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JANUARY, 1956

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New World
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REVIEW



In a Czechoslovakia nursery (see pages 13 and 26)

**Living Standards Today in the USSR
and Czechoslovakia • The Israel-Arab
Tensions • The Theater in East Germany**

New World

REVIEW

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AMONG other things, the New Year is the time for good resolutions.

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Our cover is a move in that direction, for the color adds appeal, and the extra pages add the space that gives us the possibility of better coverage.

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Peace Still the Main Issue in 1956

by JESSICA SMITH

FOR OUR COUNTRY, for its people and people everywhere, we wish a New Year of increasing well-being and happiness, and steady progress toward the goal of enduring peace on earth.

How good it would be to be able to say that the policies of our government are helping to bring this about. It is a wonderful feeling to give wholehearted support to your country's leaders, to have confidence that they are following the right course. When they are not, true patriotism requires doing something about it.

So today our wish must be coupled with the resolution to bring strong and unceasing pressure on our government to realize the bright promises of the first Geneva.

The great accomplishment there was the renunciation of atomic war as an instrument of national policy. We are convinced that the peoples of the world will not permit such a war. But the Geneva decisions are still to be implemented. As long as they are not, as long as the armament race continues, grave dangers to peace remain, which means constant vigilance and struggle by the people.

For a while it looked as though

the war party in Washington had been defeated. To what extent the illness of President Eisenhower has been responsible for its coming to the fore again, it is difficult to say. It might have been expected that the world-wide acclaim for the President's long-delayed decision to go to Geneva and for his positive role at the conference, would have influenced him to stay on this course. Yet it must be remembered that before his illness, the President joined with those who sought to put a brake on the Geneva spirit, and who today are in the ascendant in Washington.

Let the American people examine carefully the role of our government in recent months, judge where the responsibility lies for the efforts to revive the cold war, and exert new pressures for peace, remembering that in an election year all parties, all candidates, must pay attention to their demands.

The attempt to place on the Soviet Union the entire blame for the failure to reach agreement at the foreign ministers' conference is now followed by Secretary Dulles' charge that the Soviet Union has revived the cold war.

Sober and realistic analysts like Walter Lippmann and others have

blamed the failure of the second Geneva rather on the inflexibility of U.S. foreign policy, especially in its insistence on a rearmed Germany as the mainstay of NATO. Mr. Lippmann called for "a thorough-going reappraisal of our position and our prospects in the post-Geneva world."

Instead, Secretary Dulles offers a restatement of the suicidal "massive retaliation" policy, so universally rebuffed and discredited that he now calls it "selective retaliation," and continued reliance on the building up of military alliances and "positions of strength."

In an extraordinarily frank report in the *New York World Telegram*, December 16, Ned Rochon wrote:

America's leadership—or more precisely, the lack of it—came under strong off-record criticism at the NATO Council meeting of 15 nations in Paris. The principal objection was to the vacillation of the Dulles policy—from massive retaliation to Geneva spirit and thence back to "modified" massive retaliation. Almost every NATO partner objects to one or the other of these approaches, but all of them object strenuously to being kept in confusion as to which policy is being pushed.

Military commentator Hanson W. Baldwin, in the *New York Times* of December 18, put his finger on the reasons for the "major weaknesses," both political and military, which he declared were sapping the strength of NATO:

... The organization was established primarily to meet the Soviet military threat; it has been in effect a military alliance. But ... *there is now relatively little fear in Western Europe of a Soviet military attack in the foreseeable future.* (Emphasis added)

Mr. Baldwin points out the source of the real fears of the people of Europe, especially of the smaller nations, who have been complaining that they have not been considered in allocation of nuclear and other weapons planned by the United States.

Noting that NATO's whole military program contemplates "the extensive use of nuclear weapons of all kinds against enemy troops, supplies and airfields," Baldwin declares that when the full implications of a kind of tactical warfare that would "make Europe a desert" sink in, "the smaller nations . . . may not be so enthusiastic about nuclear strategy or about NATO." Since this lack of enthusiasm is already apparent, it can be assumed that the implications have already sunk in.

While charging the USSR with opening "dangerous new war fronts in the Middle East and Asia," Mr. Dulles was compelled to admit that there is no likelihood of military attack from the Soviet Union and that the Soviet "threat" is now "economic and political." He accused the USSR of repudiating the first Geneva.

Secretary Dulles' insistence that the way to meet this non-military "threat" is by greater military preparations, and the subsequent report of a considerable increase planned for the U.S. foreign military aid appropriations, can only raise the question as to who is in fact repudiating Geneva.

Despite the widely reported dissensions of the NATO Council meeting, Mr. Dulles seems to have had his own way in the writing of the communique of December 16.

It spoke of decisions made to provide all members of the alliance with

SPECIAL NOTICE TO NWR READERS

We wish to call the attention of our readers and subscribers to the fact that beginning with this January, 1956 issue of New World Review, the price per copy is increased from 20 cents to 25 cents (and from 25 cents to 30 cents for foreign sales). The subscription increases from \$2.00 a year to \$2.50 (it will now be \$3.00 in Canada, and \$3.50 in other foreign countries).

All present subscribers will receive their full number of issues paid for at the previous rate until the termination of their subscriptions. All renewals and new subscriptions sent in at the previous rate of \$2.00 a year (\$1.00 for six months) will be honored up to February 1, 1956.

We have taken this step only as a result of the most serious consideration and under pressure of necessity. The necessity stems from rising printing costs, and the experience that lack of separate cover, with color, means loss of newsstand and bookshop sales and makes it more difficult to attract new readers. This small addition to the price will help to cover the costs of the cover and give us some additional pages.

On page 41 we publish a review of the results of the questionnaire sent out to our readers, asking their suggestions for improving the magazine, and our plans for meeting them. This we shall do to the best of our ability within our present space limitations. It is only fair to add that the small increase in price will not obviate the necessity of continued appeals for support from our readers on which the publication of the magazine depends.

"the most modern weapons," and give "a new impulse to future defensive planning."

It repeated the charge that the USSR was responsible for the failure of the foreign ministers to reach agreement (See December NWR for what really happened.)

It condemned the USSR for opposing an "effective system for the control of armaments including the Eisenhower plan," whereas in fact the USSR accepted that plan, insisting, however, that it be a part of an over-all disarmament program, which the United States has rejected, including previous Western proposals now accepted by the USSR.

It condemned the USSR for "provocative moves in the Middle East and Asia."

Kumar Goshal, in his article else-

where in this issue, shows that the real provocations in the Middle East stem from long-standing American and British policies and the newly formed METO, or Baghdad, alliance.

Former French Premier Mendes-France, in his newspaper *L'Express*, on Dec. 20, strongly criticized Foreign Minister Pinay for signing the NATO statement. He declared that the fact that the USSR was using its growing productive power for "economic competition" was no reason for increasing Western armaments, but should be met by transferring Western efforts to the economic field. He described the sale of arms to Egypt by Czechoslovakia as a reply to "the unlucky Baghdad Pact," which he called a blunder for the West.

"Provocative moves in Asia" evi-

dently refers to the tour of India, Burma and Afghanistan by Nikolai Bulganin, Soviet Premier, and Nikita Khrushchev, Communist Party Secretary.

According to U.S. and British officials and press reports, the Soviet leaders have been "preaching hatred and enmity" between peoples of different races, stirring up dissension with the West, embarrassing their hosts by attacks on Western policies, and displaying "crude power politics."

The press, by picking up a few extemporaneous and bantering remarks to newspapermen by Khrushchev and taking out of context certain statements he and Bulganin made about British and U.S. policies, have created a completely false picture.

The Soviet leaders were met everywhere in India and Burma by crowds numbering literally millions. They were welcomed with unprecedented enthusiasm by national and local leaders and the masses of the people.

It is quite true that Bulganin and Khrushchev emphasized the anti-colonial stand which has always been the policy of the USSR, as the peoples of Asia well know.

The greatest furore of all was raised around the issue of the Portuguese colony of Goa—but not by the Soviet leaders. The existence on the territory of India of this colony where a few hundred Portuguese exercise a terroristic dictatorship over the native Indian population of 600,000, is a burning issue for the people of India. At a meeting in Madras, on November 28, Bulganin said:

There is no justification for the Portuguese colony of Goa to exist

still upon the ancient territory of India. It is a shame on civilized people.

In answer to this simple statement of opinion, which coincides with that of millions of people throughout Asia to whom Goa is a symbol of colonial oppression. Secretary Dulles' idea of the way to win friends for the United States was to rush into a joint statement with Portuguese Foreign Minister Cunha, attacking the Soviet leaders for "incitement" of the Indian People and by implication supporting Portugal's right to hold Goa. At his press conference the next day, Dulles blandly asserted that he "took no position" on the question, and then made matters worse by again calling Goa a "Portuguese Province."

When, coupled with such remarks, the people of Asia see the bloody suppressions being carried on by America's ally France in Morocco and Algeria with French NATO divisions supplied with U.S. arms, there is little doubt as to where the real responsibility for the stirring up of anti-Western sentiment in Asia lies.

The Dulles-Cunha statement led the influential *Times* of India to note:

If ever the cloven hoof of colonialism peeped out of an official statement, it is in the unfortunate declaration to which the United States Secretary of State has lent his name.

As to the "embarrassment" presumably caused the Indian leaders by the Soviet leaders' criticisms of Western colonial and militarist policies, Premier Nehru, while emphasizing India's position of neutrality, indicated his agreement with these criticisms when he declared:

It is strange that while one side is speaking of peace, other countries are thinking in terms of war and military alliances. We are convinced that it is not by military pacts and alliances and by lining up armaments that world peace and security can be attained. India is in no camp and no military alliance. The only camp we would like to be in is the camp of peace and good will, which should include as many countries as possible and be opposed to none.

According to *Indiagram*, Bulletin of the Indian Embassy in Washington, Nehru told the House of the People on December 5 that in India's view "The Baghdad Pact was a most unfortunate action on the part of the countries who joined it. The Pact was deplorable from the point of view of peace and security."

While a common language was found in opposition to Western colonial and militarist policies, a careful reading of the text of the speeches by Soviet and Indian leaders alike shows that the main emphasis on both sides throughout the trip was on peace, friendship and brotherhood and the strengthening of mutually beneficial ties. The Soviet leaders repeatedly expressed the desire for friendly relations with the West.

Nehru, at the welcoming banquet November 20, referring to his warm reception in the USSR last summer, said:

I saw that in the Soviet Union colossal tasks had been set and that much had been done for the well-being of the people. I saw first and foremost the insistent and widespread desire for peace. This great work and this vital requirement coincided with my feelings, and I saw there was vast opportunity for co-operation between our two countries.

. . . I sincerely believe that your visit to our country will promote the great cause of peace and cooperation which we champion.

At a reception at Bangalore, center of the State of Mysore in Southern India, Chief Minister K. Manu-manthaiya declared, November 26:

Russia helped to weaken the chains of imperialism and colonialism throughout the world. Your efforts to prevent war and establish lasting peace have earned the sympathy and gratitude of the whole war-weary world.

A great furore was raised in the West over the announcement of the test of a powerful H-bomb in the Soviet Union at the time of the trip. The Indian leaders have no more liking for H-bomb tests in the Soviet Union than anywhere else. But they also know that the USSR has proposed, and the West has refused to accept, the banning of atomic and hydrogen weapons. And in the joint Soviet-Indian statement issued on December 13, the leaders of both countries expressed their conviction that there should be "unconditional prohibition of production, use and experimentation of nuclear and thermonuclear weapons."

The Soviet and Indian leaders made a strong statement on the necessity of disarmament as the only course to establish world peace and eliminate conditions leading to the "inconceivable disaster of another world war."

The joint statement emphasized that the strengthened friendly ties between the two countries could threaten no one, but only promote peace everywhere.

It reaffirmed the "five principles" already agreed upon by the two

countries and the Bandung nations: Mutual respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty; non-aggression; non-interference in internal affairs; equality and mutual advantage; peaceful coexistence. It proposed that these principles should govern all international relations.

The statement urged continued efforts to realize the hopes of the first Geneva. It endorsed the principle of universality for UN membership, declared that peace in Asia requires the seating of the Chinese People's Republic and agreement regarding the latter's "legitimate rights in regard to the coastal islands and Taiwan." The Soviet and Indian leaders agreed that peace and security could not be secured through military alliances or regional military blocs. They agreed on greater cultural and economic ties between the two countries, and on discussions regarding further economic and technical cooperation in connection with India's second five-year plan.

Similar joint statements and agreements on economic and technical aid were entered into by the Soviet leaders with Burma and Afghanistan. The Soviet-Afghanistan Treaty of Neutrality and Non-Aggression is to be extended for ten years, and the USSR granted long term credits of \$100,000,000 to aid in Afghan economic development, with no strings attached, only the assurance of neutrality.

What provocations, what threats, could such agreements hold to any legitimate interests of the United States? Is this not a pattern for relations between states which our country might well follow?

Not by threats and military pacts and more H-bombs can we counter the growing influence of the Soviet

Union in world affairs. Only by similarly mutually advantageous relations with other countries can America's real interests be served.

Let us resolve, for the New Year, to set our own house in order, in both domestic and foreign affairs and bring relentless pressure on leaders and candidates to this end.

At home, this means increased demands that the vast sums now spent for armaments be transferred to serve the well-being of the people, to new schools, low cost housing, roads, flood control and other public projects, which would mean more jobs as well.

It means new decisive efforts to restore the Bill of Rights, to wipe out the shameful Smith and McCarran Acts, the Taft Hartley law and all other repressive measures robbing our people of their birthright. It means ending forever the shameful blot of racial discrimination in all its manifestations, and especially such horrors as the murder of 14-year old Emmett Till and the other murders in Mississippi and elsewhere in the South.

And since it is from the continued reliance on "positions of strength" to meet a non-existent threat that most of our internal repressions flow, the first necessity to achieve all these things is a peaceful foreign policy. Let us press unceasingly in this New Year for renewed big power negotiations, the ending of the cold war, the strengthening of East-West interchange and trade, universality of membership in the United Nations, with the People's Republic of China in its rightful place, and above all for effective steps toward disarmament, the banning of nuclear weapons, and the final outlawry of all war.

SOME REFLECTIONS ON

Soviet Living Standards

by RALPH PARKER

"EVERYTHING in the Soviet Union is being done with an eye to the future. The truth about Russia today cannot be conveyed in a 'snap-shot'; that would be to betray reality."

These words by the famous French film producer Rene Clair, who took part in a recent festival of French films held in Moscow and Leningrad, sum up the dilemma facing anyone attempting to describe the material standard of life in the USSR.

How is he to convey the reality of today, which is yesterday's future, in terms of advance from a past with which his readers are unfamiliar? And how is he to give conviction to that belief in their morrow which is an essential feature of Soviet people's outlook on their present conditions?

These are difficulties that anyone trying to write about Soviet living conditions runs into. It is not so much the absence of certain statistical material as of a basis on which to

build a statistical picture of conditions. If only one could stop the escalator and read calmly the writing on the wall! But it continues to mount, the figures blur, and one sees a different set before one's eyes.

I can understand the impatience of Soviet people when foreigners press them for statistical "snap-shots" of their living conditions. Consider Moscow housing, for example. There is a standard of nine square meters of living-space per head, that is to say, new family homes are being planned and built on the basis that each member of the family should have nine square meters in the living room of the apartment, excluding passage space, kitchen, bathroom, etc.

Many Muscovites, living in pre-war buildings, have less space than this. The authorities possess no powers to evict people on the grounds that the standard is not being observed, unless grave sanitary grounds exist. But the standard is applied strictly in all new houses—and Moscow is building close to one million square meters of new living space each year—rehousing, that is, about 100,000 people at the new standard, and it follows, relieving the overcrowding in the older buildings.

RALPH PARKER, who formerly represented the "New York Times" in the USSR, is a veteran Moscow correspondent whose eye-witness accounts are well known to our readers.

In such circumstances, what is the "true" statistical picture of Moscow housing conditions? Only one, I suggest, that shows that under present plans the nine-square-meter standard will become a general standard in about 10 years time and that each year meanwhile the housing conditions of tens of thousands of families will take a leap forward not from the statistical average but from somewhere considerably below it.

I could draw some harrowing pictures of overcrowding in Moscow, though I would remind you that at the end of the war, between Moscow and the Western frontiers there was not a city that had not been razed to the ground and that as a result of this, and of the destruction of thousands of villages, the population of Moscow rose from three or four to seven or eight million. But I prefer to describe a picture of the new homes, of which thousands and thousands exist, and which are being built fast and well. Because in a society developing so fast and so soundly the typical is that which belongs to the future—not the distant future but the one which already stands with the scaffolding around it and the great tower-cranes stretching above it.

One morning shortly before the Revolution anniversary celebrations, *Pravda* printed on its front page a family scene in a new apartment. It was not an "idealized" picture. It showed a two-room apartment into which a working-class family had just moved—middle-aged father and mother, married daughter with her husband, and their child.

First, the situation. The new house overlooks one of Moscow's principal new highways running

westward from the city to the popular recreation center of Silver Forest. In the new Moscow there is no zoning according to class, no section of the city reserved for privileged persons. Rents do not vary according to site.

There are four wage-earners in this family and the family income may be fairly estimated at about 4,000 rubles a month after deduction of income tax, trade union dues, state loan contributions. The rent, however, is estimated according to the 1,500 rubles a month earned by the head of the family; it amounts to 54 rubles a month, including central heating. In other words a little over three and one half per cent of the principal wage-earner's income. In fact, the rent covers only the upkeep of the house, for in the Soviet Union housing is a social service and the cost of new building is a charge on the central budget, a part of the state's investment plan.

This family, if typical, will spend about 60 rubles a day on food, including canteen meals at 4 to 5 rubles (soup, meat dish, fruit or tea). The baby, left during the day at the factory nursery, is cared for free of charge; when it is old enough for kindergarten it will cost its parents about 6 rubles a day including meals. Thus, half the family income goes on food.

There has been some improvement both in the supply and distribution of food in Moscow during the past year. In the new, less crowded neighborhoods the shops are adequate to meet the demand and many of them have introduced self-serving to replace the time-wasting practices of the traditional Moscow store with queues at the counters as well as at the cash-desks. All recently built

apartment houses have shops on the ground floors but now a change is being introduced. In order to reduce the number of standardized components in prefabricated buildings, shops are henceforth to be in separate buildings within the courtyards or on the sidewalks facing apartment houses set back from the road.

This year has seen a marked switch to canned food with particular reference to canned vegetables; improvement in the fresh milk supply and in the delivery of food, though till now, the number of families having food delivered remains very low.

Generally speaking, Moscow families do not complain about the price or availability of food.

Similar improvements are to be noted in hardware, kitchen equipment and electrical goods, as well as in building materials. Successive price reductions have brought the costs of these categories of merchandise well within the reach of families setting up house. The refrigerator, the vacuum cleaner, the electric iron are as much part of a modern home as the TV set, and though kitchen gadgets remain few and such time-saving appliances as pressure-cookers are still in the experimental stage of manufacture, the price and quality of traditional kitchen equipment are satisfactory. The pricing of such goods would seem to follow the principle of enabling the Soviet housewife to equip her home with labor-saving devices with the lowest possible strain on her purse.

The same principle is applied to clothing, where the situation is less satisfactory as a whole. Foreign visitors to the Soviet Union this year have found it hard to equate the high prices of clothing in the shop win-

dows with the fact that the Soviet people are warmly if inelegantly clad. The answer is that there are in all articles of clothing what might be called "utility" ranges marketed at reasonable prices. True, the shopper who strays outside these ranges finds prices high; you still have to pay dear for anything out of the ordinary.

But the problem of providing the people of this country with a wardrobe that will see them through its long cold winter and hot dusty summer has been solved, and sizeable progress has been made beyond that—in providing clothes that please. One has only to watch boy and girl students coming out of college to realize that youth is fashion conscious.

What is needed now is cheaper woollens and, particularly, a reform of the sewing industry, not only to improve styles but to close that still too wide gap between the price of cloth and the price of the garment. As one of my conservative colleagues said after a fortnight in Russia: "There is nothing wrong with Russia that two hundred tailors from Leeds could not put right!" (Leeds is the principal center of tailoring in Britain.)

In the long run, the cost of clothes here depends on the success of the agricultural program, especially of cotton-growing and increasing fodder crops. The Soviet Union is the source of its own wool, leather and cotton and present supplies are inadequate for the production of more than the bare minimum of clothing and footwear. The nation's resources are not at present sufficient to permit that clothes be put aside because they have ceased to be "fashionable." Those whose first impression of the Soviet scene is one of the drabness

of dress would do well to make the effort to recall the days, not very long ago, when 400,000 people of Leningrad died mainly because they could not keep warm during the hungry winters of the siege and when the problem of buying shoes for children kept Russian mothers standing all night in queues.

Finally, there is this to be said about living standards. When a society is engaged in rapid capital construction, people's lives are greatly influenced by public spending. Apart from housing, the improvements in public transport, in the factory restaurant system, in the provision of cheap natural gas to replace wood-burning stoves, in the provision of electricity to ease labor processes, in laying out new parks and gardens, are all having an immediate bearing on living standards.

And this great program of public spending is planned to benefit the greatest number of people. In a rapidly expanding society it may be misleading to draw too rigid a line between consumer goods and other things that the public "consumes"—such as fresh air and knowledge and beauty, and even leisure to contemplate and to reflect on the way life is developing.

A socialist society does not, need not adopt the same standard for measuring the living conditions of its people as a capitalist country, for it creates and fulfills new requirements.

Thus the "living standard" of a Moscow working class family does not, in the present shortage, include the accommodation that the authorities are determined it should enjoy, but it is the shortage itself, and not uneven, unfair distribution of existing housing that is the reason for present shortcomings. The working man has the right to a good home, according to his need, and the latest measures taken to speed up house building suggest that it will not be long before he can exercise that right.

No one in Moscow this year has been evicted from his home—and that is part of his "living standard." The worker whose son is studying at school or at college knows that when he has graduated there will be a job waiting for him to match his qualifications and training—and that, too, is part of a "living standard." The accessibility of culture, the certainty of work, security in the home and a bright outlook on the future—are not these things inseparable parts of living standards?

REPLY TO A READER

FOR THE BENEFIT of the reader who has written in asking why the Soviet Union has abandoned its afforestation program, our answer is that it hasn't. This is shown in the following excerpt quoted from *Soviet Weekly* (published in London) of October 13, 1955.

"Over the past six years more than a half million acres of shelter belts have been planted in Ukrainian collective farms alone, and some 700,000 acres of ravines and sandy territory have been afforested. The young trees are already about 16 feet high. . . . This year's plan for the afforestation of another 300,000 acres was substantially overfulfilled last spring."

Dollars and Sense

In Czechoslovakia

by ELEANOR WHEELER

THE SUNDAY AFTERNOON walk is a Czech institution which goes way back. If the family hasn't been in the woods or climbing hills and mountains since the break of dawn, all the members go out, after their traditional pork and dumpling dinner, to stroll through the park or to window-shop. As they window-shop they note the next large purchases they have budgeted, or stop in, for example, to buy the warm inter-lined shoes which are considered a must for winter wear here.

Visiting foreigners also window-shop in their free time. Those from People's Democracies want to compare with home products and those from capitalistic countries to see how life is behind the "iron curtain." If the latter are unfriendly they seize on the high-priced items they see in the window, jot down the prices (and sometimes add a zero) and conclude for the folks back home that in Czechoslovakia

people can't afford to buy clothing. This in the face of large crowds of people pushing up to the counters even on Sunday, for many shops in the main part of town keep open seven days a week. The crowds of shoppers grow so large at times that one visitor was justified in exclaiming, "Is this a demonstration?"

The simple crowns-to-dollars or forints-to-dollars exchange is very misleading, but it is the one which is continually made by those who want to say that life is unbearably expensive here in the People's Democracies. It was put simply by one Western journalist who exclaimed, "I'll never forget that plate of soup I paid a dollar* for—boy! What a price!" What he *will* promptly forget however, is the free medical care available and evident on every hand (even foreign visitors take advantage of it sometimes), the free university tuition, the nominal fees for nursery schools which are everywhere available, the low-cost trade union holidays, the very low rents. How is one to balance and add these

ELEANOR WHEELER has been living and working in Prague since 1947. She and her husband, both Americans, have contributed frequently to NWR.

* Not in Czechoslovakia. We have never managed to pay more than 50c—if you have to make a dollars comparison—try as we may, for a plate of soup which resembles rich stew. The normal price for a good rich bowl of soup is from 10 to 25c.

different items? We were told in the first grade that you can't add apples and pears. Even less can you add, and then average up, cups of expensive coffee and free appendectomies.

The best way to make such an estimate is to see how one worker budgets his salary and then let the folks back home draw their own conclusions. The worker in question inspects steel plates and cuts out faults with a pneumatic drill, in one of the big engineering works in Prague. He earns around 1,900 to 2,000 crowns a month. His wife earns nearly as much, but let us see how they would make out on his salary alone.

Rent is less than one-tenth of his salary, or 130 crowns. His three-room flat is in a modern apartment building and the rent includes heat and hot water but not light and gas. Flats which are not as modern may run around 60 to 100 crowns. In our experience the utilities amount to about the same as the rent.

Most important item in the budget is food. For one thing, agriculture is not as efficient or as productive as for instance in the United States. Milk is 1.90 crowns a liter when bottled, or 25c a quart, butter about \$1.25 a pound. Bread is about the best in the world, we think, and not expensive. Dark bread is packed full of nourishment at about 10c a pound. No fillers or adulterants are used. The poppy-seed filled bread has butter and eggs in the recipe. Many buns are on the market: salty or sweet crescents, salty little loaflets, poppy-seed covered braids and brioches, French bread, graham, caraway-flavored dark bread—the list seems endless and each has its

own special name and its adherents.

Meat and vegetables are relatively expensive, with meat running from one to two dollars a pound, if we insist on making the crown-to-dollar comparisons.

Buying a liter (just over a quart) of milk a day, a half to a pound of meat, a pound of bread, a half pound of butter, with all the vegetables that are needed, our "average worker" will spend about 1,000 crowns or half his income (one-fourth their combined incomes) on food, including meals in the factory canteen. These meals are partly subsidized by the factory and include soup, meat, dumplings or potatoes, vegetables and desert—usually the main meal of the day.

Our washerwoman says she spends 800 crowns on food for a family of four, including her husband's factory meals and the children's (also subsidized) at school and nursery school. But this includes some free fruit from country relatives and not a very large amount of meat and butter, so it is not as representative as the case of the worker in the engineering plant.

Unskilled workers will spend perhaps three-fourths of their income on food, but even less than the tenth mentioned above on rent. Balance this by the fact that no emergency operations are turned down for lack of money, because there is no question of fees. Children who need extra nourishment are sent free or for very nominal fees to special camps to build up their health. Holidays are awarded free in the case of exceptional work, or, through the trade unions, can be enjoyed for less than the cost of living at home. A friend of ours was happy when her husband got a trade union voucher for two

weeks' holiday in Karlovy Vary at a former luxury hotel. "It will cost about two-thirds as much as to stay at home," she calculated. Unfortunately she had the opportunity of getting completely free board and room for her little girl instead—suddenly the child needed an emergency appendectomy which required a month's hospitalization, expensive drugs, a special nurse—all without cost to the family.

Of course this does not mean without cost to anyone. The hidden costs of the medical service must be paid somehow. Every time we pay 25c for a cup of coffee we are not putting extra crowns into a profiteer's pocket, but are helping to pay for an emergency operation or dental care or eye glasses or a trip to the country for some little child who needs it. One doctor said to us ruefully that with this universal coverage he felt that the medical service is on a communist basis, whereas the society here has not yet advanced fully into socialism. The government's decision was evidently, however, to put the health of the country in the first place, even if it means a temporary overburdening of the medical staffs.

In fact, that is the key to understanding the whole price system. What is absolutely necessary is free or very inexpensive. Health service is free, education is free, nursery school services for working mothers are adjusted to earning power, rent is very low, basic food items are not dear. All that is practically guaranteed to everyone.

Then when people want candy bars, cigarettes, coffee, whipped cream cake, fine textiles, and so on, part of the costs of the necessities are included in the price of luxury goods. This is an over-simplification

of the adjustment of the economy, of course, but it helps to explain why visitors from the West have a hard time understanding the set-up.

The guaranteeing of the minimum to the average citizen does not mean a leveling of taste or cutting down on variety. Furniture stores have fine models of modern furniture, ingenious bedcouches for small flats, fine extending dining room tables, handsome bookcases, modern arm chairs and lamps, folk designs in upholstery textiles and ceramics, beautiful china and glass—all this is a great temptation to overspend. Installment buying is not encouraged; loans, as one friend discovered, are permitted only those in need of them. Those who have a good income will not get a bank loan: "You have to be poverty-stricken to get a loan from the bank here," our friend grumbled.

And as for variety in the food line: where we lose our money is waiting for the bus by a large universal food store. As we wait we see a window filled with geese, smoked sturgeon or herring, canned fish from Latvia, Poland, Denmark, Yugoslavia, Italy, the Soviet Union, cheeses from everywhere, canned or dried fruits from China, rice, chocolates or the delicious domestic manufacture, liqueurs from France and Italy, Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union, pastry and canned goods from Hungary, spicy one-meal canned foods from Rumania, Hungary or Bulgaria, canned eggplant in garlic, sweet whole tomatoes from sunny Bulgaria, fresh imported southern fruits . . . well, we usually miss the bus!

This is not to claim in any way that the range of goods is as wide or that the take-home pay will buy

as many such durable goods (radios, cars, refrigerators, etc.) as will a fully employed skilled American worker's. I am pointing out merely that what can be bought is adequate and more than adequate. And that the buying can be done in a carefree spirit with no worries about rainy days, old age unemployment and sickness. That is worth something even in dollars and cents! And as productivity is constantly stepped up, the big items of durable consumer goods are increasingly bought.

In comparison with 1953, 1954 sales of radio sets went up by 234 per cent; of electric washing machines, 424.4 per cent; refrigerators, 529.6 per cent; motorcycles, 148.8 per cent; wrist watches, 218.1 per cent. There was another big spurt in these items this year, and the trend is up.

An article I read in today's paper (*Rude Pravo*, October 31) showed the difficulty, almost the futility, of trying to include everything in a description of standard of living—it told of something which won't show up in your Sunday window-shopping tour.

A family wrote to thank a health resort for the wonderful care given their little girls. The health resort is Kynzvalt near Mariánské Lázně (Marienbad). Formerly it was a luxury resort where the rich could calm their nerves, display their wardrobes and take a rest from the troubles of running the country. Now it is turned over to children who are post-

whooping-cough cases. It is the center for Bohemia and Moravia, where whooping cough patients who seem to be coughing too long, or who have just got run down, are sent to spend six weeks in the open air near an invigorating pine forest. All free.

The Filip family of Pelhrimov seemed to appreciate their good fortune and wrote to the paper: "Please accept our warm thanks for the wonderful care given our children Irenka and Ruzenka. They came home really improved physically and spiritually. And how orderly they are now! We used to get angry with them before we could get them to wash up and clean their teeth. Now they do it without being told, fold up their clothes nicely—and all the little songs and dances they learned there! They keep on remembering Kynzvalt."

The author of the *Rude Pravo* article citing this letter reminds us that the post-whooping-cough health resort is only a small part of the medical treatment for the prevention and care of whooping cough. Children in nursery schools and creches are inoculated and infants who have been exposed get injections of gamma globulin. Severe cases are hospitalized and all drugs made available. Weaker children are sent to spas, with their mothers (also free of charge) if necessary. And finally, the open-air resort for recuperation.

Well, anyone want a dollar plate of soup?

For photographs on Czechoslovakia today

see pages 26 and 27

The World Family Grows

by ESLANDA ROBESON

THE BIGGEST, most widespread, most diverse, most cantankerous and most potentially wonderful family, the World Family known as the United Nations Organization, has been in labor.

The Family wants to increase its membership. Many states in many parts of the world want to join the Family, and have formally applied for membership: 18 states—Albania, the Mongolian People's Republic, Jordan, Ireland, Portugal, Hungary, Italy, Austria, Rumania, Bulgaria, Finland, Ceylon, Nepal, Libya, Cambodia, Japan, Laos and Spain had applied, and in that order, and were before the present Assembly session.

The overwhelming majority of the member nations were ready to accept all eighteen on the basis of a "package deal" which would include both those states supported by the West and those supported by the USSR and its allies.

On the question of expanding the Family, the admission of new members, the General Assembly voted overwhelmingly (52 in favor, 2 against, with 5 abstentions) to request the Security Council "to consider, in the light of the general opinion in favor of the widest possible membership in the UN, the

pending applications for membership of all those countries about which no problem of unification arises," which covered all the 18 countries under consideration. Nationalist China (Formosa) and Cuba voted against, and the United States, Belgium, France, Israel and Greece abstained.

Walter Lippmann, writing in the *New York Herald Tribune*, November 29, characterized the U.S. position in abstaining on this question as "a horrible example of how to lose face, of how to lose influence, of how to make this country look foolish—for no better reason than that the men at the top did not stop to think about what was happening and what they were doing."

He pointed out that the idea of the so-called "package deal" whereby the United States would vote to admit the Soviet-supported applicants including Outer Mongolia, while the USSR would vote for those supported by the U.S. was, in fact, first proposed by the United States in 1946, but opposed by the Soviet Union at that time. The idea was revived under the leadership of Canada this summer, sponsored by 25 nations, and supported by the Soviet Union, at which point, says Mr.

Lippman, "Mr. Dulles and Mr. Lodge gagged at Outer Mongolia." He continued:

Once the Soviet Union accepted the package which included Spain and Japan, it was sheer folly for the United States to make a fuss about Outer Mongolia. If we were really serious about swallowing that gnat, it would mean that we would get all the blame not only from the eighteen applicants who would be excluded but from almost all the other sixty members who favor the package deal.

The proof that we have been outwitted is our present position. . . . We do not dare to have the package deal fail because of the worldwide opprobrium which will come upon us if it does. As we do not wish to vote for Outer Mongolia openly, we are driven to the humiliating business of working behind the scenes to persuade other nations that, despite our own abstention, they should vote for Outer Mongolia, and put the deal through. For men who are continually proclaiming their devotion to moral principles, this is a truly dismal performance.

What irony that the main threat to the enlargement of the World Family desired by the overwhelming majority of its members, came from one who has least claim of all to membership—the Man from Formosa whose presence deprives the 600,000,000 people of the Chinese People's Republic of their rightful seat at the family council table!

When the Security Council, meeting in unusual Saturday sessions on December 10, considered the pending applications, Dr. Tsiang (Formosa) expressed his opposition to the admission of any and all "communist" states, especially against the admission of the Mongolian People's Republic. Although Kuomintang China was the second country to of-

ficially recognize Outer Mongolia as an independent state, Dr. Tsiang now says it is not an independent state. He then submitted a proposal for procedure to the vote by which clever parliamentarians, if they could marshal enough support, could eventually maneuver to prevent the final confirmation by the Assembly (which requires a two-thirds vote) after the Security Council had voted acceptance.

Mr. Sobolev, for the Soviet Union, well aware of this possibility, submitted a procedure which would have the Security Council vote on acceptance of the new members one by one, *in the order in which their applications were received*—Albania, Mongolia, Jordan, Ireland, etc.—then to have the Security Council's vote confirmed by the General Assembly before proceeding with the vote on the next nation on the list.

However, he later withdrew this proposal in deference to the majority opinion of the Council, which preferred a procedure whereby the Council would first vote on all 18, and then submit its recommendations together to the General Assembly.

When it looked as though only Dr. Tsiang's veto of the Mongolian People's Republic would prevent the adoption of the draft resolution on admission of new members, Dr. Tsiang suddenly demanded that South Korea and Viet Nam be added to the list of new members to be voted on, although these countries had not been covered in the resolution. The Soviet representative protested these arbitrary additions to the list, and vetoed them. Dr. Tsiang then vetoed Outer Mongolia. Since this was contrary to the recommendation to admit all eighteen, the

USSR then vetoed the rest of the list, and the draft resolution failed of adoption.

This caused immense disappointment. While the State Department issued a blast against the Soviet Union for its vetoes, it was generally recognized that it was Nationalist China's action that caused the failure of the agreed arrangement. Almost immediately intense behind-the-scenes activity was begun to find some way out of the impasse. V. K. Krishna Menon, head of the Indian delegation, who made such a splendid contribution to bringing about the return of the American prisoners of war from China early this year, insistently pressed negotiations to help resolve this all-important new members problem.

The following day, December 14, Mr. Sobolev, in one of the most fabulous diplomatic moves in the history of the United Nations, requested a special meeting of the Security Council immediately. He said in the Council:

The Soviet Union is prepared, together with other members of the UN, to seek a new way out of the situation which has been created. Desiring to facilitate a solution of the long drawn out question of new members, the Soviet Union withdraws its negative vote with respect to a number of states and will vote for their admission, but not for that of Japan, on the understanding and in the expectation that the question of Japan and the Mongolian People's Republic, for which no positive solution was provided yesterday . . . will be referred to the next session of the General Assembly.

Mr. Sobolev then proposed the list as recommended by the Ad Hoc Committee and the General Assembly, ex-

cluding Mongolia and Japan, making 16 instead of the original 18 countries. This list was successfully adopted by the Security Council, and was promptly confirmed by a special evening session of the General Assembly. The adoption of the resolution admitting the 16 new members was spontaneously applauded in the galleries both in the Security Council and in the General Assembly. The World Family has now been successfully delivered, and has been increased from 60 to a grand total of 76 members.

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The United Nations, like most large families, has special little cliques within itself. These cliques, in order to get their way on points at issue, use parliamentary, diplomatic, procedural techniques, as well as personal, political and especially economic pressure to further their aims. They intrigue, gang up, take sides, threaten; they call their opponents names and try to ridicule them, so that sometimes, as a result of all this, United Nations sessions are not so dignified as the people of the world have the right to expect them to be.

During this current annual gathering of the World Family, this Tenth Session of the General Assembly, there has been some very seriously obstreperous behavior by some of the member states. France, old enough to know better, walked out of the family gathering because the Assembly voted to discuss two of the several continuing dangerous situations in her Overseas Territories, the questions of Algeria and Morocco. And France did not return to the fold until these items were removed from the Assembly agenda.

South Africa continues to defy the

Family rules and discipline. Ignoring the universally acknowledged fact that South West Africa is mandated to the United Nations, she boldly and illegally proceeds to annex this mandated territory and administers it as her own. South Africa also walked out of the family gathering when the Assembly began discussion of the menacing and disgraceful racial situation in the Union of South Africa.

The World Family, over-anxious to placate certain member states who seem to be its favorite sons, even when they are very dangerously in the wrong, over-extends or ignores some of the basic meaning of the Family Rules, the United Nations Charter. This tendency, especially toward some very questionable behavior of the colonial powers, is increasing, so that it is now possible for France not only to continue a dangerous situation within what she insists are her own borders, but the Family further permits France to develop an even more dangerous situation in the UN Trust Territory of the Camerouns (French) on the West Coast of Africa. Although hundreds of petitions from the Camerouns have flooded the UN, France so far has made no report, no comments, upon the apparently very alarming situation there, and has merely said in answer to pressing questions, that the petitions come from "communist organizations." Well, the Camerouns is a UN Trust Territory, and all the inhabitants are under the supervision of the Trusteeship Council. Whether the inhabitants are Communists, Democrats, Republicans, Socialists, Nationalists or whatever—they are nevertheless wards of the Council, and the administering authority is

directly responsible to the Council for their lives, property, welfare and eventual freedom and independence.

On the very important question of disarmament, the Assembly did not make as much progress as some of its members would have liked. By a vote of 56 to 7, it approved a joint draft resolution submitted by Canada, France, the United Kingdom and the United States. The resolution urged that the states concerned, and especially those on the Disarmament Sub-Committee continue to seek agreement on a comprehensive disarmament plan, giving priority to President Eisenhower's Plan for mutual aerial inspection and exchanging military blueprints, and linking with this Soviet Premier Bulganin's plan for establishing control posts at strategic centers.

In voting against this resolution, the Soviet delegate Mr. V. V. Kuznetsov, made clear that it was not a matter of opposition to President Eisenhower's plan per se, but the fact that the resolution contained no concrete steps toward actual disarmament, and thus left matters where they were.

The Soviet draft resolution had recommended consideration of all proposals for the ending of the armaments race, including its own proposals of May 10 and July 21 this year "on the reduction of armaments, the prohibition of atomic weapons and the removal of the threat of a new war." This plan included acceptance of previous proposals made by the Western nations on reduction of levels of armaments, but not now included in the Western program. It also included concrete proposals for inspection and control. The Soviet draft resolution further

specifically recommended consideration of President Eisenhower's plan.

Failing to reach agreement on this resolution, the Soviet Union withdrew it, seeking instead to add amendments to the resolution finally passed which would have included recommendations for concrete disarmament measures. These amendments were defeated.

The fact that the resolution as passed calls for a resumption of disarmament talks by the five atomic powers—Britain, Canada, France, the Soviet Union and the United States, leaves the door open for continued negotiations during the coming year in which it is to be hoped real progress toward disarmament may be achieved.

Previously the Assembly had adopted without any opposing votes, a resolution to establish an International Commission on the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy. This Commission will hold its first meeting in Washington, on January 23, to set up the framework of the agency and its relations with the United Nations. The 60 UN members also voted unanimously for a U.S. resolution calling for collection and distribution of information by UN members on radiation effects on human beings and their environment.

The World Family is considering another very important matter during this final week of the Assembly. A seat in the all-powerful 11-member Security Council must be filled before the Assembly closes. Member states are in a deadlock over whether the Philippines or Yugoslavia shall occupy this seat. This particular seat is traditionally assigned to the area of Eastern Europe. The original Eastern European choice was Po-

land, but there was a switch to Yugoslavia as a compromise in the hope of getting agreement. In the 29th ballot taken on December 6th in the General Assembly, 25 member states continued to vote for Yugoslavia, the Eastern European candidate, while 29 member states continued to vote for the Philippines, which is a long long way from Eastern Europe. Neither candidate achieved the required majority of 39 votes.

The United States is vigorously supporting the candidacy of the Philippines for the seat, and when challenged by newsmen, Mr. Lodge explained that the United States feels that the Bandung Nations and the millions of people of Asia and Africa should be represented on the Security Council. He did not explain just what this has to do with Eastern Europe's seat.

Addenda: As we go to press, the deadlock was finally solved. Although Yugoslavia had gained strength in the course of 35 ballots, continued maneuvering had prevented its election. In a questionable procedure of drawing lots to decide the issue between Yugoslavia and the Philippines, the latter lost. In the final Assembly session, Yugoslavia was elected under a "gentlemen's agreement" whereby Yugoslavia will resign after one year, and the Philippines will then be elected for the rest of the two-year term. This compromise aroused no enthusiasm.

The main achievement of the Tenth Assembly remains the enlarging of the World Family by sixteen new members. It is to be hoped that the remaining serious gaps in the family membership, especially the absence of the Chinese People's Republic, will be rectified next session.

Behind the Israeli-Arab Conflict

by KUMAR GOSHAL

WHEN THE NEWS broke last September that Czechoslovakia had sold some arms to Egypt, there were anguished cries and bitter denunciation of Moscow and the socialist world from Washington and London, and strong protest from Tel Aviv.

The Soviet Union was accused of deliberately precipitating an arms race in the Middle East that would inevitably lead to an Israeli-Arab war. Protests went to Prague and Moscow demanding "clarification of [their] Middle Eastern policy." Washington and London warned Moscow that arms sale to Egypt would violate the Geneva spirit and "inevitably increase tension in the area." Immediately afterward, Washington offered to sell arms to Egypt on credit if Cairo would stop buying them from the socialist countries.

Prague gave the same reply it had given nearly seven years ago when it received protests against its sale

of arms to Israel: the transaction concerned no one else but the two nations involved. Moscow replied that Egypt had a right to buy arms anywhere. No one was tactless enough to mention that the U.S., Britain and France have been selling arms to Israel and the Arab countries for quite some time; or that, if arms sales alone would provoke a war, Washington's lavish gift of arms to the anti-Israel government of Iraq would long ago have precipitated an Israeli-Iraqi conflict.

The *New York Post* pointed out ironically that the State Department, after accusing the Russians of menacing the Geneva spirit by arms sale, itself affirmed "the Geneva spirit by insisting that the Arabs accept arms from us rather than from the Russians!"

Irony aside, it is vitally important to understand what lay behind the protests and the hysterical reactions of the Western governments, who were joined by many liberals and progressives understandably worried over the security of the valiant people of Israel.

It needs to be emphasized first that the arms sale was part of a much larger package indicating, as Don Cook noted in the *New York*

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Herald Tribune (Dec. 6), an "increasing long-term orientation of Egyptian trade and economy in the direction of the Soviet bloc." A Czech trade mission in Cairo is now putting the finishing touches to a broad commercial agreement between the two countries. Egypt has already negotiated trade agreements with the USSR, Poland, Hungary and Rumania; before the year's end it will open a trade bureau in Peking. Cairo sold 30 per cent of its only large export commodity—cotton—to the socialist countries in 1955, got in return steel from China and will be getting 83 Diesel locomotives from Hungary.

What gave Secretary Dulles "a conniption fit" and panicked Washington and London is the fact that Moscow now had a diplomatic and economic base in the Middle East, and must be consulted for any genuine solution of the region's problems.

The Western imperialist powers have long considered the Middle East their special preserve, to be exploited solely for the benefit of their own investors. Originally a British and French stronghold, the U.S. pushed in after World War II, and has since been the dominant power there. To maintain their control over the region, they have used the time-worn imperialist method of promoting, keeping alive, division and friction—the Israeli-Arab conflict is one example—and themselves posing as arbiters of disputes among the various countries. The tripartite (Britain, France, the U.S.) Declaration of 1950 baldly stated their right to ration arms to the Middle Eastern countries and to maintain "peace and stability in the area."

Imperialist interests in the Mid-

le East today are two-fold: the region's vast oil resources; and its strategic location "for attacks on the 'soft underbelly' of Greater Russia and the Soviet Union" (*The Nation*, Nov. 19). After World War II, however, strong resistance developed against the West's economic and strategic exploitation of the Middle East. Iran, for example, nationalized its oil wells; Egypt embarked on throwing the British out of the Suez Canal zone; and the newly established state of Israel seemed to be developing an independent foreign policy.

As the dominant power, Washington moved fast. Iran's premier Mossadegh was overthrown, and Western control of Iranian oil was restored. Israel was persuaded into the Western orbit. Feudal regimes were bribed and supplied with arms to crush popular organizations demanding democratic rights for the incredibly exploited people of the Arab world. But Egypt's reluctance to let the Americans step into the shoes of the departing British and the Arab world's refusal to join any group that included Israel, frustrated Washington's efforts to organize the Middle East into an anti-Soviet bloc.

Washington, therefore, proceeded one step at a time, took advantage of the rivalries among the Arab rulers, gradually managed to link Turkey, Iraq, Pakistan and Iran into METO (Middle East Treaty Organization—also often referred to as the "Baghdad" or "Northern Tier" alliance), hoping to pressure the rest into joining later. Moscow, of course, observed pact-happy Washington painstakingly encircling the Soviet Union through NATO, the Balkan alliance, SEATO, and then METO.

When Iran—next door to the USSR—fell in line, as Nehru told columnist Marquis Childs (Dec. 2), it naturally invited “retaliatory action” by Moscow, which had been protesting against every step of the forging of the link.

Egypt, meanwhile, had observed at the Bandung Conference that neutralists had strong allies in such countries as India, Burma and Indonesia. And when Washington tightened the screws by refusing to sell Egypt arms on credit last June, Cairo was ready to accept trade agreements offered by the socialist countries for some time.

In a hard-headed analysis of the Middle Eastern situation, columnist Walter Lippmann (Nov. 3) told Washington that its obsession with military pacts against the Soviet Union was futile because Moscow “moves forward not by marching its army but by carefully conceived political and economic and ideological campaigns.” He explained that “when countries like Iran are included in these pacts, the effect is to provoke . . . Soviet reprisal.”

Lippmann discounted the possibility of an Egyptian-Israeli war as a result of the Czechoslovakian sale of arms to Cairo. He found “no reason to think that the Soviet Union wants such a war or could afford to let [it] happen”; and felt that, since such a war would necessarily involve all the major powers, “the great majority of the United Nations simply could not stand by and let Egypt and its allies . . . crush Israel.”

What surprised Washington, Lippmann said, was

. . . not so much the purchase of arms as the sudden appearance of

the Soviet Union as a great power in the Middle East. [Moscow] has jumped right over [METO] and has landed behind it [and acquired] a diplomatic base in Egypt. The political effect of the arms shipment is to buy the influence of the Egyptian army, which controls the Egyptian government. . . .

The underdeveloped countries, among which Egypt is a key country, are determined to develop themselves. [The Soviet Union] is ready to take the agricultural surpluses of these primitive economies in payment on easy terms for industrial equipment. . . .

Whether we like it or not . . . the Soviet Union will now be present and participating on equal terms in the diplomacy of the Middle East.

The basic problem in the Middle East is the problem faced by millions of ordinary Asians who wish to rise above their primitive economy and low standard of living, free themselves from their corrupt feudal rulers and their resources and their lands from foreign imperialist control. Israel-Arab conflicts have to be seen and discussed in this frame of reference.

Soon after its birth Israel presented an example of social betterment to the people of the Middle East and a threat to the feudal and imperialist interests in the region. But, ironically enough, as organized popular pressure forced even the feudal Arab rulers to pay at least lip service to their people's interests, the Israeli government increasingly identified itself with the imperialist powers.

In the United Nations in the past couple of years, for example, Israel's voting record on colonial issues has been lamentably poor in comparison with the record of the Asian-African bloc. One may rightly question the sincerity of many of the Asian-

African bloc members' voting record; one may be certain that a different casting of votes would not necessarily have changed the Arab rulers' hostile attitude toward Israel; but one may be equally certain that a more sympathetic voting record would have made some favorable impression on the ordinary Arab people and gained greater support for Israel on the part of other Asian governments.

As it is, Western imperialist powers, and especially the U.S., find it to their interest to keep the Israeli-Arab conflict going, so that they can maintain the upper hand by posing as arbiters and keepers of the peace and divert the attention of the people from the basic issues of political and economic emancipation. Secretary Dulles tipped his hand when on Aug. 26 last he offered U.S. guarantee of Israel's borders only after the border has been fixed by Israel-Arab agreement. As Tel Aviv's Ambassador Eban was obliged to admit, the pre-condition was "a built-in deadlock with somber potentialities of anti-climax and disillusionment."

Tension in the Middle East can be relaxed only by consultation

among the major powers—including the Soviet Union—and negotiation among the Middle Eastern countries without pre-conditions. The Israeli government can enhance its bargaining position by dissociating itself from Washington's foreign policy; India and Burma have enhanced their position by refusing to join any camp but "the camp of peace and good will," as Nehru said.

Conflicts may still arise, and there is talk in Washington of giving Egypt's Nasser the Mossadegh-Arbenz treatment or of toppling him from power by cutting his economic base through dumping of U.S. surplus cotton. But the trend is in the direction of East-West economic rather than military competition; the *Christian Science Monitor* reported (Nov. 22) that "the Soviets are definitely stepping up their economic and technical assistance program in the Middle East and South Asia." In a world where the majority of the people are becoming increasingly determined no longer to suffer from poverty in the midst of potential plenty, the economic program is bound to be decisive in the long run.

OPPOSITION IN JORDAN TO BAGHDAD PACT

THE *New York Times* of December 19 carried reports from Jordan of big student demonstrations against the proposals that Jordan join the "anti-communist Baghdad Pact for Middle Eastern Defense." Troops and police went into action, and several civilians were killed and injured. Delegations from several of Jordan's main towns called on King Hussein to protest the idea of joining the pact.

The following day it was announced that the pro-Western Premier Hazzah Mahali of Jordan announced his resignation as a result of these demonstrations, announcing "he would let the people decide in a parliamentary election whether Jordan should join the Baghdad Pact." Mr. Mahali took office only a week ago with the expectation of bringing Jordan into the pact, replacing Premier Said el Mufti who had resigned when the dispute over the pact arose.

Further demonstrations were held in front of U.S., British and French consulates.



Above: Fitting a new snow suit in the children's department store in Prague. Below: Students leave bus to attend annual ball at Smetana Hall, where the legislature meets in Prague.



In Czechoslovakia

Just a glimpse of what the people of Czechoslovakia mean when they say that living standards are improving (see the article by Eleanor Wheeler on page 13). There are a number of photos of many, picked to show different aspects of their day-to-day living.

Right: Playground for new apartment houses, seen in background, for textile workers at Bratislava.



A collective farmer of Brno region Moravia shows his brand new Skoda car to his wife and children.

Workers relax in the main hall of a new apartment house, formerly a lovely spa.



ia today

people Czechoslovakia say it living the article by The are a few show different living

ment es, seen ters Bratislava.



region Moravia, shows his wife and children.

in loss of a rest home in one of only available only to the wealthy.



These Prague shoppers are examining a new line of couches and daybeds designed for small apartments.

This miner of Ostrava region is showing his son their new electric refrigerator.



The Soviet Housing Delegation

by HELEN ALFRED

TEN public housing officials of the Soviet Union stepped from a plane at the Washington airport on October 28 last. This was the final stop of their organized tour of the United States that had started at Washington something over three weeks earlier. The tour had covered nearly ten thousand miles and included brief but intensive working visits to thirteen cities of the East, Middle West, Pacific Coast and Deep South. This group of practicing socialists had travelled to our country at the invitation of the National Association of Home Builders, a rock-ribbed capitalist organization. Arrangements in each city were made for the party through local branches of the NAHB—realtors, builders, architects, representatives of savings and loans associations and insurance companies—all, no doubt, sturdy defenders of the private profit

HELEN ALFRED, one of the early workers for Public Housing in this country, was a founder of the National Public Housing Conference and its director for twelve years. During 1955 Miss Alfred studied the public housing question abroad during an extensive tour of Western Europe.

system. The Geneva spirit of peaceful coexistence runs swift, and through unforeseen channels.

Mr. I. K. Kozuilia, as Minister of City and Urban Construction of the USSR, headed the delegation. Mr. A. V. Vlasov, President of the Soviet Academy of Architecture and Construction, was another distinguished member of the group. Others were the chiefs of housing and public construction boards of the cities of Leningrad, Moscow and Kiev and of the Province of Moscow; the chiefs of the divisions of sanitary technical construction, Council of Ministers of the USSR, and of construction machinery, Ministry of Foreign Trade; Deputy Minister of City and Urban Construction for the Republic of Russia; also the senior scientific researcher of the BODGEO Construction Institute.

I had the opportunity of meeting the members of the delegation in Washington. They were a sturdy, intelligent looking group of men and seemed deeply interested in their special field of activity, one of the most important areas of public service in their own or any other country—the provision of healthful homes for all the people.

It was perhaps to be expected that the accent throughout the tour would be placed by the NAHB on private home building and ownership. The visitors were enabled to analyze the policies, and the methods and materials used in the construction of both large-scale multiple dwelling projects and detached, single-family houses, as developed in American cities through private enterprise. Their itinerary also made it possible for them to study techniques and resources relating to home building in regions of the United States that vary sharply as to climatic conditions, industries, architectural style and social habits.

Asked by one representative of the press to compare the utilization of materials in the USSR and the USA, Mr. Kozuilia replied, "It has not been our task to make comparisons but rather to choose from American experience what seems to be the best. We have met many specialists and have discussed with them our common problems."

But when the Minister was requested by another reporter to give his opinion of public housing in this country, he said with apparent regret, that their delegation had been given little opportunity to visit public housing developments—in Chicago, for example, only one such scheme. And it is known that the New York Housing Authority staff, in advance of the group's visit to New York, mapped out a comprehensive tour of low rent housing and slum clearance projects in that city. But the tour as proposed was scrapped, assumedly by the delegation's host organization, and visits to privately-owned developments substituted.

This seems most unfortunate for

several reasons. In the first place, the great bulk of all housing in cities and urban areas in the Soviet Union is publicly owned, built, administered, and for rent. Since this system is their direct concern, it is reasonable to suppose the visiting officials would have been particularly interested to observe at least a fair sampling of the government-aided schemes completed and under construction in the various cities on their route. Moreover, an exchange of ideas and experiences between representatives of the local housing authorities and the visiting officials might well have proven to be mutually valuable. Finally, the federal-local housing program of the United States, as thus far developed, is one of which the American people can justly be proud.

Qualitatively, in terms of plan, design, lay-out, and the services and amenities provided, public housing in this country compares favorably with that of the USSR and other countries of both Eastern and Western Europe. But quantitatively, and in proportion to population and national wealth, the government-aided programs of Europe—even that of tiny Denmark—put us to shame. With half of all American families unable to afford to rent homes of modern standards, built commercially, our public housing program is lagging seriously. And yet the countries of Europe, despite the heavy burdens of enormous armament budgets, have been able throughout the postwar period substantially to expand their low-rent housing construction each year. The present cut-back of our program is a temporary political aberration, and it seems certain the voting majority will correct the situation ultimately because

of the pressure of the need. All the more reason, it would seem, why the Soviet housing officials should have seen what we have thus far achieved.

Now, then, what of housing in the USSR? A complete picture of the policies under which they operate and of the progress of their national program was not drawn by the delegation while here. But the various members were asked a great many questions during their visit. And from their replies, more or less piecemeal, their area of activity was quite well described. Mr. Kozuilia was generally the spokesman for the group. At the close of their tour he stated that when the war ended, the Soviet Union was faced with the multitudinous task of providing shelter for 25 million homeless persons, that 1700 cities and 170,000 inhabited areas had been destroyed. The postwar movement of the population to the cities—common to nearly every European country—made the situation more critical and intensified the problem of reconstruction.

A broad attack on all sectors of the problem is being waged, Mr. Kozuilia said further, with special emphasis by necessity being placed on the construction of dwellings in the cities and of workers' settlements. In each of the Five-Year Plans, by means of which the national economy is directed in the USSR, housing has occupied an important place. Under the present Plan, greater attention is being given to the modernization and streamlining of construction methods and materials. There is an expanded use of cement and steel and of prefabricated units. As a result, the Minister indicates there has been a 190 per cent increase in house building above

the goal set in the Plan. The UN Economic Commission for Europe, in a recent bulletin, reported that during the year 1954 a total of 1,270,000 family dwelling units were built in the Soviet Union—800,000 in urban areas and 470,000 in rural villages and on the farms.

Mr. Kozuilia has given further details of this great program. All land, and all but 6 per cent of the housing in cities and industrial localities is owned by the state. A low level of rents is maintained in all urban housing. For new dwellings rents represent between 4 and 6 per cent of the average worker's earnings, there being a slight increase in some cases, in accordance with the quality of accommodations and the incomes of tenants.

Private ownership in urban areas, though negligible, is permitted. An individual may lease a piece of land through the local authority and build a house for his family. If he does not have sufficient savings, and provided his credit is good, he may receive a state loan of approximately \$2500 for a period of 10 years, at an interest rate of 2 per cent. Most of the rural population lives in privately owned, single-family homes, built largely through local initiative.

House building in the cities and in workers' settlements (developed in connection with industrial plants) proceeds as an integral part of a townplanning unit, that may include a variety of ancillary buildings to serve the educational, cultural and recreational needs of tenants. Large blocks of apartments of several stories are the prevailing type of structure. Apartments are equipped with baths and kitchens, and central laundries are standard equipment. Rents include some utilities.

Mr. Kozuilia was asked while in Washington, "What do you consider to be the international significance and value of the housing delegation's tour?" He replied: "We are extremely well pleased with our trip, and with the very warm welcome extended to us everywhere. An invitation has been conveyed by the Committee on Construction of the Council of Ministers of the Soviet Union to the National Association of Home Builders for a group of American housing experts to make a visit to the Soviet Union similar to ours to the United States. We came in the spirit of Geneva. If our invitation is accepted there will be no obstacles in the delegation's way, also in the spirit of Geneva."

It is understood that such a tour is under consideration by the NAHB, and would it not be interesting and useful if the group were to include a number of federal, state and local housing officials from the U.S.A.?

Note: On the eve of the Soviet Housing Delegation's departure for home, it was erroneously published in the U.S. press that Alexander Vlasov had been dismissed as chief architect of Moscow and President of the Soviet Academy of Architecture and stripped of his medals. The fact was that he had resigned as chief architect some time before, when he had become President of the Academy, which has since been reorganized into the Academy of Architecture and Construction, and which Mr. Vlasov still heads. The decree on which the false reports were based had criticized Mr. Vlasov along with a number of other architects for what it called extravagance in planning and building and over-attention to decorative effects. A summary of this decree, and of discussions at the recently concluded All-Union Congress of Soviet Architects, in which Mr. Vlasov took an active part, will be published in our next issue.

SOME FIGURES ON SOVIET DEVELOPMENT

In 1955 the total output of all Soviet industry was 27 times greater than in 1913, output of means of production has increased 60 times, output of consumer goods 11 times, production of electric power 86 times and output of the engineering industry more than 160 times.

Consumer goods output this year is 72 per cent higher than in 1950. Sales of consumer goods in 1955 have increased over last year as follows: silk fabrics 10 per cent, clothing 18 per cent, knit goods 13 per cent, radios 22 per cent, television sets, watches and cameras close to 50 per cent, furniture and sewing machines 17 per cent, washing machines 400 per cent, refrigerators 29 per cent, passenger cars 30 per cent.

There are 35,000,000 pupils in elementary, 7-year and secondary schools; and 1,700,000 students in 798 institutions of higher learning. Over 5,500,000 specialists with higher or special secondary education are employed in the national economy of the USSR.

East German Theater Through British Eyes

A delegation of British Actors' Equity Association recently spent two weeks in the German Democratic Republic studying the theater there. The group consisted of Madeleine Christie, a Scottish Theater and Radio actress; Charles Farrell, experienced character actor in theater, films and television and Honorary Treasurer of Equity and a member of the Council since its early days; John Fernald, distinguished producer and Principal of the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art; Ralph Truman, experienced film and television actor and a member of Equity Council; and Hugh Jenkins, Assistant Secretary of British Actors' Equity Association.

Upon their return to England they presented a report to Equity Council. We believe their findings will be of interest to our readers and present it, slightly condensed because of our space limitations.

WHEREVER we went in Eastern Germany we were received with flowers. Our food ranged from champagne and caviar with the Mayor of Dresden to a simple meal in a wayside restaurant. We enjoyed them both.

First Week—Sunday — Reception at the Hotel Johannishof in East Berlin by Dr. Allmeroth, President of the German Trade Union of Art, and his colleagues. Visit to the Deutsches Theater to see Schiller's *Kabale and Liebe* (Intrigue and Love). The delegation considered this to be a most expert performance in the rather heavy traditional German manner.

Monday—We made a sight-seeing tour of the Stalinallee. It is a fine wide street and the goods in the shops were plentiful. Quality was sometimes poor and prices ranged from the reasonable in the case of

necessities, to the very expensive in the case of luxuries.

In the afternoon we enjoyed a meal in the artists' club. These clubs exist in all the larger towns; they are open without subscription to all members of the trade union, being financed in part by the trade union, part by the State and city.

In the evening we saw an enchanting performance by the Brecht Berliner Ensemble of Farquhar's *Recruiting Officer*, here entitled *Pauken and Trumpeten* (Drums and Trumpets). This was perhaps the most creative production we saw, full of light and gaiety.

After the production we were entertained at a most enjoyable supper in the theater. The delegates were able to exchange views with Bert Brecht and his collaborators. We also met a writer of radio plays who claimed to be more free to write

as he wished in Eastern Germany than in the more commercial atmosphere of Western Germany, which he had recently left.

Tuesday and Wednesday—The journey to Dresden by coach, where we arrived in time to see the last act of *Don Giovanni*. At the Opera House the following evening we saw *Der Freischutz*. Both were excellent productions generally—not quite, we thought, up to Covent Garden or Glyndebourne standards, with weaknesses in the leading roles. The shortage of first class sopranos and tenors is clearly international. It must be remembered that these performances are given most of the year in each of the large provincial towns by a standing company, with guest artists, sometimes from Western Germany. They are not the type of performances to be seen at the State Opera House in Berlin, which far outstrips anything to be seen in our country.

Thursday, Friday and Saturday—To Weimar: Here we were received at the artists' club, much of which had been built and decorated by the members themselves. It was quite delightful and included a nursery, where the younger children of actors are cared for at a small fee while their parents are professionally engaged.

On Friday evening we saw Tchaikovsky's *Die Zauberin*, an opera of similar performance caliber to those at Dresden. We were provided with front seats at all theaters and in each town were accommodated at good hotels. We visited the Goethe and Schiller Houses and the concentration camp at "Buchenwald." It was shattering to find that this ghastly place existed outside the suburbs of Weimar and to see at such close

proximity the best and the worst in German history.

It was at Weimar that we received perhaps the most profound emotional experiences of the whole tour. We were told that at 10:30 in the morning we would have the opportunity of hearing a special performance by a trade union group of dancers and singers. We understood that this group originally consisted of amateurs but had had such success that they had been formed into a full time professional company, visiting factories and other places. We were little prepared for a performance with a choir of seventy or more, and an orchestra of about fifty and of such beauty and perfection as to take our breath away.

On Saturday evening we saw, at the National Theater in Weimar a German production of a modern Russian ballet *Die Flamme von Paris*. We were not impressed with this production.

It may be mentioned here that the annual State help given to the arts in *any one* of the towns we visited exceeds considerably the entire annual Treasury grant to the Arts Council of Great Britain.

Second Week—Sunday—We travelled to Leipzig where in the evening we saw a very good production of Verdi's *Otello* at the Opera House and had supper with the artists.

Monday—Dr. Arpe, General Manager of the Leipzig Theaters, took us to see a very extraordinary enterprise, unusual even in this theatrically minded country. We were taken to a very large building where more than 100 people are employed solely in making scenery for the theaters of Leipzig and district. The raw material, wood and iron and cloth, comes into this building and there

emerges the complete scenery for a large number of productions. All designing, manufacturing of wardrobes, the laundering and dyeing of artists' costumes is carried out in this building. It may be mentioned that many of the employees in this building were skilled craftsmen and relationships between workers and management appeared to be on a pleasant and easy basis.

In Leipzig itself there are five theaters. In the week beginning September 18th, *Otello*, *Rigoletto*, *Carmen*, *Die Entführung Aus Dem Serail* and four other operas were to be seen at the Opera House, seven operettas (Strauss, Lehar and others) at the Operetten Theater; seven plays, including *Volpone*, *The Three Sisters* and Schillers' *Die Jungfrau von Orleans* at the Schauspielhaus; seven plays including *Lady Windermere's Fan*, Capek's *The Mother*, *Pygmalion* and Jean-Paul Sartre's *The Respectable Prostitute* were at the Kammerspiele, and three plays at the Children's Theater. There appeared to be little or no contemporary comedy.

Every morning transport goes out delivering the scenery to the theaters and taking away that which is no longer in use. Most of the theaters have fair storage space of their own so that it is not necessary to deliver and remove productions daily from each theater.

Later in the day we had tea with a group of university teachers, scientists and artists. This was one of the points which occurred daily throughout the tour where we were able to acquire information. Here, for example, we heard of a method by which a committee, similar to that which examines students, was given powers after the war to test

5,000 potential actors returning from the forces and to recommend for training to other work those who did not pass the test.

In the evening we saw a first-class production of *The Three Sisters* in the Schauspielhaus and afterwards met the actors over supper.

Tuesday — Madeleine Christie, Ralph Truman and Hugh Jenkins left for the Bitterfeld Palace of Culture, where we had lunch. This is a very large building, again rather box-like externally, but well appointed internally, in the center of the largest electro-chemical works in the German Democratic Republic. Many of the workers lunch in this building. The building contains, of course, a very fine theater, a cinema, lecture halls and children's rooms and amateur and professional theatrical performances take place nightly.

After lunch we went to Wittenberg where we met the General Manager and members of a touring organization which employs a staff of 500, including 100 actors. This organization performs in Wittenberg and serves the entire surrounding country. Each night four companies go out to theaters situated in villages. The organization spends about £165,000 a year, roughly half of which comes from the State and the other half from the box-office. The actors and staff live in Wittenberg and everyone, including the director plays an active part in the production. There is no heavy administrative machine.

From here we went to the Machine Tractor Station at the small village of Sollichau where we saw a performance by one of the touring companies, of Von Lessing's *Emilia Gallotti*. The audiences come from the

surrounding villages and there was a full house in a small but adequate theater.

A standard fare of half the actual cost is charged to the members of the audience for bringing them to and from the theater.

The performance itself was disappointing and on this occasion, for the first and only time in the tour, we felt that the result did not justify the fine organization and considerable expense involved. It must be said, however, that the German members of the party who came with us on this occasion were clearly disappointed in the production, which they felt was not up to standard.

Wednesday—In the evening Madeleine Christie and Hugh Jenkins saw a wonderful performance of *Die Meistersinger* at the Opera House. This was really staggering in its conception. In the finale more than 200 people were on the stage and the internal beauty and spaciousness of the newly re-opened Opera House itself was quite magnificent.

Thursday—On this morning three delegates attended the quarterly meeting of the Council of the Gewerkschaft Kunst. The Assistant Secretary made a speech of thanks and appreciation which was enthusiastically received and at their request, told members of the Council something of the work of our own organization. The delegates afterwards answered questions. In the evening Madeleine Christie and Hugh Jenkins saw a most memorable performance of Brecht's *Mother Courage*.

Friday—Madeleine Christie visited the Berlin radio station and Hugh Jenkins the offices of the Gewerkschaft Kunst. Miss Christie reports most favorably upon the technical

equipment of the immense radio building. The drama studios are built in suites with inter-communicating doors. The producer's glass walled room is in the center. Miss Christie adds, "there is a vast canteen where all the staff and artists can eat and drink; the usual 'polyclinic' including dental treatment; an amazing rest room for the artists with a special 'echo' laid on to rest the ears of broadcasters who may have been working in sound proof studios for an hour or two; lending library, book shop, games room—the lot!" It should be added that the provision for the comfort and wellbeing of artists in theaters is also on a scale quite unknown to us.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Income

In addition to their theater salaries which they receive throughout the year, whether working or not and during four weeks' holiday, many actors derive considerable remuneration from film and radio work.

The vast majority of actors are attached to one or other of the theatrical companies. Contracts vary from one year to five years and there is at present a great shortage of trained actors.

Income Tax and Social Services

Artists pay 14 per cent tax on 65 per cent of their salary, less allowances. They also pay 10 per cent security tax and about 2 per cent trade union subscription. They receive a free health service, a pension calculated at 60 per cent of their last salary, payable at 65 in case of men and 60 in the case of women. If still able and willing to work,

they receive the full pension in addition to their salaries. They also receive other substantial services such as cheap holidays, four weeks on full salary if ill, six weeks at 70 per cent of the full salary and thereafter 50 per cent. The employing theater also pays 10 per cent social security contribution in respect of each employee.

The economic standing of the actor in Eastern Germany in relation to that of other members of the same society is very much higher than that of his British colleague.

Employment

All actors in Eastern Germany are fully employed. The majority are permanently engaged by theatrical producing companies. They are released from time to time to play in films, radio and television and they receive these fees in addition to their theater salaries. Actors employed by one company are also occasionally released to play with other companies, and in this case they receive an addition of up to double their standard salary.

Actors perform, normally, four or five times a week. They rehearse in the mornings and may take voluntary classes in elocution and fencing in the afternoons. Attendance at these classes is expected of younger actors.

Rehearsals and Method

Rehearsals often last for three months or more before a play is presented in public. Every company has a repertoire of half a dozen or so plays and anything from 50 to 100 actors play in them. Popular plays remain in the repertoire for years and the parts are often played by different actors. A new play is per-

formed several times in public before the official opening night to which the critics are admitted.

Entry into the Profession

All entry into the profession is through academies which cover the whole range of professional entertainment.

Applicants are examined by a board consisting of leading actors, producers, teachers and third-year students. The proportion of admission to applicants is about 2 per cent. The majority of those admitted qualify for entry into the profession. Those who do not are trained for other work. Applicants must be 18 years old and in possession of a general education of high school standard with the following exceptions: Professional producers are attached to amateur companies and may recommend exceptional amateurs for professional training. If such amateurs are without the required standard of education but are otherwise acceptable they are given a general education as part of their theatrical training.

All theatrical training and other education is provided by the State without charge to individual students. When a student is qualified he is attached to a theatrical company as an apprentice for at least one year. If his promise is unfulfilled he is trained for other work. During apprenticeship his salary is paid by the municipality.

Theater Organization

The land is the property of the State. The theatrical buildings are usually the property of the municipality which appoints a General Manager of all theaters in the area. This is a position of very consider-

able authority. The General Manager is not subject to any central direction. His discretion is extremely wide, as is shown by the productions available in the larger towns. Every theater plans its own repertoire but these are subject to the approval and coordination of the General Manager of Theaters.

In the opinion of those members of the delegation with experience in the matter, there is hardly a single theater in Britain to compare with those we saw in Eastern Germany. Every one has a revolving stage and every sort of technical equipment. Every one has excellent dressing room accommodation, a medical room, a Green Room and an office for the "Equity Deputy." Each theater is planned on the basis that there is roughly as much space behind the proscenium as in front of it. Almost all the theaters have been built since the war, and the larger ones contain expansive foyers and entrances. Externally the architecture is often dull and unenterprising. Inside it is frequently delightful.

Seats may be booked at the box-office in the Western manner at prices roughly equivalent to those payable in British theaters, but 80 per cent of the seats are pre-sold at half price to trade unions and other organizations.

The General Managers of Theaters were men of experience and presence who would command respect in any country and under any regime.

The Trade Union

The Gewerkschaft Kunst is an all-embracing performers and theatrical union covering employment which in Britain is within the juris-

diction of Equity, the Musicians' Union and other unions.

Every four years the theatrical organizations and branches elect delegates to a conference. The conference elects a council of 65 members which meets quarterly. The Council appoints an Executive Committee of eleven members, (six permanent, five honorary) which controls the day to day affairs of the union.

The trade union is much more closely involved with the organization of the State, of the theater and with other trade unions than is the case in Britain.

It handles individual cases and disagreements but it also administers the social services and such matters as safety precautions. Both the collection of contributions and the payment of social benefits are made at the place of employment and the "Equity Deputy," who is a member of the company elected by members as in our case, plays a large part in this. Membership in the union is not compulsory; it averages about 80 per cent.

The trade union does not bargain salary scales; these are laid down by the Government after consultation with the trade union movement as a whole. It does, however, make known the views of the theatrical profession both to the wider trade union movement and to Government departments.

It would not be correct to ascribe the favorable position occupied by actors in Eastern Germany to the efforts of the trade union. This is mainly due to the high priority placed upon all artistic matters by the Government itself, which supports all artistic endeavor to the tune of about 50 per cent of the

whole cost. It should be borne in mind that the tradition of theatrical patronage by authority is historically established on the Continent of Europe and particularly in Germany, but this fact does not deprive the present regime of the credit of taking over and extending this tradition on an astounding scale.

GENERAL COMMENT

The delegation did not go to Eastern Germany with the object of making a political study, but in practice, the delegation found it impossible in discussion to separate the economic position of actors and the general cultural effort from the form of society in which this standing exists and in which the effort is made.

There can be no doubt that the high social and economic position of actors in relation to the general standards of the German Democratic Republic and the startling concentration on theatrical and other artistic endeavor is the result of deliberate Government policy. The delegates feel that, within the very different political framework of our own country, we can learn a good deal from what is being done in Eastern Germany. We also feel that the delegation which will visit us next year, may also learn that within our own society and sometimes under great difficulty, the professional skill of our members can often produce a result well worthy to stand beside the best they have to offer.

We cannot expect anything like the degree of Government support for the arts, which they enjoy but we can fortify our own efforts to secure an increase in that support

in the knowledge that even within the framework of a very rigid, planned economy, the theater in Eastern Germany enjoys, together with financial help and security for the actors, an astonishing degree of artistic freedom. We cannot expect and neither would most of our members want—so violent a limitation to entry to the theater as occurs in Eastern Germany.

The delegates believe that the Council of Equity will regard the visit of the East German delegation next year as being an important event. Certainly nothing could have exceeded the endeavors the Gewerkschaft Kunst made to show us that we were welcome and honored guests.

We did not go to Eastern Germany to discover the flaws and faults in their method of Government. The fact that they are there is freely admitted and we heard much vigorous and open criticism, as well as a few undercover mutterings, from people who told us that you could criticize freely within the context of their form of society but must not question the method of government itself.

We did not wear blinkers while we were in Eastern Germany, but we reached the conclusion that that country is far from being the only place in the world where blinkers are worn. We found much that was good and feel it right to say so. Our job is to report our experiences to the Council of Equity. We have tried to do that fairly and justly but we shall have failed in our task if we have not conveyed some idea of the fascination of a society in which the arts are of first priority and actors and other artists are regarded and treated as most valuable and esteemed citizens.

"...The Golden Tones of Oistrakh"

by SIDNEY FINKELSTEIN

SO ELOQUENTLY have the New York City music critics written about David Oistrakh, on the occasion of his November 20th and November 23rd solo recitals, so glowing has been their appreciation of his greatness as a violinist, that it is hard to find something new to say. As all of them pointed out, he is not only a phenomenal master of his instrument, with a well-nigh perfect left-hand technique, tone and bowing arm, but also a consummate and profound interpreter of great music.

Most welcome in the reviews was the absence of any references (at least in those I read), to "iron curtains" and "slave camps." A couple of years ago, when Oistrakh's wonderful playing first came to be known to American music lovers through phonograph recordings, such remarks seemed to be obligatory to many reviewers, after they had finished praising his performance. But happily now these phrases, which originated in Goebbels' handbook, are rapidly being consigned to oblivion, where they belong. And in this spirit of whole-hearted welcome to a great musician who is adding a memorable chapter to American musical life, the reviewers were expressing both their own feelings and

those of the audiences. Certainly the majority of people listening to the recitals, like the great mass of American people, suffer from great confusions as to the nature of life in the Soviet Union. But they know that friendly American-Soviet relations, and cultural interchange, are the key to world peace. And they know that world peace is the key to their own development, and to the future of themselves and their children. And they have a good idea now that the Soviet Union is doing its utmost for world peace and friendly relations among peoples.

David Oistrakh's playing itself had a quality about it typical not only of his own personality but of the land from which he comes. I am not saying that there is a special "Soviet approach" to Beethoven, Tardini and Brahms different from that of the "West." In fact what brought such joy to the listeners was that they heard these composers performed exactly as they thought they ought to sound. But, as has been frequently remarked, a work of music can be performed in many different ways, and all of them "right."

In Oistrakh's approach, there is a complete absence of violinistic glitter for its own sake, or of display of personal temperament. Hearing his playing, one thinks of a man who has developed his art in a country which itself was rapidly developing its cultural life. He is a great teach-

SIDNEY FINKELSTEIN'S books include "Art and Society," "Jazz: A People's Music," "How Music Expresses Ideas," and "Realism in Art."

er of what music is all about. It is as if he had spent many years bringing the works of great masters to people who had never heard them before. He wants to make sure the listeners get the full weight of each phrase. He generally adopts a somewhat deliberate tempo, a shade slower than others. He wants each note to sound. The playing is, of course, never pedantic. It always sings, from the heart. But, at the same time, the structure of the work is unrolled with crystalline clarity. Oistrakh's style is like that of a great writer, who has determined that he will put his most profound thoughts into the most clear and simple language, so that anyone can understand. And of course it turns out that this is the secret of great writing for any audience. It is the most difficult way to write. And Oistrakh's, which sounds so simple and effortless, is the most difficult way to play.

Even the programs of the two recitals were like a history of violin music; Leclair, Tartini, Beethoven, Brahms, Ysaye and Prokofiev in major works, with added shorter pieces of solid musical worth. For his encores, he preferred "singing" works to brilliant ones. At his second recital, he chose for an encore the slow movement of the Cesar Franck sonata, and followed that with a slow movement of Lalo's "Symphonie Espagnole."

It is hard to select one performance over another, but for me the most unforgettable experience was his performance, at his first recital, of Prokofiev's First Sonata, in F minor, Op. 80. It is one of the great violin works of the twentieth century. It is not easy or pleasant music to listen to, for it is full of bitter, and tragic

feelings, along with passages of serenity and joy. It's writing covered the full period of the anti-fascist war. The great violinists of our time have all taken up this sonata, and I have heard it played splendidly by Szigeti, Menuhin and Stern. But in Oistrakh's hands (with the splendid assistance of his colleague at the piano, Vladimir Yampolsky), the sonata took on an extra passion and clarity, with the violin sounding almost orchestral, and with the closing measures sounding like a wreath laid by the violinist on the grave of Prokofiev, who was his beloved friend.

As at the Gilels concerts, the excitement of the audience, which filled every nook and cranny of Carnegie Hall, was tremendous, both during and after the recital. There is no doubt that there is something more to the jubilation than the pleasure at hearing great music wonderfully performed. How silly it is that a short time ago (and perhaps it is still going on now) school children were drilled to crawl under their desks when an alarm sounded, for something terrible was likely to happen, they were told, from you know who. And so, instead, we get the golden tones of an Oistrakh. His coming is a demonstration of friendliness, and the audience's reaction was a demonstration of friendliness.

There is little doubt, also, that some people in higher circles of diplomacy are perturbed at the warmth and joy over these concerts. They do not like to see the common people take policy, so to speak, into their own hands. They would like to turn friendliness on an off whenever it suits them, like water from a faucet. But when people take a great step forward, they are not easily pushed back.

Report to Our Readers

WE WOULD like to share with our readers the results of our questionnaire sent out to get their criticisms of *NEW WORLD REVIEW* and suggestions for its improvement.

The idea grew out of a reader's letter published in our April issue. He wrote that he felt that the magazine fell short of doing all it might do. Specifically, he said much of our editorial comment on questions like Formosa, German re-armament, and so on, duplicated material that could be found elsewhere. That UN speeches and similar material could be found in the *New York Times*. That much of our material convinces only those already convinced. He ended with a plea for more lively, straightforward news articles.

We received over 300 replies to our questionnaire, containing many thoughtful and helpful suggestions. One heartening thing that became apparent from the variety of the reactions was that we by no means reach only those "already convinced"; that among our readers many different viewpoints are represented; that numerous people read our magazine because they feel it is necessary to learn the other side of the picture presented in the majority of publications in the United States today, believing such an understanding essential to finding the way to the co-existence of countries of differing social and economic systems—which is, indeed, our main purpose.

We have tried to give as full as

possible a summary of the replies, though space prevents covering every point raised.

1. *What is your main criticism of New World Review?*

To this 133 replied that they had no criticism at all. We are grateful for the many complimentary comments from those who called NWR a "wonderful little magazine," said it "couldn't do better," "fills a great need," "is full of facts not found elsewhere," "is the most informative of all the publications we receive," "is always fair and unbiased," "an oasis in the desert of lies and hate," and so on. Frankly, however, we know that we could make many improvements, and for the purposes of this survey we will dwell chiefly on the critical comments.

Quite a number of our readers who expressed satisfaction with the material felt that one of the main problems was that there should be "more of it."

Of negative comments the most frequent (25 or so) was that we were "not objective enough." Among these some thought that the magazine contains "too much fulsome praise" of socialist countries, presents "too one-sided a picture," sounds too much like "propaganda," and seems to consider that the USSR and the countries allied with it are "always right." It was suggested that it should "show more of the shortcomings, along with the prog-

ress" of socialist countries, provide "more information—less dogmatism" and contain more "discussion and debate."

A number of readers criticized NWR as "solemn, dull and deadly serious," "too academic," and proposed more short, lively, human interest features, humor and cartoons.

Some readers felt that we should carry more information about internal events in the United States. But a larger number felt that this was not the province of our magazine, that it should concentrate on news of the Soviet Union, China, the People's Democracies and other countries, news not found elsewhere, yet of great importance to the American people.

While a number expressed a liking for the new small format we have had in recent years and found our "design and printing excellent," a few regretted that we no longer had the larger pages, others considered the format unattractive, several complained of the shiny paper and small print, many requested a separate cover. Several justifiably plead with us to come out on time.

We can only say that all these criticisms and suggestions are receiving serious and careful consideration and we believe that our readers will find that some of them have already found reflection.

We agree that it is important to report shortcomings as well as progress—and yet, with so little space, with progress so far outweighing shortcomings, with so many hopeful things happening, new in human history, it is not always easy to strike a proper balance. Certainly we have never wished to take the

position that socialist countries can do no wrong. Their own leaders give numerous examples of readiness to recognize and correct mistakes, their own press is full of self-criticism. But we must remind our critics that the over-all balance of information has been so weighted on the side of negative, anti-Soviet propaganda, that much, much more needs to be done in the distribution of positive information. However, rose-colored glasses are no help to clear vision, and we shall try to avoid their use!

(Since Questions 2, 3 and 5 all brought related answers, we are taking them all together at the end.)

Question 4—Would you like more, or less, editorial comment?

To this, 79 answered that the amount we ordinarily had was satisfactory, 57 that they would prefer less, 40 that they wanted more, several that editorial review and comment should be much more condensed, while a few wanted it eliminated altogether.

Other answers varied from appraisal of our editorial section as useful in assessing world affairs, to extremely sharp criticism. Some wanted it to deal only with other countries than our own and only what could not be found elsewhere. Some complained that the material was always outdated. One reader wrote of liking the "charitable, clean atmosphere" of our editorial pages, while another felt that our editorial comment was "too bitter." One complained of the "too-dominant impact of the editor, giving the magazine the character of a one-person organ," another's main criticism concerned the editor's "harangues," said that the "long-winded, verbose editorials

are pointless, it's deadly to have to wade through pages of this stuff."

Despite the fact that the majority expressed satisfaction with the usual balance, the fact that many wanted less space devoted to editorials has led us to the conclusion that shorter editorials would come nearer to meeting everyone's wishes.

We might add that our use of the term "editorial comment" was really a misnomer. What we have tried to do in the section in question has rather been a monthly review of the main issues in East-West relations, with references and documentation, so that it is not presented merely as editorial opinion. With so much happening each month, it is not always easy to cover it briefly. Perhaps the answer is not to attempt to cover too many issues, but to concentrate on the most vital ones.

6. *What countries in particular would you like to know more about?*

While the fact that practically every country in the world was mentioned gave evidence of the breadth of interest of our readers, it also showed a misapprehension as to what is possible for a small magazine like ours to cover, and of the fact that our special area of interest has been the countries of the socialist sphere and those moving in this direction. Many readers, in fact, indicated their interest in "the whole world" which, of course, is our interest too—but if we are to do an adequate job we cannot of course try to cover the whole map.

The majority who answered indicated agreement with our policy of giving special attention to the Soviet Union as the first country to

establish a socialist society, the leading country in the socialist world, and because of the key importance of American-Soviet relations in the question of world peace.

Next in interest came the Chinese People's Republic, with 55 specific requests for more information on developments there.

While there were many requests for more information about the People's Democracies in general and in particular, the next section of the world to receive most frequent mention was Africa, and then, in addition to China, the other Asian nations and the countries of Southeast Asia. Some put it—"all the nations represented at Bandung." Korea, Indochina and Indonesia were mentioned frequently. The issue of colonialism is obviously of deep concern to our readers.

Interest in the Eastern European People's Democracies was expressed in the following order: Poland, Czechoslovakia, Albania, Rumania, Hungary and Bulgaria. In the case of Albania, the special interest evidenced is no doubt due to the fact that this is the People's Democracy least of all visited by Americans, and thus little material has been available for publication. Quite a number requested more material about the German Democratic Republic, and about Yugoslavia and Israel, and the Middle East and Latin America—No space to list all the other individual countries mentioned!

All we can say to this is that we will do our best to get better coverage both through our present correspondents and new ones who will become available as the East-West contacts set in motion by the Geneva summit conference increase.

7. *Are you more interested in relations between our country and the countries of the socialist world, or in internal events in these countries?*

On this, 86 expressed more interest in internal events and policies, 44 more interest in the relations between our country and the socialist countries, and 48 expressed equal interest in both.

This would seem to be a clear mandate from our readers to publish more material on internal events and policies in the socialist countries. At the same time, since the second and third categories together, adding up to 92, all want material on mutual relations, it is quite clear that we cannot neglect that aspect either. Many of the first 86 added that more information on developments in the Soviet Union, China, the People's Democracies and so on, is the best way to promote better relations with those countries and peaceful coexistence.

8. *Would you like to see more documentary material—speeches by leaders, government decisions, reports, diplomatic notes and agreements, etc.?*

Somewhat to our surprise, in view of the criticisms that our magazine is too heavy, and needs more light, human interest material, 93 replies expressed a desire for more documentary material of the type mentioned, 54 indicated a lack of interest in such material, and 20 said they thought our present system of publishing occasional such documents was satisfactory.

We noted that most of the negative replies came from the New York area, where such material is more

available in the press and other sources than in other sections of the country.

A number of readers added that they would like pertinent synopses of such material, or "only if not found elsewhere," and some begged "not in small print!"

This all comes down to a question of space. We ourselves would like to publish more documentary material than we do, but hesitate to do so at the expense of other material our readers desire. Again—we'll do the best we can on this.

9. *We have been forced to limit pictures as an economy measure, though we hope this need not be permanent. Would you prefer to have us sacrifice more written material for pictures?*

We realize this was a pretty "loaded" question. It was clear that our readers were taking our space problems into consideration in their answers—and that it was not a matter of wanting pictures less, but of wanting information more. On this basis, 105 answered that they preferred written material, 69 that they wanted more pictures, 10 that they wanted both, 11 that the distribution is OK as is, while only 2 indicated that they didn't care for pictures at all.

We believe that if we hadn't put it on the grounds of sacrificing written material for pictures, practically everyone would have expressed a desire for more pictures. So here, too, it comes down to a question of more pages and more money being the only answer!

Answers to Questions 2, 3 and 5, because we did not formulate them precisely enough (lacking the experi-

ence of the Gallup pollers) overlapped, and must be added together. In 2, we asked what had been found most interesting in NWR, thinking that specific articles or features or authors would be mentioned, from which we could judge what type of presentation had been most appealing, but many simply cited topics. In 3, we asked what *type* of material our readers wanted in the future, having in mind form rather than content—but again the answers had to do with content. And finally, 5, asking what phases of life in the various countries most interest our readers, brought answers largely repetitive of the others.

Any exact tabulation of replies is out of the question, since hardly any phase of life or society or economics or politics was omitted!

Thus, it is clear that our readers are interested in every aspect of socialist society and how it affects human beings and world affairs.

The deep concern of our readers with questions concerning peace was apparent in all the answers, many of which had to do with peace activities on a national and world scale, disarmament and all issues affecting peaceful co-existence among the nations. Many asked for more information on East-West trade, on exchange of visitors and students and delegations, on mutual travel facilities.

It was overwhelmingly clear that our readers especially want what can best be characterized as "human interest" material. More of the requests fall directly under this heading than any other—91 in all—while the idea found expression in one way or another in most other answers.

"Give us stories of ordinary people!", "articles that show how aver-

age people live," "interviews with individuals," "stories of day to day life," "case histories," "more about living standards," "the opportunities of the common people for a full life," "their way of life and how it differs from ours," "human relations," "how the individual adjusts to the new society."

Most wanted all this presented in lively, human terms. Some specified that they wanted more figures on matters of living standards, workers and farmers budgets, consumers' goods, and so on, but examples from life along with them.

Facts, facts, facts—this demand echoed through all the requests. Our readers want first-hand information, eye-witness reports. Most of them asked for more articles by American reporters and observers, either living in the countries in question or visiting, though many also wanted to hear from the people themselves.

On almost the same level as the "human interest" category were questions concerning economics. While 40 mentioned specifically either economics in general or some sphere of the national economy, there were some 90 related questions, adding up to some 130 requests in all. Though again, many asked that the question be presented in human terms, there were quite a number of requests for more statistical material, comparisons with previous regimes and with other countries.

Questions of economics covered the practical working of the economic system, socialist construction, socialist planning, problems of production and management, industrial and agricultural development, the opening up of virgin lands. Some fifteen asked for specific information on questions of technology, mechani-

zation, automation and new inventions.

About 30 requests had to do particularly with living standards in town and country, workers and farmers budgets, consumers' goods, housing; 17 specifically with questions of labor and working conditions, jobs, economic security, wages, vacations, social services. One wanted to know more about the theory of distribution to the masses under socialism, one about "free bread."

Thirty-four asked for more information on the great construction projects showing the tremendous growth of electrification and man's growing mastery over nature. Many mentioned the hydroelectric projects, and related questions of irrigation, flood control, canals, changing the courses of rivers, as well as the whole field of afforestation, changing the climate, soil conservation and reclamation.

Many wanted to know more about the peaceful uses of atomic energy.

The two phases of life in the Soviet Union and other socialist countries that received next most frequent mention were schools and education and arts and culture, each receiving 45 requests. Music was the field most often mentioned in the cultural area.

Twenty wanted more information on science.

Another 20 requests had to do with family life and relationships, children and their bringing up, questions of marriage and divorce, women and their new avocations.

Eighteen requests had to do with health and disease prevention, medical research and psychiatry.

Government and politics got 17 votes. These included explanations of government processes, their Con-

stitutions and Bills of Rights, the political life and activity of the people, the role of the citizen, the one-party system and the attitude of the people toward it and their government, and questions relating to the extension of democracy. Another 11 asked for more information on the judicial and penal system, the functions of the police, labor camps and prison conditions, civil liberties, and the incidence of crime, especially in comparison with former regimes.

More material on sports was asked by 16, and on recreational facilities and youth. (One asked why we wasted space on minor questions like sports!) Several wanted more information on chess and international contests in this field.

Eight wanted more material on national minorities, several mentioning specifically the Jewish question.

Another 8 wanted to know more about "social gains"; 7 asked that we give more space to answering slanders about socialist countries; 7 wanted more information on religion, several more on moral and ethical questions as reflected in education and the outlook of the people.

Other subjects mentioned one or more times were: biographies of leaders; experience and opinions of great men in science and engineering; the role of the individual in the future; birth control; the extent of private ownership; geographical exploration; humaneness toward animals; Jehovah's Witnesses.

How inadequately we are able to reflect here all the varied requests that were made, and some of the difficulties in carrying them out, may be gathered from the following quotation:

Give us bright, informative articles on different phases of life in the USSR, People's China and the socialist countries not found elsewhere, showing how people live, on individual farmers and workers, the penal system, theories and practice of correction and rehabilitation, youth and juvenile problems, attitudes re marriage counseling, divorce, sex education—articles on different professions by a typical doctor, railroad man, reporter, clerk, office worker, miner, etc. On Soviet humor. On how the leaders live. Give us articles about a particular institution, a department store, a theater, a union, a court, a factory, a collective farm, a newspaper, etc., etc.

Quite a big order!

As to the final question "Add anything else that comes into your head," the wide variety of suggestions included:

A monthly department giving documented corrections to current falsehoods about the USSR and other socialist countries; more book reviews—especially of authors not reviewed elsewhere, Soviet, Chinese, etc.; an issue each year devoted to specific topics like farming, forestry, fishing, hunting, industry, commerce, banking, etc.; A "letters from readers" department; more poetry; Drop Dead! (only one such request—we won't do it); get more money and publish a larger magazine and reach more people!

The last, of course, is the key to all the rest. Not that we are presenting this as a financial appeal. We thought it would be interesting to our readers to get a cross section of other readers' opinions. If you do not find here some particular criticism or proposal of your own please do not conclude that we have ignored it. We have read every an-

swer received, filed and *not* forgotten it.

It is obvious that we cannot do all that is asked. We shall do our best to meet our readers' needs—but please bear in mind the limitations that are imposed by a small staff and budget.

One of the main problems will be to try to get more people to provide the kind of eye-witness reports our readers want. While it's encouraging that the State Department has decided to make U.S. passports good for the Soviet Union and some of the People's Democracies hitherto forbidden territory, not all the people getting such passports are likely to be willing to write for NEW WORLD REVIEW. More important would be that passports be given in the first instance to a lot of people now denied them, so that we may have our own correspondents in the countries that we cover.

In the last few months we have already taken into account some of your suggestions—shorter editorials, more about people, more first-hand reports. We hope to make more improvements as time goes on. We would like to have your comments on this survey, and on current issues of the magazine, and urge that both those who have already written and those who have not, send in their criticisms and requests.

It is the concern and support of our readers which has made it possible to continue the publishing of NEW WORLD REVIEW, and which we now count on to help us bring out a still better magazine, capable of playing an important role in the further development of the East-West understanding necessary if we are to have a peaceful world.

The Old World and the New

A review by LEMENT U. HARRIS

PARIS TO PEKING, by Joseph Starobin. *Cameron Associates, Inc., New York*, 1955. 280 pp., \$3.75

THIS BOOK reflects the experiences, and observations of a skilled observer moving about from the Atlantic to the Pacific ends of the Eurasian continent. The order seems too big for one small book, but fortunately this is neither a travelogue nor an exhaustive treatise.

Essentially the book poses the big question of today: How are the people faring who live in the old domain of private capital, and how are they faring where socialism has replaced the old order?

Joseph Starobin has an intriguing way of throwing light on this, the "sensitive question" of our times. He uses the light touch, relies on understatement, never get too heavy or too solemn. This makes for easy reading. Somehow even the small incidents which he describes throw light on the big question.

In France, he watched the deep conflict caused by its commitment to a Marshall Plan and a Dulles anti-Soviet policy—and yet where the people continue to return more Communist deputies than any other single party.

"It was a strange sensation to stroll the streets of a city," he writes, "where one out of three or four people had voted Communist, and where seven out of ten working people were members of the General Confederation of Labor, which the Communists led . . ."

But it soon becomes apparent that the commentary on Western Europe is but preliminary to the much fuller examination of the People's Republic of China where 600 million people are

shedding a feudal past. We encounter many surprises:

"Was it not true," I asked Nan Han-chen, Director of the People's Bank of China, "that the worldwide blockade of the United Nations had been hurting China?" "Exactly the opposite had happened," he replied . . . Instead of taking one-quarter of her trade, as was true in 1949, the Socialist alliance now accounted for seventy-five per cent of China's commerce . . . First class goods were coming from the Socialist countries, not to mention technicians. And these same countries were taking the agricultural and mineral goods and the textile which China's increased production enabled her to sell them . . . Nan Han-chen felt that the blockade was breaking down. Many Western countries were already trading . . . He seemed to place great emphasis on trade with Japan . . ."

Starobin is especially interested in the application of Marxism, often called a dogma by those who know little about it, under Chinese conditions. He mentions that Lenin had expressed an opinion on this matter in a letter written in 1919 to a Congress of Communists of the East:

You face a task which has never before been faced by the Communists of the whole world . . . You must be able to apply [Marxism] to conditions in which the main mass will consist of the peasantry . . . of the struggle, not against capital, but against the vestiges of the Middle Ages.

Out in the villages, Starobin encounters the "fantastic fragmentation of the land." In one village the average

peasant used to till one-fourteenth of an acre, a plot about 50 by 60 feet. Since the land distribution, the average holding is one-third of an acre, still a tiny parcel, but five times what it used to be. Starobin writes:

Land reform was not only a changeover from feudal relations in the countryside, but a vast reeducation for the six hundred thousand cadres who went out from the cities and lived and worked among the peasants . . . a vast piece of social solidarity which opened the eyes of the cadres to the rural reality.

I asked the village chairman what had happened to the landlords in Tien-chuen village. Were there any left? . . . "Most of them are still living here," he replied, waving his hand in the direction of the schoolhouse. "Some of those children you saw at the school are of former landlord families." He continued casually: "In fact I was talking with one the other day. He admits that things are better now for everybody than they used to be. Seems he is beginning to grasp the value of human labor." Everybody in the room smiled at that one.

On leaving this village, Starobin's thoughts are those that might assail any American visitor: "Was the production increase enough for a rising population . . . ? Would Mr. John Foster Dulles persist in believing that the change I had seen in the Tien-chuen village was reversible? Would it really

be a victory for democracy to return the land in this village to the eighteen landlord families?"

We get more glimpses of the panorama that is China; congresses and demonstrations in Peking, the Huai reclamation project where tens of thousands of men and women have harnessed the wild waters. There is commentary by Christian Chinese who assess a century of missionary work, Protestant and Catholic. The effect of it all is accumulating evidence that allows but one answer to the big "sensitive question" implicit in the whole book.

This is an important book deserving of wide circulation. The style is personal in the sense that the author's own perplexities find expression. This makes for an intimate rapport between him and his reader.

In my own case, it recalled the effect on my life of a visit to China at the age of seventeen. It was purely a tourist's excursion. But something happened when as a routine part of a visit to Canton, I was borne in a sedan chair by four strong men through the turmoil of the city's crowded alleys. There was an expression on the people as they looked at this perfectly healthy kid in his straw hat and western clothes. Thoughts of the maldistribution of wealth were inescapable. It started wheels turning. I feel a special delight that these millions are now coming into their own.

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