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# ETHNIC AND SOCIAL FACTORS IN NATIONAL STRENGTH: THE U. S. S. R.

Dr. John A. Armstrong

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Reviewed by: Colonel J. H. M. Smith, USAF

Date: 5 December 1960

INDUSTRIAL COLLEGE OF THE ARMED FORCES

WASHINGTON, D. C.

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7 November 1960

CONTENTS

Page

INTRODUCTION--Lieut. Colonel R. P. de Camara, USA, Member of the Faculty, Industrial College of the Armed Forces.... 1

SPEAKER--Dr. John A. Armstrong, Professor of Political Science and Executive Secretary of the Russian Area Studies Program, University of Wisconsin..... 2

GENERAL DISCUSSION..... 24

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Reporter: Ralph W. Bennett

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COL. DE CAMARA: Thus far in our studies in Unit III we have looked at the effect of cultures on different nations of the world. For the most part, though, we have generally concentrated on either our own nation or on that large bloc of countries which we sometimes refer to as underdeveloped or newly emerging. This leaves us a huge gap or void, namely, in the Communist countries of the world.

You probably have heard the wishful thought that one of these days the people will rise up and throw off their Communist yoke. Recall from today's reading that when we speak of the peoples of the Soviet Union we're talking of more than 40 nationalities, speaking more than 150 different languages and dialects.

If we had sufficient knowledge and understanding of the cultures and backgrounds of these people, we probably would be in a much better position to predict what they would do in the future. But we don't. As Winston Churchill said, Russia is a riddle, wrapped in a mystery, inside an enigma.

[redacted], to help us fill this gaping void, we have with us today an expert on the culture of the Soviet Union. He has traveled extensively throughout the U.S.S.R., and, possibly even more important, he has come back to talk about it.

It's a distinct pleasure and a privilege for me to introduce to this

Class of 1961 Dr. John A. Armstrong, of the University of Wisconsin. Dr. Armstrong.

DR. ARMSTRONG: Thank you, Colonel.

Gentlemen, the subject which we have today is a very broad one, as Colonel de Camara suggested when he mentioned the forty nationalities in the Soviet Union; and I don't intend to take up all forty in series. However I want to make several points this morning which I think will clarify your understanding of the complexity of the society of the Soviet Union.

This complexity is closely related to the intermingling of social and ethnic problems in the Soviet Union; and therefore I treat at once the class divisions of the Soviet Union and the nationality divisions as overlapping elements which serve to show us the strengths and the weaknesses of the fabric of society in the U.S.S.R.

Now for a few introductory remarks on this point before I give you more detail.

The peasantry in the Soviet Union is, of course, composed of members of all forty nationalities in the Soviet Union--Russians and non-Russians. But it is a fact that the Russians, the master race, shall we say, of the Soviet Union, constitute most of the urban dwellers. The city people of the Soviet Union are mostly Russians. There are other small nationalities which are also primarily urban, particularly the Jews and the Trans-Caucasians. I will not have time, unfortunately, to deal with these very interesting groups very much in my talk. If anyone wants to raise questions later about the Jews and the Trans-

Caucasians, I will be glad to address myself to them, however. Both these groups are urban, and have a high percentage of scientific workers and of party members.

Hence the cities, with their educated groups, their party membership, and the proletariat--the working, laboring class in the factories--have constituted from the beginning of the Soviet regime the stronghold, the fortress, of the Communist system in the U.S.S.R. Today the so-called intelligentsia, which is better translated as white-collar workers, those who work with their brains rather than with their hands, rather than as intellectuals in our sense of the term, also fall by and large into this category of the urban Russian and other groups. And, except for the Jews and the Trans-Caucasians, they are predominantly Russians.

Now, there's another facet that is very interesting here and which I'm sure you have heard and read a great deal about; namely, the relationship of religion to the Soviet system. And it turns out when you examine the class and nationality structure of the Soviet Union, that you find there is also a close correlation between early religious origins of the people and their urban and nationality distribution.

Of course, as you know, the Communist regime is an atheist regime. The most active elements in the Soviet system today are, therefore, anti-religious. Still, there is a hang-over, shall we say, a tradition of religious affiliation in the Soviet Union which is closely correlated to ethnic factors.

The Russians are almost wholly by historical background Orthodox, Eastern Orthodox; and they stand over against the non-Orthodox elements of the Soviet population, who are predominantly rural, non-urban.

Moreover, we have good reason to believe that religion has persisted to a much greater extent in the rural areas than in the urban areas. We find this phenomenon to some extent even in our own country--that the rural population tends to be more religious than the city population; and this is far more the case in a rapidly evolving society like the Russian society.

And so you have a triple correlation here, of religion, nationality, and class structure, which I propose to develop in greater length in relation to a few of the major divisions in the Soviet system.

Before going to that, I will say a few words about the general demographic position of the Soviet Union. This I need not develop in great detail, because in the report of the Joint Economic Committee of the Congress you have abundant statistics and more elaborate analysis than I could hope to present in the brief time that we have available. And I hope that you have examined this article with considerable care.

To summarize very briefly its major points, however: In the census of January, 1959, the first census held in the Soviet Union in two decades, it turned out there were approximately 209 million in the Soviet Union, as compared to an American population of 177 million as of that date.

The natural increase of the Soviet population in 1959 and 1958 was

slightly greater than that of the United States. This has led some reports, for example, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Report, to indulge in what seems to me rather fanciful speculation about the comparative growth rates in population of the two countries.

Actually, more stringent analyses, such as that in the Joint Economic Committee report, suggest that, while the Russian population is growing at a slightly greater rate than that of the American today, this will not be a long-range phenomenon, for, as the population in the Soviet Union ages--a natural process due to the fact that, as far as we can anticipate, there will be no more catastrophic losses in the Soviet population--it will tend to resemble the American population more; and thus, there being fewer persons in the child-producing age range, the proportion of births in the Soviet Union will drop, and thus the natural increase in the Soviet population will in all likelihood within the next decade very closely approximate, or possibly fall slightly below, that of the United States. And we may, I think, anticipate that ten years from now the difference of approximately 30 million between the American and the Soviet population will be about the same as it is today.

This is especially the case because of the entry into the child-bearing age in this decade of the women, the girls, who were born during the Second World War, when there was a very low birth rate, of course, in Russia and when, therefore, there will not be many new women entering this child-producing category; and that will, of course, cut down the

total birth rate in the Soviet Union.

Another point that is made in the Joint Economic Committee report that you should observe very closely is the present disparity in the 30- to 50-age category between women and men. There are about twice as many women as men in that category, which we consider ordinarily our most active and productive age group. This is an almost fantastic situation. It arises, of course, from the enormous war losses in the Soviet Union among men during the war in military service; and also very likely from the fact that Stalin seemed to prefer to send men rather than women to the concentration camps.

Now, at the same time there is another very important point that we should mention in regard to the overall population structure, namely, the fact that the age group which is now 18, and those which will be entering the 18-year-old age category and older during the next five years, is going to be very low, because of the enormous war losses. As far as the sex ratio is concerned, it makes no difference, because the low birth rate in the war ages naturally affected both sexes equally. But it makes a tremendous difference in the overall Soviet military manpower.

At the present time the Soviet Union has 9 or 10 million more men of military age than the United States does. But it is estimated that within five years, approximately, this disparity is going to decline to 3 million--3 million excess military manpower in the Soviet Union over the United States.

Now, I point out only one implication of that at the moment. You

know that the period of the next two or three years, then, in which the Soviet Union will have this great excess of military manpower available, happens by chance to coincide with the period ~~is~~ of the so-called missile gap. It is, in other words, a very favorable constellation of forces for the Soviet Union, in which they have an excess of 8, 9, 10 million men available for military power, plus a temporary lead in certain forms of military equipment. I point this out only as a caution to indicate the fact that it may be that the next three years are the time for the Soviet Union to wave its ~~success~~ ROCKETS.

Now, turning from the general demographic picture to the division of the Soviet Union into classes, we first observe the peasant class. Before the Revolution, and as late in fact as 1928, 80 percent of the Soviet population lived in rural areas. Not all were actual farmers, peasants; but they all lived in the villages. Now, the rural population in the Soviet Union is reduced to 52 percent--still a very high proportion when we consider how small the farm population is today in the United States and other highly industrialized countries--nevertheless a considerable reduction of the load of dwellers in the villages.

Working peasants in the Soviet Union today constitute approximately 40 percent of the total labor force, although, to be sure, most of the peasant workers are women and children in their teens. And thus the Soviet Union faces a great drain on its working force capacity by the necessity to retain such a large proportion in agricultural work, which is performed in the United States by less than 15 percent of the total work-

ing population. And, despite this tremendous diversion of manpower--or womanpower, if you like--to agricultural work, the Soviet Union still finds, as we all know, that its agricultural production has lagged enormously.

The difficulties in agricultural production in the Soviet Union are intimately related to the social and ethnic problems which we are confronting today. The women, the children, and indeed the peasant men, who lack high education and urban sophistication, find difficulty in handling complex modern machinery. That is one source of the lag in agricultural production.

A second reason is the lack of incentive arising from the workday system. Under the workday system, essentially, the agricultural worker is paid not according to his actual working capacity, but in accordance with a highly artificial system by which he is put in a standard category regardless of his own efficiency.

Now, recently Khrushchev has tried to move in the direction of instituting regular wage rate pay for the farm workers. But so far this has been confined to a very small proportion of the agricultural population--about 10 percent--less than 5 percent as of now. And these persons who are paid on a straight salary basis get an average of 10 to 12 rubles a day. The ruble is worth 10 cents. They are not highly paid; in other words, about a dollar a day for agricultural work.

Consequently, the peasant in the Soviet Union tends to devote as little energy and as little time as possible to working on the so-called

collectivized sector of the farm; and, instead, concentrates his major efforts on his own private garden--an area of about one acre which is allotted to him for his personal use. And it is a remarkable fact that 30 percent of the food produced in the Soviet Union is still produced on these little acre plots that lie behind the peasant huts, and only 70 percent therefore on the whole socialized sector of agriculture in the Soviet Union.

Moreover, in the critical category of meat products, which is one of the most lagging aspects of Soviet agriculture, 60 percent of meat is produced by the peasants on their private plots--chicken yards, hogs, and maybe a cow and a few sheep. They produce 60 percent of all the meat produced in the Soviet Union.

This is an example of the failure of the Soviet system to integrate the peasantry. It is the best evidence we have, I believe, that the peasantry is not wholly indoctrinated, not fully drawn into the Soviet system. It is very difficult for us to get direct evidence about the peasant feelings. For one thing, visitors to the Soviet Union are not ordinarily allowed to go out to farms except under strict escort.

I went out myself to several farms at different times. On one occasion I got separated from the guide on a collective farm, and immediately an old peasant woman ran up to me and began to ply me with questions about what the state of the peasants was in the United States. I barely got started explaining to her--it was a somewhat difficult process because she spoke a local dialect, of course, and my Russian wasn't quite up to a rapid exchange on this subject--when the chairman of the

collective farm came running back, grabbed me by the arm, and hustled me away and shooed her off into the distance, so that I couldn't have this kind of personal contact with the peasants.

So we have to derive our primary information about the nature of peasant attitudes from this indirect evidence of the fact that they just don't put out. They don't put out in work on the collectivized sector of agriculture.

We can derive evidence of the lack of full incorporation of the peasantry into the Soviet system from another indirect sign of evidence, namely, the very low party membership in the farms. Only 2 percent of the farmers in the Ukraine, where we have statistical evidence, are members of the Communist Party, as compared to about 10 percent of the urban working population. And thus the party, which is the heart of Soviet indoctrination and control, is very weakly represented in the villages.

When we turn to the city, as I have already suggested in general, we confront quite a different picture, particularly when we look at the laboring class, the industrial workers. There are about 30 million industrial laborers in the Soviet Union today, of whom over 15 million are engaged in manufacturing operations alone. The party membership in this group, in contrast to the very low party membership in the peasant areas, is about 5 to 10 percent. It's 5 percent in the Ukraine, where we have exact statistics; but that is a rather low party membership area anyway, as I shall indicate later. Thus the party has a stronger grip

on the working class.

A majority of these industrial workers are of peasant origin. Sixty percent of the working class that moved to the cities during the thirties, according to one calculation, came from the rural areas. They were forced to migrate by starvation basically, which accompanied the collectivization of agriculture; and by forcible drafts of apprentice youths to work in the factories.

Even now many of them remain vestigially attached to the land by keeping small gardens on the outskirts of the city. And to some extent it is therefore proper to regard the industrial worker in the Soviet Union as half peasant by mentality. Nevertheless, they are much better educated than the peasant.

For a time in the cities there was compulsory ten-year schooling. This was introduced in the middle 50's and was abolished in 1958. But a certain proportion of the present generation of young industrial workers in the Soviet Union, therefore, have a high school education, though now most are required to leave at the age of 14 for jobs.

They prefer urban conditions. I think there's no doubt about it that the man who lives in the city--the industrial worker or anyone else for that matter--feels he is superior and that he enjoys superior conditions. Well, this is understandable. The life in the city is typical of every advanced country in the world--the movies, the bright lights. They attract these farm boys. We had an old song that you probably can remember about this in relation to getting back on the farm after the First

World War.

But the attitude in the Soviet Union of going to the city, of becoming adjusted to the urban environment, tends to develop support for the regime, because it tends to make the working man feel that he has raised himself in social status by moving to town, and that he owes his advancement to the fact that the Soviet regime has made industrialization possible, and has made transfer from the backward agricultural districts to urban life a reality for him.

Nevertheless, there is considerable tendency today in the Soviet Union for the laboring class to drift away from active participation in work; and the development of the so-called comradely courts, to curb idleness is one aspect of the effort of the regime to overcome this.

Equally important is the extremely poor housing which prevails in the cities. The official allotment is nine square yards per person. Generally this works out to one big room per family. And this, of course, causes great dissatisfaction. It causes dissatisfaction among the white collar workers, the so-called intelligentsia, as well as the working class.

On the other hand, this group has been the chief beneficiary of the Soviet regime in many respects. Some of its elements, particularly teachers and physicians, are not well paid and are not well represented in party membership. But the intelligentsia also include large elements which form, in my opinion, the backbone of the Soviet control system.

Among these particularly are production specialists--engineers. For generations, engineering training has been the key, the golden road,

to success careerwise in the Soviet system. Today there are 720,000 engineers in the Soviet Union, plus an approximately equal number of technically trained specialists who are not university graduates. They are favored in party membership. They are favored in pay. Frequently an engineer, directing a shop in a Soviet factory, will make ten times as much as the average worker under him. They are, of course, proud of their position. They are proud of the part they have played in building the rapid Soviet technological and industrial advances. And they are especially attached, naturally, to these high-paid and privileged differentials which they enjoy.

Today there has been some tendency, as I have already suggested, to cut back on the training of persons in higher education. Still the engineer is favored in the Soviet system, and will be, I think, because of his obvious utility to a society which is developing rapidly both in industry and in military production. Most managers in the Soviet Union are drawn from engineers rather than from among lawyers and accountants, as they are in this country.

Then, of course, there are the professional military officers. That is a very important class in the Soviet Union and one which has very high privileges. You ride on a train in the Soviet Union and you find about half of the first-class compartments are occupied by men in uniform--Navy, Army, and MVD officers. These men have many privileges. And, of course, they have the satisfaction of a career which is very highly regarded in terms of prestige in the Soviet Union.

Today they face some difficulties, such as the demobilization of large numbers of military officers which have become surplus after the moderate reduction in the force levels of the Soviet military. But I would estimate that today there are still two to three hundred thousand professional military officers in the Soviet Union; and that they constitute one of the most important bulwarks of the Soviet system.

Then we come, of course, to the party and state bureaucracy--the real ruling class of the Soviet system--not the party membership, which may or may not constitute access to positions of real power, but the 200,000 full-time party officials, and approximately 300,000 state officials, which work in close conjunction with them.

These men today, in the younger generation at least, are very frequently men with technical engineering training. For example, Leonid Brezhnev, who is now the state head in the Soviet Union, the titular head, was an engineer by training and early work. And so is Kozlov, for that matter, the second most powerful figure perhaps in the party today. They are, therefore, in intimate contact with the engineering and with the military, who are, of course, also well educated professionally. And together, these groups, very small in number in comparison to the total population, but in all the key positions of Soviet life, tend to constitute the real strength of the Soviet system.

On the other hand, we have the humanistically trained intellectuals--writers, poets, actors, and some kinds of scholars, for example, in literature and history--who are dissatisfied with the Soviet system, although

they too enjoy great privileges, because of the enormous weight of rigid controls upon their intellectual activities. But compared to the iron core of party state officials, military officers, and production managers, these humanistically trained intellectuals constitute a relatively insignificant and impotent group.

Now, I promised to relate this picture to the ethnic situation in the Soviet Union. I will not attempt to do it for all the ethnic groups, as I have already pointed out. It would be impossibly complex. But I'll take up the two most important categories, in my opinion. First, the Ukrainians.

The Ukrainians occupy a key position, because of the size of the Ukraine, which is as large as Texas; its strategic location on the traditional invasion routes from either the south or the west; and because of its great economic output. Approximately 25 percent of the Soviet steel production and of its agricultural production is produced in the Ukraine.

Now, there are 42 million people in that country, a fifth of the Soviet population. To be sure, only 76 percent of them are Ukrainians. Other Ukrainians, five million more, are scattered throughout the Soviet Union. And there is a tendency among the Ukrainians to abandon their own language in favor of Russian. Nevertheless, they are a compact ethnic group. They are close to the Russians in many respects.

The East Ukrainians are traditionally of Orthodox religion. On the other hand, there is a core of dissension in the Ukraine, arising in part from religious differences. The West Ukrainians, in the area incorporated

from Poland in 1939, are predominantly Roman Catholics. They have been sharply persecuted by the Soviet regime since the war, and their reaction has been violent nationalism, expressed in actual partisan warfare against the Soviet Union, at least until 1949.

Now, today this element of Ukrainians, disaffected from the Soviet system, moves about the whole Ukraine; and there is evidence of an indirect and not very satisfactory nature that they propagate the idea of opposition between the Ukraine and Russia among the great mass of their co-nationalists throughout the East Ukraine. They are, in other words, a disturbing element in the Soviet system, which the Soviet Union took in because it felt it wanted to get all Ukrainians under its control. But it has in a sense taken in a Trojan horse.

There are other elements of dissatisfaction with Russia for this group to play upon. For example, there is a long tradition in East Ukraine of a separate Orthodox church--the Autocephalous Church, it is called--which is distinct from the Moscow Patriarchy. This also was brutally suppressed by the Soviet regime in the thirties and later. But the memory of this independent religious organization is a factor which tends to break the seeming unity of the Orthodox tradition which has united the Ukraine and Russia.

The party membership is relatively weak in the Ukraine. Only about half as many Ukrainians as Russians are in the party organization proportionately.

More important, however, perhaps than any of these factors that

I have mentioned is the difference in tradition--tradition of cultural life and tradition of economic organization. This is especially true in agriculture, which, I have already pointed out, is the weakest spot classwise in the Soviet structure. And here we have a conversion, you see, of ethnic and class friction in the Soviet system, because the Ukrainian farmer traditionally was a much more independent character than his Russian counterpart.

You have heard probably of the "mir," the communal system of village management of agriculture, which existed for centuries in Eastern Europe. This was not widespread in the Ukraine, in comparison with Russia, where it was the predominant form of agricultural life. And, of course, the mir formed the natural transitional form in many respects to the present collective farm. But, since it was absent in the Ukraine, the transition was not so easy. And, in fact, the collectivization of agriculture in the early thirties was a far bloodier, costlier business than it was in the Russian areas in general.

The Ukrainian farms were more prosperous. The so-called kulak class of fairly well-off, independent farmers was much more numerous proportionately in the Ukraine. In fact, it is probable that a majority of the Ukrainian peasants were classed as kulaks by the Communists in the thirties. Millions of these were dispossessed after they passively resisted collectivization, and millions starved to death. It is estimated that as many as three million Ukrainian farmers may have starved to death between 1930 and 1933, when the regime simply took their farms and their produce

and left them to scrape up what they could; and others were exiled to Siberia.

Now, this memory of Communist oppression, which is identified with Moscow, the great Russian center, is still strong in the Ukraine. Even Soviet sources indicate this indirectly. It is, then, a source of nagging dissatisfaction with the Soviet system. Combined with linguingistic and the religious differences, which I have already cited, it forms a constant substratum of friction toward the Soviet system.

Now, that is, of course, a latent factor only. It is not something that is going to lead to a revolution on the Hungarian model. I would be very reluctant to give that impression. I think it is quite impossible that that kind of revolution can break out under Soviet conditions. And if it did, it would be quite ineffective.

But there is a group in the Ukraine, consisting mainly of intellectuals of peasant origin in the East Ukraine, and these West Ukrainian nationalists, who serve as a potential galvanizing force for national cleavage. And the power of their potential force resides in the fact that the peasantry, which still constitutes the majority of the population in the Ukraine, is dissatisfied on traditional and economic grounds.

What might happen is, of course, a matter of sheer speculation. But if we can imagine a situation in which this overriding totalitarian control system were broken, if only temporarily, through some catastrophe, the power of Soviet repressive organs was relaxed, the tight monopoly of communications at present exercised by the party was broken,

then we can imagine that, as during the Second World War happened in fact, the nationalist sentiment in the Ukraine might offer an alternative to the present Communist organization which would, if properly developed, rapidly lead to a spirit of cleavage from Russia, and thus lend a helping hand in the further disintegration of the Soviet system.

So much for these things. Now to turn very briefly to another, much more widely scattered group, which I think is second most important in the ethnic composition of the Soviet Union. The Moslem population occupies this vast central area of the Soviet Union (indicating on map) from the upper Volga down to the borders of China and Afghanistan and most of the north Caucasus and east Caucasus area. It's a group sharply divided among itself into many different nationalities, but all united by a common Moslem heritage.

The Soviet Union has deliberately played upon their national distinctions, but it has not succeeded, I believe, in completely eliminating the idea of Moslem difference from the invading Europeans of Russian origin predominantly. The Russians dominate in the cities. They have tried to draw in the educated classes of the Moslems. But the bulk of the Moslem population, just as in the case of the Ukraine, is still peasants; and they cling to the old customs, sometimes customs, such as the suppression of women--keeping women in an inferior position--which have nothing to do directly with the Moslem religious tradition, but which, nevertheless, are historically closely associated with it.

These factors, which, of course, communism has opposed, lead

to resentment on the part of the Moslems. For example, the efforts of the Soviet Union to bring women to work in the factories seem to be bitterly resented by the men in Moslem areas. The efforts in the north Caucasus to eliminate the wearing of the dagger, the tradition sign of male virility, are resented. And, of course, the deliberate interference with the propagation of the Moslem religion, cutting off, except for a token representation, the flow of pilgrims to Mecca. The reduction of mosques to a few out-of-the-way, insignificant religious houses of worship. These have undoubtedly contributed to a feeling of dissatisfaction among the Moslem population.

The big question, which I cannot answer here, and which you will hear many opinions about, is whether the rising young generation of Moslem intellectuals feels this resentment. There are those who will say, "Yes, it does. Like the Indians under the Indian Empire, they go to the Russian schools. They learn russian. They become drawn into the social and managerial class of the Russians among them in order to learn the skills which will one day enable them, they hope, to secure independence for their own nationality from the Europeans." This is one opinion. It may or may not be correct.

There are others who feel that this group of Moslem intellectuals, the young men, are genuinely attached to communism, and feel that it has contributed much to their country.

I cannot answer that question, because it's very hard. I've traveled through these areas, but I don't speak the Turkish languages, which

the Moslems employ for the most part; and therefore my communication had to be with these Moslems mostly through Russian interpreters, who, of course, are not reliable for getting the subtle nuances of feeling about the regime. But I throw it out as a possibility.

Nationalism in the non-European areas, the opposition to the European white man, as we all know, is one of the major forces in the world today. It would be surprising if this force does not attract the Asians in Russian Central Asia and the Caucasus of Moslem extraction, as it does Moslems and Asians throughout the rest of the continent.

Now in the brief remaining time to draw a few conclusions about the ethnic and social situation within the Soviet Union.

First, I would note that the Soviet population is large, and it is increasing; but this increase is of the same order as that of the United States. The idea that we are going to be overwhelmed by vast hordes of Russians, rapidly increasing at a rate greater than that of our own population is, fortunately, a fantasy.

The second point: As an economic and social group, it is unquestionable, I believe, that the peasants constitute the most dissatisfied element in the Soviet Union, although, as I have indicated, our evidence on this score, is mainly indirect. They are, however, inarticulate, separated, isolated from one another and from other elements of the Soviet population and are in no position to carry out an active opposition, though their passive resistance to increased productiveness is an important drain upon the Soviet system.

Thirdly, the intellectuals in the Soviet system constitute the weakest of the social groups--the intellectuals, as I have indicated, with humanistic training. At the same time, however, they constitute a potential for articulate opposition which does not exist among most other classes in the Soviet Union. This potential is enhanced by the fact that a great many of the intellectuals are, as I have indicated, of non-Russian origin; and they have a deep attachment to their national tradition of distinctness from the Russians. Thus, in a moment of crisis they might, as they did in many places in the Second World War, constitute a galvanizing element for the vast inarticulate mass of the peasantry, particularly where non-Russian nationality coincides with peasant status.

Fourth, however, there is a firm core of perhaps two million managers, engineers, bureaucrats, party and military officers who have a deep interest in maintaining the Communist system and a deep pride in its accomplishments; and they are the backbone which in normal circumstances cannot, I believe, be broken.

The incentive system--to take up a fifth point--constitutes a strong reason for other large elements of the Soviet social order, particularly the industrial workers, to remain loyal to the system. The material incentives, the urbanization, have attracted these very large elements, growing elements, to believe that the Soviet system has in fact brought great benefits to them.

The sixth point: The Moslems differ most sharply from the Russians

in ethnic and historical background; but they are not geographically compact; nor are most of them culturally advanced. This leads them to act as a drain upon the Soviet system in terms of manpower. The 23 million Moslems are not equivalent to 23 million Europeans in terms of industrial or military or economic effectiveness. On the other hand, scattered as they are, they hardly constitute a potentiality for great effective resistance.

The Ukrainians, to take up the seventh point, in this regard are stronger, because they are more numerous and much more compact, and much more advanced in cultural and educational qualities. On the other hand, they are closely related to the Russians ethnically; and therefore their position in regard to the Russians, in spite of the galvanizing factors I have noted before, is essentially at the present moment an ambiguous one.

The eighth point I would like to make is that any national opposition, or class opposition for that matter, in the Soviet Union, can be articulated only in a period of national crisis. As long as the totalitarian system of control, monopoly of power, monopoly of communication, remains intact in the Soviet Union, no rebellion is feasible; and even an incipient rebellion seems to me quite unlikely.

The ninth point I would make is that under these circumstances, under normal conditions of firm administration, the Soviet population is reliable. It is a reliable element, a reliable base, for Soviet foreign policy. And it will become increasingly efficient as educational levels rise, as urbanization increases, although probably because of the diversity

in traditions and background, and the drag of the large rural population, the Soviet Union population will never attain the American per capita level of efficiency and production, especially in agriculture.

Therefore, in conclusion, I would say that the Soviet Union will probably gain on the United States, but never quite catch up in terms of overall efficiency. Assuming the United States makes a concerted effort to improve its gross national output and military capacity, the countries are likely to proceed at very slowly converging rates of military and economic effectiveness. But if some unforeseeable catastrophic force should break the monolithic control which the Soviet regime exerts at the present time, it is possible that there could be a very rapid, cumulative disintegration of the Soviet system into its component elements.

COLONEL DE CAMARA: Gentlemen, Dr. Armstrong is ready for the first question.

QUESTION: Dr. Waters in his report spoke about the Russians trying to break up that Moslem bloc in central Asia by migration of Russians--bringing them in to occupy new farms and take over new industrial projects. To what extent have they been successful in changing the character of that area by Russian migration?

DR. ARMSTRONG: That's a good point. I am not able to offer precise statistics, although they can be derived at the present time by careful analysis of the 1959 and the 1926 census returns. It does indicate, though, to speak in general terms, that there has been a very large migration of Russians, and, for that matter, Ukrainians, into these Central Asian

areas.

Now, the degree of migration differs quite a bit. The biggest republic is in the Kazakh Republic. The Kazakhs were predominently herdsmen before collectivization, and enormous numbers of them starved to death when their herds were taken away from them. Some migrated into China. This was, of course, before China was Communist. Today the Kazakhs, the native Moslem population of the Kazakh Soviet Republic, constitute only about a third of the population. The rest is Russian and Ukrainian settlers who have been moved in, especially in the recent virgin lands campaign.

You have a somewhat similar condition in Kurdesia; and smaller numbers of Russians in the rural areas as settlers, agricultural colonists, in the other Moslem republics. But in the heartland, down there along the Afghan border, of Moslem central Asia, Uzbekstan, which I visited at some length, still a large majority of the population in the rural districts is constituted of Kajiks and Uzbeks. And there are not too many Russians in this oasis of irrigated agricultural economy there. There are a lot of Russians in the cities, though. There always have been, that is to say, in this century.

QUESTION: Our reading has indicated that the Soviet regime has encountered some opposition getting industrial workers to move away from the older cities to some of the newer industrial cities. Is it serious, and does it have any effect on the government's effort to disperse their industrial complex?

DR. ARMSTRONG: Yes. It's very serious.

Now, if you look at the map there, of course, and you refer to the old cities, those are cities in the Ukraine and the Moscow-Leningrad region; and the new cities are in the Urals and in Siberia; and, of course, that is a frontier region. It's cold, for one thing. Forty degrees below is typical winter temperature there. It's remote. And the average educated Russian or Ukrainian or Byelorussians, for that matter, likes to live in a big established city. Housing conditions are poor in the established cities, but they are a little better than they are at the frontier. You find cases, for example, of graduates from the universities, let us say, as engineers, having degrees, who could get jobs out in the Siberian area, high-paying jobs; yet they prefer to take jobs as clerks in Moscow in order to stay in the old city. And this is a drain.

Now, of course, there are various measures of compulsion. There is no longer a labor draft, and there is no longer a compulsory assignment to jobs, for the mass of the Soviet population. But party members can be directed to jobs. If they don't go where they are sent, they lose their party cards.

Furthermore, there has been increasing pressure to take measures against idlers and parasites, as they are called. That's why the comradely courts have been set up, as they're called, for an extra-legal device to punish people who are judged not to be doing what they're supposed to do in terms of work effort or family relations.

There is another measure, which is not talked about at all, but

which I have seen briefly mentioned in Soviet sources and have encountered in my own experience in the Soviet Union, namely, police regulations against persons coming to live in major old cities like Kiev and Moscow. There are evidently police cordons at the airports and train stations and at the outskirts of the cities where persons' papers are checked to see whether they are entitled to live in those attractive cities. If they aren't, they go to the police station and they're given a one-way ticket out.

I was almost picked up myself under these circumstances in Kiev. I landed in the rail station. The ~~beneficient~~ INEFFICIENT Intourist agency didn't send anyone to meet me. I felt; "I know my way around. I'll just go out and get a cab and go over to the hotel." I stepped outside the railroad station and was standing there a moment looking for a cab, and a man came up to me and thought I was an Austrian. If he'd known I was an American, he probably wouldn't have spoken to me. But he thought I was an Austrian. He knew German. He spoke to me in German, which I happen to speak fluently. And he said: "This is not a good place for you to stand. If you want a cab, I'll take you around to the other side and get one for you." And, very decently, he took me around there and got me a cab.

A friend of mine who arrived in the same circumstances was picked up by the police and held for a little while until they found out he was an American.

This indicates the rigidity of control over access to these attractive cities. It's true, of course, that the people who already live there can usually

wangle a way to stay.

QUESTION: Can you give us some idea, Doctor, about the racial distribution in the Soviet Union?

DR. ARMSTRONG: This is a little hard to do, but I'll put it this way: The basic racial or ethnic group in the Soviet Union is European East Slavic. You have in this group, extending all over European Russia almost, and in a narrow line across southern Siberia and northern Kazakhstan, approximately 115 million Russians, 35 million Ukrainians, and 7 or 8 million Byelorussians. So that constitutes the large majority, about three-quarters, of the Soviet population; and they are Slavs of European origin, as we all know them.

Then there are some small European groups. The Baltic group. There are only about 6,000 of those. The Moldavians--a couple of thousand of those--2 1/2 million Jews, who are scattered throughout the Soviet Union. The Georgians and the Armenians, who are the Trans-Caucasians whom I referred to earlier, comprise altogether about 6 million people. Then you have the large Moslem group, which is Asian.

Now, these Moslems, if you speak in racial terms--and, of course, today we don't think much of racial terms in the sense of absolute distinctions between races, because they're all mixed, of course, but if you think of them in those terms as ethnically distinct groups, they resemble Asians. They are mostly dark skinned and quite different in physical appearance from the Slavs and other European groups. They number 23 million. And, as I indicated before, they are scattered all the way

from the upper Volga down through central Asia and the north Caucasus.

Then you have innumerable tribes, very small in number. They probably come to five or ten million altogether, across northern Siberia and the northern European part of Russia. They are mostly of a Mongoloid type.

This is essentially the ethnic distribution.

QUESTION: Doctor, with the rise in power and prestige of China, is there any indication that the Mongoloid people on the western frontiers there in Siberia are looking more toward China these days or more toward Moscow?

DR. ARMSTRONG: Well, I don't know. I couldn't really answer that question, because you don't get down on that frontier very readily. I haven't been there.

In the first place, you've got to realize that these are not at all like the Chinese as we think of them. We think of the Mongols and even the Tartars and Kazakh groups as being pretty similar to the Chinese. Our picture is usually somewhat vague in this regard. But actually they have a long history of opposition to the Chinese. And, furthermore, they have quite a distinct ethnic and linguistic background from the Chinese. In fact, the Chinese have been expanding as an imperial power into central Asia and taking over the Mongols and the Turks of East Turkestan, and so on; and these people bitterly resent the Chinese on the whole.

Now, whether they resent the Russians or the Chinese more, I don't know. Take the case of these Kazakhs that I mentioned before. They

were persecuted by the Russians; so they went into China. Then the Chinese Communists persecuted them when they got into power. In fact, the Nationalist Chinese did to some extent. And a few thousand of them managed to emigrate to India. But by and large I'm not at all sure that there is any historical or racial reason why these peoples of central Asia will prefer the Chinese to the Russians. Most of them are Moslems. Their natural brothers are the peoples of Turkey and Iran and Pakistan to the south, rather than either the Chinese or the Russians.

QUESTION: We are reminded by the holiday of the effect or impact of the veterans in this country; and we infer that the Russian soldiers were exposed at the end of World War II to our way of life. To what extent does this pose a problem to the Soviets, and are they having trouble keeping them down in the communities?

DR. ARMSTRONG: It poses a problem in the sense that the men who have been through the army, especially officers, don't want to go back to working on the farms yet. There's no question about that. On the other hand, there has been a slow movement of people from the farms anyway; so it's partly favorable to the general Soviet situation. And I would not say that economically this provides so much of a problem except insofar as these hundred thousand or so officers recently discharged are very reluctant to start working anywhere in the factories or anywhere else on just a small pension, starting to work now at ordinary laborers' jobs, as many of them have to do, after having been field-grade officers. You

can imagine, I presume, what that kind of dissatisfaction would lead to. But, of course, they know that they have to take orders.

Now, as for those who came into contact with the West fifteen years ago, they are middle-aged men now, as we are all getting to be; and they're not likely to be a revolutionary element. This experience, which was very important at one time, which constituted undoubtedly a great source of dissatisfaction in the Soviet system, is now a matter of history.

I think as recently as 1956 it had some echo. I had an interesting experience in 1956 on the train between Moscow and Minsk. I was sitting in the dining car and I fell into conversation across the aisle with a man who was well along in his bottle of vodka and I thought he was a good man to draw out opinions from. So, naturally, we were speaking Russian; and I asked him if he didn't think the relations between the United States and Russia were better today than they had been. He said: "Oh, yes. Ever since your great General Eisenhower came in, who is a great friend of our Marshal Zhukov, things have been much better." This was in 1956.

This seemed a good opening; so I said: "By the way, what did Zhukov do after the war?" He said, "After the war? Well, what about that? During the war he was our great military hero. He captured Berlin."

I said: "Yes. I understand that. But afterwards?"

By this time all the people in the dining car were listening in--mostly young men, many of them in military officers' uniforms. They

were beginning to grin. And he said: "Why, after the war, you know, he became our Minister of Defense."

I said: "But that's recently. What I mean is in between."

Well, this was the key, you see. They all knew what we were talking about then, because Zhukov, of course, had been exiled by Stalin after the war because he sort of represented this feeling of dissatisfaction of the soldiers after seeing the West. And so my drunk saw that he had to rise to the occasion, you see, as a defender of the Soviet system; and so he said: "Why, in between, Marshal Zhukov took a long rest."

They all burst out laughing, and I said: "It was a very long rest, wasn't it?"

He said: "After a long war you need a long rest."

But this feeling, I think, is dissipating today, because a new generation has arisen which did not personally participate in this military campaign in the West and have these contacts.

QUESTION: Doctor, I wonder if in line with your discussion of the various ethnic groups and class structures, you could bring that down to the terms of the ugly word "discrimination," which we have in our country. For example, how does Moscow compare with Washington, D. C.?

DR. ARMSTRONG: Well, compared with Washington, D. C., it's pretty good in terms of strictly racial discrimination.

The only group which is discriminated against, in the strict sense of the term, in the Soviet Union is the Jewish group. The Jews are

discriminated against. They don't publicize it, but I've been told about it, and it can be established indirectly, that there are about 10 percent of Jews in the institutions of higher education and in most lines of profitable work. They are discriminated against. There's a bitterly critical article linking the Jewish religion and reaction to treason to the Soviet Union. At times, as in the latter days of Stalin, the Jews were actually subject to being arrested and dispatched to Siberia.

To some extent the Jews continue to enjoy some privileges in the Soviet Union, arising from the fact not only that they have their own single outlay or privilege that they are entitled to, but also the fact that they are a group that has been urban for a long time and has acquired a higher education, and therefore has access to some of the advantages of the Soviet system. The effort of the regime has been to purge, to expel, them from the best jobs and prevent their acquiring them in the large numbers to support the education which their family background naturally fits them for.

The situation with the Asian groups is somewhat different. The Soviet Union actually encourages these groups to get education. They single out the young men who are amenable to enter into the urban rocket-type society and get an education, because they want to build them up as a native cadre to support Communist policy. An Uzbek, for instance, who is willing to become a simple agent for the Russians and accept communism wholeheartedly has a good career before him.

Take Ubikino, who was one of the heads of the Uzbek party, and who is now one of the secretaries of the Central Asia Group, is down in Indonesia traveling around as a great representative of Soviet interracial

democracy, singled out for advantages precisely because he is an Asian. But he has to give up his traditional cultural and national attachments to the party for this kind of career advantage.

The rumor that Supreme Court Justice Douglas and Robert Kennedy brought back some years ago that there was racial segregation in the schools of central Asia is inaccurate, because the schools that are for Moslems of the central Asia area are set up in order to allow the Uzbeks, Kazazhs, and so forth to have their native slave structure. But if they want to, they can go to the Russian schools. There is no effort to force them to stay apart from Russian children.

On the other hand, there is a certain amount of residential segregation in the smaller cities of central Asia, not in Moscow, not even in Tashkent which is the great urban metropolis of a million population here in Uzbekstan. But when I went down to Samarkand, which is a relatively small city some hundred miles distant, I found that the new-formed European quarter of the city was almost exclusively occupied by Europeans. They had by Russian standards relatively modern, sanitary buildings; and the Moslems were in adobe huts down in the old quarter. I don't know how much of this is due to the women and how much is due to choice of the Moslems to stay out of the other quarter.

QUESTION: Would you comment on the knowledge of the average Russian, if there is such a thing, in terms of what is going on outside of Russia, or even within Russia, and possibly as to the success of our Voice of America program?

DR. ARMSTRONG: It's a very hard thing to speak about. I wish I could say something about the average Russian, but you never know whether the ones you run into are average or not. Usually the Russians that talk to a foreigner are somewhat educated and articulate. Even though I speak the language, that's usually the case. Others are not interested, they're timid; you just don't see them.

From what I've heard--and this is a very, very small sample--they are not enormously impressed by the Voice of America as compared with the BBC. The BBC, with its straight news, seems to attract them more. But this may be atypical. I don't know.

The other point, their general knowledge of the world--well, it differs enormously. I ran into an Orthodox priest in Odessa. This man began talking to me. He was critical of the Soviet system, in front of the Intourist people even. He was interested in talking to me as an American. He said: "Oh, yes, America. That's over near Germany, isn't it?" Not much knowledge there, and this man should be better educated than the average peasant at least.

On the other hand, you run into some working men who are pretty sharp. I ran into a fellow in Moscow and I was trying to pump him a little. He said he'd been a sailor and he had traveled around Europe on a Soviet ship. Now he's working in a provincial town in an electric station. I said: "Well, now, isn't it kind of boring for you after this adventurous career as a sailor to be working in Smolensk?" He said: "It doesn't matter. It's all in the service of the Fatherland." He'd got the line straight, you

see, and knew exactly what to say to a foreigner when that kind of question came up. I don't think he was a plant, but he may not have been typical.

So you get a wide range. Some intellectuals know quite a lot about what's going on in the world, unquestionably. On the other hand, I would say that the mass of the population, cut off, as it is, from outside sources of information, is pretty poorly informed.

QUESTION: In Hans Adler's recent article in a News Week interview he indicated quite a difference in opinion between the Russian people on many things, a great deal of dissatisfaction; but, I believe, concludes that they don't hold any of these things against their government. What has been your observation as to that?

DR. ARMSTRONG: I haven't read Adler's article, but I would disagree with this in part. There is dissatisfaction with many things. The government tries to ascribe this to previous leaders, like Malinkov and Stalin and Beria, who made mistakes. On the other hand, I don't believe that many people are taken in by this line, because they know that Khrushchev, Kuzlov, and so forth were right in there with Beria, Stalin, and Malinkov at the period when the mistakes were made.

Undoubtedly the groups which have an interest and pride in the regime overlook these deficiencies of the regime. But those which are dissatisfied on other grounds, such as the inarticulate mass of the peasantry, I believe continue to be dissatisfied and to ascribe their difficulties in part to the regime. And where this inarticulate dissatisfaction is

stimulated by difference in nationality, and possibly access to actual word-of-mouth propaganda by anti-Soviet nationalist forces, I believe it can focus on the fact that Moscow is a source of trouble.

Well, you've heard people speak the same way about Washington, I'm sure, being in the Bureau of the Budget. You know that there are people out there in Kansas who blame everything on Washington. And there are people in the Soviet Union who blame everything on Moscow. This doesn't make much difference here, because the people in Washington are Americans and the people in Kansas are Americans.

But suppose the people in Kansas were not Americans, and they looked on Washington as the source of their troubles; and the people in Washington were of a different nationality. Then you would have a tendency for a focus of nationality discontent to arise from the fact the people ascribe their difficulties, all kinds of social and economic difficulties, to a regime that was centered on an alien city.

QUESTION: Dr. Armstrong, our image of the Russian soldier--from moving pictures and so forth--is a Caucasian, very similar to ourselves. But with all of the different dialects and the different republics throughout the U.S.S.R., does the Soviet Union have a compulsory military training program? And if they do, do they keep these various republics segregated as far as battalions or something similar to that are concerned?

DR. ARMSTRONG: That's an excellent question. I'm very glad you brought that up.

Now, your image of the Russian soldier is as a Caucasian, a Euro-

pean. Mine wasn't, because during the war we had 1700 Russians whom we had liberated from the Germans, so to speak, along the Normandy front, working for us in a depot in Liege, Belgium. And about 75 percent of these didn't look like Russians at all. They looked like Asians, and they were in fact Asians from central Asia and the Caucasus.

Those men are brought in, you see, in the regular draft into the Russian army. Toward the end of the war, in fact, they constituted a very large portion of the draft, because the Europeans had been killed off or captured, to some extent. Of course I exaggerate. Today, naturally, they come in only in the normal proportion of the population.

But they are distributed throughout the units. They are not kept segregated in national units. They tried that in the thirties and the twenties. They tried it again for a short time in the war. In 1942 the separate nationality units drawn from the Trans-Caucasus collapsed in the first battle. I'm sure that some of you have heard of this Soviet defeat. And the defeat there was associated with the name of the head of the commissar system in the Soviet Union. He had advocated the formation of these separate units, and they collapsed. You see, they weren't tough enough to hold out without a Russian stiffening. So they went back to the system of bringing them all in and scattering them throughout the Russian military units and training them in Russian language.

The language of command is always Russian. These recruits sometimes cannot understand what they're being told, incidentally; but the learn. They've got to learn if they're in an effective military system.

If they don't learn the language of command, it goes hard with them. And so it's the best kind of indoctrination in the Russian language. And the Russian army has been a school for indoctrinating and incorporating the nationalities, in addition to its purely military function.

Now, very recently there has been talk--I haven't seen any exact data on it--of reverting in part to a militia system, territorial militia. This would tend to undermine the function of the Red Army, the Soviet Army, as it's called today; and I question whether they will go very far with it. But it is something to think about.

QUESTION: Is there any trend line of local government in the Russian system, or is everything fairly well centralized in Moscow? I have read some conflicting reports about the degree of delegation of authority by the various central party headquarters to the various local areas. Will you comment on that?

DR. ARMSTRONG: Essentially, it is one of the most centralized systems of control that has been developed in modern times. What you are probably thinking of is the Sovnarkhozes, the Councils of National Economy, which Khrushchev set up in 1957. Khrushchev made a sarcastic remark about these. He said the American radio, which he listens to at least, says that this means not less but greater centralization." I feel obliged to agree with them," he said.

In other words, what Khrushchev has been doing is that he has been decentralizing some of the actual operational control and research activities in controlling the economy; but he has been maintaining an absolute