

others: Ferenc Fejtő, Géza K. Havas, Bertalan Hatvany. If you answer me that such a discrimination is justified because, after all, we ourselves did not agree in everything, you are right; in fact, one of my objections to your objections is that you often make all of us responsible for statements made only by one of us. Apart from differences of outlook, there were psychological differences between us. We had not come all from the same intellectual environments; some of us, the Catholic Horváth and the Judeo-orientalist B. Hatvany, for instance, believed in a sort of progressive or revolutionary traditionalism; while Fejtő and K. Havas and also A. József had freshly left the Communist underground; they were obsessed with the necessity to "justify" themselves and did so frequently in terms which neither fitted in with their basic beliefs in a Popular Front, nor with the political requirements of the movement, nor always with factual truth. Strangely or not, the two poets amongst them displayed more wisdom in avoiding these intellectual pitfalls than the rest; but, after all, they all accepted until the bitter end the entourage of Szép Szó which in itself was a brave deed and an unequivocal gesture against German imperialism.

I was, broadly speaking, always pro-Soviet and rightly believed that nothing short of a sincere understanding between the Western Powers and the USSR could exterminate fascism and secure a decent peace for mankind. Nevertheless, I admit to have been wrong in many important details, and I feel that only the events of the last few years opened my eyes to the full significance of Stalin's Russia and her achievements in European history. No doubt, a similar process has occurred in all of us within the Szép Szó circle, and chiefly in those who, for such reasons as hinted at above, had been more inhibited than myself to appreciate the attitude of the Soviet at the time of her isolation. Today, apart from everything else, every intelligent Hungarian patriot must feel a deep gratitude to the Red Army for having liberated Hungary from the foulest oppression history has ever seen, and must unite in the endeavour to make the nation worthy of her re-conquered chances to build up a socially minded, peacefully minded and free country.

I think you agree that the new Hungary must be both more intransigent in defending the essence of democracy than her Governments in even the short revolutionary periods were but must, at the same time, be more flexible in combining and co-ordinating the various creative forces than any of the progressive movements of the past was. Therefore I feel that you may be willing to reconsider your rigid attitude against some public figures and writers who, in spite of their faults and limitations, have made doubtless contributions, with their artistic faculties or others, to the development of Hungarian progressive mind. I do not say this on behalf of Szép Szó which you treat altogether very fairly, but about persons with whom we had less or no connection. Why not extend fairness to them too? You possess, as few do, the gift to create a comprehensive picture of Hungarian spiritual life, thanks to your approach of "imminent" criticism which does not compel you to give up anything of your basic social ideas and nevertheless frees you from any dogmatism when you come to judge persons of different outlook, and their significance. In such a comprehensive picture, however, persons such as Garami, Louis Hatvany, Kosztolányi, Kassak, should get their due in the same way in which, for instance, Babits and Osváth get it in your essay, in spite of your legitimate reservations. Even Vassanyi and Dezsed Szabó, who were really not "my cup of tea" as the English say, nor "my shirt and pants", as we would say in Hungarian, should I think be appreciated for their positive merits in limited fields, to about the same extent as the specialist abilities which you rightly acknowledge in Kóbor and Gerdonyi. But there is a great complexity of subjects to be discussed in connection with all this, and I am looking forward to meeting you in Budapest before long.

At the moment, of course, our main concern is to mobilise as much as possible of the moral and material forces of our country, and of her manpower, so as to contribute to the Allied victory, over Hitlerite Germany, and to lay the foundations of a democratic Hungary - democratic in a sense more complete and genuine than what used to be called so before the war. Let us hope those in Budapest and Debrecen will do their best in this direction; we can only