A POET OF THE REVOLUTION

MAYAKOVSY, VLADIMIR Born 1894. Poet, playwright, artist, critic, publicist, agitator. 'A great chunk of hot, tense life' (Anatoli Lunacharski).

He chronicled the October revolution and after — 'my time and myself' — in plays, articles and poetry.

Mayakovsky fought against subjectivity and spiritlessness in art and for poetry which serves the revolution, based on social and political reality.

He wrote film scripts, satirical plays and epic poems, e.g. Vladimir Ilyich Lenin — showing his love of humanity and faith in the triumph of revolutionary justice.

His life and work was inseparably bound with revolution and struggle for the liberation of working people. He expressed the spiritual potential of socialist revolution and the ideals of Soviet patriotism and internationalism.

Mayakovsy died in 1930. He was a major poetic influence on Soviet literature and an inspirer of Aragon, Eluard, Neruda, Brecht, Becher, Hikmet and many others internationally.

He celebrated 'the joy of life, the buoyancy of the most difficult march towards communism'.

Right we print an extract from FINE on the storming of the Winter Palace.

A cadet runs in —
'Resistance is meaningless!'
13 shrieks:
'Surrender!
Surrender!'
And through the door —
trenchcoats,
navycoats,
sheepskins.

And into this silence charged with pep
a bass
toughened
over top-masts rolling
'Who's the Provisionals?
Down you step.
Your time's up
misters!
Give up your callin'!'
And putting right
his pince-nez
sliding off
Antonov
Chairman of
the Revolutionary
Committee
as something
uncomplicated
simple enough
declared:
'The Provisional
Government
is unseated!'
And in Smolny
the crowd
with bosoms swelling,
hustling fireworks of news
with their voices' blast
for the first time
instead of:
'It will be . . .
sang
victorious:
*'It is our last!'****
Till daybreak
remained
not more than a yard.
From the east
rose, begging
the hand of beams.
Comrade Podvoisky
sat down in the car
and said, tired:
'To the Smolny!
It's over, it seems!'
Machine guns
fell quiet
a good rest earning.
The bullets'
resonant swarm
fell quiet.
Only bayonets
starlike
went on burning
while real stars
pale sentinels
shone in their height.
As always
October's windstorms blew.
Over the bridge
on their railtracks whizzing
cars and tramcars
busy as usual
flew
but now
under
socialism . . .

. . . Then
from above —
the city seemed exploded —
Crash! —
the Aurora's six-incher
unloaded.
And then
while the cannon echo still rolls
awe in all souls arising
a light skims up
over Peter's and Paul's —
the signal
for the uprising
'Down with 'em!
Onward!
For'ard charge!'
Under gilt vaults
over gorgeous carpets
they stormed
every staircase's
every march
stepping over cadets
carcass after carcass.
As if with floodwaters
chambers flooding
they streamed
over every victim
converging
and skirmishes flared up
fiery, deadly
behind each sofa
beside each curtain.
Along that enfilade
with greetings roared through
for monarchs
wearing
fortune's-worth crowns
through velvet-lined halls
and echoing corridors
the echo
of boots
and riflebutts
bounced.
There stands
an embarassed sonofabitch
*Above him a Putlovite**
tender as his daddy.
'Here —
out with that watch —
it belonged to the rich,
But now its ours buddy!'
The uproar mounts
*and those 13***
grabbing
it buffets
into one heap scrapes.
They hide
under ties
(where else, dirty team!)
as if an axe
hangs over their napes.
200 paces
30
20 . . .

from Fine
*A PUTILOV PLANT WORKER
**MINISTERS OF THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT
***LINE FROM THE INTERNATIONALE

AL2446/458

ПРОЛЕТАРИИ ВСЕХ СТРАН, СОЕДИНЯЙТЕСЬ!

Орган Центрального Комитета ВЛКСМ

КОМСОМОЛЬСКАЯ ПРАВДА

The changes taking place in Soviet life form the principal subject matter of the enormous flow of letters that nowadays pour into Soviet editorial offices.

The youth paper *Komsomolskaya Pravda* recently printed a questionnaire asking for people's opinions of perestroika. In particular they were asked what they thought had changed in the past year in their surroundings and in their own attitudes.

Here we publish extracts from those letters:

NO MATTER how much we lash out at all sorts of negative phenomena, we'll never be able to put a really reliable, insurmountable barrier in their way until we expose and put an end to the causes that gave rise to these phenomena. And the cause of all our troubles, in my opinion, is the acute and chronic deficit of trust in the people. We have only just begun democratising life, yet already there are cries of caution: ''It's dangerous! No knowing what it might lead to!'' Quite a lot is being done to enable them at a later stage to be able to point to the people, the work collectives and exclaim: ''They're not mature enough!'' The only remedy I can see is mutual trust.

Y.DEVYATISILNY, Mocow

AT TIMES it seems strange that a sensible idea and sound constructive criticism should give rise to a ''retaliatory blow'' on the part of the boss. Wouldn't it be better to catch the idea, support it and carry it out, thus winning honour, praise and prestige?

But no, the idea does not belong to him. The idea could compete against his own habits and thoughts, which means that the one who voiced it could compete against him, and that is what at once sounds the alarm. It is only a wise chief who can react correctly to a critical idea. A chief's wisdom eliminates the very possibility of his persecuting anyone for criticism.

What is a revolution from the point of view of the ''human factor''? It is, I think, when decent people replace less decent ones in posts that give the right to wield power, to administer, especially when this replacement occurs not through the goodwill of the latter, but through the force of law interlinked with the decent ones' strength. But for that, strength must exist. One must steel oneself and grow stronger and indulge less in lamentation and suffering.

It's worthwhile to turn from the well-known questions ''Who's at fault?'' and ''What is to be done?'' to the question ''How is it to be done?''

Y. AMORO, Krasnoyarsk

I'M A NURSE in Zaporozhye. When I finished school I saw everything around me in a rosy hue. I worked and went on studying. But in the collective of people whose very profession calls on each one to give the best, the purest part of him or herself to others, I came up against arrogance, bribe-taking — a situation where everything is permitted to some. I had no-one to turn to. I even wanted to give up my job.

But my mother once told me: ''Don't talk too much, try and prove by your actions that things can be changed''.

My ''fight'' started quite unexpectedly. I was elected Komsomol organiser. It seemed to me that I had a *carte blanche* to act. But nothing of the kind. I used to be cut short and was shown my ''proper place''. At one of the plenary meetings of our Komsomol committee I just couldn't keep myself in check. The meeting was proceeding as usual, according to a written programme. The regional committee bureau was being elected. Someone was speaking, everyone else keeping mum and nodding their head. Yet there was a sort of murmur in the hall. Then the voting started and that was when I couldn't restrain myself. I stood up and said that we were electing people we knew nothing about but whom the regional committee evidently favoured. Why, I said, don't we elect those we know well, those we trust.

You should have seen what happened then! It was as if a dam had been broken. People began to come out and say what they really thought. In the end I got hell. They called me an upstart, a busybody and demanded that I mind my own business. I came home and cried my heart out.

The next day I went to the secretary of the Komsomol organisation and he told me I was right, but that I should not have spoken so sharply.

After that I couldn't stop myself and our Komsomol members began to stir. We started from our workplaces. It took us a long time to fix everything up as it should be, but we helped each other. Then the chief doctors also showed an interest and offered their assistance. We soon found that there really were a lot of interesting people among us, in fact the majority.

Now our patients rarely have a bad word for us and we also feel the import of the changes taking place.

T. SYOMINA Zaporozhye

IN MY 20 years of independent life, I have never yet turned to anyone for help. My parents were quite right: life has left quite a few black and blue marks on me. There were many sleepless nights when I tossed and turned under the shock of crying injustice, of ''respected'' people exploiting their position for their own personal benefit, lying blatantly and outrageously.

I just couldn't understand how on earth they could do it! Shame on all of us that we let the disgraceful style of life based on bribe-taking and string-pulling be considered a virtue.

L. KHARCHENKO, Rostov

I WOULD like to get an explanation from a real expert in economics, one who knows all the ins and outs, all the details. A team contract is a fine thing and the country badly needs it, but not in the form that most managers present.

A team contract is not a ''nationwide feeding trough''. A team contract is one of the levers to raise the economic might of our country, and spongers brandishing huge ladles mustn't come near it.

Our society is not for those who want to eat without working. If you don't want to work — go to hell! If you do want to work, you're always welcome. The principle ''he who does not work, neither shall he eat'' seems to have been forgotten. It should be returned to its proper place, extracted from the depths where it has been hidden away. The time has come to put an end to such things.

A. SEMYANOV, Saratov region

MY ELDEST daughter is 19. Many people used to say to me: ''Whatever are you doing? How on earth will she be able to live with her approach to life?'' Frankly, I was at one time terrified myself.

On leaving school she went to a teacher training college. There she met people who thought the same as she did. There are eight of them who have been close friends for three years now. They dream of setting up their own school. When our home became their hangout I felt much calmer — I saw that my daughter was not alone.

Her friends drop in to discuss some problem, some article or book, or just to talk to one another, to strum a guitar and sing a few songs.

I watch them and think that it is their spiritual unity that has brought them together. I've already mentioned my fears for the fate of my daughter and her friends, but the 27th party congress dispelled them all.

Not everything comes out right all at once, it's very hard to get rid of the routine, but how wonderful that there are such dedicated people as they are.

R. PODSHIVALOVA, Barnaul

I'VE begun to treat people and my job as I would like to have them treat me.

G. TSATURAIAN, Erevan

TRUST in man, especially as a fighter. The main thing now is not merely to voice your opinion, but to stand up for it.

S. MARTYNYUK, Vilnius

WHAT have I managed to do? To stir up hostility, and my bosses' disfavour for frank and open criticism. Evidently, the time has not yet come when one can speak openly and say what one really thinks. Your paper, too, will most likely publish only those questionaires that applaud perestroika.

V. KOBETS, Donetsk region

THERE are again many drunkards in the streets, and people come to work tipsy. The only thing that has changed are the newspapers which are now interesting, while before nothing could force me to read them.

We go to the pictures a lot more now, as quite a few good films have started to appear. We follow all the changes that are taking place in the country.

Very interesting lectures are being delivered for us at work during the lunch break.

It's a good thing that various funds are being set up. I've already sent three roubles to the Zoo Fund. In our savings bank they didn't even know what account to send the money to, but they finally took it, albeit unwillingly.

I used to keep my mouth shut, but I won't anymore.

MRS YEFREMOVA, Kuibyshev

MOST likely, I shan't be able to overcome the old psychology and fear of risk. Perestroika calls on people not to be afraid of difficulties and deprivations. But who will dare to start life from scratch, to ignore the firmly shaped relations within the work collective, with the people one lives next to. After all, these relations took shape in the course of dozens of years.

The difficulties are immense. And it becomes even more clear that we have ''principles'' enough to last one or two outbursts. But then what? A new generation of revolutionaries must be raised, that's what.

V. BELYAKOV, Saratov

1917 г. — ОКТЯБРЬ — 1920 г.

Пролетарии всех стран, соединяйтесь!

Три года назад, товарищи,—помните-ли вы?
Из Кронштадта крейсеров и миноносцев флотилия
Вошла с наведенными орудиями в устье Невы
И пал Зимний дворец—капитализма Бастилия.

А теперь Советская Россия стала сосредоточие
Всего Трудового мира,—вместе с нами
Во всех странах поднимают крестьяне и рабочие
Пролетарской Революции Алое Знамя.

Да здравствует всех трудящихся братское единение.
Над нами первыми алая заря заблистала.
Да здравствует Октябрьская Революция—освобождение
Всего человечества от кровавой власти капитала!

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