

PREFACE TO THE SECOND DRAFT

THE CATEGORICAL condemnation, by the XXth and XXIIInd Congresses of the Communist Party, of the theory and practice of the personality cult was met with enthusiasm by all the Soviet people as an event of historical significance and as a turning point in the development of our country and of the international Communist movement. Everybody can now see clearly how many-sided and burdensome were the consequences of the personality cult, and how timely and courageous were the actions directed toward restoration of Lenin's principles of democracy, the socialist law, a steadfast observance of the right of Soviet citizens, and the methods of collective leadership.

The long-time failure to observe these principles was not reflected solely in political events. The cult of personality also had a serious impact on the ideological and scientific spheres of our life and violated those conditions of free scientific creativity which should be basically inherent in the socialist system. The environment of the personality cult seriously influenced the development of a number of natural sciences, and above all, biology and agronomy. A study of that influence is required with pressing urgency.

This book attempts to analyze, from that point of view, the widely known biological-agronomic controversy which began at the end of the twenties and continued, with periodic intensification, until very recent times. Understanding the responsibilities behind this task, I drew on a great number of Soviet scientists for discussions of the preliminary versions of the book, and also tried to take into consideration the comments of comrades whose roles in the events described were, in my view, far from positive. Leonardo da Vinci's observation that opponents hoping you make mistakes are more useful than friends trying to conceal them is not entirely true in

this situation; as a rule, friends did not try to conceal the shortcomings of this work, and I am grateful to them for much.

The first version of the book was prepared in the beginning of 1962, but it was changed and augmented many times as a result of numerous discussions. I wish to express my sincere appreciation to all comrades who, by their comments, considerations, and additions, aided in the preparation of the book in its present form.

Z. A. M.

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