

ON COMMUNIST EDUCATION
SELECTED ARTICLES AND SPEECHES

M. I. KALININ



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EDITOR'S NOTE

Mikhail Ivanovich Kalinin came from a poor peasant background and worked in a factory as a steelworker. He joined the early Bolsheviks and became mayor of Petrograd (Leningrad) and later Head of State or President of the USSR from 1919 to 1946, during which time he also became a member of the Politburo. This collection of speeches and articles are from 1926, through the war, and just after.

The topics in this text are collected generally under “Communist Education,” and include subjects such as the dialectics of theory and practice, education vs. instruction, propaganda and agitation, and the importance of continued study during wartime.

We at FLP debated the publication of this text throughout the editing process, mainly because we found inconsistencies in Kalinin’s approach to the issues in some articles compared to others that showed a more dialectical outlook. For instance, in “A Discussion Between M. I. Kalinin and Functionaries of the State Labor Reserves and of Komsomol Organizations of Trade, Railway and Industrial Training Schools,” instructors at a training school described to Kalinin how some of the young students had run away in fear after their school was destroyed in a German air raid. Kalinin’s response was to chide them for not shaming the youth for being cowards. Or, in another example—in “A Single Family of Fighters”—Kalinin speaks of being internationalists, but encourages agitators to stoke nationalism among under-performing non-Russian fighters to motivate them: “Do you really want people to think just because of you that all our people are cowards?”

However, in reading and editing the texts, we found that we learned a lot about the Soviet conception of communist education overall, and were able to place them in the context of what the State believed was necessary in different time periods, especially in the brutal years of the Great Patriotic War. While we may not agree in hindsight with some of Kalinin’s ideas and approaches, reading about them helps us understand the first socialist experiment in a general and more specific sense, and in that deeper understanding in turn helps us to understand the efforts—in education and otherwise—in the second, in China.

As many Marxist and non-Marxist thinkers say, “don’t just read books you agree with.” Reading books and authors with which we disagree can only help us understand better with what we *do* agree and gain a sharper analysis of the internal and external contradictions within revolutionary struggles, which then better informs us in our work today. We hope that you will read this compilation in this spirit.

ON COMMUNIST EDUCATION

Selected Articles and Speeches

From a Speech at the Seventeenth Congress of the All-Union Leninist Young Communist League¹

March 11, 1926

You will note that both the Central Committee of the Party and our Soviet Government pay more attention to the Komsomol Congress than to any other Congress. Why is this so?... The main reason, it goes without saying, is that our country's main wealth is growing in the Komsomol. In the Komsomol we have those who later will take the places of the old guard of fighters for Socialism. The Komsomol is the vanguard, the cream of the proletariat and the peasant youth.

Accordingly, I believe that the aspirations and ideals particularly characteristic of the youth ought to grow and develop on a wide scale in the Komsomol.

Indeed, what is particularly characteristic of youth, of young people? What distinguishes a member of the Komsomol from the average adult, say, from me? Of course, outwardly I differ from you in having a grey beard. But that is only an outward distinction. If the differences were only outward, no special Komsomol organization would be needed. What further distinguishes the Komsomol is its peculiar spiritual qualities.

The first quality that especially distinguishes the Komsomol is its particular, exceptional receptivity. You, members of the Komsomol, do not fully understand this, but when we older people recall the past, we know that the memories of our youth stand out far more vividly than others. The events that take place at an adult age, when a person has grown up, slip from his memory more rapidly, than the events of his youth. What does that mean? It means that people are most receptive when they are young.

In this regard our approach to the Komsomol must be different. Let us take, for example, the problem of Communist agitation. The measure one might use in the case of an adult is dangerous when applied to a Komsomol member, inasmuch as the use of one and the same yardstick will create different impressions, cause different mental perturbations in the Komsomol member and the adult. From this premise a great many practical conclusions

¹ "Stenographic Report of the Seventh Congress of the All-Union Leninist Young Communist League," Russ. ed., 1926, pp. 15-18.

can be drawn as to the way propaganda and agitation should be conducted among the Communist youth.

What is particularly characteristic of young people is their tremendous inner urge to realize their ideals in practice. Young people are always ready for self-sacrifice: they are always eager to walk to the other end of the earth, to go to sea, whether before the mast or on the captain's bridge, to discover new lands, and so on and so forth. And, comrades, this is quite natural. I don't know about other people, but as for me, up to the age of 18, my head was full of that sort of thing. I do not think the young people of today are any different in this regard. I do not think this desire for the miraculous, the desire to perform wondrous feats of valor, to accomplish great things for the people in science and in other fields is not characteristic of the youth of today as well.

Then there is another point. By and large young people are exceptionally sincere and straightforward. Now, however sincere and straightforward a person of mature years may be, his life's experience and the knocks it brings with it considerably tone down these passionate yearnings of youth for truth and sincerity.

I have touched on only a few of the features that distinguish young people from adults. It seems to me that these are the main ones. I shall not stop to deal with others, but are these features in themselves of value to man? Undoubtedly they are. If these qualities of themselves were not of particular, exceptional value to man, I have no doubt that a considerable part of the spiritual beauty of youth might, perhaps, fade away.

Well then, we—particularly the leaders of Komsomol organizations, and the Party, which gives the lead and indicates the direction Komsomol activity should follow—we think that these peculiar qualities of youth should not be stifled. On the contrary, they should be preserved and developed; the new, more perfect human being should be brought up on this basis. It is easy enough to say “bring up” but the actual job of bringing up is, of course, a very difficult one.

...Many people are under the false impression that the development, the shaping of the human being consists in young people occupying themselves with their Komsomol duties. But these Komsomol duties consist mainly of mastering the ABC of politics, studying Marxism, in a word, social problems.

It seems to me that such a narrow view of problems concerning the formation of human beings is a wrong one. I recall the way we developed as Marxists in days gone by. We not only studied specifically Marxist books. (By the way, there were far fewer of them in those days. Take the present *The ABCs of Political Knowledge*, by Berdnikov and Svetlov, if nothing more. Why, it is a huge book. At that time we only had the *Erfurt Program* and the *Communist Manifesto*.) Well, then, I was referring to our studies in underground circles; while we studied the basic principles of Marxism we also covered a course of general education, beginning with the Russian classics—fiction writers, historians, critics—in a word, the whole range of knowledge to be found in books. While working in a plant, we at the same time got an all-round education in literature, science, etc.

I think that if, let us say, the fulfillment of Komsomol duties in our schools were to hinder the study of mathematics—I deliberately say mathematics, since it is a subject that most sharply differs from the rudiments of political knowledge—if the study of mathematics or the natural sciences were to be replaced by that of the rudiments of political knowledge, then we should be doing the wrong thing. In that case, the education of a Komsomol member who has read a few books on the rudiments of political knowledge would only be superficial. In conversation he would have something to say on every subject, superficially he would appear to be educated, he would have an outward gloss, but you would not call him a developed and educated person. When you meet such a Comrade he makes a very good impression at first. But just spend a few hours in conversation with him and you will see that his political knowledge has no basis, that he lacks the knowledge of the natural sciences possessed by any secondary school graduate. That is why, I think, the Komsomol organization should help not only to give the younger generation the rudiments of political knowledge but also see to it that their political knowledge is based on those branches of general education and knowledge that are considered the necessary attributes of every more or less developed person. This development, this knowledge, should not be ignored.

I once made the statement at the Lobachevsky Military Academy that to study Marxism does not mean to read through Marx, Engels and Lenin; you may study their works from cover to cover, you may be able to repeat their ideas word for word, but that will not necessarily signify that you have really learned Marxism. To learn Marxism means to know after mastering

the Marxist method how to approach all the other problems connected with your work. If, let us say, the sphere of your future work is agriculture, will it be of advantage to be able to employ the Marxist method? Of course it will. But to employ the Marxist method, you have to study agriculture, too, you have to be an agricultural expert. Otherwise nothing will come of your attempt to apply Marxism in agriculture. This should not be forgotten if you wish to apply Marxism in practice, if you wish to be men of action, and not text-mongers of Marxism. But what does being a Marxist mean? It means being able to adopt the correct line. But to be able to adopt the correct Marxist line, you also need to be a first-rate expert in your particular sphere of activity.

Now this general thesis is applicable literally to all members of the Komsomol organization, from students down to Komsomol members working in agriculture in the countryside, and factory apprentices. In order to be a good fitter who can apply his knowledge and tackle each job in the way that will give the best results, every Komsomol member at a factory has to consider in advance how to go about his work. Anybody who undertakes a job without a plan does his work badly, and as a result turns out an article of poor quality. Hence you see that the Komsomol organization has to impress on each of its members that his chief task is to acquire a perfect knowledge of the trade he is learning, to work as well as his teacher does. If he learns his trade he is able to provide for himself materially, and in addition has the prospect of developing his particular aptitudes still further as time goes on. If a turner or a fitter works badly he will be tied to his job, because a bad worker has great difficulty in finding a new one; and it is not easy for a Komsomol member to work for long at one and the same job, because he wants to see the world. If you want to see the world, be the sort of fitter or turner who, after the first trial, will be given a job anywhere.

In conclusion—a little homily. I have noticed that some of our young people adopt a flippant attitude to the skilled men who teach them. I would very much like our young people to read the ancient philosophers. There they would see with what attention and respect pupils regarded their teachers. To learn to work well, you must put your heart into your work. Unless you do, you will never learn to work. A fitter's apprentice, let us say, ought to disregard all the negative points of his teacher, and learn from him all he can about his trade. You know yourselves how funny an old man of 60 may look to young people in very many respects, but if you pay attention only to

this, you will miss the main thing. What you have to do is to learn all about your trade from him.

All the hopes of the Soviet Union are placed on the Komsomol organization. Our further successes will depend on its successes, on how it assimilates the achievements we already have.

Hence it is quite natural that if the Komsomol does not pay enough attention to these main issues, we shall fail to accomplish the task facing us, we shall lose a great many highly valuable trades without having succeeded in passing them on in their entirety to the Komsomol. I would like you to examine thoroughly all the problems I have outlined in brief, all the various propositions I have placed before you.

If the young people correctly approach these problems, a substantial part of the negative points I have dealt with will be overcome of themselves. For life *is* too interesting, there are so many subjects to absorb one's attention. All you have to do is to interest the youth in such subjects as are of great value and make for their all-round development.

Study and Life²

From a Speech at Graduation Exercises at the Sverdlov University

May 30, 1926

Revolutionary Work and Theoretical Schooling

At the present moment we are going through an extremely complicated period. With every passing year our life is becoming increasingly complex. In our work of building the Soviet State we need more and more highly skilled personnel. Nowadays it is highly unfeasible to approach social phenomena in a primitive manner. On the contrary, Marxist dialectics teaches us that what was black yesterday has become white today. And what was red yesterday is white today. We must be able on each occasion to approach each social phenomenon in a profound, Marxist way. We must be able to grasp the subject as a whole and at the same time to analyze all its inner content. To be able to grasp subjects as a whole, to analyze their inner essence requires, of course, an enormous amount of preliminary Marxist training. Particularly is such training necessary when the person concerned has had no extensive practical experience previously.

And so, I say, at the present time both the work of building the Soviet State and the activities of the Party stand in very great need of highly qualified personnel. Our Soviet Union, I dare say, is ahead of all European and non-European countries as regards political education, political activity of the masses, and political-mindedness. There can be hardly any doubt on this score, but for all that political activity has not yet reached a sufficiently high level to cope with the enormous, systematic and regular constructive work being done.

Without a doubt our job is to make use of the activity of the masses, their desire to understand political problems, in the cultural work of our Party. At times of great uplift (as now, during the British General Strike) every worker who was an indifferent bystander yesterday becomes a hero—he fights for the Workers' interests, and the uplift among the masses brings heroes to the forefront, one after the other, in the struggle for the masses.

² Originally published in *Izvestia*, June 27, 1926.

But, comrades, the forward movement is not always rapid. We frequently have to retreat—and the drab uneventful years, the years of routine humdrum work occupy ninety-nine percent of a person's life. The most valuable quality in a Party worker is the ability to work with enthusiasm in an ordinary, humdrum situation, and to overcome, day in and day out, one obstacle after another; the ability to preserve his enthusiasm in face of the obstacles with which practical life confronts him daily, hourly, and to let the humdrum, cumbrous obstacles develop and strengthen his zeal; the ability in this day-to-day work to keep in mind and never lose sight of the ultimate aims for which the Communist movement is fighting.

Our Party headquarters' staff—using the term in its broadest sense—as members of which you, too, will be working, should not become so engrossed in current work as to forget these ultimate aims. And whatever the obstacles that may confront it, it is firm in the knowledge that these obstacles will be overcome, if not today, then tomorrow. What is needed is that it should be able to pass on, to instill into the minds of wide masses of non-Party workers and peasants, its firm faith in the final victory of Communism, and do so on the basis of everyday practical work and concrete examples. Only then does the worker value a leader. And not only the worker; you, too, value only the teacher or leader who, together with the masses, is fired with enthusiasm, and who transmits his burning enthusiasm into the minds of the people among whom he works. Therefore, comrades, to work in the Party, where the work itself to a certain degree involves self-sacrifice, and to find pleasure, to find satisfaction in this self-sacrificing work, one must be profoundly convinced of the justness and beauty of the principles for which we are fighting. Who, indeed, can be more convinced of the justness of these principles, of these ideas taught by Marxism than those who have spent three years studying them....

Marxism and Its Application

To be a Marxist does not mean merely to read or even study Lenin, Marx, Engels and Plekhanov. Of course if it is a matter of knowing Marxism, it will be enough if you read the works of these four authors, and you will know it. But it is one thing to know Marxism, and another to apply this Marxism daily, hourly, in the most diverse, peculiar, unprecedented circumstances. Textual knowledge of Marxism does not necessarily mean the ability to approach each question in a Marxist way. If to be a Marxist it was suffi-

cient to be familiar with or to have made some study of the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Plekhanov, then, of course, we would turn out Marxists like hotcakes. However difficult it may be to make a deep study of these four great Marxists, it nevertheless can be done by expending a certain amount of time. Indeed, there are people in the ranks of our Communist Party who know Marx textually...

To study Marxism—its method and its outlook—means to study not only the works of the above-mentioned authors but also the historical march of events; its real test is practical activity. You have only mastered the Marxist method (if you have mastered it, I think you have not yet done so completely), but you have mastered it like the military man who graduates at the Academy of the General Staff. Of course, the bulk of commanders-in-chief the world over are graduates of Academies; that is true enough. But it would be wrong to say that every Academy graduate makes a first-rate commander-in-chief. None of the army commanders in our revolutionary army are Academy men. What does that mean? Marxism is one of the most vital of sciences, and not an abstract theory. When you read Volume One of Marx's *Capital* you are entirely in a world of abstractions. Since you have read—as a duty if nothing more—Volume One of Marx's *Capital*, you also experienced that feeling. You are in a world of abstraction and you wonder how to apply this theory in practice, in life. This abstract theory is at the same time the most vital theory, a theory studied more than any other, day in and day out, in the process of practical activity.

Marxism Is Creative Work

To be a Marxist you must saturate theory with life, link up your daily work with theory; to be a Marxist means to do creative work.

What do we mean by doing creative work? What is the difference between one who does creative work and one who is a mere craftsman? The same as between an artist and a plain dauber. Take the icons done by the painters of Vladimir and Suzdal. They are all alike; not a single icon has a face with life in it... A person who does creative work is another matter. He puts his heart and soul into the simplest job he does, even if he happens to be making a pair of bast shoes. A craftsman can be an outstanding artist if he puts his heart and soul into the work he does. And an artist may be a craftsman if all he does is daub, without putting his heart into his work. Thus Marxism. into which one does not put one's heart, Marxism that is

not bound up with creative work, that is not always alive to all that is going on, is quasi-Marxism. If, when you get back to your localities, you apply the knowledge you have acquired scholastically, in hackneyed fashion, you will be journeymen of Leninism. You will not carry the masses along with you. Your application of the Marxist method will be a wrong one. The Marxist method is correctly applied when we employ Marx's theory to make a study of the phenomenon confronting us. And the decision we take will be a new one each time. If you settle a problem one way today, tomorrow you will settle the same problem in a new way, for the situation tomorrow will be different. The situation is constantly changing. History moves on, it does not mark time, but everlastingly moves forward. And the Marxist must constantly move forward, in step with historical progress. The Marxist must always be able to find his exact bearings. The mind of the Marxist, however simple the work he is doing, must always be in a ferment, studying, creating. You, comrades, have now finished a three years' course of Marxism. Naturally enough you are all moved by the lofty desire to work as fruitfully as possible. For what greater reward can a person want than to know that he has been of some benefit to society! There is no greater reward! However beautiful the pictures you may conjure up in your minds, nothing will give you greater satisfaction than the thought that you are useful. Awareness of this brings one complete satisfaction.

The younger generation cannot as yet have undergone this practical experience of life, the political experience of revolutionary struggle, the experience of the struggle between classes, the experience of winning the masses, of enlisting their support. It lacks that experience.

I would like you to understand, to be imbued with the consciousness that if you wish to win the masses, you have to be aflame with enthusiasm, that if you rise to address a meeting without feeling excited yourself, if you would rather be sleeping, then the mood of your audience will undoubtedly correspond to your own. Let me tell you this outright—there is nothing more sensitive than an audience. It is the most sensitive barometer in existence. You may stutter and stammer on the platform, but if you are excited, if the questions you raise are of importance, if you solve a problem while speaking, you will carry the masses. What does that show? It shows that if you wish the masses to follow your lead, you have to be fired by the same enthusiasm as they are.

Work Among the Masses

And finally, comrades, one more little item for your edification. Without doubt you are now, and will be in the future, a cultural force in the localities.

Our Soviet Union is now a great country, our Party is now passing the million mark. But in this party of a million members, as well as throughout the whole of our country, culture is still at a low level. Hence, in your future work never flaunt your culture before the masses. Never. In this regard the masses are very sensitive. The only way to talk to the masses is openly, frankly, realizing that they are people possessed of as much common sense as yourself, and as capable of solving the problem at issue just as intelligently as the speaker or author himself.

These are the few words I thought necessary to say to you today as you are about to take leave of school...

Develop Yourself in Every Way³

May 1934

We value members of the Komsomol not only because, as Young Pioneers say, they are the “heirs” of the old Bolsheviks, but also because these “heirs” play an active part in building up our country, being one of its active creative forces. This, of course, places great obligations on the Leninist Komsomol. And the prime duty of each organization of the Komsomol, as of all organizations in general, should be to know how to direct and utilize their forces expediently, in a way that yields the best results.

The commander who throws all his forces into action at once is not always a good officer. It is not always expedient to do so in battle. A good commanding officer is he who is able to preserve to a maximum degree the energies of his men for the decisive battle. Comrade Budyonny once correctly referred to an error made by a certain Whiteguard commander during the Civil War: both were leading their forces parallel to one another across the Azov steppes. Budyonny led his command through inhabited areas, where the Red Army men could sleep at night and get fodder for the horses. The enemy, on the other hand, moved along the bare, sun-scorched steppe. In this way they covered over two hundred kilometers. Budyonny’s troops arrived at their destination in the best of spirits, ready for action. The enemy, on the contrary, was worn out, and was routed by Comrade Budyonny. What I want to say is that every organizer should arrange his work properly, calculate and weigh all circumstances in good time, and throw all his material forces, the whole strength of his organization into action only when the need arises. Comrade Lenin possessed this Bolshevik quality to perfection and so too does Comrade Stalin. Komsomol members must also learn to master it by reorganizing their work so as to know each Komsomol member and what he can do, how he can and should be helped, and what task he should be given in the best interests of the work at hand.

Take the following example: Among Komsomol members there are a great many students of technical colleges, universities and technical secondary schools. Frequently these people are overloaded with work. And if the

³ From a speech at a conference of leading members of the Young Communist League organization in Dnepropetrovsk. Originally published in *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, May 24, 1934.

students do not properly organize their timetable of study, social work, and rest, some of will find their health undermined by the time they graduate. One may discover he has a liver complaint, another's kidneys may be out of order, and a third may have trouble with his digestion. Now, who should see to it that the life of our students is properly organized, who is responsible first and foremost to the Party for these cadres? The Komsomol! It is its business. It should attend to this, carry on day-to-day work in the schools, from the elementary school to the university. The Komsomol should help to secure the unswerving fulfillment of the appropriate directives of the government and better organization of the studies and everyday life of students.

Our proletarian State engaged in Socialist constructive work is surrounded by capitalist countries. That is to say, we are constantly exposed to the possibility of being attacked by enemies. We must not forget that for a single moment in our daily, peaceful work. We must, all of us, always be on guard, always be at our action stations.

Who will make up the bulk of our army in the event of war? It will consist in tremendous measure of Komsomol members. That is why Komsomol members in particular must be on their guard. They must always remember that under the guidance of and shoulder to shoulder with members of the Communist Party they will have to bear the impact of the very first blow in the event of enemy attack. And, as is well known, the enemy's first blows are the most violent. This makes it the duty of Komsomol members and the young workers who follow their lead to make a thorough study of military technique. Comrade Voroshilov has set the Komsomol quite concrete, clear-cut tasks as regards defense activity. They are well known, have to be fulfilled, and there is no need to repeat them.

Here, however, attention should be drawn to that very important sphere of Komsomol activity, physical culture. Sport is a good thing, it builds you up. But for all that it is a subsidiary matter, and it will not do to turn it into an end in itself, into a matter of mere record-breaking. We want people to be developed in every way, we want them to run and swim well, to walk fast and gracefully, and to be sound in every limb—in a word, we want them to be normal and healthy, prepared for labor and defense, we want to see the proper development of all their physical qualities accompanied by a parallel development of their mental qualities.

During a visit to a number of military schools by Comrade Voroshilov and myself, he drew particular attention to these points. He said that

we should avoid mere record-breaking, and should not engage in sport for sport's sake, that sport should be subordinated to the general problems of Communist education. For what we are doing is developing and training not mere sportsmen, but citizens engaged in building up the Soviet State, people who must have not only strong arms and a good digestion, but primarily a broad political outlook and organizational abilities. Hence, while drawing new millions of the working youth into the physical culture movement, and while raising sport in our country to the highest level, the Komsomol must ensure that our sportsmen possess clear-cut views on political issues and public affairs.

I would like Komsomol members to understand me correctly. I do not want them to imagine that I am anxious to curb their enthusiasm. I would like them to understand how important it is in all spheres of our life and work to organize things correctly and in Bolshevik fashion.

Particularly do I want to say a few words about the feeling of comradeship among the youth. It is when people are young that they are most inclined to friendship, to giving collective aid to comrades. Rarely—maybe in two or three cases out of a hundred—will a young person desert a comrade in need. This feeling of comradeship is of exceptional importance on the battlefield. An army column in which every man has complete confidence in the steadfastness of his neighbor possesses a fighting capacity of an exceptionally high order. Enemy fire will cause no panic at all; at any rate, if there is any, it will be reduced to a minimum. Feelings such as these unite soldiers and heighten their sense of discipline. The feeling of comradeship, of class friendship should be developed among the youth in every way. It is one of the most Socialistic of qualities, and is needed everywhere, particularly in the class struggle.

Many people are accustomed to regard the feeling of comradeship as so many words, yet if this feeling is properly developed, if the effort is made to ensure that Komsomol members and young people, not belonging to the Komsomol, comrades and friends, join in sharing the joy they derive from their work, in overcoming difficulties, in really lending one another a helping hand to master the technique of their jobs, and in spending their leisure hours together, participating in physical culture and sport, and so on, their comradeship will be a splendid complement to Socialist emulation, and will yield great results.

Our Komsomol members live in an exceptionally good, very interesting period. No other young generation in the whole of human history has experienced the like.

As a matter of fact, in times undisturbed by gigantic historical upheavals, you can live until Seventy without making the least advance; when there are no great changes in life a person may be born and die of old age in one and the same house.

All of us, however, live, and our young people are living, in a period of colossal historical upheavals. Before our very eyes there still exist states with considerable survivals of feudalism, yet at the same time in Russia, once the most barbaric country in Europe, the onetime prison of the peoples, the building up of Socialism, is in full swing.

When has there ever been a more interesting period in history? When has there been more heroism and drama than in our days?

Even the days of the French Revolution, rich though they were in events and perturbations, were not so heroic and dramatic as ours. And, of course, there can be no comparison between that revolution and ours. Progressive though that revolution was in its day, it was a bourgeois revolution. Our, Socialist, revolution is, for the first time in history, fighting for the interests of the proletariat, the vanguard class, the most progressive class in history, and thereby is fighting for the interests of the whole of working mankind. I very much advise Komsomol members, our young people, to read Gorky's *Stormy Petrel* which splendidly portrays the revolutionary strivings of the advanced people of old Russia.

He who wishes to spend his life in Socialist activity creates, changes life, fights, smashes the old, and builds up the new. And the Soviet life we live enables everyone who works, every young worker or kolkhoznik,⁴ to display and develop all his capacities and talents to the greatest effect. It goes without saying that never in human history has there been a period as interesting as the present one, for prior to the October Revolution people fought for a crust of bread while a handful of wealthy men dominated over millions of working people.

There can be no doubt that before long splendid works of art will be produced, based on our struggle, on the reconstruction taking place in our country. There can be no doubt that artists will find magnificent themes

⁴ Kolkhoznik: member of a kolkhoz, a collective farm.—Ed

in the mighty achievements of our revolutionary time. And it really is a source of great happiness to live at such a time. Despite my 58 years, I consider myself most fortunate to be living in this period. We know that Communism will come, life will be splendid and interesting, but the very best moment is the one when the struggle between classes is on, when you yourself are taking part in this struggle, when you know that the victor in this struggle will be the proletariat.

Now this cannot but inspire our young people as well to perform new feats in the struggle for Socialism. And we see that every day those who have been brought up by the Party—sons of the Leninist Komsomol—show how great is their devotion to the Socialist cause, how, at the Party's first call, they are mastering culture and technique, extracting minerals down in the mines, building an underground railway, storming the heights of the stratosphere, waging a courageous struggle against the grim Arctic, thus taking their places in the front ranks of the heroes of the Soviet Union.

The Central Committee of our Party, Comrade Stalin and the other members of the C.C., know how the Komsomol responds to all the tasks set by the Party. The Party and the Government find an absolutely inexhaustible well of love, devotion and support in the young generation of our country—in the Komsomol. We, old Bolsheviks, are confident that we are not mistaken. The members of the Komsomol are the new builders of our Soviet Union.

If you are a *real* Communist, you will remain young to the end of your days.

Why did I say a real Communist? Why does Communism inspire people so? A real Communist's personal troubles occupy a *subordinate* place in his mind: if something unpleasant happens in the family, it is painful, of course, but I do not think Socialism would suffer as a result, and hence the job on hand should not suffer either. It goes without saying that if you are concerned solely with domestic affairs, if you always think only of yourself and your Fekla, you will not be a real Communist. But when you really engage in active work, play an active part in all the constructive work that is going on, there will be times when you will not even notice what sort of dress she is wearing, and will forget the petty things in life and your private troubles.

To be a staunch Communist, you need, first and foremost, to have a firm Communist world outlook. The Communist world outlook enables us

to approach each problem skillfully, to approach each phenomenon correctly. The Communist world outlook is to fighters of the proletarian revolution what a powerful telescope, let us say, is to the astronomer, or a microscope to the laboratory researcher. The Communist world outlook enables the political worker, the person active in public affairs, to understand correctly and comprehensively the situation in which he is working, to organize the masses and lead them into battle, correctly to see, understand and outline future prospects. All this taken together gives one strength, makes one practically immune not only to petty, individual misfortunes but also to big ones.

If your life is guided by the idea of the common, collective good, if the cause of the community is your supreme concern, if your interests and hopes are the same as those of the people around you—these common interests of the working people make us, Communist old-timers, feel young.

Take the period of the Civil War and the period of our Socialist construction. In these times all working people, the old folks not excluded, displayed wonders of heroism and enthusiasm, performed outstanding exploits, and are continuing to do so now. This must be realized by those who are to take our place, the Komsomol members and young workers and kolkhozniks in general. From the old Bolsheviks, the old, battle-steeled proletarians they must learn habits of collectivity, the way to put heart and soul into one's work, and to understand and get a theoretical grasp of current events.

To keep in step with our eventful life, it is not enough merely to put all your heart into your work. The strength of the Bolshevik Party lies in the fact that it is armed with the teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, and wields this weapon to perfection. In conditions of illegality, hounded constantly by the gendarmes, waging a bitter struggle against tsarism and the bourgeoisie and condemned to penal servitude and exile, the Bolsheviks mastered revolutionary theory, giving a theoretical generalization to the experience of the struggle of the proletariat. True, there were times when we were "free" to study. When they put us into prison we would read, but, of course, that was not always possible. This "advantage," of course, is one that our young people of today do not possess.

Komsomol members, particularly those most active in its work, occasionally complain about having no time to read and improve their knowledge. I too am a busy man, and yet I devote time every day to reading. I read daily at least eight to ten pages not of documents, but of Marxist literature, and in addition, I read the latest novels.

Comrade Stalin once said that the worst thing of all is when people think in terms of ready-made formulations, ready-made slogans. That, of course, is the easiest way. To be able to express some theoretical proposition in your own words, you must first think it over well and understand it, otherwise you may make a mistake. But when you use formulations that you have memorized your mind is not working as it ought. It is asleep. That is why the first requirement in theoretical study is to make a deep study of the problem, to understand it, and not to learn the various propositions by rote.

Komsomol members, and particularly the active among them, work hard. They have much work to do; nonetheless it is their duty to be developed in every way.

To build Socialism, educated people are needed. However, it is not those who merely read a lot who can be considered educated, but those who make a thorough study of materialist philosophy, master the treasures of science, grasp what they have read and understand how to combine revolutionary theory with revolutionary practice.

And there can be no doubt that if Komsomol members organize their time properly, they will find opportunity enough for theoretical study, too.

From the Article “The Glorious Path Of The Komsomol” on the Occasion of the Twentieth Anniversary of the Leninist Young Communist League of the USSR⁵

October 1938

During the twenty years of its heroic struggle and work, the Komsomol has grown into an organization with six and a half million physically fit, materially secure and cultured members full of the joy of life and playing an active part in social life. The Komsomol has extensive prospects and possibilities for creative work and progress in all spheres of activity for the good of the working people. But the tasks facing the Komsomol are also tremendous and responsible.

As Comrade Stalin has defined it, the Komsomol is the Party’s reserve, the source from which the Party’s ranks are augmented. This augmentation proceeds not according to formal age considerations, for, as Lenin, citing Engels, once wrote:

Is it not natural that young persons should predominate in our party, the revolutionary party? We are the party of the future, and the future belongs to the youth. We are a party of innovators, and it is always the youth that most eagerly follows the innovators. We are the party of self-sacrificing struggle against the old rottenness, and youth is always the first to undertake a self-sacrificing struggle.⁶

Formal considerations are, of course, also taken into account, but they are not the main thing.

Membership in the Party is open to people who are capable of waging in its ranks and under its banner a self-sacrificing struggle for Communism. Entry into the Party imposes special obligations, both political and moral. That is why people joining the Party are studied carefully and verified from the point of view of how well they are equipped to fulfill these obligations and whether in general they are worthy of being Party members. The entire

⁵ Originally published: V. I. Lenin and J. Stalin, *About the Youth*, Molodaya Gvardia Publishing House, 1939, pp. 284-301.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 75.

background and the personal qualities of those wishing to join the Party are appraised at general meetings of the primary Party organizations. In joining the Party, each person entering it not only assumes the obligation to know the Party program and rules and to carry them out honestly—he makes, as it were, an unwritten vow not to do anything that might cast a slur on the Party, consciously and honestly to fulfill all the Party's decisions, to fight with all his energy, unsparing of his strength or life itself, for the Party line and for its orthodoxy, never to be dishonest in his conduct towards the Party and its various bodies, to observe Party discipline and play an active part in the life of the Party, to be tireless in raising his qualifications as a Party member by mastering Marxism-Leninism, to display exemplary discipline at work and in the performance of duties imposed by the state, by striving to acquire complete mastery of the technique of his job and of the work entrusted to him.

To be a member of the Party of Lenin-Stalin is a very great honor. For its members are selected from the best of the best. It is the working people's vanguard, which consciously marches at the head of an embattled army, fighting for the interests of the proletariat. Its principal aim in life is the achievement of the victory of Communism, and it is prepared to subordinate its entire activity to this struggle. And this is quite natural, for, as S. M. Kirov said,

a hard fight with the capitalist world lies ahead of us. We shall uproot the remnants of the capitalist elements not only in our own country. We know that the time will come when we shall storm the citadel of capitalism.⁷

The Komsomol, under the Party's guidance, trains the young generation, prepares new members for the Party, fighters for the workers' cause who are ready to storm capitalism. And in order to prepare such people and to give them the proper training in the Komsomol's ranks, the international aims of the youth must be accorded a considerable place in the work of the Komsomol. Our young people, says Comrade Stalin,

are free from the burden of the past, and it is easiest for them to assimilate Lenin's behests. And precisely because it is easiest for the youth to assimilate Lenin's behests, it is their mission to give

⁷ S. M. Kirov. *About the Youth*, Molodaya Gvardia Publishing House, 1938, p. 200.

guidance to the laggards and waverers. True, they lack knowledge. But knowledge is a thing that can be acquired. They have not the knowledge today; but they will have it tomorrow. Hence, the task is to study and study again the principles of Leninism. Comrades members of the Young Communist League! Learn the principles of Bolshevism and take the waverers in tow! Talk less and work more, and your success will be assured.⁸

But Lenin and Stalin repeatedly uttered the warning that Marxism cannot be learned, its essence mastered, by simply memorizing its formulas, that this method may produce a textmonger, an expert at citing texts, a pedant and a poor Marxist-Leninist. Marxism-Leninism is most thoroughly learned in the process of applying it to practical political activity, in the course of public and economic endeavor. And that is why the education of the youth in the spirit of Leninism must include not only study but also practical activity. There are people of the most varied professions in the Komsomol: scientists, writers, engineers, agronomists, workers and kolkhozniks, trade union, political and administrative workers, Red Army men, flyers, and so on. What a wealth of characters and intellect, what a variety of professional skill you have here! To cap it all they are full of energy, highly impressionable, very active, and eager to be of the utmost benefit to their people. The task facing the Komsomol is, then, to make skillful use of all this human energy manifested in the most varied forms, and to direct it organically, without thwarting personal inclinations, without putting a brake on youthful energy by bureaucratic methods, into the channel of Leninism, the channel of Party principles.

At the same time, however, one should bear in mind the numerous dangers and reefs which may easily wreck the ship of Komsomol leadership. A knowledge of Leninism merely helps, makes it easier, to solve political problems correctly; the solution must be provided by people, in the given case by Komsomol workers. It is these solutions, the extent to which they are sound and expedient from the standpoint of principle, that are the test of real Bolshevik leadership.

To illustrate my thought, I shall deal with two examples from our public life. We not only feel with our heroes, and applaud and glorify them, but do everything possible to ensure that they grow in numbers and improve

⁸ J. Stalin. *Problems of Leninism.*, Eng. ed., Moscow, 1947, p. 451.

in quality, firmly bearing in mind that heroism as a mass phenomenon is a product of our social system. Heroism in itself is a good human quality and is particularly native to youth. But we also regard it as one of the elements of our country's defense. I think it superfluous to point out that an army that is heroic, other things being equal, stands a better chance of winning.

The development of physical culture and sport on a mass scale among the people is exceptionally beneficial for it disciplines people, improves their health, stimulates their independent activity and initiative, and accustoms them to joint, coordinated endeavor. In a word, physical culture and sport are considerable factors in building up a healthy, strong, agile, resourceful, courageous human being, able to overcome obstacles and face the future with confidence. Yet all this taken together constitutes only the outward physical aspect of the matter. It is the task of the Komsomol to imbue the whole of this mass movement with the ideological content of revolutionary Marxism. And how is this to be done? There is only one way: to link up sports activity with the general work of building Socialism. I may be told that this is a platitude, that everybody knows all this, that everything beneficial to the common good is a particle of the work of Socialist construction. But it is just this general ideological content that needs to be instilled into peoples' minds. The keynote of the recent physical culture parade in Moscow was "Everything for the Defense of the Land of the Soviets." It can be said with certainty that the tasks of our country's defense have become deeply imprinted in the minds of the people, and the demonstration of their defense activity given by our sportsmen fully corresponds to the outlook, the strivings of the people. The conclusion to be drawn is that if these strivings of the people are to be transformed into practical activity, our physical culture organizations, each in accordance with its own peculiarities, obviously have to decide concretely what form their day-to-day participation in strengthening the defense of the country shall take.

In this way our sportsmen will be raising their work to a level corresponding to the common aspirations of the entire people as regards the defense of their Socialist homeland, i.e., they will be imparting to their work a profound inner content which will serve as an inexhaustible source from which to develop each separate branch of sports activity, and give powerful impetus to the attainment of still greater perfection.

That is the only way to link up book knowledge of Marxism-Leninism with day-to-day activity and struggle, i.e., with practical work, and avoid the

divorcement “which,” as Lenin said, “constituted the most disgusting feature of the old bourgeois society.”⁹ Only in this way will the Komsomol worthily fulfill its role as a reserve of the Party of Lenin-Stalin and prepare the militant contingents who will take the place of the old Bolshevik Guard.

Particularly responsible is the role of the Komsomol in production, both industrial and agricultural. Productivity of labor is the decisive force in the struggle against capitalism. Productivity of labor shows how much superior the Socialist system is to the capitalist system. Rising labor productivity is the most direct road to Communism, when each will receive according to his needs while working according to his abilities.

Within a brief space of time, the Socialist system in our country has shown how powerful are the productive forces inherent in Socialism. The whole problem is to know how to disclose and to direct all these forces in organized fashion to one goal.

The distinguishing feature of production in our Socialist country is that here work has changed from servitude and slavery into a matter of honor, valor and glory. This new conception of work must become part of the very being of Soviet citizens, and first and foremost, of the Komsomol and the Soviet youth in general.

Socialism has elevated work to the position of honor which is its due, for work was reduced to the lowest level of social activity by the class state of the exploiters. In capitalist society high productivity of labor results in the impoverishment of the workers and the enrichment of the capitalists. In our country, the Land of Socialism, on the contrary, high productivity of labor improves the material and cultural standards of the working people, strengthens the Socialist State.

The percentage of young people of Komsomol age in our country who are engaged in production is high. And not only in industry, at the new plants but also in agriculture, particularly in the part of it that is mechanized. Komsomol brigades in the kolkhozes are nearly always in the front ranks.

To organize labor, to increase its productivity even to the level of the elementary requirements of Socialist society, is a most complicated problem.

⁹ V. I. Lenin. *Selected Works in Two Volumes*, Vol. II, p. 662.

Lenin has said:

In the last analysis, productivity of labor is the most important, the principal thing for the victory of the new social system. Capitalism created a productivity of labor unknown under serfdom. Capitalism can be utterly vanquished, and will be utterly vanquished, by the fact that Socialism creates a new and much higher productivity of labor. This is a very difficult matter and must take considerable time....

Communism is the higher productivity of labor—compared with capitalist productivity of labor—of voluntary, class-conscious, united workers employing advanced technique....

Communism begins when the *rank-and-file workers* begin to display self-sacrificing concern that overcomes all obstacles for increasing the productivity of labor, for husbanding *every pood¹⁰ of grain, coal, iron* and other products, which do not accrue to the workers personally, or to their “close kith and kin” but to their “remote” kith and kin, i.e., to society as a whole, to tens and hundreds of millions of people, organized first in a single Socialist State, and then in a Union of Soviet Republics.¹¹

The youth must get to grips with this problem, which must be dealt with at Komsomol meetings, in discussions on organizational questions. Socialist emulation and Stakhanov working methods provide extensive possibilities for creative work at the point of production, particularly on the part of young technical personnel. The task facing Komsomol members engaged in production, particularly engineers, is to give wider application on different jobs to Comrade Stakhanov’s method in all its multiform aspects. To pioneer in Socialist emulation in the production of machine parts, to initiate long-term emulation between work brigades and even individuals is of particularly great importance now. I consider it of the utmost value when a participant in Socialist emulation occupies first place for year-round performance. To do so requires tremendous stamina, systematic work, care for machinery and tools; it is here that a good worker takes shape.

¹⁰ *Pood*: 1 *pood* is equal to 16.38 kg, or 36.11 lbs.—*Ed.*

¹¹ V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works in Two Volumes*, Vol. II, p. 497.

The way production is organized in a workshop is of tremendous importance. Suffice it to say that if the foreman selects work serially or of a more or less like character, the worker can do his job with far greater ease and results. The foreman who notes the workers' individual peculiarities, i.e., takes into account the fact that one worker may do his job slowly, yet work with precision and neatness, whereas another works with greater speed but turns out cruder products—such an experienced foreman will divide the work accordingly. All this should be discussed at production conferences, which are—and should be—good schools of technical training....

Some people may say that this is a narrow practicalness, too petty for consideration; they may ask whether this is the sort of thing with which to attract the Komsomol, which is eager to perform great feats of heroism. As for me, I think that it is this outwardly humdrum work that should serve Komsomol leaders to show and explain to the masses of Komsomol members that the one thing does not interfere with the other, but, on the contrary, supplements it. Will the young worker who is accustomed to getting the maximum results out of his machines, and who does so systematically, make a poor airman? One would imagine that his character will make itself felt in the Air Force too, i.e., he will get the maximum results out of his aircraft. One would imagine that his character will make itself felt in no less positive a fashion if he is placed in command of a military unit. So then, there is nothing to prevent great feats being performed and work of responsibility being undertaken.

But that is not all. Work, as we know, is a matter of honor, a matter of valor and glory, and when Komsomol members discuss questions of production at their meetings they should make precisely this point their premise, they should imbue the youth with the idea that the worker who does his job honestly, who regards it as a matter of vital interest to himself, thereby serves the cause of Lenin-Stalin, the cause of honor, the cause of valor and glory; that he is the main builder of Socialism, that he and the many millions of builders like him in town and country merit honor and glory. The Komsomol organization should devote particular attention to him, for in doing so it is fulfilling one of the Party's chief directives.

The international duties of our Komsomol constitute a matter of great responsibility, for it is looked up to by the working youth of the whole world. Let us then, to use Comrade Stalin's words, prove ourselves worthy

of occupying this place of honor as a shock brigade in the struggle for the victory of the proletariat the world over.

The youth of the Soviet Union are very favorably placed as regards physical and spiritual development. Family life, the relations between children and parents have taken so great a turn for the better as to be beyond comparison; here considerable advance has been made towards Socialism. In the capitalist world these relations are harsh and egoistic, coarse and brutal, but in our country they have become humanized in the best sense of the word. The equality of women has no doubt contributed much in this respect.

Our schools do not intimidate children, and the eight-year-old child goes to school with a dignity of its own, like a master entering his own domain. The indissoluble link between the elementary and the secondary school, and between the secondary school and the university, makes entry into the university an easy matter for young people thirsting for education. Operating first-class machinery and mastering rapidly developing technique, the working youth have every opportunity to acquire higher skills, while workers with initiative who take an interest in their jobs can easily find the road to promotion. As for young people in the kolkhozes, the prospects before them are not only such as were unthinkable in the old-time village but as are also altogether inconceivable in the agriculture of even the most advanced capitalist country. The collective character of production, work carried on, so to speak, in the public eye, stimulates, encourages people to display all their ability and exert all their energy so as to do a good job and ensure that the process of the work itself is attractive and draws the attention of others. Advanced engineering and a progressing agricultural science not only develop people mentally and increase the productivity of labor, but also open up the widest prospects of further advance to gifted young people.

Young people who come from the families of workers, kolkhozniks or Soviet non-manual employees also have a wide field for public activity open to them in the ranks of the Bolshevik Party, the trade unions, the Komsomol, the Aviation and Chemical Defense Society, the physical culture movement, cultural and educational organizations, etc., where active people can apply their energies, where everyone can display his capabilities in social activity; this is an inexhaustible source from which the Komsomol can draw, or more correctly, discover talented people. Happy Komsomol! What possibilities you have for serving the great cause of Lenin-Stalin! What wide

prospects and opportunities are yours for educating and molding the new human being!

The Communist Party sets itself the task of establishing complete equality—both political and economic—among people. It is building the Socialist State on the basis of all-round development of the people and all their valuable inclinations and capacities. The Communist Party, furthermore, considers that the more enlightened the attitude of our people to all natural and social phenomena, the stronger and more invincible will be our native land.

The world-historical role of the proletariat, that most progressive class and vanguard of all working people, is a great and responsible one. To fulfill its mission, the proletariat must, together with the collective-farm peasantry, study, adopt and assimilate the entire heritage of human culture, attain all the heights of science and technique, ascend the summits of knowledge, and become the most highly educated people in the world. Science in our country must develop ahead of world science, our science in all branches of knowledge must be the most advanced on earth, for beyond the frontiers of the Soviet Union science is in the hands of the exploiting classes, who adapt it to their mercenary, class interests, utilize it with a view to the utter enslavement of the working people, and fetter its development. The task of our youth and, first and foremost, of the Komsomol, is to liberate science from the fetters of the old world and to transform it into a mighty weapon for defending the working people, into an Archimedean lever for building Communism, into an instrument for establishing the dominion of free man over nature. The Land of Socialism must be the leader in technique, science and art. We have plenty of work for our youth to do, and the facilities and means with which to do it. Let us, then, advance science further, with mankind's present achievements as our basis, subordinating nature's forces to our will; but let us do so not in amateur fashion with each one working alone, but in an organized manner, equipping ourselves with all the most up-to-date achievements of science and technique. How attractive for the youth is this prospect of participating in man's collective struggle to establish his power over nature, over the universe!

Whatever branch of human endeavor you may take—from pedagogical to military activity—all of them together and each taken separately acquire in our conditions a profoundly ideological character. Take art. In the capitalist countries it is in a rickety condition. In the USSR, on the contrary,

art is developing rapidly, for the many millions of our people are eagerly reaching out to it. We can see this if only from the way our people regard the theater, music, art exhibitions, etc. We can see this from the satisfaction and unconcealed pride with which people examine the artistic ornamentation of the underground railway. I do not doubt that the Komsomol will do all in its power to ensure that our young people, working under its guidance, utterly expose and uproot within the briefest space of time all the bourgeois deceit and hypocrisy to be found in art and other forms of social ideology, and implant everywhere the ideas of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin.

The peoples of the USSR, who have freed themselves from the yoke of the moneybags, have only one object in their creative activity, namely, the happiness of all working mankind. And what can be more precious to the youth, what can enrich them more ideologically, what can inspire them more than selfless struggle for this goal, for the complete triumph of Communism the world over, a struggle fought together with the Party, under its battle standards, under the leadership of Comrade Stalin.

Speech at a Conference of Best Urban and Rural Schoolteachers Convened by the Editorial Board of the Newspaper *Uchitelskaya Gazeta*¹²

December 28, 1938

I. On Mastering Marxist-Leninist Theory

Comrades, much is being said now in our country about the study of the revolutionary theory of Marxism-Leninism, about the study of the history of the Bolshevik Party. The main point here is to assimilate the very essence of this theory, to learn to apply it, and to grasp the experience of the revolutionary struggle of our Party.

When I read the *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks), Short Course*,¹³ I was filled with admiration for its profundity of content, precision of thought and simplicity of exposition, but I cannot repeat it from memory, for I never memorized it. It is not, however, only a matter of memorizing; the main thing is understanding.

The Marxist-Leninist theory is not a symbol of faith, not a collection of dogmas, but a guide to action.

When they talk about mastering Marxism-Leninism, some people say: “it is a profound piece of work,” “very profound,” etc. It must be understood, however, that the main thing in Marxism-Leninism is not the letter, but the substance, the revolutionary spirit.

What do we mean when we say “to master Marxism-Leninism in its entirety?” How are we to understand this? Are we to take it to mean imbibing all the wisdom of Marxism-Leninism by memorizing ready-made conclusions and formulas? Or are we to understand it as meaning to master the essence of Marxism-Leninism and to be able to apply this theory as a guide to action in life, in our social, political and private life? The second interpretation is the truer, more correct and important one, for it is the basic feature

¹² Originally published: *The Tasks Facing the Soviet Intelligentsia*, State Publishing House for Political Literature, 1939, pp. 31-45.

¹³ J.V. Stalin, *History of the CPSU(B), Short Course*, Foreign Languages Press, France, 2023.

of Marxism-Leninism. And when we talk about “mastering Marxism-Leninism,” we mean learning to regard it dynamically.

Anybody can memorize Marxism-Leninism more or less thoroughly, but to assimilate its essence and learn to apply it is more difficult. We know of many old workers who took part in the political struggle. Did they study Marxism-Leninism as much as you have done? They did not have the *History of the CPSU(B), Short Course*. They had very little opportunity to make a systematic study of this theory. They read perhaps a dozen revolutionary books, and no more. And yet in their practical activity they applied Marxism-Leninism correctly enough. This theory was, and continues to be, the banner followed by millions of people. And many workers correctly interpreted social phenomena, political life, they correctly grasped the Marxist-Leninist line in solving problems of various kinds. They did so because they understood, they grasped the revolutionary essence of the Marxist-Leninist theory.

Marxism-Leninism must not be studied merely for the sake of study, for the sake of form. We do not study Marxism-Leninism in order to know it formally, as the catechism used to be studied once upon a time. We study Marxism-Leninism as a method, as an instrument with the aid of which we correctly determine our political, social and private conduct. In our view it is the most powerful weapon possessed by man in his practical life.

The problem now facing us is how we are to learn to apply Marxism-Leninism more correctly in our practical activity. First and foremost we have to know, at least in general outline, the theoretical principles of Marxism-Leninism, to know, at least in broad outline, the history of the Communist Party. When you study the history of the Party you should take note of how the Bolsheviks solved certain practical problems under certain circumstances. Why did they solve them as they did, and not in any other way? By what were their actions determined? Why, for example, did we boycott the Bulygin Duma,¹⁴ what motivated this decision? Why, later, when the political situation was less favorable, did we participate in the elections to the Second, Third, and Fourth State Duma? Why? An analysis of all these problems (and many such problems arose in history, for many struggles were fought) will serve as a sort of model of how to apply the Marxist-Leninist

¹⁴ *Bulygin, Duma*. So called after Bulygin, the tsar’s Minister of Home Affairs, who, in August 1905, drew up a draft of the regulations governing the convocation of a representative advisory legislative body. The Bulygin Duma was in fact never convened.—*Trans.*

method, of how to approach the solution of other problems in other, different political circumstances, the solution of problems arising today.

It goes without saying that attention must also be paid to all the changes that have taken place, to all the new conditions that have arisen. That is why it is most important in studying Marxism-Leninism to test oneself by one's approach to the solution of the problems that arise today, now, in various spheres of life. Let us take some example from everyday life. Suppose a schoolteacher parts company with her husband. What, from the Marxist viewpoint, should be the attitude in a case like this? What should be done? A question like that also must be correctly approached, it must be discussed and solved in a Marxist way. The simplest approach (and it is more or less—at least formally—the correct one) is to say that it is a private matter, and has nothing to do with politics. However, inasmuch as everybody knows about it, the school children talk, gossip begins in the village, and the teacher's authority is shaken, some intelligible explanation is essential. As you see, sometimes even a purely domestic issue can turn into a social and political problem. Life every day is filled with countless domestic problems of various kinds. The test of the Marxist is whether he is able to find the right solution in these cases and to correctly understand the attitude to be adopted to them from the standpoint of Marxism.

For Marxism-Leninism is a key which makes it possible to solve problems of various kinds. It only makes their solution possible, but does not actually solve them; it makes it possible to approach the solution of problems more correctly. It is not a ready-made prescription for every occasion. It is in the solving, in the approach to the solving of urgent problems that one can see who is the real Bolshevik-Marxist and who is the textmonger and pedant.

There are people who have really mastered Marxism-Leninism and are able to apply this theory to the solution of practical problems. But there are others whose heads are crammed with learned texts, like a sack full of potatoes, but who are unable to apply this knowledge in practice. Such people can tell you everything from A to Z and deliver a lecture to boot. But if you tell them of some incident that has taken place in your school—say, for example, a father has thrashed his son who is a pupil at the school—and you ask them what is the right approach from the social point of view to this specific case, such people become thoroughly confused. And if they do offer a suggestion it will prove to be an opportunistic one, having nothing

whatsoever in common with the spirit of Marxism-Leninism, even though they will cite a heap of quotations. Opportunism is not always expressed in point-blank negation of Marxism-Leninism. It is sometimes manifested in bookishness, in a dogmatic approach to this theory.

It is the solution of practical problems on the basis of a real mastery of the essence of Marxism-Leninism that gives one a schooling in Bolshevism.

To study a text is that and nothing more. And just as school in the case of children is not the whole of life, but only school, so the study of Marxism-Leninism in educational institutions, study circles and seminars of different kinds, and independent study, etc., is only study. Study of this kind gives a person only a book knowledge of Marxism-Leninism. But when he plunges into political life, into public activity, when he *applies* this method and does so consciously, then it is a different matter. It is in the practical solution of the problems of life encountered from day to day that Marxism-Leninism makes itself felt, it is this that gives the main schooling in Marxism-Leninism, and brings out the real Marxist-Leninist.

One does not get the main schooling by attending a seminar or listening to a lecture. These are only accessories.

You will get your main schooling when you argue with people, when you talk to the people, when you take a decision about a pupil who is remiss. What decision should you take: give him a low mark, expel him or, on the contrary, adopt a lenient attitude?

It is in solving such problems that you will get your main schooling in Marxism-Leninism.

Just as the work of a technological engineer in a plant is to give practical application to his technological knowledge and to accumulate experience, and a teacher's immediate work in school is to give practical application to his pedagogical knowledge, so Marxism-Leninism is the living, organic unity of theory and practice.

And so you now understand what I have been talking about all the time. I want to make the point clear that to master Marxism-Leninism it is not at all enough to memorize the formulas and conclusions of this theory, nor is it enough to assimilate its essential points. To obtain a real mastery of Marxism-Leninism you must, in addition, learn to employ this theory in solving practical problems, and to go further, you must be able to enrich it

with accumulated experience, to generalize experience, i.e., to develop and advance this theory further. That is the most difficult problem.

The *History of the CPSU(B), Short Course* is to outward appearances written in a highly popular way, but it demands a great amount of work from the reader. In it you will find all the basic principles of Marxism-Leninism, given in the most concise form. As you read it, you have to think over every line. Not to memorize it, but to think it out. It is a matter of learning to apply Marxism in practice, and that needs study. But how is one to study? The answer is to study the lessons of history, sharing and exchanging your views with others.

Now it has been said here that it would be good to have study circles, I quite understand this desire. To some extent it is true that the study circle enables you to exchange views. But who has said that such circles are not to be organized? Where did you get that from? Read the decision of the Central Committee of the Party of November 14, 1938. There the circle is condemned as a compulsory system for the study of Marxism-Leninism which was formerly made the main form of teaching Bolshevism to our personnel, and as the practical expression of the race for quantitative results in propaganda at the expense of quality. One comrade here has stated that seven teachers at her school are studying independently. Who stops you from saying: "In a week's time I shall make a report on such and such a question. Anyone who wishes to come and take part in the discussion is welcome to do so." Does anybody stop you from doing that?

If you are a Marxist you must approach every phenomenon in life concretely. And, it goes without saying, discussion of a problem among yourselves will help you to understand it better. When you read something, you may look at one side, perhaps three sides of a problem, but not the fourth side. Finally you may take all the four sides, only to find that you are dealing not with a square but with a cube, which has six sides. So when you discuss things with others, your mind becomes keener and richer.

You say that you need discussions. Well, who is stopping you? Get five or ten people together. Why, five people can debate a question thoroughly. Who is stopping you? And if in addition you write papers, I must tell you outright: you will learn five times more about the problem than if you listen to a lecture. For to write a paper you have to think over every word, every idea. To write a paper you have to draw upon source materials. When you write a paper you go far deeper into problems than if you merely listen

to a lecture. How much you gain from a lecture depends on many things, including the sort of person who is lecturing and your own state of mind. You may get into conversation with your neighbor during the lecture. You know yourselves that lectures are frequently three parts water and only one part useful information. (*Laughter.*) Unfortunately we do not know how to squeeze out the water properly. And it really needs to be squeezed out. In any case you can't squeeze it all out. Do not think I am against lectures. It goes without saying that lectures are a very important form of instruction. All I am doing is to urge you on to independent work, and this work will compel you to attend lectures and listen to them attentively.

How should study circles be regarded? You see, there is a sort of flavor of narrowness about the circle. The very name "circle" is a sign of narrowness. Does this rule out collective discussion? No, it does not, nor does it discredit the method. Collective discussion should be combined with individual study, which is the main method. Prepare at home, read a paper at a circle or public meeting, and follow it up with a general discussion. What is wanted is not an artificial debate, but a discussion in which everybody expresses his real opinion on the question raised and is not afraid to say what he thinks. If your paper contains even a particle of your own opinion, the debate, I have no doubt, will be a heated one. Such a debate, even if it is about Pushkin, will be a splendid lesson in Marxism-Leninism.

When people speak about studying Marxism-Leninism they frequently imagine that only Marxist books have to be read—the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin. Actually, however, that is not all. The task is to ensure that all kinds of books are read in a Marxist, Leninist, Stalinist fashion. Take Chernyshevsky's works, for instance. They can be read in different ways. A progressive reader of the sixties and seventies of the past century read them in his own way, a liberal reader of those days read them in his own way, and we, as Marxists-Leninists, read them in our own way. Our understanding of them is different from that of the others. When you read a paper on Chernyshevsky's work, discuss Chernyshevsky, when a debate develops and you polish up one another's thoughts, you gain a better understanding of Marxism-Leninism. When you argue, you should do so in your own words, in your own language. You are bound to have a language of your own, I am sure of it. People should argue, and not artificially but concerning fundamentals, i.e., in such a way that the argument develops, if not into a "fight," then at least into a serious, heated altercation. That is how the problem

should be put. Then people will attend circles and study. An understanding of Marxism-Leninism is best of all acquired by this method of study.

I think you know the texts better than I do, of that I am sure. If I had to pass an examination along with you I would fail as far as texts are concerned, I undoubtedly would. But as regards the Marxist approach to questions, I think I would undoubtedly find a more correct line of approach than you, and more quickly, because lengthy experience, practice enriched by theoretical discussions, have all sharpened my perceptions. I can sense the false note in a wrong formulation. Thus I have developed a new sense in the course of theoretical arguments and skirmishes, a sense which has taught me to be more alert. This is why there is no need to fear discussions; on the contrary, you should accustom people to them. That is the only way to polish up your thoughts and your language. When you know that every false conclusion and every wrong formulation of yours will evoke a debate, you will begin to be more thorough in searching for correct solutions.

Therefore, if you want to understand Marxism-Leninism and to master this theory, lectures, papers and debates, based on independent study will be of enormous benefit to you. Independent study is the main method of mastering Marxism-Leninism.

II. The Teacher's Main Task Is to Bring Up the New Man, the Citizen of Socialist Society

The matter may have been referred to yesterday, but today nobody here has mentioned children, the work being done among them, and your relations with them. One comrade said here in passing: "In workers' communal dwellings adults take turns watching over the children to see that they do not cause too much disturbance." Is that right? (*Voice from the audience*: "Yes.")

Do you want children to be like the average Philistine, like middle-aged, slightly dyspeptic people? (*Laughter*.) Or do you want children to be the exact images of yourselves, the adults? Children, as you know, have too much initiative. If I were a teacher and if the children were up to some mischief but in such a way as to show pluck, I would find some way of encouraging this pluck, scolding them a little for the mischief, but taking no further steps. Of course a distinction has to be made between mischief and mischief.

If I were asked what was the most important thing now required of the teacher, I would say that it is to bring up the new man. (We often say that and I am saying nothing new in this regard.) *The new Socialist man is in the process of creation in our country. This new man must be imbued with the very finest of human qualities.* For the new, Socialist man will not be devoid of human emotions. Man is a human being. That should be our starting point.

What are the human qualities that must be instilled? They include,

firstly love, love for one's own people, love for the working masses. Man should love his fellow-men. If he does, his life will be better, more joyous, for nobody lives so miserable a life as the misanthrope, who hates human beings. The misanthrope is worse off than anybody else.

Secondly honesty. Teach the children to be honest. The teacher must, in my opinion, work consistently to achieve this, using all possible pedagogical methods. Teach them not to lie, not to be deceitful, but to be honest.

Thirdly courage. The Socialist man—the man of labor—wants to win the world, and not only the world existing on earth: he also wants to employ his mind to extend the universe.

Fourthly a comradely team spirit. We need the comradely team spirit. It is needed if only because we are surrounded by capitalist countries, because our Union is being systematically slandered and every bourgeois is longing for a suitable moment to crush the Soviet Union. Of course they will never live to see such a moment, but it means that the Soviet Union can only be protected by a wall of steel. The USSR will be still stronger if Soviet people are brought up in the spirit of comradely team work from childhood, if they are imbued with genuine, firm comradely team spirit from their school days. In this way a person who joins the Red Army or gets to the front will find it easier to fit in with the team spirit of army life. He will come there already bound by bonds of love to his Socialist native land.

Fifthly love for work. One must not only love work, but also be honest in one's attitude to it, with the thought firmly engraved in one's mind that a

person who lives and eats without working, lives on the work of others. There is no particular need to elaborate the point to you. It should be elaborated for the benefit of your pupils. Work is an issue that needs to be specially dealt with. We often say: "Labor is a matter of honor." Our leader has put forward the slogan: "Labor is a matter of honor," but it will not be enough merely to repeat that "Labor is a matter of honor." That will not be fulfilling our leader's will, the will of the Party and the people. What is needed is that the children should see concretely that labor really is a matter of honor. You cannot deceive a child. If he senses a false note, however slight, he will no longer believe you.

One could continue the list of the qualities of the new human being, but I shall limit myself to these. They are qualities of the Marxist-Leninist. The same demands, however, also apply to each honest, sober-minded person. The value of our theory consists precisely in the fact that it demands that which is demanded of every honest, sober-minded person.

Discipline goes without saying—it follows from the qualities I have enumerated above. Children like to break and spoil things. We were the same ourselves. It was a pleasure to climb into somebody else's garden: a stolen apple seemed to taste sweeter than your own or one that you had bought. All the same, however, people must be told to preserve and take care of things of value. We must not only destroy but also *build*—that is the kernel of the matter. We not only destroy the old, we are the builders of the new.

I think that in order really to be *a teacher*, a person has to be born a teacher and not merely made one. A teacher's work is beset with many difficulties, and his responsibility is a great one. Of course, a teacher's main work is to teach his particular subject, but apart from everything else he is copied by his pupils. That is why the teacher's world outlook, his conduct, his life, his approach to each phenomenon, affect all his pupils in one way or another. This often takes place imperceptibly. Yet this is not all. It can be safely said that if a teacher enjoys great authority, some people will bear traces of his influence throughout their lives. That is why it is important for the teacher to look to himself, to be aware that his conduct and his actions are subject to a stricter control than those of any other person on earth. Dozens of children's eyes are fastened on him, and there is no eye more obser-

vant, keen, receptive as regards the various nuances of the mental processes going on in human beings, no eye catches all the minutest detail so readily as the eye of a child. That should be remembered.

I am only afraid that I might give you the idea that you should behave unnaturally. That is no good either; it would be altogether wrong. The teacher must be natural and honest in solving all problems, particularly various matters of concern to children, problems of punishment, etc. Let us suppose a boy breaks a window or offends a girl, or the other way round. The starting point here should not only be the misdemeanor as such, but account should be taken of how the different solutions of the problem will influence the children's minds. That must be done without fail. After all, children have their own "code of laws." Let us suppose two children get into a fight, and one breaks the other's nose, after which the victim goes and tells on the other. Even a boy who is not involved will condemn him for that, and say: "You sneak—first you want to fight, and then you go and complain."

The main thing is to be honest with the children, to look to yourselves, to bring up our children to be really good, really Socialist citizens—honest, brave, with a highly developed sense of comradeship, disciplined within the limits of child psychology and the possibilities of children.

And finally, comrades, we must aim to make sure that the children retain vivid impressions, the very best impressions and memories of school for long years to come. It will be a good sign if your efforts result in your pupils' retaining pleasant memories of their school years all their lives.

That, I think, is what is mainly required of the teacher.

III. It Is Every Teacher's Duty to Pass on His Knowledge to the Masses of the People and to Take Part Daily in Public Life

I shall now deal with problems of public life. In this regard it is important that the teacher should come in close contact with the people, with reality, and learn to understand local problems as well. It goes without saying that it would be ideal if all our teachers and other intellectual personnel completely mastered Marxism-Leninism. But it would not be bad if they came to know at least the general principles of this theory. That holds true both for Communists and for non-Party people. I assure you that some non-Party people have a better knowledge of Marxism-Leninism than Party members. True, there are not many of them. What you have to do is to learn to approach local issues in a Marxist way, to analyze them correctly. But,

judging from what has been said here, local life is not dealt with at all in your public lectures. Of all those who have spoken here, not one said that he had delivered a lecture on some local matter. But surely people are being born, die, get married and celebrate weddings. A great many social phenomena occur.... Is there nothing to say about all this or should one not say it? Are there not enough occasions to do so?

The building up of the kolkhozes, the advancement of farming stimulates thought on the part of the kolkhoznik, directing his interest to sweeping social tasks. There is more than enough material for lectures that will be full of interest.

The kolkhozes bring to the fore people possessing unusual qualities, and lectures about such people in which you draw conclusions and show their positive and negative features will undoubtedly evoke heated debates. Healthy discussion of such lectures will enhance the kolkhoznik's civic mindedness and increase respect for kolkhoz labor.

The kolkhoz next to yours has been raising harvests of ten, twelve or fifteen centners¹⁵ per hectare, whereas, your kolkhoz has raised five to six centners. Why are your yields low? There you have a theme for a lecture.

In a word, when you deal with peasant life, when you want to work with the population, you must do it in a way that has an immediate bearing on life, so that your talk should have a galvanizing effect on people. If you do that, people will undoubtedly come to hear you. It goes without saying that the social and political events in the life of our country and of the whole world always provide more than sufficient material.

Finally, the lectures should be freely discussed, and more patience should be displayed as regards the form in which speeches from the floor are put. The chief thing is that the main idea of the lecture be understood and that those who take part in discussion say what they think without worrying about how they state their case, bearing the point well in mind that style in delivery is something that will come with practice. The important thing is that people express their own thoughts.

In his social activity, a teacher should, whenever he has the opportunity, whenever his opinion is sought, voice his views honestly. The school-teacher should win the peasant's respect not only as a teacher but also as a human being. Bear in mind that this is a political problem, a profoundly

¹⁵ Centner: 100 kgs.—*Ed.*

political problem. If you want teachers to occupy the position that is their due, see to it that they are impartial, unafraid to express their viewpoint on the various problems that arise. A teacher, of course, can help in solving problems of concern to the peasants since he lives in the given locality and participates in all its economic and political life.

The main sphere, however, in which the teacher can help the peasant is that of culture.

Culture is a very broad conception, ranging from the washing of one's face to the latest heights of human thought. And, strange as it may be, it is easier here than anywhere else to slip into Philistinism. Clean hands, neat dress, essential comforts in the home, etc.—all these are signs of a people's culture. Public meetings, dramatic circles, social evenings with dancing, etc., are signs of social culture. Communists take part in them, justly regarding them as factors of cultural development. But all this can also turn into a Philistine pastime. Indeed, it requires a considerable level of culture and political insight to be able to draw the boundary line between Philistinism and real cultural progress. The Marxist regards these achievements as a means, a new foothold for further advance. For the Philistine, on the contrary, they are an end in themselves. He wants to rest on his achievements, he becomes a slave to his surroundings, adapts his morals accordingly, and lulls his faculty for thought. That sort of thing must be combatted.

Hence it is desirable that in carrying on cultural work you should introduce into it the elements of social and state purport, political purposefulness, otherwise your culture will become aimless, and will assume the character of so-called "provincial culture," losing contact with the culture of the state as a whole, with the cultural requirements of the state as a whole.

The cultural work you do should be linked up with the general work of Socialist construction, so as to ensure that people do not isolate themselves in their thoughts from society. The Philistine is a person whose thoughts set him apart, isolate him, a person who does not bind himself to anybody or anything.

This is very difficult work. It is very difficult and delicate work because one has to be cultured oneself. It is just as in music. A musician will catch a false note in an orchestra, whereas I will let a whole scale of false notes pass by unnoticed, for I do not understand music. When you detect a false note, you must correct it.

IV. A Teacher's Language Must Express Living Thoughts and Feelings

Comrades, I do not know what happened at yesterday's session. But as far as today is concerned I have not noticed any *exchange of views*—you all have simply given reports on your work, and some have embellished the picture. Yet did you assemble here just to enable each of you to deliver a more or less ordinary report? The impression one gets is that there is no difference between one school and another, between one person and another. And I thought that you gathered here for a “tussle.”

Why is it that you strive to speak in ready-made formulas? You are teachers, after all, and you know the Russian language. Now do you know what the employment of ready-made phrases shows? It shows that your mind is not working, that only your tongue is at work. When you use ready-made phrases, you make no impression on anybody, because everybody knows them without you. You are afraid to say things in your own way, because it might not sound so elegant. You are mistaken. You will get a better hearing and be better understood.

In actual life you have considerable contact with the peasants, with the population in general. But when you speak of this contact, you make it sound like some “technical” connection: you organized so many meetings and conducted so many talks. One might get the impression that it is not life you are talking about, but the “technique” of the relations between peasants and teachers. Yet it is not only at meetings and during lectures that you meet people. You should speak of *the content* of your relations with the population.

These relations have the political, psychological and other aspects that manifest themselves in the normal course of human life. Yet this close, organic contact is missing in your exposition. Perhaps I am too old to have noticed it? But as it is, I did not hear a single word about the difficulties facing you, the obstacles in your path, and just where you are finding things hard. You merely repeat ready-made phrases. That formalizes your speech. Everybody should try to speak his own language, the language he imbibed with his mother's milk. The best language is your mother tongue, take my word for that. We say: the teacher, the teacher, it is a great thing to be a teacher. And that is true. But what will happen if all the teacher can give is ready-made formulas?

Now you, the last comrade who spoke, work in a village and are apparently satisfied with your job; you told us of the very fine life you are now living. But it seems to me that if anybody reads the stenogram of your speech, he will believe very little of what you said. And not because what you said is untrue, no, not for that reason. Firstly, he will say that the comrade concerned flatters herself somewhat. You keep getting the phrase: I did this, I did the other. As soon as people feel that a person is bragging or pushing himself forward, they prick up their ears. I will tell you frankly myself: you used quite a number of fine words, but they seemed to lack feeling. No feeling could be detected in them. I do not at all mean to say that you have no feeling in you. Not at all. All I want to say is this: You try to express your real inner feelings in stock formulas. But an ordinary living human being usually pours out his inner feelings in his own, simple words, without resorting to ready-made formulations. That is why a literate person who reads the stenogram of your speech will say to himself: that is artificial stuff. Artificial stuff. One does not feel the natural inner emotions of the speaker. There are many words, ardent words, words about being satisfied with your work, about being carried away by it, but the words are not convincing, because they are not your own product, but ready-made. Do you understand me? Tell me, am I right or not? The way you talk sounds artificial, doesn't it? (*Voice from the audience*: "It's true.")

Now suppose you get up before people and talk to them, deliver lectures to them in this way. What do you think will happen? They will listen to you and then go home without even asking a question. And if they do ask, the questions will be very few.

Hence the first thing required of a teacher is that he has his own native style of speech. Study grammar in order to speak correctly, but speak naturally, use plain language.

I must say that a teacher's job is a most difficult one. I even think that one has to be born a teacher. I use the word teacher in its real sense. There are people who know a lot. I know many people who have a splendid knowledge of a subject, but if you were to make them teach, they could not give a good exposition of it. One has not only to know one's subject, but also to be able to expound on it so that the students will understand it well.

So then, I think that first and foremost your language ought to be natural. Do not accustom the children to hackneyed phrases, ready-made formulas—these will go in at one ear and out the other.

If you speak, do so in your own way. Your words will be different, but their meaning will be the same. People, you will see, will listen to you a little more attentively. What you say should be relevant to the place and the occasion, it should come naturally. But it happens that people talk mechanically. The words should flow organically, not mechanically, they should express what you mean.

You should avoid ready-made formulas, which are the result of relying on your memory and not using your brain. Talk to the people in a simple language, your own language, and be natural as regards style. If your style is not natural, you will evoke a feeling of revulsion. Many of you very likely remember (or perhaps you don't) the old beadswomen who used to go from convent to convent. There were many of them in our country before the revolution. If you listened to any of them, you would hear the same words muttered over and over again: "By the grace of God and the Holy Virgin I have seen the light." We must not be like them. Our language is a rich one, do not distort it, do not corrupt it, and teach the children not to either. How can you teach them not to do so? Insist that they think before they speak, and not speak before they think. That is the main thing.

Such are the tasks that face our teachers. And on the whole our teachers must be still more cultured. Cultured not only in the sense that they know their subjects, but in the general sense of the word, in the sense that the range of their cultural interests is a wide one. You yourselves can see that both the urban and the rural population, whose cultural development is making gigantic strides, is putting forward big demands in the sphere of culture.

Our life is becoming increasingly complex and is demanding an ever higher "ceiling" from all our people in every sphere of activity. If the teacher's "ceiling," for example, is now two meters high, it should be raised to at least two and a half meters.

Comrades have spoken here of a shortage of newspapers. Of course, there is a need for newspapers. But, after all, if I may say so, the press is not enough to ensure your cultural development. You need the press to be able to orientate yourself politically at the given moment, to deal with current problems. But if you want to raise your cultural level, you have to turn to the

history of culture, to the whole of mankind's cultural heritage. You should be versed in Russian literature, particularly fiction. You cannot get along without that. The teacher has to do with human material, with the youngest and most receptive of human material. Fiction provides an immensely rich panorama of human types; that, at least, is my view. In fiction you see human types in an endless variety of situations. That is why a knowledge of fiction is almost a professional duty of yours. That is why to raise the level of your culture means, first and foremost, to know fiction. That, more than anything else, will enrich you, enable you (I judge from my own experience) to develop, to understand people better.

That is all I wanted to say to you. One could talk endlessly, for you are faced with many pressing problems. But you have heard the chief and basic point I wanted to make. I would like you, when you return home, not to forget the wishes I have expressed. (*Stormy applause.*)

Speech at a Celebration Meeting in Honor of Decorated Rural Schoolteachers¹⁶

July 8, 1939

Comrades, everybody understands that the award of Orders and medals to schoolteachers is a matter of great political significance. By these awards the Government and the entire Soviet people raise the schoolteacher high in the public esteem.

The question that naturally arises is why the schoolteacher should stand high in the public esteem.

The working class and the peasantry, in other words, the entire people, having taken power into their own hands, want to retain this power, want to build up a new life, that is, Communism; they want all the peoples of the earth to follow the example of the Soviet Union. To consolidate this power once and for all and to build up Communism, the people must have their own intelligentsia, the people have to become educated, and the antithesis and all distinctions between intellectual and physical labor have to disappear. But when will intellectual labor cease to be distinct from physical labor? Only when all our men and women, the entire people, are educated, when Communism will have been built.

To make the entire people of the huge, multinational Soviet Union an educated people is a most tremendous task. But we want our people to be not only educated. We want our people, in addition, to be brought up in a Soviet, Communist way. We want our schools to give a Communist education. What does that mean? It is on this score that I would like to say a few words.

You are perfectly well aware that neither in the elementary nor in the secondary schools is a deep study made of Marxism. However, when we speak of Communist education, we have in mind not the study of the doctrine of Marxism, but precisely education. The difference between instruction and education is tremendous indeed! I myself can teach the rudiments of arithmetic to pupils in the first grade (*stormy applause, shouts of approval*), but education is a far more complicated matter. It is not with-

¹⁶ Originally published: *The Tasks Facing the Soviet Intelligentsia*, State Publishing House for Political Literature, 1939, pp. 46-49.

out reason that they used to say: the family and the environment educate a person and the school lays its impress on him. Education is one of the most difficult of tasks; I have in mind genuine, proper education in the broad sense of the word.

What do we mean by education? We mean influencing the physical and moral attributes of the pupil, influencing him in a definite direction throughout the whole of his ten years of study, i.e., molding him as a human being. To educate means to behave towards pupils in such a way as to convince them that the steps taken by the teacher in solving the innumerable misunderstandings and clashes that are inevitable in school life are the right ones. This leaves a profound impression on the mind of the child. If the teacher is partial in marking the work of a backward child, I am certain that this partiality will not fail to leave its imprint on the minds of the pupils. The crux of the matter is that the teacher is in a sort of labyrinth of mirrors where he is watched by the keen, impressionable eyes of hundreds of children, eyes that are amazingly quick to observe both the positive and negative sides of the teacher. The education of pupils begins with the teacher's conduct in the classroom, his attitude to the pupils. And this makes education a highly difficult matter.

By saying this I do not at all want to brush aside the need to give children good instruction. As far as you, teachers, are concerned, that goes without saying. Educational work in the broad sense of the term, however, very often escapes the attention of teachers, but it is just this work that is so enormously important in molding the character and morals of the children. Many teachers forget that they should be pedagogues, and a pedagogue is an engineer of human souls. Of course, to be able to influence pupils in the required direction one must possess the appropriate talent. But that is not all. To be able consciously to exert a definite influence, the teacher himself must be a highly cultured and—let me say outright—a highly educated person.

Indeed, the state, the people, entrust the teachers with the children, i.e., with people at an age when they are most susceptible to influence, entrust them with the nurturing, developing, molding of the young generation, in other words, with their hope and their future. This is a tremendous trust, one that places a great responsibility on teachers. It is clear that teachers must be both highly educated and scrupulously honest. For honesty, I would say incorruptibility, in the loftiest sense of the word, not only appeals

to children, but inspires them, leaves a profound imprint on their entire subsequent life.

So, comrades, we want our children to be educated in the Communist spirit, to be imbued with Communist principles. You may ask: What are these Communist principles?

Communist principles, taken in their elementary form, are the principles of highly educated, honest, advanced people; they are love for one's Socialist motherland, friendship, comradeship, humanity, honesty, love for Socialist labor and a great many other universally understood lofty qualities. The nurturing, the cultivation of these attributes, of these lofty qualities, is the most important element of Communist education.

These attributes cannot be instilled in children by fine-sounding sermons or simple tub-thumping. They can be deeply inculcated upon children only by influencing them day in and day out, imperceptibly, on the basis of comradesly contact throughout their school years. And that, of course, is possible only when the teachers themselves have mastered Marxism-Leninism, at least in broad outline.

We often say: it is necessary to master Marxism-Leninism. I must say—I know this from my own experience—that the study of Marxism-Leninism is of exceptionally great assistance in one's immediate work, it helps to find the correct solution to the numerous problems that arise in one's work. Our teachers are confronted with the extremely difficult task of Communist education, of instilling Communist consciousness in Soviet people. This task can be solved successfully only if our teachers have not only a good education but a Marxist education.

In this connection you are in the same position as I am, as the comrades sitting at this table. I believe you will all agree with me that our people are developing at an exceptionally rapid rate, that their consciousness, education and culture are advancing exceptionally fast, and this is proceeding in all parts of our country. We no longer have any "backwoods," now every section of our country thinks of itself as a part of Moscow. (*Loud shouts of approval, prolonged applause.*)

But what does it mean when we say our people are developing? It means, first and foremost, that every year nearly two million educated people pour into our ranks. And if we old-timers who have not passed through the school of today are stubborn and refuse to keep up with them, we shall be squeezed out gradually. That is why teachers who had

their schooling in earlier years should also not be idle now. It is absolutely necessary to accumulate knowledge. A teacher is not only a teacher, but also a pupil. (*Applause.*)

The teacher devotes his energy, his blood, all that he values, to his pupils, to the people. But, comrades, if today, tomorrow and the day after tomorrow you give your all and fail repeatedly to supplement your knowledge, strength, energy, why, you will have nothing left. (*Shouts of approval.*) On the one hand, the teacher gives, and on the other hand he absorbs like a sponge, takes all that is best in the people, life, science, and again passes this best on to the children. (*Cries of "Hear, hear." Applause.*) And if the Soviet teacher wants to be a real, advanced teacher both today and tomorrow, he must always march along with the most advanced section of the people. If he does so, if he imbibes the very best features and attributes of the people, no matter how much he gives up to his pupils, he will always have more than enough to impart to the children.

Today we have here teachers from all corners of the Soviet Union. I am very glad that Ukrainians, Georgians, and teachers from the Autonomous Republics are present here. I would very much like you to carry away with you all you possibly can from Moscow, and that your decoration, the presentation of Orders to you, the reception you have been given in Moscow should be impressed on your minds for the rest of your lives, and impressed most vividly. (*Stormy applause.*) I would like you to regard all this as close association, indissoluble contact with the center, with Moscow, or more simply, with the Soviet Government, the Party, Comrade Stalin, and that this feeling of contact with the Government, with the Party, with Comrade Stalin, should be ever with you your daily work. (*Enthusiastic ovation in honor of the Party and the Government, in honor of Comrade Stalin.*)

Speech at a Conference of Pupils of the Eighth, Ninth and Tenth Grades of Secondary Schools in Bauman District, Moscow¹⁷

April 7, 1940

Comrades, like all of you, I can only wish you success in your studies. This is everybody's wish—the wish of your fathers and mothers, the Government, your teachers, and the older generation.

But, of course, what matters is not good wishes but the fact that you have to study, and study hard. It is only at school that you are taught to work systematically. However much a person may fry to acquire knowledge by himself, apart from and without the school, he will nevertheless be what they call a self-taught man.

There are some whose thoughts run this way: well, what does school matter—even suppose I do graduate without a particularly good showing, it will only be recorded in my graduation certificate, and not be reflected in life itself. Anybody who thinks so is, of course, mistaken. Schooling gives one the systematic knowledge that prepares one for skilled work. And the majority of you will, most likely, be employed on skilled jobs. That is why you must study, and study again, doggedly and persistently.

Anybody who wants to become a skilled professional worker must pass through a Soviet school, learn to read systematically and to acquire knowledge. Those who have no proper schooling will find it difficult later on in life, will find it difficult to work. This defect, that is, the lack of systematic knowledge and the habit of working systematically, will make itself felt at all times and in all things, will always dog you like a shadow. That, by the way, has been my experience in the past, and is so to this very day. That is why you should make the fullest possible use of school—from the first to the seventh or the tenth grade—as the main source of systematic knowledge.

All pupils should remember that only those who are able to work systematically and know their jobs will play a part of any importance in the life of society and the state, in any sphere of useful activity. On the other hand,

¹⁷ Originally published: *Problems of Communist Education*, State Publishing House for Political Literature, 1940, pp. 28-35.

those whose culture. is superficial, who merely acquire an outward veneer of culture, people of the type of Onegin,¹⁸ who can tell you a little about everything but have no substantial knowledge of anything, such people do not and will not play any important role in the life of Soviet society and the Soviet State.

Honor pupils have spoken today from this platform. I must tell you, comrades honor pupils, that though you speak well, elegantly, yet—excuse me for being blunt—you are not at all original! Of course, such plain speaking will hurt your feelings, but I say these things not to hurt your feelings, but so that you should understand what is the main thing necessary in study. You speak correctly; in that respect there is absolutely no fault to find. From all points of view you speak smoothly. Your speeches could even be published in a school wall newspaper, and the editor would not be reprimanded for doing so. But such speeches will not stir anybody, they give nothing to the heart or mind. After all, you are the youth, and even your everyday language has fervor. The speech that best strikes home is that which touches a sensitive spot, evoking approval or objection. This is the first sign that a speaker possesses some independent, living thought of his own.

But, comrades, all that comes with practice. You are young yet, everything is still ahead of you. That is why I tell you bluntly that there is nothing original in the language you use. If each of you were fifty years old I would not say so, lest you should never again say anything original. But your lives are still ahead of you all, and you are certain to speak in an original way. I have no doubt of that. For the time being, however, you are trying to use not your own words, but the ready-made phrases of others. Your own, living thoughts fail to find reflection in the speeches you make. Your language is like the light of the moon. It yields no warmth.

Of you all, one—I think—the last speaker, Comrade Karib, spoke his own language. As he spoke one could see that he weighed his phrases, that he had some ideas of his own. And that is the most important point.

Suppose you are visited by some representative of the committee of a Komsomol organization. He has become such a good hand at talking that he can deliver a speech whenever and on whatever subject you like. His speech flows along incessantly, smooth and beautiful as a great river flowing between picturesque banks. But this speech is only outwardly beautiful, for it lacks

¹⁸ Chief character in A. S. Pushkin's poem *Eugene Onegin*.

the main thing, which is feeling. It is a barren flower. A speaker of that kind will teach you nothing because he gives no thought to his phrases. That sort of speaker does not grip you with the inner content of his speech.

All that his audience can say is—what a fine speaker he is! And nothing more.

Now suppose you are visited by somebody who is not so “golden-tongued” but who is simply a serious person. His speech does not abound in fine phrases, and he even falters. You can see that he thinks and speaks, speaks and thinks. When he pauses to ponder over his phrases, he compels the entire audience, which is following him, following his train of thought, to think along with him. Those who listen to such a speaker are in a position to say: he did suggest a definite idea. And they react to this idea by either agreeing or turning it down, arguing against it or endorsing it, expressing their indignation or welcoming it.

Now that, roughly, is the kind of speaker Comrade Karib approximates. You should all master the principles and methods employed by such a speaker, and learn to think, to construct your phrases yourselves, and not to mouth ready-made formulas that are prepared in advance. Among other things it will then be clear whether you know the Russian language or not.

Now, pupils from the eighth, ninth and tenth grades spoke here, and what is more they were honor students. Speaking theoretically, that is to say, if we go by the curriculums, they should have a good knowledge of the Russian language and be able to express themselves correctly in Russian. Unfortunately, however, I am unable to say whether they know the Russian language or not, because they said nothing of their own, but merely used ready-made, stock phrases. Now when Comrade Karib spoke, he himself fashioned his phrases. And when anybody fashions his phrases himself you can tell whether he knows the Russian language or not, whether his schooling has or has not taught him to express his thoughts. Now it is this road, the one taken by Comrade Karib, that Soviet school children should follow if they really want to work seriously, if they do not regard school as a punishment visited by God.

I am not saying this idly. Really, there are cases when school, study is regarded as a coercive and burdensome affair, as a purgatory to be undergone before entering “paradise.” If you regard things differently, if you look at study as a fortunate opportunity to be used to the full, in order to acquire, an

education and to broaden your outlook, then you yourselves must fashion the language you use. This applies with equal force to the compositions you write, the various mathematical problems you solve, and to the exercises you do in drafting and drawing, and so on and so forth,

Let us assume that in writing a composition you frequently resort to the “services” of the better students, or simply crib. That road, comrades, is a ruinous one; you will never learn anything that way. Even if it does not come out so well, you must write it yourself. You may have to rework and rewrite your own composition a thousand times over, but you should not be afraid to do so or spare your energy; it will accustom you to independent work. This is where independence finds expression.

Or take speeches, for example. We have speakers of many different kinds. There are the speakers who can go on for two, three and even five hours, uttering platitudes and loudly declaiming slogans so as to win applause every fifteen or twenty minutes. There is nothing difficult about that. It is the easiest thing of all. Such a speech does not require much intelligence. But to deliver a speech containing less words, and words that the speaker himself selects after careful consideration, even if it is done clumsily, is a far more difficult matter.

Assembled here are honor pupils. Of course, when the best pupils get together, it is easy to come to an understanding with them as to what is to be done so that there should be no backward pupils. But it would not be bad to assemble backward pupils and have a talk with them as to why they are lagging and what steps should be taken to eliminate their backwardness.

I did not intend to speak today. To be honest, I expected to see some heated encounters, to hear you deal with shortcomings at school, to tell us what is lacking. Instead your meeting has turned into a ceremonial assembly—and where there is much ceremony, there is frequently little content.

The best pupils have taken the floor here today; they spoke as though delivering reports. You felt that their fellow pupils had instructed them to speak that way. The comrades said: “We were seventh on the list, now we are fifth, and we hope to win the third place.” But not a single one of them dealt with what he intends to do, where he aims to go, on graduating secondary school. Yet, comrades, you are finishing secondary school and are on the threshold of an independent life. If I were a tenth-grade pupil—unfortunately I cannot be one—I would, in April of graduation year, find myself

at grips with the problem of choosing my future profession. And without a doubt I would find an exact solution to the problem.

As you know, it is not always possible to choose the profession you like. Most likely very many of you would like to enter the Institute of Journalism—I know that from the entrance examinations of past years. But competition there is so great that it is very difficult for all applicants to be accepted. And yet, where are you to go? Or perhaps this question does not interest you at all? If that is the case, it is a bad sign. That such an important question was missed in your discussion, is, in my view, a big mistake. I would very much like, by the way, to learn what most of our school children want to be, what is the favorite profession of our young generation. It would be very illuminating, and a number of interesting conclusions might be drawn from such information. But I learned nothing from you, and so am not able to draw any conclusions now.

Yet I cannot imagine that you have not given any thought to this. It surely is in the mind of each one of you. At your age, when you are young, each person must give thought to this question. There can be no doubt that nine-tenths of you intend to move mountains and reshape the whole World in your own fashion. Why, I myself thought that way in the days of my youth. There can be no doubt that thoughts of this kind occur to you, and it could not be otherwise. That is youth.

But the time has now come when you must determine your future course, when you must finally decide what you are going to do. Many of you settle this question in too simple a fashion. You say: I am a member of the Komsomol, in the future I shall be a Communist, a Soviet citizen—and the whole business is done with, I have “determined” my future, But that is too easy a “self-determination.”

To be serious in defining your future means to set the course for your life's journey, to fashion your character, your convictions, to find your calling. Each one of you must reason thus: I am a Soviet person, a citizen of the state that is surrounded by enemies, and for which I shall have to fight not less but more than past generations did. Take our generation, for example, the generation of old Bolsheviks. We fought the Russian capitalists and landlords, who were a comparatively weak, poorly organized enemy with a low level of culture. But you will have to fight an enemy incomparably stronger, better organized, more perfidious, and more skilled in political struggle,

in the various ways and means of deception. To be ready for that combat requires steadfast and systematic preparation.

You must bear in mind, however, that that combat will take place not only at the front line. Our students have already displayed miraculous courage during the vanguard encounters at the fronts. And there is nothing surprising about that. Imagine our cultured, Soviet youth not being courageous! No, that combat will embrace all spheres of our life. It will reach a degree of acuteness unsurpassed in the struggle that has been waged from the very first days of the existence of Soviet power.

Now, to achieve victory in this decisive encounter requires that you steel your character, your will power, in daily struggle, that you precisely determine the part you will play in the work of Socialist construction, and master to perfection your chosen life work.

But such a self-determination is also of very great importance to every one of you in your everyday life. When you have shaped your character, when you have clearly determined your world outlook, when you have found your place and mastered the part you are to play in the building of Socialism land in the daily struggle, when it has become the aim of your life to carry out your convictions in practice, it will be possible to say that you have at the same time achieved reliable immunity against all the various jabs, disappointments and adversities of life. As you know, things like this happen: a pupil begins to be friendly with a girl, and then forsakes her for some other girl—there you have a whole “drama.” Do not think I am speaking of this with the irony of an old man—I was young myself and now too I respect the feelings of young people. Well, then, to an unsettled person, who has not found his place in life, such a “drama” may assume inordinate importance; he may become thoroughly disillusioned with life in general and suffer severe aftereffects for many years to come. For a clear-minded and determinate person, however, such a “drama” will pass off with relative ease.

So, then, it is necessary that a person's character should be shaped and his world outlook formed as early as possible. If he says—I shall be a zoologist, that is all there is to it. And he will devote all his abilities to work in zoology for the benefit of his native land. Therein lies the difference between the Soviet zoologist and a zoologist in a capitalist country, A Soviet zoologist will say that in this sphere he will unfailingly bring the maximum of benefit to his native land. And he will achieve his objective, his work will be of great value. And such a person will find it a hundred times easier to overcome all

the jabs and adversities and dramas of life than a person who has no definite aim in life, no definite calling, no definite idea.

Personally I have great respect for people who have hammered out their convictions and their character. But perhaps it is still early for you to trouble about that? No, comrades, it is not. You are very likely well aware of the life's path of Comrade Stalin. At fifteen he already became a Marxist, and when he was seventeen years old he was expelled from the seminary for having definite political views which were directed in their entirety against the tsarist autocracy, against capitalism. You see, then, how early in life Comrade Stalin decided what path he would take in life. But if people in days gone by were able to settle their life's course so early, it is far easier for you to solve the problem now.

In conclusion I would like to say one more thing. I have been told that some of you argue like this: why try to get top marks at graduation examinations; we won't go to a higher school anyhow, but will join the army. That is an absolutely wrong line of argument. Firstly, the matter must not be regarded from the angle of marks received. The important thing is not marks but the fact that in the future such comrades will not have the opportunity to study systematically, that is to say, they will be unable to fill in the gaps in their secondary school education. Further, in our view, the overwhelming majority of comrades will be able to enter higher schools after finishing their term of military service if they graduate from secondary school with a good showing, not to mention the fact that a considerable percentage of them will enter the higher educational establishments of the army itself. We have many educational establishments in the Red Army, and they will draw their student body mainly from those who graduate from secondary school in fine style. That is why you must devote all your energy to your studies at secondary school.

Higher schools are another matter. There you will have to do with instruction of a higher order; there people take shape as specialists in definite branches of science. In secondary school, on the other hand, people only learn to work systematically, only lay the foundations of their education. That is why I consider that comrades who imagine that there is no point in exerting their energies to the utmost while studying at secondary school are committing a serious error and may be doing themselves irreparable harm.

Speech at a Conference of Pupils of the 8th, 9th and 10th Grades of Secondary Schools

From the bottom of my heart I wish this year's tenth graders to be good fighters in the ranks of our Red Army and also good students in our higher schools. (*Stormy applause.*)

Speech at a Conference of the Central Committee of the All-Union Leninist Young Communist League With Komsomol Regional Committee Secretaries in Charge of Work Among School-Age Youth and Young Pioneers¹⁹

May 8, 1940

Comrades, it was not my intention to speak, but Comrade Mikhailov²⁰ says that there's no getting out of it. Well, then, what am I to tell you in connection with this conference? It seems to me that your reports lack many very fundamental points.

You are Komsomol regional committee secretaries responsible for work among school-age youth and Young Pioneers. I would like to understand what that means. I hesitate to call myself an old man, but all the same I am nearly that, and hence make comparisons with bygone days. What place might you have occupied in the old Ministry of Education? I have searched and searched, and have found nothing even approximating the position you hold.

I suppose your task, your main task, is to instill political purposefulness in the schools and among the teachers in order to help the Party and the Soviet State in the Communist education of Soviet children. Now many comrades have spoken here and delivered reports on their work. One feels that this conference is attended by cultured, educated people. I can testify that you are good at delivering reports. The most brilliant report was made by the Secretary of the Central Committee of the Komsomol of Byelorussia. But I think she might have made a different kind of report had she not been afraid of being independent. Actually her report did not differ from the others. As regards content, your reports are all alike. Why are they so? Because they are, so to say, of an organizational, administrative and disciplinary character. You all spoke here on a supervisory plane and in a tone of authority. That is the first big defect.

¹⁹ Originally published: *Problems of Communist Education*, State Publishing House for Political Literature, 1940, pp. 20-27.

²⁰ TV. A. Mikhailov. Secretary of the Central Committee of the All-Union Leninist Young Communist League.—*Trans.*

It is rather indicative when you come to think of it that not a single one of you dwelt upon the methods of teaching, not one of you uttered a word about the general cultural level of Soviet teachers and in particular teachers who are Komsomol members and hence should play a leading part at school. I ask you: have you met among Komsomol schoolteachers people who play such a leading part in pedagogy or any other sphere of school activity? If you have, you should have spoken about them. If you have not, you should be ashamed of yourselves. After all, there most certainly must be such people in our schools; it cannot be that there are none. This is a very important question. Yet it would seem as if it did not come within your range of vision. The fact that you passed this question by means that you are not quite clear about the part you have to play.

To be a Komsomol secretary responsible for work among school-age youth and Young Pioneers means to serve as a model to hundreds and thousands of schoolteachers. Why, you yourselves have said here that not less than thirty percent of our schoolteachers are of Komsomol age. Well, if they take you as their example, the reports they make are probably of the same sort, concerned with organizational, administrative and disciplinary matters. Unfortunately, none of you told us about the life and work of the Komsomol schoolteachers. That is the second big defect.

Further. If you are striving to introduce order and discipline in the schools—and you should strive to do so—the first thing necessary is to raise the teacher's authority. I shall not deal with the various cases of teachers who lack authority either because they know their subject poorly, or because, though knowing the subject well, they are unable to teach it, or because in general their work is neither good nor bad. I shall take the cases where the objective and subjective conditions exist for the growth of the teachers' authority, and ask you: what have you done to enhance and strengthen this authority? Unfortunately, you did not dwell on this question at all, you did not even tell us whether the authority of the teachers is growing or not, and if it is, how is this brought about, by what means is it achieved. That is the third big defect.

Further, I consider that Komsomol committee secretaries responsible for work among school-age youth and Young Pioneers should be highly cultured people. By this I do not at all want to imply that you should be specialists in pedagogy in the narrow sense of the word. Not at all, that is not the point at issue. Perhaps, if you were to be such specialist-pedagogues

you might even bungle things in some respects. You should be highly cultured people in the sense of general erudition, i.e., you should be thoroughly acquainted with general and specialized works dealing with the basic problems of school work, the basic branches of science, art and technique, you should have a good knowledge of fiction, etc., because you serve as examples for the Komsomol members who are schoolteachers. You should be highly cultured in the sense of knowing how to behave toward schoolteachers, in the sense of knowing how to deal with people in general, in the sense of tact. If you possess these elements of culture you will learn the spiritual requirements and interests of Soviet teachers more easily and faster, you will find no difficulty in learning what people are reading, what works they like most of all, what their attitude is to literature in general, and, finally, it will be easier for you to discover the sentiments of teachers and school children. Only then will you become real helpers of the Party and the Soviet State in the Communist education of school children. Unfortunately, you said nothing about that either. That is the fourth big defect.

It seems to me that you should build up your reports quite differently. Judging from many facts and particularly from the fact that you do not lack the gift of eloquence this is quite within your powers. True, it will require hard work, much thought on your part, for here you will be beset by danger, you may slip up, make mistakes. But it is not becoming for Komsomol members to fear difficulties and to boggle at danger. Your speeches should be alive with creative thought and initiative. Of course, when necessary, your reports should also emphasize organizational, administrative and disciplinary matters, but for all that you should give them political content and strive to bring out the cultural values growing and developing among school children, among teachers.

I want to address the women members of the Komsomol especially. Comrades, you are the most cultured of the Komsomol workers engaged in public education, because we drag the cultured young men off to all kinds of other jobs, from the air force to the mining industry. The bulk of the Komsomol members engaged in public education are women. To all intents and purposes public education has been "farmed out" to you, women members of the Komsomol, and the main responsibility for the schools rests with you. That is why you, above all, should raise the cultural level of teachers of Komsomol age, of whom we have so many.

There was something said here about a teacher who could not solve a certain problem and who consequently is considered to be a poor teacher. That is a mechanical, an absolutely wrong, approach. Where are we to find the virtuosos who can solve all problems? Now my son was a secondary-school teacher. I once asked him: "Are you able to answer all the questions the children put to you on your subject?"

He said: "How can I answer all questions? When I am asked a question I cannot answer, I say: I cannot answer you at the moment, but I shall do so next time."

Of course, when a teacher faces forty roguish children's eyes sparkling with the impish thought "We've caught you napping this time," his position is not an easy one. Still the teacher is in duty bound to say to his pupils openly: at the moment I cannot reply to this question, because I do not know the answer. Next time, however, I shall try to give you a full explanation. Such an approach by the teacher to his pupils will, in my opinion, be an honest one, and school children must be taught to be honest.

Six members of my family have a university education. The majority of them are engineers, and consequently ought to know their mathematics well. At the time my youngest daughter was still going to secondary school, it would happen that when she sat down to do her lessons and began to solve some problem, the older lads would vie with one another to help her. They would all solve the problem, but just imagine, there were times they could not do so straight away. They had forgotten. One might have thought they had it all at their fingertips, for they are engineers and have a good knowledge of mathematics. But they were found wanting. All of which goes to show that isolated cases such as these are not enough to enable one to judge whether a person does or does not know his subject, whether he is a good teacher or a bad one.

The teacher's authority cannot be enhanced by administrative means alone. But when we see that a teacher is beginning to be scoffed at, it is necessary to interfere, for such an attitude toward him undermines the authority not only of the teacher in question but also of teachers in general. If we want to raise the teacher's authority, we should be very careful in our approach to this problem. Of course, it is not good if a teacher who never wears glasses says he cannot see without spectacles. At the same time, however, we should remember that there never has been, nor is there now, a sage in the world who can answer all questions. The teacher's authority should be raised by

cultivating a most profound respect for him among all age groups of the population by surrounding him with an aura of general esteem.

Now that is what, it seems to me, should be propounded by the Komsomol, not by way of an official circular letter, but as an unwritten law which should become a tradition with our Komsomol as a whole. And you, Komsomol committee secretaries responsible for work among the school-age youth and Young Pioneers, should be the first and most zealous exponents of this law, for it is the general line of our Party and of the Komsomol to raise the authority of the teacher.

Much has been said here of the progress made by the school children in their studies, and various percentages have been quoted. Percentages, of course, are of importance when you want to obtain a general picture. But you surely are not heads of Departments of Education. Besides, you obtain these percentages without any particular difficulty by asking teachers and school principals to prepare them for you. Consequently, you do not even have to do the elementary calculating. Honestly speaking, I expected far more of you. I expected you to speak of what lies behind these percentages. You should have analyzed the situation if only from the pedagogical point of view. But I heard nothing of the kind from you.

We are perfectly well aware that it is very easy with some teachers to get excellent marks, whereas with others it is very difficult. There are even such teachers who will not give excellent marks on principle, declaring that only their own knowledge of the subject rates "excellent." But here again we have to go into the matter. We have splendid pedagogues, in particular old teachers, who love the subject they teach very much, who are carried away by it and teach it well. Children cherish deep respect and affection for such teachers, and at the same time for the subject they teach. Although these teachers may be lenient in giving marks, one can say in advance that their pupils are certain to have a far better knowledge of the subjects they teach than of those taught by schoolteachers who consider that they themselves alone are worthy of receiving excellent marks. You paid no attention to this aspect of the question either.

In general I am somewhat surprised that you limited yourselves to mere formal reports.

To use the language of our critics, your reports were more in the nature of formalism than Socialist realism. Bryusov,²¹ I think, once said: “The reason I love the youth is that with them as your support, you can move forward.” And that is true. Yet there is no forward movement to be noticed in your case, although great possibilities for it exist. After all, you are not heads of Departments of Education who are overburdened with administrative and economic affairs ranging from repairs to school discipline. You are comparatively less occupied than the heads of Departments of Education. You are the assistants of the Party and the Soviet Government not so much with regard to repairs to school buildings—although you should help in this field too when required—as in organizing and ensuring the Communist education of the rising generation. You are, finally, not impartial observers but, I presume, ardent Soviet patriots. You should be overflowing with energy, and if you are not, then what sort of young people are you, what sort of Soviet patriots are you? You should strive ever forward, you should seize on every new urgent question. To do this, however, I repeat again, you have to be highly cultured. If it were in my power I would compel you to devote a minimum of five hours a day to reading literature (novels, writings on various problems of art, science, engineering, etc.) so as to become competent, cultured, educated people, so that whenever a problem of principle or a practical issue arises teachers should say to themselves: ah, this smacks of the Academy of Sciences. When that happens your own authority will rise immediately in the eyes of teachers.

As far as I am aware, you have no formal authority over the schools, but you can exert an enormous influence on them, and in this sense the Party expects you to do important and fruitful work. Because of this, I repeat again and again, Komsomol committee secretaries responsible for work among the school-age youth and Young Pioneers must be highly cultured people, in fact, they should occupy first place as regards culture among teachers.

Together with culture you must also introduce the Bolshevik Party spirit into the schools. What do we mean by introducing the Party spirit? The matter might seem to have become very much simplified now: there is the *History of the CPSU(B)*, *Short Course*, you study the textbook, and the matter's done with. But, comrades, a textbook is only a textbook, and you need something more than a textbook to instill the Party spirit in people.

²¹ F. V. Bryusov (1873-1924). Well-known Russian poet, translator, fiction writer, and scholar.—*Trans.*

Of course, the *History of the CPSU(B) Short Course* is a powerful instrument for developing the Marxist-Leninist world outlook. Yet apart from this it is necessary that people should have a Marxist understanding not only of the Party's history, but also of the problems arising at work, in everyday life, in life in general, that they should approach the concrete problems that arise every day and at every step as Party people, Bolsheviks.

Yet when you study a textbook, you are sometimes afraid of going beyond the bounds of its various paragraphs. But if you confine yourselves to these bounds you will be poor Marxists, for each paragraph is a guide to action and not a dogma. In studying the history of the Bolshevik Party these paragraphs should be illustrated by an abundance of facts taken not only from the past but also from the present, using examples from present-day life as well, to explain their essence.

Now, for example, something was said here about a case of suicide. If I were teaching the history of the Party, even though I might be a poor teacher of the history itself, I would not fail to seize on this incident to enlarge on the appropriate paragraph. I would show that this Communist did not behave as a Marxist should, that actually he was not a Communist, but merely called himself one, for a Communist cannot behave in that way. If you study the history of the Party in this way, you will really develop, i.e., not only will your knowledge of the history of our Party be fortified, but Communist principles, in this case proletarian, Communist ethics, will be consolidated in your minds.

You, Komsomol committee secretaries responsible for work among the school-age youth and Young Pioneers, are leaders, and if you are afraid of these problems, you will find things very difficult. You should raise these problems boldly among the teachers and seek to solve them in a Marxist way.

As you see, comrades, I have given a very high appraisal of your role and your importance. But this also places a great responsibility on you. In particular, as I said at the very outset, it makes it incumbent on you to make your reports replete with political content, so that they should really be reports reflecting the *Party spirit*. This will be your first lesson in Marxism, in genuine Marxism. And if you achieve this, if you overcome triteness and dogmatism in your reports, it will inevitably be reflected in all of your work. (*Stormy applause.*)

On Communist Education

Speech at a Meeting of Leading Party Workers of the City of Moscow²²

October 2, 1940

Comrades! Exactly twenty years ago, on October 2, 1920, Vladimir Ilyich Lenin delivered a speech about Communist education at the Third All-Russian Congress of the Russian Young Communist League. In his address to the Komsomol he said that our generation, which had been brought up in capitalist society, would hardly fulfill the task of establishing Communist society. That task would fall to the youth.

And so, today, as you were applauding, these words involuntarily came to my mind and set me thinking that before me I see just those former Komsomols, that section of the people to whom Lenin addressed himself, and who now, grown up and experienced in life, are playing an active part in the work of Socialist construction. And I join in the applause, which I address to you—the builders of Socialism.

We devote much attention to Communist education. It is not for nothing that our press is full of the word “education.”

However, one encounters considerable difficulties in trying to give a more or less precise and brief formulation of what education means in general. Not infrequently education is confused with instruction. Naturally, education is very much akin to instruction, but the two are by no means synonymous. Authoritative pedagogues consider education a wider concept than instruction. It has its specific features.

In my opinion education is the definite, purposeful and systematic influencing of the mind of the person being educated in order to imbue him with the qualities desired by the educator. It seems to me that such a definition (which, of course, is not obligatory for anyone) broadly covers all that we put into the concept of education, such as instilling a definite world outlook, morality and rules of human intercourse, fashioning definite traits

²² Originally published: *On Communist Education*, Publishing House for Political Literature, of the C.C. of the CPSU(B), 1940.

of character and with habits and tastes, development of definite physical qualities, etc.

Education is one of the most difficult fields of work. The best pedagogues consider it to be a matter not only of science, but also of art. They have in mind school education, which, of course, is of a comparatively limited nature. In addition, however, there is the school of life, in which an uninterrupted process of educating the masses takes place, and where the educators are life itself, the State, the Party, while the educands are millions of adults differing from one another as regards experience of life, political experience. This is a far more complicated matter.

It is with just this education, the education of the masses, that I want to deal today.

I

In his book *Anti-Dühring* Engels writes:

Men, consciously or unconsciously, derive their moral ideas in the last resort from the practical relations on which their class position is based—from the economic relations in which they carry on production and exchange.... Morality was always a class morality; it has either justified the domination and the interests of the ruling class, or, as soon as the oppressed class has become powerful enough, it has represented the revolt against this domination and the future interests of the oppressed.²³

Thus, in class society there never has been, nor can there be, education outside or above the classes.

In bourgeois society education is permeated through and through with hypocrisy, with the mercenary interests of the ruling classes; it is of a profoundly contradictory character, reflecting the antagonisms of capitalist society.

The ideal of the capitalists is to see in the workers and peasants their obedient servants bearing the burden of exploitation without a murmur. Proceeding from this, the capitalists would prefer not to foster daring and courage in the workers and peasants, would prefer not to give them any education whatsoever. For it is easier to cope with people who are ignorant and downtrodden. But you cannot win wars of conquest with such people,

²³ F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, Foreign Languages Press, Paris, 2021, p. 100.

and they could not operate machines and machine tools without elementary knowledge. Mutual competition under conditions of technical progress, the armaments race, etc., on the one hand, and the struggle of the workers and peasants to acquire an education, on the other hand, compel the bourgeoisie to give the working people at least crumbs of knowledge, while wars of plunder force it to cultivate among the working masses stamina, courage and other qualities dangerous for the bourgeoisie.

No system of bourgeois education can rid itself of these contradictions.

And so, despite these contradictions which, as I have already said, are inherent in the very nature of bourgeois society, the ruling classes engage in a frantic struggle to gain control of the masses, using all means, from open suppression to subtle deception.

From the day the workingman is born and until the day he dies, he is subjected in bourgeois society to the constant influence of such thoughts, sentiments and customs as are advantageous to the ruling class. This is effected through innumerable channels, sometimes in barely perceptible forms. The church, the school, art, the press, the cinema, the theatre, organizations of different kinds—all these serve as instruments for imbuing the masses with the world outlook, morals, customs, etc., of the bourgeoisie.

Take the cinema, for example. A certain bourgeois movie director has written this about American films: "Many present-day films are something in the order of a narcotic designed for people who are so tired that all they want is to sit in soft armchairs and be spoon-fed."

Such is the essence of bourgeois education.

To this system of education, which took centuries to elaborate and is designed to consolidate the position of the ruling, capitalist class and to reconcile the oppressed to their position, the Communist Party—the vanguard of the proletariat—opposes its own principles of education which are directed primarily against the domination of the bourgeoisie and in support of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

II

Communist education differs fundamentally from bourgeois education not only as regards its tasks, a point that is understandable without adducing proof, but also as regards methods. Communist education is bound up indissolubly with the development of political consciousness and

culture in general, with the raising of the intellectual level of the masses. This is something that all Communist parties are striving to achieve.

Although the final aim of all Communist parties is one and the same, yet, inasmuch as the conditions of the working class in the Soviet Union differ from those in the capitalist countries, the education we give should correspond precisely to these specific conditions. The working class in our country is the dominant, directing force not only materially, but also spiritually.

Marx and Engels wrote:

The class that possesses the means of material production, by virtue of this also possesses the means of spiritual production.... The individuals composing the ruling class possess, among other things, consciousness as well, and by virtue of this, think. In so far, therefore, as they rule as a class and determine the extent and scope of an epoch, it is self-evident that they do this in all its spheres, hence rule also as thinkers, as producers of ideas, and regulate the production and distribution of the ideas of their age; and that means that their ideas are the dominant ones of the epoch.²⁴

This cannot be said of the working class on the other side of the Soviet frontiers.

Communist education as we understand it is always thought of concretely. Under our conditions it has to be subordinated to the tasks facing the Party and the Soviet State. The fundamental and chief task of Communist education is to render the maximum assistance in the class struggle we are waging.

I see that you are somewhat surprised, that you want to get at the meaning of the thesis that the task is to foster in people the desire to be of the maximum assistance in the class struggle in our country, where the exploiting classes have been abolished. It seems to me this does not require any special explanation. It will be enough to remind you of the excellent reply given by Comrade Stalin to the Komsomol member Ivanov.

But, [wrote Comrade Stalin,] as we are not living on an island but in a system of states, a considerable number of which are

²⁴ K. Marx, F. Engels, *The German Ideology*, Foreign Languages Press, 2022, p. 35.

hostile to the Land of Socialism and create the danger of intervention and restoration, we say openly and honestly that the victory of Socialism in our country is not yet final.

The events of the past year have brought practical confirmation, concrete facts to show the truth of the views set forth in Comrade Stalin's reply.

True, our class struggle has assumed forms differing from those of the class struggle beyond the bounds of the USSR. I would say that it has reached a higher level; its positive results are more effective. But, of course, it is also considerably more complicated in character.

The thesis of Marx and Engels that "the ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas," in so far as it refers to the working class of the Soviet Union, places a great responsibility on us. We cannot confine ourselves to merely criticizing the bourgeois system. The main thing now is a struggle for practical achievements all along the line in political life, economics, culture, science, art, etc. It is clear that the Communist education we give should also follow the same direction.

III

What are the main tasks we set ourselves today in the sphere of Communist education? And, generally speaking, are these fundamentally new tasks in comparison with those set by Lenin in his speech at the Third Congress of the Komsomol twenty years ago?

Of course, the situation in the Soviet Union has changed considerably in this period. But at the bottom the tasks of Communist education set by Lenin twenty years ago, retain their urgency at the present time too.

It would not be amiss if those who try to reproduce the features of Communist society in the abstract were to be reminded of these tasks more often. Such people who like to "theorize," to indulge in "profound" dreams about the specific features of the man of the future, associating Communism with some vague, bright future, impart this abstractness to Communist education as well. In my opinion, this is telling fortunes from coffee grounds, not penetrating into the future.

Comrades, one of the most important elements in the building of Communism and a mighty weapon of the working people of the USSR in their struggle against capitalism is a high productivity of labor. Lenin said:

In the last analysis, productivity of labor is the most important, the principal thing for the victory of the new social system. Capitalism created a productivity of labor unknown under serfdom. Capitalism can be utterly vanquished, and will be utterly vanquished, by the fact that Socialism creates a new and much higher productivity of labor.... Communism is the higher productivity of labor—compared with capitalist productivity of labor—of voluntary, class-conscious, united workers employing advanced technique.²⁵

That, comrades, is what we must think and speak about, that, first and foremost, is the direction in which Communist education should be developed. It is the struggle for a high level of labor productivity.

But, between you and me, isn't such a line, such a practical trend in Communist education, my own invention? No, comrades, it is not.

As I prepared for this report and thought over its main points, I turned to what are our fundamental documents, and in the first place, to our Constitution, Article 12 of which reads:

Work in the USSR is a duty and a matter of honor for every able-bodied citizen, in accordance with the principle: "He who does not work, neither shall he eat."

In the USSR the Socialist principle, "from each according to his ability, to each according to his work," is applied. But you yourselves, comrades, know that the articles of the Constitution are not only the juridical embodiment of the rights and duties of citizens, but also a powerful factor in the education of people.

This article of the Constitution speaks directly of the majesty of work. That is understandable: as Comrade Stalin has stated, a radical revolution has long been going on in the attitude of our people to work. Socialist emulation "transforms labor from the disgraceful and painful burden it was considered before, into a matter of *honor*, a matter of *glory*, a matter of *valor* and *heroism*." This fact has found its clear, Stalinist expression in the Constitution.

But I will be told that the majesty of work in our country is one thing and the struggle for a higher level of labor productivity is another. No, comrades, it is not so. The very attitude to work as something majestic also

²⁵ V. I. Lenin, "A Great Beginning," in *Collected Works*, Vol. 29.

means that everything has to be done to encourage a rise in the productivity of labor. That is the main thing.

Subordinated to this task are such important measures of the Party and the Soviet Government as the institution of the title of Hero of Socialist Labor, the Order of the Red Banner of Labor, and the medals For Labor Valor and For Distinguished Labor. In addition, the Soviet Government and the Party frequently bestow on those who have particularly distinguished themselves in their work such marks of distinction as the Order of Lenin or the Orders of the Red Star and Badge of Honor.

The lofty title of Hero of Socialist Labor is placed on a par with that of Hero of the Soviet Union. This title, these Orders and medals are awarded not simply for work, not simply for the fact that the person in question works, but for achieving the highest indices of labor productivity, for especially great successes in the struggle for labor productivity.

The same purpose is served by the Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, dated June 26, 1940.

At the face of it this would seem to be an exact antithesis: on the one hand we have the award of the title of Hero of Socialist Labor and decoration with Orders—from the Order of Lenin to medals of various kinds—and on the other hand, a Decree which introduces the element of punishment into the sphere of strengthening labor discipline. But essentially they are measures of one and the same order. Or more exactly, these measures are designed to achieve one and the same result.

By encouraging and bestowing decorations on the best representatives of Socialist labor, on the one hand, and by punishing those who disorganize production, on the other hand, the Party and the Soviet Government indicate the direction to be taken in the Communist education of the working people of the USSR.

Comrades, probably few of you worked at factories before the revolution. People who did are becoming fewer and fewer every year. Hence, I presume, you have a poor idea of what the attitude to work was in the old, pre-revolutionary times. Unfortunately, however, this attitude still exerts quite a considerable influence over us.

We revolutionaries did not at that time have a particularly high opinion of the old-timers, good skilled hands at their trade who had been employed for forty years at a plant. Yet they were skilled workers, experts at their jobs, men who believed in labor discipline and never shirked their work. And

when a strike broke out they sometimes had to be chased out of the plant by force. They themselves did not dare to down tools lest they might spoil their good relations with the bosses. We did not value such workers in the old days. Why? Because they exerted themselves for the capitalists.

It is a different matter now, under Socialism. Now, people who have worked at a plant for forty years, who display exemplary discipline at work, are experts at their jobs and achieve the highest productivity of labor are accorded universal praise; we award them Orders and medals, we honor and premium them as the best of Soviet citizens.

Here, by the way, you have a graphic example of dialectics. Formerly we used to negate such an attitude to work. Now we “negate” this “negation.” The result, as you see, is a “negation of a negation,” the affirmation of the Socialist attitude to work.

Why have we radically changed our opinion of such workers? Why do we now consider such people to be most useful, most valuable citizens of the Soviet Union? Because they are in the front line of our class struggle, the development of which has reached its highest stage. For the class struggle cannot be regarded only as a clash of arms on the battlefield. No, the class struggle now proceeds along other lines. And the struggle for the highest productivity of labor is at the present time one of the main lines being followed by the class struggle. Formerly, before the Soviet system was established, a person who worked well thereby objectively assisted capitalism, riveted the chains of slavery still more firmly on himself and on the working class as a whole. But now, in Socialist society, a person who works well sides with Socialism and by his achievements not only clears the way to Communism, but also shatters the chains of slavery shackling the world proletariat. He is an active fighter for Communism.

Have we raised labor productivity in our country very much? I would not say that the results we have achieved in this regard are too great. Theoretically, labor productivity under Socialism ought considerably to exceed that under capitalism. What do you think, Comrade Shcherbakov,²⁶ is that right or not? (*Shcherbakov*: “Correct, quite correct.” *Animation in the hall*.) But how do things stand practically? In practice we have not yet caught up with the highest productivity of labor in Europe, let alone America. This means that we have to make a greater effort to increase labor productivity.

²⁶ *A. S. Shcherbakov* (1901-1945), Outstanding Bolshevik leader and statesman.—*Trans.*

Increasing productivity of labor enables us to see more clearly the contours of the future Communist society.

But, comrades, by higher productivity of labor we mean not only the quantity but also the quality of the output. Some of our people are inclined to regard Communism in a somewhat abstract fashion, without making this concept concrete. But what does Communism mean? It means producing as much as possible, and of as high a quality as possible. I have in view the output not only of physical but also of intellectual labor—the output turned out by engineers, architects, writers, schoolteachers, doctors, actors, artists, musicians, singers, etc.

It should be said outright that we are very much dissatisfied with the quality of many of our products. And, characteristically enough, each one of us uses strong language when he gets hold of some article of poor quality. Yet we ourselves do not give any thought at all to the sort of products other people receive from us. In a word, each one of us wants an abundance of everything, and of good quality. I ask you, however: where shall we get all this if each one of us does not try to achieve the best results at his job? We must, once and for all, fully grasp the old adage that "as you sow, so shall you reap."

And here, in the struggle for quality of output, we also do not limit ourselves to mere measures of encouragement. As you know, the Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR dated July 10, 1940, sets forth that the "manufacture of goods which are of poor quality or lacking essential parts and the manufacture of goods that do not conform to obligatory standards is a crime against the state, tantamount to wrecking." Directors, chief engineers and heads of the technical control departments of industrial enterprises who are guilty of the release of poor-quality goods or output lacking essential parts are liable to prosecution and terms of imprisonment ranging from five to eight years.

It need hardly be said that the Decree hits hard at some people, comes down heavily on them for the poor quality of their products. At the same time, however, it supplies managers of undertakings with a powerful weapon with which to wage a struggle against the unhealthy influence of the environment. How did many of them argue as a rule? Their line of argument was: well, is it worthwhile stirring up scandals, aggravating relations with public organizations, with comrades, etc.—in the mass of products, the one

with a defect will pass, too. And it did. That sort of attitude towards defective goods struck deep roots in our industrial plants.

Well, it is these roots that have to be hacked away, destroyed. It is necessary in the interests of Socialist society and of each one of us individually. It is one of two things: either we build Communism, or we merely talk about it and move towards Communism slowly, if one may say so, waddle along, stretching ourselves and yawning. But let it be borne in mind that to move towards Communism in that way is a very risky matter; in such a way the transition to Communism may drag out unduly.

When people talk of Communism and at the same time do not link it up objectively, materially with such pressing problems as that of the quality of output, they are simply beating the air.

I remember as though it were today—it was about forty years ago, perhaps thirty-nine or thirty-eight; as you see, I can go back in time to somewhere around forty years (*laughter*)—how a discussion arose among us underground workers as to whether or not a revolutionary worker is obliged to turn out a good job, i.e., to think about the quality of his output. Some said that we could not, were indeed organically incapable of turning out a bad job, that it revolted us, lowered our human dignity. Others, on the contrary, said that it was not our business to be concerned about the quality of the goods produced. That was the business of the capitalists. After all, we worked for them. In any case they would compel us to do things well. And in so far as the capitalists would compel us, we would turn out good jobs. But we ought not to display our initiative, to show any zeal.

You see, comrades, even before the revolution, when capitalism was in existence, the attitude of part of the workers who fought the capitalists was that one should not turn out a bad job—it revolted them, they were, so to say, conscience-stricken. But here, in Socialist society, where we work not for the capitalists but for ourselves—are we all revolted, does our conscience prick us when we turn out products of bad quality? Unfortunately, we cannot say so. It would, however, be far better if people were more conscience-stricken, if they felt revolted to a greater degree at the production of goods of bad quality.

And when we speak of Communist education it means, first and foremost, to inculcate upon each worker the idea that he should approach his job with at least elementary conscientiousness. We should impress it on him that if he considers himself to be a Bolshevnik, or simply an honest Soviet citizen,

he should do his job with at least a minimum of conscientiousness, so that the articles he produces should pass the test as far as quality is concerned.

And so, the struggle for Communism is a struggle for the highest productivity of labor in the sense of both quantity and quality of output. There you have the first fundamental postulate regarding the Communist education of the working people of the USSR.

IV

Comrades, Article 131 of the Soviet Constitution states:

It is the duty of every citizen of the USSR to safeguard and fortify public, Socialist property as the sacred and inviolable foundation of the Soviet system, as the source of the wealth and might of the country, as the source of the prosperity and culture of all the working people.

Persons committing offenses against public, Socialist property are enemies of the people.

The intrinsic significance of the question of safeguarding and fortifying public property is greater than would seem to outward appearances. A thrifty attitude towards public property is a Communist trait. It seems to me that never in the history of mankind has there been a more economical society than Communist society. And that is quite natural. For only in Communist society is the disposal, the expenditure of resources in the hands of the producers. I think there is no particular need to prove that the producer is more economical in expenditure than is the exploiter or the appropriator of the wealth of others.

History has not taught people to safeguard public property, and there have always been enough of those with a fondness for plundering this property. Embezzlement of state funds was a characteristic feature of the former system of administration, and the public coffers were a milch cow for state officials. Naturally, such a state of affairs bred carelessness and extravagance in relation to personal property too, while disregard for public property existed from top to bottom.

But the plundering of national wealth, of human labor, which we witnessed in the past, is mere child's play in comparison with the way human labor is plundered in modern capitalist society. It can be said without fear of contradiction that every day millions of workdays vanish into thin air, spent

on destroying the labor of the past. And how great is the destruction of those highly precious gifts of nature of which there are such limited quantities on earth. For this crime against mankind alone capitalism deserves to be destroyed with the utmost speed.

In the total balance sheet of our country's output economy is an asset. And this asset should grow from year to year as a result of our growing culture.

Comrades, Article 131 of the Constitution provides a wealth of material for Communist education. It is directed against the bourgeois conception that "this house is mine, that's all that matters, and I'm letting nobody into my bomb-shelter." It binds one to take care of public property, to place the public interest above private, individual interests, for the position of each is really guaranteed only in the community, in Socialist society.

In the very first year following the establishment of Soviet government, Lenin said:

Introduce accurate and conscientious financial accounting, manage economically, do not be lazy, do not steal, observe the strictest discipline during work—it is precisely such maxims, which were justly scorned by the revolutionary proletariat when the bourgeoisie concealed its rule as an exploiting class by these commandments that now, after the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, are becoming the immediate and the principal slogans of the moment.

As regards thieves, embezzlers of public property, crooks and other such "custodians of the traditions of capitalism," we must take punitive measures against them. These aims are served, in particular, by the decision of the Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR dated August 7, 1932, "Regarding the protection of the property of state enterprises, kolkhozes and cooperatives and the consolidation of public (Socialist) property," and the Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR dated August 10, 1940, "Regarding criminal responsibility for petty theft in industry and for rowdiness."

And so, comrades, we must first of all learn to work according to our abilities, learn to take care of public property, and when we produce enough and know how to take care of the results of our labors, we shall distribute everything according to needs.

That is the second component part of Communist education.

V

A further necessary component element of Communist education is the development of love for one's country, for one's Socialist homeland, the development of Soviet patriotism.

The word "patriot" first appeared during the French Revolution of 1789-1793. Those who fought for the people's cause, who defended the republic, called themselves patriots, in opposition to the traitors from the monarchist camp who betrayed their native land.

Subsequently, however, the term was used by the reactionaries and ruling circles for their own selfish ends. That is why the word "patriotism," both in Europe and in tsarist Russia, always roused suspicion among the most honest people, who were concerned about the needs of the masses, for in it they saw national chauvinism, the unfounded conceit of the ruling circles. Finally, it was the flag under which the tsarist satraps plundered the peoples incorporated in Russia.

"Patriotism" was monopolized by the Black Hundreds, who demonstrated their "patriotic sentiments" in street pogroms, by beating up workers, intellectuals, Jews. And in general at that time large numbers of all sorts of shady, unscrupulous elements from among the dregs of society fastened on to this "patriotism."

In the eyes of the people the word "patriotism" was besmirched. No honest person could count himself a patriot.

The nations incorporated in Russia, oppressed, exploited, fleeced and derided at every step by officials and colonizers, naturally hated the Russian state.

Running counter, as it were, to the "patriotism" of the knights of the whip and the scourge, was the ever-growing progressive movement directed against the autocracy.

At first the struggle of the progressive forces against reaction embraced literature, music, art, where one could at least hint at one's negative attitude to the then existing situation. As time went on the democratic sections of the population began gradually to be drawn into this struggle, which, as a result, assumed an increasingly radical character. This process developed and united the opponents of the autocracy, the opponents of so-called official Russia. At the same time it was creating the national bulwark of a great people in the persons of its best representatives. There

came on the scene a whole pleiad of writers, critics and publicists—men of genius and of outstanding gifts—who raised our literature on high, won it laurels and brought it world fame. And not only literature, but also Russian music, art, science began to put forth their brilliant representatives, as truly patriotic champions of national culture.

These people held their honor, human dignity and public reputation dear, and resolutely disavowed the jingoistic official “patriotism.” For them the supreme thing was to serve their people and to awaken genuine patriotism in them. In pursuit of this great end they did not spare their energy or talent. Their contemporaries and subsequent generations learned from them, followed their example and became imbued with a lofty patriotism. The profoundly patriotic activity of these people fills a great many vivid and fascinating pages in the history of the Russian people. And if they did not enjoy the sympathy of official Russia, the people, on the contrary, paid them the respect that was their due, and always revered, and will continue to revere, their bright memory.

Now, this process of the struggle of the progressive forces against the forces of reaction, this process of the growth and consolidation of cultural forces enabled at least the more conscious elements of the oppressed nationalities to see another Russia—a Russia that was noble, that loved freedom and opposed oppression, a Russia that was cultured, talented, and that facilitated the spread of knowledge among wide masses of the population. The expanding revolutionary working-class movement raised the urgent issue of the need to achieve real unity among the proletarians and other working people of all the nationalities of the Russian Empire in their struggle against tsarism and capitalism. The efforts of Lenin and Stalin to create an all-Russian working-class party, without which the liberation of the Russian people and the oppressed nationalities was unthinkable, the tireless propagation of the Lenin-Stalin national policy, the struggle of the Bolsheviks against every manifestation of dominant-nation chauvinism and local nationalism—all this drew the oppressed nationalities close to the Russian people, induced their most class-conscious elements to acquaint themselves with Russian literature, art, science, with Russian revolutionary fighters, and thereby gave them the benefit of Russian culture, turned them into supporters of the common, conjoint struggle, i.e., into people thinking in terms of Russia as a whole.

The propagation of Soviet patriotism cannot be divorced or separated from the roots of our people's past history, but must be filled with patriotic pride for the accomplishments of our people. For Soviet patriotism is the direct successor to the creative works of our forefathers who advanced the development of our people.

Soviet life provides a remarkably graphic illustration of this. It will be sufficient to point to just one fact, the rapture with which the unfettered peoples recall the images of their epic and historical heroes. They depict them in their best works of art, which they bring for display in Moscow, the heart of the Soviet Republics, where each of them wants, as it were, to say to all the peoples of the USSR: See, I am a member of the great union of nations not by the grace of anyone, I am not without kith or kin—here is my family tree, I am proud of it, and I want you too, my brothers in work and in defending the best ideals of mankind, to feast your eyes on my family tree!

So then, Soviet patriotism is rooted in the remote past, going as far back as the popular epos; it imbibes all the best that has been created by the people, and considers it to be a matter of supreme honor to safeguard all their achievements.

The great proletarian revolution not only effected tremendous destruction, but also laid the basis for creative work on an unparalleled scale. At the same time it swept along like a mighty hurricane purifying the minds of tens of millions of people, imbuing them with vigor and faith in their own strength. They now felt themselves to be titans capable of vanquishing the entire world hostile to the laboring masses.

A Soviet epos was then born which picked up the thread of the art of the people of the distant past and of our epoch that had been broken by capitalism, which is hostile to this branch of spiritual production. The ensuing process of the Socialist transformation of society brought to the fore numerous rich and captivating themes worthy of the brush of great artists. The people are already selecting what is the best in these themes and are gradually creating sketches for epic-heroic poems dealing with this great epoch and its great heroes, such as Lenin and Stalin.

Our talented men of letters and artists must not lag behind the people. For never before have they had material so gratifying and in such quantity as in our epoch. Only now do they possess unlimited opportunities to

In this proud statement we hear the majestic voice of our epoch, of our generations, who are transforming the world along new lines.

Comrades, history has charged us with the responsible and honorable task of carrying our class struggle to the complete victory of Communism.

We must march forward in such a way that the working class of the whole world, looking at us, may say: "This is my vanguard, this is my shock brigade, this is my working-class state, this is my fatherland..." (Stalin).²⁸

But to achieve that we must educate all the working people of the USSR in the spirit of fervent patriotism, in the spirit of boundless love for their native land. I speak not of abstract, not of platonic love, but of love that is impetuous, active, passionate, indomitable, of love that knows no mercy to the enemy, that will not stop at any sacrifices on behalf of one's country.

There you have the third fundamental task connected with the Communist education of the working people of the USSR.

VI

I consider it necessary to deal in addition with the question of collectivity. There is no special need to prove that the inculcation of the idea of collective endeavor should occupy an important place in Communist education. I have in view here not the theoretical principles of collectivism, but its introduction into production, into everyday life, into the world of social habits; the establishment of the conditions under which collectivity becomes an integral part of our habits and standards of behavior, and is practiced not only consciously, after deliberation, but instinctively, organically. I shall illustrate my thought with examples.

Those of you who have read Ilf and Petrov's *One-Storeyed America* will probably remember the interesting observations they made during their motor trip.

If misfortune befalls a traveler, some passing motorist is certain to offer him a helping hand. And it is characteristic that in such cases Americans, whose motto is "time is money," do not reckon with time lost. The need to render whatever aid is necessary is accepted as a sort of social obligation.

²⁸ J. Stalin, "The Tasks of Business Executives," in *Works*, Vol. 13.

Another example. At the height of the harvest season in the old Russian village, every family strove to outdo the next in bringing in the crop; yet when a crowd of harvesters who had finished their work happened to pass by a lagging reaper, usually a woman with a large family working alone, it was considered natural for all to join in helping her out.

That, comrades, is the sense in which I speak of nurturing the spirit of collectivity as a normal human habit. In former times such habits developed spontaneously. I, however, am speaking of the conscious cultivation of such habits among the people.

The concept of collectivity must not be confused with that of gregariousness. For example, when in the past peasants banded together and beat up a horse thief, or when a crowd of depositors, furious at the crash of a bank, smashed its windows, such actions, in my opinion, could not be considered manifestations of collectivity, but of gregariousness. Collectivity, on the other hand, presupposes expedience in action.

Collectivity plays a great part in the practical life of our society, for it is based on collectivism. To capitalist society we oppose collectivism-communism, being convinced of its enormous superiority. The extent to which we are successful in implanting collective habits in production and in public and private life determines to a considerable degree the extent of our success in building Communism.

The collectivity of labor, its cooperative character is the basis of production. In Socialist industry this does not require any particular proof. Here the fact is obvious and clear to workers and everybody else connected with factory production. Whereas in capitalist society the labor of the individual proletarian is completely deprived of its individuality and on being embodied in the product disappears from the sight not only of the worker but also of the manufacturer, whose only concern is profit, in our society, on the contrary, labor embodied in the product is visible to the worker. It is revealed not only at the point of production, but also in consumption, in use. In other words, the producer can, with half an eye, see the results of his work. We must, however, extend and deepen by our educational work the ability of each worker to perceive his individual share in the common, collective labor.

It is particularly necessary to focus attention on instilling the spirit of collectivity in the village, in the collective-farm village, which is undergoing a serious schooling in collectivity, possessing practically no habits of

collective work. Although the words "the public," "public interests" were occasionally pronounced at village rallies in the past, actually there was little collectivity. The words "public interests," "the public" were a screen behind which the kulaks pursued their private business.

With the transition to collectivization the peasants were faced with difficult tasks; notwithstanding their entire past, they had to break with their psychology, or rather, to turn it in the opposite direction, to pass from working for themselves to working for all. This is no easy process. And it could develop successfully only under, considerable pressure from, and with the aid of, the state.

The transition from individual, simple labor to collective, more complex labor on a higher level, requires far greater organizational abilities of people. Well then, the process among kolkhoz peasants of overcoming private-property inclinations and of accumulating collectivistic habits is accompanied by a parallel process of accumulating organizational experience in applying collective methods of work.

Such are the conditions under which Communist education is proceeding in the village.

Clearly it is not enough anymore merely to call for collectivity, to go in for bald agitation, proclaiming the advantages of collective over individual work. The propagandist, the agitator, the educator must show the kolkhozniks more effective methods of work, or, at least, cite concrete examples of effective work and analyze the reasons for its efficacy.

Thus, even so complicated a matter as that of instilling the spirit of collectivity must, if it is to achieve the greatest effect, be adapted to practical work. In other words, the spirit of collectivity must be instilled concretely. When the educator explains the meaning of some practical process, he himself becomes enriched at the same time with practical material for his own theoretical development. This, by the way, may serve as a graphic example of the unity of theory and practice.

There you have the fourth element of Communist education.

VII

Culture is the factor that makes any positive endeavor fruitful. The more complicated, the more skilled the work, the greater the culture required. Culture is as necessary for us as the air we breathe, culture in its full, broad diapason, i.e., from the elementary culture that literally every

person stands in need of to the so-called high culture. People say: a man of high culture.

Culture is a definite index of the level of a person's development. And since a developed person attracts more attention, some people imitate the outer aspects of culture. It is usually said of such people: the crow has arrayed itself in peacock's feathers. In my opinion, however, such statements are wrong, they are harmful to the development of culture. It goes without saying that people in the mass begin by assuming the outer aspect. But inasmuch as a person seeks to acquire the outer aspects of culture, they, in their turn, will serve to raise his general level of culture.

Why is the need to raise the general level of culture felt particularly keenly now? During the past twenty-three years of the Soviet system our economy has moved far ahead. The technical level of production has become far higher, machines, machine tools have become more complex and must be handled with greater attention, in a more cultured manner. If we examine one branch of industry after another, we find that there is a general outcry for more cultured people than formerly. It stands to reason that there has been a corresponding increase in such demand in state institutions too.

The kolkhoz village, in its turn, presents a colossal demand for people with an enhanced level of culture. The tractor driver, the combine-harvester operator, the mechanic, the agronomist, the animal husbandry expert, apart from knowing their immediate jobs, are in duty bound to possess at least a minimum of culture. Take any other profession, say, the stableman. It is a comparatively easy matter for a peasant to attend to the stable when there are one or two horses to look after. But when there are from twenty to forty horses in the stables, organizational experience and culture are required. And the same is the case in all branches of collective farming. To move forward we need culture.

It is in place also to recall the needs of the country's defense. In this sphere the demand for culture grows by leaps and bounds.

Apart from everything else, culture means cleanliness and neatness in production and in private life.

Just imagine, comrades, an engineer, a good engineer who has studied hard, is an educated person, has charge of a plant and is considered a valuable worker. But when you walk around his plant, why, the devil himself would break his neck! (*Laughter.*) Now is that culture?! If such an engineer does not notice this sort of thing, it means that he still lacks the most ele-

mentary culture, that he is not really concerned about his plant, about the job he does.

I understand the struggle for culture in the widest sense of the word as implying, for example, that the water tap should not leak, that there should be fewer bedbugs in Moscow homes, and so on. Bedbugs are something that cannot be tolerated, a disgrace, yet with them around there are people who ask themselves what a person should be like under Communism, what will be his distinguishing features. (*Laughter.*) There are people who expatiate on child upbringing, yet allow their homes to be infested with bedbugs. Now, what would you call that? Are such people cultured? They are spineless gentry left over from old Russian society. (*Laughter.*)

Comrades, one could dwell upon a host of other questions concerning Communist education, as for example, the role of the Party, the trade unions, the Komsomol, sports organizations, universities, schools, literature, art, the cinema, the theater, the family and so on. But this would lead us too far afield, and we would lose sight of the most important thing, that which determines the tasks and the substance of the Communist education of the working people of the USSR at the present stage of the class struggle.

I consider that the main points to which I have referred should determine the approach to Communist education on the part of all our organizations and institutions, of everyone directly engaged in this work. They should solve each practical question from the angle of the main content and the basic aim of Communist education.

If our education were to be outwardly irreproachable, yet abstract, that is, if it were not to be bound up concretely, materially, with the struggle for the further growth of the Socialist State and the strengthening of its position in the class struggle of today, it would be a travesty of education.

In the present complicated international situation our people must be particularly alert, self-possessed and intensely vigilant, so that our Socialist State should be ready to meet any surprise and every contingency. All our public organizations, our literature, art, cinematography, theater, etc., should hammer on this point. That, comrades, will really be fulfilling the will of the Party, the injunctions of Comrade Stalin and the behests of

On Communist Education

Lenin as regards the Communist education of the masses in the present historical period. (*Stormy applause. All rise.*)

Speech at a Meeting of Pupils of Eighth, Ninth and Tenth Grades of Secondary Schools of Lenin District, Moscow²⁹

April 17, 1941

Comrades, although I meet the youth quite frequently, still it is not easy for me to comprehend the feelings and sentiments that move you in your daily life. And that is quite understandable, for I was your age approximately fifty years ago. In the years that have passed since then, I have forgotten much of what I felt in my youth, while the things I remember will very likely seem to you as belonging to hoary antiquity. If you were to be asked what you think the life of the youth was like in those days, you would probably find the question very difficult to answer, for it all happened so long ago.

And yet I believe that the life of the youth of forty to fifty years ago is of some interest to you too. Without pretending to possess a profound knowledge of those young people with all their virtues and faults, I would like to draw a picture for you, even though it be a poor one, of how they lived, what filled their lives, what types they consisted of, and what occupied their minds. Moreover, I shall deal mainly with young workers, with whom I chiefly associated.

True, I was also connected more or less closely with the peasant youth. But what is there to tell you about the peasant youth of those days? Nothing interesting or instructive. The bulk of the village boys and girls were overburdened with work and domestic cares. Of course, the young workers did not have an easy time in life either, but for all that, they had certain advantages, if only in the sense that their horizons were immeasurably wider; they were able to see and learn more. As to the mental outlook of the peasant youth, it was limited to the interests of the village; they knew little about what was going on beyond the village boundaries. No sooner had they reached thirteen to fifteen years of age than they were harnessed to work. And by the time the young peasant was eighteen or nineteen years old his path in life

²⁹ Originally published in *Smyena Magazine*, No. 6, 1941.

was definitely settled: he got married, left his father, and with difficulty set up a home for himself.

As for the student youth, I had little knowledge of them, although I did come in contact with them. But to come in contact with people does not mean to get to know them. I looked at the student youth from the sidelines, so to say. You must also bear in mind that for me, they belonged to another class. But for all that, the struggle waged by the students did not pass without trace for the working masses. Apart from sympathy for this struggle, a warm feeling grew and developed towards the student youth themselves.

And so, when I speak of the youth of the distant past, I have in view mainly the working-class youth.

What sort of people, then, were the young workers of those days? What types did they consist of? What were their interests, what stirred their hearts and minds?

The types to be found among the working youth of those days were quite diverse, very likely just as diverse as they are among you.

First type. These were people who tried by every means and device to extricate themselves from the working-class environment, to earn as much as possible, to dress as smartly as possible, to acquire an outer gloss of culture, particularly in the clothes they wore, to establish contact with the office employees at factories, and to marry their daughters, so as to move up to some post higher up on the administrative ladder when the opportunity came. Of course, there were few of that type among the mass of the youth, and they were of no political significance.

Another type. These were the hard-working sort who either were still apprentices, or had finished their apprenticeship and had begun to work independently. All their interests were centered on their earnings, on securing domestic comfort and personal well-being. Their job and their personal well-being—such were the limits beyond which their interests did not go. People of this type were considerably more numerous than those of the first type. But they also constituted an insignificant minority.

We occasionally came across tattletales and toadies among the working youth. But these were altogether few in number. They were literally isolated individuals, who tried to improve their position by fawning and by informing on others. They were connected with the foremen, the police, and the high officials in the plants. The workers could not stomach such people;

they were always held in general contempt, paid heavily for their conduct, and quite often were simply beaten up.

But as far as the overwhelming majority of the working youth was concerned, the characteristic type was that opposed to the social and political order existing at the time. It was from among such people that real revolutionary fighters emerged. The working-class youth in the mass were always a firm support for our Party. They were, so to speak, a militant detachment of workers who were most active during strikes and protest movements under the leadership of Party members.

It cannot be said, however, that the opposition of the working youth was from the very outset a fully conscious one. This opposition very often burst out spontaneously, and assumed such forms as the beating up of bad foremen—hangers-on of the bosses, policemen, etc.

As time went on, under the influence of Socialist propaganda and under the guidance of Marxist intellectuals, illegal circles arose among the working youth to which those who showed signs of social consciousness eagerly turned. The further they went, the more thought they gave to the conditions of the working class and the numerous other problems of social life. They greedily devoured Marxist literature, delved deep into the theory of scientific Socialism, set seriously about educating themselves, and raised the level not only of their political, but also of their cultural, development. Heated comradely discussions developed in the circles both on the burning questions of political life and on books that had been read. That was how class, Socialist consciousness took shape among the most advanced members of the working youth.

And it should be said that those who took part in the illegal Marxist circles enjoyed the greatest authority not only among the youth, but also among the older workers. Although they conducted their work in secret, a considerable part of the workers were well aware of this and discreetly helped them in putting various revolutionary undertakings into effect.

Outwardly, however, we differed very little from the rest of the workers. Like the other young workers we frequented tea shops and pubs, and occasionally, as we returned home from work at night, we would even climb into other people's orchards, out of mischief, of course, to show how brave we were, and not because we needed apples so badly. I remember, as if it were today, the watchman in an orchard near the Putilov Works who used to carry a gun loaded with salt. Well, how could you resist climbing

into this orchard when there was the added risk of getting a charge of salt into you! (*Laughter.*)

We used to go to parties, made dates with girls, had a merry time. And sometimes, when we wanted to take a walk in a public park, we would climb in over the fence. (*Laughter.*) We climbed over not at all because we could not find ten kopeks to pay admission. No, we had the money, for we were earning wages and could find ten kopeks to buy a ticket. But, after all, to climb in over the fence meant taking a risk—you might get caught and be led “in triumph” out of the park. How could you resist climbing in?!

(*Laughter.*) We climbed fences and went out walking with girls, as you probably do, I don’t, of course, know how these things are nowadays, but I imagine that it all goes on exactly as it did forty or fifty years ago. There does not seem to have been much change in this respect. (*Laughter.*)

And so, outwardly we led a most unremarkable existence. Had anyone kept us under observation he would not have noticed anything extraordinary.

Yet, all the same, we did differ from the rest of the working youth. Wherein did this difference lie? We were different in that our everyday interests gradually began to be ousted by the general interests of the workers. Study in illegal circles and the reading of revolutionary literature broadened our political outlook, filling our lives with ideological content. At first we regarded the glaring facts of tyranny at the factory as isolated outrages, but then we began to see them as a system of oppression of the working class in general, not only by the factory management and employers, but also by the autocracy.

Outwardly everything seemed to remain unchanged. We walked out with the girls, kept dates with them, danced at parties, and, of course, had love affairs. (*Laughter.*) But there already was something more in our minds than the “American happy ending.” Our thoughts were turned towards public work, and now, even when we attended parties, we would consider how they could be used for our revolutionary ends.

And so gradually, and imperceptibly, as it were, we entered into a principled life. And a principled life is actually the biggest and most interesting of lives! Now that was where we differed from the rest of the working youth, with whom we were always closely connected and on whom we constantly based ourselves in our revolutionary work.

Of course, our opportunities for leading a principled life were far more limited than those now enjoyed by the Soviet youth, and particu-

larly by you, pupils of the senior grades of secondary schools. And that is quite understandable.

Firstly, we did not go to *gymnasiums* then, secondary education being beyond our reach. What is more, far from all of us were fortunate enough to finish elementary school. Consequently, in this respect you are considerably more advanced than the working youth of those days, and by virtue of that one fact alone you possess greater opportunities to lead a principled life.

Secondly, in those times principled, class-conscious workers were persecuted. They were driven out of the factories, arrested, exiled, and so forth. And that means we could put our ideas into effect only illegally. And so, if anybody in those days wanted to live a principled life, to develop politically, to work in the interests of the working class and his people, to follow the path of progress, there was only this narrow thorny path open to him, a path, of course, that only a few people could take! You, on the contrary, have absolutely boundless vistas before you in this regard. All the necessary conditions are at your service—all you have to do is to work!

However, if you were to ask me whether I regretted in those years having chosen just that path in life, I would answer you that for a person who strove to live a big life, and not the narrow, philistine life that is designed to satisfy only personal, purely petty-bourgeois well-being, for anybody who wanted to make his life a really fine and interesting one, there could be no other path! I am speaking to you here as though all this concerned myself alone. But actually this is not so. For I was only one of many, and hence all I have told you concerns hundreds of people whose development and understanding of life were on a par with mine. I merely proved to be a lucky one in the sense that I am in a position to stand here before you and have a heart-to-heart talk with you, while most of the others of my age have very likely died long ago.

And so, a principled life, one replete with social interests, a life that is full of purpose in this sense, is the best, most interesting life on earth. The whole life of Comrade Stalin is, essentially speaking, a model of just that kind of a life. (*Prolonged applause.*)

But you may say to me: “Yes, Comrade Stalin’s life really is a model of a noble life governed by lofty ideas. But we are just ordinary people, and you are talking about a great man, a leader.” We must learn to live and work from our teachers and leaders, Lenin and Stalin, who possess the faculty not only of excelling all others in understanding and in giving correct expression to

the urgent requirements of social development but also of excelling all others in satisfying, and correctly satisfying, these requirements.

To live a big, principled life means to have your life governed by the social interests of the most advanced and most progressive class of your day, and at the present time, by the interests of the Soviet people, of the Soviet homeland. If your lives are governed by such interests, if all your thoughts are directed towards still further exalting your people, still further enhancing the economic and military might of your native land, if you devote all your energies to the struggle for the complete victory of Communism, and if this great idea predominates in your minds, then I do not doubt that you will really live big lives.

Comrades, young people of all times and generations have been inclined to indulge in dreams and fantasies of different kinds. That is no fault, it is a precious virtue. No active and normally thinking person can get along without imagination. But with young people this tendency is usually more strongly developed than with older people. There was a time when we also had rich and varied fantasies. Each of us wove fantasies in accordance with his general outlook and level of development. But, of course, the limits of our flights of fancy, their “ceiling,” so to speak, cannot be compared with the limits of the flights and the “ceiling” of your fantasies. And yet, as you see, very many young workers of those days were captivated by dreams of a better and more purposeful life. In this regard, I think, we had much in common with you.

By the way, I myself also indulged in fantasy to no small degree. For example, when I was nearly fifteen years old, I dreamed of becoming a sailor. I was not yet employed in a factory. Well, in preparation for the hard life of a sailor, I slept for three months on the bare floor. I wanted to harden myself, and I said at the time: now, what sort of a sailor sleeps in a bed. (*Laughter.*)

I imagine that your heads are also full of suchlike fantasies. You are pupils in the ninth and tenth grades. That is just the age when people are stirred by fantasies and the urge towards something great. And it cannot be otherwise! What sort of young Soviet people would you be if you did not dream about a great life, if each of you did not think of moving mountains or using Archimedes' lever to overturn the globe? (*Laughter.*)

But, as I have already said, it is easier for you to undertake the struggle for a big life than it was for us. If you were to ask me how practically to

launch upon this path, I would answer that for the time being nothing very much is required of you, in so far as you still attend school. As a beginning, to lay the foundation, so to say, what you need in order to become builders of a great life is to master three subjects contained in your curriculums. Only three! You see how modest I am. (*Laughter.*)

First and foremost you must have a thorough knowledge of the Russian language. I think that a knowledge of the Russian language is an exceedingly important factor in a person's general development. For there is no science that you will have to study in the future, particularly if you enter higher school specializing in the humanities, and no sphere of public activity where a good knowledge of the Russian language is not required. And even in ordinary everyday life such a knowledge is necessary to be able to give correct and precise expression to your thoughts, feelings, to the very depths of your emotional experiences. For if a person wishes to convey all this to other people, he has to express it in sentences that are built up correctly in respect to both syntax and grammar.

I think you often hear your comrades say: "I understand the subject and know it well, but I just can't explain it to you." (*Laughter.*) But why can't they? Well, because they have not mastered their mother tongue. Just imagine a young man wanting to write a letter to the girl of his heart. Suppose it happened fifty years ago. And he writes: "My darling, my love for you is boundless. (*Laughter.*) My emotion is so great that I cannot express it. I lack the words to do so." (*Laughter.*) Of course, a simple, naïve girl would say: "How wonderful!" (*Laughter.*) But, supposing she is neither naïve nor simple, but a well-educated girl? I am certain such a girl would say: "Poor boy, how little brains you've got." (*Laughter, applause.*)

To study one's native tongue is an important matter. The highest achievements of human thought, the most profound knowledge and most ardent sentiments will remain unknown if they are not given clear and precise shape in words. Language is an instrument for expressing thought. And a thought only becomes a thought when it is expressed in speech, when it has come to the surface through the medium of language, when, as the philosophers would say, it has been mediated and objectivized to others. That is why I say that a knowledge of your mother tongue is the most fundamental requirement for your further work.

The second subject that I also consider absolutely necessary for you is mathematics.

Why do I lay such emphasis on mathematics? Why do I consider it so important a science in precisely present-day conditions and precisely for you, the Soviet student youth?

Firstly, mathematics disciplines the mind, teaches one to think logically. It is not for nothing that mathematics is said to be mental gymnastics. I do not doubt that your heads are seething with ideas (*laughter*), but these ideas must be put into order, disciplined, directed, if one may say so, into the channel of useful work. Now, mathematics will help you to cope with this task. However, these motives will appeal more to scientists than to you, and I do not think they will give you a very strong impulse to study mathematics.

Secondly—and this probably will be closer to you—the range of the practical application of mathematics is enormous. Whatever science you may study, whatever higher school you may enter, whatever sphere of work you may engage in, if you want to leave your mark there, you need a knowledge of mathematics everywhere. And which of you is not now dreaming of becoming a sailor, an airman, an artilleryman, a skilled worker in some branch of our industry, a builder, a steelworker, a fitter, a turner and so on, an experienced agriculturist, cattle breeder, horticulturist, etc., a railwayman, an engine driver, a shop assistant and so on? Yet all these professions require a good knowledge of mathematics. Consequently, if you want to live a full life, fill your heads with mathematics while you have the chance. It will help you tremendously later on in all the work you do.

Take this example. One of Moscow's leading eye specialists once told me that an oculist with a poor knowledge of physics is a poor oculist. I did not ask him what branch of physics he was referring to, but apparently he had optics in view. Now optics is almost entirely a matter of mathematical formulas. Am I right? Approximately right. (*Laughter.*) You see, those of you who go in for medicine will also need mathematics.

The third subject which I consider of exceptional importance to you is... but I am afraid you will be very much surprised by what I am going to say, and maybe you will not fully agree with me. Nevertheless I must tell it to you. If I do not succeed in convincing you completely, I shall try at least to impel your thoughts towards an understanding of the importance of this subject. Perhaps you will do some thinking along these lines. If you do, I shall consider my aim achieved. Well, then, what is the subject? I have physical culture in mind. (*Laughter. Applause.*) I see that some of you are glad,

and most likely because I did not mention some other subject which would demand great mental effort.

But why have I placed physical culture on a par with the Russian language and mathematics? Why do I consider it one of the main subjects of instruction and education?

Primarily because I want you all to be healthy Soviet citizens. If our schools turned out people with shattered nerves and disordered stomachs (*laughter*) who have to take a cure every year at some health resort, what would be the good of it? Such people would find it hard to secure happiness in life. What happiness can there be without good, sound health? We must prepare ourselves healthy successors—healthy men and healthy women.

Secondly, I mention physical culture because I want our young people to be agile and hardy. The fact is that not all people are born healthy, agile and hardy. There are, of course, people who are born as healthy as an ox, as they say. These people remain healthy even when the conditions of life are most unfavorable. There is even a saying: healthy as an ox. Nevertheless such people are few. The average person develops and builds up his health in the course of his life. All the more does this apply to agility and hardihood. Both the one and the other can be acquired.

An example of how a person can develop his endurance by training is provided by the life of Suvorov. I cite this example because all of you most likely have seen the film about Suvorov. As you remember, he was such a weak child that his parents did not even think of his choosing a military career. Nevertheless he managed to steel himself to such a degree that he finally became one of the hardiest people! of his day, and lived, as far as I remember, till seventy. Am I right or not? After all, it is not I but you who ought to know history. (*Laughter.*)

Well, what we want is that Soviet people and above all, you, the student youth, should be agile and hardy like Suvorov. And the slightest success in this respect should be regarded as a great achievement of the Soviet State. I recommend you to read the book *Fighting in Finland*. It's a very big book, in two volumes. When I asked the advice of an acquaintance of mine as to whether I should recommend this book to you or not, he told me not to; it was too big, he said, they would not read it to the end, anyway. And he is a professor, who knows something about you. He suggested instead that I should mention other books devoted to the fighting in Finland, inasmuch as they are considerably smaller in size. Nevertheless I decided to recommend

you to read precisely this two-volume book. I think that once you pick it up you will most certainly read it to the end—it is so interesting and instructive.

What makes this book interesting? It does not give a general review of the war, but running through the whole book is the idea that modern warfare requires superb knowledge of military matters, mastery of the latest military technique, tremendous exertion of physical energy; it requires a colossal amount of work, endurance and again endurance, it requires exceptional agility, resourcefulness and ability to orientate oneself in the most complicated conditions encountered on the battlefield. Without these qualities you don't stand a chance in modern war. Hence you must prepare vigorously to perform your most important and sacred duty as Soviet patriots. And that requires, above all, that you steel yourselves physically and are hardy, healthy and agile.

However, you also need physical culture in practical life. Now what sort of happiness can a person experience who suffers from an ulcerated stomach! (*Laughter.*) But if a person is healthy and all his organs function normally—that is, if he does not suffer from poor appetite, insomnia, etc.—he will overcome all the adversities of life with far greater ease. So, in order to be healthy, in order to secure the maximum of happiness in life, you have to go in for physical culture.

It seems to me that in our schools people are, if I may say so, intellectualized too much. Intellectualized not in the intellectual sense, but in the sense that the children are coddled and are not taught to value physical work. I cannot say who exactly is to blame, but facts, are facts. Evidently, the influence of the survivals of the old attitude to work is still making itself felt here in some measure. Perhaps the main blame lies with the family, but the school does not counteract this influence properly and cultivate sufficiently a Communist attitude to physical work among the children. That is why many children are unwilling to do physical work and regard it as something shameful and degrading. I think this is one of the biggest mistakes. In our country all work is held in honor. With us there is no work of a lower or a higher order. In our country work is a matter of honor, glory, valor and heroism, whether it is the work of a bricklayer, scientist, janitor, engineer, carpenter, artist, swineherd, actress, tractor driver, agronomist, shop assistant, physician, and so forth.

Every young Soviet person should value physical work and not avoid work even of the most ordinary kind. Those of you who become accus-

tomed to physical work will have a better knowledge of life; those of you who learn to do for yourselves at least the most essential things—such as washing and mending clothes, cooking a meal, tidying up your room, etc.—those of you who learn at least some kind of trade, will never be lost, you may be sure of that.

I once happened to read the pedagogical letters of the well-known English philosopher John Locke, who lived over two hundred and fifty years ago. Addressing the English ruling classes, he said: don't accustom your children to sleep on soft beds, bring them up so that they will find every bed soft—for you cannot drag soft bedding around with you on your travels, and still less can you think of that when you are at war; if a young gentleman learns to sleep on a hard bed, there will be no need to teach him to sleep on a soft one—he can get accustomed to that quickly enough. In addition, John Locke advised parents to bring up their children so that they should learn without fail several trades, one of them thoroughly. This would always stand them in good stead and could be of use even to highly learned people when they want to rest from intense mental labor. All the more useful would it be if luck failed one.

As you see, at the time of the rise of Britain's might, the ideologists of the exploiting classes advised them to bring up their children to value physical work, not to shun ordinary work, and to prepare themselves for all conditions of life. And all this was done in order to consolidate still further the domination of the exploiters.

But if the children of the British capitalists and landlords took heed of this advice to respect physical work, if they did not abhor plain work and tried to harden themselves, in order the more easily to withstand any one of the trials of life, all the more reason why our youth, the Soviet youth, should understand this. Where and how can you do physical work? Accustom yourselves to it first and foremost at home. Then you should develop in every way your endurance and agility.

Our people often ask: what will the people of the Communist society of the future be like? As for me, I would like Soviet people to be healthy, strong, hardy and irreconcilable toward the enemies of our native land, to be able to fight splendidly for their people, for the complete victory of Communism. And I do not think for a moment that our young people taken as a whole do not want to fight. That would be unnatural. Am I right or not? (*Voices*: "Right, right.") Of course, there are people of different kinds. I,

however, am speaking of them in the mass. That means that you must train yourselves to be strong, agile, hardy people, capable of withstanding any trials and of overcoming any difficulties.

But now judge for yourselves whether there is any good in the sort of person recently described in the *Pravda* in an article entitled “Young Lazybones.” The correspondent who wrote it had interviewed eighteen-year-old Victor N. at the Kolkhoz named after the OGPU.

Victor, a kolkhoznik’s son who finished a seven-year school two years ago, is now without occupation, sits at home, or, as he himself put it, “is gathering strength.” Asked why he was not working on the farm, the lad pulled a wry face, and said: “I didn’t spend seven years at school in order to work on the kolkhoz. Let lame Andryushka work there. As for me I’ll find cleaner work. I can get a job in some office!”

When I read this item, I decided that, apart from everything else, this Victor N. is absolutely uneducated. If he has done nothing for two years since he left school, we have every reason to believe that he did his schoolwork haphazardly too, and only just managed to scrape along from one class to another, that is to say, he is even not properly literate. Now if that is the case one should imagine that he is no good for office work either. Why aren’t our kolkhozes in need of educated people? Can anybody engage in agriculture now without knowledge? We, of course, cannot agree with such a “philosophy.” It is a harmful “philosophy” which must be fought vigorously. We must make sure that our schools do not turn out people of that kind. Soviet people cannot tolerate idlers. Indeed, what do we get? We made a revolution to overthrow the idlers and parasites, and here, if you please, new idlers and parasites are growing up. No, that is intolerable, and in this case, a definite share of the responsibility falls on the school.

Comrades, when I spoke to you about the Russian language, mathematics and physical culture, I in no way sought to minimize the importance of the other subjects in the curriculum. Consequently, it does not mean that you can neglect all the other subjects. I dwelt upon these three subjects only because I consider them the foundation necessary to enable you to master all the other subjects and to live a full life. I am certain that if you get excellent marks in these three main subjects, your success is fully

assured in all the other subjects in the curriculum, since they all are very closely interconnected.

Comrades, if you take the main idea of all that I wanted to tell you, you will see that there is nothing new about it. I only sought to recall to your minds and to some extent to illustrate the well-known injunction of Comrade Stalin who, addressing the youth, once said: “In order to build, you have to know, you have to master science. But in order to know, you have to study. To study steadfastly, patiently.” It is possible that the material I chose to illustrate this injunction was not altogether suitable, and that for that reason people who are better acquainted with pedagogical matters may question its expediency.

In conclusion, let me say that at different historical periods different progressive tasks arise which the best forces of the people fight to fulfill. For example, in the forties and fifties of last century the basic progressive task was that of the emancipation of the peasantry from serfdom. And we know that all honest and progressive people of those days fought directly or indirectly for the realization of this task.

At the end of the last century and the beginning of the twentieth century a new progressive task rose to first place on the order of the day, namely, the task of overthrowing tsarism and the power of capital, effecting the proletarian revolution and reorganizing society on Socialist lines.

At the present time the most progressive task is that of consolidating Socialism and building up Communism. The progressive nature of this task is obvious not only to Soviet people, but also to the working people of the whole world. The fulfillment of this task requires, above all, that the economic and military might of the Land of the Soviets be strengthened to the utmost. And so, I would like our young people to be inspired by this majestic task, to make it the aim of their lives, for only in that case will your lives be filled with deep ideological content.

Marxism-Leninism is a weapon in the struggle for Communism, for the realization of all Communist ideals. This doctrine and its method constitute a powerful instrument in both practical and scientific activity. And anybody who is eager to live a full and colorful life must have a thorough knowledge of Marxism-Leninism. Such a life cannot but attract our youth. Comrade Stalin has said:

The youth is our future, our hope, comrades. The youth must take our place, the place of the old people. It must carry our banner to final victory.... True, they lack knowledge. But knowledge is a thing that can be acquired. They have not the knowledge today, but they will have it tomorrow. Hence, the task is to study and study again the principles of Leninism.

Comrades, you are now in your formative period. I do not know whether you understand this rather philosophical expression. To put it in other words, you are in that period of your development when you are changing from youths, whose predominant traits are imagination, fervor and utter fearlessness, into mature people. But you have not yet become such people, and have not finally chosen your path in life. You are only seeking out your path. It was easier for us, fifty years ago, to make up our minds, because ahead of us lay only one narrow track. And if a person stumbled then, he inevitably slid into the morass of philistinism. You, however, are faced with countless numbers of practical paths. You are now choosing these paths. In time you will become sailors, railwaymen, artillerymen, tankmen, flyers, engineers, fitters, turners, builders, scientists, artists, physicians—in a word, people engaged in the various branches of physical and mental work.

Well, then, I would like you to be governed in your formative period, just as we were fifty years ago, by the desire to take part in conscious social activity, and to make it the aim of your lives to serve the great Soviet people and to carry the cause of Lenin-Stalin to its conclusion. If you firmly set your mind on just that sort of purposefulness and are able to subordinate everything else to this idea, then, comrades, I do not doubt that your happiness and joy in life will be ensured. (*Stormy applause. All rise.*)

Everything Must Be Done for Victory Over the Enemy!³⁰

November 12, 1941

Comrades! The Soviet Union experienced many vicissitudes in the past, and the older generations had to undergo severe tests that required much effort and sacrifice from them. Their lives abounded in feats of valor. For what purpose were these feats performed? They were performed for the sake of the future, for your sake. I cherished the hope that those favorites of the people, the present generation of Komsomol members, would grow up in a more or less tranquil situation, imbibing knowledge and experience.

But, as you see, no less difficult, and perhaps even more severe, trials are befalling your generation. War has, as it were, an immediate maturing effect on the youth. Our Komsomol member is transformed in the briefest time from a young man whose life is still made up of the joys of the moment, of pleasant dreams about the future and his sweetheart, and who revels in all the delights of life, into an adult; he feels that the war is bringing all that to an end, that this best period in his life is being cut short.

I will cite you a most commonplace fact. The newspaper *Krasnaya Zvezda* published the notes of its war photographer Loskutov in which he describes how a group of our people, including himself and a cinema cameraman, made their way to the partisans behind the German lines.

We were accompanied, [wrote the correspondent,] by a guide, who became the commander of the group. Our commander was a young man, only twenty years of age, but he had undergone many trials and seen a great deal. He was a Komsomol member, brave, persevering, and we immediately took a fancy to him. His name was Seryozha Zaitsev, but we simply called him Zaichik.³¹

³⁰ From a Speech at a Meeting of Leading Komsomol Workers of the City of Kuibyshev. Originally published in *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, November 21, 1941.

³¹ The surname “Zaitsev” is derived from “zayats” which means “hare.” The diminutive form “zaichik” as a nickname is the equivalent of the English “bunny.”—*Trans.*

Yes, very likely he was a “Zaichik” five months ago; now, however, he is commander of a group, the wiser for experience in action. Just think of it, a twenty-year-old lad leads a group of men for a distance of fifty kilometers in the rear of the Germans. Five months ago he was an ordinary young man, with, of course, no notion of becoming a partisan and a guide in the German rear. His thoughts probably were centered in considerable measure on having a good time, making dates, attending dances—rail of which are most natural desires at his age. But in five months he has changed into a fighter, into a people’s avenger. Of his youth he has retained his peerless courage and eagerness for struggle, but now he is an experienced fighter to whom life has brought wisdom and in whose hands adult people entrust themselves at critical moments.

You see how quickly youths in our time become fighters, men. In peacetime this would take years. For those Komsomol members who are at the front, youth is already past, they have become fighters. Many of you have brothers who have been at the front and whom you have met when they came home on leave or under other circumstances. Haven’t you said: “How you’ve grown up! You were a boy when you left, and now you’re a man.”

These are outward changes, however. People are also undergoing profound inner changes. Without a doubt the bulk of Komsomol members are now bearing the burdens of the war. Many of them are already at the front, and those who are not are engaged in production, where we have the front just the same. For example, Komsomol members in Moscow who are employed in industry are frequently exposed to enemy air raids. One has to be very steadfast to continue working at such moments with complete self-possession and maximum productivity.

The front is still closer to Leningrad people. Whether a Leningrad Komsomol member works at a plant or defends his city arms in hand, he is at the front. And both of them, the young Moscow proletarian, and the young Leningrad proletarian, have matured, have become fighters.

The same process, of course, takes place also in the rear, only, probably, at a somewhat slower pace.

Part of the Government is now quartered in Kuibyshev. This places a corresponding responsibility on the working people of Kuibyshev, on the Kuibyshev Komsomol organization. A year ago, even five months ago, Kuibyshev though a big town was nevertheless only one of many. Sverdlovsk, Chkalov, Novosibirsk and other towns did not pay any particular attention

to Kuibyshev people, for they too are regional centers. But now the Central Committee of the Komsomol is located here. Komsomol members come here from other regions. And naturally they look attentively at you and your affairs, and are interested in how things are done in Kuibyshev. They hope to see and learn things here.

What is the main task now facing the Komsomol? To me it seems to be perfectly clear, namely, to take part in the war. The war is the most fundamental and decisive fact of present-day life. There is no task now more important than that of smashing the enemy. All other tasks are merely subsidiary to this basic aim of defeating the enemy.

You can take part in the war directly or by working in industry, in all sorts of military and other institutions in the rear. But the majority of you will very likely take a direct part in the war, if not today, then tomorrow, and if not tomorrow, then the day after. And this is a cruel war. The enemy is such as can be dealt with only by a great exertion of effort.

The Komsomol organization is therefore faced with the task of preparing its members for the war, for effective participation in it. I think that politically every one of you understands perfectly well and appreciates fully the justness of the war we are waging. But each one of you should prepare himself morally for the war. You must accustom yourselves in advance to frontline conditions.

You should understand that war is not a game but a severe trial. It is not a matter of chance that in wartime a callow youth becomes a man, a fighter, so quickly. In wartime a person lives through more in one year or in a few months than he would in ten years in peacetime, and in one battle he may experience what he could not ordinarily in half a lifetime. You need to be prepared for that. The Komsomol organization, Komsomol members should prepare themselves and the entire youth to participate in the war, prepare themselves mentally, so that all the savagery of war, all the cunning of the enemy shall not break you.

What is meant by preparing yourselves for the war? Preparation for it should be concrete. In modern war a tremendous quantity of diverse weapons and technical equipment is employed. You must not only learn how to use them in order to defeat the enemy, but also be able to protect yourselves as fighters.

When Comrade Voroshilov was seeing a certain division off to the front he said to the men: "Learn to dig in quickly." A Marshal of the Soviet

Union told this to Red Army regulars, to people versed in military matters, who, however, had not been at the front. Do not spare your energy in digging trenches, he told them, use your spades—the spade is a soldier’s salvation in wartime—learn to dig in quickly.

I think that if a Marshal of the Soviet Union gives such advice to a division of regulars setting off for the front, this advice applies in still greater measure to you, Komsomol members. Learn to wield a spade. As a future fighting man each of you should reach a point when you can dig yourself chest-deep into the ground in an hour and a trench that reaches over your head in two hours. Well, then, one of the concrete tasks facing you is to learn to dig in. If I were the secretary of your city Komsomol organization I would make each one of you spend a couple of hours each day digging into the frozen ground and watch how quickly you master the art of digging in. (*Laughter.*) Of course, many of you would curse me for it to yourselves, considering it tyranny on my part, a useless waste of time. (*Laughter.*) And those who did not land at the front would possibly keep on thinking so. Those, however, who got to the front would thank me: “What a good thing it was that I was taught to do this before—now it’s child’s play for me to dig myself a trench.”

I do not remember, but I think it was Napoleon who said that in his army every soldier carried a marshal’s baton in his knapsack. That was said about Napoleon’s army. In the Soviet Union there are no special social categories that enjoy privileges as regards appointments and promotion in military rank. In our country all this is done exclusively on the basis of the personal merits of different individuals. Very likely, many of you will be commanders or political workers. I think that many of you will become commanders of large military units, even marshals, perhaps. Surely at least one marshal will emerge from your midst? (*Laughter.*) That is quite possible. So then, comrades, you should make a careful study of the art of warfare, of military theory. It does not matter if you have to serve at first as rank-and-file Red Army men. It is better to get theoretical training in advance, it will stand you in good stead in the future. When I was young I also had my dreams: perhaps I would become a member of a workers’ parliament. That was what I dreamed about, though I knew I would have to serve time in prison first. (*Laughter.*) When people are between fifteen and eighteen years old, their dreams always run ahead of reality. And that is not a bad thing. So then, you need to prepare yourselves to occupy commanding posts in

the army. And that means that you should now make an all-round study of military matters. That is the main thing for us now.

Here, at this meeting of leading Komsomol workers, a Komsomol district secretary complained that many members in his district are not undergoing military training. I do not understand this at all. Why, the secretary himself could be prosecuted for that. (*Laughter.*) Military training is a civic duty and not a voluntary occupation. Who can refuse to take part in it? If I were the secretary of a Komsomol district committee, I assure you all my members would undergo military training.

Sometimes village Soviet or kolkhoz chairmen have to make kolkhozniks put bad roads into proper shape.

While working on road repairs people may upbraid the chairmen, but as soon as the road is fixed and they themselves begin to use it, they begin singing its praises: "It's a good thing that we did that road, it's good they made us do it." (*Laughter.*) You have to make people do necessary jobs in the Komsomol, too. What do you think? If one Komsomol member fails to turn out for military training today, and another tomorrow, if one Komsomol member or another begins to ponder over whether he should or should not turn out for military training, what will come of it all? No, that is not the attitude to take toward civic duties. Military training is a civic duty, and the question of whether a person wants to or does not want to fulfill it just cannot rise.

Another matter to be taken up is that the Komsomol should play a leading part in the military training of the youth. Here the demands are greater. It is necessary that Komsomol members should themselves make a successful study of the art of warfare and serve as an example to those who are not Komsomol members, that the youth should set the pace for older people who are undergoing military training. That, of course, is a more difficult matter. But I think it quite possible for you in the Komsomol have your Komsomol discipline—only you must learn how to make proper use of it.

It is very important that you also prepare yourselves physically for the war. Our young people were pretty well off, and we even spoiled them somewhat. I'm not at all sorry about that. But the time has now come when not only a high morale but also physical endurance is wanted of people. I think the Komsomol ought to help people build up their physical stamina. Kuibyshev nature provides us with opportunities for that. In weather like

today's you can harden yourself very well indeed. Suppose you go out on trek from Saturday to Sunday evening taking along only a couple of crusts, or even one, to eat. That would be hardening yourselves.

We must, and will be, victorious. But victory will not drop from the skies. Victory has to be won in battle, and in what battle! Harden yourselves now, before you get to the front. Maybe it will not be altogether pleasant for you now, but when you get to the front, you will be thankful for it. Of course, there is much that could still be said about military training. However, I only wanted to show you the direction this training should take. You must cope with military training—your membership in the Komsomol makes that your duty. Otherwise you cannot call yourselves Komsomol members. Why, the majority of our men at the front do not belong to the Party. Yet what boundless heroism they are displaying in defense of our country!

Now a few words about production. To wage war without production, as you yourselves are aware, is impossible. There are many important plants in Kuibyshev Region—there is no need to tell you about that. Komsomol members should be pioneers also in production. You now have to step up your work to the maximum, to do everything you can.

I listened with pleasure to the speech delivered by the comrade from a trade school. I liked the way he dealt with the negative aspects of the work of his school, did not brag, but brought out defects with a view to eliminating them.

Well then, comrades, Komsomol members engaged in production, you have to master your jobs to perfection, and in a minimum of time you have to secure good results in your work.

What is required of us is to increase the productivity of labor to the utmost limits, bearing firmly in mind that each new shell strengthens our fighting men, our Komsomol members at the front. So then, do not be sparing of your efforts, turn out more munitions and of the very best quality.

Comrades, we are all patriots. But there are among us contemplators, if one may use such an expression. But surely passive emotions cannot suffice at a time like this. There are some people who, listening to the communiques of the Soviet Information Bureau, begin to moan: "Oh, we've retreated, oh, we've withdrawn from a town!" They listen to the communique, moan and groan, but do not lift a finger to help the front. Patriotism of that kind is

worthless. No, rather than get nervous, it would be better to do everything possible to help the front, to help smash fascism.

Such are the tasks facing the Komsomol at the present time. You must do all in your power and even more to achieve victory over the enemy!

This will accord with Comrade Stalin's words:

“We must crush the military might of the German invaders, we must destroy to the last man the German forces of occupation who intruded into our country for the purpose of enslaving it.” It is to fulfill this task that I call on the Kuibyshev city organization of the Komsomol. (*Stormy applause.*)

From a Speech at a Conference of Secretaries of Rural Komsomol Organizations in Moscow Region³²

February 26, 1942

Comrades, your conference has a definite purpose: to discuss how best to prepare for spring field work, how best to carry through the spring sowing. In this connection Komsomol members are faced with tasks requiring very serious attention. The Komsomol members in the countryside are a big force. If this force is organized, if the Komsomol organizations in the kolkhozes are able to take the lead not only among the youth, but also among the adult kolkhozniks, they are certain to make a success of the spring sowing.

It is clear that not only the Komsomol will engage in preparing and conducting the spring sowing. Party and Soviet organizations will attend to all this. But, since we attach great importance to the successful conduct of the sowing, we want all public bodies, the Komsomol included, to be drawn in.

...There is a war on now. I shall not be mistaken if I say that everybody in the countryside wants the Germans to be defeated.

But just to want is not enough, it is tantamount to doing nothing. If you want to defeat the Germans, you have to do it with deeds, not words. And speaking about Moscow Region, it has to be said outright that if you want to have a share in the victory over the German fascist invaders, you must plant as many potatoes as possible.

A peasant woman may, of course, say to you: "How can I defeat the invaders with potatoes?" Such ideas may possibly exist, and it is up to you, Komsomol members, to tell the kolkhozniks that the huge Red Army, which is fighting the German invaders and successfully moving westwards, must be fed well and supplied with everything it needs. You understand yourselves that the men in the army suffer much privation and adversity. They are in the trenches, exposed to the bitter cold day and night. In order that they should be strong, energetic, that they should always want to fight and always be in high spirits, they must have plenty of good food. If you were to be deprived of food for two or three days and then told to enter a race or to play a game of football, each one of you would say: "I can't do any running," or, "I'm a poor footballer." And so the men in the army should be given good, tasty,

³² Originally published in *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, March 3, 1942.

satisfying meals. We have to supply our army with an abundance of the necessary products. We have to provide the army and the population with more meat. Potatoes are good fodder for pigs, and the more pigs we fatten, the more pork will there be for the army and the population.

Spring sowing this year, in wartime conditions, must be carried through in an exemplary manner, and within the shortest possible space of time. By making a good job of the sowing we must lay the basis for a bumper crop.

Consequently, comrades members of the Komsomol, you must see to it that the spring sowing is well done, and primarily that the plan is fulfilled and the maximum use made of every patch of available land. That is the task. I would say that this task should become the law for every Soviet citizen. This, comrades, is task number one. Task number two is to raise the biggest possible harvest, to extract from the soil all that it can yield. That is why the quality of spring field work must be such as to ensure a successful harvest. And you, comrades Komsomol members, must do all in your power to lay the foundation for a bumper crop by doing the spring sowing in exemplary fashion. I shall not deal here with what has to be done to achieve this. You are kolkhozniks, and you know all that no worse than I.

So then, you have two main tasks. The first is to sow as much as possible, and the second, to gather in a bumper harvest. And in this, comrades, will be expressed your service to your country, your help to the front, your most effective participation in the struggle against fascism.

Comrades have spoken here of the very active part being played by Komsomol members in preparing for the spring sowing, of the efforts they are making to ensure that the kolkhozes are well prepared for the spring field work. That is very good. All that is deserving of praise, but I think some Komsomol members are trying to usurp the positions of the chairmen of kolkhozes.

You say: we were short of this and that, we went, we obtained it, we exchanged something else for it. But what was the chairman doing? Warming himself at the fireside? The chairman ought to work harder. Your job is to help, to exert pressure, to push, not to give people any peace, to sting like bees, and when bees sting a person, he quickly gets moving.

But what actually happens? You will be doing everything yourselves, while the chairman of the kolkhoz will take it easy, letting others do his work for him.

Bear this in mind, comrades Komsomol members: there are two ways of leading or taking part in organization, agitation, or propaganda.

One way is to do everything yourself. There is the Komsomol member who does everything himself: he is the village librarian, he organizes meetings, delivers lectures, conducts propaganda to draw new members into the kolkhoz and collects membership dues. In a word, one individual does everything and is busy from morning till night, while other Komsomol members who live next door to him are not given anything to do at all. That sort of thing happens with us, and it seems that some little progress is being made, but, comrades, I think that an organizer's strength should consist not only in working himself, but in making others work, getting them to follow his lead. Now if it could be assumed that I, as a Komsomol member (that, of course, is already impossible) (*laughter*), came to a kolkhoz, on no account would I start doing everything myself; I would try to get all the work done with the help of the local people, so that each one had a task, an assignment—in a word, that everybody had some work to do. What is more, if I were to notice that some Komsomol member was only nominally a member and was not doing any work, I would make it a practice to give him assignments as often as possible. Please be so kind, I would say, as to do this or that. And I would make it a practice to check up often on what he was doing, on how he was working.

That is the only way to achieve success. It should be understood, comrades, that when many people are busy, when each one has a job to do, when all the work of the Komsomol organization is divided among all Komsomol members, then, it stands to reason, things will go better. For say what you like, ten people will always do more, and do it better, than a single individual.

The youth cannot be welded together organizationally only on an ideological basis. Not everyone joins the Komsomol out of ideological convictions. Of course, most young people join the Komsomol because of ideological motives, realizing that the Komsomol is the first and closest assistant of the Party, but there are some who on joining are still poorly prepared ideologically and have only a vague notion of the ideological content of the work of the Komsomol. Much work has to be done with this section of the youth to make them people with convictions whose actions are governed by lofty ideas. You have to accustom them to the Komsomol, to ensure that the Komsomol organization becomes part of their lives, of their being. Now that

requires that they should do something from day to day. It is while doing practical work that a person receives training, develops, becomes a capable organizer, grows ideologically. That is why every Komsomol member should be engaged in practical work, constantly do something and be responsible to his Komsomol unit for his work. Only in the process of joint, collective work will we be able to train good organizers, good Komsomol workers.

Why does this sort of thing often happen in our kolkhozes: as long as the farm has a good chairman it prospers, but no sooner does this chairman leave and a bungler is given his job, than the kolkhoz becomes unrecognizable in a year, and turns into a very bad one? It only happens because the kolkhozniks themselves have not been drawn into the conduct of practical affairs.

That is why you, Komsomol members, if you wish to become real organizers in the kolkhozes, must not only help with everything, but you must be good organizers; you must follow the work of the brigade leader, the chairman of the kolkhoz and its members, help them, encourage the kolkhoz Stakhanovites³³ and reprove and scold the negligent kolkhozniks. Komsomol members in the kolkhozes should be the instruments of public pressure and not exercise administrative functions.

You understand the difference between the influence of the administration and that exercised by the community. Now, if you were to call a Komsomol meeting to which you invite non-members and there give a good dressing down to somebody who, let us say for example, engages in speculation, that would be an action of a public nature: you will shame such a person for taking advantage of the war situation to sell potatoes at three times the regular price, and seek to influence him by public pressure. Of course, there is also another way of influencing the speculator, by administrative measures, but I have in mind the method of public pressure, which is a highly important educational factor.

At present most of the work in the kolkhozes is done by women. Your job, comrades Komsomol members, is to draw all the women into active work in production, to evoke lofty patriotic sentiments in them, to get them to follow your lead. Now if you cope with that job, then the work of the Komsomol organization and its influence over the masses will be very effective.

³³ The Stakhanovite Movement was named for Alexei Stakhanov, a coal miner who mined over 14 times his quota in coal in less than 6 hours in 1935.

We have already agreed that we shall make a splendid job of the spring sowing this year and lay the basis for a bumper harvest. But if you seriously want to do this job, you must draw as many women as possible into the work, you must explain to the women members of kolkhozes that the supply of food to our Red Army and our people depends on the success of the spring sowing. I am certain that all our women are anxious to provide our Red Army and our people in the rear with more and better food. You, Komsomol members, must arrange matters so that all women collective farmers should work in the fields during the spring sowing. The work of the Komsomol members should be judged not only by what they themselves do, but also by their success in getting the youth, all kolkhozniks, and particularly the women, to follow their lead. It should be remembered that women are the main force in the kolkhozes, and if we get all the women to work in the fields, inspire them with lofty patriotism, they will accomplish a great deal.

I think that Komsomol members will be supported by all kolkhozniks of both sexes if they combat idlers with all their youthful ardor. Idling cannot be tolerated, particularly in wartime when fierce battles are being fought, when every day hundreds of people are laying down their lives on the field of battle for our country, for our Soviet State. I think we shall have the sympathy and support of the whole people if we severely punish idlers and parasites.

During the grim days of the war, when the fate of our homeland is being decided on the battlefield, no honest person can stand aside from the struggle. Picture to yourselves the person who walks along with a smile on his face, does nothing and has no wish to do anything. Such an individual is our enemy. Komsomol members should brand him with shame, and expose him to the entire people. And if he is incorrigible, he should be severely dealt with. That is the line you should adopt, comrades, Komsomol members!

Komsomol members have a big and responsible job before them. Our valiant Red Army, comrades, is coping with a very powerful enemy, an enemy without equal in the world, and our fighting men are driving him westward, sweeping Soviet territory clear of the fascist filth, and I think you want to be on a level with our fighters—the Red Army men, commanders and political workers. You must not be daunted by responsibility and difficulty, you must cope with the tasks you have been set....

Some Problems of Party Mass Work Speech at a Conference of Party Workers of Moscow Plants³⁴

April 21, 1942

Comrades! I do not intend to deliver a directive speech, but shall only touch on certain problems of Party mass work. We hear a great deal of talk about Party mass work. Everybody is talking about it, but if we probe deeper into the matter, we find that many lack a sufficiently clear and definite idea, a concrete understanding, of this problem. In the highly complicated conditions of the present war, particularly when we bear in mind that thousands of new people have been promoted to leading posts in Party organizations in the factories and institutions and have become propagandists and agitators, we are faced with the task of effectively utilizing the wealth of experience accumulated by our Party in organizing and conducting political work among the masses.

What is Party mass work? What do we mean by contact with the masses? After all, this is precisely what we particularly value in our political work.

It should be said that contact with the masses can take the most varied forms.

Let us suppose you have a wide circle of acquaintances, you visit one another, and, of course, while visiting you can also learn something of what is going on at the factory, among the workers, at the office. That is also a way of maintaining contact with people.

Breezy familiarity in relations with the workers. There is, say, the Party or trade-union organizer who, while making the rounds of the departments, pats workers on the back, and even calls them by their first names. Yet he makes no effort to go into the work in hand, nor does he direct the attention of the workers to defects. One can occasionally hear it said of such a Party secretary or Party organizer: "That chap's closely connected with the masses. He pats the worker on the back, calls him Ivan Petrovich. He's one of us."

Trailing behind the masses is also maintaining "contact" with them. People come to you with complaints about one thing or another, and you

³⁴ Originally published in *Partiinoye Stroitelstvo* Magazine, No. 8, 1942.

nod agreement and then you weep on each other's shoulders. Someone whines to you and you join in: "Yes, there's no light, it's cold, there really is not quite enough food." Some hitch occurs at the factory or in the office, and you walk around and chorus: "Those confounded bureaucrats! See the hopeless mess they've got us into?" And people will listen to you, and, I dare say, someone may even like it at first.

But is this the kind of contact with the masses that we Bolsheviks have in mind? Of course not. To go along with the masses, which are sometimes carried away by backward elements, wherever these masses go is a Menshevik line. Our Bolshevik line is to lead the masses, not to assume guardianship over them, but to lead them on behind the conscious vanguard.

But how does one lead the masses?

Before answering this question, let me ask you another: who can lead the masses? That is the calling of the Communists. The Communist Party leads the masses and does so quite well. Countless examples could be cited in proof of this. And the first example is the war. Despite the setbacks of the first months of the war, due mainly to the sudden and unexpected way in which we were attacked, one can say without fear of contradiction that the people's confidence in their Government, and hence in the Party, was not shaken for a single moment. That is a fact.

Here we have a gathering of Party leaders. Whether you like it or not, you are the leaders of the masses on the spot. And how could it be otherwise? What sort of a Party secretary is he whom people do not consider to be their political leader! The secretary of a Party committee is a highly responsible person in a factory, institution, or district.

But what is required of the secretary of a Party organization if he is to exercise real influence on the masses, if the masses are to take heed of him, believe in him? It goes without saying that a Party leader, propagandist or agitator must be guided by lofty ideas, he must be deeply devoted to the Communist Party, he must know the history of our Party at least in broad outline and understand the tasks which our Party sets the working class, the people. A Party leader or propagandist must at least be not less developed politically than others, and it will not hurt him to have some general culture besides. But how is a Party worker to approach the masses?

Firstly. Judging from my own lengthy experience, it seems to me that a Party leader must not be swellheaded, a know-all. If, in conversation with workers of rank-and-file Party members you imply by some gesture, tone

or some insignificant, apparently casual, phrase that you consider yourself cleverer than they are, and know more than they do, then you are as good as lost. The worker or the average person in general does not care for those who have a high opinion of themselves, and will pay no heed to them, and at the appropriate moment will let them know about it, well and truly. So then, first and foremost, Communists must not be swell-headed, know-alls, and must not forget what Comrade Stalin said at the conference of Stakhanovites held in November 1935:

Hence, we leaders of the Party and the Government must not only teach the workers, but also learn from them. I shall not undertake to deny that you, the members of the present conference, have learned something here at this conference from the leaders of our Government. But neither can it be denied that we, the leaders of the Government, have learned a great deal from you, the Stakhanovites, the members of this conference. Well, comrades, thanks for the lesson, many thanks!

The conclusion, therefore, which we have reached is that an agitator must be modest; particularly must this quality be possessed by the Party worker who holds, so to speak, Party administrative power, namely, the secretary of a Party organization. If he wishes to enjoy the affection of the workers he has to cultivate in himself the quality of modesty, and not get swell-headed. Am I right? (*Voices*: “Yes, hear, hear!”) He who wants to be a leader must keep an eye on himself.

Secondly. It will not do for a propagandist or Party leader to be too didactic in his dealings with the masses. You probably have noticed yourselves that when a speaker does nothing but say: you have to do one thing or another, we must, indeed, are in duty bound to do this or that, it actually becomes unpleasant to listen to him. When I write an article and it logically follows that I should say “This must be done,” it somehow goes against my grain and I try to replace that formulation with another one. It is an altogether different matter when you convey your thoughts, your message or appeal, by means of arguments and analysis, by proving that some measure or other has to be taken. Surely in addressing your audience you can take counsel, so to say, with it: “What do you think if we were to do it like this,” “It seems to me it would be better to solve the problem this way,” “In the

given circumstances I would do the following.” If you do that the audience will react quite differently.

In this instance we are dealing with speeches at small meetings and production conferences, and brief talks. A speech delivered at a meeting attended by thousands of people will, of course, take another form. There each phrase must be short, clear-cut; it is difficult there to employ the conversational form. But in your everyday work it is necessary more often than not to draw the workers themselves into discussion, conversation, and here the form “What do you think, how does it look to you?” will be more acceptable. It is very valuable to start the ball rolling, to get the workers to exchange views, to express themselves. Then the meeting will be a lively one, the workers will speak willingly, and the value resulting from such a meeting will be unquestionable. Yet meetings sometimes are like it used to be at prayers. The speaker and the audience are things apart and after they have sat out the appointed time, everybody goes home.

Do not be afraid to depart from the outline of your speech or talk. You may be talking about work or about the war, but if some other question crops up that is of interest to those present, never mind, do not pass it by. Once the people are aroused and are interested, they will all continue to listen, and you will find it possible to discuss all the points you originally intended.

The main thing is never to avoid sharp issues, as some speakers quite frequently do. Under no circumstances do that, do not evade an answer, don't try to gloss over questions that have been raised. If you are unable at the moment to answer some question, say outright:

The question is interesting and important, and I would gladly answer it, but I am not prepared to do so now, I have not given it any thought, and am at a loss how to answer it. I shall go into the matter, talk it over with comrades and then I shall answer you. But perhaps there is somebody present who can clear the matter up?

If you do that, it will be an altogether different matter. But occasionally some of our people like to steer clear of burning issues, or explain them in such a way that nobody understands what it is all about or gets a straightforward, honest answer.

A Party leader has to be absolutely honest in his attitude to others. The secretary of a Party organization is the eye of the Party. I do not know whether you fully appreciate the point. That is why all personal likes and dislikes must be set aside. If there are people whom, for one reason or another, you do not like, you must hide the fact so thoroughly that nobody will have the faintest idea of it. It will be a bad thing if it is noticed that you are not unbiased in your attitude towards different people.

It happens occasionally that some average man is reticent and keeps to himself, but does his work well; on the other hand, the fellow who is not much good at his job, but frequents the offices of the Party committee, the trade union committee or the Young Communist League, and is always on hand, gets pushed forward. That will not do. If the secretary of a Party Committee wishes to enjoy prestige he must have a clean reputation with the masses. That does not mean that he cannot have closer personal relations with certain people. Of course he can. But in his public relations he must be impartial to all people. His attitude should be this:

You are a friend of mine, which is all well and good, but if you approach your work carelessly, idle around, and shirk the jobs you have been given, I shall demand more of you than of others, and make it hotter for you.

Such must be the attitude to people on the part of a secretary of a Party organization.

In all things your conduct should be such that those around you feel your sincerity and honesty. Hypocrisy cannot be hidden from the masses at all, and so do everything in your power to avoid it. You cannot deceive the masses, and if people discover that a person is hypocritical, they will never put their faith in him again.

If, then, we cultivate these qualities in ourselves, we will find it easier to work.

And now let us take up the question as to how Party mass work should be approached, how it should be conducted, and how problems of one kind or another should be raised before the masses. All questions must be raised from the standpoint of the Party, and the approach to all things must be a Party approach. Say, subscriptions to the state loan have been opened. It is clear that now everybody will sign up for the equivalent of a month's salary. As a propagandist I would put it straight to the workers:

At present even those whose wages are not high are subscribing a month's pay. After all, you know the situation our country is going through now. We have a big army, our expenditures are enormous, the state needs money which must be got somewhere. Either we allow inflation or help the state by loaning it money. That's the only way to carry on the war, there's no other way out.

To this some may say: "But we're having such a hard time." I, however, would answer:

You are having a hard time and bread is rationed just because there is a war on. If we had plenty of bread, plenty of textiles, clothing, footwear and other goods we would not need to raise a loan, but would simply open shops, fill them with goods, and the money would flow in. The loan has been floated just because we are short of money and consumer goods, because shells, armaments are being produced, and goods are serving the needs of the army, the war.

There is a shortage of goods not only here, but also in other countries, particularly in the fascist countries and those that have been plundered by the German fascists. And in this connection it should be explained that we are least of all to blame, that we were attacked; we should make clear the imperialist nature of the war being waged by Hitler Germany. The workers may be bluntly asked: "Do you want us to be defeated?" But I know that you are afraid of even uttering that word. As for me, I would time and again ask those who make a poor contribution to the loan: "Do you want us to be beaten?" The alternative is that either we work harder or are beaten. Take an example from the people of Leningrad. See what difficulties they are enduring and how heroic is their conduct. That is how issues should be put to the working people; that will be raising problems in a Party fashion.

Speaking to the workers at one big plant, I told them frankly that what the state requires of us is that we should consume less and produce more; I put the matter sharply and explained that this was so not because we want our workers and other employees to go short, but only because we have less goods now, the needs of the front are great, and the enemy is pressing on

us. Don't be afraid to raise issues sharply, as long as you do so correctly and in Party fashion.

If people know at your factory that you don't like hypocrisy, that you don't evade issues, and are not swell-headed, your words will impress everybody. Otherwise nobody will believe you and people will say: "We know you. You advise us to do one thing, but think differently yourself. You don't practice what you preach." They might not tell it to you to your face, but on the quiet they are certain to say it.

What is the aim of Party propaganda and agitation at the present time? To ensure that the masses should feel at every step that the Communist Party has no special interests of its own, that it upholds the interests of the proletariat, of the people as a whole. And now is just the time when the predominance of the interests of the whole over those of the individual stands out with extraordinary clarity and vividness, in a way that anybody, even a semi-literate person or a child, can understand. Everybody is now aware that the interests of the people prevail over those of the individual or of groups.

A cruel war is going on; the fascists are perpetrating the most unheard-of atrocities. These things should be spoken of, and everybody should be asked what he thinks, what he is prepared to do in the common cause.

Here is what society as a whole, the Party requires of you. If we defeat the enemy you'll have everything, but if we don't, then you too will perish. But we can defeat the enemy only if we throw all our forces, both material and human, into the war effort.

If you address any meeting along these lines and put the whole matter before it honestly, I'll warrant that at least ninety-nine, if not one hundred, percent of your audience will declare their readiness to make any sacrifices so long as the enemy is defeated. Some miserable creature may be opposed to that, there still are enemies, but these are only isolated individuals, renegades left over from the old world. We must teach people to work with supreme devotion for the common good. That is the task now facing the Communists.

A very important phenomenon can be observed at present: more people are joining the Party now than in peacetime and more people are entering it at the front than in the rear; more applications for membership are being

made in areas close to the front than in areas at a distance from it. (*Voices*: "That's true!") Now why is that the case? Because everybody feels the need to strengthen the Party. Everybody knows that our Party is the leader, and that only a powerful, strong Party can guarantee the people victory. And when a Red Army man sees that he is about to take part in some heavy fighting, he hands in an application for Party membership, wishing to go into action as a Communist. Therein lies the great strength of our Party, of the Soviet State. The masses are well aware that their path is the same as the Party's.

There are mass organizations in fascist Germany. Hitler has duped the masses, suppressed and debased them. We, on the contrary, develop the masses, raise their consciousness.

It has been said here that our propagandists and agitators are attentive to the needs of individual workers and help them. That is not a bad thing. I must say that it is a good thing, a good human quality, to be able to help people, to render them assistance. Women are better than men at this. But here again one should explain the connection between private needs and the common tasks facing us. If a person asks for assistance, he should be helped, but at the same time he should be told: "Look here, the Party or trade union organization is assisting you, helping you on. But we want you, when the time comes, not to stand aloof but to join with the rest in advancing the common cause." This line should be adhered to and pursued in all our work among the masses.

It was said here that the way newspapers are read out aloud makes such readings rather dull. It must be admitted that it often looks less like reading the press aloud to the workers than exercising a sort of tutelage over them. It seems to me that it is not always convenient and beneficial to have the same people do the reading every time. If I were the secretary of the Party organization at a factory, I would do this: during lunch hour I would go over to the workers and ask them if anybody wanted to hear extracts read from the press. Of course, some would want to. Then I would ask: "Who wants to do the reading?" Many of our people make good readers and volunteers would undoubtedly be forthcoming. I would, however, send an experienced, cultured worker to the group of workers, to get the conversation started and help explain the material read out. That would be more natural, and would make it easier to discover what questions the workers are interested in. Of course, the comrade you send should be a cultured, tactful person. I guaran-

tee that if this method of discussion is followed, press readings will become more lively and popular.

Forty years or so ago I myself was such a reader. There were fifteen people in my circle, which was an illegal one. Had I confined myself to reading, nothing would have come of it. The reading itself used to take from fifteen to twenty minutes, and then a discussion would follow. I would ask: "Well, did you understand this point or that?" "No, we didn't." "Well then, let's see what it is all about." Then we would begin a discussion that would last an hour, an hour and a half, or more. Nobody fell asleep while I was reading because they knew that the reading would be followed by discussion. So, comrades, it's not so simple to be an agitator. And reading the newspapers aloud is practically propagandist activity and has to be done skillfully, with much thought. If the reader and leader of the discussion lacks the ability to interest his listeners, and if they know that you have prepared him beforehand, what sort of an exchange of views can you expect? Those who listen to such press readings will regard them as school lessons of a kind, as something like the scripture lessons we used to get in the old days.

Every newspaper article contains something that can be used to bring the conversation to political issues of a general character. And I think that it would be better if one of the workers themselves did the reading and still better if they took turns. As for those whom you appoint to take part in these group readings, let them help to keep the conversation going and explain any points that are not clear.

As I listened to the speeches of the comrades here I did not get the impression that you had displayed initiative in raising issues concerned with production. Maybe you were shy. That's possible.

What are the problems of production that face us, apart from the general problems of which you are well aware? For example, one important task I would raise is that of collecting metal scrap. I have in mind not the factories or dwellings, but, say, the enormous quantity of shell fragments alone which is scattered about here in Moscow Region. Why not set the Moscow Young Communist League organization the task of collecting this scrap? Lying about in the fields and the forests of Moscow Region are smashed up aircraft and much metal scrap of other kinds.

I think that it ought to be easy to collect not less than ten thousand tons of scrap, at a very modest estimate. And that would be of great help. To do this, of course, it is necessary to conduct appropriate propaganda, make it

clear to the young people how much the country needs metal, and tell them how to go about collecting and delivering scrap. As a matter of fact, there will hardly be any need to conduct extensive propaganda, the issue being sufficiently clear as it is. You only have to organize the job practically.

I would also like to deal with the question of allotment gardening. Not one of the comrades who spoke here referred to this problem, and yet it is an important one. The agitator must not only popularize this movement, but also help organize it, see that where there are collectively cultivated allotment gardens people are not taken out to the fields for nothing, but once there, should be able to make the best use of their time, achieving the maximum of productivity. In this regard a great deal of organizational work has to be done by Party and trade union workers together with the managements.

Here is a point that has astonished me very much at our conference. Day in and day out the press deals with the Stakhanov movement, and, although this is a gathering of secretaries of Party organizations, some of whom delivered what amounted to reports on their work, nobody mentioned the Stakhanov movement. It was forgotten. And it seems to me that it was forgotten not by accident. In its treatment of the Stakhanov movement the press occasionally emphasizes the wrong point. Only the thousand and two-thousand-percenters are popularized, but have we many of such workers? That was why you did not speak of the Stakhanov movement. Your wall newspapers very likely also deal mainly with the thousand-percenters.

This problem can be approached from two angles. One might say this: didn't the director, the chief engineer and the entire management at your factory or mill know any better than to have their people work so long on output quotas that any intelligent, honest person can fulfill by one thousand percent? Evidently people have been working very poorly till now, or have done nothing at all. Why, if a person can fulfill output quotas by one thousand percent without introducing any new devices or other innovations, the director and the chief engineer of the factory or mill concerned should be put on trial for permitting the misappropriation of state funds. I myself worked as a lathe operator for twenty-five to twenty-seven years, and all of you who come from the factories also understand what it means to be a thousand-percenter.

Only he who introduces some innovation, some technical improvement, in his job can be a genuine thousand-percenter. Let us say, for example, that instead of sewing buttons on by hand you begin to do the work

by machinery. Your output would, of course, increase many times over. Or some other rationalization proposal is put into effect on the job, resulting in a rapid increase in output. The Stakhanov movement is unthinkable apart from rationalization on the job. But this is just the point that has not been shown or spoken about.

When we speak of thousand-percenters we should say that such and such a person at such and such a plant has made a sensible proposal, and that its effect in production has been such and such. It is far more important to tell how such a result was arrived at than to repeat endlessly the word "thousand-percenter." Everybody at the plant should pay attention to each innovation and see to it that it finds its way into other departments. And if the rationalizer happens to be a fitter, a lathe operator or a worker in some other trade, it ought to be found out what assistance he received from the engineering staff and designers. All this goes to show how much we lag behind in this most important matter of popularizing rationalization, introducing innovations, promoting emulation. If we printed articles about thousand-percenters written along these lines, this would render great assistance in promoting rationalization.

But what is our chief trouble? The trouble is that we forget the average, ordinary worker. Just tell me this: if all those who still do not fulfill their output quotas began to do so, by how much would output increase? You are people with experience, you can tell me. (*Voices*: "By ten, fifteen, twenty percent?") There you are. So then, if we succeeded in raising productivity of labor among all the workers—I repeat, all the workers—by only ten percent, how beneficial it would be, what an increase in industrial output it would yield! But it is more difficult to achieve that than to obtain isolated records. It is very important to produce some small invention or introduce some rationalization proposal, but that is not everything or the most difficult thing to do. Working on a hand-operated lathe you can produce, say, twenty screws, whereas on an automatic lathe you can turn out five thousand at the same time. But that does not decide the matter.

The Stakhanov movement presupposes the improvement of working methods, facilitating work by introducing devices of different kinds. This kind of innovation cannot embrace a very wide range of people, because much depends here on each person, on his individual capabilities and his inventiveness. Yet it must be spurred on and developed, particularly by departmental engineers and designers, whose duty it is to do so.

The Stakhanov movement should not, however, obscure or minimize the role of Socialist emulation among the rank and file, which can yield considerable results; it is the average, rank-and-file people who play the decisive part in successful production performance. However, you comrades—I shall put it bluntly—adopt a negligent attitude to the rank and file. You must remember more often that to raise the productivity of labor of the average worker by only ten percent is a matter of tremendous importance which requires day-to-day propaganda. The attention of the engineers, particularly those who are Party members—and we have quite a number of them in such big cities as Moscow—should be drawn to this. In dealing with the Stakhanov movement in the press, we should present it as it should be. Achievements in rationalization should be popularized and displayed, and what is most important, introduced in production, yet they should not blind one to the significance of achievements on the part of the average worker. The average worker increases his productivity without introducing any changes into the technical process of production; what he does is to increase the intensity, speed and adroitness of his work. It would be a good idea to get such average workers together, especially elderly workers with long service records, and have a frank talk with them about increasing output. That would exert considerable influence on the general performance of the plant and produce substantial results.

I very much advise you to pay more attention to the average worker, to bring him to the forefront, to give publicity in the factory wall newspaper to the work he does. Suppose a worker for two years fulfilled his output quota to the extent of only eighty to ninety percent, and during the war began to turn out one hundred to one hundred and five percent. He should be brought to the fore, his work should be given publicity. Why? Because there are thousands of such workers. You will be honoring a developing rank-and-file, average worker who regularly exceeds the output quota by three to five percent. Write an article about him in your wall newspaper, publish his portrait. If you do that the man who works next to him will think to himself: “What about me, am I any worse than he? I too can turn out the extra three to five percent and get my portrait in the paper.”

In this way the masses can be drawn into the emulation movement, for it will now develop on a basis within everybody's reach. And this will be of really great assistance in production. It is frequently called the Stakhanov movement. In essence it is genuine Socialist emulation, shock work, some-

thing you cannot give up on any account; only you must know how to make use of it, and I would very much want you to utilize and develop it. The approach to the matter should be a practical one, it is not hullabaloo we need but tangible results, and this means raising the average rate of output.

The question was raised here concerning work among new workers. That is highly important and difficult work. Wherein does the difficulty lie?

First and foremost, when the new worker—and it is women in the main who are now coming into industry—enters the factory for the first time, he is stunned, and even somewhat scared by the unusual atmosphere. And it is only after he has worked at the plant for six months or so that he begins to like it. I remember my own experience in this regard. In a factory there is discipline, whereas some of our people, particularly the youth, are accustomed to doing things their own way. We should help the new arrivals get into their work, become accustomed to the discipline and order of factory life, and, on the other hand, explain in a way that will be understood that although it is hard at first, they will come to like it as time goes on and will not be able to tear themselves away from the plant. Everything should be done to enable the new people to grow to like their work and to master their profession and improve their qualifications as quickly as possible. That is why the problems of helping the novices in their work and in acquiring technical knowledge, and of the Party and trade union organizations devoting attention to drawing the new workers into the daily life of the factory, should, in my opinion, be regarded as of first-rate importance. It is very important to know people, to know what a new contingent that has come to work at the plant is like, and to plan one's work accordingly.

We now have at our disposal an exceptionally convincing argument, namely, the war. It should be explained to the young people who have entered industry that they have come there not to play, not to fool around, but to take their places at a fighting front which is almost as much a battlefield as the firing lines. That is one of the strongest arguments we possess. Not only the Young Communist League but also the Communist Party organizations will have to put in some work with the new contingents of young workers in the factories and mills.

In the present difficult situation, very much will depend on the new workers, the women and the youth. The new workers have to be imbued with a sense of discipline, with an understanding of the interests of the proletariat as a whole. Party mass work has to be conducted among them daily and skill-

fully. You should not, however, seek to influence them only by laying down precepts, but to interest them in social work and draw them into it.

Well, that, strictly speaking, is all I wanted to tell you. I venture to hope that our talk will prove of at least some little help in your work. (*Prolonged applause.*)

Regarding Certain Problems of Agitation and Propaganda³⁵

Speech at a Conference of Komsomol Regional Committee Secretaries in Charge of Propaganda

September 28, 1942

Comrades! I do not propose to deal with organizational questions concerning the work of the Komsomol—that is your affair. You yourselves decide what form of work suits you best. I shall touch on the question of the forms of agitation and propaganda to be employed today.

I now regard the Komsomol in a somewhat different light than previously. Before the war I used to look upon Komsomol members as green youngsters who like to have a good time, to make merry, and who are not particularly anxious to bother their heads with very deep problems; I used to regard them as young people who have to grow and gather physical strength, so as to mature in due course and reach old age as late as possible.

But then the war began. It is clear that now Komsomol members, and not only Komsomol members, but all people, are acquiring experience in life much more rapidly. That is why a comparison between our Komsomol and the Young Communist Leagues of other countries shows that it, of course, is far more mature, and this maturity adds to the age of its members. As a matter of fact, seventeen-year-old lads now have to prepare to enter the army. I say prepare. When they are called up is another matter, but they are already thinking about joining the Red Army.

And what about the entire environment? As you know, propaganda must be adapted to the surrounding conditions. The Komsomol is now an extremely powerful public organization in our country, particularly in the countryside. It is clear that the Komsomol now plays a far greater part in the public, political, economic and cultural life of our country, and, what is most important, as a whole takes part in the war and, it goes without saying, in conducting agitation and propaganda. And it has to do all this not only among the youth, but also among the population as a whole. Thus, you see, the political

³⁵ Originally published in *Bolshevik Magazine*, No. 17-18, 1942.

significance of the Komsomol is now greater than it was before the war. And for that reason the Komsomol must engage in extensive agitational and propaganda work and obtain a better grasp of its various forms.

Each historical moment requires its particular form of agitation and propaganda. There can be no doubt that at the present time the forms of propaganda we employ cannot be the same as we used, say, two years ago. And that is natural. If in our approach to the masses at the present time we employ the same forms of agitation and propaganda as we did previously, they will be of little effect, they will fail to make the same impression on the population as they did before the war. For example, if two years ago we came to a kolkhoz meeting in some big village and delivered a speech interspersed with funny remarks and anecdotes or couched in flowery language, such a speech might have been given a good reception then, people might have laughed and applauded, and even gone away satisfied. But can one deliver such a speech now? Of course not. Now the people are suffering great adversity; many have lost their near ones; the population is now engaged in a tremendous and very difficult job of work, and stringent restrictions have had to be introduced as regards satisfaction of their needs. Life has become grim. People have become more concentrated, more thoughtful. Consequently, agitation and propaganda should correspond to the situation that has arisen and to the mood of the people.

But what forms should agitation and propaganda take, and where are Komsomol functionaries in charge of agitation and propaganda to seek for them? Where can you look for them, what examples should you take as your models?

It should be said that our press is not yet rich in new forms of agitation and propaganda; it is only just beginning to find more and more of them. And from what source can we learn more than from the press, which carries contributions from the most qualified people? It stands to reason that the best material for agitators is the dispatches sent in by war correspondents. That is only natural, for there is no life nowadays apart from the war. All the anxieties of the people are connected, in one degree or another, with the war, with its successes and failures. Because of this you who are in charge of propaganda work among the youth should also draw your main inspiration in agitation and propaganda work from these sources.

Is it possible to do this, are there models which one can follow in agitational work?

I think that there are, although not in great numbers. But with every passing day the press is publishing more and more articles by experienced writers on which one can draw for material; to a certain extent you can imitate them, learn from them. It goes without saying that when I talk about imitation, I do not mean mechanical imitation—that method is not a very effective one. In imitating you must rework the material somewhat to adapt it to local conditions, the given category of population, the character of the audience you have to address.

I consider the articles written by Tikhonov and Simonov, for example, to be good war dispatches; and you can find material for agitators also in publications issued by the army authorities. All of you want to come to Moscow to obtain help and instructions here as to how to conduct agitation. But it is difficult to give you such instructions, and indeed how can one pass on, show you, the forms you should employ in your agitational work? Each person goes about it in his own way. I consider the main source from which one can learn to conduct agitation and propaganda to be the press. Leaving aside official articles which determine the substance and general political line of propaganda, outline the compass of the questions that face us—I shall merely point to the new forms that are making their appearance in our press.

I do not know whether you have read Simonov's latest article "Days and Nights." I must say that it is well built up. In general, his articles give a realistic picture of the fighting. In his last article all proportions and correlations are observed. It is written with restraint. Outwardly it would seem to be the dry chronicle of events, but at bottom it is the work of an artist, a picture that long remains in one's memory.

Simonov must be given credit for being the first to write about the struggle of Stalingrad's workers, particularly the workers of the Tractor Plant, which is something of great social and political significance. I shall read his text:

Now the city has no longer just mere residents. Every one of those who have remained is bent on defending it. And come what may, no matter how many machines and lathes have been shipped out of any given plant, a shop always remains a shop and the veteran workers who have devoted the best part of their lives to the plant are determined to defend it to the last, defend

these shops of theirs with the shattered windows, which still reek of smoke from the fire only just extinguished, defend them as long as it is humanly possible.

“Not everything is recorded there,” said the director, nodding in the direction of the board showing the output. He went on to tell us how, several days ago, German tanks broke through our lines of defense at one spot and dashed headlong towards the plant. The news of this was immediately conveyed to the plant. Something had to be done at once, before nightfall, to help the Red Army men close the breach. The director summoned the manager of the repair shop. His orders were to complete repairs right away on several tanks, which were half ready. And the men who with their own hands had repaired the machines, at this moment of dire peril manned them too.

Several tank crews were formed then and there, on the factory grounds, from among the workers of the plant, members of the Workers’ Guards. They took their places in the machines, and the tanks, clattering across the empty yard, made straight from the shop for the scene of the fighting. They were the first, in the vicinity of the stone bridge over the narrow river, to bar the road to the oncoming Germans. An enormous gully lay between them and the Germans, and to cross this gully the tanks had to pass over the bridge. It was on this bridge that the column of German tanks was met by the factory tank crews.

A furious artillery duel began. In the meantime German tommy gunners began to make their way across the gully. During the tense hours that followed the plant put its own force into the field to combat the German infantry. Two detachments of Workers’ Guards left for the gully immediately after the tanks. One of them was under the joint command of Kostyuchenko, the militia chief, and Pashenko, a professor from the Engineering Institute, while the other was commanded by Popov, a foreman from the tool shop, and Krivulin, a veteran steel worker. The battle on the steep slopes of the gully time and again developed into a hand-to-hand fight. Among the veteran workers of the plant who fell in this engagement were Kondratyev, Ivanov,

Volodin, Simonov, Momotov and Fomin whose names now are on everybody's lips.

That day the outskirts of the factory settlement changed beyond all recognition. Barricades appeared in the streets leading to the gully. Everything at hand was used to build them—boiler plates, armor plates, dismantled tanks, and the like. And as in the days of the Civil War, the women kept their husbands supplied with munitions while the girls, leaving the shops for the forward positions, rendered first aid to the wounded and carried them out of the firing line to the rear. Many were killed that day but the Workers' Guards and the Red Army men, at the price of their own lives, held the breach until nightfall when fresh units arrived to take their place.

Isn't this truthful picture of fighting for Stalingrad a good one?

The factory yards are empty. The wind whistles through the smashed windows. Whenever a mortar shell scores a near hit, bits of broken glass go flying down from every side onto the asphalted sidewalk. The plant is putting up a staunch fight just as the city is. And if, in general, it is possible to become accustomed to bombs, shells, bullets and danger—then everybody here has become accustomed to them, accustomed as nowhere else.

In the same article Comrade Simonov depicts the experiences of people. Here is an episode concerning a medical orderly, a girl from Dniepropetrovsk, who accompanies the wounded as they are ferried across the Volga:

Next to me, on the side of the boat, sat a military feldsher—a Ukrainian girl. She was about twenty years of age and had the quaint name of Victoria; her surname was Schepenya. This was her fourth or fifth trip to Stalingrad...

The ferry boat approached the Stalingrad shore.

"And yet every time it's a bit terrifying to have to go ashore," Victoria suddenly said. "I have been wounded twice, once quite seriously, and yet I could not bring myself to believe I'd die because, after all, I haven't lived at all, I haven't seen anything of life yet. How could I possibly die."

Her eyes were large and sad just then. I realized how true her words were: what a harrowing experience it must be at twenty to have been twice wounded, to have seen fifteen months of active service and to have to cross over to this city, to Stalingrad, for the fifth time. How much life holds in store for one at twenty—all one's life, love, maybe the first kiss—who knows! And yet here was night, a night filled with the endless rumbling of guns, before us stretched a city in flames, and this girl of twenty was making her way there for the fifth time. She was in duty bound to go there, no matter how terrifying it was. In another fifteen minutes she would be wending her way on past burning houses and in one of the streets on the outskirts, midst ruins, with bullets and shell splinters whizzing past, would pick up wounded and take them across to the other side, and should she manage to make it in safety—she would come back again for the sixth time.

The writer could, as is usually done, have pictured a girl who knows neither fear nor doubt; instead he showed us human feelings, human anxieties. This picture provides splendid material for agitators and propagandists.

A characteristic point to be noted is how the question of glory and heroism is dealt with in this article.

I want to compare this with the way other correspondents approach the question.

Simonov writes:

Yes, to live here (in Stalingrad) is very difficult. Even more: it is impossible to live here as a passive bystander. To live here to fight, to live here to kill Germans—here it is possible, here it is necessary and here we shall live, while staunchly defending this city enveloped in flames and smoke, and drenched in blood. And if death hovers over us, glory is by our side: she has become a sister to us midst the ruins of dwellings and the tears of orphans.

Those who engage in agitation and propaganda should seek out the vivifying gems of Russian language and thought and carry them to the people.

Interesting and instructive is the description of one of our men fighting for Stalingrad on the city's streets. Peter Boloto, one of four men who prevented a unit of thirty tanks from getting through, putting fifteen of them out of action with anti-tank rifles,

rrecalling the engagement in which he and his comrades had crippled fifteen tanks, suddenly smiled and said:

“When the first tank was coming at me,” he said, “I thought that the end of the world had come. Really, that's what I thought. When it drew nearer I set it on fire and so, you see, it wasn't me that went West but the tank. By the way, during that scrap, you know, I must have rolled and smoked to the butt end at least five cigarettes. Well, maybe, not to the butt end—that, perhaps, would be exaggerating a bit—but at least, I really did roll five cigarettes. In action it's like this: you move the gun away a bit and light up—whenever you have a chance to, of course. It's permissible to smoke in action, what's impermissible is to miss your mark. Miss it just once and you'll never light up again—that's how things are...”

Peter Boloto smiled, the broad, calm smile of a man who is convinced that his views on a soldier's life are right—a life in which it is permissible at times to rest for a bit and smoke a cigarette but impermissible to miss one's mark.

Is there material here for the propagandist and the agitator? I think there is a wealth of it. All you have to do is read it, think it over and pass it on skillfully to your audience. It goes without saying that correspondents do not often succeed in writing good articles; in the main, I imagine, they send in items like “On the Banks of the Terek.” Articles frequently appear in our newspapers in the following form:

Towards evening, when the battle began to quiet down, when hundreds of German corpses remained in the valley, when the German tanks burned out and the German field guns were withdrawn to the rear, everybody learned... that Senior Sergeant Rakhalsky, who had skillfully camouflaged his machine gun, had opened annihilating fire at the advancing German

columns and killed fifty men. Honor and glory to Senior Sergeant Rakhalsky!

Everybody learned that Sergeant Tupotchenko, at the risk of his life, had wrested four wounded men from the clutches of the fascists and carried them off the field of battle. Honor and glory to Sergeant Tupotchenko!

Everybody learned that in a hand-to-hand encounter Red Army man Zhienko had killed six Germans. Honor and glory to Red Army man Zhienko!

Here you have an entirely different form of exposition. I would not advise you to follow this form. The author, like a rich man on a spree, hands out honor and glory like Vyazma cakes. (*Laughter.*) This is showing disrespect to people who have displayed genuine heroism, and to the reader, too. For what the author has not done is to show us living people. All he has done is to enumerate points from an official report: such and such people have done so and so, adding the three words: “honor and glory.” What is the purpose of these cries of “honor and glory, honor and glory?” Glory is not something to play with. A Red Army man shoots with his rifle or machine gun, he beats off an onslaught of the Germans and kills them; he has to do that, as any fighting man has to in action.

When the Soviet Information Bureau, which is a government body, registers the heroic deeds of one or another soldier or commander, it does not hand out honor and glory in the way some of our correspondents do. It seems to me that these people do not attach enough importance to the meaning of words in the Russian language. They do not understand that glory is not something that is handed out, but has to be won. Stalingrad, that big city with historical fighting traditions, has for two months now held the enemy hordes at bay in bitter battle, inflicting such losses on them as have to all intents and purposes stabilized the rest of the front. Here heroic deeds are a daily occurrence. This should be shown by citing facts, without indulging in rhetoric and loud phrases. Our men do not need a reporter’s praises—the best praise for them is a faithful account of their deeds.

In agitation and propaganda everything should be done to avoid hula-baloo. Now is not the time for noisy speeches, rhetoric and didacticism. They have little effect. If you come to a meeting of workers or kolkhozniks and launch on a bombastic speech, begin to lecture them, they may say:

“What are you lecturing us for?” The thing to do now is to give people a clear and patient explanation of what is going on, to tell them the truth about the difficulties we are undergoing.

If you avoid exclamations and rhetoric in your agitational and propaganda speeches, and do not admonish or lecture your audiences—I realize, of course, that it is somewhat difficult not to sometimes—your agitation and propaganda will, undoubtedly, be far more effective.

A special place in our agitational literature is occupied by Ehrenburg’s articles. I think you can learn from him and derive much material for agitational purposes.

What should be your attitude to Ehrenburg’s articles? Ehrenburg is engaged in a hand-to-hand fight with the Germans, he hits out right and left. His attack is a furious one, and he hits at the Germans with the weapon at hand at the given moment: he fires from a rifle, and when his ammunition runs out, he hits at them with his rifle butt, on the head, wherever he can. And this constitutes the author’s principal wartime service.

Can the propagandist and the agitator draw good material from his articles? They undoubtedly can. Of course, you should not take just any article in toto, but chose three, four or five facts, think them over and use them with a view to the given conditions. Only you should not imitate what has been said, but rework all the material in your mind.

So you see, there is after all material in our press. There are a number of fairly good war articles, particularly in *Krasnaya Zvezda*, which can very well be used. They are well written and can serve as quite good material for the agitator and the propagandist, particularly Komsomol members.

I would like to advise you to avoid pretentious language in agitation and propaganda. Some of our people have a predilection for it now and then. For example, you often see in the press the expression “super-accurate marksman.” Some people who know Russian well enough have asked me: “Can you tell us how he manages it—does better than the bullseye, or what?” Of course, there was a note of sarcasm to the question. Somebody once used this pretentious expression, and it began circulating in the newspapers. Yet these words do not mean anything definite. If you were to tell a hunter who is an excellent hand at shooting wild fowl that he is a super-accurate marksman, he would simply laugh. And, really, what could such “super-accuracy” mean? That the person in question does something in excess of plan, above a hundred percent? Bear in mind that this leads to the measure of accuracy

being lost. Such an expression is wrong from the viewpoint of both the Russian language and its purport. What is more, it simply does harm. Why? For the following reason. If we assume that the super-accurate marksman has a hundred percent score—for he can't score more than a hundred percent—then the one who registers eighty or ninety percent of hits will be an accurate marksman, seventy percent—a good one, and sixty percent—a satisfactory one. That is what it leads to. And it all comes about because people do not attach importance to the meaning of words, and the use of such words as “super-accurate marksman” merely shows a striving for pretentiousness and in the final end leads to absurdity. Agitators and propagandists should avoid far-fetched words—they are of no use.

One frequently comes across boasting in newspaper articles. I recently read in a newspaper a description of a certain war episode. It dealt with the way a certain lieutenant in command of a company carried through an offensive operation within the bounds of a company's possibilities and captured an inhabited point. The correspondent, after relating the various stages of the battle, added that the lieutenant had captured the place in Suvorov style. Can one use such an expression in the given instance? One can, of course, but all the same the term “in Suvorov style” should be employed very carefully. If we apply this term to a relatively small operation of a platoon or company, we thereby lower its significance. It would seem that the correspondent puts the operations of Suvorov, that great army leader who won fame in a number of splendidly conducted military campaigns, on a level with operations which, though important, are conducted on a relatively limited scale. Our job is to raise lieutenants to the level of Suvorov, and here, of a sudden, one successful operation is immediately christened—“in Suvorov style.” You get an expression that to all intents and purposes is a pointed one: ah, in Suvorov style; it seems nice and brief, but you will hardly satisfy your audience with it. What is needed is that words should be effective, that expressions, the estimation of the conduct of people should be more modest, that the people to whom you speak should feel that the words were uttered not on the spur of the moment, but have been thought over, word for word.

I would like to draw your attention to one more expression which is quite often used in newspaper dispatches. Inasmuch as this expression is to be met with almost every day, it can take a firm hold on one's mind; and yet it too is not quite correct and is confusing to some people. Correspon-

dents report: the unit in question did not fall back a single step. Once said, twice said, and then it goes into circulation. And at the same time people read another item from the front which states that the unit held its ground, and they begin to think: it doesn't say here that they didn't fall back a single step, so maybe they did retreat after all. (*Laughter.*) So then, comrades, when you speak or write, especially when you write, you should think not only of how you yourself understand this or that event, but of how others will understand it. At the same time the call "not a step back" is of great purport, since it is precisely the first step taken in retreat that is dangerous for it is inexorably followed by a next step.

You must not be careless with words. Carelessness of expression will undermine the influence of agitators and propagandists.

All that I have said has been concerned with propaganda relating to the front. But how about our agitation and propaganda in the rear?

The same issue of *Krasnaya Zvezda* that contained the article by Simonov of which we have spoken, carried an article by K. Finn entitled "Women of the Town of Ivanovo." I must say that we are all so much infected now with thoughts and anxieties connected with the war, that we do not always read the articles that deal with life and work in the rear. And the article is a good one. Of course, like the whole of our life, it links up the rear with the front. The author tells how he met on a square a woman of about thirty who told him of the sorrow that had befallen her, how she had taken it and was overcoming it.

"I received the news yesterday. My husband has been killed at the front. The letter came in the evening. I had only just come home from work..."

She had lived in perfect harmony with him for twelve years. They had no children.

"So, he was both husband and son to me. My love for him was of a special kind. If you only knew what sort of man he..."

She could not say the word "was." Thus, avoiding this word, afraid of it and at the same time also afraid to speak of her husband as if he were living, she told in confused, broken phrases that were like cries of distress, but without shedding a single tear, how she fainted when she received the letter, and how on recovering consciousness she rushed out of the house. Where?

She did not know. She walked along the dark streets of Ivanovo, through the town where she had been born and whose every stone and every house were familiar to her. It was dark, but she found all the spots she had previously visited with her husband, recalled what he had said to her just there, at the corner of Sotsialisticheskaya Street or yonder, on the bench in the square near the city theater. And for a moment it seemed to her that nothing had happened, that there had been no war at all, that her Vasya was still alive, that he was with her. But then grief again engulfed her.

“But I went to work today, I operate a coarse spinning frame. I was afraid I couldn’t go, that I wouldn’t have the strength. I took myself in hand. I persuaded myself. I said: ‘Go to work, Marusya. For his sake go, for his sake, for Vasya. He would approve.’ I worked today, and I felt that he, my dear one, was standing beside me. And my workmates looked at me, pretending nothing was the matter, but actually wept quietly when my back was turned. And here I am walking home from work. And just imagine: I am afraid to pass by the spots where Vasya and I used to walk together.”

Or take the author’s account of how ties were established between some artillerymen and Komsomol girls from Ivanovo:

Dusya Lebedeva was one of a group of working women who visited the front to deliver gifts to the soldiers and officers. She happened to visit a certain battery.

What fine young fellows they are! Quick. And how splendidly they work. When I was there, they smashed a German field kitchen and a dozen Fritzes with it. “There you are, Dusya,” they said, “accept this nice little gift from us in honor of your visit.” But what amazed me was how neat it was there. Their guns shone as though they had licked them clean. In general you could see everything was very tidy at the battery.

And then it was that the idea entered Dusya’s head that it would be worthwhile to establish closer ties with the artillerymen, to link her team of workmates with them by bonds of genuine,

cordial friendship. But Dusya hesitated at the time to tell the artillerymen about it. Only on her return to Ivanovo, after she had discussed the matter with the girls, did she make up her mind and write a letter to the men at the battery, suggesting that they compete with one another: "You give it to the Fritzes, and we'll over-fulfill our plan."

Truthfully written, isn't it? And that means it is well written. Only try to make as good use of it. It is a veritable find for an agitator.

Or take, for example, the way the author describes how these girls and those of the artillerymen who did not receive letters began corresponding. The agitator should not pass by this fact which is so important in wartime.

Once the girls received a letter from the battery's new military commissar, Comrade Maltsev. Here is the end of the letter: "Oh yes, I have one more request (a confidential one). Some of my men, quite good fellows, get no letters from home for reasons which you yourselves can guess. They get quite lonely, especially when the mail comes in, and there are no letters for them. It's really hard on them. Please, Dusya, think the matter over, and send me, say, three or four addresses of your girls. I could then give the addresses to the men and put an end to their wearisome waiting. Please don't think this is rudeness on my part, but take it as a request in the interests of our common cause. As to the direction their correspondence will take, the men themselves will decide."

Dusya sent the addresses. Correspondence began. And now, when the mail arrives at "our battery," there are letters not only for those who have relatives, but also for those whose native homes and villages have been wrecked by the accursed enemy.

Very likely, when the men of "our battery" have some time to themselves, they talk about the girls from distant Ivanovo, and call them "our girls."

Then the author quotes a number of other episodes from the life of the working women of Ivanovo. He describes their life and work concretely, as it really is, and you feel that here is a slice of real life. There is no

deliberate overstatement, no artificiality. This is a useful article for the propagandist and especially for the agitator. You consider me an experienced agitator. I don't think so myself (*laughter*); at any rate I cannot give you as much as you can get from these articles if you regard them seriously and think them over.

Such articles, and everything new that appears in our press, everything that in my opinion is new and of value in evolving the forms of agitation most effective at the present time, are mostly to be found in the army press. Evidently the army press is closer to everything associated with the front.

That, comrades, is all I wanted to tell you.

How am I to summarize our talk? I think this way: our press provides sufficient material; all that is necessary is to be able to make use of it. We have capable authors. I have only dealt with articles that have appeared these last few days. I have not dealt with Korneichuk's play "Front," which is of great significance, orientates one on many questions, and provides material worthy of thought. The times we are undergoing are very severe. People, as I have already said, are performing a tremendous task which absorbs all their energy. And at the same time, their standard of life, their living conditions, have deteriorated. There is so much heroism, courage, steadfastness in our people that we have no need to create anything artificially, to advertise anything; it is sufficient to draw on the life of the people and the army and speak with a full awareness of the difficulties borne by the people and of the need to defeat the enemy at all costs. If you employ such material in addressing the people, I guarantee that the method of agitation will be the most effective and exercise the greatest influence. (*Applause.*)

Urgent Tasks of Komsomol Members in the Kolkhozes³⁶

Speech at a Reception to Outstanding Komsomol Kolkhozniks

October 8, 1942

Comrades! The war being waged by our country is a very grim and bloody one. The Germans succeeded in drawing the armies of a number of states, Italy, Romania, Finland and Hungary, into the war on their side. Each of these states, with the exception of Italy, is, taken by itself, a small one, but all the same the fact remains that we have to fight a lone battle against a whole number of European states.

The Germans have seized much of our territory and occupied densely populated areas. They imagined that after they had dealt us a few smashing blows our army would be thrown into disorder, that it would fall to pieces. The opposite has happened—with each passing month the tenacity with which the Red Army is fighting is increasing and its resistance to the enemy is growing. This is a result of the tenacity of our people, brought up as they have been by the Bolshevik Party. Only one bad habit hinders some of us. I have in view those who wait for the thunderstorm to break before they cross themselves. Such people begin to fight properly only when they see the Germans at their throats.

It was not expected abroad that our country would offer such resistance to the Hitlerites. Some people imagined that we had little strength, that our industry was in a poor condition, that our army was weak; they imagined the Germans would make short shrift of us. The heroic resistance being put up by our people to the German invaders is causing surprise now among such politicians.

Only the blind abroad can fail to see that complete unanimity exists in our country between the government and the people. Despite the fact that the Germans have seized a large area of territory, the forces that our country has set in motion have proved to be exceedingly great. The Germans themselves did not think they would meet with such resistance, they

³⁶ Originally published in *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, October 22, 1942.

counted on finishing us off in three to four weeks. It can now be seen how severely they miscalculated.

Our Red Army is a match for the Germans. What is more, the Germans have Romania, Hungary, Italy and Finland fighting on their side, whereas the USSR is fighting single-handed. We have no small quantity of the weapons of war, and they are not worse but better than those possessed by the Germans. We have begun to maneuver more rapidly with our resources. Since the war began our men and our commanders have learned a great deal. Of course, there are weak commanders and also incompetent ones on such a huge front. The overwhelming majority of them, however, have undoubtedly risen to the occasion.

Our losses, of course, are not inconsiderable, but the Germans are losing more. I have made detailed and insistent inquiries among military men. And they all confirm the fact that the losses of the Germans are considerably greater than ours. True, the Germans have captured large numbers of our civilian population on the territories they have occupied. But that is no gain for them either.

The outcome of the war depends on our further resistance. We have much for which to thank the courageous defenders of Stalingrad. They are putting up a good fight and are showing an example of how one should really defend our soil, our inhabited points.

I should say that on other fronts, too, wherever the Germans are attempting to advance, they are meeting with a stiff rebuff. The heavier the blows we deal, the sooner will the German soldiers realize how their lust for conquest will end.

Now a few words about the state of our industry.

We made a good job of the evacuation of our plants from the areas seized by the Germans. Of course, the Germans had not expected that. They had counted on making immediate use of our plants to serve their needs.

The evacuated plants are already in operation. In general our industry has shown a high level of organization and maneuverability. Workers, foremen, engineers, the entire technical and administrative personnel have, I must say, given a very good account of themselves in this war, they are working self-sacrificingly, and are increasing productivity with every passing day.

As a result, our army is equipped technically and supplied better than ever before, better than when the war broke out. That has almost never hap-

pened in Russian history. For example, in former days when Russia was at war, her army never had enough shells.

You know how important a part artillery plays in war. The war shows that our artillery is something to be envied. The quality of our guns is good. We are producing them in such quantities as to be able not only to make up for wear and tear and losses, but also to have a certain reserve. There is also an improvement as regards tanks. It is recognized throughout the world that there are no better tanks than ours.

As you see, our industry has coped with its tasks. Only there must be no swell-headedness, the plants must work still better. We are far from having made use of all our possibilities.

The most difficult thing now is to cope with agriculture. The Germans have temporarily seized the Ukraine and the Kuban, territories that used to yield the greatest proportion of our marketable, exportable grain. Thus the full brunt of the struggle for grain; has shifted to the regions in the East, beyond the Volga. These regions have to produce the maximum quantity of grain, exerting every effort that is humanly possible. I think that if they work as they should, we shall be able to manage. We shall also have to put pressure on such regions as the Kalinin, Yaroslavl, Moscow, Ryazan, and Gorky regions to increase their yield, to give us more grain. The kolkhoz system provides all possibilities for this. We must at all costs increase the output of grain. This is a very serious sector of our struggle for victory over the Germans.

In agriculture, as in industry, our Komsomol members and Young Pioneers now constitute almost the main force—at any rate, the most active, vital force of the population. A far greater responsibility than previously rests with them. There are very few young men under forty years of age in the countryside, it is mainly women and children who remain. Successes in production now largely depend on the Komsomol.

That is why we look at it differently now. Komsomol members must be approached differently, greater demands should be made on them. The Komsomol is the most active section in the army too. As a matter of fact, it is precisely you who in many respects will have to bear the full brunt of the war. You have all your life before you. When we defeat the Germans—and that we shall certainly do—it is you who will have to rehabilitate what has been wrecked, to strengthen and build up our state.

This war is a great and cruel school for our youth. The fascists regimented and drilled their young people. This enabled them to make automations of them, to discipline them, in a mechanical way, of course. It is clear that when they begin to suffer defeat this discipline will show its reverse side, but for the time being it helps the Germans.

What are the tasks now facing you, members of the Komsomol?

Firstly, you should understand that you, Komsomol kolkhozniks, bear a serious responsibility for the condition of our agriculture. There is no organization in the countryside now that is bigger than the Komsomol organization. Komsomol members now are not carefree youngsters who do nothing but stroll about the village playing accordions; in wartime village life is largely their responsibility, their concern. You have a great deal of work before you. You have to answer both for the progress of work and for its quality. You are grown-up people now. The notion that formerly existed about the Komsomol must be changed. The Komsomol is the most active section of the population, and it bears full responsibility for the condition of production. In a kolkhoz that works badly, it is the Komsomol organization, first and foremost, that will be responsible—morally to the entire population, politically to the central bodies, to the Party, to the state—for the fact that the kolkhoz has failed to fulfill its obligations. You should understand and draw the practical conclusions.

Secondly, you must acquire more knowledge on agricultural matters—both practical and book knowledge, without which no progress is possible in agriculture. There are few experienced people in the countryside, for most of them have joined the army. Komsomol members, of course, now have the strongest and closest ties with the kolkhozes. They know no other form of agriculture. For all you know about individual peasant farming is from hearsay, reminiscences. The old individual way of farming was a backward one. That means that whether you like it or not you have to accumulate your own experience in agricultural matters. As yet you have little knowledge or experience and without these the kolkhozes will make no headway. Perhaps you would like to become engineers, technicians, doctors, or to occupy administrative or political posts. But the issue now at stake is that of saving our state, of saving its independence. You are responsible for the way the farms are run. That means that before all else you must work where your country needs you most. You must, as quickly as possible, become experienced people, able to manage affairs, and with a knowledge of collective farming. Where there is

no agronomist, you have to take his place. In each kolkhoz Komsomol organization there should be people who make a serious study of the different aspects of farming—field crop cultivation, cattle breeding—who search for ways and means of raising bumper crops of grain, vegetables, potatoes, flax. It is desirable that more young women should be promoted.

Thirdly, you have to become the foremost organizers in the countryside. Of course, you have little experience in this regard, too. To be able to give leadership to people, an organizer has to know something himself. It is, of course, difficult for an eighteen-year-old girl to be a leader. But nobody will supply us with ready-made leaders. The proper thing to do is boldly to appoint to leading positions those who you feel possess organizational ability, a flair for organization.

There are young women among our partisans. It is not easy for them, but they show a quick grasp of the situation, have a sense of organization, they display great ability in outwitting the enemy, and are as good fighters as the men. Yet partisan warfare is more difficult than work in the kolkhoz. The partisan has to solve military tactical problems to be able to outwit the enemy. And in spite of this we have a considerable number of women among the partisans. I think that in agriculture too you will find quite a number of efficient young women for promotion to leading posts. They must be sought out and promoted.

It sometimes happens with us that a leading post is occupied by a person of whom they say that he is neither fish nor fowl nor good red herring. That sort of person has no push, his heart is not in his work. The only quality he possesses is that he has reached a certain age. Such people should be replaced by boldly promoting new, young people to their posts. Let a Komsomol member manage affairs. Now that is what we meant when we say that you have to become organizers on the farms.

Finally, the *fourth task* is to conduct political work among the masses. The burdens of the war are also felt in the countryside. Well, then, the Komsomol must come forward and explain the nature of these difficulties in such a way that people will understand that the burdens of the war have not been brought about by ourselves, but have been thrust on us, that each kolkhoznik must summon all his energy for a constant exertion of effort. Unless we staunchly endure all difficulties, unless we overcome them and smash the Germans, we shall fall into fearful bondage. In that case not only

would we never see our husbands, fathers and brothers, but life itself would become a purgatory.

The Komsomol should be the most vitally active, persistent and purposeful section of the youth, guided by the one aim of defeating the enemy. No sacrifices can halt us. We must be ready to make any sacrifice, to do everything in order to achieve victory.

You see how great are the tasks that now confront you. Consequently, the Komsomol must increase its membership. Members should be admitted into the Komsomol the way Red Army men are admitted at the front. There they do not ask the Red Army man whether he knows the Statutes and Rules; they do not demand of him a knowledge of history. If he hits hard at the Germans, he is the best candidate for membership in the Komsomol and the Party. There are girls in our midst whose work is worthy of our cause, yet when you bring them to a meeting, they get confused and tongue-tied. But when you talk to them separately, you see that they are not bad people at all; they are genuine people, our own kind. They are shy, and that is why they get confused. You yourselves should be active in selecting for the Komsomol, those who have undergone the test of work.

There are, it is true, young people who work well, but who, in binding sheaves, for example, try to take credit for other people's achievements too. And there are those who appear to be good people, but who resort to all sorts of intrigues to push themselves forward. I would refrain from accepting such people into the Komsomol. There is no point in admitting into your organization a person who resorts to dishonest methods out of a desire to boast. There is no room for that sort of person in the Komsomol.

Some people join the Komsomol for careerist ends. That is why members should not be admitted into the Komsomol wholesale, but at the same time no artificial brake on admission should be established. On the contrary, people should feel that they can join the Komsomol, that its doors are wide open to them. You know everybody in the village, don't you? Most of the families are decent. Well, the ranks of the Komsomol should be swelled by drawing members from the good ones. Six or eight Komsomol members for a whole village are not enough. You should have at least twenty members. It should be made easier to join the Komsomol, you should always have a crowd of eager applicants on its threshold.

That is about all I wanted to tell you, comrades. The questions I have dealt with here are not new to you. Nevertheless, you will have to be guided

by them, to think them over and to set about the fulfillment of the wartime demands of which I have spoken. Remember, success in agriculture means winning a big battle in this great war. And the responsibility for achieving successes in agriculture rests with you, young men and women belonging to the Komsomol.

I wish you success in your work. Should we ever get together again, I would like to see the Komsomol organizations in the kolkhozes stronger, to hear that the Komsomol in the countryside has become a still more militant, political organization, that the countryside has still greater cause to feel that the Komsomol is a great force.

A Discussion Between M. I. Kalinin and Functionaries of the State Labor Reserves and of Komsomol Organizations of Trade, Railway and Industrial Training Schools³⁷

October 23, 1942

On October 23, 1942, in the Kremlin, the Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, Mikhail Ivanovich Kalinin, received a group of functionaries of the State Labor Reserves and Komsomol Organizations who had participated in a conference on questions of political mass work in trade, railway and industrial training schools.

During the discussion, which lasted for three hours, assistant chiefs in charge of political mass work of Regional, Territorial and Republican Labor Reserves Administrations and functionaries of Regional and Territorial Committees of the Komsomol told Comrade Kalinin of the educational work they were conducting among the young people called up by the State for training in the above-mentioned types of vocational schools, and of their efforts to ensure a high level in vocational instruction.

In his speech Mikhail Ivanovich Kalinin indicated how exceptionally important is the work of training young people in trade, railway and industrial training schools, and dealt with a number of questions concerning vocational instruction and education of the youth.

Below we publish an abridged stenographic report of the discussion.

Comrade Gogina (Assistant Chief in charge of political mass work, Tula Region Labor Reserves Administration): All the trade, railway and industrial training schools in Tula Region, with the exception of the trade and railway schools in Tula itself, were wrecked by the German invaders.

Our pupils have done a tremendous amount of work in restoring all these schools and repairing the equipment. Particularly worthy of note is the work of Trade School No. 12, which was awarded second prize in the all-Union Socialist emulation contest.

Comrade Kalinin: Have you cases of young people leaving school without permission?

³⁷ Originally published in *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, November 15, 1942.

Comrade Gogina: There have been such cases. True, the youngsters do not leave the schools where the instructors treat them with paternal solicitude, study the peculiarities of the pupils and make an individual approach to each one of them: in those schools, on the other hand, where the tutors and instructors are heartless toward the pupils, where education is based on shouting at the youngsters, there are cases where they leave without permission.

Comrade Kalinin: That means that education is still badly organized.

Comrade Gogina: That is a serious defect in a number of our vocational schools.

In many of the schools where the instructors work well, display skill as pedagogues, achievements have been registered in industrial training.

Considerable successes have been achieved by Railway School No. 2, as the results of the Socialist emulation contest have shown. There is a good tutor in that school, a manual instructor named Rassokhin, who is very fond of the youngsters.

You once said at a conference, Mikhail Ivanovich, that one has to be born a pedagogue. Well, this man is a born pedagogue. He combines the political education of the youth with their practical instruction. His pupils in Tula built a railway branch line four kilometers in length. This brought them a prize and the thanks of the Tula City Soviet and the City Party Committee.

Comrade Kalinin: What is your approach to the pupils? Do you treat them as older children or as grownups?

Now you have spoken of education, pedagogies—what does that mean?

Comrade Gogina: I distinguish between the system of education in the ordinary schools and in the Labor Reserves schools. There is a great difference, since our pupils are being directly trained to become workers.

Comrade Kalinin: I am afraid you are making adults of them before their time, depriving them of all that is inherent in youth. You, as a pedagogue, ought to sense that. Tell me, do they retain the fervor of youth or not?

Comrade Gogina: I think they do. For example, in our Trade School No. 3 there is quite a good choir of sixty voices, defense circles, dramatic circles and so forth.

Comrade Kalinin: There's a war on now, we need people who are plucky and daring, and you don't get that by organizing choirs. Circles of different kinds are, of course, a good thing, but we do not want our children to feel that they are in a monastery—children should be plucky and vivacious.

The education of the youth is a complicated matter, and the main thing in this regard is the following: on the one hand, the children must be guided along a definite path, and, on the other hand, you must take care not to paralyze the volitive aspect of their character; they are at the age when you can break that side of their character. Herein lies a great danger, and you must see to it that they do not become tedious people who try to be adults before their time.

Comrade Ivanova (Instructor of the Department of Trade and Industrial Training Schools of the Gorky Regional Committee of the Komsomol): A big trade school in our region was wrecked during a German air raid.

Comrade Kalinin: And were any of the boys hurt?

Comrade Ivanova: No, the boys did not suffer, but some of them left the school after the bombing.

Comrade Kalinin: Tell us about this incident. The boys left the school; now what did you do about it?

Comrade Bushuyev (Assistant Chief in charge of political mass work, Gorky Region Labor Reserves Administration): With the help of the school director, his political assistant and the instructors, the bulk of the pupils came back. The youngsters themselves put the building and equipment into order again. Now this trade school is one of the best in the region.

Comrade Kalinin: And what was your political estimation of the fact that the youngsters scattered; and how did you explain the matter to them, how did you approach it?

Comrade Bushuyev: First and foremost we told them that Hitler was responsible for the bombing just as for the entire war. We spoke in detail to the pupils of the need to repair the school with our own resources, of the fact that we must train personnel for industry.

Comrade Kalinin: That was not enough. You should have called the boys together and told them: "Shame on you for being such cowards! Here you

go and run away, what sort of defenders of your country are you going to be? Your fathers are fighting the fascists, and you run off to the villages. We thought you would save the school, and you run away. What sort of heroes are you?"—Yes, you should have said to them: "You are cowards, you have disgraced yourselves before the whole of Russia: one airplane came over, and you took to your heels."

After all, you must approach boys as boys. Had I been the school director, I would have said to them: "This is a fine state of things: here I was left alone, and you all took to your heels. And we thought you were brave fellows; we wanted to give you rifles and machine guns, and you go and run away. I am wondering now whether it is worthwhile opening the school for you. Why should I teach cowards here who make off at the first sign of danger?" That is how you should have shamed them. And then you should have said: "Come on then, to make it safer for ourselves, let us dig some trenches and get everything ready in case there is an air raid."

The boys were frightened, of course, and took to their heels, but surely each one of them wants to be brave. I'll wager that ninety-nine out of a hundred want to be brave.

It is your job to train these youngsters, and it is easy to shame them. You could have done that, had you put it roughly the way I did: "You ran off and left an old man like me by myself, without any help." This would have made them ashamed of themselves and forced them to think over their behavior. That is how agitation should be conducted.

And if, let us say, three girls had remained behind, they ought to have been held up as an example to others, you should have said: "Now these three brave girls stayed behind, but the rest ran away." Instead you launched into a public oration, uttered general phrases, and missed the main point, the point that contains the politics of it. And it's the same in every matter!

I want to remind you that you have to train not only people who know their profession, but also fighters, Soviet citizens.

Comrade Ivanova: We are in a bad state as regards the growth of the Komso-mol organizations. We have one of the backward schools, Trade School No. 3, attached to the Sormovo Plant.

Comrade Kalinin: Why is it backward?

Comrade Ivanova: Much depends on the leadership, but the director of the school has been changed three times. The Komsomol organization could not do anything, and there was also no political assistant to the director for a long time. At that time the student body came from the Orel and Tula regions, and out of one thousand five hundred of them, only eighty-seven were Komsomol members; of course, they could not do much.

Comrade Kalinin: Tell me, do you arrange parties, dances?

Comrade Ivanova: There is dancing after meetings held to sum up the results for the month.

Comrade Kalinin: Have the pupils got musical instruments?

Comrade Ivanova: Yes, they have.

Comrade Kalinin: You should arrange parties so the youngsters might have some recreation, a chance to dance.

Comrade Ivanova: We arranged a conference with an attendance of four hundred, and invited old workers as well as young workers who had finished trade schools. The old workers spoke of how they used to work before the revolution and how they are working now, and of the conditions provided for pupils now.

The best pupils described how they had achieved successes. Fifteen-year-old apprentice Byelov did a job in five days, fulfilling his plan two hundred and fifteen percent. The conference was followed by a concert and dancing.

Comrade Kalinin: Why did I ask you about dancing? Again I want to tell you that you should not make old people out of youngsters artificially. I say that you should not avoid arranging dances, because; dancing teaches people to move gracefully. A person who can dance will carry himself properly and be light on his feet. Our young people like dancing. I can tell that by observing the young people I meet, and if they like it there is no need to put an artificial brake on it. Only you must see to it that they do not spend all their time at it, but that dancing should be a relaxation.

Comrade Galiulina (Assistant Chief, Labor Reserves Administration of the Tatar Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic): We have eleven trade schools,

two railway schools and twenty-three industrial training schools, with an enrollment of sixteen thousand young people.

We attach great importance to the development of amateur art among our young people. Our tutors have done a good deal of work in organizing singing, dancing and musical circles; they organized a review of the best amateur art-groups of the leading trade and industrial training schools and did quite a good job of conducting it.

The youngsters are very fond of singing, recitation and other forms of amateur art.

Comrade Maximov (Assistant Chief in charge of political mass work, Leningrad Labor Reserves Administration) described how the pupils and members of the staffs of trade, railway and industrial training schools of the city of Leningrad study and work, and how they help the military authorities in defending the city against the German fascist invaders. The pupils helped to restore tram service in Leningrad, and to repair the Palace of Pioneers and some other buildings in the city.

Mikhail Ivanovich Kalinin also heard a number of functionaries of Labor Reserves Administrations and Komsomol organizations of the Bashkir Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic, Molotov Region, Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic, Chelyabinsk and Yaroslavl Regions, Komi Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic, Archangel Region, Kalinin Region, Moscow City and Moscow Region.

Speech By Mikhail Ivanovich Kalinin

Comrades! The education of the pupils of the Labor Reserves training schools is a very difficult and delicate matter, and the approach to it a most difficult one. What is more, the very task of training state labor reserves is a complicated one.

Firstly, we have to train more or less skilled workers; secondly, we want the young generation of the working class to be brought up in the Soviet spirit; thirdly, the matter is complicated by the present situation—by the war.

The pupils of the Labor Reserves training schools have to fill a great many state orders to meet the needs of the front, something that they did

not do in normal times. Problems connected with food, clothing, footwear have become complicated matters, and the war of itself places the Labor Reserves organization in quite a difficult position. Of course, under such circumstances it is considerably more difficult to train workers according to all the rules.

The war is now at its height, and although the pupils of the Labor Reserves system are not being mobilized, it is quite possible that some of them will have to fight. And that is why it is quite natural that they should be diverted from their immediate work to military training. In normal times, in peacetime, we would devote all our attention to acquiring knowledge, learning professions. In the present circumstances, however, we are in duty bound to conduct military training in all schools. We are training skilled workers, but, if need be, they should know how to fight. And it would be an unpardonable error on our part if we failed to equip them with military knowledge. That is why I consider that our people in Leningrad are doing the right thing under the circumstances in organizing their pupils on a military footing, even though it means difficulties for the youngsters.

It is our duty to train young workers with a good knowledge of their professions, and at the same time to train Soviet citizens, fighters, so that our young people should understand their duty to their country, learn their trades with greater persistence and in less time, and, while undergoing training, supply larger quantities of arms and ammunition to the Red Army, that they should acquire military knowledge and develop physically.

Our native land will not forget the valor of its sons who are now fighting the Nazi invaders at the fronts of the Patriotic War.

It will also remember with gratitude the valiant work done by our boys and girls studying at the trade, railway and industrial training schools, who are helping the front and striving to study and work as well as they possibly can in the rear.

Speaking of education, it should be said that the practical approach to it is a very difficult one. It requires great skill on the part of the tutors,

The Labor Reserves schools enroll people who differ from one another and come from different regions and from different sections of the population—boys and girls from town and country. It is clear that these people are not alike, and you must try to bring them up so that they should all develop equally. That is no easy job. What is more, we must always bear in mind that we are dealing with youngsters who are little more than children, with all

their childish habits. True, the war and the entire environment are making them more adult than they were in peacetime, but all the same we want to preserve their youthful inclinations as long as possible. No doubt, the whole of this body of questions is very difficult to solve in practice.

Read world pedagogical literature. It contains a wealth of varied experience in the education of people. Some have sought to prove that children can best be educated in towns, while others have disputed this and claimed that child education should take place in the countryside. Many other proposals and claims have been made on this issue. However, it cannot be said that any thoroughly elaborated and established system of education exists. The system of education today should be different from what it was, say, three years ago. Formerly, if one may put it that way, we trained intellectuals, and not people of physical labor. I personally consider such education to be wrong, since, after all, the bulk of the population in our country is engaged in physical labor. And so we were confronted with the problem of what to do to ensure that your young people should be adept at physical work and at the same time intellectually developed.

Now we can lay somewhat more emphasis on developing physical strength, on inculcating working habits, on training the young people to be enduring in the face of all kinds of hardships, thus enabling them, by passing through a series of trials, to steel themselves. Just as we employ physical exercises, all sorts of sports, in order to steel ourselves physically, so by means of enforcing strict discipline and inculcating working habits we should steel our young people to enable them the more easily to endure all the difficulties that may befall a person during his lifetime.

Because of this it is now necessary that our young people should be prepared to overcome difficulties and that they should acquire a love for work, so that after going through this schooling they should regard work as something they cannot do without,

A considerable part of the workers in our factories regard their work in industry as a lifetime occupation; if they were to lose their jobs, they would feel that life had lost all meaning. When such people grow old or are compelled by sickness to give up work, they seem to lose half of themselves because they are accustomed to work, love their trade and, when they lose it, they are deprived, as it were, of their support in life. We want these qualities of love for work to be inculcated in some degree on our young workers.

When comrades who spoke here wanted to make the education of the youngsters the sole responsibility of the manual instructors, it goes without saying that they were wrong. If you were to ask me which manual instructor I considered to be better—the one who has a pedagogical approach, but a poor knowledge of his craft, or the one who is rather weak in pedagogics but has a very good knowledge of his trade, I would, if I were the director of a trade school or an industrial training school, prefer the craftsman who is weak as a pedagogue but highly skilled in his own sphere.

Why would I do so? Because the craftsman's influence will only be effective when his pupils feel that they are acquiring a real knowledge of the trade from him. The pupils will always profit from such an instructor. Here is an example. Formerly there were in the universities reactionary-minded professors who, however, had a very good knowledge of their subjects and could expound them ably. Their lectures were always well-attended, although the students knew that these professors were reactionaries. There were also professors of another kind—gasbags who knew how to talk and readily indulged in liberal phrases. At their first lectures all the seats in the auditoriums were occupied, but later the serious students stopped attending because they learned nothing from them.

The same is true of our manual instructors. If they have a good knowledge of their trades and are able to pass on their knowledge and professional skill to their pupils, they will fulfill their role.

As regards the point that both the craftsmen and the charwomen have to play their part in educating the youngsters, this should not be taken literally, but in the sense that by their conduct, by the exemplary fulfillment of their duties, they instill in the pupils habits of work, neatness and order. If the charwoman looks after the building properly and sees to it that the children do not make a mess, and scolds them if they do, she teaches them definite habits, and her influence on the pupils will be a positive one. But she does that because the school director demands that she fulfill the duties with which she is charged.

It is very difficult to find a good fitter or turner and a good pedagogue combined in one person. It was correctly pointed out here that there are craftsmen who adopt a fatherly attitude to the children, but the reason for that, in my opinion, is this: it is difficult to imagine a good craftsman who does not love his job and adopts an indifferent, careless attitude towards it. Such a case would rather be the exception than the rule. A good craftsman

whose very psychology is bound up with his trade tries to pass on his knowledge to his pupils, and he cannot help looking after them in all respects. That is the essence of vocational training of young people.

Only a craftsman who is skilled in his particular sphere, who knows his job to perfection, can help his pupils to master the job. We must instill a feeling of professional pride in our pupils, and that can be done by a good craftsman, one who knows and loves his job. The rest of the staff must only fulfill their duties well. If they do so, they will thereby indirectly help in the education of the youngsters inasmuch as their example will teach the children to be neat and accurate and inculcate certain habits upon them. They constitute an environment that influences those who come in contact with it.

As I have said, we want to make our young people both good workers who will consider work in industry a lifetime calling and good Soviet citizens. That is where the responsibility of the political leaders of the Labor Reserves system lies; they should systematically foster among our young workers an appreciation of the fact that they are members of the working class of the Soviet country, that this class is the leading class in Soviet society, that it sets the keynote for the whole of our life. Now it is these fundamental ideas that should be imbued in our young people by the political leaders, first and foremost.

The Soviet State is a state of workers and peasants. There is no other such state in the world, and we are its defenders, its representatives. That is the kind of propaganda our political leaders have to conduct day in and day out. How successful this propaganda will be will depend on their ability.

I have been asked here how the role of the Komsomol in the Labor Reserves system should be regarded.

The Labor Reserves system is a state organization.

The Komsomol, of course, plays and should play a considerable role, inasmuch as the mass of Labor Reserves trainees are of Komsomol age. If there are few Komsomol members among them, it is simply due to our own negligence; generally speaking, in two years' time some ninety percent of them ought to be in the Komsomol. But does that mean that the Komsomol ought to play the part of administrative and political leader in the trade and industrial training schools?

Of course not.

The Komsomol is a political organization which shapes the political outlook of the youth, directs it into a definite Party channel, and prepares people for Party membership.

But perhaps the educational aspect should be in the hands of the Komsomol? I think not. It is possible, of course, that my radical views on this issue may not please the Komsomol, just look at the matter yourselves. Our schools and universities are made up in their entirety of people of Komsomol age, but is the Komsomol in charge of them? The Komsomol helps in shaping these students politically, makes them more conscious, assigns them to independent Komsomol organizations, organizations that to a certain degree are independent of state bodies, but the schools and universities are under the direction of the latter.

Who is responsible for the education of the labor reserves? You, Comrade Moskatov,³⁸ are responsible for the education of the labor reserves, and the Komsomol helps you. For any faults in this regard the government will call you to account, and not the Komsomol. The Komsomol too would probably be told: "You also, dear comrades, are working badly." The leaders of the Komsomol, however, would not be removed from their posts for that, whereas the Chief of the Labor Reserves Administration would.

That is to say, it is the State Labor Reserves bodies that are in charge of this work.

Let us now consider who should directly engage in the education of the young people in the labor reserves. I have just told you how difficult is the work of the political leader and educator. This work should be done by experienced people with a good theoretical training. Generally speaking, people of mature age, with experience, are preferable for this work. It should be done by Komsomol members who, if one may say so, have outgrown the Komsomol outlook. It seems to me that people of more mature years will be more suitable for this job. If the youngsters are approached by somebody of approximately their own age, they will not have any particular confidence in him. They will say: "You don't know any more than we do." Youngsters look up to people with authority, and we must instill in them a respect for authority.

It seems to me that the Komsomol organizations should assist in this regard, and infuse some fervor into those leaders who, though possessing

³⁸ *P. G. Moskatov*. Head, Chief Administration of Labor Reserves, Council of People's Commissars of the USSR. He later became Vice-Minister of Labor Reserves.—*Trans.*

experience and knowledge, yet have grown somewhat lukewarm in life. I even think that an experienced tutor will be able to get closer to the youth. Of course he will not play ball with the children or chase around with them. The crux of the matter is political influence, authority, the desire of the youth to acquire knowledge from him, and these are all very precious things not always possessed by teachers of the same age as the pupils. For one can always say to one's coeval: "Who are you to give orders to us, we're no more stupid than you are and know no less than you do." Here age itself commands attention. I do not want to say that we should not draw Komsomol members into this work at all, only I think that a person of mature age is better.

I believe that in the Labor Reserves schools the Komsomol should formally play the same part as it does in factories and offices; the role of the Komsomol is in fact enormous here, since it is the Party's assistant in the education of young workers.

The Komsomol should criticize shortcomings, put forward demands, to ensure that educational work is properly organized. If the Komsomol were to be given one or another share in administration, it would also have to bear the responsibility, whereas it ought to have a free hand. Nowhere is the Komsomol organization thought of so highly as in our country. I personally have an exceedingly high opinion of it, but there is no reason to assign to it functions for which it is not suited.

Cases of pupils leaving the schools without permission are the result of the lack of proper order. Of course things seem hard at first to the boy or girl from the countryside. Everything in a town scares them. I say that from my own experience. You feel as if you had landed in an entirely different world. Moreover, instead of the accustomed freedom, there is discipline here. And to get used to the factory itself you need time, and quite a lot of time too. Two months is not enough to get used to it, and at first you are simply afraid of everything. And when, to cap it all, there is bad organization, shortcomings of various kinds, lack of order, that makes it all the harder for the youngsters.

I think that the Labor Reserves schools in towns should have more pupils from among the urban population. That will facilitate your work. True, part of the urban youth thinks of other work, such as office work or bookkeeping, but good skilled workers can also be made of them. That is very important.

I understand all the difficulties connected with work in the Labor Reserves system, but the job you are doing is of very great importance to the state. Just think for a moment—we are training new contingents of young workers on whom the strengthening of the Soviet system will depend. And Comrade Stalin has repeatedly stressed that we cannot be indifferent to the way our working class is augmented. We want the best part of our population to enter its ranks, we want the working class in Soviet society to be at a high level of political and intellectual development.

A great task confronts you, a big job has been entrusted to you. If we cope with this task, we shall accomplish a great feat in the interests of our country.

I wish you success in your work!

Speech at a Celebration Meeting of Pupils and Personnel of Trade, Railway and Industrial Training Schools of Moscow on the Occasion of the Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution³⁹

November 2, 1942

Comrades! Your meeting is devoted to the twenty-fifth anniversary of the establishment of Soviet power. Twenty-five years have passed since the Soviet system was established in our country. It is an event of unique import in human history, an event the like of which, or even approximating which, history has not known.

On the twenty-fifth anniversary of the October Revolution we are celebrating the liberation of the working people of our country from the system of reaction and exploitation. You should be clear as to what that means, because you know about the old system only by hearsay, from reading books or talking with people. And people can have different things to say about it. If you meet someone who used to be a rich man, or someone who has been de-kulakized, he will praise the old system. But if you meet a former poor peasant, worker, middle peasant, office worker, he will tell you of the hard lot of the workers, peasants and urban poor in pre-revolutionary, tsarist Russia.

The Great October Revolution effected a radical change in the conditions of life of the working people of our country. Now we have the Soviet system.

A great many fine young people perished in the struggle for the Soviet system. Young people are fighting for the Soviet system now, too, and not only directly at the front, but also in the rear—in the factories and plants.

This year we are celebrating our holiday engaged in a bitter war against the German fascists. When we celebrated this holiday in peacetime, we used to do so for two days running, our working day was shorter, our tables were more abundantly laden. Now we are celebrating it at a time when many of our comrades, Soviet youths, are on enemy territory where they are enduring great trials; some of these young men have perished or are dying now at the

³⁹ Originally published in *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, November 12, 1942.

hands of the fascist monsters. Such is the time in which we are celebrating the twenty-fifth anniversary of Soviet power.

Our labor reserves—if we take the trade and industrial training schools—were established before the war. Wherein lies their significance? In ensuring that our industry will always be able to augment the ranks of its workers with people possessing production skill.

It is not an easy matter to train a skilled worker. It takes two to three years, and to become a highly skilled worker requires three to four years. It is not absolutely essential to spend all this time in the training school. To learn to work well, a person must acquire his basic skill at a school and complete his training later, on the job.

You will be called upon to work as skilled workers at our factories and plants. Many of you may involuntarily wonder whether that means that your careers are already settled. Today it is the trade school, the industrial training school, and then we will become factory workers. Some of you may have doubts as to whether that is for the best. Wouldn't it be better to work in an office, where it is perhaps cleaner and easier?

But is it better?

I must give you a definite answer to that, since I have spent thirty years in factories and now twenty years in an office (*stir in the hall*), and can say something about both kinds of work. Where is it better? Undoubtedly in the factory, in the workshops of a plant.

Of course, it is a bit terrifying at first when you come from a training school workshop into the huge departments of a plant. The first period, the first month or two, will seem difficult to you. But then the factory atmosphere, the work itself, takes an increasing hold on you. After a year or two of work, you become attached to the plant. No work in an office can compare with work in a factory as regards the inner satisfaction it gives you, for here you see, directly feel, the results of your labor.

To enter a plant with confidence a person must know his trade well. When I was an apprentice, each one of us wanted to work better than the other. Everybody wanted to be good at his trade; if he was a turner, he wanted to be a good turner; if he was a fitter, then a good fitter. Work in a factory is interesting, it carries you away, and now it is far more interesting than it used to be—the conditions are different.

Formerly everything was done by hand. That was very important, but however skillful you may be with your hands, lathes, machines are

better. There used to be few of these. But now our factories and plants are equipped with an enormous quantity of machinery. This makes work in our plants more interesting, but, on the other hand, it requires more knowledge and skill.

To leave school with a poor knowledge of your trade means that you will not enjoy the respect of your comrades. If you do not know your trade, you will not have the opportunity to do any particularly important work. Important jobs are entrusted only to those who work well. That means you must know your trade. You must be able to read blueprints. In the future many of you will be brigade leaders, you will install or assemble machinery, or work as fitters or toolmakers. Every self-respecting worker should be able to read blueprints, and you should learn this while still at school.

It is your duty to know machines, preferably, to know them thoroughly. Work in a plant is mass-production work. On the surface it is monotonous, but it requires keen attention and a knowledge of machinery. Mass-production work has its specific features. What do they consist of? This kind of work requires deftness and speed. You make one part after another; sometimes it takes no more than a minute to produce a part. That means you have to learn to work rapidly, rhythmically. In the trade schools some pupils do one part of the work while others do another. You should learn to perform all the types of operations you come across.

I would like you as soon as possible to develop professional pride, and that is a lofty pride. If your fathers were good workers, you should at least be no worse than they.

You are now preparing to enter a factory, an industrial plant. Learning a factory trade does not prevent you from working in any other sphere in the future. A plant does not bar the way to further development; on the contrary, it opens the gates wide to public, political, administrative, and, if you wish, scientific work.

You should be experts at your jobs. The workers of our country cannot be worse at their jobs than the workers of foreign countries. Soviet workers, our young workers, should be more, not less, skilled than European or American workers. Now that is something to remember, to carry into life.

Secondly. Formerly it was among the workers that the Communists were mainly to be found. There was no Komsomol as yet, but there were young people who were close to the Communists.

For people of your age we have the Komsomol organization. It is an organization that educates the youth politically, instructs them. And I would like all the young people sitting here in front of me to become members of the Komsomol. There may be passive people too among you; nevertheless I would like the majority of the pupils of trade and industrial training schools to want to join the Komsomol.

In our country political consciousness of people is a very important factor, and it is our goal that each person in our country should be politically conscious.

The Komsomol is the threshold of the Party. The Komsomol prepares young people for membership in the Party, enhances their political consciousness. It accustoms them to public activity. For you will work as part of society; will not be isolated in your work from the people, but will engage in the common task. Machines are not made by individuals. Hundreds of people take part in producing them.

Work itself impels one to take part in public life. I would like you to spend your time not only in production, directly on the job, producing the articles we need; I would like your spare time to be spent and your spiritual development to proceed in an organized fashion, in a Komsomol environment. It is for this that the Komsomol, the organizer of the youth, exists. It will fill that aspect of your life which is not directly connected with your work, it will, if one may so put it, make for a full-blooded spiritual life.

There is a war on now, a cruel and bloody war. The Germans want to tear our country to pieces, to trample our people into the dust. You, comrades, are not only studying, you are helping our men at the front. In the schools and at factories you are engaged in filling war orders. It is necessary that you fill these orders well.

You are not at the front itself, but, comrades, you are the youth, and I think you will not be the hindmost in the struggle our people are waging against the fascists. I think you should not yield to your elders as regards that quality of youth, speed. On the contrary, you, the youth, should hold first place. You should be first both in production and at the front. You should say: "Let us be as good as our fathers, let us show how we, the youth, who have only just entered industry, can work."

Let me wish you this ability to work, and that you should display it in future years to the full. (*Prolonged applause.*)

Introductory Article to the Book *The Komsomol in Battle for Our Country*⁴⁰

The people of our country, and not of ours alone, are, by the will of fascism, experiencing severe trials. The German obscurantists imagined themselves the makers of world history, capable of turning it in reverse at their pleasure. It has fallen to our country, to our people, to defend the progressive development of mankind against the barbarians of the twentieth century.

On July 3, 1941, J. V. Stalin, Chairman of the State Committee of Defense, said in a radio address to the Soviet people, army and navy:

In consequence of this war which has been forced upon us, our country has come to death grips with its bitterest and most cunning enemy—German fascism. Our troops are fighting heroically against an enemy heavily armed with tanks and aircraft. Overcoming numerous difficulties, the Red Army and the Red Navy are self-sacrificingly fighting for every inch of Soviet soil. The main forces of the Red Army are coming into action armed with thousands of tanks and airplanes. The men of the Red Army are displaying unexampled valor. Our resistance to the enemy is growing in strength and power. Side by side with the Red Army, the entire Soviet people is rising in defense of our native land.

It is quite natural that the defense of our native land has fallen primarily on the youth since the regular army is made up mainly of young men. As the most active part of the population, the youth, the Komsomol, fill the army's ranks and take part in the partisan units.

The partisan form of warfare follows logically from the very nature of the Patriotic War of the Soviet people against German fascism, which forced on us its so-called total war with all its devastation, indescribable cruelty and orgy of violence and outrages directed against the peaceful population of our country.

⁴⁰ Originally published: *The Komsomol in Battle for Our Country. A Collection of Articles*, Molodaya Gvardia Publishing House, 1942, pp. 3-6.

Thus, the issue is one of life and death for the Soviet State, of life and death for the peoples of the USSR, of whether the peoples of the Soviet Union shall be free or fall into slavery.⁴¹

Engels, in an article dealing with the Franco-German war of 1870, wrote:

Wherever a people did energetically carry out this irregular resistance, the invaders very soon found it impossible to carry out the old-fashioned code of blood and fire.⁴²

Engels understood perfectly well the predatory essence of capitalism, but he did not foresee the kind of barbarity that has been displayed by the German fascists, who have added to blood and iron mountains of filth. And it is characteristic that the heavier the blows they receive, the more abominable are their actions.

The historical development of mankind is marked by contradictions—periods of the revolutionary accumulation of molecular changes are followed by international crises.

The present war is a crucial point in our history. It will be closely studied, it will exert great influence on the cultural and patriotic development of our youth. The people will create legends about it, the heroism of the fighters will become the subject of songs; dramatists will draw themes for their plays from this period, as from a rich treasure-trove. But all this is a matter of the future, all this will be the affair of our descendants. At present, our people, and primarily the youth, the Komsomol, are participants in a great living drama which for ferocity and the human effort invested in bloody battle has no precedent.

The Soviet youth and the Komsomol as a whole, the conscience of each Komsomol member in particular, are faced with the issue: our country is in danger, barbarians are trampling our soil underfoot, they are making a mockery of everything we loved, everything we revered, bespattering it with evil-smelling filth. The enemy seeks to tear the human soul out of us and to turn us into draft animals, into bond-slaves.

The alternative facing us is either to sacrifice and fight for our freedom, or else to submit without a murmur. Our people, and first and foremost our youth, the Komsomol, full of wrath and hatred for the fascist enemy, have

⁴¹ Excerpt from a speech by J. Stalin broadcast over the radio on July 3, 1941.

⁴² K. Marx and F. Engels. *Works*, Vol. XIII, Part 2, p. 174.

taken the irrevocable decision to fight, to fight to a finish, to fight until the enemy is utterly defeated. And indeed, there is no arm of the forces, no form of struggle employed in the Patriotic War in which the Komsomol has not played its part, in which it has not been in the front ranks.

Our Komsomol organization is relatively young, but its first cadres were forged during the Civil War in defense of Soviet power. Guided by the Lenin-Stalin Party, they were forged during the years of the battle to industrialize our country, during the collectivization of the peasant farms, in the struggle against opportunist, traitorous elements in the ranks of our Party and of the Komsomol. All this enabled the Komsomol to accumulate the positive traditions of steadfastness on matters of principle and staunchness in defense of the proletarian state.

Now we are imperiled by the external enemy. The war against fascism is assuming an increasingly fierce character, and Komsomol members are taking part in it *en masse*. And the heroism being displayed in battle by Komsomol members is of a mass character. There is hardly a single military unit that has not cited the courage and gallantry displayed by Komsomol members, and this, in its turn, strengthens the glorious fighting traditions of the Komsomol as a whole, renders courage and supreme devotion in battle traditional and binding, as it were, for the rank-and-file Komsomol member too. Therein lies the essence of cultivating, consolidating glorious fighting traditions.

The present collection is a modest work containing far from all the facts concerning the heroism in action, the supreme devotion to country, displayed by those who, fully conscious of the justice of their deeds, suffered all the tortures one can possibly imagine and went to their death, firmly confident that fascism would be defeated, with the proud cry on their lips: "We die for our homeland, for the happiness of our people!"

I would like the reader to take this book not as a finished work of literary art, but as a simple comradely record of the wonderful deeds performed by our Komsomol members at the fronts of the Patriotic War. When our men die the death of the brave, their comrades with their own hands erect modest memorials over the graves of the heroes. These monuments are simple ones, and so are the inscriptions on them. But it is hardly likely that a single artist invests as much love in his work as do the men at the front in the tombs into which they lay to rest the fallen in battle, those who have died the sacred death of the brave. The people will preserve these memorials, tend

them with loving care as a tribute to their warriors. The youth will make pilgrimages to them, and there will ring out the triumphant songs of the free Soviet people and of its youth, of the Komsomol.

The authors of this book are setting up at the height of battle, memorials to our heroes, memorials that as yet are simple and have not yet fully measured up to all artistic standards. They cannot, for the time being, do more: as fighters they must advance together with our troops who are liberating our native land.

Together with our warriors they rightly consider that the best memorials they can raise now to our heroes and heroines are pyramids of enemy corpses.

For us Shura Chekalin, Liza Chaikina, and Zoya Kosmodemyanskaya, known among the partisans as Tanya, are not only heroes: they are the children of living mothers, brothers and sisters of living brothers and sisters. They are known throughout the Komsomol organization, they are near and dear to us, and their heroic death at the height of this hard struggle evokes in us desire to wreak our vengeance on the enemy.

I would like to see this volume widely circulated among the broad masses of the population, and particularly among the youth, among Komsomol members. In the features of the living heroes described in this book the reader will see the features of the new, Soviet man; he will see how rich our Komsomol is in people who place the happiness of the Soviet people, the ideals of our Party, above all else.

It is for this happiness of the people, for the Party of Lenin-Stalin, that our youth, the Komsomol, is sacrificing its blood, drop by drop. Who, then, can doubt after this that the enemy will be punished according to his deserts, that we shall wrest victory from him in battle?

Such is the message of *The Komsomol in Battle for Our Country*.

The Word of the Agitator at the Front⁴³

April 28, 1943

Every agitator strives to conduct talks on a warm, friendly footing. What do we mean by this? I know that agitators frequently go to the men expressly to have a heart-to-heart talk with them. Yet the very fact that the agitator sets himself such an aim in advance robs the talk of the desired intimate warmth. If, however, he were to drop in on the men for a cup of tea, get talking with them about one thing or another, and then touch on some question of interest to them, the talk would assume a really informal character.

Another example. If a person is guilty of some offense and you give him a paternal dressing down, lecture him, and then say: "All right, then, I'll tell nobody about this, but bear in mind that if it happens again, I won't be able to hide it"—that will also be the friendly, informal approach. But when you set out with the special purpose of being cordial, you almost never succeed.

When I say informal conversation, I have in mind people not feeling themselves constrained in any way, discussing freely with you everything that interests them, and not feeling that the agitator has come for a definite purpose. It is common knowledge that agitators have many assignments covering special themes, which they also have to deal with. But in informal talks about which we are speaking now the theme crops up by itself, as it were.

You should try to get people to exchange views, to get them arguing about things, with yourself as a sort of judge who will decide which of them is correct.

Informality of a conversation does not mean that it need not be directed along certain channels. That it should be, but in a way that people should not get the feeling that you have come to them on a definite assignment.

It will be quite legitimate, however, for you to come to the men and say: "I have come today to conduct a talk on such and such a theme." For you cannot base all your agitational work on informal talks alone. But whatever the theme you talk about, you must hammer away at the one point that

⁴³ Speech at a discussion with agitators working at the front.

Originally published: *The Word of the Agitator at the Front*, Publishing House of the People's Commissariat of Defense, 1943, pp. 15-24.

we have to smash the Germans, and to accomplish that we must do all that is possible, and even the impossible.

The very form of the talk depends on the situation.

If the audience is a big one, it can take the form of a lecture or a meeting. If you come to a dugout, you can give your talk the form of answers to questions. But if you want the men to obtain a more comprehensive idea of some particular question, you can limit yourself to this question alone and tell your listeners that you will discuss only this theme with them and deal with other questions later.

I would like to draw your attention to the point that the agitator should guard against making it appear that he knows more and is cleverer than the people around him. My experience as propagandist and agitator extends over many years, and I know that if people notice, in however slight a degree, that the agitator puts on airs, considers himself cleverer than they are, such an agitator is done for, he will not inspire confidence. You must talk to the Red Army men as to people with a good grasp of things. And if any one of them says he does not understand something, you can always come back at him: "Why pretend you don't know? What have you got on your shoulders, a head of cabbage? I can see you understand it all no worse than I do. You're just trying to be clever." You must not take a supercilious attitude towards people. If someone says about a soldier, "He's a greenhorn, he does not know a thing," you should answer: "We know these greenhorns, just wait and you'll see what a fighter he'll make. You people have already been at the front, you know your way about. Well, he'll be like that, too." If you approach people this way, they will respect you.

You can be forgiven much, but no one will ever forgive you for being swell-headed, and what is most important, nobody will think you clever. Suppose, for example, that you learn that a certain soldier who has been at the front for a long time has not yet killed a single German. You can approach this fact in different ways. One agitator will begin to reproach him, another will remind him that others have already killed several Germans each. I, however, would put it roughly like this:

"Well, I suppose not every Red Army man can kill a German; if everybody had been killing them, we would have wiped out all the Germans long ago. Still it would be better if all our men were killing them. War is war. The Germans want to destroy us, and we want to do the same to them. That is why every soldier has to try at all costs to kill the enemy."

An agitator should be truthful. Do not paint rosy pictures to the men, but show them things as they are, do not be afraid to show the difficulties, for you are dealing with mature, intelligent people.

The most difficult thing in agitational work is to learn to speak properly. At first glance it would seem that there is nothing remarkable about speaking, for people begin to talk from the age of two! And yet it actually is an important and difficult matter. Where does the difficulty lie?

An agitator has to convey his thoughts in a vivid manner so as to create an impression, and precisely the kind of impression he wants. At the same time you have to express your thoughts briefly because you have little time. Your ideas should be clear to your hearers and understood by each. All this is very difficult.

As regards language, you should learn from the classics. Take Turgenev. Where else will you find anything like the description he gives of the appearance of his heroes? Suppose any of you were to be asked to describe his own wife. Would you find the right words to do so? Not everybody can do it, however well he might know those who are near to him. He would use general phrases. But of the agitator something more than that is demanded: he must be able to give colorful descriptions.

The all-important thing for an agitator is his language. You talk with the men about things they know. Consequently, they will be interested in what you say only if you talk about these things well and vividly. I do not say "eloquently," because some of our people often allow themselves to be carried away by phrases, imagining that it is in very good taste to do so, whereas actually it is very bad to spout stock phrases. I know of agitators who can talk for three hours at a stretch, but when they have finished, their audiences retain nothing in their heads except the memory of some exclamations, because there were no ideas in the speeches. Remember that you are addressing soldiers, plain men who have fought their way across thousands of kilometers and have seen many distressing sights; to offer them general, and what is more, flowery phrases is like putting a knife to their throats. They want the agitator to expound definite ideas clearly and briefly. And what is more, it never hurts to repeat good ideas. Never mind if, for example, somebody says: "Why are you always harping on digging in?" You just reply: "I'm going to keep on talking to you about it until you learn to dig trenches; I wouldn't like to see you lose your lives for nothing."

An agitator should be a developed person. He should read a lot and study hard. I would say that the agitator should devote all his spare time to reading. Read the works of our classical writers. Read the works of Lenin and Stalin. Learn to conduct agitation in the Stalin style. Comrade Stalin is a very good agitator. How well he talks to the people!

An agitator should always prepare his talks, even if he happens to be well educated, well read, and versed in military matters. After all, our knowledge is limited, and for that reason it is necessary to prepare thoroughly each time, using your knowledge to the maximum advantage. That is why I favor more frequent talks on specific themes, for they increase people's knowledge and discipline them.

But when you feel that the men have had enough of thematic talks, that they would prefer to have a plain chat, then go and have a cup of tea with them and have a heart-to-heart, informal talk.

You should, however, prepare yourself even for an informal talk, because during it you may be asked a great many questions. Do not evade answering or dodge a question that has been put to you. But don't be afraid, either, if you are unable to answer some question. Say frankly: "I don't know, I'll have to read up on the subject: if I find the answer, I'll tell you,"

Sometimes this problem is put: "Among our men, particularly the older ones, there are religious people who wear crosses and say their prayers, and the younger ones make fun of them." It should be remembered that we do not persecute anybody for his religion. We consider it a delusion and fight it by educational methods. Since considerable sections of the population are still under the influence of religion, and some people are deeply religious, you will not overcome it by scoffing at it. Of course, it is not so terrible if some of the young people get a laugh out of it; the important thing is that banter should not develop into mockery. That must not be permitted.

What should agitators pay special attention to now?

More than anything else they should popularize the need for organization. How is this to be done? Let us take the following simple example: It is dinner time, but the field kitchen is missing and has to be searched for. If you run into a situation like that you have a ready-made theme for a talk on organization. Discuss what steps should be taken to ensure that the field kitchen is always at hand on time, and how to arrange that. During such a talk it will not hurt to use some strong language about our Russian laxity,

which we still have to fight against. If I were an agitator I would spend ninety percent of my time dealing with this theme.

Our main defect is our complacency. We still are often careless and think: "Well, never mind, we'll manage somehow!" We all know that when a unit occupies a position, it should exert the maximum of effort to consolidate its lines and hold them, and during offensive action everything must be done to make it effective and to reduce losses and sacrifices to a minimum. Yet we frequently do these things haphazardly with poor results as a consequence. Complacency must be vigorously uprooted.

During the first period of the war we encountered many difficulties because we did not organize battles properly, whereas everything depends on their organization. All military men should be first-class organizers. Formerly many commanders thought that the command post was where battles had to be organized. Yet that is where the last stage of organization takes place. When a commander enters his command post during a battle he already reaps the results of his preparatory work.

I think it is very important to teach fighting men to be cautious. It will not do in frontline conditions to sit down to a meal in the open. A shell might hit the spot with disastrous consequences. Men would be killed and would have to be replaced. You, agitators, should conduct a very energetic struggle against those who adopt a negligent attitude toward danger.

You should also agitate for the development of military cunning and dexterity. I emphasize the word "cunning" because you have to deal with rank-and-file Red Army men, whose field of action is limited. You should impress on the men that they must give thought to their actions, try to do everything as well as possible, and whenever they can, to outwit the enemy. Now sniping, by the way, is valuable in that it accustoms people to give thought to their actions, develops in them the qualities of the hunter, so to speak. The sniper tries to kill the enemy, and vice versa. That is why the sniper must be equipped with the maximum of cunning: he has to be able to camouflage himself, he must possess a sharp eye and a firm hand. These qualities should be developed not only among snipers, but also among all our fighting men.

Pay attention to teaching the men to dig trenches. Our people sometimes try to dodge this work, particularly during an offensive. The men say: "Why dig trenches, seeing that we won't need them in a half an hour's time?" You, however, must impress on them that this work is always necessary, and

that even if the trench were not to be needed, work on it is a very necessary schooling in the kind of struggle we are waging.

I also consider that you should pay more attention to the wounded. The wounded need a warm word, sympathy, and here is where you can display thoughtfulness. A wounded soldier will always remember a kind word and will talk about it in a thousand different places. In this way, a word softly uttered will echo far and wide.

You should impress it upon the Red Army men that they should respect and honor the dead. What is the attitude of the people towards the dead? When someone dies, those around him speak in whispers. There must be due respect for the fallen, and this is something that you, agitators, should introduce. I have written to the Chairmen of Executive-Committees of Soviets asking them to see to it that all common graves are put into proper order, and that this work should be entrusted to the Young Pioneers. In your units you should see to it that burials are properly conducted, and that mounds are built up over the graves. Of course, when the army is advancing this is not always possible, but surely there are agitators in the second echelons too. You as agitators must see to it that as far as possible the funerals of Red Army men are given a ceremonial character. This will exercise an influence on the education of people and inculcate upon them love for the defenders of our native land.

An agitator must always be at the head of the masses, get them to follow his lead. Particularly great is the part played by the agitator in action. It sometimes happens that even a good unit, after suffering heavy losses, loses faith in its strength. At such moments the agitator can raise the spirits of the men and bring about a turn in the progress of the battle.

An agitator must always appraise the situation, bear in mind what kind of people he is working among.

You are dealing with fighters, disciplined people, but people who bear enormous burdens. This must be borne in mind as well as the fact that they differ as regards nationality, age and character. An agitator should take all these things into account.

A Single Family of Fighters⁴⁴

August 4, 1943

Comrades! It gives me great pleasure to meet Red Army agitators representing nearly all the nationalities of the USSR taking part in the Great Patriotic War.

This is a grim and bloody war. During the more than two years of war that have passed, many families have suffered losses. But we have no other way out than to fight. The issue is as follows: either we become bootblacks for the fascists, become their slaves, and go to our doom, or we fight for our freedom and independence.

When the German fascists began this war, they did not regard us as human beings, but called us cattle. That is how they used to think. Now, however, after the blows we have dealt them, the fascists are beginning to appreciate more and more what the Soviet Union really is. Formerly they used to consider all our men Russians, but now they have seen that not only the Russians, but also the Turkmenians, Kazakhs, Uzbeks, Azerbaijanians and so on are fighters, and good fighters to boot. Formerly the Germans imagined that the Ukrainians and Byelorussians would welcome them with open arms and rise up against the Russians. The other nationalities the Germans did not take into account at all.

The war has shown that the Soviet Union is a single, harmonious family of nations, that our unity is such as the world has never seen. Of course, you come across insignificant exceptions. There are individuals who agree to work as village elders or at some other jobs for the Germans, but they are isolated cases, and in such a big country as ours, of no significance whatsoever. Men of all the nationalities represented in the Red Army are defending their country selflessly, fighting splendidly, displaying supreme courage and heroism. This is something our enemies did not bargain for.

In our country everybody is taking part in the war. Under the tsarist system Azerbaijanians and the Central Asian peoples—Turkmenians, Uzbeks, Kazakhs, Kirghizians and others—did not fight, they were not called up for

⁴⁴ Speech at a discussion with agitators working at the front among men of non-Russian nationalities.

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service in the army. The tsarist government did not trust them and did not want to give them military training. You know that although war demands great sacrifices from the peoples it at the same time enables the male population to become adept in the use of weapons. And a people that can use weapons will not allow anybody to tread on its toes. That was why the tsarist government banned all these nationalities from the army, with the exception of a handful of kulaks and noblemen who to all intents and purposes were agents of the tsarist government and carried through its policy.

The Soviet Government has no reason to adopt such an attitude to the peoples who inhabit our territory. In our country all peoples are equal. And all the peoples of the Soviet Union, even those that were formerly considered to be very backward, are now taking part in the war, not to speak of the Georgians, Armenians and Tatars who took part in war even under the tsarist system.

Of course, it was no easy matter to accustom the population of the non-Russian national republics and regions to the idea of taking part in a war, bearing arms, serving in the army. Only the Soviet State could cope with that task.

We often refer to ourselves as internationalists, but not everybody understands what this means. Some think that if you call yourself an internationalist, you do not consider yourself a Russian, or an Uzbek, or a Kazakh. That is stupid. To be an internationalist means to respect all nationalities—that is the crux of the matter. Our teacher on the national question is Comrade Stalin, who has directed our national policy for many years. Already before the revolution, he was Lenin's adviser on this question. Comrade Stalin teaches us to respect all nationalities. If you treat all nationalities with respect, you are an internationalist, but if, for example, you are a Russian and consider that only that which is Russian is good, then you are a Russian jingo and not an internationalist. Your outlook is limited and you do not see further than your nose. The Stalin national policy has made it possible to rally all the peoples of our country to the Patriotic War; Stalin's policy makes all our peoples heroes, opens up the road to all talented people in our country.

Indeed, if a Soviet person, no matter what nationality he belongs to, has talent, he will make ever-increasing progress. You know how many splendidly trained officers of all nationalities there are in the Red Army now. Today they are lieutenants, young colonels, but after a while they will be generals and marshals. With us, promotion depends not on nationality, but on

ability and bravery. An unintelligent person, a poor fighter will not be promoted, while a fighting man or an officer who is talented, clever, and knows his job well, will rise very high, regardless of the nationality he belongs to. This principle is strictly applied by our Supreme Command. Nobody can say that Comrade Stalin gives preference to any particular nation. He is a father to all, he equally rewards and censures according to deserts, and promotes talented people of all nationalities.

I shall deal with one more important question, namely, that of the study of the Russian language by fighting men of non-Russian nationalities. It is extremely necessary. You cannot get along in the army without knowing the Russian language. Our military service regulations are drawn up in Russian; it is the language in which army orders are written and commands given. The Russian language serves as a medium for intercourse among all the peoples of the USSR. The Russian language is the language of Lenin. It is the language in which our leader, Comrade Stalin, addresses the Soviet people, the Red Army.

At first fighting men of non-Russian nationalities are bound to have a rather limited knowledge of Russian and they naturally will think in their native languages. Hence, if you want to say something to the men in a way that will move them, say it in their native language, and your audience will respond better to what you tell them. Their mother tongue will reach their hearts, convey all the nuances of your thoughts to them. That is why study of the Russian language does not release the agitator working among men of non-Russian nationalities from the obligation to use their native language. Study Russian, but find the way to the soldier's heart, particularly in the early period, by using his native language. It is very good indeed that our agitators are selected from the same nationalities to which the men belong.

Since the war began, all the peoples of our country have developed considerably. You, for example, have told us of Uzbeks asking how the cotton crop is coming along at home. But cotton is no longer the chief feature of Uzbekistan, it is only the chief agricultural product of that republic. Uzbekistan now possesses a huge industry. During the war numerous factories and mills have been transferred there, coal mines have been sunk, and new hydroelectric power stations are now functioning there. Now you can no longer say of Uzbekistan that it is famous only for its grapes and cotton. Today it is a republic with large-scale industry. Formerly there was

almost no working class there; now there are hundreds of thousands of workers in Uzbekistan.

The war demands great sacrifices—both material and human—of all our nationalities. On the other hand, all our peoples are growing ever more staunch, developing a civic sense, expanding their horizons; they are growing taller by a head, and, we may say, are emerging on the international arena. Indeed, picture to yourself what you will be like when you return home after we have smashed the Germans. You will return home as new people, world-famous people, I would say, people conscious of the direct part you are playing in making world history.

Agitators who spoke here correctly stated that each nationality should be approached in a particular way, because people of different nationalities have lived, and now live, under different conditions, and this leaves its imprint on them. For example, the peoples of the Caucasus and Transcaucasia have a very great respect for arms, and the presentation of weapons with due ceremony is of great significance to them. Among the Uzbeks old men are held in great esteem. The agitator must without fail take the national customs, manners and modes of life of the different peoples into account in his work.

However, I think there is also a common approach to all our peoples. You know that the agitator need not spend very much time with the soldier who fights well and keeps abreast of events. But to the soldier—whether he be Georgian, Kazakh, or Uzbek—who fights badly or is fainthearted, the agitator could say something like this: “Do you mean to say you don’t want us to take part in the war when all the other nationalities are fighting like lions? How can we stand aloof from the war? Do you really want people to think just because of you that all our people are cowards? Do you think it’ll be a good thing if our republic gets to be looked upon as a country whose people cannot fight and are unable to wage war and defend themselves? How after this can we look other peoples in the face, how shall we be able to go forward, to develop our culture? Are you the only one fighting in this war? Everybody is fighting now. What then do you want, not to fight? Do you want us to be enslaved? No, man, we won’t allow that. Better to die in battle, than return home branded as cowards or traitors. The war being fought now is not over some town or territory, it is not due to the Germans wanting to seize some frontier town which we refuse to give up. The war is on because the Germans are trying to turn us into slaves and to build up their world

dominion on our bones. From the territory they have seized they have driven off many Soviet people to forced labor in Germany. Very many of these people have died of starvation and inhuman toil. It is against all this that we are fighting. You can't say now that the war is on somewhere in the West and does not concern us."

When you speak to a person in his native language you can talk more freely, because he will understand everything properly. An Uzbek feels at home with Uzbeks, and a Kazakh with Kazakhs. If the men ask you: "Why do you tell us that and why do you use such strong language with us?" you can answer: "I'm an Uzbek (or a Kazakh) too, and I love my people no less than you do, that is why I talk this way."

Everybody, including the Russian, is proud of his nationality, and he cannot but be proud, for he is a son of his people! This point is of very great importance, and should always be borne in mind in agitational work. Imbue our people with Soviet patriotism, national pride, remind each soldier of the heroic traditions of his people, of its splendid epos, literature, of its great men, great captains and military leaders, fighters for the liberation of the masses of the people. That alone, however, is not enough. The national pride and patriotism of our people should be embodied in action on the field of battle. Each people has its national heroes. Let their number grow still greater. There is a war on, and as you know, war makes heroes. Make it your job to train brave, courageous warriors, help to develop cadres of Red Army sergeants and officers from among the men of non-Russian nationalities.

The peoples of the USSR consider—and correctly consider—the Russian people to be their elder brother. The heroic past of the Russian people, its national heroes and great men, should be well known to you too, and you should tell fighting men of non-Russian nationalities about them. This will bind all the peoples of our country still more closely together and strengthen friendship among them.

Friendship among the peoples should be strengthened not only on the basis of facts and events drawn from the past. At the front one can come across many splendid examples of friendship between fighting men of different nationalities. Popularize these examples, make them known to everybody. You agitators can do very much in this direction.

At the present time the war is taking a turn increasingly favorable to us. The credit for this belongs to our fighting men of all the nationalities of

our country. All our peoples, vying with one another in heroism, are fighting the enemy with self-sacrifice and courage.

Our Red Army is a single family of fighters in which all our peoples live together in firm, indestructible friendship. And friendship of the peoples, as Comrade Stalin has said, is the most precious thing of all the Bolshevik national policy has given us. This friendship is a reliable guarantee that we shall be victorious over the German fascist invaders.

Militant Aide of the Bolshevik Party on the Occasion of the Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the All-Union Leninist Young Communist League⁴⁵

October 1943

The Komsomol, and with it the entire Soviet youth, is celebrating the twenty-fifth anniversary of its foundation. A glorious path has been traversed by the Youth League. Our Komsomol has to its credit great historic services to our homeland. Born in battle for the Soviet system, the Komsomol in answer to the Party's call, fought heroically shoulder to shoulder with the older generation against the White-guards and interventionists in defense of the young Soviet republic.

During these twenty-five years the Youth League has gone through a good schooling. The Komsomol organizations have won lasting authority in all spheres of state, economic, cultural and educational activity. Wherever the energy of youth, youthful enthusiasm, self-sacrifice were required, Komsomol members were always in the forefront. Comrade Stalin said not without reason that

the Komsomol in our country has always stood in the front ranks of our fighters. I am not aware of it ever having lagged behind the events of our revolutionary life.⁴⁶

Lenin and Stalin teach us that the chief thing in every undertaking is to be able to find the main link by seizing which you set the entire chain in motion. Our Komsomol has learned to do this, and together with the Party, and under its guidance, it has solved tasks of the greatest importance in the up-building and strengthening of the Soviet Socialist State. Suffice it to recall the tremendous part played by the Komsomol and the rest of the youth in the rehabilitation of industry following the Civil War, and subsequently in the industrialization of the country, particularly in the Urals.

Hundreds of thousands of Komsomol members and of young people outside its ranks worked selflessly at the construction sites of the Magni-

⁴⁵ Originally published in *Pravda*, October 29, 1943.

⁴⁶ V. I. Lenin and J. Stalin, *About the Youth*, Party Publishing House, 1936, p. 192.

togorsk Iron and Steel Works, coal and ore mines and electric power stations. It was their hands that built the Stalingrad and Kharkov tractor plants and the Dnieper Hydroelectric Power Station. And, as a sort of souvenir for posterity, Komsomol members built a town bearing their name in a remote spot in the midst of an impenetrable forest on the banks of the majestic Amur River—the town of Komsomolsk, which has already become an industrial center of considerable and ever-growing importance in the Far East.

Equally great was the service rendered by the Komsomol in the collectivization of agriculture. The Komsomol organization in the countryside loyally carried out the Party line was the Party's militant assistant in the struggle to establish and consolidate the kolkhoz system.

Comrade Stalin's call to Komsomol members to study hard, patiently, to grit their teeth and study so as to master the sciences, so that new cadres of Bolshevik experts should be built up in all branches of knowledge, fell on fertile soil. Hundreds of thousands of Komsomol members and other young people studied with a will, mastered specialized branches of knowledge, and by the beginning of the war our country possessed considerable numbers of young specialists. This was the crowning point, as it were, of the great constructive work done in our country, and it enabled us in the difficult circumstances of the present war to get the evacuated plants going and progressively to develop such branches of industry as the aircraft, tank-building and other industries. Now, every Red Army man is able, on the basis of his own daily experience, clearly to see for himself how great are the benefits that have resulted from Comrade Stalin's slogan: the Komsomol must master science.

A considerable role was also played by the Komsomol in strengthening our country's defenses. The patronage established by the Komsomol over the Navy and the Air Force constitutes one of the splendid pages in the history of the Komsomol. Thousands of the best Komsomol members joined the Navy, enrolled in naval schools, and by the time the war broke out our Navy had grown into a formidable force. The entire world admires the heroic sailors who defended Odessa, Sevastopol, Leningrad; the memory of their feats of valor will forever be treasured by our people.

Our Air Force was built literally from the bottom up. And the part played here by the Komsomol was not smaller but, I would say, even greater than in the Navy. The efforts of the people and particularly of the Komsomol have yielded rich fruits in the present war. The names of such products of the Komsomol as Twice-Heroes of the Soviet Union Alexander Molodchy,

Boris Safonov, Dmitri Glinka, Vasili Zaitsev, Mikhail Bondarenko and Vasili Yefremov, Heroes of the Soviet Union Nikolai Gastello, Victor Talalikhin, Pyotr Kharitonov, Stepan Zdorovtsev, Mikhail Zhukov and many others will serve future generations of airmen as models of supreme service to their country and of great flying skill.

Thus, in the course of these twenty-five years, the Komsomol, which came into being in battle against the White-guards and interventionists, self-sacrificingly worked to restore and develop industry and build up the kolkhoz system in the countryside, successfully mastered the sciences in universities, institutes and factory laboratories and on experimental farm fields, in this way strengthening the defensive might of the State. The work of construction proceeded at full speed. Boundless opportunities were opened to the Komsomol and the rest of the youth for peaceful labor and creative scientific work.

The war forced on us by Hitler Germany cut short the peaceful creative work of Soviet people. Grim days set in for the Komsomol and for all our young folk. We had to defend our country, to defend everything achieved during almost a quarter of a century by the common efforts of all the peoples of the USSR.

War is a stern test for a nation, its state system, its policy and leadership. The same indeed can be said of any public organization, in particular the Komsomol. Before the war, under the influence of our ever-expanding construction work, of our economic and cultural successes, peacetime tendencies prevailed among Komsomol members and in general among many Soviet people. The war abruptly cut all that short, and the Komsomol was faced with new tasks connected with the war. It goes without saying that it is no easy matter to get rid of the peacetime state of mind, particularly if we take into account that the Komsomol is an organization with a membership of millions. However, it can be said to the credit of the Komsomol that it has coped satisfactorily with this task.

The slogan "Everything for the War" is a simple, comprehensible one, and it was taken up with enthusiasm by Komsomol members and the rest of the youth. But what was still required was organizationally to direct the

energy of the youth into the various channels of definite practical activity. The difficulties on this path were enormous. They exist now too.

The youth are only just beginning to live, but the war demands everything of people, including their lives. To enable millions of people to understand this need, it was necessary for them properly to grasp the fact that the war had been violently forced on us, that it could not be avoided, that to participate in it was to engage in a sacred, just cause. The Komsomol organization has done much in this direction, and continues to do so.

It is natural that the Komsomol, just as all other Soviet organizations and each Soviet citizen, was faced with the question of primary importance of where and how to make best use of its forces in defense of the homeland. And thousands of Komsomol members, youths and even girls, loyal to the best traditions of the Komsomol, volunteered for service in the regular army, and in the occupied territories joined the partisan detachments. And this attraction to the front—so characteristic of Komsomol members—continues to this very day.

Difficulties and dangers do not scare, rather do they attract the youth and stimulate them to perform feats of heroism. Our Soviet youth, who are fighting heroically at the fronts of the Patriotic War, are not only inscribing a new and splendid page in the history of the Komsomol, but are displaying the adamant will of their people to uphold the honor, freedom and independence of the Soviet State.

Wars in general are cruel, exacting and inexorable towards people. The despicable German fascists have given this war particularly monstrous forms. The unparalleled outrages perpetrated on the population of the occupied districts, against the sentiments they hold dear and their morals, the slaughter of the aged and children, the torture of the wounded and the sick, the separation of mothers from their infants and their deportation to hard labor in fascist Germany, the floggings, shootings and hangings—all this was planned in advance in the German Staff Headquarters as measures that were to facilitate the victory of German arms. The German fascists counted on being able, by means of such terror, to demoralize our people and turn them into a dumb herd of slaves.

Soviet people, the army and particularly the youth, whose whole upbringing is based on consideration for people, on respect for their dignity, could not at first understand these war tactics of the German fascists.

Comrade Stalin disclosed the bestial nature of German imperialism, pointed to the mortal danger threatening our homeland, and called on the Soviet people to steep themselves in hatred for the German bandits, to exterminate all the fascist invaders who had penetrated into Soviet territory. Komsomol members and the youth in general took these words of our leader deeply to heart, rose to the defense of their native land, and with selfless bravery and all the energy of youth are wiping out the German forces of occupation.

Modern warfare puts an enormous moral strain on the fighting man. But the main thing is that it demands proficiency with weapons, ability to make the most effective use of them in battle against the enemy; it demands supreme courage combined with the circumspection of the experienced fighter, and finally, physical hardiness, agility. And we see how, in this grim struggle against the German plunderers, the fighters of our Army and Navy; our infantrymen, airmen, tankmen, artillerymen, cavalrymen, mortarmen, sailors, airborne troops, and sappers, are being shaped. The Komsomol can be justly proud of the fact that over five hundred of our Heroes of the Soviet Union and tens of thousands who have received Orders or medals have been brought up by it.

One can say without fear of contradiction that the heroism displayed by the youth at the front is of a mass character. If one man performs a feat of heroism, scores and hundreds follow in his footsteps. The names of the Komsomol members Ivan Smolyakov, Lyudmila Pavlichenko, Natalya Kovshova, Dmitri Ostapenko, Maria Polivanova, Kurban Durda, Ivan Sivkov, machine gunner Nina Onilova who used to work at the Odessa knitted goods factory and many others have become the symbols of all that is heroic; thousands of our fighting men are trying to be like them. And how many heroes have repeated the unexampled feats of Komsomol members Gastello, the airman, and Matrosov, the infantryman, Guardsman Musabek Sengirbayev of the Panfilov Division, and others!

We now have a new group of heroes, the fighting men who crossed the Dnieper, of whom a considerable number are members of the Komsomol. The crossing of the Dnieper adds one more splendid page to the history of the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet people.

Komsomol members are participating on an extensive scale in the partisan movement. The German Command hoped to stifle it by means of terror. But the more frenzied the ferocity of the enemy, the stronger has the par-

tisan movement become. And now the fascist invaders are compelled from time to time to whine that “the Russians are not fighting according to the rules of warfare.” Yes, the partisan movement is the vengeance wreaked by the people for the ruins to which our towns and villages have been reduced, for the plunder and violence, for the outrages perpetrated on Soviet people, for the murder and execution of defenseless women, aged people and children. However much the German bandits may whine, “having sown the wind, they are reaping the whirlwind.”

It is difficult to overestimate the significance of the partisan struggle in the present war. But one thing is sure, namely, that its extent has exceeded all expectations. Hundreds of thousands of officers and men have been lost by the Germans as a result of the operations of the Soviet partisans; thousands of locomotives, tens of thousands of railway wagons carrying troops and munitions have been derailed. The destruction of telephone and telegraph communications, the wrecking of strong-points and commandatures by the partisans—all this makes the Germans’ rear services unreliable and disorganizes the communications of the German army. The main thing, however, is that by their operations the partisans are spurring the population to resist the enemy, inspiring the people with confidence in the inevitable defeat of the fascist invaders.

The partisans have achieved great successes, but the struggle they are waging is an exceptionally difficult one. Danger hourly hangs over their heads. Partisan struggle makes severe demands on people both in their everyday life and in battle. And in these rigorous conditions of war the Komsomol partisans have not only emerged with flying colors from their trials, but have won fame as tireless and fearless fighters for the liberation of their homeland from the German plunderers, violators and murderers.

Thousands of members of the Komsomol are conducting a self-sacrificing underground struggle under difficult conditions behind the German lines, organizing the local population for the fight against the occupation forces. At the risk of their lives they organize meetings of the youth. By conducting talks, recounting things seen and heard, spreading “rumors,” circulating leaflets and newspapers, and in many other ways Komsomol members bring the truth to the people, imbue them with confidence in the Red Army’s coming victory, and expose the lies of fascist propaganda.

Our country and our people highly value their best sons who are battling in the rear of the enemy. Among the partisans who have been awarded

the title of Hero of the Soviet Union, twenty-two are Komsomol members. Thousands of young partisans have been awarded Orders or medals. The entire Soviet people know and lovingly utter the names of Liza Chaikina, Sasha Chekalin, Zoya Kosmodemyanskaya, Antonina Petrova, Filip Strelets, Vladimir Kurilenko, Mikhail Silnitsky, Vladimir Ryabok, the Ignatov brothers, and many other Komsomol Heroes of the Soviet Union. These immortal heroes and heroines will find their place in the history of the partisan struggle and thereby in the history of the Great Patriotic War. They will serve as models to the young generation of lofty service and of supreme devotion to one's country.

The Hitlerites encroached on that which the Soviet youth holds most dear—its freedom, its high principles, all the enormous wealth of spiritual and material Soviet culture that is the birthright of the youth. And with all its fervor the youth is waging a life-and-death struggle against the enemy, in defense of its future. Everybody knows of that remarkable phenomenon, the establishment of the Young Guard Komsomol organization in the town of Krasnodon, Voroshilovgrad Region. Oleg Koshevoi, Ivan Zemnukhov, Sergei Tyulenin, Ulyana Gromova, Lyubov Shevtsova and other members of the Young Guard organization, despite the brutal German terror, refused to bow their proud heads to the invaders, and with all the passion of freedom-loving Soviet people undertook a bitter struggle, seemingly beyond their strength. The majority of the boys and girls of the Young Guard organization died the death of heroes, but the cause for which they fought, the cause of Lenin-Stalin, lives on. There is no force capable of destroying the spirit of a people, a people that loves its native land, its freedom and independence. The places of the fallen are taken by ever-new ranks of fighters, who continue their glorious work.

The fascist vandals wanted to deride the Soviet people, to trample them into the mire, to sow terror and horror in their hearts. But they failed. We have seen around us immortal examples of lofty and honest service to the people, to the Soviet land, I would like the leaders of Komsomol organizations to make it their duty to jealously collect and carefully preserve records of the feats of valor performed by the young people at the front and in the rear of the enemy, of the supreme love for their country displayed by the youth, of how Komsomol members, in battle with the enemy, are holding aloft the banner of the Komsomol, the banner of the Party of Lenin-Stalin.

Highly important is the work of the Komsomol in our rear—in industry, agriculture and other spheres that serve the front. In many industrial enterprises the bulk of the workers are young people, including young women. And our industries are being sustained by an uninterrupted influx of ever-new contingents of workers from trade and industrial training schools which, while training skilled workers, are also filling substantial war orders.

It can be said with confidence that the mass of Komsomol members and of the youth in general are putting all their ability and energy into their work for the front, displaying initiative and creative incentive. Comrade Stalin's call to reorganize our industry on a war footing, to do everything to ensure that the front does not go short of arms and ammunition, met with a warm response among Komsomol members and all young people.

One can judge of the effectiveness of the work of our industry by comparing it with the work of German industry. Hitler Germany plundered the whole of Europe and drove millions of workers from the occupied countries to its territory for forced labor. Nevertheless the German manufacturers are howling all the time about being short of workers, particularly skilled workers. What is becoming of the workers? There has been an unparalleled increase in the death rate among them, particularly among foreign workers, as a result of inhuman toil, beatings, starvation and disease in German industrial enterprises. In the way it is exterminating man power, fascist Germany is like the Minotaur, that monster to which, according to Greek legend, youths and maidens were flung to be devoured. Like the Minotaur, Hitler unceasingly demands ever-increasing sacrifices from his allies and vassals.

In our industry, engineers and technicians, including young engineers, are working tirelessly to improve technological processes, to lighten the labor of the workers. And as a result, the work of our industry is on a high level and satisfies the needs of the front as regards both quantity and quality. This means that the productivity of labor of a free, patriotic people defending their native land is many times in excess of the productivity of the penal labor of those employed in the German enterprises. The profits of the German magnates, however, have reached unprecedented heights, and that is the main thing as far as they are concerned.

The youth, particularly young women, are a highly important factor in agriculture. They are now playing a leading part in thousands of kolk-

hozes. In this sphere too the Komsomol has done much to prevent a decline in the pace of agricultural production. In a good many regions, particularly in the central ones, crops have actually increased considerably since the war began. In this we see a great service rendered to the homeland by our women and young girls. With the male population away at the front, a great amount of work had to be done in order to train tractor drivers, combine harvester operators and other categories of workers. Young women are successfully mastering such complicated agricultural professions as those of tractor and combine operators. Many young women operating tractors are showing results considerably in excess of the targets fixed by the state plan.

I could quote numerous examples of the practical achievements of the Komsomol and the youth in general in the countryside in increasing the agricultural output required for the front and industry; if I do not do so, it is merely because they are mentioned daily in the press and over the radio. One thing can be said, namely, that if in their propaganda the Hitlerite blockheads, and maybe crooks (most likely they are both), forecast famine in the Soviet land, they forget that in a country where free labor on free soil prevails, where the people, the kolkhozniks are inspired by the desire to exterminate the Hitlerite gang, there the earth, the soil—like the spirit of the people—is efficacious and rewards the toil of the people a hundredfold. No small service in this regard has been rendered by our rural Komsomol members and other young people.

In speaking of the great work done during the war by Komsomol members at the front, in industry and in agriculture, I wish to point to one more task in solving which the Komsomol must undoubtedly play no less considerable a role. I refer to the participation of the Komsomol and the rest of the youth in rehabilitating demolished towns and villages and in organizing aid to the victims of the German occupation.

Rehabilitation of Stalingrad is now in full swing. Every Soviet person utters this name with pride and considers it his civic duty to take some part in this work. The Komsomol's noble initiative in assuming patronage over the restoration of the Stalingrad Tractor Plant, the Dzerzhinsky Works, the Krasny Oktyabr metallurgical plant and Plant No. 264 has met with a widespread response among the youth of the Soviet Union, and I hope that this initiative will spread to all the liberated areas.

It is with pride and love that the Soviet people regard the youth. The war burst like a hurricane into the lives of Soviet young people, facing them

with the grim necessity of staunchly defending their native land, their future, of undergoing stern trials, For more than two years now our young people have been waging a bitter struggle against the enemy, fighting alongside their fathers and elder brothers and bravely and self-sacrificingly upholding the freedom and happiness of their people. The war has been a severe test of the spiritual and physical qualities of the Soviet youth, of its vanguard—the Komsomol. Our Komsomol, our young people, are passing this test with honor. In the rear, as at the front, the youth are working tirelessly and, fully conscious of their duty to their country, are devoting all their energy and ability to hastening the hour of victory over our bitterest enemy.

There were many people abroad, particularly at the beginning of the war, who searched for an explanation of the lofty patriotic fervor of the people of the Soviet Union, of the steadfastness of the Red Army. For us, however, the source of the patriotism of Soviet people is clear. It lies in their love for their country, for their people, for their culture and way of life. It is precisely because all are equal in the great family of Soviet peoples and filled with respect for one another, mutual confidence and friendship that the Soviet Union is strong and indestructible.

One of the decisive sources of the lofty patriotism of our youth and of its unexampled heroism is the indissoluble tie that binds the Komsomol to the Communist Party. The Party inspires the Komsomol to perform feats of heroism in the name of the common cause. The history of our Party, of its struggle for the ideals of the people, has served and continues to serve as an inexhaustible source of inspiration to the youth during the Patriotic War, impelling them to perform deeds of heroism. The aims set by our Party are majestic: to achieve the well-being of the people, their fraternal unity; for these aims our Party has fought and is continuing to fight, and for them our Komsomol too, together with the Party and under its leadership, is conducting a selfless struggle, carrying the entire Soviet youth with it.

From the bottom of our hearts we congratulate the Leninist-Stalinist Komsomol on the occasion of its twenty-fifth anniversary and wish it new victories and glory.

A Few Words About Propaganda and Agitation⁴⁷

January 12, 1944

Comrades! We have heard six speeches, and I think that they are approximately the same as would be made by all the other secretaries of Party organizations present here.

What is the characteristic feature of the secretaries of our primary Party organizations? It is their practicality. You have noticed that all the comrades who have spoken dealt with issues in a practical fashion. This is not a bad feature. Bolshevism never overlooks the practical side of things. It is a positive quality in a Party worker to be businesslike. At the same time, however, it seems to me that it is not quite enough for secretaries to deal only with the practical side of problems; they should also make some generalizations. You should learn to generalize.

Although listing things and summing them up is necessary, still it is only part of the job. What distinguishes Communists is that they generalize the sum-total of practical problems, the sum-total of practical tasks, knit them into an integral whole. Well then, an examination of your practical work and an attempt to generalize it somewhat would seem to show that you separate Party, social work from work in production. You seem to think that although a person may be a first-rate worker, a devoted Communist, he does not do any social work unless he is active in a study circle, speaks at meetings or conducts agitational work.

Now it seems to me personally (I stress the word personally) that such an approach, which separates social work from work at the point of production, from work concerned with affairs of State, does not fit in very well with the tasks facing production itself, with the character of our State. Such an approach probably would have been more characteristic of Communists in the old days. Why? Well, because in the days before the revolution, work in the factory was to the advantage of the capitalists, and the agitation we conducted was directed in its entirety against the capitalists, but now production work is one of the most important of state and social tasks; it is the most important work of our day.

⁴⁷ Speech at a conference of secretaries of Moscow Communist Party organizations. Originally published in *Propagandist Magazine*, No. 2, 1944.

When in the olden days I used to work at the Putilov Plant, I thereby strengthened the capitalists; at that time we had every right to make a sharp division between work in industry and Party work. Had I exceeded production quotas at that time, my comrades would have had legitimate grounds for saying to me: "Earning money, hey? And working overtime—supporting the capitalists. But when it comes to meetings, you have no time for them; you're neglecting your Party work." That would have been natural, but only at that time. But now? Imagine a person nowadays who would leave his job in production undone, postponing everything for tomorrow, call a study circle together and take other people away from their work, drag them to a lesson, and call this doing Party work. Of course, nobody will consider such a person a good Communist. And no wonder, because we do not work for a boss now, but have ourselves become the masters of our Socialist State. And production itself has become social production, state production.

Hence, if I were a secretary, I would consider a person's chief Party and social activity to be his production work. I would say that a person with an unsatisfactory showing in production is a poor Communist even if he shows up well in all other respects.

I feel from your speeches that in practice you are guided by my idea, but are afraid to say so outright for fear of getting into hot water for turning into business executives. One can tell by your speeches that you are cultured people, well-informed, but all the same not a single one of you said that he regards production work under our Socialist conditions, and what is more, during wartime, as Party and social work of the most important kind, as work that strengthens the Socialist system.

Indeed, why not raise this question in Party fashion, as a matter of profound principle: is not work that strengthens the Soviet system, work that inflicts tremendous blows on our enemies, work that spreads all over the world the fame of the Soviet land, in other words, of the Socialist system, is not such work Communist work, Party work? Are our achievements in production, our successes in the field of culture, not Communist work, Party work? There is propaganda in words and propaganda in deeds. Propaganda and agitation in deeds are more effective. Practically everywhere in our country they say that propaganda and agitation in deeds is the most effective propaganda. Well then, our successes in production are propaganda in deeds.

I shall cite you the following example: what at the front today is considered to be the most important quality making a person a worthy candidate for Party membership? (*Voices from the hall*: "Heroism!")

Quite right, heroism. Operations well executed. Yet on the surface this is not Party work. So you see that heroism, supreme devotion in battle is a most important element in estimating a person's qualities when he joins the Party.

Now let us draw an analogy. If you allow that splendidly performed operations at the front constitute important Party work, are Communist work, then you will also agree that the production of shells, guns, machine guns is of just as vital concern to us, that it means taking a direct part in the struggle for our aims. The production aspect is the prime foundation, I would say the holy of holies of Party work today. So then, when you engage in agitation, propaganda, the education of people, you should always remember this.

You know from the reports of Comrade Stalin, from the works of Lenin, how important it is to be able at each stage of development to grasp the main link. In agitation, in propaganda, in inculcating the Party outlook, you should grasp this main link. What is the main, decisive task now facing the entire Soviet people? The struggle against the German occupationists. That is why, wherever you may conduct agitation, whatever the work you may perform, whoever the person with whom you may converse, our agitation and propaganda at the present time must always come down to the main point, that everybody has to exert every effort to help carry out this chief nationwide task of smashing the German invaders.

If you prepare for your agitational work in the local Party education center and imbibe Communist wisdom there, you should select the sort of material, seek for the kind of historical analogies that would enrich you, make it possible for you the better to interpret, to explain to the masses the condition of our country today, and the tasks that face each one of us in the struggle against fascism. Indeed, our life now is so rich in striking facts that every agitator, from the rank-and-filer to the most prominent, can find an endless quantity of material there, material that is vivid, living, and that directly concerns current events.

Let us take yesterday's newspaper, if nothing more. There you will find a declaration made by our Government through TASS⁴⁸ on the Polish problem. It contains a wealth of material. And this statement is drawn up so vividly and set forth so clearly that everybody can understand it. It could be used as the basis of a most splendid talk. Direct the attention of your listeners to what has already been said on numerous occasions, namely, that the war we are waging is a just one. In his first speech at the outbreak of the war Comrade Stalin stressed that we are waging a defensive war, a just war. At the present time our army is better off than at any time during this war, while the Germans during the last five years have never been worse off than now. Now look at the way our Government is at this time meeting the wishes of Poland, the Polish people. You can, of course, trace the history of Soviet-Polish relations, select and cite the appropriate historical factual material which you will be able to obtain in the same Party education center.

By using this method, people will come to understand international problems in a Marxist way, and gradually accumulate experience for their daily Party work.

What do we mean by Party work? Of course, organizationally we separate the different spheres of work, and call them Party, trade-union, economic work, etc. Each of these branches of work has its own special features.

What special features distinguish Party work from all other forms of work? It seems to me too narrow a view on the matter to assert that its distinguishing feature is the fact that it is concerned only with agitation, propaganda, communist education in the narrow sense of the word. Party work consists, if one may so say, of introducing into every job, even the most technical and mechanical one, the spirit of the Party outlook, the Party approach.

For example, a lathe operator does a simple, mechanical job. But it is far from being a matter of indifference to us whether he does this job as he would do it were he working in a privately owned plant for a certain wage, without a social understanding of its full importance, or whether our lathe operator is fully aware while producing some part or other that he is at the same time doing something of great importance to the state, working for the country's defense, that the products of his labor are sent to the front where they are used against the enemy, and that the better the article he

⁴⁸ TASS: *Telegrafnoye Agentstvo Sovetskogo Soyuza*, or the Telegraph Agency of the Soviet Union.

turns out, the more effective is the part he is playing in the struggle against the Germans. That means that he regards himself not as isolated from our general political tasks, but as a constituent link in the common struggle, in the common measures undertaken by the state.

In this connection I would like to share one more thought with you. Among us it is frequently said of some Communist or another that he is a thorough Party man. But you must remember this: is that term applied only to agitators and propagandists? To be a thorough Party person you do not necessarily have to be only an agitator or a propagandist. What is needed is something else, namely, Party conduct in political, social and even in private life. Take the same lathe operator again. If he links up his work with the whole, if he puts all his energy, strength and ability into his work, understanding that thereby he is also defending the Soviet land, and for that reason takes no account of time, difficulties, shortcomings with which production is bound up, then his approach to his work is a Party approach, and I would say that this comrade is a thorough Party man, and his work at the point of production is at the same time Party work inasmuch as he links it up with the whole.

I shall cite an example from the past. Some of the people who joined the Party in those days were dissatisfied when they had to do simple, technical work, say, deliver leaflets or look after flats used for the secret work of the Party, or some other technical job. These people, who soon drifted away from the Party, wanted to be agitators, propagandists, i.e., they strove for political ostentation. Yet inconspicuous, humdrum work had to be done; in those days such jobs were of the utmost importance to the Party.

And finally, let the comrades remember from Party history that Comrade Stalin organized a secret print shop in Baku. Do you think Comrade Stalin organized it by conducting agitation and propaganda, by writing leaflets? No, under the autocratic regime and the system of police surveillance it was an enormous job of organization, but at the same time it was both technical and most humdrum work, since many purely technical matters had to be solved. Premises had to be found for the print shop, type had to be got, delivery of die printed material had to be arranged for, and so forth. Tell me, was that Party work or not? So you see that it is not the form of the work, but the purpose for which it is intended, that determines whether it is work in the Party spirit, Party work. If the work does not serve the cause of the working class, it is useless and not Party work.

And now, tell me: what sort of productive work in our Socialist country, particularly work in industrial undertakings, kolkhozes and offices, does not strengthen the Soviet system? As you see, the Party character of political work is determined not by the organizational distribution of the work (which is the correct thing to do as far as organization is concerned) but by the introduction of the Party spirit into all work, whether it is social, production or office activity.

When I say this I naturally do not want to underestimate the need for studying Marxism-Leninism which, as a matter of fact, is what enables one in practical life to approach all matters from the Party standpoint.

One of the comrades who spoke here stated that he had difficulty in finding Party and social work for all the numerous Communist Party members at his plant. I consider this a misunderstanding.

We have been told here of an engineer and inventor who was accepted into the Party and who, when he came to the Party Committee asking for some social work to do, was placed in charge of a political study circle. Then another member came along, also a skilled engineer, but there was no circle left for him, and the Party organization did not know what sort of social work to invent for him. I would have acted differently. I would have told him: "Organize a circle of inventors and take charge of it. Maybe you won't invent anything, but then again you might." Some of you might not regard that as a Party assignment, but I would consider it to be real Party work. For if a man is a genuine inventor, he is obsessed by a single idea, all his thoughts are turned in one direction. So why take his mind off it? Give him the work that suits him most, let him organize a circle whose members will go in for inventions. I would consider that his Party assignment. If the other engineer is a good agitator, he will conduct agitational and propaganda work, but if he is not inclined that way, you have to find a field for him in which he would be most useful.

So there is no need to worry about there being not enough work to go around; instead you should give people a chance to display initiative, give some thought to the matter, and you will see for yourselves that there are not enough people to do all the work there is to be done.

Reference has been made here to the education of Communists. How is the Party spirit to be cultivated in a recently enrolled member? That depends on you, on the direction you give to his training.

One of the comrades told us here how some young Communists had been upbraided at a meeting for not paying their Party membership dues regularly. This might appear to be a purely practical issue. Of course, one can simply use strong language at people, tell them they are undisciplined, bad Communists and so forth. But the same question can also be raised as an issue of principle. You can say to them:

You yourselves understand that if you fall behind for a month or two in paying dues, it will not matter much to the Party, its treasury will not suffer. Our Party is not a poor party now. And if we are discussing this matter with you, it is not because your tardiness in paying dues prevented us from sending our Party report in on time. No, that's not the point. The point is that if you fail to pay your Party dues on time, it means that you don't think about the Party, you are attending to your Party duties in a slipshod fashion. Anybody who adopts such an attitude to his Party duties, and what is more, to such simple, strictly organizational ones as the payment of Party dues, does not take the Party seriously. To anybody who thinks of the Party, the payment of Party dues is a source of satisfaction, because he thereby establishes material contact, as it were, with the Party, comes, so to speak, in touch with it.

As you see, comrades, you and I approach this problem in the same way, think alike, but I wanted to show how you can approach a simple matter politically. If you approach the matter in this way, the simple question of Party dues becomes a political issue.

When you take up the matter in this way at a meeting, speakers will promptly come forward who will begin to adduce all sorts of examples, they might even object that the matter is not so important, that a person may be ready to die for the Party and still forget to pay his dues, and so on. A discussion will then be under way on an issue of principle.

As you see, when one and the same question is approached from the strictly practical standpoint, using only the language of facts, it makes less of an impression than when you generalize, give a political appraisal of the matter—that educates people.

I notice that you associate Party work among new members, the education of Communists, with study alone. To study is, of course, not a bad

thing. I am not against it. You have to teach them. But education and instruction are not one and the same thing in the strict sense of the word.

You can get a person to memorize the Party program, know the Rules, and comply with all the formalities, but that still does not make him a Communist. He is a block of wood, not a Communist. You must have heard people call somebody a block of wood. (*Voice*: "A blockhead.") No, that's something different. To call somebody a blockhead is offensive, whereas by a block of wood we mean a person who is too stiff and inflexible in his way of thinking, and who is without emotion and lacks a sense of humor and irony. Such a person is called a regular block of wood.

It is far more difficult to educate people than to teach them, give them a formal schooling, for the educator influences the educands not only by giving them definite knowledge, but also and mainly by his attitude to everyday phenomena.

Comrade Bodrova told us here of the hard life of a working woman to whom help had been given and whose spirits rose immediately as a result. I must say that this is not only a good instance of the Party attitude in itself. The important thing here is not only that help was given to somebody in difficult circumstances, but that this is what we mean by educating Communists, concrete education. It is on such examples that you should base your work to educate Communists.

Even unworthy actions should be put to an educational use by discussing them from the angle of principle. Suppose a person works badly. You should show how this bad work affects everybody else. It is concrete facts like these, vital issues, as well as general political problems, that should be used as the basis for educating people.

Here is an example. Let us suppose that I am the secretary of a Party organization. I am visited by numerous people among whom are those who go around whispering to everybody about so-and-so working badly and so-and-so behaving badly. Yet they themselves are guilty of these very faults. There are people of that kind, are there not? Well, to take such a person and expose him would have educational value.

I must say that education of people is a most difficult task because much depends on your own behavior. If, for example, you advocate abstinence and drink yourself, that will not pass. If you appeal for discipline and constantly break it yourself, it is obvious that your appeal will be of little effect.

Education in the broad sense of the word is a most difficult pedagogical job. But to teach people the ABCs of political knowledge, the Party Program and Rules, is another matter, since here it is a question of passing on definite knowledge. Of course, it is difficult to draw a sharp line between instruction and education, because people are educated by means of study, too. The main thing, however, is not to lose sight of the fact that the education of Party members should go on daily, imperceptibly; often it is based on minor details, but sometimes on serious, major matters and issues.

Reference was made here to the practice of reading out extracts from the press. If the papers are merely read out loud and there is no discussion, that is not enough. You may get a situation when one person has already had time to read the paper and hence pays no attention to you, while another may not have read it but still is not satisfied with merely hearing you read it out. But if you analyze or generalize what you have read, then naturally everybody will be interested. Get an argument going. Why not? You people are over-practical. You are afraid of making a mistake. Well, what if you do? We do not punish people for mistakes; if you make mistakes, you are criticized, the papers may say something about it—and that is all. Punishment is meted out to those who defend their mistakes, who insist on them and depart from the Party line. If a person is one of us, devoted to the Soviet State, to his Party, and if he is not quite correct in formulating his views, his attention will of course be drawn to it, and nothing more.

Do you imagine that the Party outlook can only be instilled by the Party Rules and Program? Of course, you have to acquaint the new Party member with the Rules. These set forth the Communist's rules of conduct, model rules of conduct. But if your talks with Communists amounted to only that, it would be boring. You cannot be formal in your approach to such matters.

You should know how to make a different approach to different people as regards study, too. Suppose a man is sixty years old and you demand that he know the Party Program and Rules thoroughly. He is a good worker, honest, devoted to the Soviet State, and not a bad Communist. It is clear that you have to be more lenient in this respect towards such a Party member.

Now we organize circles, study Marxism, but do very little in the way of studying Russian history; we do not consider it a Party matter, so to say. That is wrong, absolutely wrong. The study of Russian history is interesting, fascinating, and if it is taught by a Marxist, and each historical phenomenon

of the past is discussed from the Marxist viewpoint, people will attend such a circle with interest and learn much. That will be Party work.

More qualified people could occupy themselves with studying the history of philosophy. Generally speaking, each group of individuals who go in for some particular subject, say for fiction, or a particular period in world history, or people who are interested in exploring some social or even technical problem, can set up circles where they can study the subject that interests them. And the Party character of these circles will consist in the employment of the Marxist-Leninist method in dealing with the problems being studied. People can also philosophize there.

How can anybody be a real Communist if he does not do some philosophizing? We look far ahead, far into the future. But it seems to me you have all become terribly practical, watching your step for fear you might stumble.

Marxism is the only true method of cognition not only of social but also of natural phenomena. That is why every piece of work aimed at acquiring a knowledge of the phenomena of the universe, if conducted from the viewpoint of Marxism-Leninism, strengthens our Bolshevick Party outlook. There is no end to this work. All that is needed is that a broader view be taken of the world, that people should understand and generalize the practical work they do.

Excerpt From the Article “The Might of the Soviet State”⁴⁹

April 1944

The Soviet youth and the glorious Leninist-Stalinist Komsomol—the organizer of the youth—play an enormous part in the life of our country, in strengthening the might of the Soviet State.

I shall not dwell on the heroism of Komsomol members, of the youth who are at the front or in partisan detachments, nor shall I dwell on their selfless work in the rear, in factory, mill and field. Their patriotism and their devotion to their Soviet homeland are known to everyone. All I want to say is that the Komsomol, like a huge furnace, sublimates and shapes the new, Soviet man. For the youth, the Komsomol is the first rung, a rung that leads on to the highroad of social and political life, that leads the youth into the Party. The Komsomol is the most important organizing factor in relation to the working-class youth, and particularly the village youth. The Komsomol is, as it were, the beginning of collectivity and extensive social activity for these young people, and its role in shaping Soviet people, in expanding their political and social horizons, is exceptionally great.

⁴⁹ Originally published in *Bolshevik Magazine*, No. 7-8, 1944.

A Few Remarks About the Education of Komsomol Members in the Army⁵⁰

Speech at a Reception for Red Army Komsomol Workers

May 15, 1944

I would like to say a few words, comrades, about the education of the youth in army conditions.

It is clear to everybody that the chief task of the Komsomol everywhere, including the army, is to educate the youth. And educating people, particularly military men, is a complicated and delicate matter. In this work you cannot rely entirely on certain constant organizational forms or invent new forms of work to meet every occasion in life, believing that education will then proceed automatically. You cannot solve all the problems connected with education simply by employing a ready-made form, however good it might be.

Take, for example, the daily influence of an officer who is a Komsomol member on the mass of Red Army men belonging to the Komsomol. Can one invent anything in this regard that is obligatory, laid down as the law by the Central Committee of the Komsomol? I think nothing will come of that. The very manner of life, the relations that are developed in the army unit, assume definite forms, become established in life and serve as an educational means.

Our Komsomol rank-and-file soldiers are literate people, the majority of them having finished at least the seven-grade school. But they are young and spirited. The officers have to accustom them to discipline. At the same time a distinction must be made between relations when on and off duty. When a soldier is at his post, in the front lines, he is required to obey orders without any argument whatsoever. To argue during battle means disaster, for the enemy does not wait while you argue. But when the battle is over, at a meeting of Komsomol members, for example, the men can frankly examine their own shortcomings and those of their comrades.

In his Komsomol environment the authority of an officer who is a member of the Komsomol is determined not only by his rank. Here his

⁵⁰ Originally published in *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, May 31, 1944.

authority is of a different order. He should be respected not only as a lieutenant or captain, but as an expert, as an intelligent person, as a political leader. In other words, he has to win his authority, and win it primarily through his knowledge and experience.

The very behavior of the officer who is a member of the Komsomol serves as an instructive example, for the young soldier is influenced in every way first and foremost by the relations that develop between people, in the given instance in army life, particularly by the attitude of the officers toward the mass of Red Army men.

In our army there is no such thing as officers merely issuing orders and soldiers merely obeying them. When a squad or platoon commander is disabled in battle, rank-and-file soldiers assume command and thereby display their own initiative. With the Germans this can happen only in isolated cases, but in our army there have been a tremendous number of such instances. With us both the officers and the masses of Red Army men are at one as regards spirit, upbringing and origin. Our Komsomol Red Army man who has graduated a ten-grade school and the young officer who is a Komsomol member are not only close in spirit, not only think alike, but also approximate one another in their mental development.

We demand the enforcement of strict discipline. That is understandable since an army is an army only so long as it is disciplined, so long as its tanks are firmly united. That is why the demand for disciplined conduct must be strictly stressed. At the same time, however, the officers in charge of political work, particularly at the front, devote much attention to education, for without this we will not get that conscious discipline which is the distinguishing feature of our army. These officers teach the Red Army men to be brave and honest and not to be crafty toward their comrades, for while one may and even should be crafty toward the enemy, it is impermissible to be so in relation to one's comrades-in-arms.

It is here that the officer's personal authority is of great importance. It should always be at a high level. If an officer who is known to be brave, efficient and well versed in military matters makes a mistake in formulating his ideas at a meeting or in a talk, the Red Army men will not take offense. They will say that he has made a slip but for all that he is a splendid fellow at the front. An officer acquires such authority on the battlefield, in directing his unit and in political work, and it makes itself felt in the solution of all the problems that face the Komsomol organization.

It is, of course, desirable that the officer who is a Komsomol member should be politically more developed and more cultured than the officer who is not a member of the Komsomol. Let their military knowledge be equal, but at any rate see to it that the cultural level of the Komsomol officer is higher. This, and this alone, can guarantee him greater influence. To accumulate knowledge you have to study constantly. You may say that you have been fighting for three years without a break, and that under such circumstances it is very difficult to study, to augment any kind of knowledge and particularly theoretical. All that, of course, is correct. I understand how difficult it is. But I must say that he who does not augment his knowledge when times are difficult will most certainly say when there is less work to do that he needs a rest, and that knowledge is not so important anyway. (*Laughter.*)

I admit the difficulty of the situation. But this difficulty itself is an additional stimulus to us to increase our knowledge and raise our level of culture. When there is no daily pressure from without, it is more difficult to acquire knowledge. I judge by myself: I have never written a single article without being pressed to do so. But when I am asked, when pressure is exerted on me and there is no way out, I sit down and write. (*Laughter.*) Pressure from the outside helps to prevent a person from becoming fossilized, stagnating.

I am nearly seventy, but just the same from day to day I am bound to keep abreast with literature and to study. And it cannot be otherwise. Yet I am somewhat more experienced and politically more alert than you are, I can find my way out of a difficult situation with greater ease. You are younger, and hence it is more difficult for you, but only knowledge can help.

You must study all the time. Life itself imperatively demands this of you.

It is clear that each officer and soldier is primarily and chiefly concerned with the honor of his unit.

We have splendid military units that have reached a very high level. You ask how their experience can be passed on so as to enable other units to become like them. I will reply with the following example. Suppose a magnificent picture has been painted, and copies, very good copies are made of it. Well, the copies always remain just copies in spite of everything, and are priced far more cheaply. In exactly the same way, the education of people does not permit of stereotyped methods, however good they may be. It goes without saying that you should make use of the experience of others, but you

must not transplant ready-made experience without taking account of the specific features of the given situation, the people concerned and the tasks to be performed. That any experience should become part of you, you have to go through it yourself, acquire it by your own hard effort.

Let us suppose a unit has taken part in some landing operations, and acquired a great deal of combat experience. Obviously the marines, infantrymen and artillerymen in that unit will be closely welded together, and the spirit of comradeship in action will be very highly developed among them. Where did it come from? As the marines went into action they knew that they were being watched by the entire army, and that much depended on them. Danger dogged them at every step. Each one tried to carry out his orders, to do his job and at the same time to save himself and his comrades. Success was achieved at the cost of enormous exertion. It is clear that under such circumstances the men mature far more rapidly than, say, in units quartered at quieter sections of the front, where there is less tension and where, in addition, the monotony of the situation has an adverse effect on the men. It would seem that in these latter units there is more free time, and that hence it is easier here to conduct educational work. Actually, however, it is much more difficult. It is far easier to educate people where life itself helps you to do so. Thus it turns out that where the men spend a long time at one spot, in the trenches, it is more difficult to carry through organizational, agitational and propaganda, and political measures. I think that in these conditions far more attention should be paid to the work of Komsomol organizations.

This example shows that it is difficult to give a ready-made recipe suitable for all cases that may arise, as to how, in conditions of army life, the Komsomol organizations should conduct their educational work.

How, for example, does it come about that one unit is better and another worse? The good unit has a leader who is able to get things going. I must tell you that a person may be very learned and cultured, but if he leads the youth without enthusiasm, if he does not put heart and soul into their education and training, the youth will immediately perceive this. They will have no affection for such a leader. On the other hand, if you put heart and soul into your work and try to do all you can to make your organization one of the best, if you expend your energy, your ardor on achieving this, you will most certainly earn the love of the youth. You will not only enjoy their respect, but also something more than that, their love.

That is why I think that if a given Komsomol organization is a good one, it is the result, to a considerable degree, of its being headed by a good leader. If a person really tries to get things moving, if he is cultured in however slight a degree and not a complete idiot—he will be successful. Life itself will suggest to him the path to follow in order to achieve this success. When we speak of these day-to-day relations, it must be remembered that they are created in the process of life, are unwritten and arise out of everyday life itself, as distinct from the organizational forms that have developed historically and are recorded in the Regulations. It depends on you whether these relations between our officers and the rank-and-file soldiers who belong to the Komsomol will always and unswervingly serve the education of the youth and the strengthening of the might of our army.

You raise the question as to what is to be done about the fact that there are good Komsomol members and bad ones in the units? Well, what can you do? Komsomol members do not drop from the skies, they come from the people. Among the people there are some who are good, very good, and some who are bad—cowards, idlers, hypocrites. It is only twenty-six years since our people emerged from the capitalist system, and traces of the old world still remain. It would be strange if an army that has come from among the people were to be made up entirely of saints. (*Laughter.*) That is not possible. In the same way in the Komsomol too some members are good and some are bad. Why, if all people were honest, brave, disciplined and cultured and knew their jobs, there would be nothing for you to do. (*Laughter.*)

All the same I think I will not be mistaken if I say that the mass of Komsomol members consists in the main of front-rank representatives of the youth. But, of course, there is among this mass an inconsiderable section of backward people. Do not let them slip away from under your influence. That is the task.

One of the comrades stated that in the Army Komsomol organization there are very many good comrades, but unfortunately they do not all play the part of leaders. What can I say to that? If the entire people were made up of leaders, then, I dare say, there would be no people at all. (*Laughter.*) Leaders are always to be found in limited numbers, otherwise they would not be leaders, they would have nobody to lead. If there are one or two who give the lead in your unit that is very good. If one of them is disabled there will be somebody to replace him. I am afraid that if some unit were made up only of leaders, it would be unable to fight because everyone would take

offense at being led. (*Laughter.*) What is important is that there are people who strive to follow the leader, to be as close as possible to him. These are the active ones who fulfill all the tasks he sets them. You should always make use of such active members in your work.

The question has arisen among you as to the attitude to take toward those Komsomol members who have no Komsomol duties.

This question must not be approached formally. If a person has no special Komsomol assignments, but is fulfilling other, very important and necessary duties, and is coping with them well, hastening victory, you can consider that person to be fulfilling his Komsomol duties with credit. And it would be very good if the Komsomol organization recognized the basic military work he is doing as sufficiently important, that it takes up all his time, did not give him any additional assignment. Let us say an officer who is a Komsomol member is engaged in important work at headquarters. Well then, is he fulfilling his Komsomol responsibilities or not? If he holds a responsible staff job and is fully loaded up with military work, can he be reproached with not carrying out Komsomol assignments in addition? At times some of our Komsomol organizations try to invent some additional job for a member although they can see for themselves that he is up to his neck in work. That is wrong. You, organizers and leaders of the political activity of Komsomol members, should know how each member is working, and if some are fully occupied with their basic military work, even though in the broad sense of the word it cannot be considered Komsomol work, you should not regard them as shirking their Komsomol responsibilities. There is a fundamental difference between the person who is overloaded with work and the one who shirks it.

Komsomol work was never an end in itself for us. Young people join the Komsomol to help the Party in its struggle for the well-being and happiness of the working people. The worth of a Komsomol member does not consist in making good speeches at meetings, being active among his fellow Komsomol members, or performing some special functions in the Komsomol. His worth is determined first and foremost by the way he copes with the main work—state, military or economic—entrusted to him.

In exactly the same way the successes of the Komsomol as a whole are the result of the socially useful work done by all Komsomol members of both sexes. You yourselves are justly proud of the fact that so many who have received Government decorations, so many heroes, have come from

the ranks of the Komsomol. But they were decorated not so much for their Komsomol work as for their military work.

At different stages of our history the Party has set itself definite tasks. Formerly the Party rallied the people round itself to overthrow tsarism, to organize the Socialist society, to consolidate the Soviet system. Now, all the energies of the Party are directed at the defense of the Soviet country. The Party is not at all concerned with turning all its members into nice, clean, tidy creatures. It is occupied with the epoch-making work of defending the Soviet State, of safeguarding its independence and future, of fighting to ensure that the entire world will reckon with the Soviet Union as with a great force. That is the task of the present day. It stands to reason that in this great struggle people are being remade, their world outlook, their characters are being polished. Thus we are bringing up a generation of new people who set the public weal, the struggle for the ideals of the new society and of all mankind, above all else. It is to these aims that the Party has dedicated itself; the Party is not an end in itself. In exactly the same way, the Komsomol cannot exist for itself.

Each member of the Komsomol should be estimated not only from the angle of the Komsomol duties he performs, but from the viewpoint of the benefit he brings to the common cause. And if he fights tooth and nail, if he defends the Soviet State and upholds it with all the energy at his command against the encroachments of the enemy, should not his military work, which is aimed at the defense of the Soviet State, be considered Komsomol work? It is clear that his military work is Komsomol work, the main, basic work in which a person shows his patriotism, heroism and ability.

Some of our units are now fighting beyond the borders of the Soviet State, on foreign, Romanian territory. There we are faced with a different world. The Red Army has established correct relations with the local population. But we should not interfere in the way of life of the Romanians. It should be said that many lies have been spread among the Romanian population about the Soviet Union. Some Romanians are fleeing from us out of fear that the terrible Bolsheviks will come and skin them alive. They must be shown that they have been deceived. In this regard our Red Army men and officers have risen to the occasion. The Romanians are becoming convinced that the cultured army of a cultured people has come to them. We must only safeguard ourselves against espionage and sabotage, and take precautionary measures of a purely military character.

In conclusion, I want from the bottom of my heart to wish you success in your work. This summer, apparently, big battles will be fought, and your main job is to prepare people for these battles, to prepare them technically, politically and psychologically. You must subordinate all of your work to the fulfillment of this task. I wish you complete success. (*Stormy applause. Exclamations of* “Long live Mikhail Ivanovich Kalinin!” “Hurrah!”)

The Moral Complexion of Our People⁵¹

January 1945

Morals, or ethics, have existed since human society began to take shape, and they are determined by its economic development—of course, not automatically but with a lag, like every other ideological superstructure, such as law, religion, etc. At the dawn of human society, morality sprang from the conditions of everyday life, took practical shape in the form of definite standards of human conduct. These standards, of course, were not written down in any codes of law—at that time no written characters existed as yet; but for the people of that period they were perhaps no less obligatory than the modern written legal codes are for us. The attitude toward the community, the clan, the family, the relations between the sexes, everyday relations became consolidated, turned into generally accepted psychological principles, into public morals.

With the division of human society into classes, with the appearance of the state, morals naturally also assumed a class character, became a powerful weapon in the hands of the ruling classes for the enthrallment of the subject masses. Writing about capitalist society, Engels stated that it practiced at least three kinds of morals: those of the “feudal aristocracy, the bourgeoisie, and the proletariat.”

And as society has hitherto moved in class antagonisms, morality was always a class morality; it has either justified the domination and the interests of the ruling class, or, as soon as the oppressed class has become powerful enough, it has represented the revolt against this domination and the future interests of the oppressed.⁵²

In each epoch—slave-holding, feudal, capitalist—the ruling classes strove to mask their rule and to palm off their narrow class interests as the interests of the whole of society. They served up their exploited morality as the morality of all mankind, raised it to the rank of an eternal truth, based on foundations existing outside of human society, independent of man and

⁵¹ Originally published in *Bolshevik Magazine*, No. 1, 1945.

⁵² *Op. cit.*, F. Engels (“Anti-Dühring”), p. 100.

of the given social and economic system and proceeding, as it were, from God.

With the passage of time the old social and economic structures perished and new ones arose in their place. Questions of ethics, of morals, became one of the branches of philosophical science. In laboring upon these delicate questions, the metaphysical and scholastic philosophers would justify the existing situation by ethical laws proceeding from transcendental conceptions, i.e., conceptions that cannot be grasped by the human mind. This does not mean that the many centuries of work of the metaphysicians and scholastics were barren of positive results for the development of human knowledge and logical thinking. But, in general, they all aimed at one goal—to compel morality to serve the interests of the ruling classes, to justify the oppression of a majority of exploited by a minority of exploiters, to secure the recognition of this state of affairs as ethical.

While, as a whole, serving the interests of capitalist society, West-European literature, nevertheless, produced some remarkable works flaying capitalism. For instance, in *Père Goriot* by Balzac, one of the keenest observers of bourgeois society, the Viscountess de Beauséant instilled the following ideas into the mind of the student Rastignac:

The more cold-blooded your purpose the surer you will be of success. Strike without pity, and the world will fear you. Treat men and women as post horses: never mind if you founder them, so long as they get you to the next relay. ...But if you really entertain a lofty sentiment, hide it as you would a treasure; let no one ever suspect you of it; you would be lost: instead of being the executioner, you would become the victim?⁵³

In Russia, as everywhere else, moral principles changed with the development of society. The morality of the ruling class in tsarist Russia rested upon three pillars, the three mainstays of the tsarist regime: “autocracy, orthodoxy and order.” These were the three principles of the most reactionary strata of the population: the landed nobility, the military caste, upper officialdom and the house of the tsar with all its retainers—so-called “high society” which united and headed all the reactionary forces. All the efforts of this ruling class were directed toward the preservation of its privileges and the maintenance of the people in a state of subjection. The aristocracy

⁵³ Honoré de Balzac, *Père Goriot*, Roberts Brothers, Boston, 1886, p. 100.

itself, by the way, did not attach great moral significance to the personality of the tsar, but this, nevertheless, did not prevent it from widely propagating among the people the notion that the tsar was the anointed of the Lord, that his power was sanctioned by God and that therefore all his decrees were just and infallible.

In contrast to the narrowly egoistic morals of the aristocratic-monarchist upper stratum, the foundations of a new morality began to rise: hatred for the exploiters, love for the people, love of country. The finest people of Russia gave all their strength, their very lives, to help the peasants to free themselves from their state of dependence under serfdom. The uprisings of Stepan Razin and Yemelyan Pugachev provided the most enlightened minds of the nobility with food for thought, moved them to a critical estimate of the condition, of the peasantry and the despotism of the landlords.

The literature of the eighteenth century in Russia supplied the first shoots of revolutionary morality, in part under the influence of the French enlighteners. Radishchev, the most outstanding representative of this literature, in his *Journey from St. Petersburg to Moscow*, subjected serfdom to annihilating criticism, depicting in striking colors the shameful scene of serf life (the sale of families of serfs wholesale and retail, condemnation to lifelong service in the army, the insults and the tyranny of the masters over their slaves). Radishchev indignantly stigmatized the serf system and its brutality, and asserted that any actions the peasants took in defense of their rights as human beings were legitimate. In the following words he appealed to the intelligence of his contemporaries:

The tillers of the soil among us are slaves to this very day; we do not recognize them as fellow citizens, on a par with us; we have forgotten that they are human beings. My beloved fellow citizens! True sons of my fatherland! Look about you and admit the error of your ways....

Who walks in our midst in chains, who feels the burden of unfreedom? The husbandman! He who feeds our lean bodies, he who satisfies our hunger; he who makes us healthy and strong and prolongs our life, yet has no right to dispose of what he works up nor what he produces....

Can a state, two-thirds of whose citizens are deprived of the name of citizen and part of whom are legally dead, be called

blessed? Can the civic status of the peasant in Russia be called blessed? Only the bloodthirsty can say that they are blessed, for they have no conception of a better state of affairs....

A country where a hundred arrogant citizens wallow in luxury while thousands are unprovided for with adequate nourishment and a roof of their own against the heat and the frost we call a blessed land. May such abundant lands be laid waste!⁵⁴

Radishchev's ideas on education can be considered progressive even today.

Morality embraces a very wide range of feelings the elucidation of which to society requires a developed language. The great Russian scientist Lomonosov worked hard to create such a developed Russian language, which facilitated the apprehension of the new ideas of his time by Russian society.

The language, [said Lomonosov,] with the aid of which Russia rules a great part of the earth possesses a natural abundance, beauty and strength that yields place to no European tongue. [He saw in the Russian language] the magnificence of the Spanish, the vivacity of the French, the strength of the German, the daintiness of the Italian and in addition the wealth of the Greek and Latin languages and their powerful brevity of picturization.

The literature of the first half of the nineteenth century considerably advanced the development of political thought in Russian society, its knowledge of its own people.

Powerful impetus to the development and further penetration of revolutionary morality, which already embraced considerable sections of society of that day, was given by Belinsky, Chernyshevsky, Dobrolyubov, and Nekrasov. They roused men's consciences, compelled people to ponder over life's problems, to think of the useful things one can do. Hardly anyone in the history of Russian literature and publicism exercised such dominance over the minds of people and so effectively raised their civic consciousness, spurring them on to the struggle against the autocracy and for a democratic revolution, as did Belinsky, Chernyshevsky and Dobrolyubov. And their personal lives, wholly devoted as they were to the development of Russian

⁵⁴ A. N. Radishchev, *Works* 1938, Vol. I, pp. 313, 314, 315, 317.

democracy, were surrounded in the eyes of progressive society by an aureole of lofty morality.

Belinsky wrote:

One cannot but love one's fatherland... But this love must not be a dead contentment with what exists but a live desire for improvement; in a word, love of country must at the same time be love of humanity.... To love one's homeland means to burn with a desire to see in it a realization of the ideal of mankind and to the best of one's ability to promote this goal.

Nekrasov's works aroused in each honest person hatred for the slaveholders and love for the people. He, too, called for struggle:

Face fire in defense of your country's honor,
Of your beliefs and of those you love....

Go die a death beyond reproach.

Your death will not have been in vain....

Firm stands a cause fought for with blood.

The outcry of his soul—"You may not be a poet but you must be a public-spirited citizen"—involuntarily stirred the best civic sentiments in wide circles of Russian society, aroused a consciousness of the moral responsibility to one's country, to one's people.

The chief content of Marxist morality before the October Revolution consisted of this: "to criticize the bourgeoisie, to arouse hatred of the bourgeoisie among the masses, to develop class consciousness and the ability to unite their forces."⁵⁵ Among the working class and the working people in general dissemination of the new morality proceeded along two convergent paths: on the one hand, Marxist intellectuals spread it by means of propaganda; on the other hand, developing capitalism itself, by the cruel exploitation of labor, drove the workers to resistance. Hence, the consciousness of the community of interests of the working people and appeals to international solidarity were readily apprehended by the workers. Proletarian morals were molded in the course of the workers' everyday life—in the factories,

⁵⁵ V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works in Two Volumes*, Vol. II, p. 666.

mills and workshops, Marxist propaganda merely widened the scope of their understanding of proletarian ethics.

Thus, for instance, the workers deemed it just retribution to beat strikebreakers, spies, stool pigeon and harsh foremen who cut wage rates. Workers solidarity, particularly during conflicts with employers, was recognized to be the right thing by the vast majority, if not by all of them. It goes without saying that, of course, the workers did not always act in solidarity. Besides the spies in the pay of the management, its agents, there were upstarts among the workers who tried to worm themselves into foremen's jobs, to get executive positions, and who therefore kept to themselves.

Every strike, every more or less important conflict at an enterprise, brought repressions in its wake: discharge of the so-called ringleaders, black-listing and arrests. The workers used to collect money to help these victims as best they could. Even some foremen used to contribute, and sometimes they were instrumental in securing work at other factories for those who had been discharged. This was considered a moral duty among the workers.

But all this was done at first in an unorganized manner. Only the further development of the revolutionary movement, the awakening of the class consciousness of the proletariat and its transformation from a class by itself into a class for itself gave rise to ethical qualities such as honesty to one's class, discipline, mutual support and self-sacrifice in struggle and organization. These characteristics of the ethical complexion of the proletariat formed the basis of the incipient Socialist morality which, under the conditions of capitalism, stood in direct opposition to bourgeois morality with its cruel, rapacious principles: "Man is a wolf to man," "Everyone for himself and the devil take the hindmost," "Try to get on in the world," and the like.

Our Party's propaganda introduced a remarkably ennobling element among the workers. One may boldly state that it was precisely the spread of Marxist propaganda and agitation, the organization of underground circles, that gave rise to the formation in Russia of a working-class intelligentsia. The propagandists and organizers welded the workers into a compact, organized force. They instilled revolutionary proletarian morality which penetrated the masses of the workers to a considerably greater depth than seemed to be the case if one judged by outer appearances. Revolutionary morality invaded not only the domain of social relations but also the everyday life of the working class.

It is to the credit of our pre-revolutionary intelligentsia that very early there sprang from its midst talented thinkers, artists, writers and impassioned fighters for the good of the people. The shining constellation of the revolutionary Narodniks was rightfully succeeded by the Marxists. Who does not know of the passionate struggle waged in the political literature of the nineties and of the nineteen hundreds between Narodism and Marxism, the controversies concerning the road of development that Russian economics and revolutionary thought must take? That this struggle was one of principle was conditioned by the realities of life before the revolution: strikes and demonstrations in the cities, rivaling, as it were, the peasant uprisings and the firing of landlords mansions in the Kharkov, Poltava and other gubernias.

In this struggle against the autocracy and the bourgeois and landlord order Marxist revolutionary thought took shape, and from the scattered workers' circles there was formed a Social-Democratic Party which in 1903, after the split with the Mensheviks at its Second Congress, was given the name of Social-Democratic Labor Party (Bolsheviks). Under the leadership of Lenin and Stalin the Party of the Bolsheviks and with it the working class firmly pursued the Marxist revolutionary path of struggle for the interests of that class. The ideas of revolutionary Marxism grew and strengthened among the workers, and the Leninist idea of the community of interests of the masses of the workers and peasants in the struggle against tsarism as well as the idea of the necessity of armed insurrection struck ever deeper root among them.

Notwithstanding the limited results achieved and the temporary defeat of the working class, the Revolution of 1905 raised considerably the class consciousness not only of the workers but also of the peasants, and enriched them with the revolutionary experience of struggle under the leadership of our Party. The people witnessed a practical demonstration of the possibility of defending their interests by taking up arms; needless to state, this was bound to leave its imprint upon their minds, was bound to find reflection in their moral and political moods and sentiments.

While, for instance, among the bourgeois intellectuals, the lower-middle classes and the upper strata of the workers, who had been following the Mensheviks, revolutionary sentiment experienced a sharp decline as a result of the defeat of the revolution; while they sang the dirge of the revolution and preached the so-called "legitimate" egoism of the individual, our Party was the only one which, in the teeth of petty-bourgeois anarchy, not only

did not lower the flag of revolutionary struggle, but even consolidated its ranks, fought ruthlessly all manifestations of opportunism and purged itself of fellow travelers. This work, of which Lenin and Stalin did the lion's share, soon bore fruit.

Under the influence of our Party the bourgeois-democratic February Revolution developed into the Great October Socialist Revolution, which culminated in the complete victory of the proletariat and the poor peasantry over the old order of tsarist Russia, over capitalism. The Rubicon was crossed, indeed: a new life began. The people blazed a new path that no one had as yet explored. It set itself a great goal—to reconstruct its life on new, Socialist foundations, without exploitation of man by man. This demanded a thoroughgoing demolition of the old social relations, and consequently man's moral complexion likewise had to undergo a change.

This was natural, for the rebuilding along new social-economic lines of Russia, a country in which various systems of production and of social life were intricately intertwined, demanded of our Party and its leadership a tremendous exertion of intellectual faculties, many years of agitation and propaganda, conducted for the purpose of imbuing the masses with Communist ethics. Marx and Engels wrote:

Both for the production on a mass scale of this Communist consciousness, and for the success of the cause itself, the alteration of men on a mass scale is necessary, an alteration which can only take place in a practical movement, a *revolution*; this revolution is necessary, therefore, not only because the *ruling* class cannot be overthrown in any other way, but also because the class *overthrowing* it can only in a revolution succeed in ridding itself of all the muck of ages and become fitted to found society anew.⁵⁶

The Great October Socialist Revolution raised the morality of all the peoples of Russia to a higher plane, the highest plane in human society. This is no exaggeration; it is merely an objective conclusion drawn from existing reality. This did not mean of course that one fine morning people woke up to find themselves blessed with new, Socialist ethics. Already Marx pointed out that the consciousness of people lags behind economic development, and

⁵⁶ *Op. cit.*, K. Marx, F. Engels ("The German Ideology"), p. 60.

that it is, therefore, impossible at once to destroy all survivals of capitalism by a revolutionary upheaval alone.

The greatness of the Marxist doctrine consists in Marx's discovery that in bourgeois society the working class is the only force capable of transforming life.

Lenin wrote that what distinguishes Marxism "from the old Utopian Socialism" is in fact

that the latter wanted to build the new society not from the mass human material produced by bloodstained, sordid, rapacious, shop-keeping capitalism, but from a special species of virtuous men and women reared in special hothouses and cucumber frames. This absurd idea is now seen to be absurd by everybody, and has been abandoned by everybody, but not everybody is willing, or able to ponder over the converse teaching of Marxism and to think out how Communism can (and should) be built from the mass human material, which has been corrupted by hundreds and thousands of years of slavery, serfdom, capitalism, small individual enterprise, and the war of every man against his neighbor for a place in the market, for a higher price for his product or his labor.⁵⁷

And indeed the masses did not find it easy to apprehend the new, Socialist morality. The victory of the proletariat and the poorest peasants at first encountered the hostility of even the majority of the intelligentsia, not to speak of the classes which had been overthrown. Even the working class itself, and particularly the peasantry, were unable to cast off at once the habits, customs and usages that had become ingrained by the age-old mastery of the landlords and the bourgeoisie. Not every worker understood that while living in capitalist society he had been a homeless proletarian who virtually had no fatherland, whose country treated him as a stepchild; that only after the October Revolution did he become converted from a dispossessed proletarian, into a citizen of a great country, into an equal member of a multi-millioned collective of builders of the Socialist State, became a co-owner of all the actual and potential wealth of the country.

Love of work is one of the principal elements of Communist ethics. But it is only upon the victory of the working class that work—that indis-

⁵⁷ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXIII.

pensable condition of human life—ceases to be a heavy and shameful burden and becomes a matter of honor and heroism.

Before the revolution I once happened to attend a meeting of workers at which a discussion arose concerning the attitude one should adopt toward one's work in a shop. Some were of the opinion that since we were working for capitalists there was no occasion particularly to exert oneself, that it was enough to do the minimum required by the boss or the foreman. Others, however, objected to this notion. Their professional pride would not permit them to produce goods of second-rate quality. They derived moral satisfaction from turning out first-class products.

This argument was, of course, purely theoretical in character. Everyone was well aware of the fact that any foreman or boss would insist upon high quality of output, and would see that he got it. But could anyone conceive of such a question being raised even (theoretically after the victory of the Socialist revolution? Quite the contrary. General proletarian ethics make the unqualified demand that only goods, of excellent quality be produced.

Needless to say, the apprehension of Socialist morality progressed with considerably greater difficulty in the countryside. But this is quite natural. There private property habits had taken deeper root; there substantial differences in the forms of land ownership and land tillage existed. In some localities community ownership of land, in others, individual households or farmsteads prevailed. The local social conditions and ways of living introduced substantial differences in the moral complexion of these strata of the peasantry.

And when the pivotal peasant question, that of collectivization, was placed upon the order of the day, the difficulties seemed insurmountably to many people. It was not easy for the peasant to embark upon the unknown road of collective farming, to start with the socialization of the means of production. Not to mention the poor peasant, even the middle peasant had little property: a horse and harness, primitive implements for tilling, such as a wooden plow and a harrow. However, many a one at that time considered that the property he turned over to the kolkhoz was more than that turned over by others that his contribution to collective-farm labor was greater than that of his neighbor. Besides, it must also be borne in mind that every village, even the small one, had its kulak or someone with kulak propensities, and these people, sometimes overtly but more often covertly, waged a bitter struggle against collectivization, sought by every means in their power to

disintegrate the collective-farm community, and slandered the foremost, the active ones among the kolkhozniks.

The kolkhoz system was victorious in our country because of the prestige enjoyed by the Soviet State, the Party and Comrade Stalin. The peasantry was convinced that the Soviet Government, the Party were seeking to effect a real improvement in the life of the peasants. The kolkhozniks took to the Socialist system and became active builders of it. Parallel with the change in the economic foundations of the peasant economy in the direction of Socialism, a change also began to take place in the psychology of the peasants, in their attitude towards the state, toward public, Socialist property, towards work; a change took place in their relations with one another. In a word, Socialist morality found fertile soil for its development among the peasants.

In our country, in the USSR, labor—from the simplest to the most skilled—in both city and country has acquired a profound content, has become inspired by the great idea of Socialism, has become the creative principle that regenerates people, trains them in the spirit of Communist ethics.

Communism begins when the *rank-and-file workers* begin to display self-sacrificing concern that overcomes all obstacles for increasing the productivity of labor, for husbanding *every poond of grain, coal, iron* and other products, which do not accrue to the workers personally, or to their “close kith and kin” but to their “remote kith and kin,” i.e., to society as a whole, to tens and hundreds of millions of people, organized first in a single Socialist State, and then in a Union of Soviet Republics.⁵⁸

This widely known proposition laid down by Lenin speaks more eloquently than anything else of the profound transformation effected in the views of people about work after the victory of the proletariat. And now we have every right to say that Socialist labor in our country, that Socialist emulation and the Stakhanov movement have become unshakable principles of Communist morality, have become the standards of conduct of Soviet people.

On June 22, 1941, the German army invaded Soviet territory without declaration of war.

⁵⁸ V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works in Two Volumes*, Vol. II, p. 497.

For twenty-four years our entire people had been working with unremitting energy. At the same time, while straining every muscle and every nerve, it had been learning, learning, learning. In the struggle for the development of industry and agriculture, in the persistent concerted effort to raise the standards of general culture, science, technique and art, all the peoples of the Soviet Union were drawn more closely together and their bonds of kinship strengthened.

This was excellently expressed in a message from the Uzbek people to the Uzbek fighting men:

Your people are the product of the Soviet Union. For twenty-five years Russians, Ukrainians, Byelorussians, Azerbaijanians, Georgians, Armenians, Tajiks, Turkmenians, Kazakhs and Kirghizians have worked together with you day and night, building the great home we dwell in, our country, our culture....

Now German bandits have broken into the home of your elder, Russian, brother, into the home of your other brothers, the Byelorussians and Ukrainians. They bring in with them the brown plague, the gallows and the knout, starvation and death.... But the Russians' home is also your home!... For the Soviet Union is a family that lives in harmony, and although each member of it dwells in his own home, one single and indivisible household and economy unites them all.

It is said that in order to fight the enemy successfully you must know him. The German fascists did not conceal their principles, their aims, or the "moral" complexion which they pictured as their ideal.

Hitler told them:

We must obey our instincts alone. Let us return to our childhood, let us once more be naïve.... We are anathematized as enemies of thought. What of it, so we are.... I thank my lucky star that I have been spared a scientific education. I can be free from numerous prejudices. I feel fine.... We shall raise a youth that will make the world shudder: a youth that is incisive, exacting and cruel. I want it to be like the cubs of savage beasts.

In a talk with Rauschning Hitler threw off all restraint:

We shall be confronted with the duty of diminishing the foreign population.... We must work out a technique for reducing the foreign population. Who can contest my right to destroy millions of people of a lower race who multiply like insects?... First and foremost the number of Slavs must be cut down. The great fertility of the Slavic and Eastern peoples represents a great menace to the Nordic race. The hierarchy of the masters must subjugate the mass of the slaves.

Full of confidence of victory over the whole world, the Germans thought they would be able to scoff with impunity at mankind and with impunity wipe out millions of people to please the “German blond beast.”

Guided by these “principles” the German command applies corresponding methods in its conduct of the war. In an address to its soldiers, printed in the form of a “handbook,” it is stated:

Do not forget to do the following:

1. Always think of the Fuhrer, morning, noon and night. Let no other thoughts disturb you; remember: he thinks and acts for you. You only have to do as you are told and fear nothing, for you, a German soldier, are invulnerable. No bullet, no bayonet will touch you. You must have neither nerves nor heart nor pity—for you are made of German iron. After the war you will acquire a new soul and a clean heart—for your children, for Greater Germany. So now act with determination, without hesitation.
2. You have neither heart nor nerves; in war they are of no avail. You must crush all pity and commiseration within you—kill every Russian, every Soviet person; do not hesitate if before you stands an old man or a woman, a boy or a girl—kill them and you will thereby save yourself from destruction; you will ensure the future of your family and gain eternal glory.
3. No force on earth can withstand the German onslaught. We shall bring the whole world to its knees. The Teuton is the absolute master of the world. You will decide the fates of England, Russia and America. You are a Teuton and must,

as behooves a Teuton, destroy everything that is alive and opposes your progress; always think of what is lofty, of the Fuhrer, and you will conquer. No bullet or bayonet will get you. Tomorrow the whole world will lie at your feet.

Thousands of letters from German soldiers and officers, their notes and diaries, could be quoted. They are all alike; they all characterize the German as a rag-picker and grabber, a dullard ready to execute the bloodiest tasks, an ignoramus stuffed with pride and self-conceit, who has gotten it into his head that he belongs to a "higher race."

Well, this army of soldiers whose heads had been crammed with hairbrained fascist ideas of "race superiority" and "geopolitics," an outlook which in itself excludes a human morality, rushed eastward, anticipating an easy victory.

It must be said that the German command considered victory over the USSR assured not only because of its overconfidence. This conviction was also fostered to a certain extent by the incessant campaign of slander conducted for many years by the anti-Soviet press abroad, which sought to discredit all our achievements and harped particularly on the allegedly low moral and political level of the Soviet people. Hence, at the beginning of the war foreign military experts one after another were busy calculating the time within which, in their opinion, the Soviet Union would be finally defeated. Now the whole world realizes how gravely mistaken all these so-called experts were.

Even when times were hardest our people were convinced of their final victory over Germany. This conviction was based on our material possibilities, on the fact that a people that had worked for twenty-four years at establishing the Socialist State could not be vanquished so long as it possessed arms.

The war, indeed, has been a most severe test of the stability of our State, of its economic might, of the correctness of its political leadership and of the moral and political steadfastness of the people. It was the moral superiority of our army over the German fascist army that became one of the most important factors which have ensured our victory. This is quite evident now when the German fascist hordes, thoroughly beaten and ejected from the confines of our country, stand at the brink of defeat.

On their accession to power the fascists declared, "Let them call us barbarians, we do not want culture," and forthwith they burned twenty million books.

In our country the Bolshevik Party has attached immense importance to the cultural revolution.

It would be difficult to calculate how much labor the Party and the Soviet Government have invested in the development of culture, the enlightenment of the popular masses, not to mention their daily solicitude for the development of industry and agriculture and the organization and equipment of a modern army. Foreign observers, with few exceptions, in estimating the level of culture and knowledge in the Soviet Union, take pre-revolutionary standards as their gauge, and even if they allow for a rise of these standards during the years of Soviet power, they try to measure it in terms of the growth of culture in the bourgeois countries. Yet only a few figures on the development of cultural institutions in our country need be cited to convince anyone of the extraordinary extent of this development.

As early as 1938-1939 the USSR occupied first place in the world as regards attendance at schools of general education, its figure being twenty percent higher than that of Great Britain, Germany, France and Italy taken together, while attendance at its higher educational institutions was forty percent above that of the countries mentioned plus Japan. Before the outbreak of the war Leningrad alone had more university and college students than the whole of fascist Germany.

At the beginning of 1939 the USSR had 240,765 libraries, comprising a total of 442,203,800 books. Compared with 1914 the number of its public libraries had increased 6.2-fold, the Saltykov-Shchedrin State Public Library in Leningrad alone having 3.2 times as many books as the Prussian State Library in Berlin.

Our Socialist culture rests upon a principle that Lenin formulated as follows:

Formerly, man's entire intellect, his entire genius, created solely in order to give to some all the benefits of technique and culture and to deprive the others of what is most essential—education and development. Today all the miracles of technique, all the achievements of culture, will become the possession of the whole people, and henceforth the human intellect and genius

will never again be turned into instruments of violence, into means of exploitation.

The Soviet Government has spared no means to bring the best products of the human mind within the reach of all the people. The works of Aristotle, Voltaire, Diderot, Helvetius, Holbach, Spinoza, Descartes, Democritus, Feuerbach, Darwin, Newton, Einstein, Mendeleyev, Mechnikov, Pavlov and Timiryazev were published in editions numbering tens and hundreds of thousands of copies. World classics like Byron, Balzac, Heine, Goethe, Hugo, Dickens, Zola, Maupassant, Romain Rolland, Cervantes, Anatole France, Shakespeare and Schiller were published in editions totaling millions.

Russian classics, such as the works of Pushkin, Gogol, Griboyedov, Lermontov, Herzen, Nekrasov, Saltykov-Shchedrin, Tolstoy, Chekhov, Gorky, and Mayakovsky, have already been published in tens of millions of copies. The Russian people have also been introduced to the literary classics of the other peoples of the USSR, such as Shevchenko, Akhundov, Rust'haveli, Ovanes Tumanyan and Sholem Aleichem, while the non-Russian peoples of the USSR have become acquainted with the treasure store of Russian and world literature. Here are some typical figures:

Works of:	Before the revolution, published in different languages	After the revolution, published in different languages
Pushkin	9	66
Lermontov	5	26
Tolstoy	10	54
Nekrasov	1	21
Saltykov-Shchedrin	1	24
Chekhov	5	53
Goethe	1	6
Romain Rolland	1	13

Under the Soviet system the works of bards, poets and ballad narrators—Jambul, Toktogul Satylganov, Suleiman Stalsky, Gamzat Tsadassy, Fekla Bezzubova and Marfa Kryukova—have been widely published.

Our theater rightly occupies a leading place not only in Soviet culture but also in world culture. Like the Soviet Union it is multinational. Whereas before the revolution the theatre art of many of our nationalities was only in an embryonic stage, it has been given all-sided development under the Soviet system and has come to hold a place of honor in the various national cultures. Thus, in Armenia, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Kirghizia there were no professional theaters; now Armenia has 27 theaters, Tajikistan 23, Kirghizia 21, and Turkmenia 11. The Ukraine possessed only 35 theaters before the revolution; in 1940 it had 125. Georgia had 3 theaters and now it has 49; Uzbekistan had 1 theater, now 49.

Even the smallest nationalities which under the tsar had no written language of their own, can each now boast of several theaters of their own, which serve as a basis for the development of their national art.

Clubs, cinemas and museums have vastly multiplied in number in the Soviet Union. At the beginning of 1939 the number of clubs exceeded the 100,000 mark, 41,000 of them belonging to kolkhozes. The number of cinema installations in the USSR showed a 21.9-fold increase in 1939 as compared with 1915. In general the cinema, one of the forms of art most popular among the masses, developed here only in Soviet times.

Before the outbreak of the present war our country had 794 museums, whereas before the revolution there were hardly more than a few dozen of them, and these were located almost exclusively in St. Petersburg and Moscow. Only a few of the other big cities, such as Kiev, Kharkov, and Tiflis, had museums of their own, and these were small ones. Today almost all the capitals of our republics have their own art galleries and there is literally not a single regional center that does not have its own museum containing samples of the wealth of the given territory or region, including the works of local artists.

Moreover, every city where some famous writer, musician or artist was born or lived, takes pride in collecting all mementos pertaining to his life and work and in setting up a museum in his honor. These are regularly visited not only by the local population, but also by people from other localities. Thus, for example, a museum in memory of Chekhov has been founded not only in Taganrog, the great Russian writer's native town, but also in Yalta, where he spent the last years of his life. The urge to set up museums is so great that the process of setting them up has not stopped even now, during the difficult war period. Our press frequently carries notices of the opening of museums

in various parts of our country. Quite recently a literature branch of the State Museum was organized in Kazan. The Khorezm Regional Museum is arranging an exposition in the Mauretania Palace of the city of Khiva showing new historical materials pertaining to ancient Khorezm.

This is the fourth year of the war. The fighting has now been carried into German territory. Today the Germans are feeling the effect of the war more palpably, more concretely, on their own skin, although, of course, the invasion of the Allied armies does not bring with it that regime of plunder and violence which the Hitlerites instituted in the countries, occupied by them, particularly in the USSR. In our villages and towns they dealt most savagely with the civilian population. The whole German army, from front commander to private, engaged in looting, all Germans, from Hitler to the rank-and-filer, tortured and murdered.

At the beginning of the war Soviet people experienced a sort of indecision, did not know how and wherewith to fight the gang of murderers and robbers which had invaded the country. Many were astounded by the barbarian incursion from “cultured” Europe which in no way harmonized with their conceptions of that continent.

Comrade Stalin in his broadcast of July 3, 1941, pointed out that the war with fascist Germany cannot be considered a war between two armies, and issued a call to start a great war of the whole of the people against the fascist invaders. In this call the people found a concrete form for their struggle against the enemy, preferring to die with arms in hand rather than become forever slaves in the fascist menagerie. Only then did the rest of the world see—for it was impossible not to see—and realize—for it was impossible not to realize—the fortitude of the Soviet people, the high moral and political plane upon which they stood.

Indeed, how could one fail to acknowledge the heroism of our army, how not acknowledge the gigantic work and the wholehearted devotion to their Soviet homeland displayed by our whole people during the country’s gravest moments?!

Our working class manifested such self-sacrifice in surmounting wartime difficulties, such persistence in acquiring professional skill, such political consciousness and labor discipline as will hardly find a parallel

anywhere in the world. Comrade Stalin highly appraised this labor heroism when he said:

Just as the Red Army gained a military victory over the fascist troops in a long and severe struggle, fighting single-handed, so the working people in the Soviet rear gained an economic victory over the enemy in single combat against Hitler Germany and her accomplices.

How difficult were the conditions under which the factories evacuated from enemy-occupied territory had to restart work is common knowledge. People had to build factories and dwellings and at the same time organize the resumption of production at new locations, and under absolutely abnormal conditions. And they did this job. For days on end the workers did not leave their factories when it was a question of urgent production for the front.

And all these incredible difficulties notwithstanding, the work of new construction proceeded and is still proceeding without a break.

Our workers are displaying great heroism in the liberated districts where they are rehabilitating the industry destroyed by the Germans.

In a letter to Comrade Stalin the miners of Stalino Region spoke of the conditions in which they have to restore the production of coal:

Immediately after the place was liberated we proceeded to restore the wrecked pits. People undertook this work as if they were going into battle. Danger threatened the miners not infrequently. For instance, the Smolyanka Pit No. 1-2 of the Kuibyshev Coal Trust had been mined by the Germans who, after blowing up the shaft, had tightly bottled it up. But people worked day and night at the risk of being buried under the debris any moment and cleared a passage to the pit meter by meter. The oldest timbermen were in charge of this selfless work, inspiring the miners by their fearlessness and daring. On the third day they had cleared the shaft. Then the struggle entered a new stage. Defying all danger, blasters extracted from the pit over three hundred kilograms of dynamite which had been placed there by the Germans. Up to their belts in ice-cold water, volunteer miners raised the flooded machinery.

In the Kaganovich Pit of the Makeyevka Coal Trust the Germans set a coal seam on fire. Fearless miners went below ground to fight the flames. The contest lasted three days and three nights. Finally the fire was extinguished, the pit restored and production resumed.

At the Kalinin Pit of the Artyom Coal Trust young mechanics worked in ice-cold water in order to take a pump apart, and salvaged it from the flooded mine.

In the Dimitrov Pit No. 5-6 of the Budyonny Coal Trust workers dragged huge boilers by hand for fifteen kilometers.

And this process of rehabilitation of industry and also agriculture is going on in all the liberated regions.

Our kolkhozniks have also evinced a high degree of civic consciousness. The number of able-bodied male inhabitants in the countryside is considerably smaller than it was before the war. The brunt of agricultural work must now be performed by the womenfolk, the kolkhoz women. And they are making a splendid job of it. For the fourth year now the kolkhozes are satisfactorily supplying the Red Army and the cities with foodstuffs, and industry with raw materials. There are practically no kolkhozes which do not consider it their moral duty to deliver part of their produce over and above the fixed deliveries to the state, to the Red Army Fund.

One might ask: what has civic consciousness, moral duty, etc., to do with this? It must not be forgotten that today the kolkhozes frequently lack not only mechanical but also animal traction power, and it is only by great exertion of physical effort on the part of the kolkhozniks, only by dint of their determination to defeat the enemy at any cost, that the farm work can be done in time and a crop obtained. Examples of such high civic consciousness at work have been displayed in thousands of instances.

On the "Five-Year Plan in Four Years" Kolkhoz, Kolomna District, Moscow Region, Tamara Krutova's team carefully tilled its two-hectare section of the potato field, finished every process of work on time, but was threatened by crop failure on account of the July drought. Thereupon the girls under the direction of their team leader looked for a remedy and found an old fire engine in the farmyard, repaired it and set to work. As a result Krutova's team picked eighty-three tons of potatoes from each hectare.

Somewhere along, the Tashkent railway a “bottleneck” had to be attended to. Tens of thousands of kolkhozniks came out to work along the line and in twelve to fifteen days doubletracked it and built the necessary sidings and junctions.

During this war our intelligentsia too have displayed creative initiative and patriotic activity in unprecedented measure. Everywhere, from the Academy of Sciences with its research institutes down to the engineer in the shop or in the mine, down to each prospecting party, creative activity is going on without interruption. Soviet teachers, doctors, agronomists, artists, actors and writers gave their all for victory, and the results of their labors have been fittingly appraised by Comrade Stalin in the following words:

Our intellectuals are boldly pursuing the path of technical and cultural innovation, are successfully promoting modern science and are creatively utilizing its achievements for the production of armaments for the Red Army. By their constructive efforts the Soviet intellectuals have made an invaluable contribution to the cause of defeating the enemy.

Of great importance also is the part played by the youth, especially the girls, in industry, agriculture, transport, and the various offices and institutions. In wartime they have to shoulder the brunt of the work. And our youth, reared by the Leninist Komsomol, has fully justified the trust the Party placed in it. There is no branch of industry in which our young men and women, organized in youth brigades, have not performed their patriotic duty, raising labor productivity, releasing skilled workers for other branches of industry and rationalizing production processes. Let me cite a few examples to illustrate this point.

At factory No. 45 of the People’s Commissariat of the Aircraft Industry, Orlova, a girl operating a milling machine, suggested using one universal jig instead of four jigs for drilling, which would make it possible to perform four operations in one. She cut down milling time to one-third. A turner named Turin proposed transferring the drawing of parts from the drawing bench to the turner’s bench. The adoption of this suggestion cut down the turning time seventy-five percent,

Nor do the rural youth lag behind their comrades in the towns. By October 1944 twenty thousand youth tractor brigades numbering over two hundred thousand tractor drivers were involved in the emulation move-

ment. High-crop-yield youth teams comprised almost four hundred thousand young kolkhozniks.

A typical example is the work of the team led by Zoya Shegeda, Buturlinovka District, Voronezh Region. Before the war Zoya attended school. When the war broke out and her father went to the front, she decided to work in the local kolkhoz. She was soon put in charge of a team which was assigned fifteen hectares of land to till. During the entire winter, spring and summer of 1943, Zoya Shegeda and her team mates worked diligently, studied and applied advanced scientific farming methods to ensure a big crop. In the autumn of 1943 their hard work was rewarded by a crop that was unheard of in those parts—one hundred and eighty *poods* of millet per hectare.

The intensive effort of the Soviet youth can be observed everywhere and at all times; it is evidence of the fact that our young generation has greatly matured politically and morally during the stern period of the war. Much of the credit for this is due the Leninist Komsomol which has succeeded in instilling in the youth the ideas of the Bolshevik Party, its traditions, its boundless love of its country and its people.

Although all that has been said about the workers, kolkhozniks, the intelligentsia and the youth applies in equal measure to women as well as men, the outstanding part played by women during this war should be given special mention. Perhaps nowhere in the literature of other countries is woman assigned such a place of honor as in Russian classical literature. How numerous are the women in the literature and history of our country who have been exemplary in the lofty morale they have displayed! Yet everything that has gone before pales into insignificance when compared with the grand epic of the present war; with the heroism and readiness for sacrifice of Soviet women, their civic valor, fortitude in bereavement and enthusiasm in struggle manifested with a force and, one might say, majesty, never witnessed in the past.

Komsomol member Zoya Kosmodemyanskaya, a girl-partisan, attained the summit of patriotism and moral grandeur. She imbibed, as it were, all the finest emotions that have moved our people in the course of their historical

development. She was indeed a daughter not only of the Russian but of the whole Soviet people, a daughter of the Leninist Komsomol.

Fascism resorted to barbaric cruelty in the hope of degrading Soviet women, breaking their morale; but in this it failed utterly. Zoya's moral stamina and that of the other Soviet women triumphed over fascist brutality.

Zoya Kosmodemyanskaya, a Hero of the Soviet Union, was, of course, an outstanding girl. Yet she was typical of the girls of our country, for readiness to do and dare has always been, and continues to be, characteristic of the majority of Soviet women. The living reality of today is yielding thousands of examples of the bravery, devotion and love of country being displayed so abundantly by our womankind during the Patriotic War. Here are some cases in point:

Olga Tikhomirova acted as scout and nurse in one of the Vitebsk partisan detachments. Again and again this fearless girl risked her life to save her comrades. During an engagement in the Shalbovo forest the commander of her group was wounded. After dressing his wound Olga personally led the partisans in an attack upon the enemy strong-points. A shell splinter tore off her right hand. Comrades bandaged her wound, after which Olga continued to advance. Another shell hit her and mangled both her legs. She perished, but to her dying breath continued to hearten her comrades,

A dynamiter in a partisan detachment named Vera Lesovaya inflicted great damage on the Germans. Her military record included the derailment of three enemy trains and the blowing up of numerous motor trucks. Wounded in the leg, Vera fell into the hands of the Germans. In order to extort information from her concerning the partisan detachment, the Germans lit a fire on her bosom. But even this inhuman torture could not wring a single word from her. She died without having betrayed anything to the enemy.

Junior Lieutenant Maria Batrakova, Hero of the Soviet Union, took part in the defense of Leningrad and Stalingrad. In August 1943, she volunteered to participate with a company of tank-borne tommy gunners in an assault on enemy positions. When the officer in command of the operation was disabled she promptly took his place. The German trenches were taken. A month later, while forcing the Molochnaya River, Maria once more led a group of men, who had lost their commander, in an attack against enemy tanks. Under the command of this intrepid girl the Soviet fighting

men fought for one hundred and twenty hours, repulsing fifty-three enemy counter-attacks.

Guards Lieutenant Yekaterina Budanova, a fighter pilot, sighted twelve German bombers on their way to loose their loads on one of our trains. The daring flyer cut into the thick of the enemy formation. The Germans lost their heads and jettisoned their bombs in the steppe, but on seeing that they were dealing with a lone fighter they counter-attacked. Yekaterina stood her ground brought one bomber down and forced the rest to turn tail. She has shot down twenty German planes herself.

The whole country knows the story of how Oleg Koshevoi's mother, Yelena Nikolayevna Koshevaya—well knowing what lay in store for her son and his companions if they were caught at their underground work—sheltered these Komsomol heroes of Krasnodon and helped them as best she could.

It is life in the Soviet land that has enabled our women to rise to such heights of moral steadfastness. Their glorious deeds, the high degree of patriotism they have displayed in this Patriotic War, will no doubt be a source of inspiration to great writers, sculptors and painters, and our Soviet heroines will be worthily immortalized in art and letters.

Partisan struggle must be considered a manifestation of the magnificent initiative displayed by our people in the defense of their homeland and safeguarding their freedom against enslavers.

On July 3, 1941, Comrade Stalin's call to partisan warfare resounded throughout the land. This was the clearest indication of the close connection between the Soviet Government and the people. As the leader of the people and Supreme Commander-in-Chief of all the armed forces of the Union, and also as a statesman, Comrade Stalin realized more than anyone else the necessity and importance of this appeal. For the people, if we picture it as one person, was nervously shifting from one foot to the other, undecided as to what specific practical steps should be taken in defense of the country by those who had not been called to the colors. Comrade Stalin's appeal showed the way out, opened the floodgates of popular passion, indicated how the energies of the people could be applied in partisan warfare.

Leader of the people—how great is the purport of these words! They imply not only guidance of the people, of the army; they express as well the unity of leader and people, the community of feelings and purpose. This explains why Comrade Stalin's appeals and directives are so effective. Our partisan movement developed into a struggle of the whole of the people, a struggle which grew with every month. In this movement our Party played a tremendous part. The Communists became the initiators and organizers of the first groups of partisans. Much of the success they achieved must be credited to the centralized and purposeful leadership given to the partisan movement.

Our people had recourse to partisan warfare even before this war as a means of defending the country from its enemies. Denis Davydov, the well-known partisan, wrote as follows on the basis of the experience of the War of 1812:

Vast is our mother Russia! Her abundant resources have cost dearly the many nations who have assailed her honor and existence; but they do not yet know all the strata of lava lying beneath her. . . . Russia has not yet risen to her full gigantic stature and woe betide the foe if she ever does!

And, indeed, never before in its age-old history has the partisan movement been such a mass movement, such a nationwide movement, and for that reason never was the partisan struggle so well organized and so all-embracing as in this war. A highly characteristic feature is the considerable extent to which the Soviet intelligentsia have participated in the partisan struggle. How effective this participation has been may be gauged if only from the example of the fight put up by the partisan unit named after the Ignatov Brothers from Krasnodar, the Kuban.

In his *Partisan's Diary*, P. K. Ignatov (Batya), the commander of this detachment, relates that his unit consisted in the main of professionals with technical training—engineers, directors of factories, economists, and scientific workers. They were all city people, more likely than not people accustomed to what is called “paper work.” But in their patriotic fervor they exchanged their comfortable, customary city life for the unaccustomed and difficult life, full of hardship and danger, of partisans operating in the mountains. They might have all evacuated and chosen defense jobs in the rear. However, under the circumstances they considered they could

do more effective work by employing their energy in direct combat with the hated enemy.

The results they achieved in a half a year were astounding: this small detachment derailed one hundred and fifty-five railway cars loaded with munitions and equipment (tanks, guns, etc.), or with enemy troops, blew up eight bridges, destroyed scores of tanks, tankettes and heavy guns, more than a hundred smaller guns and mortars, killed about two thousand enemy soldiers and officers and seriously wounded over two thousand five hundred. During this period the Ignatov unit lost only five men killed and two seriously wounded.

In actual fact, the results accomplished by this partisan unit were considerably greater, if we take account of the fact that a sort of “sapper and saboteur university” was organized in the detachment to train sappers and saboteurs for neighboring partisan detachments, who kept their own scores of losses inflicted upon the enemy.

The efficiency of the Ignatov detachment is to a large degree due to the high technical training of the engineers, technicians and workers among its personnel. This made it possible not only to organize well the partisan group itself, but also to direct its blows against the enemy according to plan, scientifically, so to speak. The Ignatov men devoted everything—not only their fervor, but also their great skill and knowledge, their diversified training, their intellect—to selfless service to their country.

All the nationalities of the Soviet Union took part in the partisan movement, and especially, for reasons readily understood, the Ukrainians and the Byelorussians. Volumes have been, are being, and will be written in the future about the exploits of the partisan fighters. We shall cite here by way of illustration only a few examples.

Far in the rear of the enemy the Byelorussians won back entire districts which were called “Partisan Territory” and where the German invaders dared not show their noses. The partisans also controlled other districts, preventing the occupationists from shipping out grain and other products. This was the case in Baranovichi Region, where the popular avengers wiped out more than thirty thousand Hitlerite scoundrels by train wrecks and ambushes, and in open battle.

In the autumn of 1943 the Germans decided to wipe out the partisan brigade operating in Lyuban District, Minsk Region. Several German divisions armed to the teeth, equipped with tanks and aircraft, surrounded the

forest where the brigade was in hiding. By superhuman effort it managed to fight its way out of the encirclement. Thanks to the skill of its commander Shashura, and despite the boggy terrain and the constant fire and bombardment of the enemy which made it impossible even to stop and pick up the wounded, the partisans managed to extricate themselves. Shashura fell, seriously wounded. The partisans placed him upon an improvised stretcher and carried him along, but they could do so only by walking upright. Stretcher-bearers fell one after another, six of them were killed. Yet each time a new man instantly took the place of the fallen and the wounded commander reached safety together with his force.

The partisan movement assumed many different forms, P. M. Buiko, a professor at the Kiev Medical Institute, volunteered for the front during the first days of the war, was captured and escaped. Burning with hatred for the German invaders, he engaged in underground work on German-controlled territory. Having secured a position as physician in the Fastov district hospital, Buiko arranged for the treatment of wounded Red Army men and commanders. He saved a thousand of the local youth from deportation to Germany, established contacts with the partisans and sent people to them. When his activity was discovered, he escaped (in June 1943) to the partisans. Finally the Germans succeeded in capturing Buiko. They poured gasoline over him and turned him into a burning torch. The name of this valiant Soviet patriot, this splendid representative of our intelligentsia, will never be forgotten.

The partisan struggle, in which all the nationalities inhabiting German-invaded Soviet territory took part, clearly demonstrated to foreign countries that the Soviet system is rooted in the people; it demonstrated the love felt for it by the entire people, their firm resolve to fight for its preservation, for the independence of the Land of Soviets. There can be no more convincing proof of the moral and political unity of the peoples of the Soviet Union.

While war in general is a test of the material resources of a country and its moral fiber, the present war has demanded of the people a really unprecedented expenditure of material forces as well as the greatest possible

moral stamina. Military authorities likewise consider moral stamina one of the most important factors of victory.

In this regard the opinion of General M. I. Dragomirov is of interest:

Success in battle requires of military men very much moral energy, doggedness and moral flexibility; the energy which permits of no doubt of success even when the situation appears hopeless; the doggedness which gives one the strength not to recede from the set goal; the flexibility which, when circumstances change, is capable in one instant of changing the means of achieving the set goal.⁵⁹

Victory will be achieved by the army whose soldiers are imbued with the determination to achieve it, even at the cost of their own lives, for only he can be victorious, i.e., bring about the doom of another, who is capable of going to his doom himself.⁶⁰

The same idea as we understand it today is expressed in the clear-cut motto: contempt for death. But we do not invest this motto with any mystical romanticism any idea of a high pitch of nervous tension in the individual, a desire to die gloriously. We do not look upon death as an end in itself, as something lofty, superhuman in itself. From our point of view death is the heaviest blow that can strike a man.

Perhaps nowhere is the desire to live as great as in the Land of Soviets. And it is precisely this love of life in the Land of Soviets, in the midst of the Soviet people, that, when this life is endangered, when a life-and-death struggle is being waged to preserve it, causes the citizen of the Land of Soviets to lose his fear of death; his desire to preserve the life of the Soviet people and thereby preserve his own life forever, as it were, overpowers his fear. It is no accident that the Communist goes to the scaffold with proudly uplifted head and hurls at the enemy the words, arising from a profound faith: "I shall die, but our cause will live on forever." At such a time the individual merges completely with the collective, whose interests he holds higher than anything else and considers stronger than death. This mentality makes Soviet people indomitable fighters. Let us recall the valiant feats of the twenty-eight Panfi-

⁵⁹ M. I. Dragomirov, *Textbook on Tactics*, 1906, Part I, p. 3.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, Part II, pp. 10-11.

lov Guardsmen who engaged in single combat dozens of fascist tanks; of Red Army man Matrosov who blocked the embrasure of a German pillbox with his own body; of Kamal Pulatov, who hurled himself with a bunch of hand grenades under a tank at the head of a German column during the defense of the approaches to Stalingrad; of Tuicha Erjighitov, who flung himself on the muzzle of a German machine gun. What is particularly important here is that these are not isolated cases of heroism but have been repeated again and again in the course of the war by our fighting men and officers.

Even during our greatest adversity, when our army had to withdraw, firm confidence of our victory prevailed in its ranks. The Red Army men and commanders confidently told the population remaining behind: "We shall return, we shall come back." And this conviction was based not only on material premises but also on the moral stamina of our people, on their faith in the justice of our cause. No one could think for a moment that there was any force in the world strong enough to deprive our people of Soviet power. And this feeling which has gripped the masses has become a material force which in the West is regarded as a miracle. We, however, deem this conviction to be the truest measure of the strength of Soviet power.

Love of country is inherent in all nations, but the same cannot be said of all armies. The renowned Brandenburgian army of Frederick II did not love its people and was not loved by them. The army and the people were alien to each other. This army was merely the instrument of the Prussian king's plans of conquest, it served only to consolidate his power over his subjects.

Frederick's principles and his methods of organizing and training an army are matters of the distant past, but up to recent times all European governments considered them the military ideal and strove to model their armies on Frederick's. Naturally time and progress introduced corrections and greatly limited such desires. Nevertheless the discipline of the stick, the barrack regime, isolation from the outside world, the ban on politics and progressive literature, in a word, all measures isolating the army from the people and the people from the army, are applied to this day. And the foremost among all foreign countries in this respect is Germany, where the cult of ruthless discipline of the stick still flourishes. They even have a special preserve there (Prussia) which is carefully guarded from the people and kept for a special breed of men whose sole aim in life is war.

However much the Russian tsars tried to transplant the Prussian military system in the Russian army, they never quite succeeded. The Russians are made of different stuff from the Germans. Hence the saying: "What is good for the Russian is death for the German." But the Russian army too was kept apart from the people by the tsarist government, and it was not patriotic in our sense of the word. All the same it always had a stratum that produced sincere patriots and talented generals who faithfully served their country and despite pressure from above improved the real fighting qualities of the army and raised its prestige on the battlefield.

The Soviet army is a special kind of army, unlike the former Russian army and unlike all other European armies. Its personnel is truly of the people. The fighting men and commanders of the Red Army are homogeneous as regards class, something that cannot be said of any other contemporary army. Our army is bound to the people by countless ties in private and public life.

The social ties between the people and the army find expression in our country in a system of patronage of civilian establishments over army units, in performances given in army units by amateur art circles and in diverse other ways. The Party and its lofty ideas spiritually unite the army and the people. Our Red Army men and commanders are not only interested in the life going on in their native localities, not only give thought to all that is going on in their home towns and villages, but actually participate as far as possible in local affairs, and in the overwhelming majority of cases do so fruitfully. The army has, and cannot fail to have, a strong love for its native land of whose warm affection it is ever conscious.

The friendship of the peoples of our country rests upon the firm foundation of the community of their interests. It is but natural that this friendship should be strongly felt in the army, too. This friendship is, of course, unlike the tie that links the German soldiers and their officers, for their "friendship" is based upon brigandage. There, when the boss of a notorious gang sallies forth on some risky venture, he takes along the heads of smaller bands but looks upon this bandit small fry with contempt. It was precisely such relations that linked the German army with the armies of Germany's satellites at the time of the predatory attack upon the USSR. This "friendship" was unmoral and hence unstable, of which the disintegration of the fascist bloc offers splendid proof. Nor is this surprising, for the fascist race

theory is a flat negation of all friendship of peoples, and Germany's entire policy is built upon this race theory.

The true friendship of the peoples of the Soviet Union, constantly nurtured in peacetime, has burgeoned forth magnificently during the war years and has caused not only our enemies but also our friends abroad to marvel. This friendship has become steeled in the severe trials of the war. Naturally it is felt particularly keenly at the front, where constant danger stalks the fighting man and he consequently must be able to place complete trust in the comrade standing shoulder to shoulder with him. The front is the touchstone that, among a host of other human emotions, tests loyalty and friendship. The peoples of the Soviet Union have stood this test not only in concerted work in the rear but also in the conduct of their sons in the forward lines at the front. And it could not be otherwise. Our army is a fraternal family where to aid one's comrade is a self-imposed duty. Almost every war dispatch published in our press contains examples of such fraternal assistance.

During lulls in the fighting this friendship brightens life at the front. A young Kazakh will read a letter from his wife announcing the birth of a son, and he and his comrades in the squad hold a serious discussion as to what name to give the child. Or a Siberian will receive in his mail a description of life on his kolkhoz at home, of the crop and similar questions. These topics are of interest to all the men at the front, even to those who hail from the cities, and are bound to become the subject of general discussion. In brief, there is always an endless number of themes of general interest for discussion.

In our country neither the color of one's skin nor one's nationality has anything to do with advancement in service or promotions in rank. The only criterion is one's ability and combat record. This is so not merely formally, in pursuance of the law, so to speak, but is facilitated by the outlook of the Red Army men and officers. Hence the army's high morale. And the personal friendship that develops on this basis lasts long even between people who live far apart from each other.

Hatred of the enemy has deeply permeated our army. The Germans themselves have helped to bring this about. For there is perhaps not a single unit in the whole of our army without somebody who has suffered from the brigandage of the Germans, whose wife, children or aged parents have been

murdered, or whose sister has been driven off into German bondage, not to mention the plunder of his property and the burning of his home.

Today when Germany is being pressed ever closer to the wall by the allied armies and the war has been carried into her territory, the German propagandists shed crocodile tears and complain that war is becoming ever more cruel, that the old spirit of chivalry has died out in the armies. Such propaganda is evidently intended for the credulous in the allied countries. The cutthroats who directly or indirectly have wiped out tens of millions of people now appeal to sentiments of chivalry when the hour of retribution has come.

To us hatred of the fascist fiends is a sacred hatred. But one American journalist, while in general commenting favorably on Ilya Ehrenburg's *War*, has remarked that the book loses in value because it is full of hatred for the Germans. This opinion is not an accidental one. In America as well as in Western Europe there is a considerable stratum of people who avoid calling things by their names and display no great passion in the struggle against fascism. They claim that moderation is more effective and that anyhow hatred is incompatible with man's nobler sentiments. This, of course, is absolutely contrary to fact.

Foreign critics have justly considered Russian fine literature to be great and the most human of all. Thus Aleksander Bruckner, the Polish authority on *belles-lettres*, wrote in the preface of his *History of Russian Literature*:

Russian literature is the youngest in the world.... Its youth is compensated for by its fertility and originality, its high moral value, its propagation of humanity and altruism, its keen wit and penetrating analysis of the human soul and life's observations, its frankness and veracity, its democratic spirit. It creates a profound impression because of the significant place it has won for itself in its own country, a point wherein it far surpasses the other literatures of the world.... It has become a rostrum from which goodness, beauty, freedom and humanity are stoutly defended; it has become the only voice of the social conscience.

However, running through our literature, through the works of our best masters of the written word, is hatred of evil as the noblest of emo-

tions and one of the most active instruments for combating the enemies of mankind.

Gorbatov's novel *The Unbowed* gives a remarkably fine description of the hatred felt for the Germans. Old man Taras will not entertain the thought of the Germans escaping unpunished after all the evil they have done to people. He does all in his power to take revenge on the enemies. When the Germans are leaving the town he runs down the street, knocking with his stick against the shutters and shouting:

“Come on out, everybody! Come on, the Germans are leaving! Don't let them get away! Come on out, men, all of you!”

A crowd was gathering around him.

“Let them go!” someone in the throng shouted. “We didn't ask them to come. The devil take them, and thank the Lord for our deliverance!”

“What do you want, Taras?”

“We mustn't allow the Germans to get out of here,” he shouted. “We ought to kill them on the spot!”

“They'll be killed off without us, Taras.... We're not the army. It's none of our business.”

“What do you mean—none of our business?” roared Taras. “Whose then is it? If the Germans leave with a whole skin they'll show up again to trample us in the mud and to hang our children. Don't let them get away! I want to see them dead and buried; that's what I want!”

He dashed off toward the city, swinging his stick, Lyonka at his side. Already workers could be seen running from every direction. Many had arms; the Lord knows where they got them....

“Too bad I haven't got a gun,” Taras exclaimed bitterly as he ran. “Too bad about that, Lyonka!”

And he raised his knotty old man's cane high above his head. He was a fear-inspiring figure, formidable with his cane in his hands, grey-haired, without a cap, ruddy from the glow of the burning city...

We have indicated the sources from which Soviet morality develops. They reach far back into the historical past. The task of bringing them to light falls to the investigators of the spiritual development of the Russian and other peoples inhabiting the Soviet Union. We have dwelt upon a very limited number of those who have contributed to this development and facilitated the inculcation of the finest moral qualities in Russian society. It goes without saying that the moral feelings of people are far fuller and more varied. For instance, we have said nothing of how parents' love for their children has grown in Soviet times, of the increased independence and initiative of women, etc. We have illustrated primarily the political aspect of the morality of the Soviet people, and have endeavored to show the sentiments that help in the struggle against the enemy.

As I have already said, our morality has been developed and propagated by the finest of our people. Due credit must here be given to the Russian progressive intelligentsia, to Russian literature and art, which for hundreds of years fought devotedly against the dark forces of tsarism, the cruelty of the exploiters and the ignorance of the people. Russian literature has ennobled man and compelled the whole world to acknowledge his lofty moral qualities, which have risen to particularly great heights and penetrated into the very midst of the popular masses under the Soviet system. The Soviet Socialist system has been the basis for the development of our Communist morals. And it could not be otherwise. The Soviet Government and the Party of Lenin-Stalin pursue but a single aim, the well-being of the people, and all their actions are directed toward this really lofty moral goal.

Comrade Stalin's every action is confirmation of his pledge to give his last drop of blood for the cause of the people. Is that not the highest degree of human morality? And the morality of our Party, the Party of Lenin-Stalin, is also the morality of our people. It gives the Soviet State its power of tremendous resistance to aggressors; it inspires laboring men in factory and field; it makes heroism a mass phenomenon at the front; it is one of the most important elements of victory.

Speech at Presentation of Orders of the USSR to the Newspapers *Komsomolskaya Pravda* and *Pionerskaya Pravda*⁶¹

July 11, 1945

Comrades, I congratulate the editorial staff of *Komsomolskaya Pravda* and with it the entire Komsomol, and also the editorial staff of *Pionerskaya Pravda*, Young Pioneers and other children who read *Pionerskaya Pravda*, on these high awards. The first newspaper has been awarded a military Order, and the second, an Order in recognition of services in the field of labor, and I think both newspapers well deserve these decorations.

Throughout the war *Komsomolskaya Pravda* has held aloft the banner of Soviet patriotism, raised the spirits and patriotic fervor, the fighting spirit and labor energy of our youth—and its efforts have not been in vain.

During these four years our Komsomol members, our young people in general, have gone through a hard school of life, and many of them have even given their lives. And there can be no doubt that during this period, when people have done so much, *Komsomolskaya Pravda* has helped in the struggle indicated the path, the right line of conduct for the youth. It now has every reason to be proud of the results of its work and its appeals. Its propaganda, agitational and organizational work has been crowned with great achievements. The Komsomol of the Soviet Union, the entire Soviet youth, have probably done more than the youth of the rest of the world in this period.

Consequently, let me congratulate *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, firstly, on the fact that it has seen in practice the fruits of its labors—on the field of battle, in the factories and mills, on the kolkhozes and sovkhozes⁶²—in the shape of the tremendous patriotism, the selfless devotion of our young people to their country, to their Socialist State, their Government, and the leader of the people, Comrade Stalin, who have always, and particularly in difficult times, supported the Soviet youth; secondly, on the fact that it has greatly helped the Komsomol give guidance to and exercise an influence on

⁶¹ Originally published in *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, July 13, 1945.

⁶² Sovkhozes: State-owned farms.—Ed.

the entire Soviet youth, and has won enormous prestige not only among the youth, but also among the entire population of the Soviet Union.

A vast amount of work has also been done by *Pionerskaya Pravda*. The significance of this work consists, firstly, in imperceptibly accustoming our Young Pioneers from their very first steps in life, so to say, from their childhood, to read the press and to take part in public life, and in promoting their mental development not in spurts—which was the case formerly when a person could be unenlightened until he was forty and mature only after that under the influence of Party workers or even by chance—but gradually and steadily; and secondly, in widening their mental horizons while at the same time stimulating their desire to lead an active life, so that they should not grow up into people who, so to say, have become weary of life already in their youth and see nothing ahead of them, but that their activity, eagerness to live and striving for accomplishment should steadily grow. As a matter of fact that is the function of *Pionerskaya Pravda*.

Education of the youth is a very difficult matter and those who are engaged in this sphere are doing a very honorable and, at the same time, a very responsible job. Only if you love this work and are devoted to it, only when the Young Pioneer worker puts his heart and soul into the work of the Pioneer units, only when he devotes himself utterly to the Pioneers, their interests, their education, only then can any great benefit accrue, only then will success be assured.

Let me wish you success in this difficult, but—I must repeat it once again—very, very honorable and necessary work.

We speak of the new man. Indeed, we now see particularly clearly that man, like all living beings, yields to outside influence. You yourselves can see the effect of bad influences on people at the present time when entire countries are poisoned by misanthropic ideas. On the other hand the whole of mankind now has before it a magnificent example of good, human influence on people, of the inculcation of noble sentiments, of love for one's country.

And I would like Young Pioneer workers to love our children as intelligent mothers do who want to make their children really happy. I refer to the inculcation of noble, human, really human emotions upon the youth, of imbuing them with such lofty sentiments as will later become ingrained in them. This is one of the important tasks facing you. And so, let me wish you success in this work.

On Communist Education

(Workers of the youth press respond to M. I. Kalinin's warm, paternal wishes with stormy applause and assure him that *Komsomolskaya Pravda* and *Pionerskaya Pravda* will do all in their power to achieve still greater successes in educating the youth in the spirit of lofty love for their country.)

Organization and Culture as the Basis of Komsomol Work⁶³

Speech at a Conference of Secretaries of Komsomol Organizations of Moscow Region Kolkhozes

July 12, 1945

Comrades, I shall deal with only one problem. You are the Komsomol organization of Moscow Region, the region where our capital is situated, a region with a high level of education and literacy. It is quite natural that the Komsomol members of Moscow Region should make up one of the most cultured sections of the Komsomol in our Union. And the qualities you display daily in deeds—your selflessness, your energy in work, your enthusiasm in emulation, your patriotism—in a word, all the positive qualities of our Komsomol, are also ingrained in all the other sections of the Komsomol.

Yet the Komsomol organization of the capital should differ in some way, possess some quality peculiar to the capital. The resident of the capital, it is said, possesses a distinctive polish, differs somewhat from those who live in the provinces, is distinguished for keenness of perception, reaction to events, etc. True, you do not live in Moscow proper but in Moscow Region, and work in agriculture. And yet there should be something distinctive about you too as the Komsomol organization of the region in which the capital is located.

What, then, is required at the present moment of your regional Komsomol as one of the most cultured in our Union? It seems to me you need organization. Comrade Popov is quite right when he says that we put too much work into agriculture. You should be able with less effort to get even better results than you are getting today. That is the task now facing the Komsomol!

After all, you are the most cultured among the peasants—you have had a seven-grade or a ten-grade schooling. Very few young people in the old Moscow Gubernia had a secondary education. And never in the old days was so much expended on educating the youth as under Soviet power.

⁶³ Originally published in *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, July 14, 1945.

And what is meant by education? It disciplines people, enables them to approach each issue in an organized manner. An uneducated person does his work mechanically, by habit, and has very few detailed plans to go by—he works the way his grandfather did. But now you have to work not as grandfathers did, you have to introduce organization into your work.

What is meant by organization? It means, for example, that the sowing is not done at such pressure that everybody gets up with the lark and goes to sleep after sundown, runs around with his tongue hanging out. I allow that results can be obtained that way. I allow that there are times when you can resort to such methods, too. But your job, the job of the cultured, intellectual section of the peasants, is to introduce orderliness into your work, to ensure that work is done without fuss, that it gets done by itself, as it were, well and with good results. This is where you have a big job ahead. It is precisely your Komsomol organization that must be in the forefront in this sphere of work, and introduce culture.

But what is meant by introducing culture even into everyday life, into work? It means not to do anything that is superfluous, it means that every motion should yield results. Do you know how they work at a plant? The more a worker fusses at his lathe, the less he gets done. And on the contrary, the worker who seems to be making hardly any motions is working wonders; he does not make a single superfluous, useless movement, he has all his tools at hand and in perfect order. Without turning round, he lays his hands on what he needs and his work is very productive.

In agriculture, in the countryside, you can work from dawn to dusk like a horse and still feel you have not done much. Am I right or not? You seem to work and work, and still there is plenty to do. That, of course, is due to lack of proper organization. So what we have to do is to introduce organization into our work, I would say, even into our everyday life.

And what do we mean by organization in Komsomol work? It means that there should be no superfluous, empty talk at meetings, that when a question is put on the agenda, it should be discussed not in general, but concretely, and settled in a businesslike fashion and seen through. Bear in mind that whether a person is organized or not makes itself felt in everything—in his agitational activity, his conduct at a meeting or at the tea table.

I think that the Moscow Komsomol organization, being the most cultured, can cope with this task. If it does not solve it, who will? All the more so must your work be done in an organized fashion since in agricul-

ture you have to deal with crops of different kinds, crops that require an enormous expenditure of labor—garden crops, vegetables, which require a great amount of work. And, of course, if you are not organized you may get no results.

I have raised this matter previously before the Komsomol, but neither your meetings nor your speeches show that you have taken it to heart. Yet the Komsomol shapes the character of people. The Komsomol, if I may say so, lays the foundation of a person's activity for the whole of his life. And that is why you, leading Komsomol workers, are taking a great responsibility upon yourselves if, let us say, some organization of yours, some kolkhoz or district organization, turns out active, energetic people, Soviet patriots, in a word good people, who nevertheless are unorganized and lack the ability to organize their work and their private lives.

Therefore permit me to hope that the Moscow Komsomol organization will pay attention to this aspect of its work. From the bottom of my heart I wish you success.

(*Stormy applause. All rise. Exclamations of* “Long live Mikhail Ivanovich Kalinin!” “Hurrah!”)

Glorious Daughters of the Soviet People⁶⁴

Speech at a Meeting With Young Women Demobilized From the Red Army and Navy. Held at the Central Committee of the All-Union Leninist Young Communist League

July 26, 1945

Comrades, I would like, first and foremost, to congratulate you on the victorious conclusion of the great people's war. The enemy is beaten, our just cause has emerged triumphant. In this unusual war women not only supported the army by their work in the rear, but also fought with arms in hand.

The young women who fought in the war were selected for the army from among many millions with a view to their education, level of culture, health, physical hardiness, and their inclination for one or another branch of military service. In a word, I think that the best of our young women went to the front, and it is quite natural that they gave more than satisfactory account of themselves there.

The war has ended, and you are now being demobilized. To take part in war is no easy matter, but at the same time it is no easy matter for you to be demobilized, either. It is one thing, for example, for a kolkhoznik to be demobilized. He has a definite objective—he goes home to a place that is ready for him, where his family, wife and children await him. It is another matter for a young woman of twenty to twenty-three years of age to be demobilized after having done at the front what is in fact her first serious job in life. And, what is more, she became accustomed to this life in the army, despite all the difficulties and dangers that accompanied it. The majority of the young women who have served in the forces did not stand on their own feet before the war, they studied and, except for a few isolated instances, came from under the wing of mothers, grandmothers or fathers, and only became independent at the front. This independent life lasted for three to four years and is now being cut short, and so it is quite natural that ninety percent of you are worried about what the new life ahead of you will be like,

⁶⁴ Originally published in *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, July 31, 1945.

about what it holds in store for you. But, bear in mind, you will have an advantage in this new life.

What is this advantage? It is that you are proceeding to jobs fully fit, strong physically, strong in spirit. That is a very great boon, for the physically fit get more out of life. This direct advantage you have gained from your service in the Red Army.

The majority of you have steady nerves; far from shattering you, your grim experiences during the war have only steeled your spirit. That is also an advantage gained in the army and will also be of great significance to you in your future life.

What, then, is now required of you, and will your experience in the army be of any use to you? It undoubtedly will. You have the inner, moral satisfaction of knowing that you have taken part in a great nationwide effort. You defended your homeland at a moment of supreme danger, and that is a great thing indeed. This profoundly moral foundation will be a source of great strength to you in your future life.

Somebody said here that there was nothing heroic in what they had done. Heroism, the sort of heroism that throws a person into bold relief as by a flash of lightning, falls to the lot of only individuals. Such heroism is based to a considerable degree on chance circumstances. Specific cases of heroism, the coincidence of circumstances under which heroism is displayed, are not infrequently matters of chance. Those who performed heroic deeds were able to take advantage of these chance coincidences of circumstances because they had been physically, psychologically, morally and politically prepared to display heroism.

I am certain that a large percentage of our young women would perform heroic exploits if the circumstances for doing so should arise. The fact remains, however, that we are dealing here with individual heroism.

A certain British ship's captain was once asked the question: What does heroism consist of? He replied: Heroism consists of doing one's duty fully and under all circumstances. This performance of one's duty fully and under all circumstances is also heroism, and it is for such heroism, for the common heroism displayed by hundreds of thousands and millions of young men and women, that the Government has bestowed on the Komsomol the Order of Lenin, the highest Order in our country. I think that all of you may be proud of this, for the decoration of the Komsomol as a whole means that you, too, have been decorated.

I am convinced that ninety-nine percent of you will quickly accustom yourselves to your new situation and will “swim” in civilian life no worse than many experienced people who have long been well adapted to it.

I think you will get settled soon. There is any amount of work in the Soviet Union. You will get offers of work at factories, mills, kolkhozes, and offices and institutions of various kinds—you will be received with open arms wherever you go. What is more, you will be rapidly promoted to public, political, organizational posts. That is quite natural. A young woman who has worked for three years in an atmosphere of discipline is a very valuable person.

That is why I think you will get fixed up quickly. The Central Committee of the Komsomol, of course, should lend a helping hand to those who, for one or another chance reason, may find themselves in difficulties, but there will not be many such cases—these will be isolated individuals, and they should be given all possible assistance.

I believe that Komsomol organizations both in the center and in the outlying localities will do all they can to secure employment for you, and, of course, they have good reason for doing so, for you have done a great and important job of work.

Apart from everything else, there is one more thing you have done. Equality for women has existed in our country since the very first day of the October Revolution. But you have won equality for women in yet another sphere: in the defense of your country, arms in hand. You have won equal rights for women in a field in which they hitherto have not taken such a direct part.

But allow me, as one grown wise with years, to say to you: do not give yourselves airs in your future practical work. Do not talk about the services you have rendered, let others do it for you. That will be better.

I am optimistic about you and your future. I think you will play quite an important role in civilian life. Perhaps it will not be so noticeable as in the army, but all the same you will be contributing your share to our peacetime work of construction.

However spectacular a wartime situation may be, however much it may bind the masses together into one single entity, however lofty the heights to which it may raise man’s noblest emotions, for example, patriotism—still it is a mere episode in the history of the state, whereas peaceful

existence is the country's normal condition, the condition in which you will now have to work.

From the bottom of my heart I wish that you too might contribute to this peaceful existence a particle of the creative energy you have accumulated.

(Stormy, prolonged applause. All rise and heartily acclaim Comrade M. I. Kalinin.)

On the Teaching of the Basic Principles of Marxism-Leninism⁶⁵

In Higher Schools Speech at a Meeting of the Student Body and Faculty of the Higher Party School of the Central Committee of the CPSU(B)

August 31, 1945

Comrades, the decisive role played by the Soviet Union in winning victory over fascism, and the military and economic might demonstrated by it during the second world war came—as is well known—as a complete surprise to many people abroad. They were amazed beyond words, and some of them even received an unpleasant surprise. But the fact remains a fact, and it is now admitted not only by our allies, but also by our enemies. It is admitted by the whole of mankind.

We can say that the whole world has recognized the genius displayed by the leader of the Soviet people and, the talent shown by his colleagues in the political, diplomatic and military fields, and in the sphere of economic, cultural and organizational work.

The great victories of the Soviet people during the Patriotic War created a profound impression on the public abroad and brought about a veritable revolution in its attitude toward the Soviet Union. There is no country in the world today in which such deep interest is displayed abroad and which is so intently studied as our country is. Many people abroad who formerly believed all sorts of slanderous fabrications about the Soviet Union have ceased to regard it as some sort of a “totalitarian” state, i.e., a state where all human thought and independent activity are fettered.

The whole world saw for itself how during the most trying times for our country the creative energy, initiative and inventiveness of our highly gifted people unfolded themselves in a remarkably extensive, many-sided and effective fashion. And all this made itself felt not only in the actual conduct of the war, but also in literally all aspects of life in our country. Is there a single state, even the most democratic, on the other side of the Soviet

⁶⁵ Originally published in *Propagandist Magazine*, No. 17, 1945.

frontiers that can show anything of the kind? All this has disconcerted some people abroad and evoked in others keen interest and a desire to make a really close study of the Soviet system, its institutions, and its people.

And the heroism of our army, its selfless struggle and unparalleled courage in defense of the Soviet Union? And the heroism of those who worked in our rear, the intense, self-sacrificing work of women, juveniles and old men, many of whom, although they had already retired on pension, resumed work during the war of their own free will? Is there a single other democratic country that can show anything similar? And is such a thing conceivable at all in a country that is not the embodiment of genuine people's democracy? All this goes to show that our people are wholeheartedly devoted to the Soviet system, that they have fought for it and are always ready to fight for it to the end, to their last drop of blood. All this, too, could not fail to attract the attention of the outside world to the Soviet Union.

And what have we inside our country?

The cruel war, fraught with mortal danger to our freedom, independence and statehood, showed our people, even the most unenlightened backwoods dwellers, that had there not been Soviet power and had Socialism not been built in the USSR, had there not been the guiding hand of the Communist Party and of Comrade Stalin, matters would have ended in an appalling catastrophe. Never before have our people apprehended so clearly and completely all the benefits and advantages of the new democracy they themselves have fashioned.

History has probably never known a combination of circumstances so favorable for the apprehension of the Marxist doctrine by the wide masses of the working people. And indeed, if in times of adversity our people displayed such great devotion to the Soviet Union, and so firmly bound up their fate with the Soviet system (which, as you know, rests ideologically on the teachings of Marx-Engels-Lenin-Stalin), it is quite clear that the present moment is historically the most favorable for propagating Marxism-Leninism.

Such, broadly speaking, are the conditions under which we, propagandists of Marxism, have to work at the present time.

Since I am addressing here people whose profession, whose work it is to instill Communist ideas in the masses, I would like to raise the question as to what forms and methods should be used so as to achieve the greatest success in propagating Communist ideas among the workers, peasants, the intelligentsia, and particularly the youth.

To teach Marxism-Leninism and associated sciences is a difficult but at the same time a thankful job. Lenin once said that the doctrine of Marxism attracts people by the fact that it is, on the one hand, the most scientific, and on the other hand, the most revolutionary, doctrine. You can teach Marxism-Leninism in two ways: in the creative way, and, I would say, in the abstract way.

What is the difference between the creative way, which is a particularly difficult one, and the abstract way? To teach in the abstract way means to take a book, mark off "from here to here," make your pupils read it and then to question them about what they have read. This method yields the least results, both as regards teaching and as regards propaganda and agitation. The more abstract the propagandist or agitator is, the farther his thoughts are from concrete things, the less will be the impression he creates.

People can master the Marxist doctrine simply mechanically; on the other hand, they can do so consciously, I would say, assimilate it organically. We, Marxists, must strive to make sure that as many people as possible grasp the Marxist doctrine thoroughly, understand it and master it profoundly.

Why do I dwell here upon the teaching of this science? For the simple reason that in our institutions of higher learning the study of Marxism-Leninism is now considered to be an extremely difficult matter.

I once chanced to talk to a comrade in authority about the matter and asked him this question:

What if we make this subject not compulsory but optional? For, as a matter of fact, Marxism-Leninism is the most interesting and most necessary subject for a cultured person. It can be made the basis for the most absorbing lectures. The students ought to crowd the auditoriums when lectures are given on this subject.

My interlocutor thought for a while and finally said:

Maybe you're right, but perhaps we'd better wait a little until we have more lecturers who can really attract students to this subject. (*Laughter.*) Till then, however, we'll hardly cope with it, for we're still rather weak in this regard.

From this conversation you can see that at the present time teachers of the fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism are faced with the enormous task of improving teaching methods, of mastering the creative method of teaching this highly attractive subject.

Marxism-Leninism is the genuine science of society and of the laws of its development. Of course, outwardly, formally, one may apprehend it rapidly. But the whole question is—how?

The study of Marxism-Leninism is to some extent like that of mathematics. Mathematics is an abstract, if not the most abstract, science. But how is it taught? At first you study the rules, then you are given a number of concrete, purely practical problems to solve. The study of Marxism-Leninism should also be backed up by concrete facts, by examples taken from actual life.

You are aware, comrades, that there are some professors, of history, for example, who simply repeat the one and the same facts and dates in their lectures, whereas others introduce new facts, new data, into each of their lectures, contrasting the past and the realities of today, and showing the difference between the present and the past. It is only when the study of history is approached in this way that people will be carried away by the subject and make a deep study of it.

Marxism-Leninism especially demands constant confirmation, if I may put it that way, of its basic principles by concrete facts, concrete tasks. For it is not enough merely to study the doctrine of Marxism as a subject. What is required in addition is that people should master the method, learn to apply it in appraising social phenomena. That, I would say, is the main thing. A person may master the doctrine itself, to a certain extent understand Marxism, and yet be unable to apply it in appraising social phenomena. That is a far more complicated matter. Yet, as a matter of fact, a Marxist is valuable only in so far as he is able to apply the Marxist method in solving specific tasks.

Suppose two students come to take their examinations. One of them answers in the words of the textbook, while the other gives an answer which, though it very closely resembles the material in the book and is fundamentally correct, is not identical to the formulation given there. How would I estimate the work of these students? I would place greater faith in the knowledge of the second one, and under no circumstances would I give him lower

marks than the first, who cited the book from memory. (*Stir in the hall.*) Why would I do so?

We should aim at our students being able to formulate their thoughts themselves, at their being able to employ their knowledge independently and not merely to cite from books; under no circumstances must they become, to use Plekhanov's expression, "libraries turned upside down."

Experience has taught me that the formulations given by the mediocre student are usually more bookish than those of the more gifted students. And I think this is quite natural, because the latter try to understand and to create. The very fact that they create, that they try to express Marxist ideas in their own language is a great merit and they should be urged on in that direction. (*Applause.*)

On what do I base my attitude? Why do we advocate this? For the simple reason that the sort of people we need are not those who know merely the letter of Marxism, who, in anticipation of being examined, learn its formulas by rote, but those who have mastered the Marxist method and are able to apply it in practical life.

Marxism, you know, is the method that enables you to approach social phenomena scientifically. A knowledge of Marxism-Leninism is necessary for people employed in all branches of state, economic and cultural activity. Is it not of importance to an engineer, apart from having a good knowledge of his own profession, to be armed with the theory of scientific Socialism? For he will then be able to approach each phenomenon consciously, correctly. The science of Marxism enables one to understand not only separate phenomena but also entire social structures.

On the basis of his doctrine, Marx gave a brilliant analysis of capitalist society. Had Marx merely expounded the essential features of his doctrine and not analyzed capitalist society, do you think his theory would have occupied the really eminent position in social science that it does now? Well then, if Marx did not restrict himself to the doctrine alone, but made it the basis for disclosing the essence of an entire social structure, each professor in expounding the fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism should give a corresponding analysis of the social phenomena, of the processes that are now taking place in our society. If he does that, his lectures will attract people. If the professor analyzes social phenomena he will be teaching in a creative fashion.

I also was a teacher... a teacher of Marxism in an underground study circle. Well, there were times when I felt as I was expounding something to my pupils that they did not quite grasp what I was trying to say. So I began to employ the following method: first we would spend fifteen minutes on theory and then have a heart-to-heart talk analyzing various phenomena of actual life. And, do you know, people easily grasped what I told them. But if I had spent the whole hour just expounding formulas, nothing would have come of it. So you see how necessary it is for propagandists to employ various measures in order to liven up the lessons and to help the students better to understand the material they have read. All the more should this be done by teachers at our universities.

This is what teaching creatively consists of.

It is, of course, very difficult to teach in this way, because you must prepare for each lecture, select the proper material and think it over. On the other hand, this method of teaching will give your pupils a profound understanding of the basic principles of Marxism-Leninism, since it fortifies this understanding with an analysis of concrete events, concrete facts. But when the teaching is done in an abstract way the results are poorer, the subject becomes dull and people even lose all desire to study it because it is not enlivened by concrete facts.

We should demand of the students that they know not only the fundamental principles of Marxism but also how to approach various concrete facts, how to estimate them from the viewpoint of Marxism-Leninism. If this cannot be done at lectures, it can at any rate be made the practice at classroom discussions.

V. I. Lenin always urged us to forge ahead in the field of Marxist theory. Comrade Stalin always reminds us that theory and actual reality are inseparable, that Marxism does not tolerate sheer abstraction, but is constantly being enriched, reinforced, brightly illumined as a result of a profound study of the realities of life.

So then, comrades, it seems to me that we (I consider myself too if not a teacher or lecturer, then one of those who propagate Communist theory) (*applause*) should do everything to ensure that lectures delivered on Marxism-Leninism, strictly adhere to principle as regards their revolutionary and scientific character (remember these two requirements: they must be revolutionary and scientific in character!) and are illumined in the most beautiful colors that man can possibly find. Do not forget that young people

want things to be attractive. And if you give thought to the matter, what can be more attractive than the ideas of Marxism-Leninism, for these are ideas of boundless creative endeavor! The widest vistas open up before you in this regard. But these vistas make it incumbent on you to engage in serious work, in creative activity. Do all you can to avoid working according to the rule of “from here to there.”

I believe that by our concerted efforts we shall be able to make use of the highly favorable state of mind of the people to which I referred at the beginning of my remarks, so as to instill the ideas of Marxism-Leninism in the minds of the working class, the peasantry and the intelligentsia as widely and profoundly as possible.

I wish you, comrades, complete success in mastering the creative method of teaching, and guarantee that if you do so, you will make the basic principles of Marxism-Leninism the most interesting, the most attractive subject in the curriculums of our higher schools.

The workers and peasants in our country are ready to give their all for Soviet power. (*Applause.*) So then, let us exert all our energy to enrich still further and to illumine still more brightly the working people of our country with the ideas of Marxism-Leninism.

Speech at a Ceremonial Sitting of the Fourteenth Plenary Session of the Central Committee of the All-Union Leninist Young Communist League⁶⁶

November 28, 1945

Comrades, members of the Central Committee of the Leninist Komsomol, representatives of Komsomol regional organizations and active workers of the Moscow organization!

Today the Leninist Komsomol has been presented with the highest award—the *Order of Lenin*. The Komsomol carries now on its banner the Order bearing the likeness of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, the great fighter for the well-being of the people.

Together with you I am happy to see such a high award bestowed on you. I am confident that you will hold this Order sacred, that you will fight with still greater enthusiasm, wage a still more effective and still more active struggle for the great cause of Lenin, for the great ideals of the Party of Lenin-Stalin.

Comrades, for the third time the Soviet Government is marking the services of the Young Communist League by decorating it. For the third time Comrade Stalin, our leader of genius, has highly appraised the services rendered by the Komsomol to the people.

The first decoration was awarded to the Komsomol for the active part it played during the Civil War, when our people were fighting in defense of Soviet power. In those years the Komsomol successfully mobilized tens of thousands of the revolutionary youth to fight Kolchak, Denikin, Yudenich, the Polish Whiteguards and Wrangel. Under the banner of the Bolshevik Party these young people proved their devotion to Soviet power by heroic exploits. Led by the Komsomol, they fought with success for the consolidation of Soviet power, for our victory.

In 1931, when the First Five-Year Plan was fulfilled, the Government again decorated the Komsomol—for the enormous work it had done, for the enthusiasm it had displayed, for developing Socialist competition, for having conducted a self-sacrificing struggle under the Par-

⁶⁶ Originally published in *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, December 2, 1945.

ty's leadership to secure the fulfillment of the First Five-Year Plan, for its activity—activity that carries others along and makes them too work with eager enthusiasm. At that time the Komsomol was awarded the *Order of the Red Banner of Labor*.

I have now presented you with a third Order. This Order, the Order of Lenin, has been awarded to the Komsomol for outstanding services to the country during the Great Patriotic War waged by the Soviet Union against Hitler Germany and for the great work done to educate the Soviet youth in the spirit of supreme devotion to the homeland. By bestowing this, the highest award, on the Komsomol, the Government has stressed the great services rendered by it during the years of the great struggle in defense of our native land both at the fronts of the Patriotic War and in the rear—in factories and mills and on the kolkhoz fields.

In a word, the decorations awarded to the Komsomol for services rendered to our homeland show that there is no sphere of activity in which a part has not been played by that loyal helper of our Party—the Komsomol.

Comrades, when our Government decorates an organization or individuals, it always bears in mind not only work already done, but also future work. What tasks, then, now face the Komsomol? In what sphere will you now have to work with particular zeal so as to crown the banner of the Komsomol with new successes?

I think I shall not say anything new to you, I shall only tell you what all of you know, but which is worth recalling. Your first, main, fundamental task, comrades, now is to fight for the fulfillment of the plans of postwar construction outlined by our governmental bodies in the new five-year plan. To fulfill our postwar production plans is a big job, and there is no need to prove its significance to you. It is clear to everybody who has seen the destruction wrought by the fascists in our country, everybody who has fully grasped the importance of the further strengthening of our country.

I am confident that by rallying the youth to fulfill new tasks in production, the Komsomol will succeed in educating additional millions of young patriots, people selflessly devoted to the homeland, to the Party, and to Comrade Stalin.

I would like to draw your attention to one more practical task. You know that at the present time international ties are being vigorously developed. They are being developed along youth lines, too. Well, I would like our young people, our Komsomol members, to get to know more about

the life, culture and character of the peoples of foreign countries. In particular it would be desirable for more of our Komsomol members to know foreign languages.

Comrades, the Komsomol has earned this high award thanks to the heroic efforts of millions of Komsomol members, young people who, as I have already stated, fought self-sacrificingly for our just cause at the front and in the rear. Part of the services rendered falls to the galaxy of splendid sons of the Komsomol who gave their lives for their Soviet homeland. These people displayed political maturity, organizational experience and great skill in the struggle, lofty patriotism, supreme devotion to the Soviet people, and demonstrated to the whole world the high morale of Soviet people. Is it not clear to everybody how rich are the fruits yielded by Comrade Stalin's constant solicitude for the Komsomol, for the youth?!

Well, comrades, I think that the members of the Komsomol will preserve as sacred and multiply the splendid traditions created during the years of the Patriotic War. It is in these traditions that our boys and girls, our young men and women belonging to the Komsomol, will be reared.

The awards to the Komsomol have always been connected with important historical stages in the life of our country. The latest award is connected with the epopee of the Patriotic War, with our victory. At all stages of our history the Komsomol has fulfilled with credit the tasks entrusted to it. Allow me, then, to wish you as great success in the performance of the work ahead of you as you achieved in the previous periods of the development of our state. (*All rise. Stormy, prolonged applause.*)

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