REPORT ON SERVICE WITH THE
AMERICAN EXHIBITION
IN MOSCOW

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INTRODUCTION

During the past summer I served with the American Exhibition in Moscow as one of the 75 Russian-speaking guides. Although the Exhibition ran from July 25 to September 4, I arrived in the Soviet Union on July 7 and remained until September 9. I thus had an opportunity to spend some time before and after the Exhibition (as well as during the Fair) in making contact with the people of the Soviet Union. (While my contacts were primarily with Russians, they also included some with representatives of the many other nationalities of the Soviet Union.) While I met most people in Moscow, I also talked to many in Kiev, Leningrad, and Riga, which I visited after making my own arrangements.

What follows is a distillation of my observations and the many comments and opinions expressed to me in the course of my stay in the Soviet Union. Since comments ranged over a variety of subjects, I have selected the topics of most general interest which I had an opportunity to explore at length. I have limited myself for the most part to comments made to me in conversations with individuals who could not be overheard, since even in the relatively free atmosphere which existed at the time of the Exhibition Soviet citizens still felt constrained in talking with foreigners. Accordingly I have placed less stress on comments from the crowds which surrounded me daily in give-and-take discussions at the Exhibition. I should note here, however, that many significant comments were made in disputes among the
Soviet visitors. Thus, when a zealous defender of the Soviet system, in trying to score a point in a discussion with me, would overstate the benefits of the Soviet system, say in housing or medical care, he would often be vigorously contra-
dicted by someone in the crowd.

Since the Exhibition provided the setting for many of my initial contacts with Soviet citizens, I have included a description of this major landmark in the U.S.-Soviet cultural exchange program. I have also indicated in some detail the environment in which my private meetings with Soviet citizens were held. This background indicates the political climate in the Soviet Union in the Summer of 1959.
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I. DETAILS OF THE EXHIBITION

Background

The American Exhibition in Moscow (with the Soviet counterpart in New York) was one of the results of a general agreement reached in 1957 covering a wide range of American-Soviet contacts in the cultural, scientific and educational fields. In the subsequent negotiations on implementing the agreement, the exchange of exhibitions proved to be most troublesome to arrange; final agreement on the exchange was not reached until late 1958.

One of the major reasons for this delay was probably the fact that the exchange necessitated a major change in the attitude of the Soviet regime towards East-West contacts. Until the Exhibition these contacts were confined for the most part to exchanges of official delegations and to meetings of specialists. The Exhibition, however, entailed broadening these contacts to the general public.

When agreement was finally reached, it signified that for the first time in the history of Soviet-American relations a sizeable group of Russian-speaking Americans was to receive an opportunity to tell the U.S. story to the Soviet masses directly, without the distorting propaganda "correctives" applied in the Soviet communication media. The significance of this fact was not lost upon the Soviet people themselves. It was reflected by the many visitors who said it was heartening that American-Soviet relations had so improved as to make it possible for Soviet citizens to talk to Americans face-to-face. The
eagerness with which the Exhibition visitors overwhelmed the guides with questions also suggested a pent up desire to learn about America from Americans. It was as if the Soviet people had saved their questions for some forty years and at last had a chance to ask them. At the same time, the intensity with which questions were asked also reflected a feeling of many visitors that the Exhibition might be not only the first opportunity to meet Americans in person but possibly the last, given the political uncertainties in the world. I am sure this thought was behind many of the wistful expressions of hope that there would be similar opportunities for meetings in the future.*

*In speaking of contacts with Americans, a number of visitors privately made the point that until the Exhibition they had little or no opportunity to talk to us. On prior occasions, they had been inhibited from meeting Americans by the fact that this would have involved either tourists who did not know Russian and were being shepherded around by Intourist interpreters, or U.S. Embassy personnel from whom Soviet citizens shy away for obvious reasons. (The regime reinforces the inhibitions with respect to contacts with embassy personnel by pointed warnings from time to time as in the recent Russell Langelle case.) Similarly, there were numerous comments that it was too bad that U.S. delegations or visiting dignitaries never had a chance to observe real Soviet life and instead formed their impressions from the model collective farms, model factories, and even model party hacks and government bureaucrats. To correct this deficiency, some Russians issued oral and written challenges to visit places even as close as the immediate vicinity of Moscow to see real Russian conditions. Several guides, myself included, were escorted on such tours as part of a personal campaign by some Russians to apply a corrective to the regime's policy of conducting "Potemkin Village" showcase tours.
A Description of the Exhibition Visitors

In line with the expressed purpose of placing a "corner of America" in Moscow, the U.S. Fair attempted to show many phases of American life with emphasis on our standard of living. It was a new experience for most Soviet visitors to see, touch, taste and smell the products of America -- some, such as Pepsi Cola or ready-made cake mixes, unfamiliar to them, others, such as automobiles or appliances, familiar only in less advanced domestic models.

But more important to the visitors, according to their oral and written comments (the latter noted in books provided at the Exhibition), was the opportunity afforded them to talk to the 75 guides.* Many said that even if we had been unable to mount an exhibition, the presence of guides at empty tables would have made the undertaking worth while.

Since it gave us general access to Soviet people, the Exhibition offered us, as participants, one of the best opportunities we have had to date to explore Soviet life and to probe popular attitudes in depth. Soviet citizens also made themselves more accessible because of the Exhibition. To them, the mere fact of the Exhibition, in such sharp contrast to the regime's past policy on contacts with Americans, implied official sanction of such contacts. The Fair also offered a specific

*The latter were chosen from some eight hundred applicants for their Russian language fluency and their knowledge of American life and Soviet affairs after comprehensive examinations administered by Government -- U.S.I.A., State and Commerce Departments -- and academic personnel.
place and opportunity for a Soviet citizen to satisfy in part his insatiable curiosity about America, which tended to overcome his apprehension. The general atmosphere before the Camp David talks (the announcement of the forthcoming Khrushchev-Eisenhower meeting in the U.S. was made at the height of the Exhibition) encouraged the Soviet people even more to seek the acquaintance of Americans.

As a result, visitors came in droves. Some sixty to seventy thousand visited the Fair daily. By the end of the Fair some 2½ million had seen "the corner of America" at Sokolniki Park located in the northwestern part of the Soviet capital. (A little over a million Americans visited the Soviet Exhibition in New York.) The Fair visitors appeared to represent a cross section of the Soviet peoples since they came from all walks of life and from all parts of the Soviet Union, by all means (legal and illegal).

In the first week of the Fair, the visitors were heavily weighted on the elite side starting with Khrushchev and Kozlov. This was evident (1) from their dress (among the men many good-quality, pressed suits and white shirts and ties, among the women many tailored suits and fur pieces); (2) from their language (more refined and educated); (3) from other external signs (many sported Orders of Lenin and Red Flag insignias with inscriptions denoting Supreme Soviet deputies); and (4) from the general hostility with which questions were asked and answers received. (In many cases the questions were asked
in a hostile manner which conveyed the impression that the
questioner was a privileged member of a system which the U.S.
Exhibition was challenging by its presence -- true in a sense;
in contrast, the questions of subsequent visitors were asked in
a manner indicating genuine curiosity and desire to receive
information.) The elite composition of the early crowds was
confirmed by many later visitors who informed us that initially
the Exhibition tickets were distributed through Party organiza-
tions on a limited basis. For example, the director of a Moscow
plant with 600 employees received 50 tickets which he passed out
to selected personnel. The initial make-up of the visiting
groups was further predetermined by the fact that no tickets
were on public sale anywhere. However, many Russians managed
to overcome this barrier by crashing the gates without tickets
or going over the fences.

Subsequently, when tickets were put on general sale, there
was a noticeable change in the composition of the crowds. People
came from all parts of the Soviet Union: this was evident from
many non-Russian faces, from the fact that questions were often
asked in broken Russian, and from the colorful national costumes
worn by some visitors. (The fierce-looking visitors from the
Soviet Caucasus even wore their ceremonial daggers.)

The visitors came with varying degrees of governmental
sanction. Some visited the Fair on specific authorization.
For example, one Leningrad assistant plant director showed me
his travel papers listing his assignment to visit the Fair;
subsequently, he was to report to his workers on what he had seen. Many non-Muscovites visited the Exhibition during their vacation in Moscow without either approval or disapproval of the regime.* Still others came without authorization, even illegally. Thus I met a group of farmers from a collective farm near Leningrad who simply commandeered a farm truck and drove to Moscow, sitting up all night; they were wearing cotton quilt coats and had sacks on their backs containing black bread, sausage and onions — a sample of real Russia! A number of Balts (Latvians and Estonians), arrived in their own small German-make cars, salvaged from the German occupation days. Under Soviet law Soviet citizens must receive prior approval for distant trips and must register with the local authorities on arrival. These Balts, being pro-Western, assumed they would never get permission from the Soviet authorities to visit the Fair and therefore chose to come illegally. They made their way to Moscow by buying gas at a premium from Russian truck drivers along the way, a service the drivers were only too glad to render as a means of making some extra money. While in Moscow, these visitors from the Baltic states slept in tents on the outskirts of the city. These and other instances of

*Many Soviet citizens stream to the capital from other cities and the countryside during their vacation for the specific purpose of shopping at GUM — Soviet Union's equivalent of Macy's Department Store — and stocking up on goods not available locally. This is tacit proof, if it is needed, that the Soviet capital is a showcase of the Soviet Union.
illegal visits to the fair illustrate how the Soviet people manage on some occasions to evade the all-pervasive control which the regime seeks to exercise over them. These examples also show how some Soviet citizens ran the risk of punishment for a chance to talk to Americans, indicating still further how eagerly they grasped the opportunity to hear something about the U.S. from non-Soviet sources.

During the Exhibition, I was stationed at the voting machines, which might have been considered one of the hardship posts. Since the voting machine exhibit was probably one of the most sensitive from the regime's point of view (pertaining as it did to secrecy in voting -- a method not favored in the Soviet system) it received great attention from the Communist Party activists who were assigned to the Exhibition to harass the guides with embarrassing or provoking questions. The voting machines became a prime target after the attention -- or more correctly the lack of it -- paid to this particular exhibit by Khrushchev on his tour of the Exhibition on opening day.*

*To refresh the reader's mind I will mention the incident as I witnessed it. When Vice President Nixon escorted the Soviet leader around the Exhibition on opening day he tried to interest Khrushchev in examining the voting machine and perhaps induce him to register his opinion. (The ballots contained questions on the over-all impression of the Exhibition and preference among specific exhibits.) As Nixon began to explain the function of the voting machine Kozlov amiably started to say that he had heard about the voting machine at the Brussels Fair -- where Mikoyan and Voroshilov had actually voted -- when Khrushchev with a sour expression on his face cut Kozlov off with the curt comment, "This doesn't interest us," and rapidly
I found the voting machine exhibit to be an ideal sounding board since I could engage in a discussion on all subjects, including politics. The nature of the voting machine put it in a political context the moment a Soviet visitor asked about it and its use in the U.S. This meant I had a free hand to engage in such discussions, although they were not officially encouraged.* As a result I often heard significant comments emerging from heated discussions among the Russians themselves on such politically sensitive subjects as decision-making in the Soviet system and the desirability of being exposed to competing political ideas. In many instances the visitors were so carried away by these disputes that they forgot or ignored my presence until reminded by others in the crowd that it was impolite to wash dirty laundry in public, or until the disputant was accused by the zealot of being anti-socialist and pro-capitalist (a label designed apparently to frighten the challenger). In one instance, for example, an older, distinguished-looking Russian, uninvited, took over from me the defense of a free press not subject to government control.

strode away leaving Kozlov behind open-mouthed and with a now less than amiable expression on his face. In witnessing this incident, I had little doubt about which member of the Soviet "collective" leadership was "more equal" than the others.

*Soviet officials made unofficial protests during the Exhibition that too many of the guides were engaging in political debates. For us, this was ironic since many political questions were often initiated by the regime-inspired activists or zealous defenders of the Soviet system.
He upheld my contention that with all the possible abuses of a free press it was still better to be exposed to a number of viewpoints than to be restricted to a single government line. He added that even a government of the people can sometimes be wrong; the Soviet government itself has not been immune to error in the past. Many in the crowd took this reference, I am sure, to the limited debunking of Stalin carried on earlier by Khrushchev.

**Nature of the Questions**

As could be expected, the long isolation of the Soviet people from contact with Americans resulted in a torrent of questions on all aspects of American life. The most frequent inquiries pertained to U.S. living standards and conditions (prices, wages, housing, etc.). There were numerous questions on the domestic side of U.S. life, on unemployment, education, discrimination, medical care, and the study of Russian in the U.S. No minutia was beyond the Russian curiosity: a frequent question concerned the cost, per kilowatt-hour, of household electricity. On foreign affairs, the most frequent question related to the possibility of war. There were specific questions on U.S. military bases and the suspension of nuclear testing.

All the guides were asked personal questions about their religious beliefs, party affiliations, and home life; how they learned Russian; the image of the Soviet Union they held prior to arrival in Moscow and the change, if any, after arrival. In addition, the Russians bluntly asked some questions on delicate subjects such as prostitution and abortion.
Some interesting questions on politics revealed how Soviet citizens conceive of government. There were questions as to why President Eisenhower could not make Congress obey him in case of disagreement and as to why the federal government could not enforce its will arbitrarily on the states as, for example, in the desegregation cases. Significantly, however, when I explained about our tradition of division of power, which was designed to forestall the concentration of political power in the hands of one man or group, the Soviet citizens in many cases related this to their own experience under the Soviet system, particularly in Stalin's time. There were also frequent questions on the U.S. passport system and freedom of movement. Again, these questions were most revealing of the Soviet citizens' concept of the value of the individual. Thus they were quite surprised to learn that the U.S. had no internal passport system and that Americans were free to move about in the U.S. without registering with authorities in each place visited.* The inevitable question on this point was how did the authorities keep track of American citizens. When I explained that according to our tradition, our movements were

*Under the Soviet system all citizens over the age of 16 are required to register for a passport which must be in their possession at all times. A passport contains, along with other data, information about the registrant's current place of work and residence. Within 3 days of arrival in a new city, he must register with the local authorities.
none of the government's business, except for flight to avoid prosecution, I would be immediately asked how violators of the law were tracked down without a passport system. My answer to the effect that we did not believe that, in order to facilitate catching the few criminals in our midst, we should all be subjected to a surveillance system via passport registration, was met with a meaningful silence or, in some instances, vocal approval. Silence was frequently a sign of Russian approval, since a voiced comment could have been noted by agents of the regime in the crowd. (The fact that on other occasions the Russians never hesitated to voice disapproval confirmed silence as a mark of approbation.)

Many questions, of course, reflected the special interest, status and age of the questioners. The older Russians were interested in medical care, the retirement system and subjects related to their personal experience such as war and surveillance; they frequently asked about the passport system and freedom of movement in the U.S. The younger visitors tended to ask questions about education (how free was one to attend any college of his choosing, financial details, etc.) and culture (jazz, modern literature, etc.). Collective farmers centered their questions on land ownership in the U.S. and usually received my answers on this point with meaningful silence. On one occasion, however, a Ukrainian farmer engaged in a bitter argument with one of the agitators who denounced "the fact" that U.S. land was in the hands of the capitalists instead of
the small farmers. When I pointed out that it was true that land in the U.S. is held by both corporations and small individual farmers, but that the U.S. government had made and was making an effort to help the latter, the Ukrainian broke in to remark that that was more than his government was doing for its people.

There were also significant differences in the questions asked by visitors of different nationalities. Nearly all asked about racial discrimination in the U.S. But some non-Russian visitors, such as Kazakhs and Uzbeks, inquired about domination of national minorities by the dominant national group in the U.S.* By implication, their questions seemed to reflect their feelings about Russian domination over the other nationalities in the Soviet Union. On some occasions, non-Russians vocally contradicted zealots who maintained that discrimination was nonexistent in the Soviet Union.

There was also a difference in the questions asked about religion. The believers (and there were many in the crowd, mostly among the older people) asked about worship of God in

*Without exception, Soviet citizens had difficulty comprehending the fact that the nationality concept as such does not exist in the U.S. Under the Soviet system, one is a Soviet citizen and then a member of a nationality group stipulated in his passport. Consequently, after I identified myself as an American, I was inevitably asked about my nationality. Our negro guides had even more difficulty in answering the question.
the U.S. and religious training.* The nonbelievers (mostly among the young and middle-aged) asked about religious belief on philosophical grounds, that is, how any intelligent person could rationally justify a belief in a supreme being. They did not believe it could be done. Therefore, in their view, man must be supreme. Yet I found many in this group (particularly among the students) who doubted that man had, or could ever get, all the answers despite his great achievements to date. For me, this attitude represented an interesting commentary on the regime's failure -- after forty years of effort -- to instill, particularly in the Soviet youth, the idea that in "scientific" Marxism one could find the solution to all problems. I found that some among those professing atheism were searching for answers elsewhere, though not necessarily in religion as some U.S. observers have concluded. The fact that some Soviet citizens are looking for answers outside of the Marxist framework may have fateful consequences for the Soviet regime which, basing itself on Marxism, has sought to set itself up as the source of revelation.

Many questions asked by the visitors day after day related to problem areas in the U.S., e.g. unemployment, discrimination, etc. It seemed to me that the regime had succeeded in focusing attention on questions embarrassing to the U.S. but that its answers had failed to convince the Soviet

*The believers, however, are not confined to elders. I had the interesting experience of meeting the young Russian
people. They asked many questions in order to test the official Soviet version for correctness, to confirm rumors of facts they suspected were being withheld from them by the regime and to fill in general areas of ignorance resulting from lack of information.

This was evident from the manner in which questions were asked. For example, to obtain confirmation or rebuttal of the official version of the U.S. unemployment problem, a visitor often phrased his inquiry in the words of the official version as, "Is it true that the unemployed are shelterless and are starving?" In contrast, a visitor seeking information out of genuine ignorance phrased the question as, "We are told that there are unemployed. Could you tell us about their plight?" To confirm facts withheld by the regime but which he somehow had uncovered, a visitor would phrase the question as, "Is is true that the unemployed get relatively high unemployment compensation?" (The official Soviet version of U.S. unemployment says little or nothing about unemployment compensation and particularly about the fact that unemployment compensation in most cases equals or exceeds the average Soviet wage level.)

who stole the Bible printed in Russian which had been put on display at the beginning of the Exhibition. After this loss another sample was sent to the Exhibition and put under glass to safeguard it for the duration of the Fair.
Our answers to questions were accepted in varying degrees depending on the subject and the questioner. The agitators sent in by the regime to ask us embarrassing questions, of course, accepted none of our explanations. On the other hand, I found acceptance among the nonprofessional defenders of the regime whenever a thoughtful point was made for their consideration. (In this group I include those who would normally be expected to have a vested interest in the Soviet system.) For example, I had an interesting discussion with two news- men on the alleged conflict of class interests in the capitalist countries vs. social harmony in a classless socialist society. In the course of the conversation, I posed a question: How is it possible for the Supreme Soviet, for example, to hold unanimous views (as represented by their unanimous votes) on the solution to complicated problems of national policy when daily one witnesses disagreements among Soviet citizens on such trivial matters as boarding busses, service in stores and restaurants, etc.? It appeared that I had struck a sensitive note since the younger of the two newsmen was led away by the other without completing our discussion. Visitors who were neither agitators nor zealous defenders of the Soviet system accepted many of my explanations. I found this encouraging since they seemed to form a majority of the daily crowds after the elite had made their visit during the early days of the Exhibition.

In answering questions, I found the crowds most receptive when I began with an assumption that all is not perfect in the
U.S. This seemed to disarm many visitors who were expecting pat answers from "the hired defenders of the capitalist system," as the regime characterized the guides. I continued with the observation that things were not perfect anywhere, even in the Soviet Union. This statement usually met with a demur from someone in the crowd to which I replied that as far as I knew heaven did not exist on earth, but if anyone knew of such a place let him tell me and I would gladly go there. Inevitably there was a comment from the crowd, "Let him also tell me and I'll go with you." The idea that heaven did not exist on this earth was accepted by all Russians. Not even the most ardent zealot in the crowd attempted to introduce the Marxist dogma that Communism would produce utopia. He would not have dared in view of the skepticism I detected about the current Seven Year Plan allegedly designed to achieve vast material improvement for the Soviet people.

My explanations of U.S. domestic affairs tended to be more readily accepted than those on foreign policy. I often received a sympathetic hearing when I pointed out that progress is a slow process and that we were making an effort to solve such problems as unemployment or racial discrimination. This often met with a response, "We know what you mean; we have our own unresolved problems." When a hostile visitor continued to chide me about our domestic problems, I would refer to Soviet problems such as bureaucracy, drunkenness and hooliganism cited in the Soviet press. This reference sufficed to silence the critic and brought appreciative smiles from many in the crowd.
My comments on U.S. foreign policy met with less sympathy. Here, of course, one had to contend with widespread fear on the part of the Soviet people, owing to the fact that hardly a family in the Soviet Union was left untouched by the last war. Therefore, in answering questions on U.S. foreign policy (such as those on military bases and nuclear testing), I had to hurdle an emotional barrier before I was able to reach the Russians.

The Impact of the Exhibition on the Soviet People

The best way to assess the impact of the Exhibition on the Soviet people is to refer to the comments made by the visitors and the reaction of the regime. The people, for the most part, reacted favorably to the Exhibition as a whole. This was evident from comments directed to the guides, from the notations made in notebooks placed around the Exhibition* and from the results registered by the voting machines. Many visitors wanted to express greater appreciation by more covert means. For example, a number of Russians told me that they hesitated to enter more favorable comments in the notebooks since others would be looking over their shoulders either out of curiosity or, more important, on assignment from the regime. To encourage freer expression, many visitors suggested that we set up boxes under lock. This arrangement, they said, would

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*At the end of the day we made a practice of removing the sheets containing the comments made during the day. This was done to forestall the rifling of the sheets which had taken place overnight on some occasions, perhaps by Soviet design.
permit them to write their comments in solitude elsewhere and deposit them in the boxes on the assumption that these would be under our control. The idea was not put into effect until the last week of the Exhibition. The Exhibition management may have feared that the Soviet Government would protest that we were providing a channel for transmission of intelligence. Until this innovation was introduced a number of visitors resorted to their own means of expressing unrestrained opinions. For example, some visitors crammed notes in the voting machines at the close of day which we found the next morning.

The reaction of the Soviet regime also indicated that the Exhibition was making a favorable impression on the Soviet people. From the first days, the Exhibition was subjected to severe and sometimes vicious attacks in the Soviet press. Almost every day articles appeared criticizing the Exhibition for misrepresenting some aspect of American life. On many occasions, without having read a copy, I could determine the theme of the attack in the morning paper from the questions asked by the agitators and others on that particular day. For example, an article on the deficiencies of U.S. medical care would be reflected later in the day in questions on this subject. In attacking the Exhibition, the regime apparently was unable to work out a consistent line. This was evident from the contradictory nature of the criticism directed at the Exhibition. Thus, in one breath, it was declared that the Exhibition was
displaying wares beyond the reach of the average American and, in the next breath, that the Exhibition was showing nothing that the Russians did not already have. This confusion tended to be reflected among the agitators and the zealous defenders of the Soviet system. For example, in one and the same crowd, you might have someone maintaining that the $14,000 house on display at the Exhibition was a Taj Mahal which no American worker could afford and another stoutly maintaining that such a house had been available to the Russians for a long time. The latter assertion was greeted with silent skepticism by the visitors, most of whom live in one-room apartments sharing a kitchen and toilet with several other families. This skepticism in turn often made it unnecessary to answer the other assertion that the typical house was really a showcase. Visitors maintaining both viewpoints were often thrown into confusion when I appealed to the crowd to tell me which of the two conflicting charges I was to answer.

When the attack on the Exhibition apparently failed to have its effect, the Soviet press switched to personal attacks on the guides. A number of articles had as their theme alleged misbehavior, rudeness, or misrepresentation of facts on the part of the guides. In stepping up its campaign, the Soviet press resorted to fabricating stories. Thus, one article alleged that one of the guides, named Hugh Johnson, had called the editor of a Moscow newspaper, challenging its version of a story on the Exhibition, and invited him to meet Johnson at
the Exhibition to get the truth. A correspondent allegedly went to the Exhibition to seek out Johnson and was unable to find him; this, according to the Soviet paper, proved the dishonesty of the entire Exhibition. Of course, we had no one by the name of Hugh Johnson and, as far as we were able to determine, none of us had ever called the Soviet editor.

Along with press attacks on the Exhibition, the regime attempted to influence attendance. As already noted, in the early weeks of the Exhibition, tickets were distributed through party organizations. Later, when tickets were put on general sale, the regime tried to discourage attendance by other means. Thus, posters announcing the U.S. Exhibition were plastered up without bottom strips which contained details of ticket procurement. In some cases, posters were further defaced by eliminating another segment which announced the closing date of the Exhibition. As a result, a number of people made plans to visit the Exhibition after the closing date. For example, I met several non-Muscovites who told me that their friends were planning to visit the Fair in mid-September (the Exhibition closed on September 4). I was further told that the Exhibition was ignored in the regional press, especially in the Baltic states, in order to reduce attendance of people from the outlying areas of the Soviet Union. (The silent treatment, however, failed when news of the Exhibition was passed by word of mouth.)

To blur the impression that the U.S. Exhibition might make on the visitors, the regime set up its own fair just
outside of the main entrance to the U.S. Exhibition. This fair included a display of the latest models of Soviet cars, refrigerators, and other wares. Before entering our Exhibition, the visitors were herded past the Soviet display. This obvious attempt to reduce the impact of the U.S. Fair proved self-defeating. Many visitors made a direct comparison of Soviet models with American-made products to the detriment of the former. They also indicated that they realized the Soviet Fair was a showcase since many products on display there were beyond their means or were unavailable in the stores. Nature also took a hand, dealing an embarrassing blow to the regime. A severe storm at the height of the Exhibition caused the collapse of the shelter cover over the exhibits of the Soviet Fair. This mishap forced a temporary closing of the Soviet showcase while the U.S. Exhibition continued unaffected. Some of the visitors took due note of the situation with appropriate innuendos concerning the quality of Soviet workmanship.

The Soviet Fair was a "subtle" effort by the regime to reduce the impact of the U.S. Exhibition on Soviet visitors. Many visitors, however, received explicit instructions not to be over-impressed by what they saw or were told at our Exhibition. Thus a young metalcraft worker from Minsk told me that he attended a meeting at his factory where agitprop personnel (those charged with disseminating party propaganda) in speech after speech decried the Exhibition; they exhorted those who might attend the Exhibition to remember that it was
merely a showcase sample from a decaying capitalist society. This particular worker had a better than average knowledge of American life, acquired from a close personal friend in Minsk who had met Americans at the Elbe in 1945 while serving with the Soviet Army. The assistant director from Leningrad, who showed me his travel papers assigning him to visit the U.S. Exhibition and report to his workers, had also been warned in advance not to be over-impressed with what he saw.

The regime assigned agitators to harrass the guides with embarrassing questions as another means of lessening the impact of the Exhibition. At the voting machines, the harrassment also took the form of physical action. An agitator would enter a voting-machine booth and deliberately stall inside to prevent others from voting their opinion of the Exhibition. If I asked such a person to leave after a reasonable time, he would protest that I was trying to prevent him from exercising his right to express an opinion. For effect on the crowd, he would ask, "Is that the way democracy works in the U.S.?" Most of the visitors, however, were not impressed since the delaying tactics were too obvious to all. We later learned that, in addition to the professional party workers, several classes of law students were commandeered for the task of asking embarrassing questions. In the closing days of our Exhibition, this cadre was reinforced by a number of Russian guides from the Soviet Exhibition in New York. But the Soviet guides turned out to be surprisingly friendly -- perhaps out of sympathy for our
physical hardship since they too had been subjected to a barrage of questioning day after day from morning to night. This sympathy apparently came to the attention of the regime. Near the end of the Exhibition we invited them to a party at our hotel. They accepted but never showed up. Our efforts to contact them to ascertain the reason for their failure to appear were unsuccessful.

All attempts to discourage attendance at the Exhibition and dampen the enthusiasm of the visitors were unsuccessful as far as we were able to determine. The demand for tickets was fantastic. The tickets nominally priced at one ruble (10 cents) were selling for as high as 50 and 75 rubles on the black market. Since tickets were placed on sale only on the day they were valid, potential visitors lined up the evening before and spent the entire night in line. (This seemed to match the ardor of fanatic Dodger fans at World Series' time.) This eager quest for tickets often met with disappointment because of the great demand and the limited number of tickets put on sale by the Soviet authorities who had complete control of ticket distribution. Many visitors were surprised to learn that we had no control over tickets and thereupon drew their own conclusions about the encouragement the regime was giving to attendance. Some of them described the procedure for the general sale of tickets as one designed to discourage visitors. To obtain tickets, visitors had to stand in two lines: first, in one line for chits, then in another line for tickets available only
to chitholders. Many of the latter reached the box office only to find the supply of tickets for the day exhausted. This, however, didn't seem to deter many Russians from trying again until they succeeded. A few commented humorously that they had a lot of previous training for waiting in lines.

The avidity with which the visitors collected souvenirs was still another indication of the impression the Exhibition was making on the Soviet people. The distribution of descriptive brochures and lapel buttons often created near riots, physically endangering the guides. Many display items simply disappeared at the end of the day. (When I described this loss as expropriation in the best "capitalist" tradition, many visitors smiled while others, who maintained that the Exhibition displayed little of interest to the Soviet people, were silenced, momentarily at least.) We found, for example, several thousand books (including bulky Sears catalogs) missing at the end of the first few days of the Exhibition. In a desperate attempt to preserve the book exhibit for the duration of the Exhibition, we placed many books, particularly pocket books, under glass. However, about a hundred other books were put under similar protection at the "request" of Soviet authorities after it was discovered that they contained unfriendly references to the Soviet system. I found many people had items which I would not have considered souvenirs in places far removed from Moscow. For example, I met a Russian boy in Leningrad who proudly showed me a Pepsi Cola paper cup which his father had brought him as
a souvenir from a visit to the Exhibition. The souvenir craze displayed by the visitors seemed to answer the official Soviet line that the U.S. Exhibition demonstrated nothing new or interesting to the Soviet people. The regime's carping criticism that the Exhibition was frivolous and lacked a display of American technological achievements (partly true) was best answered by one Russian who jokingly told me, "Please, don't come with heavy machinery next time, as Pravda demands, since I can't possibly take a heavy lathe with me as a souvenir."

Assessment of the Exhibition

Probably the most important gain for the U.S. from the exchange of exhibitions was that it gave a large group of Russian-speaking Americans direct access to the Soviet people. Undoubtedly, they changed the black-and-white image of America, fostered by Soviet propaganda, to some shade of gray. And the American guides left the Soviet visitors with facts about the U.S. which they could use in the future to evaluate the correctness of the official view of America. That the Soviet people now may know more about the U.S. than they did prior to the Exhibition puts a greater strain on the regime to make its propaganda more credible. Up to now the regime has had an easy time in getting its version of events in the U.S. and the world accepted by the Soviet people because of their limited contact with Americans in the past; in the future, the regime may be less convincing. The contact with the American guides may have results similar to those of the meeting of Soviet and
American G.I.'s at the Elbe River in 1945. I met several Russian participants in that link-up whose attitude toward the U.S. was strikingly different from others. They exhibited less initial uneasiness in our first meeting and displayed attitudes toward the U.S. which seemed to have been influenced in some measure by earlier contact with Americans.

The Exhibition also intensified the hunger for consumer goods which is evident among the Soviet people and to the satisfaction of which Khrushchev lately has paid increasing lip service. The Soviet visitors had an opportunity to glimpse the productivity of the American economic system which Khrushchev has pledged to overtake and surpass in the next 7 to 12 years. Since they seemed to be particularly impressed by the quality of U.S. wares, which are far superior to most Soviet-made consumer products, the Soviet visitors now have an additional gauge for measuring the degree to which Khrushchev carries out his promises to improve the quality of the Soviet consumer goods.

On the negative side, the exchange of exhibitions again demonstrates how Soviet leaders manage to score propaganda gains by appearing to relax tension without acting on the real causes of such tension. Undoubtedly, they regarded this exchange as part of their continuing effort to induce a less vigilant attitude in the West by creating an image of a Soviet regime engaged in activities strengthening peace. On this occasion, they may have succeeded. By now, many Americans
probably have forgotten the background against which the exchange took place: preparations for the U.S. Exhibition began in the Spring of 1959 when the Berlin crisis was at its height. Yet, one can hardly avoid seeing the irony in the situation. While U.S. Exhibition personnel were frantically trying to meet an opening date, other Americans, under the threat of Khrushchev's ultimatum, were trying to decide if we should attempt to blast our way through a possible Soviet-inspired East German blockade of Berlin. The Soviet leaders were having their cake and eating it too. On the cultural plane they were going through peaceful motions with the concomitant propaganda gain while pursuing a policy of bluster and threats on the political level.
II. PRIVATE MEETINGS WITH SOVIET CITIZENS

How the Meetings Were Arranged

A stay in the Soviet Union of over two months gave me ample time to establish numerous contacts with Soviet citizens. Since I spent over six weeks of this time in Moscow I had an opportunity to see many on more than one occasion. Consequently, I became sufficiently familiar with them to have more than the guarded conversations an American normally has in his first encounter with a Soviet citizen. I had a similar experience in Riga, as a result of exceptional circumstances described elsewhere (section III C). These repeated contacts gave me fresh insights into the thinking of Soviet citizens on the topics covered in this report.

I shall describe first how contacts were made. As any informed foreigner in the Soviet Union knows, the value of conversations with Soviet citizens often depends on who makes the first overture. If a Soviet citizen initiates the contact, an American must weigh the circumstances involved: he may be talking to a genuinely curious Soviet citizen or to one whose curiosity has been instigated by the regime. An American can never be sure on this score, but he can acquire a feeling from the circumstances and the nature of the conversation which will enable him to judge the intentions of a Russian-initiated contact. Less wariness, of course, is in order if an American initiates the meeting. The Exhibition in Moscow provided
opportunities for both types of contact since it was a meeting ground upon which thousands of Soviet citizens converged daily. Undoubtedly, among them were a few sent deliberately to establish contact with the guides. The vast majority, however, were at the Exhibition out of sheer curiosity. This curiosity was strong enough to drive many visitors to seek conversations with the guides beyond the normal, brief give-and-take exchanges at the Exhibition. Therefore, I was assured by the great influx of visitors that along with those who possibly sought me out by design there were others who were spurred by genuine interest. Consequently, some of my contacts were established after individuals in the crowd heard my explanation on some point of particular interest to them and approached me for lengthier exchanges off the Exhibition grounds. Before responding to these overtures, I resorted to a test designed to reduce the possibility that my exchange would be conducted with a "plant."

In answering a request for a private meeting I suggested that a visitor call me at my hotel to arrange a meeting. Invariably, nearly all visitors requested that we make on-the-spot arrangements for a place and time of the meeting to obviate the necessity of calling me at the hotel. (There was an implicit assumption by these Russians that our phones at the hotel were tapped.) I eliminated the few others who did not balk at my request as "plants" or as too foolhardy for their own good.

Another test used by me to determine the spontaneity of a contact (in so far as this was possible) pertained to the
meeting place. Almost without exception, Russians declined to meet me at my hotel. And only rarely did they suggest that a first meeting be held at their home. (Where such an invitation was extended at all, it came only after the second or even third meeting.) As a result, I avoided Soviet citizens, who, in approaching me first, expressed no hesitation about coming to my hotel room or invited me to their homes for a first meeting. In these instances, I felt sure that I was dealing with people representing the regime. One early incident strengthened my belief. During the second week of the Exhibition I was approached by a dark skinned non-Russian (possibly from Soviet Central Asia) as I was making my way through the crowd for lunch. He indicated he wanted to talk to me alone and asked if we could do so, off the Exhibition grounds, at his apartment in the southwestern part of Moscow. Being wary of such an open invitation, I suggested instead that we meet in the park around the Exhibition. He accepted this with disappointment showing on his face. When I met him later in the day, I heard a fantastic story that only confirmed my suspicion that he was a plant and reinforced my wariness of Soviet citizens who, on first contact, unhesitatingly extend invitations to their homes. Because it was also a fascinating story I will relate it here to illustrate how crudely imaginative a Soviet agent can be. He claimed to be a Saudi Arabian who fled from his homeland to the Soviet Union in the late thirties with an uncle who had killed a Saudi Arabian official. (The teller
of this tale was about 40 years old.) In the late forties he journeyed with his uncle to China where they took part in the civil war on the Communist side. His uncle became a Colonel in the Chinese Army while he became a member of the Red Chinese Intelligence. In the course of his duties with Intelligence he was wounded. (He showed me a scar on his neck.) In the mid-fifties he had a disagreement with his superior in Intelligence, killed him and fled to the Soviet Union for asylum (sic). In the last few years, he said, he had become disillusioned with the Soviet system and wanted to return to Saudi Arabia. When he made his wishes known to the Soviet authorities they tried to appease him by moving him into a brand new two-room apartment (a luxury by Russian standards) where he now lives with his common-law wife. She works as a secretary in the Central Committee of the Party where she is privy to many party top secrets. He continued by saying that if I really wanted to learn about the workings of the Party I should visit him at his apartment. He would also arrange to have a girl friend of his common-law wife present for company. At that time he would also give me a message requesting assistance in returning him home. The message was to be passed on to the United Nations and then, in turn, transmitted to Saudi Arabia. (The Soviet Union does not have diplomatic relations with Saudi Arabia.) As one can see, this story had everything including the proverbial kitchen sink -- secrets, sex, a plea for aid in defecting. Needless to say I declined the invitation.
I made it a practice whenever possible to have discussions with those whom I approached first. The majority of my contacts were in this category. To attain this aim I selected places where I could easily initiate such contacts. In Moscow, instead of frequenting the restaurant set aside for U.S. Exhibition personnel, I often chose one of the numerous restaurants and snack bars in the vicinity of the Exhibition. Some of these establishments were newly-opened showcases, designed to impress the Soviet visitors to Sokolniki Park where the U.S. Exhibition was located. (It is one of Moscow's major parks for entertainment and relaxation.) I made my other contacts in Moscow off the Exhibition grounds by visiting popular places like the enormous Soviet Exhibition of Achievements in Industry and Agriculture, the sprawling botanical garden, downtown museums and the numerous "parks of culture and rest" which dot the Soviet capital. One other source of contact in Moscow proved a boon. The hotel at which we were quartered was located in a northern suburb of Moscow, at some distance from the center of the city. It was isolated, forcing us to go downtown either by bus the entire way or by changing midway from the bus to the subway. I do not know if this isolation of the Russian-speaking guides was deliberate. (The non-Russian-speaking Exhibition personnel were housed in hotels in the center of Moscow.) It might have been intended to discourage travel into the city, thereby restricting our contact with the Russians. If this were the purpose, it turned out to be self-defeating. By riding in
Soviet buses we had a chance not only to see another example of the crowded conditions of Moscow's transportation system but also to make additional contacts by striking up conversations with fellow passengers.

I made contacts in a similar manner in two of the three other Soviet cities which I visited (Kiev and Leningrad). In Riga, I met people under exceptionally favorable circumstances, mainly as a result of previous meetings with Latvian visitors to the U.S. Exhibition. They laid the groundwork for my extensive contacts in the Latvian capital which I visited at the close of the Exhibition.

The souvenir buttons distributed at the Exhibition proved to be very helpful in meeting people. They were worn by the visitors long after their visit to the Exhibition. I saw these red, blue and white buttons not only in Moscow but also in the other cities I visited. (Other Americans told me of seeing them worn elsewhere in the Soviet Union.) Therefore, in some cases I deliberately approached Soviet citizens with the Exhibition insignia in order to strike up conversations and was pleasantly surprised to receive a friendly reception upon identifying myself as a guide. This reaction stemmed from the fact that they themselves had attended the Exhibition or had heard favorable comments about us and the Fair from relatives or friends who had visited the Exhibition. In one instance, in Leningrad, I was even recognized personally by a youngster who had visited the Exhibition with his father a week or so before our meeting.
A Description of the People Who Were Interviewed

Like other Americans confronted with a similar opportunity, I was interested in getting comments and opinions from as many Soviet citizens as possible. Since I saw many people a second or third time, I had the limited freedom of eliminating from the many first acquaintances those who I believed would repeat views of groups already familiar to me. For example, since the Exhibition was held in Moscow the majority of the visitors were residents of the Soviet capital. Consequently, after the first few weeks of the Fair, I attempted to meet more of the visitors from the other parts of the Soviet Union. Also, since most of the visitors were Russians, I tried to meet as many non-Russians as possible. Similarly I attempted to solicit opinions of those at varying levels of education and social standing. I succeeded in talking to some seventy-five people for several hours each and, in most cases, on more than one occasion. (It is obvious that with some sixty to seventy thousand people visiting the Exhibition daily I had many short conversations with hundreds of others both in crowds and individually. The quality of the comments made on these occasions was, of course, lower.)

The following is a sample of those with whom I had extensive discussions:

Russians

Assistant plant director from Leningrad
English instructor at the Leningrad Academy of Science
Graduate student of nuclear physics at Moscow University
Teacher of dumb and deaf children from Tobolsk
Civilian air line pilot from Moscow
Dean of technical institute in Moscow
Woman construction engineer from Moscow
Moscow newspaperman
Sailor from the Soviet Pacific Fleet
Member of Gosplan (Soviet Planning Commission) from Leningrad
A Red Army Guards' sergeant on leave, staying with his parents in Moscow
English translator from Moscow (employed at scientific conferences)
Doctor from Minsk
Student from Tashkent University
Grandniece of Leo Tolstoy
Editor of Literaturnaya Gazeta
Secretary of Union of Soviet Writers

Non-Russians

Woman deputy to the Supreme Soviet (a Kazakh)
Mining engineer from Donbas (a Ukrainian)
A student at a pedagogical institute in Georgia (Abkhazian)
An economist and Middle East oil expert (an Azerbaijani)
Student from Outer Mongolia studying at Moscow University
Tennis champion of Latvian SSR*
Woman manager of restaurant from Kiev (Ukrainian)
Assistant plant director from Moscow (a Jew)**
Professor of engineering from Bryatsk (a Jew)

The above listing indicates for the most part those who are close to the middle level of the Soviet society in terms of either status or education. I have not listed a number of those whom I would characterize as belonging to lower levels such as unskilled workers and collective farmers with whom I likewise had extensive discussions.

* I had my broadest contact with non-Russians among the Latvians.

** Under the Soviet definition a Jew is considered to be of non-Russian nationality which is so indicated in his passport.
Where the Interviews were Held

The setting of a conversation with a foreigner is of prime importance to a Soviet citizen. This is true even today despite the fact that Khrushchev has lessened the xenophobic atmosphere which stifled contact in Stalin's days. Many Russians openly acknowledged that they were less fearful of talking to me now than they would have been in the days of the "deceased."* Nevertheless they insisted on observing certain precautions. The most important pertained to privacy of conversation. As a result many meetings took place on park benches, and some took the precaution of not sitting near bushes where someone could be concealed. Sitting on a park bench, I was supposed to observe one side for the approach of strangers while the interviewee facing me covered the other side. I had other conversations on long walks around the spacious grounds of the Soviet Exhibition and the botanical garden near our hotel, or around the suburban parts of Moscow, which, incidentally, also offered me an opportunity to observe the tempo and quality of new construction in the Soviet capital. The beaches of Moscow River proved excellent meeting places where one could combine work and pleasure that made for a relaxed atmosphere conducive to fruitful discussions. I had a number of meetings

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*Many Soviet citizens refer to Stalin by the term pokojny (the deceased) rather than by name. One Russian told me he resorted to this euphemism to protect himself in case he was overheard.
at the homes of those who extended invitations to me after initial contact elsewhere. Some of my conversations were even held on water at a lake near our hotel where rowboats were available for hire.

Train travel in the Soviet Union provides another opportunity for conversations. I had such an opportunity on a trip from Leningrad to Moscow when I was separated from a group of other guides and put into a compartment with several other Russians. In Kiev I had several conversations as the result of meeting worshippers at a Sunday evening service in one of the many churches in that city. One of these was a young Ukrainian whose religious beliefs were nurtured and sustained by his grandmother. It is not unusual in the Soviet Union to see grandmothers accompanying youngsters to church services. I learned that in many cases the grandmothers acquire a disproportionate share of influence over the grandchildren in the absence of mothers who are forced to work by economic necessity. Then, too, many young couples after marriage are unable to set up separate households because of the housing shortage and therefore live with parents who take part in the upbringing of the newly-born children.

Soviet citizens also cited another reason (new to me) for seeking privacy in our conversations. They explained that in meeting me alone, they reduced the chances of encountering difficulties from the regime even if we were observed conversing. In such an eventuality they readily expected to be
detained and questioned about the nature of our conversation, but in being alone with me, they could safely give their own version of our conversation which naturally would not be detrimental to them. In doing so, they would count on the probability that the Soviet security police would not detain an American for similar questioning. The foregoing also illustrates how Soviet citizens generate and pass on anti-regime sentiments. Several told me that such ideas are discussed in twos to avoid the presence of witnesses; in case of questioning by the regime it would be the word of one against the other. Students, particularly, appear to resort to this method when questioning the official line.

Since an American normally stands out in a Soviet crowd because of his apparel, I was often asked to make myself less conspicuous by not wearing a suit with a white shirt and tie. I obliged, to the satisfaction of my contacts, by wearing slacks and dark color sports shirts during the day and adding a raincoat in the evening. Another item to which some people were sensitive was my eye glasses. They are made of dark-brown pearl shell in a style prevalent in the U.S.; since most Russian eye glasses are made of thin steel frames, mine would of necessity be conspicuous. Several people asked me not to wear them during our meetings. This illustrates once more how sensitive Soviet citizens are to anything that may contribute to reducing the privacy of conversation which they seek; at the same time, the precautions mentioned indicate the variety of measures which they have worked out to assure such privacy.
The Atmosphere of the Discussions

It might be appropriate to describe the atmosphere in which the discussions took place, particularly with reference to the impression I made on an interviewee and the freedom with which he conversed with me. Those with whom I had conversations as a result of an initial contact at the Exhibition formed their impression of me from the general aura of friendliness and goodwill which surrounded all the American guides. We were a relatively young group (with the average age about 27-28), mostly students and teachers in the Russian field. We were considered by many visitors to be fairly representative of American life, particularly since we did not appear to be on a government-assigned mission. Many of the visitors were surprised to learn that most of us were not in the government, that we volunteered for service with the Exhibition and that at the end of the Exhibition we would all scatter and return to "civilian life." As a result, they did not place us in the same category with the Russian guides at the Soviet Fair in New York who were seasoned technicians (many over 40), hand-picked by the regime for political reliability. A frank admission that we did not know all the answers added significantly to the generally favorable impression made by us on the Soviet public. To a Soviet citizen subjected to a daily barrage of claims of the omniscience of the party and government this admission was a refreshing change.
One additional personal fact tended to reinforce the rapport established between those interviewed and myself. I had learned my Russian as a child; my father, along with other American engineers and technicians, worked in the Soviet Union in the thirties. I never failed to mention this point in the context that we had helped the Soviet people in their time of need. To my pleasant surprise I learned that many people remember our help with gratitude and, even further, that this memory is passed on to succeeding generations. Thus I encountered one young Ukrainian who told me he knew of American aid from his father who had worked with Colonel Cooper and his group; the latter took part in the building of the gigantic Dnieper Dam in the thirties. His father told him not to forget this in judging America. In other instances I talked to people who had received U.S. aid packages during World War II and gratefully remembered this fact. These isolated incidents undoubtedly explain the friendliness which an American encounters from many Soviet citizens. That the warm memories of U.S. aid persist to this day is a tribute to the regime's failure to erase them despite the vicious anti-American campaign of the last 15 years. The personal fact of my earlier stay in the Soviet Union, associated with a U.S. effort to help the Soviet people in their time of need, proved an effective stopper when agitators would begin haranguing the crowds in front of me about U.S. hostility towards the Soviet people. I felt, too, that the people proved more receptive to my ideas because I had lived in their midst and
understood them somewhat better than the average tourist coming
to the Soviet Union on his first trip. I also found that my
earlier experience eliminated a lot of beating about the bush
with zealous defenders of the regime. For example, in dis-
cussing the "virtues" of the Soviet regime, I would mention
that I could remember the 1937 purges from personal experience:
fathers of Russian children with whom I used to play as a child
disappeared at the time without a word. Citations such as this
gave a number of conversations a different twist; they were
continued thereafter on a more realistic basis with less mouthing
of the propaganda line.

Nature of the Conversations

As already indicated, a Soviet citizen has an insatiable
curiosity about the U.S., soon discovered by any American in
the Soviet Union. In the past, he had little opportunity to
satisfy this curiosity. But in the summer of 1959, the pre-
sence of Russian-speaking guides gave the Soviet citizen a
rare opportunity to have many of his questions answered. As
a result, many of my conversations were devoted to exhausting
the visitor's questions first before I had my own answered.
While I was interested in all aspects of Soviet life, I
attempted to center the discussion on questions of particular
interest to me. (The results are described in part III.) I
found that in most instances asking a blunt question did not
evoke an unfavorable reaction: since he often posed pointed
questions about the U.S., a Soviet citizen was fair enough to answer some blunt inquiries in return. However, a fruitful conversation on some topics had to be nourished from time to time by shaky assumptions for the sake of discussion. For example, I would state that some of the world problems might be due to misunderstanding between us and the Russians. My assumption of reasonableness on the part of Soviet policy-makers (unjustified in reality, of course) often evoked candid admission, even from zealous regime defenders, of fault attributable to the Soviet Union. Thus, in discussing U.S. bases around the Soviet Union I would indicate that it might be true that they could cause fear of the U.S., but then I would mention that the size of the Soviet army gave us reason, in turn, to fear the Kremlin and suspect its motives. In posing the problem this way, I heard no one maintain that the Soviet army (despite claimed reductions) was smaller than, or even anywhere near the level of, the U.S. Army; further, it was often conceded that the U.S. consequently might have reason for attempting to balance the disproportion in its favor by any means available to it, including bases around the Soviet Union. Or, to take another example, in discussing the German problem I would often be confronted with the officially fostered line that we were rearming West Germany for an attack on the Soviet Union and allowing this build-up to take place under ex-Nazi leadership. (Several names like Speidel would be put forth as proof.) I would then pursue the conversation by saying
that it might be true that some of the West German leaders had been associated with the Nazi regime and that, for the sake of argument, let us even assume that some of them might harbor aggressive designs against the Soviet Union. But I would ask, "Can you really tell me that there are no ex-Nazis in the East German regime? Can you further maintain that all of the West Germans are aggressors while all the East Germans are peace loving?" To this line of questioning I received (unexpected by me) some significant answers. An answer like, "We have the East Germans under control." (This is something which the Soviet Government, of course, denies while proclaiming the sovereignty of the German Democratic Republic.) Still others would acknowledge that Chancellor Adenauer was anti-Nazi and, therefore, as long as he was in control, it was unlikely that West Germany would march against the Soviet Union.

I cite the foregoing instances to demonstrate that I could and did have reasonable discussions with Soviet citizens even on such an emotional subject as Germany and despite the fears that this subject evokes as a result of World War II memories.

My recollection of the substance of many of the conversations is dependent in part on a diary which I kept while with the Exhibition. Normally this might have seemed inadvisable. But I decided to do so shortly after arriving in Moscow and ascertaining (at least to my satisfaction) that the atmosphere during the Exhibition would be such as to minimize any danger. In doing so, however, I took certain precautions. I carried
the diary on me at all times. It contained no names of people to whom I talked. Lastly, it was a sociological record and contained no military information. At worst, should the diary have fallen into Soviet hands, the most the regime could have made out of it was to call it a distorted version of Soviet life by an unfriendly observer.
III. TOPICAL SUMMARY

A. THE VIEWS OF THE SOVIET PEOPLE ON WAR AND PEACE

1. Degree of Interest in the Problem

I came to the Soviet Union with a preconceived notion that I would find the people vitally interested in world developments that have a bearing on whether peace will prevail. I thought this would be particularly true since they, of all participants in World War II, had sustained the greatest damage in human and material terms. They frequently pointed this out, even when the occasion didn't seem to call for it.

I found, however, that the lack of interest of the average Soviet citizen in foreign affairs rivals that of many Americans. To be sure, all of my Soviet contacts, without exception, expressed fear of another war and hopes for U.S.-Soviet friendship. But beyond these generalities, there was little awareness of the factors which might determine the question of peace or war and, even more important, little interest in reflecting on the problem.

At the Exhibition curiosity about material details of U.S. life outweighed interest in the role of the U.S. and the Soviet Union in the world. On many occasions, the latter was discussed only as the result of "provocative" questions by agitators designed to evoke hostility to the U.S. (Many of the questions referred to U.S. bases, West German rearmament or nuclear testing.) But even on these occasions, someone in the crowd
would suggest, often with vocal approval from the crowd, that
the questions be dropped in order to hear something about
American life. A few more daring visitors even remarked
directly to the agitator that they had not come to the Exhibition
to hear another lecture. "If we want that, we'll go to an
agitpunkt."*  

I found this lack of interest in foreign affairs also
in my private conversations. Frequently I had to initiate the
discussion on this subject. Initially, I thought that the
people I talked to were reluctant to engage in polemics on
foreign policy; subsequently, I discovered that they had little
interest in the subject.  

A number of factors seems to account for this attitude.
Most important appears to be a feeling of impotence with re-
gard to exerting any influence on the policy-makers. Many
of my contacts referred to the fact that Soviet foreign policy,
like all policy, is made by the verkhushka (the top); therefore,
they saw no reason for wasting time on even the gravest of
world problems. (This attitude was reflected also in the common
disbelief that the average U.S. citizen had any voice in de-
termining U.S. foreign policy.) A few added that it was futile
to engage in deep thought about foreign developments because,

*Agitpunkts are local propaganda centers through which
the Party disseminates its views by printed matter and lectures.
as in internal matters, ordinary citizens never received all the facts. In addition, while they could occasionally test the truth of the propaganda on domestic affairs by referring to their own experience, there was no way of evaluating reports on foreign affairs. Here again, the Russians, referring to their own experience, questioned whether the American people received the truth from their government. The foregoing provides an interesting commentary on how Soviet citizens view the relationship between a government and its people. The two are considered separate entities. Few Russians I talked to conceived of the Soviet government as being representative of the people. On many occasions this was epitomized by reference to "them" (the Soviet leaders) and "us" (the people). This attitude explains why Soviet propaganda can be effective with the Soviet people in one context and self-defeating in another. When the propaganda says that the U.S. government does not represent the American people, the Soviet people accept this assertion. Their own experience has taught them that the Kremlin rulers are not their own freely chosen representatives, and therefore they are more than willing to believe that a similar situation exists in the United States. The regime thus gains its point with regard to the U.S. but, at the same time, is unable to persuade the Soviet people that they, in contrast, enjoy democracy at home. Undoubtedly, their skepticism explains why the regime feels compelled to stress continually, and particularly in times of crisis, the theme that the Soviet people are rallied around "their beloved government."
The other factor behind the indifference of Soviet citizens to foreign developments is economic. Some of them indicated that even if they had the interest, they did not have the time because they were busy earning a living. Students, for example, cited the need to work in their spare time. I met several of them in Moscow who worked at night unloading incoming fresh produce. They told me they were obliged to do this because their government allowances (so often touted as one of the great benefits of Soviet higher education) were inadequate for subsistence. In this type of work, too, they were able to appropriate fresh fruits and vegetables which otherwise would have been unavailable to them owing to normal scarcity and high prices.

Even more than among students, the attitude that they had no time for concern with world affairs was prevalent among the less privileged members of Soviet society. Many of them hold more than one job; in some families this is true of both the wife and the husband. For example, one waitress who served us at the restaurant set aside for our use at the Exhibition, worked at a downtown restaurant on her off-days. (Soviet restaurant employees normally work a 12-to 14-hour day with every other day off.)*

*The fact that Soviet citizens often must toil long hours also produces other reactions. It results in disbelief of propaganda regarding promised material improvements in the future. Thus some Russians commented that Khrushchev's promise of a 35-hour week by 1965 (the current work week for most Soviet workers is 46 hours, 6 days a week) didn't mean a thing since such a work week wouldn't give them sufficient earnings to subsist. A few wryly added that the only good thing about such a promise, if fulfilled, would be to give the workers more time to work at another job.
The lack of interest in foreign affairs, which I found in my conversations, is reflected in the reaction of the people to the regime's attempts at indoctrination. For example, in one of my walks through a residential section in the center of Moscow I came across a posted announcement of an evening at a local club* devoted to a lecture on the Berlin situation to be followed by a film on folk dances and songs. I inquired of the woman-director of the club whether I could attend and was told that I would be welcomed with open arms. On the evening of the lecture, however, I was admitted with the greatest of reluctance. Before the meeting began, the lecturer, the local Party secretary, "suggested" in an unfriendly manner that I might be more interested in an evening at one of the city's Parks of Culture and Rest where the entertainment might prove more interesting. I politely insisted on remaining, reminding him that the Soviet government spoke of bettering U.S.-Soviet relations and that here was one opportunity to do so. He apparently didn't feel that he could order me out in front of the few early comers or go back on the invitation of the director who was embarrassed because her hearty welcome was not shared by the lecturer. As the evening progressed, it became clear why I had been unwelcome. In a hall which

*In the Soviet context, this is a local recreation and information center with facilities for indoor games and evening lectures or discussions.
could hold some 250 people with ease, only about 20 were present for the lecture. They evinced little interest in the talk and openly displayed their boredom. After the speaker had concluded his formal presentation there were no questions, despite almost frantic urging by the director who served as the chairman. After an embarrassingly long pause, one question was finally asked: "Who is the stranger [referring to me] in the back row?" When the lecture session was over, some fifty additional people streamed into the hall for the entertaining, non-political film. As the meeting broke up, I heard one member of the audience comment to the director on how much he had enjoyed the lecture, to which she replied bitterly that he would also enjoy the other lectures if he attended more often.*

2. The Possible Causes of a New War

Despite the indifference which I encountered, I attempted to have some fruitful conversations with those who seemed to me to have an interest in and to have given some thought to urgent world problems. Specifically, I sought their views on the developments which might lead to a new war and the form and consequences of such a conflict.

*The shortcomings of its propaganda workers have apparently reached such proportions as to force the Party to take official notice. In January the Central Committee, in a major policy statement, openly took note of public indifference, which is aided and abetted by uninspiring speakers and unimaginative presentations of the official line. Of course, nothing was said about the line itself.
On the question of how a new war might break out, I found few Soviet citizens who believed that the U.S. itself would initiate such a war. (Here I am referring primarily to views expressed in private conversations. The reaction in public was somewhat different. At the Exhibition, many visitors maintained a discreet silence in discussions that were dominated by agitators or zealots who talked official propaganda about U.S. aggressiveness.) The belief that the U.S. would not start a war was shared by both friendly and hostile commentators but for different reasons, depending on their conclusions about U.S. power and intentions. Those who were belligerently hostile to the U.S. said that the growing Soviet might ensured that the U.S. would not dare start a war. Their attitude bordered on arrogance as they declared that the U.S. was no longer facing the weak Russia of the twenties. Others, more friendly, questioned the official line that the U.S. was impatiently thirsting for war. For them, the line had worn thin; it resembled, as one Russian put it, the classic fable of the false cry of wolf. The more sophisticated (particularly those who had previously met Americans, like several veterans of the Elbe link-up) expressly cited the fact that the U.S. did not use its A-bomb monopoly in the immediate postwar years as sufficient proof for them of the basic peacefulness of the U.S. They were even more impressed with the fact that the U.S. had virtually dismantled its military machine in that period and agreed that this was not the sign of an aggressor. They were further impressed by the fact that the U.S. never had peacetime
compulsory military service until 1948. They accepted as reasonable (without approval) the proposition that, in view of the postwar "misunderstanding" between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, the U.S. had cause to renew the wartime draft, just as the Soviet Union in their view had reason to maintain its large standing army.

While I found that the U.S. was often absolved of deliberative planning for war, the implications of several aspects of U.S. foreign policy created conflict in the minds of those Soviet citizens whom I found relatively reasonable in their outlook on the U.S. One point related to American overseas bases. The position of these bases suggested to them an aggressive stance by the U.S. Many referred to American publications containing maps of the Soviet Union that illustrated possible U.S. air strikes with arrows pointing to vital Soviet centers. In further discussion, however, I found that many of the more friendly listeners accepted as logical (though again without approval) the argument that the bases were one means for the U.S. to balance the overwhelming Soviet manpower superiority. In all my discussions, not a single Soviet citizen questioned the fact that the Red Army far exceeded any Western force; many mentioned figures of five to six million as their concept of the size of the Soviet Army. Some of the hostile commentators maintained, however, that this fact shouldn't be overstressed because the regime was reducing the size of the army. When I expressed skepticism about the magnitude of the claimed reductions, they relented
somewhat; they, and all Soviet people, were well aware that the Soviet compulsory military service system (truly universal in comparison with the U.S. system), unless drastically revised, could only produce a large standing army. Additionally, when I reported having seen many Soviet servicemen on the streets and on work details at numerous construction sites, these unfriendly commentators retorted that the fact that I saw soldiers laboring at civilian tasks only emphasized the peaceful employment of the army. Some of the more friendly commentators, however, openly opined that the army was a reservoir of cheap labor for the regime.

Another source of doubt about the peaceful intention of the U.S. related to statements on preventive war allegedly made by many U.S. generals. All Soviet citizens had difficulty comprehending the fact that such remarks do not represent the official policy of the U.S. government. This is understandable, of course, since a Soviet citizen cannot imagine that an official can speak either as an official or as a private citizen. "If he belongs to the state, how can he not speak for the state?"

But many appeared to be impressed when I told them that several U.S. officers, who had advocated preventive war, had been dismissed or reprimanded. It was the first time they had heard this.

While Soviet citizens seemed well versed on the allegedly bellicose statements made in the U.S., they were less familiar with those made by their own leaders. I found few persons who were aware that a great deal of war discussion was contained
in the Soviet military press and literature, including a debate on what we could interpret as preventive war. Few of them were even acquainted with the more publicized statements of Khrushchev and the Soviet Defense Minister, Marshal Malinovsky, which have appeared in the general Soviet press, claiming Soviet ability to strike any point on earth with nuclear weapons and wipe out entire countries. They did not seem to know that Khrushchev had stated that eight H-bombs, easily available in the Soviet arsenal, could wipe out West Germany or that even fewer would demolish Britain. While some of my listeners may have disclaimed knowledge of Khrushchev's bluster for political reasons, others, I believe, were genuinely ignorant of the subject. (Some of the latter accepted my assertion that Khrushchev had uttered threats against the West after I indicated where his statements could be found.)

Several factors could account for the fact that the Soviet people are relatively uninformed on the war brinkmanship in which Khrushchev is increasingly engaging. One is that his blustering statements are not featured prominently as themes in the Soviet press and on the radio since highlighting these statements would weaken the peace line of the regime. Because of Khrushchev's loquaciousness (freely admitted by many Soviet citizens), few of them bother to read the lengthy texts of his speeches and interviews in which the threatening remarks are often buried. Their interest is further dampened by the general dullness of the Soviet press, now openly admitted by the regime. One gets a clue to the attitude of the Soviet people to their press by
observing how and what they read. On numerous occasions in
buses and in the subway I saw many readers skip over the front
pages, containing editorials and long speeches, and interest
themselves in the inside pages, containing feuilletons or
letters of complaint. The latter detailed shortages of goods
or bad service, or criticized bureaucratic shortcomings. I
found, too, that in Moscow, for example, only rarely were there
lines at the kiosks for Pravda or Izvestia, but unfailingly
there were queues for Vechernaya Moskva, which comes closest
to being a local newspaper since it carries items of personal
nature (exchange of apartments or sale of household goods by
individuals) and detailed listings of movies and plays in the
capital.

After citing the blustering statements of Khrushchev and
Malinovsky, I found many Soviet citizens willing to admit that
such declarations gave us good reason to attribute to the
Soviet leadership the same hostile intent that Soviet prop-
ganda ascribed to statements of U.S. leaders. They agreed
that maybe U.S. motives were being "misinterpreted." I found
such misinterpretation exists even in less weighty matters.
Thus some of the more hostile Soviet citizens maintained that
war mania in the U.S. was obvious from the fact that American
stores were flooded with a variety of military toys. Soviet
peacefulness, on the other hand, was demonstrated by the fact
that Soviet stores did not carry similar playthings. After
encountering this opinion the first few times, I visited
Detski Mir, Moscow's central department store for children,
and bought models of a MIG-17 jet fighter and a Red Army soldier which I produced on appropriate occasions for refutation.

The most disturbing implication of U.S. foreign policy for all Soviet citizens related to West German rearmament. Hostile critics charged that the U.S. was deliberately arming the Germans, as they said it did in the thirties, for another attack on the Soviet Union. The more friendly commentators seemed to accept such rearmament as logical for the U.S., in military terms, if one granted (which they did not) its necessity because of U.S.-Soviet differences. But with the completion of rearmament they were fearful that West Germany would get out of U.S. control and begin a war that would pit the U.S. against the Soviet Union. As already noted, some Russians openly admitted that while East Germany was also being armed, it could not provoke a war since it was under firm Soviet control. I was asked whether we had the same degree of control over "our" Germans as they had over "theirs." This seemed to reveal the realism with which the average Russian views the relationship of the Soviet Union with its satellites, despite the official line that all Soviet bloc members are equal and independent, held together only by brotherly ties.

In connection with the German problem, I found a distinct difference in the Russian evaluation of Germans and Americans as competitors. There is a great deal of respect for the Germans as adversaries. Some Russians said that the Germans were always prepared to match the Russian level of sacrifice to gain victory. In contrast, they implied that Americans not only led
a soft life in peace but fought their wars in comfort. Americans didn't know what real sacrifice was and they probably couldn't endure it, given their untroubled past. It is natural, of course, that the Russian image of German capabilities would be overdrawn after the personal experience of many Russians in World War II. The contrasting image of U.S. is also understandable in view of postwar Soviet propaganda which has given the Russians the lion's share of credit for defeating the Germans and has minimized the U.S. role. This image may account for the arrogance that I found among some of the more hostile Russians when they talked of the growing Soviet might which would deter any U.S. aggression. This is the line which Khrushchev himself is now uttering with increasing frequency, fed possibly by a belief that the U.S. doesn't have the determination to safeguard its position in the world.

In exploring the views of Soviet citizens on developments that might touch off a new conflict, I found that many of them were ill-informed about the danger to peace involved in the various crises (Berlin, Quemoy, Lebanon). The U.S., in line with Soviet propaganda, was blamed for holding an unreasonable position and being unyielding. But each incident was viewed as unrelated to the Soviet bloc campaign of exerting relentless pressure on the U.S. in order to make gains at its expense. There was little or no awareness that Khrushchev was using the growing Soviet might to initiate or exacerbate crises which one day might precipitate a violent reaction by the U.S. and lead to a U.S.-Soviet armed conflict.
Thus I met few Russians who were aware of the seriousness with which the West viewed Khrushchev's November 1958 ultimatum to solve the West Berlin "problem" his way. They saw the problem merely as a matter of giving up a few square miles of territory over which it was not worth having a war. There was no realization that Berlin had great symbolic value for the U.S. as a place which could not be yielded without affecting its power position in the world. Many Russians expressed surprise on hearing that the use of force had been considered in the U.S. to break a possible East German blockade. They did not seem to know that the situation was so sensitive. However, it is clear why this information gap exists. For me, it was illustrated during my attendance of the lecture on the Berlin situation mentioned earlier. The speaker had not presented a single word of the West's position on the question. And even if he had done so, there would have been few to hear him.

Similarly, Soviet citizens seemed to be ignorant of the degree of U.S. interests involved in other crises. For example, on the Quemoy crisis of 1958, I was told that as far as they could interpret that flare-up it again involved a matter of yielding a few square miles not worth fighting about. They seemed to be surprised by the importance the U.S. attributed to the off-shore islands and its determination to resist a Red Chinese takeover by force. They also did not think that Khrushchev's reference to the Sino-Soviet Pact of 1950 during the crisis (the first time the pact had ever been referred to in a crisis context) had any serious ramifications. In fact,
the very existence of the pact was not taken seriously by many Russians. Some of them dismissed the pact as just one more piece of paper. The more sophisticated commentators, however, considered it like any other pact, subject to "flexible" interpretation. Few Russians felt that the Soviet Union would go to war for the Red Chinese over such an unimportant matter as a few islands.

I found that the Lebanon landing in 1958 by the U.S. seemed to have caused more original apprehension than any other recent crisis. This apparently was due to the fact that it involved an actual display of U.S. power. Even so, a number of Russians told me that they did not take it as a serious threat to peace (as the Soviet regime attempted to depict this event) because they did not believe it was directed against the Soviet Union itself. Further, their attitude seemed to stem from an apparent belief that Lebanon (like the few square miles of West Berlin and the offshore islands) was not worth a war. I found this feeling reflected in the skeptical attitude of some Russians to the regime's efforts at the time to mobilize public opinion against the U.S. intervention. A number of them indicated to me that they had been ordered to attend mass protest rallies which they freely admitted they did perfunctorily. An exception to this seeming lack of comprehension of the high stakes involved in the Middle East was an Azerbaijani I met in Moscow. As an economist, specializing in Middle East oil, he looked upon the U.S. action in Lebanon as a serious step since it meant that the U.S. was
intervening in the Middle East for other than economic reasons which could lead to war. He said he could understand, though not condone, the interest of the British in the area since they had no oil and needed it to run their economy, but he found it difficult to see why the U.S., with adequate resources of its own at home and in the Western hemisphere, involved itself thousands of miles away at "the doorstep" of the Soviet Union. I replied that using his own reasoning we found it difficult to understand why the Soviet Union, which claims to be self-sufficient in oil, should meddle in the Middle East. He said this was a different matter since the Soviet Union was helping the just aspirations of Arab nationalism. He took good-naturedly my comment that apparently there are just and unjust great power interests, as there are, according to communist doctrine, just and unjust wars; whether the interest is valid, I added, seems to depend on who defines the terms. He did not disagree with me.

3. The Image of a Future War

In discussing a possible new conflict, I tried to determine how Soviet citizens envisioned the form and scale of such a war. I found that the general image was that of a total holocaust brought on by an exchange of nuclear blows. What remained of life in the two countries after the initial exchange would be erased by subsequent radioactivity. Eventually, life in the rest of the world would similarly come
to an end.*

As a result of the above image, everybody I talked to, without exception, thought that a new war would involve the use of nuclear weapons. Nobody could conceive of any direct engagement of U.S. and Soviet power that would or could be accompanied by restraint in the use of such weapons since both sides admitted that these were the weapons of the future. Therefore, the progress of technology would make their use mandatory. Some people remarked that just as gunpowder had made bows and arrows obsolete, so A- and H-bombs had the same effect on conventional arms. And, many people could not conceive that the vast sums devoted to nuclear weapons production would, in case of war, remain "unspent" through disuse of such weapons. (Though no Soviet citizens had any idea of the specific amount involved, they believed that the resources being diverted to nuclear and missile production by the regime were on such a scale as to deprive them of many comforts of life which they could otherwise enjoy.) The more hostile commentators repeated the propaganda that it would be the U.S. which would initiate the use of nuclear arms since the "capitalists" would find

*This is the image projected in the West, for example, by Nevil Shute's novel "On the Beach." At the time of my conversations, however, the Russians had not heard about this book. The American-made film, based on the novel, recently was premiered in Moscow before a limited Russian audience and was criticized by the Soviet press for the defeatist attitude depicted in it. Pravda, by implication, took exception to the film's end-of-the-world portrayal. To date, the regime has refused to show the film to the general Soviet public.
that for economic reasons they could not afford not to use them. Significantly, however, other people said that circumstances independent of ideology would insure nuclear weapons usage; they implied that a socialist state might have to resort to A-bombs "in defense of its interests" even though it was opposed to the use of such weapons "in principle."

Generally speaking, Soviet citizens did not differentiate between limited war and an all-out conflict and did not understand how one could do so. Even assuming that limitations were possible, they asked how could these be communicated during an actual conflict if the opposing sides had been unable to reach each other in time of peace to avoid the war in the first place. On second thought, most people rejected the notion of a limited war between the U.S. and the Soviet Union. They said that current weapons technology should make an armed conflict completely unthinkable; therefore, an outbreak of war would mean that the differences had become so basic and insoluble that only the last desperate resort to force could resolve them. In such a situation, there would be a call for an all-out effort which would not be restrained by humanitarian or moral considerations.

I found that most Soviet citizens, in projecting their image of a possible new war, make only the most tenuous connection between missiles bearing nuclear warheads and those carrying satellites into space. Soviet propaganda has succeeded in blurring the facts so that Soviet rocket achievements are viewed almost exclusively in the field of peaceful exploration of space.
However, I encountered no dissent when I pointed out that the same launching pads can be used for both military and peaceful purposes. No such "confusion" exists in the minds of Soviet military personnel. One Air Force captain told me rather proudly that while the U.S. can still be justly proud of its manned air force, the Soviet Union has already outpaced all others with its rockets, thus satisfying its "defense" requirements. "You can draw your own conclusions from our progress in space." He seemed rather non-committal when I gingerly brought up the question of whether manned aircraft had seen its day. And, he feigned ignorance when I mentioned that Khrushchev had said so. Understandably, one doesn't disagree with his commander-in-chief.

Soviet space achievements have had one result, unforeseen by the regime, I am sure. I found that most Soviet citizens credit accomplishments to themselves (the people) and not to the "glorious leadership of the Communist Party" as trumpeted by Soviet propaganda. They have every right to do so, of course, since they have been paying by doing without many comforts of life. Many of them are aware of this. A few commented bitterly, "What's the hurry into space; we still haven't solved our problems on earth." However, since there is little they can do about changing the priorities, they create a virtue out of necessity by being fiercely proud of Soviet space achievements.
It did little good to discuss the relative accomplishments of the U.S. (as I had to on many occasions both at the Exhibition and in private) in terms of sophistication of guidance and instrumentation. The important thing to Soviet citizens was: "How big was your payload?" The only answer was to get into the numbers game by pointing out that we had more satellites in space than they did. Back would come the answer, "But you've had so many launching failures while all of ours were successful." At this point one received the only chance for a retort that would silence even the overzealous. "Can it be true that with the great progress you claim to have made, you have launched less than a half-dozen?" (As far as the average Soviet citizen knows that is the Soviet total to date since that's all he has been told.) This question was usually followed by a meaningful silence, indicating a realization that maybe he had not been informed of some failures.

4. Consequences of a Possible Conflict

Without exception, Soviet citizens in private conversations said that there could be no victors in a new war. This was also the predominant opinion expressed in public. In all of my numerous discussions with the crowds at the Exhibition, I heard only one young, zealous Komsomol member maintain that there would be a winning side in any future conflict; and, on that sole occasion, he was vigorously contradicted by the crowd, including an older woman who said that as a young upstart he didn't know about the horrors of war or he wouldn't be talking that way. For me, this negative attitude of the Soviet people indicated that
Khrushchev apparently has failed to convince them that the socialist system would emerge triumphant from World War III.

In fact, most Soviet citizens rejected Khrushchev's views even further: they said that not only would there be no victors but, in accord with their image of a future war, there would be no survivors since the earth would be depopulated by radioactivity. On this point some of them referred to Western opinion which had been quoted by the regime in a different context (in its campaign for a ban on nuclear testing). As in some other instances, Soviet propaganda here has been hoisted on its own petard: many Soviet citizens accept the formulation of the danger confronting mankind, used by the regime in propaganda broadsides against the West, but have put it to mental use which the regime has not foreseen. Their fear that all life would be wiped out in a nuclear war again runs contrary to Khrushchev's line that the Soviet people should not be afraid to face a new war "if it is foisted on us by Western imperialists."

The bleak outlook on the outcome of a possible new war has produced among some Soviet citizens a hopeless -- almost defeatist -- attitude. It could explain the apathy which I found exists toward such vital state programs as civil defense. Their pessimism may also explain the immersion by some Russians in a search for material well being, evident in many conversations and visible in the throngs crowding Soviet stores.

The hopeless feeling of the Soviet people may be a factor in the regime's apparent attempt to keep them uninformed of the serious implications for peace of Khrushchev's rocket diplomacy.
Any apprehension that a crisis could be a prelude to an all-out war, which the Soviet people fear and expect in case of a direct U.S.-Soviet confrontation, could impair their support of his policy of nibbling at the Free World position. However, by withholding facts relating to U.S. reaction in crisis situations, Khrushchev has deprived his people of the opportunity to evaluate the implications of his moves. In doing so he has given himself a relatively free hand in stepping up or downgrading a crisis without unduly alarming the Soviet people.

Khrushchev needs this free hand because I found that his dedication to burying the capitalist system is not shared enthusiastically by all people in the Soviet Union. Some of them openly said so, others indicated their lack of enthusiasm by expressing fear of any moves which could bring on a war.

B. ATTITUDES TOWARDS RED CHINA

Red China is obviously a sensitive subject for discussion in the Soviet Union. I usually broached the subject by declaring that the U.S. and Red China had many political differences, that I had my own ideas as to who was to blame but that I was receptive to a new perspective which I might not have considered. This approach invited many comments from the Russians who are only too happy to demonstrate their pouchitel'nost' (the act of instructing).*

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*The Russians, perhaps more than any other people, take great pleasure in instructing each other, invited or uninvited. One witnesses many instances of this in matter of daily life: conductors on busses and trolleys instruct passengers on how
1. **Assessment of Chinese Capabilities**

   I found that the attitude of the Russians towards the Chinese ranges broadly from ignorance and/or indifference on the part of the uninformed man-on-the-street to condescension (bordering, in some instances, on contempt) on the part of educated Russians who exhibit interest in Soviet-Chinese relations.

   The less informed Russians have little awareness of Red China beyond its position as a place on a map thousands of kilometers away. As one Russian, a young Moscow metal worker, put it, "China is a place beyond Siberia." Many in this group have only the bare knowledge that Red China has a much bigger population than the Soviet Union; they seem to give little or no thought to the implications this fact may have for Soviet-Chinese relations in terms of either adding strength to or creating difficulties for the alliance. Their assessment of China's role in the Soviet bloc does not extend beyond a repetition of the official line, "China is a great ally of ours." But, while parroting this line, they do not ascribe to it the same meaning that the regime intends it to have. Thus, in the past critical incidents involving U.S.-Red Chinese differences, such as the Quemoy crises of 1955 and 1958, Soviet leaders have referred to the Soviet-CPR alliance as a warning to the U.S. that in a showdown it may face both members of the alliance.
found, however, that many of the less informed Russians did not believe that such serious consequences could, or should, follow from Soviet-Red Chinese ties. (See Section IIIA for a discussion of the views of Soviet citizens on the Quemoy crises.)

The more informed or sophisticated Russians view Chinese capabilities with condescension combined, in an almost contradictory vein, with awe of Chinese industriousness and discipline. Many in this group said that the Chinese have a long way to go before they would or could reach the Soviet level. One Moscow engineer stated it this way, "It took us 40 years to achieve our position; they certainly can't do it in less time." A number of Russians referred to the fact that Chinese progress was being made largely as a result of Soviet aid, implying that the speed of this progress was more dependent on the Russians than on inherent capabilities of the Chinese. These Russians seemed to be unaware of the fact that Soviet aid, in relative terms, was actually small; or, perhaps, they chose to gloss over this fact in line with their apparent feeling that the Chinese by themselves would have achieved even less without Soviet help. If this condescending attitude toward Chinese capability exists at high levels of the Soviet government, it could conceivably lead to underrating of Chinese ability to strike out, now or in the future, on independent ventures embarrassing to the Soviet Union; conversely, Soviet leadership could overrate its ability to exercise control or restraint over the Chinese.
The less than enthusiastic feeling of the Russians towards the Chinese can be illustrated by a few examples. A Moscow University student made a thinly disguised sarcastic remark to me that so far the only evidence he had seen of Chinese progress had been raincoats and shaving cream. He was referring to the fact that many of the raincoats on sale in the big Soviet cities -- Moscow, Kiev, Leningrad -- were often poor-quality, rubber impregnated cotton coats of Chinese make; and, that on sale at stands around GUM -- the Macy's Department Store of the Soviet Union -- many tubes of shaving cream had Chinese labels with accompanying instructions in Russian for use of the cream.

Or, to cite another example. I was browsing one day at a bookstore specializing in Soviet bloc publications, on Gorky Street (a central Moscow thoroughfare). Several Chinese students were in the store at the same time. They were readily identified by the uniform-like, dark blue suits which the Red Chinese apparently wear not only at home but also abroad. These students received less than cordial service from the Russian clerk who also waited on me and others. At the request of several Czechs he readily went to the stockroom in the rear of the store for several items which were not on display or available on the shelves behind him. When the Chinese picked up Volume Two of a Chinese-Russian dictionary on display on the counter and asked if Volume One was available, they were curtly advised by the clerk that the store did not have it. A request by one of these
students to make a check of the stockroom evoked an undisguised sarcastic retort, "Comrades, don't you think I know what we have or don't have?"

On some occasions the Russians even displayed a warmer attitude toward Americans than they did toward the Chinese. For example, at a Bolshoi Theater performance I sat next to a group of Chinese who appeared to be members of a low-level delegation and were accompanied by several Russian hosts. While there was little exchange between the Chinese and their hosts, I had pleasant conversations with the latter at intermissions. Of course, there was no exchange between the Chinese and me!

The condescending attitude towards Chinese capabilities and coolness towards the Chinese themselves apparently are shared by some people in the Eastern European Peoples' Democracies. I discovered this in the course of an extended conversation with a Bulgarian student who was on his way to Sofia from a six year stay in Peiping. In the Chinese capital he studied foreign trade at the University of Peiping and was returning home to be assigned to work on Chinese-Bulgarian trade problems. His appraisal was that the Chinese Communists had made significant progress in terms of the Chinese past but by "our [i.e. Bulgarian] standards" they had far to go. To support his evaluation, he cited the fact that the Chinese peasants still live in hovels, two or even three families to a hovel; that the food problem was nowhere near solution; and, that while at present there were no food shortages the government still had to stockpile food
for such emergencies as natural disasters. He spoke rather condescendingly of the leap-forward program as a paper plan that would require a long time for attainment; he implied that the leap forward would really be a crawl forward. When I asked about the commune program, including the herding of peasants from individual homes (he insisted on calling these "hovels") into dormitories, he replied that the regime would be incapable of carrying through this transformation because of limited resources. (He referred indirectly to the collectivization difficulties encountered in Bulgaria to indicate the problems that even an "advanced" economy encounters.) On the specific point of resettling the Chinese peasants, he said the regime would need the hovels for a long time since building materials were unavailable for large-scale dormitory construction. As for Chinese industrial progress he, like the Russians, also stressed the fact that it was, and would be, made in large measure with outside aid, including Bulgarian.*

While the informed Russians have a patronizing attitude towards the Chinese, they also hold the latter in awe. They have heard of the vast redirection of labor involved in the

*I am not aware of large-scale aid to Red China on the part of the Bulgarians since trade between Bulgaria and Red China is the smallest of all of Red China's dealings with other members of the Soviet bloc. Yet the feeling of this Bulgarian that his country's minute contribution somehow has determined CPR's progress is again witness to the condescension apparently felt towards Red China within the Soviet bloc.
Chinese leap-forward programs. They also seem to be aware of the price that is being paid by the Chinese people in terms of regimentation and discipline. The Russians apparently have deduced this, in part, from fragmentary first-hand evidence available to them. For example, several Moscow University students mentioned a severe regime in effect for Chinese students studying in Moscow. Whereas the Russian students are not required to be in the dorms until 1:00 am, the Chinese students have to be in by 11:00 pm. A Chinese student violating this rule is returned forthwith to China. And, the Russian students are impressed by the zeal (apparently voluntary but nevertheless within the disciplinary context noted above) with which the Chinese pursue their studies. Red Chinese discipline must indeed be awesome if it can impress the Russian students, who by our college standards follow a Spartan regime.

I myself witnessed an example of the Chinese discipline which is apparently causing the uneasiness felt by many Russians toward their oriental ally. One morning, on descending to the sizeable lobby of the Ostankino Hotel where we were quartered, I found it occupied entirely by a group of about 200 young Chinese. (As on other occasions they all were dressed in the same uniform-like, dark blue suits.) Despite their presence, there was almost no noise in the lobby -- one could have heard a proverbial pin drop. I heard no laughter and saw no smiles on the faces; the only conversation consisted of occasionally whispered words. I found this demonstration of self-discipline or imposed discipline
almost frightening. Under similar circumstances I could not imagine that an American -- or even a Russian -- group of this size and age could remain so quiet and orderly.

On this particular occasion I overheard the Russian doorman comment to one of the maids that the Chinese didn't seem to be friendly to anyone. And, indeed, they were not. When one of our negro guides approached one of the clusters of Chinese in the lobby and said, "Good morning, how are you?" he received in turn stony stares that did not even acknowledge his existence, much less his presence. The hostility towards all Americans that must be instilled in the Chinese by the Peiping regime must be overwhelming. For, even the most hostile Russian went out of his way to be friendly to our negro guides, despite the fact that this might have been a feigned demonstration of friendship for an "oppressed" segment of America rather than a genuine display of comradeship. In Peiping's eyes this distinction between "the oppressed" and "the oppressors" in U.S. apparently doesn't exist.

2. The Role of Red China in the Future

Whether the evidence of Chinese discipline which has aroused Russian awe has given any Soviet citizens second thoughts on possible future problems is difficult to discover. One can only surmise. Of the many Russians to whom I talked about Red China only one expressed open and unreserved admiration for the Chinese. (This was a doctorate candidate in the field of philology, a woman in her late thirties who served as my guide during a tour of the Lenin Library.) She commented that she wished the Chinese the best of luck in attaining a position in the world that might
even include out-distancing the Soviet Union. One might expect that I should have heard more comments in this vein since they would have been in accord with the official line which praises Red China as a great ally with whom the Soviet Union has indestructible ties. But in no other conversations with Soviet citizens did I hear again such fulsome praise for Red China. Instead, I heard cautious lukewarm comments including one from a Russian who I had reason to believe was in the Soviet foreign office. In the course of our conversation he indicated that he had traveled and lived extensively in Asia, including China. He was the best informed Russian on foreign affairs I met in the Soviet Union.

I want to go into some detail on my conversation with this Russian since I discussed the Chinese issue so thoroughly with him. First, a word about the setting and the man. He was close to 50, well-dressed by Russian standards (white shirt and tie, pressed suit) and obviously of considerable education, using the language of a cultured Russian. I met him in a restaurant of one of the bigger and better non-tourist hotels set aside, as I was told later, for middle-level Soviet officials who come to Moscow on business from other parts of the Soviet Union. I met him after I sat down at his table. The subject of Red China came up after we had a discussion reviewing the course of the U.S.-Soviet alliance in World War II and the causes for its dissolution. I might note here that I detected a certain wistfulness about the disappearance of American-Soviet co-operation. This might explain perhaps why our subsequent
discussion of Red China was relatively reasonable. I indicated to him that as he knew the U.S. had differences with Red China. What disturbed us most was the fact that the Chinese seemed determined to solve these differences by force; this determination went as far as a reported statement by Red Chinese leaders* that Red China was prepared to lose 300 million, if necessary, to emerge victor in World War III. He did not demur to this report nor did he seem surprised to hear it -- I do not know if he had read it in the Western press or had learned of it through internal Soviet channels. I pointed out to him that this statement, if true, alarmed some of us in the U.S. since we could not conceive of World War III as one that would not involve the U.S. and the Soviet Union. As a result, the dangerous attitude reflected in the Chinese statement could only cause grave concern when one considered the mathematics of the situation. Neither the U.S. with 175 million people nor the Soviet Union with 200 million had 300 million to sacrifice, and therefore would be unable to win a war that Mao might only too willingly instigate since he apparently was prepared to pay a big price to emerge victor. Thus in the event of a U.S.-Soviet war, Red China might well pick up the pieces. In posing the problem this way I did not get, as I had on some other occasions, a questioning comment or a disbelieving look. I was heard out fully and thoughtfully. He then made a neutral comment that any big nation, especially of China's size, would strive to assure its

*Variously attributed to Mao Tse-tung and Peng Teh-huai
position in the world. The U.S. had done it as had the Soviet Union. Red China was now taking its turn. From a historical viewpoint it must be hoped that China would attain its aim without detriment to other big nations in the world. Among his concluding comments was, "We must hope it never comes to a war between the Soviet Union and the U.S." And, more significantly, "Things change in the world, we have been friends before and there is no reason that we couldn't be friends again." I will conclude the report on this particular conversation by saying that at no time did this Russian repeat enthusiastically the official line on the glory of the Soviet-Chinese alliance; of all people, this should have come from him since he seemed to me to be connected with the Soviet foreign office.

In assessing the unity of the Soviet bloc, some Russians maintained that there was no possibility of a split between Red China and the Soviet Union. This often was mentioned not on ideological but on economic grounds. Firstly, it was said that unlike the Western alliance the Russians and the Chinese had no conflicting economic interests. Secondly, Red China had to lean on the Soviet Union for assistance since it (Red China) started its way towards socialism from a lower level of economic and material development than had the Soviet Union.* These remarks were often made after a frank admission

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*It was interesting to me that the reasons given corresponded to hard reality, viz. that the Chinese were going to stay with the Russians because of need and not because of a common ideology.
that this contrast did not exist with regard to some of the Soviet satellites in Eastern Europe: their economic and industrial development at the time they "took the road to socialism" might have exceeded the Soviet level with the result that there may have been a tendency then to rely less on Soviet guidance. However, it was quickly added that this difference no longer existed; on the contrary, the Soviet Union by virtue of its great progress earned its pre-eminent position in the Soviet bloc so that all members now looked to the Soviet Union for leadership.

The opinion that Red China would remain in the Soviet fold because of economic dependence seemed to fit in with the patronizing view of the Russians that Chinese progress to date was largely, if not exclusively, determined by Soviet aid. This view raises an interesting point about the possible course of Soviet-Chinese relations if the Soviet Union should be unable or unwilling to render future large-scale aid, or if Red China through its own efforts should attain a level of economic development at which it might decide to dispense with further Soviet aid as not worth the political price China might have to pay for the receipt of such aid. And, of course, Chinese economic development to anywhere near the Soviet level would pose obvious problems for the Kremlin leadership. Currently the Soviet rulers may be less concerned about their oriental ally because of a feeling that Red China still has a long way to go before it can create sizeable problems for the Soviet Union and that in the short run the U.S. presents the major challenge.
In the long run Chinese development cannot be ignored by
Moscow since the Chinese are apparently determined to follow
the Soviet footsteps in at least one way. The Soviet Union
has become a great power in 40 years. (In fact, for the first
time it now is boasting of being the greatest power on earth.)
This is not lost on the Chinese who may be determined to better
the Soviet record in less time. The Bulgarian student, to whom
I referred earlier, told me that one dream dominated the minds
of the Chinese students with whom he studied: to see Red China
become the first power on earth, as befits her size and popu-
lation, and erase her past history of a weak disunited country,
abused in the great powers' fight for spoils. These Chinese
students -- the future leaders of Red China -- may remember
that the Russians took part in this plunder and may fail to
distinguish some time in the future between Czarist and Soviet
Russia.

In some ways a display of Chinese reserve may already be
in evidence. Currently, Chinese students studying at Moscow
University are quartered separately instead of in the Univer-
sity dormitories as had been true earlier. (The students from
other Soviet bloc countries continue to live together with the
Russian students.) Also, most Chinese students in Moscow are
engaged in technical scientific studies, few of them major in
political subjects. One might expect more interest on the
part of the Chinese in studying Marxism-Leninism in the Soviet
Union by virtue of the latter's longer experience and leading
role in the socialist camp. In fact this interest was displayed
in the twenties when many members of the present Chinese leadership journeyed to Moscow for political indoctrination. But the Peiping regime currently may feel that it is better able to formulate political ideology itself and only needs Soviet guidance and assistance in the technical and scientific fields. (Even this difference, however, may not continue indefinitely as the Chinese acquire their own scientific capabilities.)

The patronizing attitude of the Russians towards the Chinese also extends to the Mongolians. The Russian students at Moscow University have a very low opinion of the attending Mongolian students. They consider them backward in intellect and social amenities. The Mongolian students reciprocate by a less than enthusiastic attitude toward the Russians. (Their common experience at the hands of the Russians has apparently resulted in drawing the Chinese and Mongolian students in Moscow together.) When this is combined with reports that Mongolian students studying in Peiping return more pro-Chinese than when they left it appears that some fateful consequences for the Soviet-Chinese alliance may be in the making. For, the attitudes held by these students -- potentially the future leaders of their countries -- may determine the relationship of Mongolia with the Soviet Union and Red China and, in turn, the relationship between the latter two. It might be noted here parenthetically, for whatever additional light it may throw on the interrelationship of the three countries, that no Soviet air line operates in Mongolia, whereas a Red Chinese air line regularly flies its planes in the land of the Nomads. In going from the
Soviet Union to Outer Mongolia, one must change from a Soviet air line to a Mongolian or Chinese air line.

One other observation may cast some sidelight on Soviet-Chinese relations. While in Moscow I saw a number of Chinese officers -- of the Air Force only -- on the streets and in stores. During the same time I saw a number of Polish, Czech and East German officers (the latter even at the U.S. Exhibition) of all military branches. Perhaps, this is a reflection of the attitude of the Red Chinese that they still have something to learn from the Russians in the air but not on the ground.

C. VISIT TO SOVIET LATVIA

1. Introduction

During my stay in the Soviet Union I had an opportunity to probe in depth the life and attitude of Latvians, one of the non-Russian groups which has remained unreconciled to Soviet rule. Their nationalistic feeling and pro-Western attitude (representative also of the other Baltic peoples, the Lithuanians and Estonians), still evident after 15 years of Russian occupation, clearly explain why the Soviet rulers have continually striven for Western recognition of the status quo on the Western side of their empire, including a U.S. recognition of the seizure of the Baltic lands.

As a result of Latvian hostility toward Soviet rule, an American can explore this part of the Soviet empire with the full co-operation of the subjected people if he can get by obstacles put in his way by the regime. I managed to do so
without prior assurance that I was going to be successful. I met a number of visitors to the Exhibition from the Baltic states. They invited me to visit them at home to obtain an idea of what "enlightened" rule had meant for them. Of the invitations to visit Vilna in Lithuania, Tallin in Estonia and Riga in Latvia, I could only accept the last since the other two cities were closed to American visitors.*

Even though Riga had been removed from the list of restricted cities earlier in the year, the Soviet regime did not appear too anxious to have Americans in the Latvian capital. (According to Latvians, I was one of the few Americans to visit Riga since the war.) Though I put in a request to visit Riga several weeks in advance, I did not know until late in the evening prior to the day of departure whether I was going to have an opportunity to make the trip. Even on the morning of our take-off, the plane departure was postponed for three hours; according to Aeroflot (The Soviet Air Line), this delay was due to the fact that mail for Riga was being awaited.**

*Vilna and Tallin were declared "open" cities at the end of the Exhibition.

**I do not know if this delay was designed to shorten my visit in Riga. I do know that one of the other guides who made a trip to Riga on another occasion was misinformed (deliberately as far as we could determine) as to which of the three airports in Moscow he was to depart from; as a result, in missing the scheduled plane, he lost almost an entire day (of two). I also know that the flights to Kiev and Leningrad (to which tourist travel is encouraged wholeheartedly by the regime) took off promptly. I might add here that the flights to these two cities are made in showcase Soviet jet liners, TU-104's, while the flights to Riga are made in Il-14's (the Soviet equivalent of DC-3's) in an almost hop-hopping manner requiring 31/2 hours. By a strange coincidence, Kiev and Leningrad are approximately the same distance from Moscow as Riga, but are reached by the Soviet jets in an hour's time.
From the moment I landed in Riga the Soviet authorities attempted to subject me to continual surveillance. Thus at the airport conspicuously devoid of people I was "greeted" by a party of three who shadowed me until I arrived at my hotel in the center of Riga. But, thereafter, because of Latvian ingenuity I managed to evade further surveillance during my entire four-day stay in Riga.

The Latvians displayed such ingenuity in both the practical advice and active aid rendered me. Thus I used two methods to elude the security police -- one spontaneous, the other prearranged. The spontaneous method involved the use of taxis driven by Latvians. Since Riga taxi drivers include both Russians and Latvians I had been advised to use the latter. I was able to distinguish between them by using a few phrases of Latvian which the Russian drivers do not speak. After identifying myself as an American, I would ask the Latvian driver if he could lose the Russians who were following us and would be told that he would be only too happy to do so. Asked if he were aware of the danger to him, he usually replied that he had been in exile in either Siberia or Northern Russia (from which many Latvians are now returning) and that therefore there wasn't much more the Russians could do to him.* In addition

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*This attitude illustrates the degree to which the Latvians appear contemptuous of the regime's efforts to control them. Most Latvians, having had their "vacations" in the Soviet Union, appear to have lost their fear of the regime. At the same time, this fearlessness is reinforced by the fact that Khrushchev's rule has seen a lessening of the police oppression experienced by the Latvians under Stalin.
a Latvian driver was confident of his ability to outwit the Russians since he was on his own home grounds. Actually, he had little difficulty because Riga is an old city with many narrow, winding streets.

Despite their contemptuous attitude, most of the Latvian taxi drivers took the precaution of first driving me around one or two tourist attractions. Then, in case of questioning, they could maintain that they were merely showing me (a tourist) the sights and were not aware that I was being followed. In the current relaxed atmosphere, the Soviet authorities are more likely to accept such an explanation in order to cover up the seemingly ineffectual efforts of their security police.

The other method of eluding surveillance involved some rather elaborate preparations on the part of my Latvian hosts. On the third day of my stay one of them picked me up across the park from my hotel. (Many Latvians have their own cars salvaged from the German occupation days.) It soon became evident that we were being "shadowed" by two cars -- a small Pobeda in the rear and a big, black ZIL (the Soviet version of a 1940 Packard) in front. The latter was easily lost by a turn into a side street. To evade the Pobeda, my host suddenly turned into a narrow street ahead of an oncoming truck which blocked the Pobeda's way. After a few blocks in a winding maze, I was brought and transferred to a second car awaiting us by prearrangement. The whole episode was somewhat melodramatic and would have seemed unbelievable to me if I had not experienced it.
During my visit, I was introduced to many Latvians who were eager to talk to an American; this was understandable in view of their long isolation from Western contact. Also, they conversed freely which again was understandable in view of the defiant attitude illustrated above. Included among the many to whom I talked were the following:

Construction engineers from the central housing office
Students from Riga University
A secretary in the editorial office of the central Latvian Communist Party newspaper
Food processing engineers
Students from an architectural institute
Sportsmen (including the tennis champion of Latvian SSR)
Foreman in the VEF factory (one of the biggest industrial enterprises in Latvia turning out radio and electrical equipment)
Baritone with the Latvian opera company

I met most of the people cited above through prearrangements on the part of my hosts. Many of them were mutual friends and therefore might have expressed views not commonly held by most Latvians. To allow for such a possibility, I sought out still other Latvians by methods I had used in Moscow. Thus, I spent part of each day strolling through some of Riga's numerous parks and striking up chance conversations. (Again, a few phrases in Latvian enabled me to determine that I was speaking to Latvians rather than to some of the many Russians who now reside in Riga. This precaution was in addition to the fact that most Latvians can be distinguished from the Russians by dress and appearance -- the former are, for the most part, still better dressed and many are blond and taller than the stockier Russians.) With one or two exceptions I carried on my conversations in Russian. This
presented no obstacle inasmuch as the Latvians have had to learn the language, against their will in most cases. The reverse, as I have already noted, is not true. There are few Russians, if any, who have taken the trouble to learn Latvian. As elsewhere in the Soviet Union, my conversations were conducted in places where they would not be overheard. Such privacy was insured by strolls around the city, in parks, on the shores of the extensive beaches along Riga Bay and by visits to apartments in Riga and surrounding country homes. Understandably, I visited more private homes in Latvia than elsewhere in the Soviet Union.

2. The Russification of Latvia

The current drive to Russify Latvia is taking place as an open admission of failure to win the Latvians over to Soviet rule, despite initial attempts by Khrushchev to reverse the harsh policy of Stalin. The latter had decimated Latvia by deporting a quarter of the country's two million population between 1940 and his death in 1953. Included among the deportees were the most advanced segments of the population in terms of education and skills. They were sent to camps in Northern Russia, Central Asia and Siberia. The remaining Latvians were subjected to the same oppressive terror that prevailed elsewhere in the Soviet Union during Stalin's last few years.

After Stalin's death, the Soviet leadership attempted to make amends by permitting deportees (many of whom did not
survive the forced exile) to return to Latvia.* This measure eased bitterness somewhat, but, at the same time, created new problems for the Soviet regime: it injected into Latvia a group which, as a result of its experience in Russian concentration camps, only reinforced the anti-Soviet feeling that had persisted in the country. As I mentioned earlier, the returning deportees have in fact created among the Latvians a defiance of the regime not encountered elsewhere in the Soviet Union. (I was struck by the boldness of the Latvians, demonstrated in snatching me away from Soviet surveillance, in contrast with the caution displayed by the Russians.) The fact that in meeting Latvians today one encounters many who either are recent returnees from "vacations in Northern Russia or Siberia," as the Latvians describe this experience, or have close friends or relatives with this experience, vividly explains why the Soviet regime has failed to integrate Latvia into the "brotherly union" of the Soviet peoples.

At the same time, the regime cannot allow this failure to stand unattended. Because Latvia, disproportionate to its small population, makes a key contribution to the Soviet

*Some, however, having been released from concentration camps, have not been allowed to return to Latvia but instead have been forced to live in cities near the sites of the original detention. For example, I met a teacher who managed to get permission to visit her homeland but had thus far been denied permission to resettle permanently in Riga from Novosibirsk where she now lives.
economy (for example, in electronics and radio communication),* the Soviet rulers have been forced to devote attention to this area in the face of more pressing problems elsewhere. Latvian recalcitrance reached such proportions in 1959 that it required Khrushchev's personal attention. This was followed by the current open campaign to Russify Latvia.

The signal for this drive was given in June, following Khrushchev's little-publicized visit to Riga. His intervention was required as a result of a virtual upheaval in the Latvian Communist leadership, spearheaded by the then Deputy Premier Berklav who was purged immediately after Khrushchev's return to Moscow from Riga. Berklav and his supporters in deviating from Soviet policy made the following case.** In broad terms, Berklav appealed for an effort to win the people's support for the Soviet regime through greater Latvian participation in the production and consumption of the country's output. On the production side, Berklav sought an end to such disruptive measures as the replacement of Latvian plant directors with

*A sizeable number of the shortwave radio sets on sale in Moscow, Kiev and Leningrad are made in Riga. Many Russians frankly acknowledged the better quality of these sets and mentioned to me that they would buy these sets in preference to those made in other cities of the Soviet Union such as Minsk or Moscow.

**Some of the details outlining Berklav's position were obtained by me from a secretary in the editorial office of the Latvian Communist Party central newspaper.
Russians. If this practice were to continue, regardless of its advisability, directors and management personnel should at least be required to learn Latvian to make possible more amiable relations with the Latvian workers; this policy, in turn, would facilitate an increase in output that might not otherwise be obtainable. Berklav also asked that a greater share of the Latvian output remain at home for local consumption. He requested further that an effort be made to correct the great imbalance between heavy industrial and consumer goods production, and that a current problem like housing receive attention in the form of a higher allocation of resources. As a temporary solution to the housing problem, Berklav sought to end the influx of Russians into Riga until such time as adequate space became available. (Latvian housing construction is currently 3 years behind schedule.)

Berklav's proposals were turned down on all counts. His attempt to stem the Russian influx apparently only reinforced Khrushchev's determination to Russify Latvia. After his departure, Riga was declared an "open city" for Russian settlement. This means that Russians now can become permanent residents of Riga by seeking shelter after arrival. This is contrary to Soviet policy elsewhere. Non-Muscovites, for example, desiring to move to the Soviet capital must first obtain living quarters before they are permitted to make a permanent change. But, this permission is difficult to secure in view of Moscow's housing shortage.
Khrushchev's "open city" declaration has swelled the Russian tidal wave engulfing Riga. The city has always had an attraction for Russians because of its relatively high standard of living and its location near Riga Bay (a favorite summer vacation spot for many of them). Its appeal was reflected in the steady influx of the postwar years. Khrushchev's decision spurred an even greater movement, reaching the current rate of 10,000 Russian arrivals monthly. As a result, the city's population is soaring and its composition is undergoing a radical change. Riga now has more than 600,000 people as against a prewar population of 350,000. Its composition is now on the order of 65% Russian and 30% Latvian (the balance consisting of other strains, mainly German); before the war, Riga was 85% Latvian with the balance consisting of Russians, Germans and Jews.

The incoming Russians are now being moved into apartments previously occupied by Latvians; the latter are being resettled in the city's environs. This change is reflected in an interesting way. For example, time after time, I noticed that the listing of tenants in apartment buildings consisted almost exclusively of Latvian names, yet I heard Russian spoken primarily. I discovered that this apparent contradiction was due to the fact that in three- and four-room apartments previously occupied by single Latvian families, the original tenants have been forced to squeeze into one or two rooms while Russian families have been moved into the other rooms. As a result, Latvians find themselves reduced to Russian standards. Thus each Latvian family is
allowed 9 sq. meters per person in houses and apartments it now occupies; anything above this amount is available for Russian occupation. The fact that new housing is assigned primarily to Russians hardly relieves the congestion because of the three year lag in construction schedules.*

Soviet "planning" has had other detrimental effects on Latvian construction. I was taken to the sites of two theaters which have been under construction for the last several years. Completion has been held up by a shortage of materials. But this was only part of the story. Initially there had been enough material on hand to build one of the theaters. Because of misplanning at the top, a decision was made to start both theaters at the same time. However, the balance of allocated material had not been delivered with the result that there are now two incomplete projects instead of one operating theater.

And here is another example of the "benefits" of Soviet planning for Latvians. The tallest building in Riga is the 25-story Palace of Culture and Rest. Originally it was contemplated as a recreational center for incoming farmers, delivering produce to the neighboring central municipal market. The original purpose was abandoned when it was found that the Latvian farmers were individualists who preferred to return home after delivering

*The Latvians currently have a wry saying when describing a promise one does not expect to be kept: "I'm waiting for it as I'm waiting for an apartment."
their produce to being herded together into the "palace" for a program of indoctrination by lecturers and movies. As a result, the building is in a state of disrepair, only half occupied with some government offices.

Confronted by Russification, Latvian intellectuals fear the loss of national identity which has been kept alive over the centuries despite continual German and Russian incursions. But there is great concern now that the current Soviet occupation may erase Latvian national feeling permanently. The Soviet regime, however, has made some overtures to relieve this anxiety. It permits the publication of books and magazines and the production of plays and operas in Latvian. Also, instruction in Latvian is permitted in schools and universities with the simultaneous requirement, however, that all students must learn Russian. And street and store signs are still lettered in Latvian, as well as Russian, even though virtually all major thoroughfares of Riga have been renamed after Communist heroes like Marx, Lenin, Engels (but not Stalin).*

Despite the fears expressed by the intellectuals, Latvians are making their own effort to stay above the Russian tidal wave. The Russian influx has tended to draw them together,

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*Evidence of Stalin's days remains only in the form of a small bust in a secluded part of one of Riga's central parks. This is in contrast with a big statue of Lenin erected in front of the main governmental building, housing the Council of Ministers, and located in one of the major squares of Riga.
something that might not have happened otherwise. This cohesion is expressed in many ways. For example, a Latvian sales clerk in any store in Riga, confronted by several customers simultaneously, will inevitably serve first those who address him in Latvian. Or, a Russian seeking help in getting around in Riga will receive less aid than a Latvian or a foreigner (as I found in making my way around the city).* Or, Latvian managerial personnel will seek to ease the lot of Latvian workers whenever possible. For example, one Latvian engineer told me that in his plant (engaged in food processing and canning) fellow engineers deliberately juggle figures to arrive at lower working norms; this enables the workers to overfulfill plans with ease and thus to earn something above the minimum. As elsewhere in the Soviet Union, Latvians have their own speculators engaged in blackmarket activities. While the profit motive is supreme, the Latvians engaged in these operations attempt to channel scarce goods into the hands of countrymen where possible.

Soviet rule has also created a bond of sympathy between the Latvians and other non-Russian nationalities in the Soviet Union. For example, the Latvians speak warmly of the Georgians. This is strictly a political tie since culturally the Latvians and Georgians have no similarities; it would be fair to say that before the Soviet occupation few, if any, Latvians would have known or cared much about Georgians.

*I have been told that the situation for a Russian in Tallin is even worse. The Estonians express their hostility towards the Russians by deliberately misleading them whenever the occasion presents itself.
While denuding Latvia of her material wealth, the Soviet regime has also attempted to appropriate her human resources. For example, in the field of sports the most prominent Latvian athletes are often bribed or otherwise induced to serve Soviet aims. This recruitment stems from the following situation. In the annual national competitions, a disproportionate share of victories is normally gained by the teams of Moscow's sports organizations over those representing other areas of the Soviet Union. This abnormal superiority of the Moscow teams is a result of extensive recruiting carried on in all parts of the Soviet Union which brings the best local sportsmen to Moscow as members of the capital's select teams. Thus the tennis champion of Latvia told me that he had been approached a number of times to leave Riga and move to Moscow to play under the auspices of one of the city's sports associations. This transfer would, of course, be accompanied by material compensation of a larger apartment and higher remuneration. He declined the honor because he wanted to remain with his family and friends in Riga and because the transfer would involve insecurity of tenure. By remaining at his job as an engineer (while practicing on week-ends and in the evenings), he would have an occupation at which he could continue until retirement. Other sportsmen, however, who had accepted similar offers found themselves discarded after passing their playing peak. Their return to the working ranks was not accompanied by allowance for time spent in the service of the state as sportsmen.
Soviet athletes thus seem to be subject to the same insecurity which, according to Soviet propaganda, plagues sportsmen in the capitalist countries.

One other interesting point: trainers of the select Moscow teams are under heavy pressure to guarantee victories not only over the teams of the capitalist countries or the People’s Democracies but also over those of other nationalities of the Soviet Union. The Latvian champion cited as an example the dismissal of a trainer from Moscow’s Dynamo (the sports organization of the Soviet Secret Police) after one of his players lost a match to the champion of Estonia. Great Russian chauvinism apparently dominates the playing field as well as politics.

3. **Latvian attitude Toward the Soviet Regime and the West**

With rare exceptions Latvians seem to be anti-Soviet. Their feeling stems not only from the misfortune of Russian occupation but also from a sense of superiority.

As the Latvians see it, they had a more advanced culture and a higher living standard which are now being reduced by the Soviet regime to the Russian level. Furthermore, the independence which they enjoyed between the two world wars gave them a taste of democracy. As a result, they had a

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*Lattians appear to equate independence with democracy. Thus, they gloss over the fact that in the last few years before the Soviet takeover of Latvia in 1940, the country was ruled by a strong man. When questioned about this fact, Latvians maintained that the situation was due to the excess produced by unbridled democracy. In the Latvian case, political chaos, arising from the existence of over 20 political parties in a country of 2½ million people, paved the way for a strong man.*
yardstick by which to measure Soviet-imposed "democratic" rule. The comparison, of course, could produce only hostility to Soviet domination.

This hostility appears to be universal in Latvia. The Soviet regime has found little support among the people. The Latvian Communist Party has a membership of less than 30,000 out of a population of two million. And many of these are not Latvians but transplanted Russians. The job of the Latvian Communist is a most difficult one since he is disliked by the native population and is not fully trusted by the Russians. Under conflicting pressures of the two sides, he is forced sooner or later to side with one or the other group. Berklay's case illustrates this. The Soviet leadership assigned him the task of getting the most out of the Latvians for the Soviet regime; to achieve this aim, it gave him a club to work with instead of a carrot. This produced recalcitrance on the part of the Latvians. Berklay finally decided to side with his people -- by demanding more goods and autonomy for the Latvians -- and as a result was purged. Now he is a hero among the Latvians. (This pattern apparently repeats itself in other non-Russian areas of the Soviet Union as the recent shakeups in the native leadership in Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan indicate.)

Latvian hostility to the Soviet regime ranges from fanaticism to a passive hope for liberation. Some of the more fanatic Latvians told me that if they could obtain an atomic bomb, they would risk their lives in dropping it on the Kremlin. The more passive Latvians merely nurture the hope that Latvia, having
been free before, would again have freedom in the future. However, the majority of those I met, while not fanatic enough to talk about violent action against the regime, expressed a fervent wish for a new war which would lead to Latvia's liberation. This feeling, I was told repeatedly, represents the sentiments of the country. Among the Latvians who spent time in Soviet camps, the hope for war seems to be so strong that I was told it is desired even if it means a nuclear holocaust which might consume them in the process. Because of the hatred engendered by the Soviet occupation, many Latvians cannot understand why the U.S. thus far has not made war on the Soviet Union. It was ironic to me that at the Exhibition in Moscow I had to defend the U.S. against Russian charges that we were thirsting for aggression while in Riga I had to withstand Latvian accusations to the effect that we were not committing enough aggression. As the Latvians see it, war should come now, not later, because the U.S. is losing its superiority and may be forced to fight when it is too late. The more extreme among the Latvians have lost faith in the U.S., in view of its inactivity in the uprisings in East Berlin and Hungary.

One direct result of the loss of confidence in the U.S. is the fact that many Latvians now look for liberation to come not from the U.S. but from West Germany. As they see it, Germany had never failed to act when it had both the power and the opportunity. They are convinced that the West Germans will never allow the present division of the country to stand as final, and hence will march some time in the future. Having
suffered under both German and Russian occupation, the Latvians prefer the former if they cannot be free.*

The ardent feeling on the part of many Latvians for German deliverance is undoubtedly known to the Kremlin leadership; it may be one of the spurs to Soviet attempts to secure not only a recognition of *status quo* in the area but also to prevent West German rearmament. This feeling, no doubt, also accounts for the apparent Soviet nervousness in Latvia whenever disturbances occur elsewhere in the Soviet bloc area. Thus at the time of the Hungarian uprising, security in Riga was tightened. The center of the city was surrounded by Soviet troops during the early days of the upheaval and no Latvians, except residents or those on business, were allowed in or out.

It is noteworthy that even after 15 years of Soviet occupation there is little difference in the attitude towards the regime between the younger and the older Latvians. The young

*The Germans, for their part, apparently made the same mistake in Latvia as in the Ukraine. The Ukrainians had initially greeted them with open arms, but instead of utilizing the anti-Russian sentiment the Germans resorted to oppressive measures which engendered anti-German feeling. Similarly, in the early days of the war, the swift German march into Latvia produced many Latvian volunteers for service with the German army; they were, however, accepted condescendingly by the Germans. Subsequently, the civilian population in Latvia was mistreated, evoking a mild anti-German reaction. This reaction, however, left no feeling to rival that which now exists towards the Russians.*
are as violently anti-Russian as their elders, despite the fact that they are subjected to daily propaganda in the schools. Apparently the influence of the parents is more decisive. The younger Latvians, in fact, tend to think in terms of action rather than passive hope. Thus I encountered a number of them who wanted to and seemed to be planning to flee to the West. With this in mind some were studying Western languages on their own. In talking to me, they wanted the answers to such questions as: Where does one have a better chance of getting asylum, in West Germany or in France? If one managed to reach the U.S., would he be returned by the American authorities? What could a Latvian do in the U.S. if he knew both English and Russian?

In addition to those who seem to be deliberately preparing for possible escape, there are others waiting for chance opportunities. For example, the leading Latvian tennis players hope some day to play at Wimbledon where they might have a chance to seek asylum; similarly, yachtsmen hope to sail in races abroad. Still others are waiting for the day when foreign travel may be permitted. (To date the regime has not permitted Latvians to travel even to the satellite countries.)

The Soviet authorities seem well aware of these sentiments. Latvian sportsmen being considered for meets abroad are subjected to thorough security investigations. They must fill out numerous detailed background questionnaires and supply a dozen photographs for the use of the Soviet security agencies. Normally selection is limited to those with close relatives who can be
held as hostages, a fact designed to act as a deterrent to defection. Thus I met a ranking yachtsman who had been refused permission to participate in races in Scandinavia. Since he was only 26 with no record of anti-Soviet activity and little interest in politics, he was turned down, as far as he could determine from friends in the central athletic office, because his wife -- an only living relative -- was considered insufficient insurance for his return.

The unrest which I found among young Latvians is apparently continuing with undiminished strength. In November the first secretary of the Latvian Communist Party was dismissed for failure to erase nationalist feelings specifically in this group. General dissatisfaction must also be prevalent since the Premier of Latvia was dismissed at the same time.

The Latvian attitude toward the Soviet regime is also reflected in the news they want to hear from abroad. Unlike some of the Russians to whom I talked, the Latvians do not appear interested in receiving a factual presentation of Soviet activities in the world that is normally associated with, say, the BBC. In line with their fervent wish for liberation they crave news that will somehow support this hope. In this sense, the earlier Voice of America broadcasts which seemingly hinted at U.S. action were preferred over those of the BBC. The fact that the Latvians face West for their news has not escaped Russian attention. As elsewhere in the Soviet Union, Western broadcasts to Latvia are jammed if they are in Russian or Latvian. The Russians recently put into operation in Riga new
300 ft. jamming masts which now tower over the city as a continuing reminder of Soviet occupation. While I was in Riga everything from the West was being jammed -- not only broadcasts from the U.S. and Britain but also from West Germany and the Scandinavian countries. This Soviet operation is most efficient. I spent half an hour with one Latvian who tried to tune in a broadcast from the West for me on his shortwave radio. Except for the opening identification, which was all the time the jammers required to get the range, the broadcasts were completely unintelligible. Interestingly enough, the English language broadcasts of the Voice of America, for example, were not jammed. As a result, many Latvians now studying English practice by listening to these broadcasts.

While jamming is currently used to limit Latvian access to news from Western sources, Soviet authorities have an alternative control at their disposal should they feel the need to resort to it. Latvians are required to register with the local authorities all television and radio sets in their possession. In the case of newly acquired sets this must be done within 10 days. At that time a certificate is issued in the form of a passport (!) which shows the date and place of acquisition, the date of registration and a description of the instrument. A Latvian unable to produce such a certificate during periodic inspections is subject to a fine. After the initial registration, a recurring tax must be paid. On a radio set this is 3 rubles per month, on a TV set 10 rubles. The tax must be paid, regardless of an instrument's usability, until a
set is surrendered to the authorities for scrapping and a
notation to this effect is made in the "passport." I met one
Latvian who had a portable radio for which he had been unable
to obtain batteries. Unwilling to part with it, he continued
to pay a tax on an unusable item. The foregoing registration
and tax system thus gives the regime a means by which it can
determine who has an "ear" to the outside world; it also can,
should it so choose, call in the sets at any time and completely
isolate the Latvians from access to non-Soviet sources. Such
a move would prove more effective in Latvia (where many of the
shortwave sets are made) than in other areas of the Soviet
Union where relatively fewer shortwave sets are in use. Even
in the larger Soviet cities (like Moscow or Kiev) many Russians
still have only the simple loudspeakers tuned in to the one
local station.

The anti-Soviet sentiment which I found in Latvia illu-
minates vividly the necessities behind Soviet actions in Eastern
Europe in the postwar period. There is no doubt that the regime
is aware of the smouldering discontent in the Baltic states.
It has tried to reduce the significance of such discontent by
several means.

In seeking Western recognition of the status quo, the
Soviet leaders hope to extinguish the last flicker of hope for
liberation which may remain among the Balts. In the eyes of
the latter, recognition would constitute a final and irrevo-
cable abandonment by the West. Some Latvians told me they
would interpret such action to mean that thereafter the West
would consider any possible disturbance in the Baltic states as strictly a Soviet internal affair and would therefore with-
hold any aid that might be warranted by developments favorable to the Balts. In view of Western inactivity in the Hungarian uprising, the Latvians, of course, do not expect any help except in the extreme and unlikely case of massive disintegra-
tion of the Soviet empire.

Internally, the regime is trying to reduce the instability of the Baltic states by Russification. By its resettlement policy, the Soviet leadership aims to isolate the Balts in a mass of Russians. Until this is finally achieved, any pro-
longed disturbance in Eastern Europe could have an effect on the Baltic area. This puts a premium on quick Soviet action to stamp out any unrest elsewhere before it has a possible chance to inflame the discontented peoples within the Soviet borders.

In military terms, the Baltic area would, in case of war, constitute for the regime an unreliable rear since the Balts would openly welcome any military incursion from the West. A number of Latvians who had served with the Wehrmacht in World War II told me they would eagerly join any new struggle against the Russians. This feeling among the Latvians, shared I was told by the other Baltic peoples, constitutes a restraint for the Soviet regime insofar as it has to take into account the fact that any planned aggression on its part must be so decisive as to insure against a setback which would permit any dis-
affected groups to stage an uprising.
As indicated earlier, many Latvians expect an eastward push by the West Germans to give them such an opportunity. Undoubtedly, this in some degree has motivated Soviet apprehension over the revival of German power. But the growing Soviet might is reducing the regime's concern, much to the dismay of the Latvians. They posed the most difficult question of the many I received in my numerous discussions with Soviet citizens: "Since the West is falling behind the Soviet Union what hope is there for us?"