youth was generally favorably inclined, although I had no opportunity to get into any real deep discussions on this subject because I posed as an American Pole.

In a conversation with a middle aged construction teacher, an old boy scout, who boasted that he travelled a lot "during the old regime" about which he was sentimental. I learned the following: Western Ukrainian lands belong to the Ukraine and this fact must be accepted. The young people who do not remember the pre-war period and who feel no ties to these lands accept the present status quo as "natural," but the older people, and chiefly those who lived there, have a sentimental attachment to these, their former areas and look at this more emotionally and it is "necessary to understand them." In addition, the "Polish emigre press" incites these people.

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