Talk to Party Propagandists December 6, 1974

I have read some of the novels which have been written recently by our writers. They are humdrum, dull and boring and are poor in vocabulary. I have learned that it is not only the writers who are to blame for this. They say that even when writers use original expressions, these are not passed during the deliberations. Good works cannot be written if you suppress writers initiative. Writing novels is creative work. So, if you repress their initiative, how can they produce good books?

In the creation of every work, it is important both to choose the right seed and describe it with artistic skill.

The seed is the ideological kernel of a work which determines its existence. It is only when we choose a suitable seed that we can give it vivid artistic portrayal and ensure that the work is of high ideological quality.

The work, however, cannot be completed of its own accord just because a suitable seed has been selected. If the work is to be completed, a serious quest is called for and the writer screative wisdom and talent must be given full play. If you ask writers to confine themselves to the same expressions, they will not be able to display their initiative and produce good works.

When I study the working copies of films, I devote much attention to ensuring that the creators choose more original expressions and descriptive techniques. We educate the creators to make the dialogue more expressive.

It is not right, therefore, to ask writers to write novels while confining them to one and the same construction. If one hundred authors write a book, the books must come in 100 varieties. Each should be different in content and should have its own specific features.

Needless to say, this does not mean that one can write as one pleases. We cannot tolerate even the slightest manifestations of liberalism in creation. The point is to promote individualities in creative work. Fostering individualities and latitudinarianism in creative work are two entirely different matters. In saying that the characteristics of individual persons should be fostered, we never mean to flatter the writer individual taste or to tolerate the 'freedom of creation the land case, all our creative work must be carried out under the guidance and supervision of the Party, and every one of our writers has to produce works which accord with the Party spolicy and meet its requirements. Works which do not cater to the Party srequirements are of no use at all.

In the ranks of our creators there is no place for a man who calls for

the 'oliberty of creation' and writes as he pleases, producing works which run counter to the Party's policy and the reality of our life. Furthermore, we must not tolerate the wrong, subjective point of view of individual persons in literary creation.

In literary creation, while giving full play to individual responsibility and initiative, collectivism should be properly ensured at all times. Collectivism is a communist principle of creation. In the last few years a number of good works have been written, and they are the result of collective wisdom.

I gave instructions that joint social appraisals and judgements of literary works should be organized frequently in order to prevent the wrong, subjective view of individuals and guarantee collectivism in their creation. Creators should respect the right views which are expounded at the joint social appraisals and judgements and accept them willingly.

However, individual initiative must not be undermined on the excuse of ensuring collectivism. Good works can only be written when collectivism is correctly combined with a high sense of responsibility and initiative on the part of individuals.

Fostering individuality in creative work implies that the writer writes his work creatively, strictly adhering to the Party sideas, identifying himself with real life and relying on the collective wisdom.

The creative method of socialist realism requires that life in its richness and diversity be given more vivid representation through the medium of individualized expression. If we are to produce works which are analogous to each other, without promoting individuality, we shall not need 100 authors writing 100 books.

What is made in one and the same framework is not a work but a commodity, and the man who makes such things is not a writer, but a producer. A man who makes the same things in one and the same framework cannot be called a creator.

What we want are not goods which have been made to a uniform pattern, but works which reflect the variety of life and in which individualities are displayed.

Recently the People 's Army Song and Dance Ensemble composed a song entitled The Soldier Hears the Rustle of Ears of Rice. Its words sound sweet to the ear and its melody is also good. The song sings of the great leader 's virtues. It is simple and vivid. This is the very kind of piece we need.

I once said that the Korean painting, The Evening Glow over Kangson, is good. I said so because this picture shows a scene of our socialist construction not by means of conventional techniques, but in a new way, in the form of a landscape.

One will not succeed in one swritings if one only uses one and the same recipe. One must use original expressions as far as possible. If all the original expressions are crossed out, the phrases in every writer sworks will all be the same. If this happens, the result will be that all works will be written according to the already established construction. If writers are not allowed to use words and expressions in a creative manner, there will be no difference between a novel and

a political editorial or a newspaper commentary. In fact, the vocabulary of some literary works is no richer than that of newspaper articles.

In the field of literary creation there is no need to take issue with writers choosing descriptive techniques or vocabulary as they please. After the theme of a work has been clearly determined, the writer should be permitted to develop it and choose the vocabulary to the best of his ability. The important thing is that the theme of the work should be consistent with our Party sidea and that fidelity to the Party, the working class and the people are clearly represented in it. Once that objective is set, there is no need to define only one method of attaining it. It does not matter whether one takes a direct route or approaches it in a roundabout way as long as the objective is reached. If you ask writers to follow a set path, their works will be analogous to each other and lose their effect. It is necessary to encourage and inspire them so that they will conceive original ideas and use new words and expressions as far as possible.

If you ask writers to follow a set pattern even in the use of descriptive techniques and expressions, they will seek an easy way of writing instead of trying to find lively expressions and new words.

Working to a formula is taboo in creative work. No work, no matter how good, can be regarded as an absolute criterion. How can we write a work confining it to the construction of another work, when life is diverse and the circumstances are different?

Few of our novels are interesting. The same is the case with poems. Formerly the 'sumnida' tended to be used in every poem. So I criticized this practice. Now they have curtailed its use. However, our poems have not yet been completely freed from the established convention. Many of the so-called poems become ordinary pieces of prose when their sentences are interlinked. Such poems are not interesting.

Many lyrics are also imitative. To all intents and purposes, lyrics must have a poetic form, although they must fully convey the idea they carry.

We must ensure that after correctly determining the direction in which novels, poems and songs should be written, the artists creativity is given full expression so that they will produce works that are diverse and original. In doing so, we should see that all literary and artistic works deal with facts as they are and give them skilful artistic representation.

That our writers works are uninteresting and humdrum is also attributable to the shortcomings in their construction.

At present our works based on real life almost never deal with negative aspects.

Needless to say, in our life positive examples predominate, and the main emphasis in our works should be placed on giving prominence to the workers and peasants who are faithful to the Party and the revolutionary cause and on dealing with their worthwhile life. However, this does not justify totally ignoring the negative practices. When we deal in our works with negative aspects which still remain

in our life, we do not aim to tolerate and encourage them, but to oppose and overcome them.

As a matter of principle, the revolutionary struggle is a process of the struggle between the new and the old, and between the progressive and the reactionary. It is a rule of life that the new and the progressive emerge victorious in this struggle. Our literature and art should describe this law of struggle, this law of life.

Some people hesitate to deal with negative aspects. This is because they think that by doing so they will make a mistake for this means revealing the shortcomings which still remain in our society. You need not think so. Communists are not afraid of criticizing mistakes. Ours is a revolutionary and a fighting party. There is no reason for a revolutionary party to hesitate to show that it opposes what is retrogressive.

It is not good to beautify and decorate life. It is not an attitude of describing life truthfully to conceal the short-comings or negative aspects which remain in our life, on the plea of representing typical characters. It is natural that there are negative practices in life as well as positive and progressive aspects; furthermore, the revolutionary struggle aims at overcoming negative aspects.

Literature and art must be a powerful weapon not only for creating the new, but also for destroying the old, by means of artistic description. Therefore, in writing literature it is also necessary to expose the outdated and reveal the process of the struggle to overcome the old.

It is a matter of course that literature and art, a weapon in the hands of a revolutionary working-class party, should openly criticize old and retrogressive practices.

In the final analysis, it can be regarded that another reason why at present our writers hesitate to deal with negative aspects in their works is because they seek an easy way of writing.

Our writers are in the van of our Party 's ideological front. They will never be able to produce good works while they ignore the struggle between the new and the old which is under way in our reality. Our writers should discard the idea of writing books in an easy way, and involve themselves in the class struggle, in the revolutionary struggle, and deal properly with our revolutionary and militant life, so that all our works of literature and art will become more militant and revolutionary.

Many books for children should be written.

At present we have a dearth of literature for children. Therefore, children read books that have been written for adults. Children need works which are geared to their level of emotional development. As the great leader Comrade Kim Il Sung said, developing literature for children is a very important matter which has a bearing on the future of our revolution.

If we are to train the rising generation to be revolutionaries who will shoulder the future of the revolution, it is necessary to infuse them with our Party 's revolutionary idea and instil a revolutionary world outlook in them from childhood. If you only lay stress on emotional

education with regard to children, this will be contrary to the principles of socialist educational science.

Ideological education of children should cater to their feelings. Even by doing so, we can give them efficient education in the revolutionary traditions as well as good revolutionary and class education. Suitable literature has a big role to play in the education of children. Reminiscences of the anti-Japanese guerrillas alone do not constitute sufficient education in the revolutionary traditions. With regard to

sufficient education in the revolutionary traditions. With regard to children, works of literature are a very effective means of instilling ideas in their minds.

However, at present writers are not being bold enough in writing literature for children. The songs that are being written for children are merely songs for grown-ups in miniature. The slight difference between them is to be found in the division of the bars and in the wording of the lyrics. But there is hardly any difference in the descriptive techniques.

As for the songs which sing of the leader, there must be different songs for children and adults. Songs for children should express the feelings of the children who follow the father Marshal, while the latter should express the reverence the grown-ups hold for the leader. You must not think that it is easy to write children so books. Careful research is required to write them. It is necessary to delve deep into the world of the child. It also takes a lot of effort to invent vivid descriptions and expressions that will capture children so imagination.

Our writers and artists should show greater boldness in creating literature for children. This has great importance in the education of the younger generation. They need to write more good novels, poems and songs for children.

A major shortcoming in the works written by our authors is that they do not offer a good representation of the seething reality.

Our life is now seething with activity and socialist construction is

progressing very fast, but our literary and artistic works are not dealing with these realities. This is mainly due to the fact that our writers do not mix enough with the main stream of life and have little experience of it.

If writers are to deal with the life of the working class, they must visit factories and share in that life. And if they intend to represent the life of farmers, they must stay in the second room of a farmer. s house and gain firsthand experience from living among them. However, many writers are now said to be producing all their work from the self-imposed confines of secluded studies.

Needless to say, there will be occasions when writers have to write in a quiet study. But this should just be part of their creative life. They should not spend the whole of it locked away in a study. If they confine themselves to the study all the time, they will eventually become isolated from reality.

At present writers visit various places to gain personal experience and cover what is happening in real life. However, it is impossible for them to convey fully the diversity and vibrance of reality if they are

isolated from that reality and are merely reproducing what they have witnessed, recollecting the data they have already covered. Life advances and constantly changes and develops. Therefore, if an author writes a work that is only based on the experience he gained at one time in the past, this in itself means retrogressing from the advancing reality.

A writer must be a standard-bearer who guides and leads life in the forefront of the times. If he falls behind life, he cannot fulfil his mission as a writer. Writers must mingle with the seething reality and accumulate life experience amidst this reality.

Writers can experience life in a number of ways. They can do so by associating with workers and farmers and sharing their life, or through taking part in various kinds of social and political life in their office. They can also experience life on their way to and from the office? they can personally feel the seething atmosphere of the city and see the happy life of the workers, office employees and students reflected in their smiling faces.

Many writers are, however, now isolated from such reality; therefore, it is natural that they cannot meet the requirements of the developing reality.

They are even isolated from family life after living a life of seclusion over a long period. Family relations are invariably represented in literature. If they are to depict these in a lifelike way, writers need to study the atmosphere of life in many families and delve into how they educate their children. But if they are isolated even from their own family life, they can have no idea about all this, nor can they be in any position to write about it convincingly. In the long run, they will be imbued with subjectivism.

If writers only meditate in isolation from real life, they will not be able to write good works.

Literature is humanics. Humanics is inconceivable out of nothing. It is conceivable only when one experiences human life and studies it. Writers must accumulate different kinds of life experience amid the bustle of reality and must write works that stem from contemplation in the midst of real life.

For some period in the past anti-Party factionalists made writers work at home without even reporting for work. They did so with the insidious intent to encourage latitudinarianism among writers and isolate them from real life, so as to prevent them from writing those works which they should have written.

Then, how are we to construe the fact that our writers only want quiet places such as rest homes? This is an expression of indolence and relaxation.

At present among our writers there are those who are working hard to write good works with a high sense of responsibility to the Party and great creative zeal. On the other hand, some have not produced a single work worth mentioning, although they have been confining themselves to their studies for years. This is by no means incidental. If writers only seek places like rest homes, isolating themselves from the seething reality, they will not be able to describe reality correctly

in their works.

Moreover, in the end they become engrossed in laziness and negligence and are unable to complete their works quickly. It is possible to ensure high-quality works and write them quickly only when writers launch a speed campaign with creative zeal and stamina, mingling with the stimulating life of the people and personally experiencing their titanic struggle.

For writers to confine themselves exclusively to their studies is tantamount, in the final analysis, to digging their own graves. Writers must expose themselves to real life instead of being fascinated with rest homes and studies.

All our writers should always share the life of the working people and their joy amidst the seething reality and experience with them the exhilaration of vigorous struggle. In the process they must write many fine works that skilfully portray the flourishing life of the Juche era. If writers are to produce good works, they must have a high level of political knowledge and insight.

Without correct political knowledge and powers of discrimination, writers cannot be responsive to the requirements of Party policy and write revolutionary works which cater to the revolutionary era, to the fighting era.

In raising their political insight, it is most important for writers to arm themselves firmly with the great leader. s instructions and the Party. s policy. This is the way they can always judge everything correctly with a sharp political eye and write good works which meet the requirements of the Party.

In order to improve their political knowledge and powers of discrimination, writers should be made to participate extensively in social and political life. However, at present you do not even let them attend the Wednesday lectures organized by the Party Central Committee. We should let them take part in social and political life in a variety of ways including attendance at lectures. By doing this we should make Party policies known to them promptly and keep them well informed of the world situation.

The Ministry of Culture and Art and the Writers Union must bear some of the blame for the deficiencies which are evident in our current literature.

At present they are poor in their work with writers. In many cases they try to evade responsibility and always go for the easy life wherever possible. They thus compel writers to produce works that follow a single, set pattern, which is easy to do, or they confine themselves to giving the writers merely administrative and routine guidance. Nor are they efficient in their ideological education of writers.

It is a fact that the Party gives direct guidance with regard to the orientation which should be followed in the creation of literary and artistic works. It oversees the content of the works, corrects divergences, and leads writers along the right path of creation. This, however, does not mean that the Ministry of Culture and Art and the Writers Union can confine themselves to just giving

administrative and routine guidance. Literary creation must not be directed by such methods. Administrative guidance of the creative process tends to paralyse writers. creative enthusiasm.

We must criticize and correct the purely administrative and routine methods of guidance that persist in the work of the Ministry of Culture and Art and the Writers Union, as well as their irresponsible and overcautious tendencies, and see to it that they direct creative work and educate writers more scrupulously.

Party organizations of cultural and art organs and of organs under the General Federation of the Unions of Literature and Arts should first of all carry out effectively their principal duty, which is to educate writers and artists to be workers who are unreservedly loyal to the Party. Then, it is important for these Party organizations to organize and mobilize them correctly and efficiently, proceeding from the Party stand, so that they will bear good creative fruit.

We should improve the social conditions of writers. We should provide writers with more opportunities to take part in social and political life and do away with the tendency to neglect writers. We should ensure that all writers make a significant contribution to the enrichment and development of our art and literature, possessing a deep awareness of their mission and duty and devoting all their creative wisdom and enthusiasm.

Korean Friendship Association (K.F.A) http://www.korea-dpr.com