

ETHNIC AND SOCIAL FACTORS IN NATIONAL STRENGTH: THE USSR

19 November 1958

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NOTICE

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DR. CLEM: Gentlemen: In referring in our everyday speech to various peoples of the world, we are prone to use the terms, "The Germans," "The Chinese," "The Italians," "The British," sometimes forgetting that in actuality these terms tend to simplify a rather complex picture. For example, the old saying, "Fifty million Frenchmen can't be wrong," might well have been footnoted, "nor can they agree."

This is to say that in almost every country there are groupings, be they ethnic, racial, socioeconomic, religious, which tend to basically condition the attainment of national unity, a most important fact in determining national strength.

This morning, in pursuing our study of human resources, we are going to turn the spotlight successively on two important peoples--the Russians and the Americans. For this period we are going to consider the subject, "Ethnic and Social Factors in National Strength: The USSR."

Our speaker is Dr. John A. Armstrong of the faculty of the University of Wisconsin.

Dr. Armstrong, it is a pleasure to welcome you here this morning and to introduce you to the students and faculty of the Industrial College of the Armed Forces.

DR. ARMSTRONG: It is a great pleasure, indeed, Dr. Clem and Gentlemen, to be with you this morning and to present as concisely and as clearly as possible, I hope, the picture of the ethnic and social factors in the national strength of the Soviet Union.

Now, at first glance, and even, I might say, at second glance, this seems like a very big order for 45 minutes; yet if we look closely at the relationship between the social classes in the Soviet Union and the ethnic groups, we note that they are so closely intertwined that it would, indeed, be difficult to handle the two topics separately, and therefore it is quite logical and appropriate, I believe, to consider these two major aspects of Soviet strength in one lecture.

Let us briefly see why this close relationship exists and then I will proceed to analyze or discuss separately the social and ethnic factors. The relationship exists because the peasantry in the Soviet Union, which is, of course, the lineal descendant of the peasantry of the old Russian empire, is not evenly distributed between the Russian dominant group and the non-Russian minorities. Instead, the Russians have had a vast preponderance in the urban population throughout almost all the cities of the Soviet Union.

There are certain other groups, which I will just mention now and won't have to come back to again, which are also heavily urban, particularly the Jews and the Transcaucasian groups like the Georgians and the Armenians, but by and large it is the Russians who inhabit the cities. This was more true under the old Russian empire even than it is today.

Now, we all know that communism is the effort to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat. The proletarians are, by definition, industrial workers. Therefore, they are people who live in cities, and, consequently, in the formation of the Bolshevik Party in the Soviet Union, it was the cities which became the stronghold of communism; it was the cities which became, in a sense, the fortresses from which the surrounding countryside was dominated. Thus, there developed inevitably, not through the planning or the ideology of the early Bolshevik leaders, like Lenin, but as a result of the social situation, a dominance of the Russians in the party structure of the Soviet Union.

Long ago, the proletarians were relegated to a pedestal as the honorary beneficiaries of the Communist system; actually they were submerged, like all the other working people, in the excesses of the system. Another group has arisen which has, in its turn, become the beneficiary of the system, namely, the intelligentsia, what we would call white-collar workers. These white-collar workers, naturally, like white-collar workers everywhere, are also people who live in cities.

So the Russians, in spite of this changeover from dominance of the proletariat to dominance of the white-collar groups, have also retained their dominant position in the Soviet social structure. Thus you see there is a very intimate connection between the social class to which varying elements in the power structure of the Soviet Union belong and the nationality in which they are born.

Now, I will mention one other factor, too, and we'll come back to this very briefly, later. There's a very close connection between

religion and nationality and social structure. The religion of Russians, per se, is Orthodox, the Russian Orthodox Church, one of the great branches of Christianity. At the time of the revolution, before, of course, the reindoctrination by communism, which is antireligious, the vast bulk of the Russian people were Orthodox, but the bulk of the people in the non-Russian areas were non-Orthodox. Some were Catholic, some were Protestant, and some were Moslem, as we shall see; but there was a tendency for the people who were not Orthodox to be non-Russian and also nonurban. Even some of the dissident Orthodox groups like the Autocephalist Churches had their strongholds in the non-Russian areas. As a result, there has been a high correlation between non-Russian nationality, nonurban social status, and non-Orthodox religious affiliation.

I want to give you a bird's-eye picture of the complexity of nationality distribution in the Soviet Union first. Then we'll let that go for a time and come back to it at the end of the lecture in slightly more detail in relation to just two of the most important ethnic groups.

You see the enormous differentiation of the Soviet population. Each one of these colors is a different nationality. There are about 100 of them. Most of them are of no great significance. But you will note that the larger groups are still very numerous and very widespread. Note that these gray areas (indicating) are areas where there is practically no population at all.

This is a Soviet map. They have arranged it very cleverly so that the non-Russians and the uninhabited areas don't seem to outweigh the Russians in the more thickly inhabited areas. So they left the sparsely inhabited areas gray and showed only the relatively well populated areas as compactly inhabited. But, even so, you get a clear picture of the enormous dimensions of the nationality problem in the Soviet Union.

If you will bear this in mind as I discuss the social classes and then come back to a picture of the nationalities, I think you will have a better grasp of just how difficult the problem is.

Now, turning to the social structure, we don't know how many people there are in the Soviet Union. Neither do the Russians. The whole world, as well as the statements which were released by the Russian leaders themselves, from time to time postulated a population of about 215 million in the Soviet Union prior to 1956. Then, in the spring of 1956, the new annual on statistics for the Soviet Union indicated that

future--namely, urbanization. We don't know exactly what the effects of urbanization are upon the birth rate in the Soviet Union, but they seem to be drastic. My experience in talking to urban people in the Soviet Union and that of many people who are better qualified on this subject than I am, such as Dr. Warren Eason at Princeton University, is that urban families in the Soviet Union tend to be pretty well restricted to two or three children at the most, and then only if they've got an old grandmother to take care of those kids while the mother goes to work. And the more people who enter the urban group in the Soviet Union, the lower the birth rate will tend to be.

But let us turn from this general observation of trends in the Soviet population to a more detailed observation of the trends in specific classes of the population. First, the peasants--as I suggested earlier, the peasantry is traditionally the big group in the Russian lands. Before the revolution, 80 percent of the population lived in rural areas. Not all of them were actual peasants farming the soil, but, if you include the country doctor and the village school teacher and the storekeeper, you had 80 percent living in the villages, an enormous part of the population--about 130 million altogether.

In the 40 years since the revolution, this figure has been reduced to 40 percent. It hasn't been reduced absolutely so much--down to 113 million, but, given the increase in the overall population, the proportion is now down to 40 percent. Still, we know that having 40 percent of the population of a modern industrial state living in the country is quite excessive. It compares to about 20 percent in this country and it indicates that the Soviet Union is not fully utilizing its resources, by keeping such a large group tied up in agricultural production and the ancillary services.

In spite of the huge proportion of the population devoted to agriculture, production returns are not proportionately high. And this is the biggest evidence we have for the fact that the peasantry in the Soviet Union is still the least integrated group in the sense of serving to increase Soviet power. We can deduce from that fact that it is also one of the least satisfied groups in the Soviet Union.

The reasons for this are varied but relatively simple. One is the high proportion of women in the work force on the farms, about two-thirds. They do most of the heavy work on the farms. As you look at them, you can see that they are well capable of handling these heavy tasks. The weak sisters among them have been pretty well weeded out.

Nevertheless, it is obvious that women in heavy industrial labor are not going to turn out as much per capita as the same number of men would. So that is one reason why the agricultural labor force is not as productive as it might be.

The second reason is the relatively low education and skill level of the rural population. They just do not know how to handle the complex machinery which has been introduced on the farm in the Soviet Union. I have myself seen milking sheds which were supposed to be completely mechanized. I have walked in there and have seen two milking machines in operation and the rest hanging on the wall and a bunch of big, husky girls doing the milking chore in place of those machines which broke down, I suppose, some weeks or days earlier, due probably to careless handling.

A third reason, and probably more important than either of the two which I have just mentioned, is the lack of incentive for the peasant to put his best efforts into producing. I won't describe the details of the way in which the peasant is compensated for his labor. It's a rather complicated system, but it boils down to this, that, at the end of the year, whatever is left over after paying off the state is divided up among the peasants on a given farm according to categories of skill in which they are placed, but without any regard to the individual effort of the peasant within each category. As a result, the peasant is quite unable in advance to foresee how much he is going to get in return for his labor on the collectivized sector of the collective farm, and, as a result, he tends to put in just as much time as he can on his own little garden, one-half acre, trying to produce the maximum there, because what he makes there for the most part is his to keep or to sell, and he produces almost all his own food from his half-acre, all except bulk grains. He also has enough to supply the larger part of the vegetables, milk, and eggs, and a good part of the meat which the city dweller gets, leaving the collectivized sector of agriculture to produce only the big crops, such as cotton, livestock, and wheat.

All these factors have led to a diminution of agricultural production, not an absolute or even a relative diminution, but a diminution in comparison with what an advanced technological society like the Soviet Union should produce, and what the United States is producing. They have also led, I am convinced, to a great deal of dissatisfaction among the peasantry.

What about the urban laboring force that once was the aristocracy of Bolshevism? This group is harder to estimate, because we don't

have any exact figures on the number of industrial workers. The Soviet statistics refer to 46 million workers and employees in the economy, but that includes white-collar workers, too, and is not really very revealing. We know that there are 15 million manual laborers in manufacturing alone, however, and we can estimate that the total number is therefore perhaps double that. Most of these workers are of fairly recent peasant origin. They either came to the cities to work, themselves, during the famines of the thirties, or they came later, many of them forcibly inducted into apprentice schools in the late thirties and forties, as part of drafts taken from the farms. Therefore, the workers, too, have a certain residue of peasant mentality which is enhanced by the fact that, in order to supply themselves with the butter, eggs, milk, and vegetables which I referred to earlier, they often, if they live far enough out on the edge of town, have their own private gardens and continue to behave in part as peasants would.

Nevertheless, they are much better educated than the peasantry, and their technical skills are much greater. Recently in many of the cities in the Soviet Union a compulsory high school education has been introduced. This has not as yet affected a great proportion of the Soviet population and will affect fewer because of certain recent changes, but it has certainly tended to make the education level of the proletariat higher than that of the peasantry.

Moreover, there is still some feeling among the workers that they are the elite of the Communist system, a mistaken feeling, by and large, but nevertheless one which tends to make them more sympathetic to the regime than the peasantry, who feel that they have been the oppressed element throughout.

More important, however, than either of these two factors is the influence of the piecework system. We know the attitude of labor unions in this country toward piecework. But, under the "socialism" which prevails in the Soviet Union, piecework is the rule and not the exception. All jobs and all compensation for work are based on output. "From each according to his ability to each according to his output" is the rule in the Soviet Union, and this factor leads a great many of the workers to feel that their advancement in the system depends on their own efforts. I believe that there is considerable sympathy for the system among the more capable and better educated working elements in that country. It attaches them to the regime.

The greatest source of disaffection among the working class of the Soviet Union is the incredibly poor housing conditions. The norm--

and they don't always reach the norm--in the cities is nine square yards of housing per person. That is to say a stretch of room nine feet by nine feet, which means that, if you have a family of four, you can get one good-sized room. As I say, that norm is not always in practice attained. This is one of the largest factors restricting birth rate in the Soviet Union. You just can't have children, or you try not to have them, if you have no place to put them.

Now, we come to the third element in the social composition of the Soviet Union, which I referred to earlier, the intelligentsia, or the white-collar group. It is the most complex of all. It has been, as I indicated, the chief beneficiary of the Soviet system. The man or woman of the working class or of peasant parentage who has risen to a university education and a white-collar job, with an office of his own and with people working for him, feels that he has gained something from that system. Nevertheless, there is a very sharp differentiation internally in this group.

There are, for example, the teachers. Leaving aside professors who are relatively well treated in the Soviet Union, teachers, by and large, are very poorly paid and very poorly compensated in terms of housing and other facilities as well. There are about 1.8 million of them in the Soviet Union, 80 percent of them women--about the same percentage as in this country. That we might expect. Teachers tend to get it in the neck, I suppose, in many parts of the world.

But, strangely enough, the doctors in the Soviet Union are also very poorly treated. There are about 330,000 of them, quite a large group, 80 percent women. They are very low paid. Many of them make no more than an average factory worker, and they have very little prestige. So this group also, in contrast, certainly, to the physicians in the United States, tends to be a dissatisfied group.

Thirdly, we come to the intellectuals, per se--professors in humanities and what social sciences they have, writers, such as Pasternak, artists, actors, and so forth. They are very well treated economically. If a man like Pasternak hews to the party line, he has no material worries at all. He has his apartment in the city and his dacha, his country home, and a car to take him back and forth between the two abodes. And yet they are dissatisfied. I experienced this very strongly, myself, in 1956, when I visited the Soviet Union. Writers would seek me out on park benches, wherever they had any reason to think from

my clothes, or from my having been talking to other Americans, that I was a foreigner, and would tell me how much they disliked the Soviet system, how much they felt that it was cramping their whole intellectual development, keeping them in the vise of conformity--the same expression which we get from all the accounts of Pasternak's experience. This, then, is a group, I believe, which is quite dissatisfied.

So we have the teachers, the physicians, and the intellectuals dissatisfied. One would think that this might be a very serious matter for the Soviet system. But it is not based on teachers, who, after all, have an important job, certainly, but who can be controlled--and the major part of political control is performed by the party and the Communist youth organization and not by the ordinary teacher; not on the doctors, who keep people alive, and, as we know, the Soviet Union has been willing to accept very large losses in human life and doesn't value human life highly; not on the intellectuals, who provide a certain amount of indoctrination, but who otherwise can be dispensed with; but on those who provide the material and political strength of the Soviet system. And these groups among the intelligentsia are those which are most strongly anchored to the Soviet system.

What are they? Well, first are the engineers. Engineers are the big category in the Soviet Union. About 720,000 engineers, graduates with university degrees, are now in the Soviet labor force. Many men, who go through engineering training, do so not only with the idea of actually working as production engineers or planners but also of fitting themselves for higher careers in the party and the state bureaucracy. Ever since Lenin's day, an engineering education has been the golden road to advancement politically; just as a rising young politician in this country gets a law degree, he goes through engineering school in the Soviet Union. He doesn't stick with his engineering practice any more than the lawyer in this country stays with his private practice. He uses it as a springboard for political advancement in many cases.

But they are a highly privileged group and they are very well paid. The only major difficulty experienced with this group in the Soviet Union is getting them to go to outlying areas, to leave the comfort and advantage of the big cities, such as Moscow and Leningrad, and go to outlying areas. That requires a certain amount of compulsion and incurs a certain amount of dissatisfaction. But I think it is a minor factor.

These engineers, from my experience in talking with them--and I think many other people will confirm this--are great advocates of the vastly differentiated pay levels in the Soviet Union which will lead to a

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managerial engineer, and almost all managers in industrial enterprises are engineers by training today, getting, let us say, 50,000 rubles a month--not a vast sum by our standards, \$5,000, but still pretty good pay--whereas the average worker is getting 800 rubles a month, or \$80.

These people will defend ideologically, in heated arguments with the outsider, their right, based on their higher abilities and education, to receive 10 to 20 times as much as the workers they are supervising under "socialism."

A second group is the professional army officers. They are certainly also beneficiaries of the Soviet system, and, in my experience, are quite content with it. There are--I don't know how many, exactly--200,000 or 300,000 of them, after recent cuts in the Soviet Armed Forces. They are well paid, well clothed, and provided with a great many amenities outside of the basic pay rate. They don't have political power; neither do the engineers.

The engineers and the industrial planners, after the downfall of Malenkov, are excluded from political decision-making, even to the extent to which they had such power before, and the army officers, after the ouster of Zhukov, also are in a relatively weak political position. Nevertheless, they know that they are so well compensated, well treated, in comparison to other groups of the population, that they seem to be firmly behind the regime.

Finally we come to the party and state bureaucracy itself, about 500,000 men who certainly are strongly anchored to the system. I don't mean members of the party now. They may or may not be content. I mean those who have paying jobs in the party bureaucracy, many of them with technical training. They, of course, run the system, and they have the advantages of some slight share in power--of course all decisions being made at the top--as well as the advantages of superior treatment.

Now, I said I would relate all this to the ethnic groups. I can't cover all of them, as you can see, if you recall the complexities indicated on the map, so I will restrict myself to two groups--the Ukrainians and the Moslems. Now, let us have a quick look at the Ukraine.

Here with the physical map you can get a better idea. The Ukraine is a relatively small area in the southwest corner of European Russia. But, as you can tell, even from this map, it is not mountainous, and,

being in the European plain, it is relatively well watered. Hence it has an exceptionally high productivity and an exceptionally dense population. There are 41 million people in that one union republic of the Soviet Union. They are not all Ukrainians--75 to 85 percent are, but the statistics are very vague. There are quite a number of Ukrainians throughout other parts of the Soviet Union as well. One-fifth of the agricultural production of the Soviet Union comes from the Ukraine, plus a larger portion of certain of the key sectors of industrial production, such as 37 percent of the steel and 33 percent of the coal. So it is extremely important. It is also important because it lies on the great invasion route of the past, and possibly the future, into the Soviet Union, whether from the West, as in the case of the Germans, or from the South, in the case of the British in the Crimean War.

The Ukrainians are very close to the Russians in many respects. Linguistically, the Ukrainian language, is a Slavic language, religiously, most of them were Orthodox, and, under Khrushchev, they have been taken into partnership, to some extent, with the Russians in ruling the Soviet Union. Khrushchev, himself, is not a Ukrainian, but a great many of his closest henchmen, such as Kirdichenko, are, indeed, true Ukrainians. Nevertheless, the difference in tradition between Ukrainians and Russians has led to a sharp feeling of national distinctiveness in the Ukraine. Part of this is due to the difference in agricultural organization. The mir, the system of communal development of agriculture, which existed throughout most of Russia, was never dominant in the Ukraine. and thus the Ukrainians have resented collectivization much more than the Russians did, and they suffered much more from the great purges which accompanied collectivization.

I think that the Ukrainians realize that their country is richer and would be better off separated from Moscow. The idea that the oppression which they have experienced over the past 40 years has always come from Moscow, I think, is firmly rooted among certain sections of the population, and this group, therefore, tends to view its evil as associated with Russian domination, even when the Russians themselves have also suffered under the Communist system.

At the present time, the main element of opposition throughout the Ukraine, as throughout other parts of the Soviet Union, is to the Communist system as such. But, if this system ever began to break up, if, through external events--because that's the only kind of event which I can imagine could lead to its partial disintegration--the Soviet system were loosened, it seems to me that there is a possibility, only a possibility, that this enormous group of Ukrainians might seek a future under

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its own separate statehood, which is nominally recognized, through membership of the Ukraine in the United Nations even today.

The elements in the Soviet Ukraine, which are most dissatisfied are, again, the peasants, and the peasants form a much larger group in the Ukraine than in the Soviet Union as a whole. Over half of the Ukrainian population is still rural, as compared to only 40 percent, as I mentioned earlier, in the Soviet Union as a whole. And the party membership is much weaker in the Ukraine than in the Soviet Union as a whole. Whereas there is one party member for every 25 people in the Russian republic, there is only one for every 50 people in the Ukrainian republic, and thus the Ukrainians are both benefiting less from the party system and are less attached to it. This provides a potential for resistance. It is a potential factor which may or may not be galvanized. There would have to be the galvanizing element. And, by annexing the non-Orthodox West Ukrainian population in 1939, which had formerly been part of Poland, part of Czechoslovakia, and part of Rumania, the Soviet regime introduced among its Ukrainians a very very disturbing element, namely, the Galician, or West Ukrainian Catholic population, which has bitterly resented Communist domination, particularly the forcible suppression of the Catholic Church. The churches were simply transferred to Orthodox pastors. And the West Ukrainian population has resented the establishment of the collective farm system in that area. Up until 1949, at least, it carried on active guerrilla warfare against the Communist domination and still provides, according to even Soviet accounts, a large element of underground dissatisfaction.

Now we come back to another group which I will survey very rapidly. This is also a potential source of dissatisfaction. This is the Moslem population of the Soviet Union, located here (indicating) in the Ural-Volga region, in the North and East Caucasus regions, and in Central Asia. It looks very large on the map, but actually constitutes only about 21 million people. This group is scattered. It is differentiated, within itself, in terms of language, and there are even some variations in the Moslem religious practice. The Soviet regime has exploited these differences by subdividing the Moslem population into six union republics and four autonomous republics in the Russian republic, and thus has tried to fragment the national and religious consciousness of the Moslem population. This has not, however, been entirely successful because, traditionally, these people are united by their common Islamic tradition, which is vastly different from communism, and because they are united for the most part, by speaking various forms of the Turkic language.

There are many other factors also which lead them to dislike the Soviet system. For example, there are their practices, which are not absolutely part of the Moslem religion, but which are associated with it, of keeping women in a subordinate position--polygamy, child marriages, the wearing of the veil by the women, and so forth. These practices, which you are familiar with, the Soviet Union has tried to do away with, as well as the clan spirit and wearing the dagger in the Caucasus. All these factors have tended to reduce the degree to which the Moslems fit into the Soviet system and have made them unhappy about the Soviet attempts to make them conform. There are feasts, there is fasting, and there is circumcision, even, which are essential parts of the Moslem religion, and the pilgrimages of Mecca. All these things are hindered by the Soviet system, if not absolutely forbidden, and arouse bitter resentment among people who are as inclined to observe traditions as are the Moslems.

The Russians in these areas dominate the cities. They have drawn the rising educated groups among the Moslems into urban intellectual or technical work, and this has tended, no doubt, to make some elements in the Moslem population more satisfied. On the other hand, it may be that this intelligentsia is simply using Russian civilization the way the Indians in India used British civilization, to advance itself to the point at which it is capable, technically and intellectually, of striking out on its own should the occasion arise.

That is, therefore, the broad picture of population in the Soviet Union. What conclusions can we draw from this complex picture? Well, I would list seven of them, and they are generalizations which I offer as my conclusions. I can't guarantee their accuracy.

One is that the size and the rate of growth of the Soviet population, while it is very large, is of the same general order as the population of the United States. The idea that we are going to be overwhelmed by vast hordes of Russians and that the Russian population is going to shoot away ahead of the American population is, I think, an exaggerated one.

The second generalization is that there is great class weakness in the Soviet Union from the point of view of the disaffection of the peasantry, as indicated both by its low productivity and by its degree of dissatisfaction. But this dissatisfaction is inarticulate because the peasants, separated, isolated in their rural areas, are in no position to foment an active movement of opposition.

Thirdly, there is a firm core of perhaps 2 million engineers, managers, bureaucrats, party and army officers in the Soviet Union who are firmly attached to the system, and who feel that they have gained a great deal from it and would lose enormously if it were dissolved. This is probably enough to keep it intact unless it is shattered by some very drastic external event.

The incentive system, fourth, is important enough to keep large elements outside the bureaucratic elite content, as long as the standard of living is rising, as it has been for the past eight years and probably will continue to do.

Fifthly, the national differences are sharpest among groups like the Moslems, which are entirely different from the Russians in tradition, but these groups are not geographically compact, nor culturally are they at the level of the Russians. This leads to certain waste in their employment in the labor force, but it also means that their dissatisfaction cannot be articulated in a strong resistance movement.

The group which would be most effective in resistance to the regime is among the Slavs, particularly the Ukrainians. But the relationship of the Ukrainians to the Russians is ambiguous. On the one hand it is one of opposition because of the features I have indicated. On the other hand it is sharing in the rule of the lesser groups in the Soviet Union.

The sixth point I would make is that the opposition elements, whether among the Ukrainians or the Moslems, or the groups which I did not mention in detail, can be articulated only in time of crisis, as during the Second World War, when, indeed, resistance movements did become prevalent among these groups.

The elements are there, but they are not organized opposition at all, because organized opposition cannot exist under the Soviet system, and no amount of propaganda, or even propaganda combined with dissatisfaction, is likely to articulate these movements unless some decisive crack appears in the Soviet system which makes opposition feasible.

Thus, my concluding point is that, under normal conditions, with maintenance of firm administration, with communication and the military under the firm monopoly of the rulers, the Soviet population is reliable. It also is increasingly efficient as a work force, though it will probably never, on the average, attain the United States level, because of the vast difference in traditions. Impetus of this tradition of peasant behavior and

the diversity among the many population groups tend always to keep the efficiency and the unity of the Soviet population somewhat below that of the United States, on the average, and particularly the inability to solve the agricultural production problem is a reflection of this inefficiency.

Therefore, the only overall conclusion that can be made is that the Soviet Union will increase, will gradually catch up with the United States both in unity and in production but will probably never quite reach it unless some unforeseeable force interferes to break the monolithic control of the government, in which case the whole system may disintegrate very quickly into its component elements.

Thank you.

DR. CLEM: Dr. Armstrong is ready for your questions, gentlemen.

QUESTION: Dr. Armstrong, It seems to me that, in the early campaigns of the Germans in Russia in 1941, the first units of the Red Army that the Germans ran into were regular army units, and these seemed to surrender enthusiastically. Is this support of the regime by the Red Army a new thing?

DR. ARMSTRONG: Positive disaffection was not so widespread; however, it was more widespread then, probably, than now, because the memory of the great purge of 1937, which had decimated the Soviet officer force, was very strong, and many of the officers in command posts, even like Zhukov, at that time had themselves been punished temporarily during that purge, and certainly therefore harbored a certain amount of resentment. Now that is long past. There has been no such large purge of the Soviet army system since then. Even in the overthrow of Zhukov a great many high officers, like Koniev and Malinovsky, sided with Khrushchev, and there seems to have been a certain dislike of Zhukov among the high army officer force.

I base my conclusions as to the present affection of the Soviet officers for the regime in large part upon conversations which I have had myself with quite a number of officers in casual meetings, and those of many other people who have been in the Soviet Union recently. I think our conclusion would be that this group tends to be firmly behind the regime under present circumstances. It could change.

The second question is very broad. It is a very hard one to answer. I think that our radio programs do some good. The Voice of America and Radio Liberation. I think they might do more good if they had more money, particularly broadcasts to non-Russian groups in non-Russian

languages, which have been cut back severely recently. These keep alive a feeling that there is interest in the problems of the oppressed groups in the Soviet Union. They keep alive a feeling that there is some alternative potentially in the future to Soviet rule.

Our very encouragement of the emigre groups who come across the line is also a great factor in keeping alive the feeling of an alternative to the Soviet system. We made the horrible mistake, as I think you all know, in the period immediately after the war, of turning back hundreds of thousands of Soviet citizens who tried to get away, to Soviet control. Now the idea, I think, has trickled across that we are not pursuing that policy any more.

These, however, are only factors which potentially keep alive the seeds of discontent in the Soviet Union. They do not mean that there is going to be a revolution or that a revolution would be practical at all as long as the monopoly of communications and power is retained by the Soviet ruling group.

QUESTION: In your travels to the Soviet Union, sir, can you tell us what you observed about the mobility of the people? Can they go from one place to Siberia without permits?

DR. ARMSTRONG: I think the laughter indicates that the problem is not going to Siberia but returning. I talked to one high Soviet official, and he said, "You know we have a saying in Russia that all good things come in three. You made two trips to the Soviet Union and you covered the western part on the first trip and you are covering Central Asia on this trip. Maybe you will want to go to Siberia on the third trip." I said, "Well, I'm not quite sure about that."

But, as far as the Soviet citizen himself goes, mobility today is relatively great. The restrictions, as you know, probably, on moving from one job to another, have nominally been lifted. There are still great incentives for sticking to the job. You lose your pension rights if you leave without notice, for example. One is no longer bound to his job legally. On the other hand, there was, at least in 1956, a legal provision against moving to many large cities, such as Leningrad, Moscow, and Kiev, and I have known foreign visitors--it almost happened to me--being picked up by the police just as soon as they landed in one of those cities, if they were not met by the intourist agents. I have seen people stopped on the edge of Moscow and crossexamined by the police as to why they were coming into town.

There is an effort, a logical effort, in certain respects, in view of the housing shortage, to keep people from moving to the cities. The movement within rural districts, and movement of people from one city to another on vacation is not so limited any more. It is very hard to say how much free movement actually goes on, but it is apparently fairly large. You do meet a large number of ordinary people who are not on government orders who are traveling about for vacation or for family reasons.

QUESTION: Dr. Armstrong, can you tell us to what extent the prerevolution intelligentsia managed to survive and perpetuate itself in the present elite?

DR. ARMSTRONG: Statistically I don't know. If one looks at the individuals involved, we certainly find that some have been able to perpetuate themselves. For example, Pasternak's father was an artist, and Pasternak is certainly a member of the intellectual class today. I have run across numerous instances of that. I would say that a much higher proportion of the children of the old intelligentsia are in the intelligentsia today than are those of the working and peasant classes. When we consider that the intelligentsia was a very small group in old Russia and that the intelligentsia today is quite a large group, it is evident that this survival, this biological survival, if I may put it that way, is swamped by the influx of the newly educated sons of peasants and workers. Most of the people whom one talks to who are not opposed to the regime take great pride in pointing out that their fathers were workers or peasants. They wanted to know what my father was, to satisfy themselves that there is no such opportunity in this country of moving up in the class structure.

QUESTION: I think these are both very simple questions. The first is: Who, exactly, are the Byelorussians that are represented in the United Nations? The second is: How about Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania? Are they still trouble spots? Are they still places where we might expect the people who live there to be troublemakers for the Soviet regime?

DR. ARMSTRONG: Let's have a look at the large slide. (Map.) It's always better to locate these specifically. Here we have the Baltic group. Here is Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. And here is Byelorussia (indicating) a much larger group, about 8 million. The others are about 2 million apiece.

The Byelorussians are very close to the Great Russians, or Russians, as I prefer to call them, in language and in tradition. They are Orthodox.

The Byelorussian language is not very different from the Russian language, and almost all Byelorussians, in my experience--I spent some time in Minsk, the capital of the country--speak Russian, not Byelorussian. Only the peasants speak Byelorussian.

This group is the most closely incorporated into the Russians of all the non-Russian groups. Nominally they are given a certain amount of national privilege. They have their own newspapers in Byelorussian, and supposedly they have certain classes at the university in the Byelorussian language. I didn't see much of that. I visited the university, and everybody seemed to be speaking Russian. I would say that the Byelorussians are really not much different from Russians, except that they are very predominantly peasants, and, as peasants, they share the dissatisfactions that the other peasant groups do.

The Baltic nations, on the other hand, are in a different position. They were incorporated only in 1940, and were very drastically treated. They are non-Russian by language and non-Russian by religion. They are either Protestants--Lutherans, mostly--or Roman Catholics in Lithuania, and these groups, therefore, have a great deal of reason to resent the regime. The regime knew it. It simply took them off in large numbers, especially the intellectual groups, which might have served as a focus for discontent. For example, an army unit was set up in Latvia in 1940. Officers of the old Latvian Army were told that they would be recruited and given positions in the new Soviet Latvian Army. When the unit was formed it was put on trains and taken to Northern Siberia. Accounts have come through to us of one group which rebelled there. They were surrounded and shot down.

How many of these people actually survive in the Baltic countries it is very hard to say. In 1956 I was in Riga, the capital of Latvia, in the airport, and also in the Vilnyus airport, but I wasn't allowed to leave these airports. I would say that probably at least a quarter of the population of these countries is now Russian. The Russians have been moved in sufficient numbers, especially military and police units, to hold down the 6 million people--probably now only 4 or 5 million--the natives who remain in the area. Therefore, although undoubtedly discontent is higher among this group than almost any other group in the Soviet Union, I don't see that they have any chance to exert active opposition.

QUESTION: Doctor, in your travels, to what extent did you find that the Russians were using the German scientists, and how is that influencing their industry?

DR. ARMSTRONG: I didn't find any German scientists. I made a special effort to get in touch with Germans. I got a German haircut in Bonn in 1956, before I went into the country. I speak German fluently. I studied in Germany and I am familiar with the country. I was occasionally mistaken for a German as I traveled about the Soviet Union. I was very well treated by Russians who knew Germans, surprisingly enough. But I never ran across any actual Germans except of course visitors from East and West Germany. The scientists are kept under wraps and it is very hard to know just what influence they have exerted. Certainly you can find people who are better informed on that subject than I am.

But I do feel that at the present time the Russians have learned most of what they needed to learn from the Germans and are capable of going ahead on their own. There is, I think, a segment of the Russian engineering and scientific personnel which is very good, judging from my conversations, but judging more from conversations of people who are technically equipped to understand these things. There is that group of highly trained scientists and engineers who are as good as those anywhere else in the world. And I think they are capable of going ahead with the sputnik and the missile without continued German support, although they no doubt use certain Germans still.

The real question is whether this group is large enough to be effective in case of a major defense effort, or war effort, on the part of the Soviet Union. What I mean is, as you know, we devote about 10 percent of our national income to defense at the present time, and the Russians probably devote at least twice that much of theirs. Now, using 10 or 20 percent of their national income, they can produce first-rate missiles, aircraft, and so forth, by using the very cream of their technicians, their industrial facilities, and their scientists. If they had to go down and use 20 percent more, let us say, making a total of 40 percent, of their industrial output, as they would have to, certainly, in case of war, I doubt that the next 20 percent would be as effective in producing these highly complex and delicate scientific weapons which are the decisive factor today.

I am not a scientist or an engineer or a military man, and that is a guess on my part. But it is a factor to ponder over, I think.

DR. CLEM : Gentlemen, I regret that our time has run out and we have a lot to do this morning. Dr. Armstrong, I think I speak for

everyone here when I say that that was a very scholarly and comprehensive coverage of that subject.

We all want to thank you for coming here and talking to us.

DR. ARMSTRONG: Thank you.