

required to "civilise" the black race might be shorter than he had originally thought.

Oliver's revelations about Johnston, the more convincing because written by one who remains a fervent admirer of the man, make it imperative to subject all writing on Africa which has been under the influence of ideas like his to the most searching critical analysis. If we are ever to restore the connected picture of African history we must endeavour to penetrate to the historical truth through the appearances created by a biased presentation. We must be prepared to find this truth turning out to be radically different from what we may have thought in the past; whether, in particular, there were any genuine tribes at all in Africa a long time before the conquest is now seriously in doubt.

Naturally, this question is of the most profound significance for the question of the African nations. At present the prospect is that in progressive British thought, at least, the last obstacles and hesitations to the recognition of the African nations will, perhaps soon, be swept away. It will become clear that not the accidental conglomerations of nations and parts of nations in the ephemeral colonial frontiers, but the African communities which in the course of their long history have developed their national languages

and cultures, built up their economic links within their own national boundaries, demand recognition as nations entitled to erect their own national states.

In the conditions of Africa this is bound to mean that the African nations will inevitably have to raise the question of the colonial frontiers:

"... the principal question, the very question which the imperialist bourgeoisie will not permit to be discussed, namely the question of the *frontiers of a state* which is built upon the oppression of nations... the bourgeoisie will willingly promise 'national equality' and 'national autonomy', if only the proletariat remains within the framework of legality and peacefully submits to the bourgeoisie on the question of the state *frontiers!*" (Lenin, Selected Works V, p. 287).

But at what point in the struggle for liberation this question has to be raised, how the African nations are to co-ordinate their political movements and to combine the fight for their individual self-determination with that against the particular colonial power which is holding them in colonial subjection is a question entirely for the African nations themselves to decide. There is absolutely no occasion to express fears or doubts in the wisdom of these nations.

An Old Problem Re-Discussed

Bert Ramelson

THE Jewish problem is not the same as the problem of Israel—it existed centuries before Zionism or an Israeli State were even thought of. Nor is it the problem of Jewish culture—with the single exception of the Hitlerite era, the Jewish problem was probably at its sharpest in periods when Yiddish culture and Yiddish as a language were born and developing.

The essence of the problem is the widespread barbaric practice of anti-Semitism—social, political and economical discrimination (at times accompanied by physical persecution) against Jews, for no reason other than that they are Jews.

It is true that the nature and degree of discrimination against Jews has varied and still varies from time to time and from country to country. Thus at one extreme we have the pogroms in

Tsarist Russia and the inhuman Nazi attempt at genocide; at the other there has been the exclusion of Jews from snob public schools, social clubs and certain residential areas.

The core of the problem is how to put an end to anti-Semitism and create conditions in which the Jew can enjoy real equality (social, political and economic) with the non-Jew in the country of his birth.

Until fairly recently, historically speaking, it was generally accepted by Jew and non-Jew alike that the solution lay in the extension and broadening of democracy. It was assumed that the limitations of democracy resulted in depriving various sections of society of certain rights—that is, discrimination against them—and that the position of the Jews was merely an extreme example of a general phenomenon.

Experience confirmed this approach. To the extent that the people's struggle succeeded in widening democracy and extending the rights of the people as a whole, to that extent there was greater tolerance towards the Jews; legal restrictions were removed, and social and economic discrimination against them were reduced. Anti-Semitism was sharpest in countries like Tsarist Russia and Eastern Europe where even bourgeois democracy was weak or non-existent; while relative tolerance was achieved in America and Western Europe, where the people's struggle had pushed forward the bourgeois democratic revolution.

Anti-Semitism, however—as typified in the Dreyfus trial in France—began to emerge again in the West at the end of the nineteenth century. This re-emergence was no historical accident: it came at the time when imperialism began to develop, marking the end of the era when capitalism was the vehicle for the extension of democracy. It is not surprising, therefore, that it was at that time too that doubts about the democratic solution to anti-Semitism began to appear, and that political Zionism was born.

The approach of the international socialist movement to the problem was different from the generally accepted approach, in that the socialists held that the economic and class basis of capitalist society fostered prejudice and discrimination, hindered the growth of democracy and constantly endangered the democratic gains which had already been won.

Because of this class approach, the socialist and working class movement inevitably assumed the leadership in the struggle for the extension of democracy and against anti-Semitism. The socialist view was that the Jewish problem could only be ultimately and permanently solved by the victory of socialism, by ending capitalist class society, which was the root of the problem at the present stage.

Recent history confirms the validity of this approach. The tragic fate which overtook the Jews in Europe in the 1930's and 1940's was the result of the ruthless destruction by imperialism in crisis of all the democratic gains won by the people, through the imposition of fascism.

On the other hand, the victory of the 1917 socialist revolution created for the Jews, in a country which used to be the hotbed of anti-Semitism, entirely new conditions. As Dr. Nahum Goldman—American president of the World Jewish Congress—stated in his address to the World Executive Council of the Congress at its Geneva meeting on July 23rd, 1958:

“Nobody accuses Soviet Russia of being anti-Semitic: the equality of rights which the Soviet Constitution grants to all citizens and all minorities applies also to Jews.”

The Nationalist Trend

While therefore the democratic solution of the problem held undisputed sway up to the end of last century, a new trend arose parallel with the rise of imperialism, a trend which sought the solution in Jewish nationalism, whose underlying philosophy is Zionism.

Especially following the emergence of fascism in the 1930's, Zionism made a tremendous impact on the minds of many Jews. The basic assumption of Zionism is that there can be no hope of ever eliminating anti-Semitism under any system. For it, therefore, the only solution is the segregation of Jews from non-Jews, to be carried out by the “ingathering” of all Jews to some territorial base. Originally, Patagonia and British East Africa were considered, but the final decision was on Palestine, where a Jewish State was to be established.

Zionism is essentially a philosophy of despair, or refusal to believe that prejudices—which are in fact products of a specific social order—can ever be overcome by the people. It is a philosophy rooted in mysticism—anti-Semitism is seen as an innate, and therefore incurable, characteristic of Gentiles. The very circumstances in which Zionism was born illustrate the despair which is its outstanding feature.

Dr. Herzl, the founder of Zionism, was a completely assimilated Austrian Jew. In the course of his professional duties as a journalist, he covered the trial of Captain Alfred Dreyfus, a completely assimilated French Jew. It was the shock of this anti-Semitic frame-up in what was considered an advanced European democracy which made him lose faith in democracy as a solution to the Jewish problem, and led him to evolve the theory of Jewish nationalism—Zionism.

The revelation of the Nazi horrors and the barbaric slaughter of six million Jews had a similar effect amongst Jewish workers and small tradesmen in the after-war period, although it was not the failure of democracy that led to these horrors, but the destruction of democracy by the ruling class.

In proposing a national solution to the Jewish problem, Zionism is compelled to argue that the Jews are a nation, although they have no common territory, language, economy, culture or way of life—which are the essential prerequisites of nationhood. They are not a nation, but the product of specific historical conditions.

During the two thousand years since their

dispersal a highly organised religion has played a major part in holding them together with a sense of community, often in the face of persecution. This religious system has been closely associated with the endeavour to maintain racial purity. Thus Jewish descent as well as religion has played a part in the maintenance of Jewry as a distinctive group; even including those among whom the practice of the Jewish religion has been abandoned. But with modern conditions and intermingling, the distinction between Jew and non-Jew begins to disappear. Anti-Semitism too has always been the other major force in keeping up the differentiation between the Jews and the non-Jews among whom they lived, and created a common defensive bond between Jews in all countries. With the waning of religion in recent times, anti-Semitism has become the most important single factor in maintaining the Jews as an entity.

In spite, however, of all the historical factors which have tended to keep Jews as a distinctive group among different peoples, they do not form a nation.

Today, however, an *Israeli* nation is rapidly emerging in the State of Israel, with its common territory, national market, language, culture and way of life. There is a great deal of understandable sympathy among Jews in other countries towards Israel, but they are not Israelis.

Because Zionism as an ideology is based on false premises, it is not only incapable of solving the real problems of the Jews, but makes these problems more difficult and hinders their solution. The false theory of Jewish nationhood results, for example, in:

(a) Making aliens of the overwhelming majority of Jews in the countries where they were born and brought up, and towards whose culture they have made a considerable contribution. This plays into the hands of the anti-Semites who also preach that the Jews are "foreigners" and should move out or be moved out.

(b) The withdrawal of many Jews from the political struggle of the working class, not only leading to self-imposed isolation, but depriving the working class of valuable help in the fight for socialism.

(c) Weakening the class sense of Jews by preaching a non-existent "common national interest" involving class collaboration within Jewry; and seeking support for imperialism on the ground of "national interest" (for example, the widespread support among Jewish workers for the Suez aggression was in glaring contrast to the strong opposition in the general Labour movement).

There is therefore no reason why Communists should change the view of Zionism which they have held hitherto—namely, that it is a reactionary ideology which can only divert Jews from participation in the only struggle capable of solving their problems—the struggle for socialism.

Israel

It is essential to distinguish between Zionism and Israel. Zionism, as shown above, is an ideology, whereas the Israeli State is a fact. As a State, Israel has all the attributes of State-hood—defined territorial boundaries, a national market, a rapidly developing national language (Hebrew) replacing the many mother tongues of its Jewish inhabitants, and the emergence of a distinct Israeli culture.

The Arabs remaining in Israel, although formally Israeli citizens, but with second-class rights (subject to military rule, pass laws etc.), are an oppressed national minority.

It can be said that the factors enumerated above, which have operated in Israel for something like a quarter of a century, have started a process which is now nearing completion—the creation of an Israeli nation.

While Zionism undoubtedly played a part in the formation of the State of Israel, it was by no means the only or even the major factor; perhaps the biggest single factor was the policy of British imperialism to further its aims in the Middle East.

What then is our attitude to Israel?

Up to 1947, our policy was clear. We stood for an independent, sovereign Palestinian State with equal rights for all its citizens whether Jew or Arab. We pointed out that the attempt to establish a purely Israeli State could only be achieved with the help of imperialism and would meet with the undying hatred not only of the Palestinian Arabs, but of all Arabs in the Middle East, in whose midst it would have to exist. We argued that the tragedy of Jewish persecution in Europe was no justification for depriving the Palestinian Arabs of their land or their right to a sovereign, national existence in their own homeland. We held that Israel could only solve the problem for a tiny proportion of the world's Jewish population (five out of six Jews still live, and will continue to live, outside Israel), and was therefore not touching the core of the problem.

After the end of the Second World War, however, conditions in that part of the world considerably changed. On the one hand there was a rapid development of the Arab national liberation movement, and on the other there were great waves of Jewish immigration into Palestine following on the monstrous Nazi persecution of Jews

and the collapse of hopes of any future for the Jews in Europe.

In pursuit of its imperialist policies, British imperialism played off Arab against Jew, repressing Jews and Arabs in turn. The consequence was the rapid growth of movements for independence among both Jews and Arabs. In these circumstances, it seemed that the Palestine question could be solved only on the basis of a common struggle by Arab and Jew against British imperialism and the establishment of a bi-national independent State. At that stage, we advocated such a policy.

In 1947, however, the United Nations decided on the establishment of two States—a Jewish State and an Arab State, with an international zone in Jerusalem—and in the circumstances the decision was supported by our Party.

The Israeli State was set up. But British imperialism, in its desperate efforts to retain its position, and making use of the genuine resentment and fear among the Arab people, conducted a war against Israel in the name of the neighbouring Arab States, whose governments were still under British influence and whose armies were led by British officers.

The result of the war was the defeat of this British imperialist effort, the considerable enlargement of Israeli territory beyond the boundary set in the United Nations resolution of 1947, the annexation of large areas of Palestine by Britain to Jordan, and of the Gaza strip by Egypt; and the fleeing of 900,000 Arab refugees from Palestine to neighbouring Arab countries, where they still live in unimaginable squalor, misery and poverty.

Such in brief were the events leading up to the establishment and consolidation of Israel as a State, and of the Communist Party's policy in relation to it. Everything that has happened since then confirms that our basic approach was correct.

The New Situation

Nevertheless, Marxists must tackle problems as they exist at a particular time, and not as they might have been.

Whatever the rights or wrongs of the past, the central fact in this connection is that Israel exists, and that an Israeli nation is developing. The problem now is how to ensure its continued existence and further development in peace and friendship with its neighbours.

The reason for the hostility to Israel which undoubtedly exists among Arabs is not only the sense that their national rights have been outraged by the establishment of Israel in their homeland through foreign invasion and conquest, and by the driving out of the original inhabitants, but also

the fear that the existence of Israel is a constant threat to the realisation of their own national independence. They see Israel as a tool of the imperialists, a constant threat to the independence of its neighbours.

It must be said that the policies of the Israeli Government since 1948 have gone a long way towards confirming this fear rather than diminishing it. Instead of supporting the Arab national liberation movement (the surest way of alleviating Arab suspicion of Israel), the Israeli Government has given repeated support to imperialism in its attempt to suppress it, as the following examples show:

1. In alliance with British and French imperialism, Israel launched the aggressive war against Egypt, which led up to Suez.

2. Israel supported the British and American troop landings in Jordan and Lebanon. Not only did Israel allow British military air transports to use her air space, but her threat to invade Jordan if Hussein was thrown out by the people was the main argument used by the British to justify the occupation of Jordan.

3. Whereas all progressive Arabs rejected the Baghdad Pact and the Eisenhower doctrine as twin instruments of imperialist aggression in the Middle East, Israel welcomed them.

4. Whereas the orientation of Arab countries fighting for independence is towards the Bandung alliance and friendly relations with the socialist countries, Israel boasts that she is the only reliable ally of imperialism in the Middle East. On every issue in the United Nations, Israel has cast her vote as the United States directed.

5. The disgraceful treatment of the Arab minority as second class citizens adds fuel to the fire.

Israel's expansionist policy was made clear in the Suez war when Ben Gurion boasted that Israel had now conquered territory three times its size and would never give it up. His latest summary of Israel's Middle East policy is that Israel stands for the status quo and will fight to the end against any change in the status quo. This does not square with the recent declaration of his Foreign Minister, Mrs. G. Meir, that in the event of any democratic political change in Jordan Israel would immediately invade Jordan and annex all territory up to the Jordan River. But even a policy of status quo on Israel's part is a policy hostile to the hopes and aspirations of the Arabs. The Arab liberation movement aims precisely to change the status quo, from dependence to independence, and it is understandable that the Arab people should see in Israel's policy a danger to their own independence,

and look on Israel as an outpost of imperialism in their very midst.

The future of Israel depends on a decisive break with the policies of alignment with imperialism, oppression of the Arab minority, or aims of aggression and expansion; and the substitution for these of a peaceful policy of negotiation with the Arab national liberation movement.

We should give support to the aim of a peaceful settlement which would ensure the just national existence and independence equally of the Israeli people and of the Palestine Arabs. The basis for such a settlement has been provided by the United Nations decision of 1947. A negotiated settlement on this basis would require recognition of the United Nations decision by both sides; peaceful negotiation of boundaries on this basis to ensure the just national rights and State existence of the Israeli people and of the Palestine Arabs; and a just settlement of the refugee problem on the basis of recognising their right to return to their homeland, restitution of their property and adequate compensation.

Such a peaceful settlement would require concessions on both sides. From the Arab side it would require recognition of Israel as an independent State, and abandonment of any attempt to challenge its right of existence. From the side of Israel, it would require recognition of the United Nations decision and readiness to negotiate a peaceful settlement on this basis.

I do not underestimate the difficulties involved; but there is no other solution. The basis of support for such a settlement does exist and is developing on both sides. It has been recognised by responsible leaders of the Arab liberation movement, including President Nasser, and of the Afro-Asian nations in their Bandung Conference resolution on Palestine. It is supported by progressive forces in Israel including the Israeli Communist Party. The Israeli Communist Party is the only political party in Israel which really unites Arab and Jew in its membership and leadership; there is no enmity between Arab and Jewish supporters of the MAKI (Israeli Communist Party). There is evidence that growing numbers of Israelis, becoming aware of the disastrous consequences of present policies, are turning towards such a solution.

The Socialist Solution

Before the cold war, no one dared to challenge the fact that the establishment of working class power in the Soviet Union had succeeded, in a relatively short time, in eliminating anti-Semitism in what used to be the country where anti-Semitism was most widespread.

This fact had a tremendous impact on Jews all over the world. Sympathy with the Soviet Union was general, and socialism as a final solution to the Jewish problem was the dominant trend among Jewish workers and many of the middle class.

Zionism sought to counter this with a ceaseless anti-Soviet campaign, but with little success.

The advent of the cold war, however, and the revelations that amongst the victims of the gross abuse of socialist democracy and legality in the Soviet Union during the period of 1948-53 were many leaders of Jewish cultural life, and that administrative measures were taken in 1948 to close down Jewish cultural institutions, were heaven-sent opportunities, unscrupulously used by Zionists and anti-Soviet Jewish elements, to spread the vilest slanders about the position and status of Jews in the Soviet Union. The most outrageous lie of all was that anti-Semitism was rife in the Soviet Union.

The aim of these campaigns was self-evident—to divert the Jewish working class from the struggle for socialism in the country where they live, and to lead them to the acceptance of Zionism. This campaign, aided and abetted by renegade and revisionist elements, had considerable success.

Such an outrageous lie, without foundation of fact, could not of course be maintained for long—just as the lie about the nationalisation of women in the Soviet Union in the 1920's soon had to be dropped.

As is made abundantly clear by the statement quoted above from Nahum Goldman's Geneva speech last July, anti-Semitism does not exist as a significant phenomenon of Soviet life.

Finding it difficult to maintain this slander, its authors have now turned their efforts to confuse and deceive to the issue of Jewish life and culture in the Soviet Union.

There may be room for controversy as to the correct application of Marxist principles in a given situation; there is less room for controversy as to what are the appropriate Marxist principles; but there can be no serious discussion at all except on the basis of the salient facts. Some of these are:

(1) Yiddish developed over the centuries as the mother-tongue of Jews in Central and Eastern Europe, owing to the persecution of Jews and the enforced segregation in Ghettoes. This compulsory isolation developed a common way of life, tradition and behaviour, and this in turn gave rise to a specific Yiddish culture, whose essence was the depicting of Ghetto life and a yearning for revolt against such intolerable conditions.

(2) Wherever the Ghetto walls were broken down—as in Western Europe and America—Yiddish ceased to develop and was gradually replaced by the language of the country where the Jews lived. English, French and German became the mother tongues of English, American, French and German Jews.

(3). Similarly, Jewish writers, artists, musicians and actors, both in content and form began to express themselves only in the language of the country where they lived; the themes and ways of life they reflected were indistinguishable from those of their non-Jewish colleagues.

(4) In the period immediately following the socialist revolution, when Yiddish was still the mother tongue and the Ghetto experiences still fresh in the minds of Jews, every facility was given to them in the Soviet Union for the development of Yiddish culture. Freed from the shackles of Tsarism, the new opportunities offered by socialism were fully grasped, the Yiddish culture flourished. This was the case not only in the initial period in the Soviet Union, but still is the case in the present period in the People's Democracies.

(5) With the further development of socialism and the complete emancipation of the Jews, the conditions and memories of the Ghetto disappear into the past. Yiddish ceases to be a living tongue and the basis for a specific culture (expressing a specific Jewish life which no longer exists) rapidly crumbles. The following further quotations from Dr. Nahum Goldman's speech at Geneva last July shows his recognition of this inevitable process:

"The disappearance of the brutal form of anti-Semitism and the political and economic well-being of most Jewish communities has initiated a system of anonymous disintegration and assimilation which has endangered the basis of our existence in the Diaspora. If this is not evident today on the surface of Jewish life, it is primarily because our generation still lives under the tremendous impact of two great psychological experiences, the Nazi period with the extermination of a third of our people, and the heroic fight resulting in the emergence of the State of Israel. Both these overwhelming experiences have revived and revitalised the Jewish consciousness of millions of Jews. The Nazi experience has created deep feelings of guilt and responsibility; the Israel experience deep emotions of pride and happiness to be a Jew. These experiences, however, determining the psychological structure of our adult generation are losing their impact even for us, but certainly for the young generation for whom the Nazi tragedy will be only a historical memory and the existence of the State of Israel an obvious matter of fact.

The more impacts of these two revolutionary experiences of our generation will disappear, the less barriers will remain to Jewish survival. If nothing is being done and the status quo continues a process of silent assimilation will continue, destroying the roots of our existence and undermining the foundations of our survival."

(6) Large concentrations of Jews lived in the bordering cities and towns of the Soviet Union which were overrun by the Nazi aggressors in the early stage of the last war. The humane action of the Soviet Union in giving priority to their evacuation saved millions of Jews from the gas chambers. It also meant, however, the breaking up of concentrated communities and a speeding up of the process of integration.

(7) Jewish cultural and literary works have been made available to all Soviet people by the publication of large editions in Russian translation.

(8) In 1948, during the period of abuse of Soviet democracy and legality, administrative measures were taken which led to the cessation of publication in Yiddish and the closing down of the Yiddish State Theatre. The justification given for these measures was that there was not enough demand to justify such undertakings.

(9) Since then, in the general rectification of past errors, certain developments have taken place. Numerous and well-attended concerts by Jewish artists with Jewish repertoires are being held throughout the Soviet Union. Some publications partly in Yiddish and partly in Russian have appeared. Comrade Danilov, Soviet Deputy Minister of Culture, told a delegation of French Jews, headed by M. Vilner, editor of the Yiddish-French weekly *Presse Nouvelle*, that the question of resuming publication in Yiddish is now under review.

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The Marxist approach to national culture is not only to permit, but to facilitate by every possible means, the fostering and development of all national cultures. Neither financial cost nor the relative smallness of the population of a nationality can be seriously considered as an obstacle to the application of this principle: every nation, large or small, has the absolute right to its fullest development, culturally as well as economically. No one has challenged the fact that this has been and is today Soviet policy.

Confusion arises, however, from treating Yiddish culture as a national culture in the same sense as other national cultures. But as we have seen, the Jews are not a nation, and Yiddish therefore cannot be treated as a national culture.

Experience has shown that whereas the emancipation of an oppressed nation leads to a spurt

in the development of its national culture, even relative tolerance for the Jews leads to the disintegration of Jewish culture.

The question that is raised is whether Marxists should attempt by artificial means to delay the natural historical process—which to many Jews may be a highly desirable one—of complete cultural integration.

I believe that the general Marxist principles applicable to nations and national cultures have no relevance as far as Yiddish culture is concerned, for the reason that it is not a national culture and is by its very nature transient. My own view is that nothing should be done either to prolong it artificially or to hasten the natural process of its demise.

The Soviet administrative measures of 1948, which closed down Yiddish cultural institutions and organisations in the process of the fight against foreign intervention and counter-revolution, were bound up with the mistaken administrative measures of that period. While their purpose was political, rather than to deal with the cultural question as such, the effect was

abruptly and artificially to close down such institutions, in place of leaving the natural process of development to determine the question.

Whether this can be rectified by the re-establishment of the Yiddish State Theatre and opening Yiddish publishing houses is not a question of principle, but can only be decided on the basis of the actual situation, which I am certainly not in a position to evaluate.

The facts to be ascertained (and the Soviet people are the only people able to evaluate them) are whether—as a result of forty years of freedom and equality in all spheres of life, the absence of a Yiddish press and theatre for the last decade (even though due to an incorrect decision) and the dispersal of Jews all over the Soviet Union during the war—sufficient numbers of Jews who speak, read, write Yiddish and feel a need to express themselves in that language, remain in the Soviet Union.

All recent developments show that when a decision is finally taken on this question, it will be one based on such an approach.

On Nationality in Music

Katharine Thomson

THOMAS RUSSELL has raised a number of important problems regarding the nature of music. Perhaps the discussion can be carried a little further by considering them from a somewhat different angle.

When we discussed Zhdanov's report on music ten years ago, we devoted a great deal of attention (perhaps too much) to his attack on formalism, but very little to his remarks on the importance of the national element in music. He appealed, it will be remembered, for music which is "realist and of truthful content, and closely and organically linked with the people and their folk-music and folk-song". We forgot that a very similar appeal had been made many years before by our own national composer, Vaughan Williams, whose death we are now mourning. In his book *National Music* (1934) he wrote: "Any school of national music must be fashioned on the raw material of its national song". And again: "The composer who tries to be cosmopolitan at the outset will fail, not only with the world at large, but with his own people as well." Referring to Mozart, Beethoven and Schubert, he maintained that the influence of folk-song in their

work "is not noticeable because it is so very plain", and that "what we call the classical idiom is the Teutonic idiom, and it is absolutely as narrowly national as that of Grieg and Mussorgsky". He referred too to Glinka's aim of writing music which would "make the people feel at home". It will be remembered that Zhdanov too quoted from Glinka: "The people create the music; we, the artists, merely arrange." It seems clear that on this vital issue Vaughan Williams and Zhdanov were at one.

How far did Vaughan Williams succeed in his avowed aim of writing music which would make his own people "feel at home"? After the production of *Sir John in Love* by the Birmingham Clarion Singers in 1949, one of the workers who had taken part in it said, "Whenever I hear *Greensleeves* on the wireless now, I think to myself, That's my *Greensleeves*". Many English people, hearing *Linden Lea* for the first time, must have experienced that sense of recognition which Vaughan Williams described himself as feeling when he first heard the English folk-song *Bushes and Briars*: "Here's something I've known all my life, only I didn't know it".