

22. Following Khrushchev's unfavourable comments on modern art at an exhibition of paintings by Moscow artists, *Pravda* published an article on December 3, 1962, entitled "Art Belongs to the People"—the phrase is Lenin's. Khrushchev's earlier statements on literature were recalled and writers were advised to read them again: "The false tendencies which have appeared in the work of certain writers and artists are evidence of the serious neglect on the part of artistic organizations, which have not been exacting and have permitted themselves to be liberal in their evaluation of certain phenomena, deviating from a fundamental and pointed statement of the vital questions of art."

Both the sentiments and the style in which they are expressed are typical of *Pravda*.

The modernism and experimentalism of the Moscow artists brought about a drive for ideological purity in all the arts by the Party authorities. Artists and writers were summoned to the Kremlin in the second week of March this year and lectured on "the responsibility of the artist to the people" by L. F. Ilyichev and also by Mr. Khrushchev. It seemed that literature was again about to endure another "freeze". However, despite many rumours, the liberal Alexander Tvardovsky was not removed from the editorship of *Novy mir* and this journal has continued to publish the serialized memoirs of Ilya Ehrenburg, who was subjected to a vicious attack by Ilyichev in his speech at the Kremlin on March 7.

THE VISITOR

Sanora Babb

Safe in the light, walled against the lion and the thief,
 Lulled by the evening rite of women in ancient rhythms
 Of the meal, forming the unformed into an offering of love,
 She moves enclosed in the work without dream, unwary
 Of the windowed dark and the dark's great company
 Crowding the air, weightless on flowers, unpierced by thorns,
 Unhindered by matter spun from motion, their easy element.
 Is the grass startled by their amorphous feet?
 Do the trees shudder in the cosmic winter's cold?
 Or, by the strange intelligence of other living things,
 Accept?
 What being defies the lock, flows past, makes for the stair
 Unseen, unheard, raising the fine hairs of her arms
 And bristling the dog's hackles? His eyes focus on the empty air.