

TRAVELLING BEHIND THE IRON CURTAIN

In these days of mass travel by air, it is easy for professional people to go to the far ends of the earth. I was fortunate in picking a field during its formative phase. It has been exciting to maintain friendships and acquaintances with those who are working in the same field in various parts of the world. For this reason, I have travelled a lot, and my travels have frequently taken me behind the Iron Curtain. I have been to Czechoslovakia on several occasions, to Poland, to Yugoslavia, and most recently to Russia, which is the main subject of our conversation tonight. If one is successful in a field and joins many professional societies, meetings alone could occupy practically all one's time. (The full time professor, in fact, is defined as the professor who is full time away.)

Government invitations to Russia are granted to professional people occasionally. My previous invitations had always been on a personal basis or had been open-ended invitations like "We are having a meeting in Leningrad or Moscow next year; won't you come." If you go on that basis, then you have to make all your own arrangements. I had resolved long ago that I would not go to Russia unless I was officially invited by their government. My reasons for this were simple: first, I wanted to be treated like a first-class citizen, and secondly, I have entertained many Russian visitors to this country whose expenses are fully paid by our State Department, who are accompanied by a State Department guide, and who get free first-class air passage anywhere. This, I feel, should be reciprocated on the part of the Russians.

They came close to it on this last visit of mine in August of 1971. The invitation to be an Honored Guest of the Soviet Union came first from the Embassy in Washington

and second from one of their senior professors in Moscow. The occasion was the Biennial Meeting of the International Surgical Society. This organization is composed of surgeons in most of the countries of the world, and includes representatives from all the Iron Curtain countries, from China, North and South Korea, and North Vietnam.

I have not missed a meeting of this organization since I became a member approximately 15 years ago, and it has been a fascinating experience to watch the internal changes of the organization as it evolved from a mutual admiration society to one that was truly representative.

My expenses were paid by the Russians once I got there, except for my passage from Moscow to Leningrad. The accommodations were supposed to be de luxe the whole way: this turned out to be a matter of interpretation. In any event, let's start with my arrival in Moscow. The top three surgeons in the country were there to greet me, as well as the professor in charge of the meeting. I was taken upstairs to an enormous reception hall where there were a number of fellows waiting to offer transportation or advice, carry baggage, and so on. The rest of the delegates to the meeting were taken in downstairs, where I heard they went through an hour of filling out forms and getting their baggage and transportation. I was whisked off in a car driven by a young surgeon to the Intourist Hotel in Moscow, where the distinguished visitors were housed. This is a rather tall building, not massive, filled with tourists of all kinds, but with a special floor set aside for meals and small receptions for the special guests of the Soviet Union. My room was ready for me. It was a small affair, just large enough to walk around the two beds; it had a small bathroom with little shelf space, but with hot and cold running water. I was immediately supplied with a very nice guide who was a middle-aged school teacher; she was delighted to be in charge. We began to make plans for sightseeing, when I should go to the conferences, where I should meet my private car, and so on. The next morning, she telephoned me in tears, saying that for some reason the Intourist Bureau had changed her assignment.

She had been turned over to a Finn and another girl had been assigned to me; this had upset her enormously and she wanted me to intervene so that she could come back to being my guide. I knew better than to intervene with Intourist for her, as she might get into trouble. I was then assigned Valentina, who was about 26 years old and whose husband was an engineer. Apparently, the young Russians marry as soon as they can when they are no longer students, since combined incomes make living reasonably comfortable.

The general plan was to have the car ready for me whenever I needed it to go to the conference, to various receptions, and so forth. Valentina was also put in charge of getting me the proper tickets and papers to avoid my standing in line or having to buy them. This worked pretty well throughout.

The guides who were assigned to me throughout my stay were extremely careful about their remarks. They were indoctrinated completely as to what to say, never asked questions about the outside world, never made any remarks or critical statements about their own world, and had standard information always ready to be cranked out.

Down the hall from my hotel room was a headquarters for the convention's special guests, where arrangements were made for private cars, tickets, and that sort of thing. One of my Australian friends called to find me one day when I was out, and got the headquarters instead. Somehow, they got the impression that Dr. Sharp, my friend, was I, and that I had lost my guide Valentina. I suppose they couldn't understand his Australian accent. When Valentina returned to the headquarters that evening to report, which she had to do morning and night, describing where we had gone and what we had done, she was practically fired by the director for having abandoned me. She called me, weeping, on the phone, saying that unless I got it straightened out, she would no longer be a guide. I promptly went to the office and explained that it wasn't I who had telephoned, that it was my friend, Dr. Sharp,

and that he merely wanted to know where he could find me. This straightened everything out, and the next morning Valentina was very happy about being back in their good graces, particularly since I have made some complimentary remarks about how excellent a guide she was.

At the Intourist Hotel, there was always a woman sitting at the desk in each hall, watching all the traffic to all the rooms. One woman would be on duty for 24 hours every other day, and would sleep in her chair after the hotel became quiet.

The distinguished guests' meals were given at set times on their special floor at the Intourist Hotel, and were dull and repetitious. The coffee at breakfast arrived half an hour after the meal, weak and usually cold. Even though I tried to tip the waiter (and succeeded), a different one would appear the next day, so my efforts in this direction were unavailing. As one of my English friends said, the Russians have finally learned how to make coffee out of grounds. Fish was served at all the meals; the meat was usually in small quantities and not very good. The vegetables were mainly limited to tomatoes and cucumbers, with very little lettuce; occasionally a small spoonful of green peas appeared, and that was about it. One began to long for a crisp salad and a nice juicy piece of meat. For fresh fruit, one could choose between wormy apples and an occasional orange.

In the private restaurants, like the one in the basement of this hotel, one could get a very decent meal for about ten dollars; it would be well-cooked, and served with alacrity. The diversity was slightly more than was given on our distinguished visitors' floor, but certainly not better than one would get in a good Holiday Inn restaurant. With regard to the several prominent restaurants open to the public in Moscow, the food there was plentiful, diversified, usually very rich, but had good flavor and was well-cooked. The service was better; the waiters all knew they were going to be given a tip. Apparently, Russians who have a little extra money and can afford this sort of restaurant use it frequently. There is usually a queue waiting in front of the major restaurants at mealtime.

The meeting opened in the great marble hall at the Kremlin built for the Communist Party meetings. As with all the functions that we attended, there was quite a difference between being among the chosen few and the proletariat, as one might call those who were just coming to the meeting. For example, about 25 of us were invited to a side room just before the Congress opened, and given wine and a small meal. We were then brought in through a side entrance to the great hall. The hall is enormous and beautifully decorated, with comfortable chairs, loudspeakers well placed, and with translation in all languages for every seat. The usual introductions were given by Petrovsky, the Minister of Health for the Soviet Union, and the most important medical person in all Russia. He was a friendly man, knew absolutely no English, but was adept at running meetings and knowing what to say to please everyone. After the introductions, there was another meal offered to the chosen few in the side room before we went home.

At each meeting we went to, whether it was in a hotel or visiting a hospital or laboratory, there was always, at the end of the sessions, a room ready with open-faced sandwiches and wine, and the everpresent vodka. As a consequence, unless one was on the alert, 5000 to 7000 calories a day would slip down inadvertently with a large quantity of added liquor.

Scientific sessions were held in a large meeting hall in the center of Moscow about six blocks from the major hotels. We had transportation both in buses and in taxis and private cars, but the special guests always had a car and a driver. The meeting facilities were outstanding; in fact, I have never seen better anywhere in the world. The projection equipment was first-class; the translation was excellent, in all the major languages, and simultaneous with the speaker. There were plenty of people about to help direct individuals to their proper meetings. The only time when the whole organization slipped completely was on the first days of registration. Here, the Russians were cast into confusion at the prospect of selling tickets and

distributing them properly to hundreds of impatient surgeons. Some delegates had to stand for three or four hours to get a simple matter adjusted properly.

The recordings of the meetings were taped and in many instances these formed a permanent record for the various subspecialties to present to their staff members later. There were approximately 1500 surgeons from Russia attending the meeting, 200 from the United States, and about 500 from other countries, including a large delegation from the bordering Iron countries like Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Bulgaria.

Moscow's surgery apparently shut down as much as possible during this week, and the hospitals which we visited were empty except for the most dire emergency patients. In fact, in the four hospitals I visited, there was only one operation in progress and one patient in an intensive care unit. All we saw were long rows of nice clean beds with nurses in starched uniforms standing at attention here and there. I would judge that the patients brought in on an emergency basis were taken to other hospitals which were not on the list for visiting by the delegates to the convention.

The presentation of scientific papers at this Society's meetings is a ritual around which is built the real business of getting to know your colleagues and their work. To an American who attends a lot of meetings, the papers were unexciting, but we expect this. The best papers, of course, had been previously presented at meetings in societies of smaller scope, so that most of the presentations which we heard were sort of re-cooked statistical papers. Without doubt, the Russian papers were among the poorest, and seldom told more than how many cases of a certain kind were being treated. Mortality and morbidity figures connected with the treatment of a given condition were vague and inconclusive. Their slides were poorly made, hard to read, and way below the standards acceptable in a good medical society in this country. The same has always been true of the Yugoslavian papers, though somewhat better work is done in Czechoslovakia and in Poland, in my experience.

Something should be said about the hierarchy of Russian medicine. The Minister of Health, Petrovsky, is a man I mentioned earlier. He is virtually a king of budgetary and personnel matters for all Russian medicine, and I would judge that no one of importance is appointed anywhere in the health system without his approval. He passes on the budgets submitted by each hospital, and therefore has sole power over tremendous sums of money. As a consequence, it would seem that in Moscow, the best hospitals are built for and run by friends of the Minister of Health. It would be inconceivable to give an important hospital position to somebody critical of the regime. There is only one major surgeon in Moscow who has managed to survive while not playing his fiddle properly in the orchestra, and he survives because he has a great international reputation, is known all over the world for his esophageal surgery, and has been honored by many countries outside Russia. He is permitted to continue in an old hospital and speaks rather freely (particularly when he is out of the country), because he has no family to protect. He is not criticized openly, because he is in his early seventies. If he were a young man, regardless of how able he was, unless he played his music in the proper fashion, I am sure he would be in serious trouble.

Petrovsky, being Minister of Health, undoubtedly has enough funds to do what he wants in his own institution. One of the things he had decided was important was to build a hyperbaric chamber room, which, however, was incomplete. This is a system of pressure chambers where oxygen is in high content and under pressure, to be used in certain conditions of congenital heart disease, particularly cyanotic heart disease in infancy, and for the treatment of gas gangrene and other situations where high oxygen content is desirable. This whole concept has been explored scientifically in several centers in this country and elsewhere, and found to be interesting but extremely limited, and for a country like Russia, which needs a great deal done on a basic level, to spend this amount of money and still not have the system working is somewhat incongruous.

I would guess that he shows this half-built hyperbaric chamber to lots of people for its prestige value, but will never have it operational. Another friend of the state and a former war hero, Visnevsky, heads the most modern hospital in Moscow; it was founded by his father, who was obviously also held in high esteem in the country. The hospital has numerous viewing galleries to watch surgery, very modern lighting equipment, and was the only place where an operation was in progress while we visited. About half the hospital is completely finished. The experimental laboratories are not operational, but probably will be in a few years. Another large and older hospital is the one where most of the heart surgery is done under a tall, very nice surgeon named Bourakovsky. He was the most friendly of all the surgeons we met and undoubtedly has one of the most active heart units in Russia. His results statistically for ordinary cases are quite acceptable. His intensive care facility had not a single original Russian piece of equipment in it. There were several copies of Swedish, English, and American equipment such as respirators, including a sprinkling of respirators made in California. A large Italian console for monitoring the patients had been placed strategically in the center of the intensive care unit where the nurse in charge could have monitored all the seriously ill patients in this section of the hospital. However, even though the Italians have come several times to try to service it, they could never make it work, and so it stands there in majestic uselessness.

A lot could be said about Uglov's clinic which I visited later in Leningrad. This is a modern hospital of approximately 500 beds devoted entirely to nontuberculous and noncancerous diseases of the lung. This is the only lung hospital in all Russia, so some patients have to come from as far as Siberia on long journeys to get to this clinic for diagnosis and treatment. They are put on a train, given tickets to stay in a hotel in Leningrad and meal tickets which they can use in the hotel. They go to the clinic each day for testing and, if necessary, for hospitalization. Uglov had a good war record in defense of Leningrad, and has the Order of Lenin, which

is why he has this hospital and virtually every piece of equipment known for the diagnosis of pulmonary disease. He has expert help with him, and they do about 75,000 evaluations a year. Mind you, this kind of specialty hospital is the only one of its kind in Russia. The same evaluations which are done there are usually done in three or four hospitals in every major city in the United States.

Words should also be said about things such as artificial heart valves and mechanical devices to assist surgeons. There was not one original piece of equipment of this kind that we could see anywhere. Their ~~total heart or complete~~ mechanical heart was very much like the ones we produced here several years ago and far below the standards we have reached in this very difficult field. The heart valves were rather poor copies of our valves made in California and Baltimore. The same is true of the circulation pump assisting devices: they are merely copies of American design and not very good ones at that. In general, one had to decide that medicine was established on a high priority basis in a few hospitals in Moscow and Leningrad, but that the quality then dropped off sharply.

I would guess that females in medicine were mainly in clinics scattered throughout the country and not in major hospitals. I met only three women in any responsible surgical position. There was one female doctor in charge of Bourakovsky's intensive care unit who seemed to be knowledgeable and intelligent. The other two women I met were of average caliber; I didn't meet any of the masses of women doctors who are being trained for clinics and for the small country dispensaries.

The young men in training, fellows and residents in these major hospitals, are very much like our own residents and fellows. They are enthusiastic, and obviously do a great deal of the work. They are well-dressed, many of them speak good English, and they have good ideas. I would judge that given an opportunity, these men would measure up to the best we have in this country.

A great deal can be said about the whole business of Intourist travel arrangements in Russia. Anyone who has not experienced this intricate and complicated method of dealing with masses of people has a great many surprises in store. All reservations must be made through Intourist. When you arrive in a major city in Russia, you have no definite assurance that you will be put in your hotel of choice, and usually you are told on arrival that you are going to the place they have decided to send you. In Moscow, almost everyone is put in the Hotel Russia, which has 5,000 beds and is the largest hotel in the world. There are a number of separate entrances with separate dining room arrangements, and you have to remember which entrance you belong to, or your tickets won't be accepted. The Hotel Russia's accommodations, including the so-called "de luxe accommodations," are very simple, small but adequate.

As a tourist in ^{Russia} Moscow, you are under complete control of Intourist. In the summer, ~~the city of~~ ^{the city} Moscow ~~is~~ filled with thousands of tourists being shuttled about in buses, being rushed through the same routine spots decided upon by Intourist, and generally feeling like a herd of cattle. Drastic changes can occur in your schedule without any explanation. For example, our most distinguished delegates from Australia and New Zealand were with a couple of very prominent people from England in a group that was supposed to visit Leningrad for three and a half days. They had all paid for de luxe accommodations and first-class attention. They were in Leningrad for two days when they were told that they would have to pack immediately and go back to Moscow: the plane was waiting for them. You can imagine the hubbub of this planeload of people who had suddenly to gather all their possessions and pack them within an hour. No explanation was given, but it was found out later that something had gone wrong with the calculations, and the doctors were displaced two days early from Leningrad by the World Bee Keepers Association who were all over Moscow and Leningrad on convention status at the same time. These surgeons thus had two extra days in Moscow with no program, since they had already visited the spots they had been

expected to see. Obviously, this didn't leave them with a very good feeling for Intourist.

Somewhere in Russia there is a vast hive controlling their enormous tourist business, for every individual is followed carefully on some kind of chart in some sort of headquarters, and it is obvious that they know exactly where everybody is, and almost exactly what he is doing all day long. Because of its very complexity, it frequently breaks down and one is caught in the machinery. I can't imagine how they can make a lot of money out of it, having to watch everybody so carefully during their entire stay in the country.

One little story which is amusing was the result of my desire to take a train trip while in Russia. I did have airplane tickets from Moscow to Leningrad, but decided that since everyone said the Red Arrow was such a magnificent train that I should try it. I bought two tickets because Mrs. Gerbode had intended to go with me. Since she couldn't come because of illness, I had in hand two first-class de luxe accommodations on the Red Arrow overnight train from Moscow to Leningrad. I turned the tickets over to my guide, who said she would change them and get me a very good room. After two or three days I was told to pick up my new tickets at the Intourist desk, which I did, and it looked as though I had been given a large room in exchange for two de luxe tickets. This was fine; however, 24 hours later, I was told by my guide that they had made an error in my tickets; I would have to bring them back again. I did this, and the next day another set of tickets was issued to me. On the night of the Red Arrow's departure, I was taken to the station by Valentina, and she fortunately stayed with me to be sure that I was going to be properly treated as an Honored Guest of the Soviet Union. We went to my accommodations in the train, and found that instead of a de luxe room, I had a very small double room: the separation between the two beds was perhaps 18 inches, and sitting on the bed opposite me was a large hairy Bulgarian, who obviously was very unhappy about having company in the room. I told Valentina that I had bought two tickets, and had been assured that I would have a room to myself. We were ushered back and forth until we got hold of the chief

station-master on the platform, who advised me to sit in the room until the train left, and he would then see if there was a single room available. After the train took off, I was given a small single room next to the conductor's quarters, but as it was over a broken wheel, there was a lot of clackity-clacking all night long as we rolled toward Leningrad -- a dubious improvement over the Bulgarian. In the morning we were served tea which had been brewed on a charcoal stove. There was one toilet facility for the whole car and it was in a pretty bad state of repair. So much for the magnificent Red Arrow -- others have apparently had a happier experience.

When I arrived in Leningrad, I was met by a guide and was taken to the hotel which had been designated on my tickets. After I had registered, the desk lady said firmly, "We have decided you would be better off in the Hotel Moscow -- we are moving you over there. Wait and we will get a car for you." I put up a mild objection, but was told with finality that this was what Intourist had decided for me. So we proceeded to the Hotel Moscow, a large gloriously oldfashioned hotel with huge rooms and high ceilings. I was taken in with great decorum and shown a number of suite-like arrangements, and was told that I could have my choice of them. I chose one overlooking some trees. It had a large entrance hall with a white refrigerator and ice-making machine, a huge bathroom with a gigantic bathtub, a sitting room with a desk, and a large double bedroom. This was spacious quarters for me and I was happy to have them after being so cramped in Moscow. But I began to be puzzled, the first night, when a series of voluble Russians telephoned me at frequent intervals. Although I complained for two days about these mysterious calls, I had to solve the problem by simply taking the telephone off the hook -- which made it difficult for my friends to reach me. It was only later that I found that my room telephone number was nearly the same as the hotel desk's.

There was always a great deal of discussion and many trips to the hotel's Intourist desk concerning tickets for meals and museums. Separate tickets were required for coffee and for eggs, which would then arrive at wildly disparate times.

Next to the Hotel Moscow is a charming restaurant with music, where the food is good and not too expensive. The woman at the hotel desk told me about this, fortunately, and that is where I had most of my meals with my friends.

In Leningrad, one notices that buildings have a sort of metal grill sticking out just above the first floor. I thought they were put there to catch snow and ice falling off the roof, but Vicky, my guide, told me that they were put there because the plaster on the exterior of new buildings falls off quite frequently and otherwise would hit the people on the streets below.

Leningrad's reconstruction, however, is being done tastefully, even though the workmanship is poor. While maintaining the exterior of the old buildings, they gut the interior, then rebuild the inside more or less in modern terms, and restore the soft greens, reds and blues of the handsome old-world facades.

I learned quite a bit about the students and their work by having student guides in both Leningrad and Moscow. Students are paid approximately 40 rubles a month when they are in college: barely enough to buy food and pay for very small lodgings, and they have to get an extra job if they can, in the summer, to buy clothes or have spending money for what amounts to necessities. They do this by being guides, for which they are paid 80 to 100 rubles a month.

The life of the average Russian is hard to document accurately because one isn't frequently invited into the people's homes. I visited two homes of surgeons in Moscow and their accommodations were extremely limited. One of the most prominent surgeons in Moscow, a professor, head of a department and famous throughout the world for his contributions, lives with his wife in a tiny two-room apartment with the most limited facilities -- hardly any more than one might find for an American secretary just starting out in life. I suppose if he had a child he would be allowed another room, but space allocations are made on the basis of who you are in the regime, as well as being based on a formula of square footage per individual. One other professor, whose wife

is a gynecologist, had a larger three-room apartment in a newer building. I wondered whether he had a better apartment because he is in good graces with the regime. But, in any event, he had a combination living room and dining room, a kitchen and one large bedroom and a bathroom. He had a little two-foot balcony with a couple of potted plants, and was quite proud of the fact that he could look out on part of the city from this balcony.

The officials in the government, whether in medicine or any other department, obviously have very handsome accommodations, and when a man becomes a minister or a vice-minister, he not only has a private car with a chauffeur, but also has either a small house or an apartment in town and a dacha in the country. The vice-ministers and ministers can take off in government planes to hunting lodges and fishing camps where they are met; free food and service is provided. I was invited to go to Siberia for bird shooting, but it would have taken three days, and I didn't feel I could take the time off. However, I am sure that if, on another trip to Russia, I expressed a desire to do this, they would arrange it for me.

I would say that the average Russian worker is slow, careless and wasteful of his time. If you watch a group of men digging a hole and putting in bricks to shore up some pipes, it would appear that there was easily twice the number of men required, all slow and sloppy in their work. I have been told by others, particularly by the Czecks and Poles, that this is characteristic of the average Russian worker, and that the skilled and capable ones are in the high priority industries -- space, electronics, and that sort of thing.

It struck me that the life of the average peasant working in the fields could not be very different from what it was before the revolution. They seem to be dressed in the most simple clothes; most of them seem almost handwoven. Their shoes are obviously repaired often. As you know, the peasants were allowed to stay in their farmhouses as long as the same family occupied it serially. When the last of the

family died, then the farm and the house would be given to another family. Some of the farmers can sell their produce to the market at a fixed rate, but those who work on the cooperative farms have to turn over all their produce, keeping very little for themselves and being paid for their work.

I went to three church services, one at the Prince's College in Sergei Monastery, where they still train Greek Orthodox priests, then once in Leningrad, and once in Moscow. In each instance, over 90% of the congregation were old ladies with a few very old men and young girls. There were no young adults or middle-aged working people attending church services. The old peasants were obviously still deeply imbued with their religious feeling. They would do the same thing I'm sure they have done for centuries, kissing the pictures and statues, bowing and kneeling whenever a priest came by and giving their hand for a blessing. The priests were fat and often somewhat boorish looking. This was particularly true in the Prince's College in Sergei, which is a beautiful example of religious architecture, dating back many centuries. There I was entertained by the Chancellor at tea, and we had a long discussion about the place of Orthodox religion in the world scene. It is apparently very difficult for priests to leave Russia. Occasionally they may go to Iron Curtain countries, but since there aren't many churches open for services, there aren't many places to send them. The government has permitted this resurgence of a certain amount of religious activity, but it is being watched closely, and I believe it is allowed mainly for publicity purposes and tourism.

Of course the Russians have restored many hundreds of beautiful old churches and convents as tourist attractions. Someone said that during the revolution approximately 400 churches were destroyed in Moscow alone. There are still plenty of them left.

The stores in Russia are fairly well supplied with the usual commodities. The longest queue in the major Moscow department store was to purchase small hand towels which had just been imported from China. They were of very poor quality but were selling for two rubles apiece, approximately \$2.20, according to the rate of exchange. You would find similar towels here selling in Woolworth's for about thirty cents;

but the women really wanted them badly. Generally speaking, the quality of the goods in the major department stores was mediocre, and the prices were high throughout. In the best food shop I could find, very little meat was being bought by the customers, probably because it wasn't of good quality and was very expensive. The fish, however, was going well.

In walking around Moscow and Leningrad, the people are grim; one hears no joking. They are well-dressed and obviously all employed. The subways are immaculate: no papers, gum or cigarettes, either for sale or underfoot. Smoking is forbidden in all public conveyances and meeting halls. The streets and buildings are kept clean.

Comparatively speaking, I think the Poles, Czechs and Yugoslavs are better off than the Russians, but not by very much. The living conditions I have described in Russia are pretty much the same in these countries; private ownership is practically unheard of. In Bratislava, for example, I visited a professor who lived in a duplex. His wife liked to play the piano, and had finally been able to obtain one through the government. The plumbing was out of order a good deal of the time, the plaster was falling off the outside of the building, the drains from the gutters were broken, the piano was out of tune. The reason all these things were in disrepair was that one cannot just order a repairman to fix things; requests go through a central agency which establishes its own priority as to what gets fixed, and for whom. The couple don't own the property, and dare not do any repairing themselves, since people have got into trouble working on what is government property, so to speak.

In Warsaw, as a comparative example, the surgeon in charge of all the lung hospitals in Poland is an extremely nice fellow who has sent many men abroad for training in England and the United States. He is assigned a small apartment on the main street across from the major hotel. It consisted of two bedrooms, each of them just large enough to hold two beds and a little table, a tiny kitchen with two burners, a lavatory which was not functioning when I was there, and a bathtub down the hall which is shared with other families. He slept in the living room on a couch; the teenage boy and girl shared one small bedroom. They were fortunate, however, in having a small cabin

in the country, where they frequently went on weekends. This arrangement is considered luxurious, I believe, and was only awarded to him because he is an important professor, and has four in his family.

To me, Russia is run like an army. From the point of view of the leadership, this has tremendous advantages. The whole country ^{is} ~~can be~~ programmed, which is a great way to conserve energy and prevent waste. They see the lack of competition as an advantage, because there isn't the duplication of effort and waste of materials which are produced for profit and frequently are not consumed, as in this country. Also, the economy is adjusted so that little more than the necessities of life are offered to the public. Therefore, they have great reserves of funds to use for developing whatever happens to be on their program, whether it be war machines, space vehicles, or truck factories. However, from the point of view of getting the most out of people, is this the right way? I imagine that if people have been indoctrinated from childhood to believe that this is the only and best system, then the internal rewards will be evident to them, rewards which we don't see or fully appreciate. The whole concept of sending children to state schools and then allowing gifted children the opportunity to go to other schools after the regular school hours for advanced training in all sorts of skills and arts leads to a belief in the structure of the system. In the Moscow schools, for example, the children are brought together and indoctrinated in Stalin and the State before they get started on their afternoon special program. This follows through the whole educational system. The high school and college students belong to an information group which meets once or twice a month. Attendance is not compulsory, but it is monitored. There they hear about progress in the government, increases in productivity, plans for the future, political items of note, and very little, if anything, about the outside world on a comparative basis. I imagine that later on, when opportunities for employment of a special nature are available, the ones who have a good track record in the youth groups are the ones who are selected.

Certainly, my guides had attended these sessions, and had a good record from early childhood; perhaps this is why they were given the highly desirable summer employment.

We all know that the government has tried to set up a reward system, but it has not been particularly successful, and when it has been based on productivity in numbers, the quality has fallen off. There is a classic example of a man in charge of a window pane factory who was told that he would get special awards if he produced more windows with the same amount of personnel. He got his rewards for several years for increasing productivity, until the government machinery found out that the window panes were frequently broken on delivery, or broke soon after installation. He had simply been making more panes by making them thinner.

Another question: where does a country go that has no system of built-in self-criticism, except at a very high level, and where very little feedback can come from the population? Anyone who criticizes the regime is automatically disqualified from any position of importance, as witness many of the writers who have described, even mildly, the deficiencies of Russia. They have been treated badly and are watched very carefully.

Having lived in Germany in the pre-war Hitler era, I see many similarities between the way Hitler ran his country and the way Communism is running Russia: with all orders coming from the top, with surveillance on a high level, with tight control of criticism -- these are taken directly out of the dictators' operating book. However, the Russian people have never known much else than this, and therefore perhaps it is accepted more easily by them than it would be by a people used to democracy.

Of course, there is crime and a fair amount of alcoholism in Russia, but not nearly on the level, presumably, as is found in this country. Criminals are dealt with rather quickly and severely, and the lengthy delays in court and inadequacies of the legal system we are observing in this country are not found in Russia. Not that I would wish to be tried in a Russian court, but it is probable that crime is

It is probably also true that justice in court
is not cultivated as it is with us.

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discouraged a little more frequently by this system than by ours. Prostitution is rigidly controlled and if a prostitute is arrested twice, she must then move at least 100 miles away from Moscow or any other major city. If caught again, she is put in jail permanently. I'm not ^{saying} ~~sure~~ that this is good or bad. It is merely an example of what is done.

I haven't spoken of the museums and cultural aspects of what is offered to the visitor in Russia. Of course, the ballet is magnificent; there are at least two great ballet companies in Moscow who perform equally well. The Bolshoi is the most famous. It goes on most tours, but the other does extremely well. The music, of course, is excellent, and we could spend the whole evening discussing Russian art.

Is going to Russia worthwhile? Yes, if you can arrange it so that you're not pushed around like sheep. It helps a great deal to know somebody there, but as I said earlier, the best way to see Russia is to be invited officially.