

PERSONAL IMPRESSIONS OF SOVIET RUSSIA AND COMMUNISM

by
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Colonel Jordan and Gentlemen:

I cannot tell you how I appreciate the honor of being asked to speak to this class, so I shall not try.

My subject is "Personal Impressions of Soviet Russia and Communism". For many years I have been making a study of the political, economic, sociological aspect of Soviet Russia, and I believe in personal reconnaissance. They have a saying at the French General Staff School in France: "A poor officer uses the expressions 'as far as possible', or something equally ambiguous, and a good officer goes and sees". I try to be a good officer so I went to see; I saw, and I came back so impressed that I felt I had better try to do a little better job than I had been doing. I even went so far, although I am a very timid man, as to write down to the War College and offer to go down there and give them first-hand impressions. They were very nice; they gave me a very courteous reply, but said their program was filled.

I am going to give you a talk here that will not be what they sometimes are - a mental anodyne. It wears me out sometimes to listen to a lot of talkers. There is the peripatetic talker

who walks around. I even suggested when I was at the War College that we get a pair of shoes and nail them to the middle of the floor and have him stand in them so he would not walk about, but my suggestion was not received with favor. I am going to try to live up to what Colonel Jordan has said.

The Alceve Rykov of Leningrad, a dirty little tub, was lying at anchor at Hays Wharf just below London Bridge last summer when I boarded her for a journey to Moscow and points east. I did not want to go on it at all. I suppose all of us in the regular Army have this sort of ingrowing conscience about official things. I wanted to drift around up through Scandinavia and into Helsingfors and go in that way, but if you go to a country on one of its ships you will learn about the country, and since I was going to Russia I thought I better go on a Russian ship.

When you get as old as I am you probably will have developed your powers of observation so that your mind almost automatically is as sensitive as a photographic film when you wish to receive impressions. I looked at this ship and I thought: what did she bring from Russia? She was just finishing unloading a cargo of asbestos in bags, potato glucose in barrels, caustic soda in drums, and large crates of wooden furniture parts. A very lucrative trade -- they pay a few shillings for them and sell them for thirty or forty. The wooden furniture was crated up,

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and everything was plentifully besprinkled with the crossed hammer and sickle insignia of the U.S.S.R.

No one paid any attention to me when I went on board. As soon as I had seen the ship I chased back up town and got some rough clothes, it was so dirty. Then I found a girl, who when I told her in my halting Russian that I was a passenger bound for Leningrad, showed me to a stateroom which was fairly clean. The first-class saloon and staterooms were the only places on board that came up to ordinary standards of cleanliness. She told me tea would be ready at four o'clock. Among the passengers who gathered in the saloon at tea time were some very odd types. I was approached by a middle aged lady with a pronounced Cockney accent. She said: "Did you see the trooping of the colors?" I said: "Yes, beautiful sight." "Came from the Royal Family, a lot of bloody wasters; ought to chuck the whole bunch out." I said: "I am not British; I cannot subscribe to those sentiments. I have great respect for the Royal Family."

While we were having tea a man broke into loud speech. He said: "I was an American citizen but I renounced my American citizenship. I am going to live in a free country where the workers rule, and I congratulate all of you on going to see this country." We left shortly afterward, and he made a speech to the dock, telling them to shake off their chains and come on to Russia. I thought he was rather impressive. He paused for breath and a big

narry stepped up and said something, which I cannot repeat, and put his hand across his throat that way (demonstrating), a sort of anticlimax, and we left amidst howls of laughter.

I was puzzled as to what to call the dining room steward. I tried "kellner" a word of German origin, but that did not go. I tried "Craaziano". Then I said: "what are you sup-posed to be called, anyway?" He said: "Well, Tovarish" would be all right", so I got used to calling him "Comrade" or "Fellow Worker" in Russian.

Often some of the officers are women, but there were no women officers this time. They told me in London before we sailed that quite often they run away when they get there. There were, however, a number of women among the crew and they were not permitted to go ashore - the women sailors. The only person on board who spoke English was the mate. He was a very young man; all the people on board were young. The oldest man on board was the man in charge of education, and he was younger than forty.

Discipline on that ship was a strange thing to me. I went to sea when I was sixteen years old for several years but I never saw anything like that. There was no swearing, no profanity. The officers gave orders quickly and the men obeyed them. Neither was there the smartness of performance that you expect on American, British, French, German, and other ships. The easy-going way in which things were conducted was reflected in the general condition

of the ship. The decks were dirty, paint work not scrubbed, brass work unpolished. I would not like to be in an accident on that ship.

After dinner I went down to see the crew's quarters.

Unlike the ships of other nations, the entire after part of the ship was given over to the crew. They had a library with comfortable chairs for reading; in another room was a billiard table and various musical instruments; and still another room, almost half as large as this, ^(AIC Conf Room) was fitted up as a classroom with desks, blackboards, and technical books. Across one end of the room in large letters a foot high were the words in Russian: "Workers of the World Unite". Every member of the crew goes to school two hours daily or instructs, and some do both. Reading, writing, arithmetic, and Leninism are given to the elementary students. Seamanship, navigation, engineering, radio telegraphy, and principles of Marxism and socialism are for the more advanced students. The members of the crew, both male and female, when I went down there (after the lecture period) were having a little social gathering - very decorous - the women had bathed and applied lipstick, or whatever they do when they polish up, and looked not bad. Well, they did not have any use for me. I was to them either an oppressor or one of the oppressed and in either case an object of contempt.

The journey across the North Sea, the Baltic, and the Gulf of Finland to Leningrad took five nights and four days and

was a beautiful journey. White nights during July were weird and fascinating - the sun hardly goes down before it comes up again. The first view of Leningrad was disappointing. The harbor is approached through a long canal-like channel dredged out of a shallow bay, and the immense piles of pulp wood and lumber are reminiscent of Canada. Russia, as you know, is in the unfortunate position of having all routes of egress to ice free waters, possibly with the exception of north of Leningrad, leading through a bottle-neck which could easily be blocked by ships of any first-class power: England, Japan, to say nothing of Germany. She is now building sixty-eight submarines. Her naval policy is one (this, of course, is according to my information) of secrecy and stealth, for obvious reasons.

It took several hours to get ashore in Leningrad, but it was not in the nature of an ordeal, more of a bore than anything else. When you get down there they change your money, if you like: five rubles for one dollar, and of course scrutinize your passports most carefully. However, so far as my baggage was concerned, they hardly disarranged the contents of my three handbags. Then I was shown into an immense bus and was told that when a sufficient number of passengers were entered to fill it that it would take me up town to the hotel. All of this took three or four hours, but they were very courteous. They were very young, both sexes, and treated me very well indeed.

Once in the bus, naturally I wanted to look at the new sights: the soldiers, the women working as day laborers, the girls drilling, the swarms of gaunt and hungry looking people, but our Bolshevist American friend chose that moment to make another speech. He said: "Now, ladies and gentlemen, you can put your passports away. You are in a free country where the workers rule. You may go from one end of this vast country to the other and never have to show your passports." Just then we went through a gate; there were some soldiers there with fixed bayonets, and two officers came up and said: "Passports, passports", and we had to show our passports. The first thing we had to show when we got to the hotel was a passport. It was that way everywhere; it is that way all over Europe, and God knows what would happen to you if you lost your passport.

The Astoria Hotel (probably some of you have been there) shows traces, relics, of former grandeur. The meals are good after you get on to the fact that you have to tip rather liberally. You are warned against tipping and naturally at first you want to comply with the rules, but if you do not tip you do not get anything to eat, so you have to tip. Just across from the hotel is the immense, somber looking cathedral of St. Isaacs, formerly a cathedral, now an anti-religious museum.

Leningrad has a population of about four million. They had to stop the people from pouring in there. The general

impression is one of gloom.

What strikes the visitor is the high price of everything. A glass of beer costs two and one-half rubles. I priced some things in a second-hand shop: a half dozen cups and saucers, antiques but very ordinary, six hundred rubles; a moth eaten fur coat, twelve hundred rubles. I paid three rubles to go to a picture show - very poor film.

There were miles and miles of new workmen's apartment houses and immense automobile factories.

I was interested in what is going on now and the future, but did take time off to look at some of the historical places, among others the Hermitage, which is worth going to Russia to see. You can spend a month there - room after room of pictures, the old Dutch masters. At least, I thought that is what they were. They have sold a lot of them; Mr. Mellon bought some. They got hard up a few years ago. However, they looked all right to me, I will say.

Inquiry about the night train for Moscow brought the response that it would leave around nine or ten o'clock; if left around eleven. Transportation seems to be one of the weak features in the general scheme. I was told that conditions are improving. Kaganovitch is running it now; he is a very brilliant man, and I think that is true. The roads are overwhelmed with traffic. Automobile highways as we have them here

are non-existent. First-class travel is expensive, luxurious and solitary. Third-class goes to the other extreme. The seats are bare, the cars are packed with humanity, and soap is expensive. Second-class is midway between the two. The seats are bare, the cars are packed with humanity, and soap is expensive. Second-class is midway between the two. The seats have cushions on them - hence the expression "riding soft"; some arrangements for sleeping; packed in with three other people in a place six by eight. I wanted to meet the people of the country so I rode "soft". Travel in Russia by rail is monotonous. The villages are dreary and devoid of interest. According to the official figures, over seventy per cent of the agriculturual area west of the Urals is collective.

Without doubt this concentration of energy brought about by collectivism and the assistance given by the tractor stations is a good thing. Whether the old people like it and the middle aged people, however, is a matter of doubt. I think they do not.

The young people who have grown up since the revolution, of course, are highly propagandized and they are the ones who are running things. One of the most amazing things about the country is the way the older people have been brushed aside by the younger ones who have grown up since the revolution. Now this audience, many of you, I see retain the beauty of youth, but in Russia I think you would be put back in the corner because, according to

my experience, the young people are running things; they have the bit in their teeth.

The passengers shied away from me. They did not want to be seen talking to a foreigner. One man was an exception. I think he was a minor official from Moscow; probably he had been detailed to accompany me. He was very verbose until we went by a large stockade. It took several minutes to pass it. There hundreds, thousands of people were being herded around by soldiers with fixed bayonets. I asked who the prisoners were, and he froze up. He said: "They are people who won't take the work offered by the government." Later the train stopped at a siding by another train. I could hear a murmur of voices coming from this train, and a Frenchman I was riding with said: "My God! it smells bad around here." An overpowering stench struck me like a blow in the face; then I saw up at a grating in a corner of one of the closed cars clusters of hands and realized that this was a prison train. There were forty-eight cars and from forty to fifty prisoners in each car. Whether the two thousand more prisoners in that train were some of the eight hundred thousand Kulaks about whom so much has been written, or merely a consignment picked up for forced labor because of lack of adaptability to the rule of the workers, I do not know.

Work on the immense highway, railway, and canal projects is carried on largely by forced labor. The offenses are divided

into two classes - criminal and political. Treatment accorded criminal offenders is of corrective nature and relatively mild, while that imposed on the political prisoners, those who offend against the state, goes the limit of severity. My impression is that the prisoners I saw in these cars were political prisoners, possibly they had offended against the Communist Party, which, according to the new constitution, "constitutes the leading core of all organizations of the workers, both social and state."

To attempt to describe Moscow with only the experiences of a brief visit as a basis would be futile and absurd. Many of the press correspondents and resident foreigners with whom I talked said that conclusions about what has taken place, no matter how carefully they are arrived at, tend to change from time to time. Others said that Moscow affects people according to their apperceptive capabilities and that no two people are affected alike. If I were going to epitomize my impressions of the place in one word I would use the adjective "fantastic". The Soviet Union is a federation of eleven republics. Its population is estimated at one hundred seventy million, and they say they will have two hundred million in ten years; that the population is increasing, and I believe it. Its boundaries enclose between one-seventh and one-sixth, according to their figures, of the land surface of the globe. Moscow is the capital of the union, and, moreover, it is the control center for the greatest experiment in

government and human relationships that has ever taken place. Beyond doubt, it is the most interesting place in the world today to visit.

During the whole of my stay there I tried to take an objective viewpoint; to absorb impressions as a sponge does water; so that later on I could think over these things and crystallize my impressions and make conclusions that would stand the test of logic and cold reason. I had done that successfully in many countries but here it was more difficult than it ever had been before because there was so much that was strange and completely new. The socialist and communist philosophy is different from anything that we are familiar with. There were no norms by which I could be guided. I got about a lot and I think that my opportunities to see and observe were better than the average. My interest in the country was neither new nor momentary. I think that a knowledge of the history and literature of the country gained through years of reading helped some. Certainly a working knowledge of the language was a great help. I had plowed through "Anna Karenina" "The Prisoner of the Caucasus" and "Peace and War", the longest novel that was ever written until "Anthony Adverse" and "Gone with the Wind" came along, in the original Russian. I had plowed through Lenin's interminable expositions of Marxian philosophies and tried to read Stalin's still more tiresome

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treatises on Lenin. It has been a pleasure to read recently published books by Wm. Chamberlain, Vincent Spear, Walter Duranty, John Gunther, Sir Bernard Pares, Sir Walter Citrine and others on Russia. Without this preliminary work I believe it is impossible for any one visiting the country to comprehend the significance of what he sees with his own eyes. I think my opportunities, as I say, were better than the average because I had access to all the sources. I believe they were better than those of the delegation that came while I was there. They traveled first-class; they saw the show places; they stayed at luxurious hotels; they went to parties given by the diplomatic corps and they left; none spoke or read the language. I met one of them at the Embassy in London after I got back and he said: "The Russians are getting back to the capitalist system". Nothing could be farther from the truth. The true objective is communism for Soviet Russia and ultimately for the entire world. Let those who doubt this read the most authoritative pronouncements that they can find; namely, those of Stalin himself. I will read them to you. This journey was made last summer and I took these notes: On November 25th at the meeting of the Soviet Congress in Moscow, when Stalin presented this constitution, drawn by himself, he said in part: "Socialism has now been completely achieved in the Soviet Union and the foundation of ultimate communism now at last

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has been built. The international meaning of this constitution cannot be exaggerated." What he meant by that is that it is your constitution if you want to join. "The new constitution is a document showing that what millions of people are dreaming of in capitalistic countries has been accomplished in the U.S.S.R. What has been accomplished in the U.S.S.R. can be accomplished in other countries. Our knowledge that the blood that has been shed in the past has not been shed in vain will give new inspiration to the working class who will mobilize for a new struggle and new victories for communism. Yes, the dictatorship of the working class will remain and the Communist Party will retain its leading position."

The objective of ultimate communism is soft pedaled to a large extent, has been recently, because they wish the alliance of other countries who might not dare to be friendly with them if they were so active along those lines. They need military and financial support. Whatever may be the limitations in the psychology of the communist leaders in estimating the reactions of the American and British and Western European peoples, they are masters in the art of leading and controlling the thoughts of their own youth. After all, there are some inherent traits in man that no extraneous power, not even the Communist Party, can eradicate, and these leaders have grasped that fact. They have realized that unnecessary

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trouble could be avoided by conceding something in recognition of each of these inherent traits, but nothing has been conceded which would interfere in the least with their aims. On the other hand, every concession made has been so contrived as to develop the force or power which caused it to be yielded into increased effort to carry out their aims. I think I can prove that to you by a few examples. You will remember that the socialist thesis in the relationship of state and worker is "take from each according to his ability and give to each according to his need." They have found out that it is not possible to expect untrained masses of people to do their best work under such an arrangement. They have taken advantage of the spirit of competition, of desire for recognition of good work inherent in everybody, to accelerate the accomplishment of the vast industrial achievements which have taken place incident to the development of their first and second five year plans, and that statement now has been changed. It is now "from each according to his ability, to each according to his work". Inequality of pay, of recompense, is now the order of the day, and I saw an example of it. I will tell you about that. In order to increase the productivity of labor the so-called Stakanovite measure has been put in force, which is simply putting round pegs in round holes. If I am a good fieldman they will put me in the field instead

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of having me teach school or do something like that. They let you do what you are good at. I went through a factory for machines to make machine tools, and the guide said: "That man over there gets forty rubles a day; the average pay is nine." I said: "How come?" "He does four times as much work as anybody else," was the answer. He looked as though he was overworked, thin as a rail and nervous. I went over to him and said: "How many to you rubles each day?" He drew himself up proudly and said: "To me forty." He did four times as much work; he got four times as much pay. Similarly, a girl from out in the Urals, who had raised more agricultural products per hectare than anybody else in that locality was brought into the hotel where I was staying. She had never been in a hotel before - judging by the way she acted. She was taken about the town; her picture was put in the papers and on the screen; she was taken on sightseeing trips; given a decoration, the red star of labor, and sent home with a whacking big sum of money. Such instances of the dramatization of outstanding labor accomplishment are very common. They play them up like that. The desire to possess things of one's own (a little baby has it; it is common to every one from earliest childhood) is likewise recognized. The desire is strong in the Russian peasants who had to give up their cattle for the collective farms - many of them slaughtered them rather than do that. Under the new constitution, the peasant on the collective farm is permitted to have a few domestic animals: a pig, chicken,

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horse cow, and even to own a house instead of living in barracks. He cannot own land, but a small tract is given for a kitchen garden on which he can raise his own vegetables. Without receding from the basic principles of collectivism - no better way could be found to put it over and at the same time relieve the great shortage in domestic animals which exists in Russia.

I think the attitude toward religion affords another example of compromise. This new constitution came out while I was there and its so-called liberal provisions were being given wide acclaim in the Russian press. I want to read you a paragraph of the official translation of Article 124: "In order to insure the citizens freedom of conscience, the church in the U.S.S.R. is separated from the state; the school from the church; and freedom of anti-religious propaganda is recognized for all citizens." It is possible for me to separate the form from the substance in such cases. Not even the most naive people in Russia expect the provisions of this constitution to be put into effect so far as its liberal provisions are concerned. No one is simple enough to expect that. The rulers do not now prohibit the profession and practice of religion. To do so would be stupid, and they are anything but that. In order to see for myself (that is my rule) I went to church at one of the largest churches in Moscow. The music and impressive ceremony so wrought my feelings that, Scotch and hard-boiled as I am, I emptied my pockets into the contribution box.

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The audience consisted of seven, all old people of the peasant class, five men and two women. What they do prohibit is religious educational instruction. To give religious instruction to any one under eighteen is punishable by a fine and imprisonment. Moreover, a very strong anti-religious crusade is carried on. Basic military training, Leninism, and Atheism, or rather hatred of Christianity, are emphasized, even in the schools for the very youngest children, churches are being demolished and the new cities have no churches. I came from down in the so-called "Bible Belt" of the South, and I was taken to Sunday School and to church regularly. I was at the age of six when I was taken to join the Band of Hope and I swore a fearful oath, never to handle, touch, traffic in, transport, drink, or taste intoxicants in any form. I am sorry to say I broke it before I was fifteen. But with that austere background, imagine my feelings! I went to two of these anti-religious clinics, and the one which had been the largest church in Moscow was filled. There must have been five hundred little blue-eyed, flaxen-haired children there being organized into groups of about thirty by their teachers to go through the progressive instruction in anti-religion, or hatred of Christianity. You can imagine what it was like to me. I had a strange feeling, when I attached myself to a party of about thirty, went through with them, and for two hours looked on while all the force of grown up influence and

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concentrated effort of oral and visual representatives were brought to bear on the minds of these children to instill in them hatred of the same Jesus Christ that our grown people tried to make us love. I want to tell you that I am no saint, as many of you know, but devil worship, or celebration of the black mass in my presence could not have seemed more outrageous to me. Nevertheless, the authorities recognize the necessity for some spiritual belief, and I want to read you a conversation that I had. Those of you who have been military attaches know that a good attache is the one who appears to do the least and does the most, he spends the hours until one or two o'clock in the morning conversing and then takes until daylight to write the whole thing out. I made notes of this conversation, and I should like to read this to you. This man was one of the few Russians that I met who spoke freely with me;

Q. I can see that you are opposed to Christianity.

Have you any religious belief at all?

A. Not in the sense that you mean.

Q. Why do you take such pains to keep the children from becoming Christians or believing in God?

A. I will explain to you as briefly as I can. First, religion is the refuge of the ignorant, it developed the

superstition of the savage; it is utterly disproved by the teachings of science. Second, in Russia the church has always helped keep the peasants in serfdom; and upholds oppression. Religion as our Lenin has said, is the opium used in all countries by the ruling classes to keep the masses quiet in their misery.

Q. What you have told me is set forth in the anti-religious clinics over and over again. It seems to me, however, that man requires the hope given by religion. I have been in many countries and everywhere I have found religious beliefs of some kind. You are trying to abolish the religion of your people; what do you offer them in its place?

A. We offer what our great leader, Lenin, taught: belief in the brotherhood of workers all over the world. In other words, love of our fellowmen.

Q. How many people died in the Ukraine and elsewhere in Russia during the famine three years ago? As I understand it, the peasants would not harvest all their crops because the government claimed the lion's share. Then the government collectors levied on what the peasants had harvested for their own use and a lot of the peasants starved.

A. I do not know, perhaps three or four millions. The peasants were starving; would not do as they were told; they had their lesson; now they obey.

Q. How can you propose to love your fellowmen when you condone, as I suppose you do, the deliberate destruction, with famine as the weapon, of three or four million lives? It doesn't seem consistent to me.

A. It is you who are not consistent. Far better for these stupid and disobedient people to die than for us to risk even a temporary failure in our great plan. We are now successful. Success means that before long the capitalist system will break down; war will come and dictatorship of the workers everywhere, and there will be a world union of soviet government.

Q. And everything be just hunky dory, I suppose - no more wars, no more employment parties, everybody happy?

A. You are right, my friend.

I saw their communist alphabet - a big red broom sweeping Bibles out of doors, an example of it. This discussion sets forth their thesis about religion better than I could give it in my own words.

In justice to the Soviet Government, credit must be given to the spread of educational and recreational activities throughout the country. The Pravda is the propaganda organ, Pravda means truth. The other paper is the "Izvestia", (the news). The joke about that is: it is said that there is no "truth in the news and no news in the truth". When I was there it was reported that twenty-six million children had finished a course in education during the month

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of June preceeding. Everywhere I went I saw people reading. I was told that that was characteristic of people who had just learned to read. They formed quenes to buy reading matter as they did to buy food. The young people there are different from our people. They are alert, militant, progressive. They have been given an objective, a mission, a vision; for them there is no vacillation, no hesitation whatever, but they are narrow, dogmatic, hard. Think what it is like for a child to be taught that it is a splendid thing to denounce his father and his mother? They laughed at me for not believing it. To denounce one's parents is a common thing, and they who do that are praised beyond words; told that it is a fine thing to do. Figure what it is like to have youngsters grow up, without rights of property, without religion, and without family.

I have nothing but praise for the new park of culture and rest at Moscow. Every one that goes there tells about it, and I suppose I had better do so. The gates registered some fifty thousand the night I was there. I missed the ballyhoo, the garishness and the hot dog stands of our pleasure parks. There they had groves, lagoons, libraries, open air theatres, and fields for every sort of sports, and everything had some basic military value. Parachute jumping was very popular. The reading matter in the open air libraries was inspired by the government; and the play being given an audience of ten thousand had a strong propaganda slant. Every one there was young - the old people are out of it

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entirely. I say "old", I mean middle aged (not old like me), even some of you would be out - just set aside off in the corners. Scattered throughout the park were little booths with officials in them. They were there to answer questions about the laws and about land and economic matters. I went up to one marked, according to my translation, "Here Are Answered Questions About Land". The man had gone away for a minute and two little boys were playing in there; one of them was pretending he was the official, so I went over and said: "Please, I would like some information about a homestead up in the Taiga country". He looked me over and said: "Well, go over to the Kremlin and see Stalin, he will fix you up." The point is that under the dictatorship I mentioned before no one dared to mention the dictator's name in public, whereas here there was no hesitation. One could see pictures of Stalin all over the place, on every building, holding a little girl in his arms.

At the hotel there was a long list of places to visit, and one of them stands out in my memory: "The Prophylacterium for the Rehabilitation of Reformed Prostitutes". The crowd went to the prophylacterium and I trailed along. There were several hundred inmates; they were seated in a large enclosure, knitting and sewing; seemed to be very comfortable and getting along all right. It may have been imagination but one fancied there was the reflection of hidden fires in some of the eyes demurely cast down as we approached. The Russians claim frankly to have

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eliminated prostitution by removing the barriers of early marriage. I think they have removed them. At least in the industrial centers I do not think there is any doubt about it. However, marriage and divorce are not the casual things they were a year ago. Those leaders have come to a realization that man in the depths of his being clings to some idea of permanency in the marriage relationship, and they have tightened up on the laws. Social life between the sexes is freer now than it was before the revolution.

At three o'clock in the morning I was coming home from the Circassian Club with a crowd and we stopped to look at several thousand girls drilling on one of the wide avenues leading into Red Square. Massed in close formation they marched and counter marched with a zeal that looked fanatical to me. They were dressed in shorts, and were having an awfully good time. Before the revolution they would have been at home in bed. Of course it was as light as day at three o'clock in the morning.

I want to read Article 122 of the new constitution:
"Women in the U.S.S.R. are accorded equal rights with men in all spheres of economic state, culture, social, and political life." The voting ages of both sexes is eighteen; both husband and wife are expected to work. The principle expressed in the constitution "He who does not work neither does he eat" applied equally to all citizens of both sexes. Eating places are provided in the communal apartment houses and they eat together. Woman has been liberated

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from the drudgery incident to procuring, preparing food, and cleaning up afterward, and she has also been freed to a large extent from that of caring for her children because the babies are cared for in the official creches; the older children in the communal playgrounds and schools. Woman, at least in the industrial centers, has been freed from domestic drudgery, to enter shop, factory, and field, and literally by the sweat of her brow to earn her living. I saw women work with pick and shovel on the extension of the subway, and lifting heavy stones and timbers on building projects. In fact, wherever work, light or heavy, was being carried on women were taking part in it, and they were the sturdiest women I ever saw: wide shoulders, full bosoms, heavy hips, thick ankles; no reason, except for the superfluous bosom, why they would not make good soldiers. In fact, an Attache, one of the foreigners watching these girls drilling, said, "If e one of these big winches were to come over a trench pushing a bayonette ahead of her I would shoot her as quickly as I would a man", and I would too. The Slav woman is not becoming more attractive; certainly she is becoming less feminine.

I went to the market to see where the ordinary workers make their purchases and from there I was taken by our Military Attache to a shop where every variety of food and drink, from the most expensive imported tinned and bottled stuff to live fish

swimming in tanks, is for sale. The place was so crowded it took me ten minutes to make a purchase. Undoubtedly it was a source of supply for the officials who enjoyed a great deal of luxury and also for the stakanovites and Vdarnike who get very big pay. I saw old peasant women with a hundred ruble notes in their knotted hands, almost fighting to buy caviar at thirty-five rubles a kilo; and men in work soiled overalls going out with their arms full of canned goods priced far above my means. In fact, what strikes one always is the high cost of commodities for every day use. The standard of living in a show place like Moscow is immeasurably lower than that of the American workman. People ask: "what is the value of the ruble?" That is not an easy question to answer. We pay a dollar for five rubles but that means little. The currency is protected and the only way to find out is to ascertain the value of the working man's labor in terms of the buying power of his ruble, and that is difficult. It took a lot of time and energy and I will show you what it was; I will read the figures to you: The average monthly industrial wage, this is June, 1936, according to official figures, was 205 rubles. Moscow prices for various items of food and clothing, July 1, likewise official figures, are as follows: Caviar 55.8 rubles; tea, four hundred grams; that is a kilo (a kilo, as you know, is 2.2 pounds) 10 rubles; sugar 3.8 a kilo; flour, (thirty per cent)

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4.6; beef, 12.5; pork, 10.6; milk, 3 rubles, for five hundred grams; apples, 6 rubles, kilo; lemons, 59 rubles, kilo; raisins, 10; prunes 14; cigars, 20 rubles for ten; man's suit, 850; shoddy overcoat, 1100; woolen underwear, 135; women's stockings, silk, 40; men's shoes, no leather in them much, 250. The figures speak for themselves. I took them to a man with whom I had established, what I thought were, confidential relations (he undoubtedly was detailed to check up on me) and showed them to him. If time is available I would like to read the conversation with that man:

Q. "Why are your prices for food and clothes so high and how can you expect an ordinary worker to live when he has to pay more than he makes a month to get a pair of shoes, or more than he makes in five months to get an overcoat? I speak, mind you, of the average worker, and there must be many who get much less than the average because you pay higher wages to your stockholders*."

A. "We have demanded this sacrifice of the people in order to carry out our plans, particularly the expansion of our heavy industries. Already the burden is being lightened now that many of our steel works, power plants, and factories are in operation, and we are turning to the production of consumers goods."

Q. "I have been told that the government takes the agricultural products from the collective farms and sells them at a profit sometimes as high as a thousand per cent but gives the peasants who do the work only a small wage and enough food for

them to live on. Why is this?

A. "So it is, but we have needed all the money we can get for the expansion of our industry. We have now completed hundreds of factories to produce everything the consumer needs and many more are being built. Before long wages will get higher and prices lower; wages have already gone up. A few years ago the average worker got less than a hundred rubles a month; now he gets about two hundred, and the purchasing power of his ruble is constantly increasing."

Q. "Yes, but I understand prices are more than double, so the workman is no better off than he was."

A. "Wait and see. We have unlimited raw material. We have the labor, now we have the factories; also we have the transportation since Comrade Kaganovitch has taken charge of the railroads. We have all that is needed, everything belongs to the people and we manufacture not for profit but to meet our needs as determined by our system of planned economy. Eventually we will have the highest standard of living in the world."

Q. "Don't you fear that the centralization of control necessary for planned economy will throw a lot of power into the hands of whoever does the planning?"

A. "Not at all. We are under the wise direction of leaders who work only for the good of the people. You have seen our new constitution drafted by our great leader, Stalin. In it

the people are guaranteed the right to work; maintenance in old age and sickness; the right of education; inviolability of person and home; freedom of speech, of the press, and of assembly; even the right to hold mass meetings and make demonstrations."

Q. "I know the constitution guarantees all these things but will the people actually get them?"

A. "Of course, you understand our people in general are not so far advanced as the Americans. Our wise leaders will watch the situation and extend the rights to the people as they become ready to receive them. Most important thing of all, we have abolished the exploitation of one man by another."

Q. "I cannot help thinking your government is exploiting labor. The workers are not individuals; they are only cogs in the machine. I fear, too, that the unions are dominated by members of the Party who hold key positions." (Gentlemen, you know what members of the Party means - only one party.)

A. "You fail to consider the benefits the worker gets. He is always sure of employment; he has a seven hour day and one day's rest in six; he gets old age, health, accident insurance and a vacation for two weeks annual with pay; he also has many recreative diversions arranged for him by the government. A worker may rise to commandship of a factory, or a trust, or even higher. We take from each according to his ability, you know. As for the Party, the leader, the worker represents him and fights for his interest."

Q. "Everywhere I go I see people standing in line waiting to buy things or receive something that is issued. What is the advantage of a seven hour day if the workers have to spend a lot of their own time standing in these queues?"

A. "That is a fault in organization which will be remedied. Give us time."

Q. "What about the days of labor which the workers are called on to give without pay? Is any compulsion used to get them to do this?"

A. "They gladly give this labor to public projects because they know in doing it they are working for their own benefit."

Q. "Where there is competition between agencies which serve the people the employers are obliged to be courteous and otherwise to show consideration. Here there is no competition in service and no matter how bureaucratic or arbitrary the functionaries may be the people have to accept the treatment accorded and like it, and there is no appeal. What remedial action do you propose for this?"

A. "As set forth in the new constitution the Communist Party is the vanguard of the toilers in their struggle to strengthen and develop the socialist system. It is the duty, therefore, of the Party to watch public officials and bring about their removal and punishment if they do not function satisfactorily."

Q. "The worst allegation I have heard against your system is that the worker, although nominally the master, has to do exactly as he is told, and since his thinking is controlled from the time

he begins to reason he does not even have mental freedom."

A. "I fear you are prejudiced against us. Let us talk of your journeys in other countries."

Gentlemen, the worker is reading more; he is playing more than his predecessors under the czar, but he is doing that everywhere else in the world where I have been and I have been pretty well over it. The circumstances that made it possible for me to hold this and the other discussion were exceptions. The ordinary traveler should avoid discussion of political matters. It is best, of course, to avoid any criticism of political matters. The communists with whom I talked were sincere in their convictions. They hold that anything which will bring about their ends is justified, anything whatever - the ends justify the means and argument is just a waste of time because there is no common meeting ground.

While I was there the interest rate on internal loans was reduced from ten to three plus per cent, the internal loans taken up by the workers mainly. The workmen in one factory, a silk mill, took a month's pay each while I was there; other factories took larger amounts, and the press came out with statements from their leaders saying how glad they were; that they realized that, although the government was reducing the interest rate from ten per cent to three and one-half per cent, at the same time they were reducing the credit rate to collective farms and that that would result in a lowering of prices and the cost of living would be much lower. They realized it

was for their own benefit and they were delighted to do it. One thousand workers, I think it was, in one factory subscribed for three months' pay under the new law, and then sent a message saying: "Greetings to our Beloved Stalin, who has pointed out the way to us to a new life."

Gentlemen, the seven billion rubles appropriated in 1935-1936, for purely military purposes, does not include all the work that is done and submerged in the appropriation for military munitions. Twenty billion rubles were appropriated in January, 1937 for military purposes and they estimate for 1938 twenty billion more, making a total for the three years of forty-seven billion rubles for strictly military purposes. It doesn't look very hopeful to me - this general rise in the standard of living and reduction in the cost of things. I wondered at the time what the American workman would do if he was told: "Here, you will take this out of your pay, and like it, and, furthermore, your interest rate is reduced from ten per cent to three and one-half." That is what happened while I was there.

Gentlemen, I want to talk for a little while about the Army. The Military Attaché and others at the Embassy could not have been nicer. I found a Cousin there who happened to have been born in Manchuria, although his father was from down in Crockett's Cove, Virginia. He is an authority on Russia. I would prefer to read these notes about the army. They have been passed on by the War Department.

To talk about Russia without mentioning the army would

be to leave out reference to the most important element, excepting in the Communist Part, of the new regime. Wherever I went I saw soldiers. Quoting Article 133 of the new constitution: "Universal military service is a law. Military service in the workers and peasants Red Army is an honorable duty of the citizens of the U.S.S.R." The army is under the all union people's Commissar for Defense. The aggregate strength of the military forces was given while I was there at one million three hundred thousand men with the colors, and later figures, which I believe are not exaggerated, are one million six hundred thousand. This is exclusive of the independent interior defense force, which is used for frontier guards, political troops, and detachments at the various centers throughout the country. The army has strong aviation and mechanized forces. It is equipped and trained on modern lines, and if it were not for the factors of great distances and inadequate railway transport facilities, without doubt would be the strongest military force in the world. They have thousands of tanks. If defects are found in the tanks after they are built, or if they do not like them, they scrap them and build some more. They have the advantage of us in that.

The Soviet rulers are too clever to wish for war, as time is working for them with respect to development of their resources. Moreover, further increase of the army might be dangerous. There is hidden opposition which, in the event of a mobilization with the vast expansion of the army, might try

to take advantage of the situation. The army is composed of selected men of whom probably one-half are members of the Party. Communization of the army is increasing. While with the colors the soldiers are given diversified military training, concentrated training in socialism, cultural training, and their educational training is carried on. Thus, at twenty-four the soldier is turned back in his community, intelligent, strongly indoctrinated, and in support of the ruling authorities.

A peculiar provision of the new constitution appears in Article 138, which provides that citizens serving in the army have the right to elect and be elected on equal terms with all other citizens. Another provision, under 133, is: "to defend the fatherland is the sacred duty of every citizen of the U.S.S.R." Treason against the country is punishable with the full severity of the law as the most grievous offense. The use of that word "fatherland" is anathema to the communist of the Trotsky school, who holds there is no such thing as fatherland. With them the world is divided into but two classes: the oppressed and the oppressor. Stalin's idea is reflected in the building up of a strong nationalist spirit.

Great secrecy is maintained about military matters. I never saw more secrecy anywhere in the world. It is no secret, however, that two separate field forces, each strong in numbers and fully equipped with modern weapons, are in existence: one in the far east and the other in western Russia. The inter-

national situation on each frontier and difficulties of longitudinal transportation require that two separate forces be maintained, and, incidentally, they are improving the transport system between the two. Of the army's loyalty and will to fight there is no doubt. The basic human material is regarded as excellent, equipment good, and the training satisfactory. The young field officers are said to be able troop leaders, alert and intelligent and enthusiastic. They seemed that way to me. Whether the higher command and staff are competent to meet the increased demand for modern war is a question. Since I was there I have heard of the maneuvers that have taken place and the staff and command officers are highly praised. They say that they have done very well. My information is that a ruthless system of elimination exists to rid the army of incompetent officers. The recent extension of the age limit is construed as a measure even to permit the extension of certain able commanders or to hold on active duty various officers whose political service has entitled them to such consideration. I remember that General Kuropatkin, in his book written after the Russo-Japanese War, attributed the consistent failure of the Russians to the fact that the men were not educated sufficiently to enable them to maneuver on the offensive; and he attributed that in turn to the general lack of education throughout the country. Of course the use of modern engines of war and equipment requires a high degree of technical, educational training, among the soldiers. The point I am working up to is; that the Commissar for Defense now claims that seventy

per cent of the soldiers are technicians. I do not agree. I talked about that with some of the other people there, and I do not think he meant what they think he did. What I think he meant was that seventy per cent of them had received modern military training as distinguished from the training that local troops like the militia get. Seventy per cent of technicians is very high; they certainly did not look like it to me.

There is one very great advantage that their system of government has over ours with respect to making war. There are no private property rights in the means of production; they can go ahead and take what they want, and the nature of the production can be changed merely by a decree of the State Planning Commission. They do not have to wait for the expectation of profit, and the prices charged are mere matters of cost accounting - it makes no difference. In locating their munitions factories, they can put them wherever they want to. They do not have to scatter them over the country for political reasons. There are no strikes - quite an advantage - and under conditions of socialized agriculture they can give priority to anything they want to. So it makes a rather strong arrangement there for military purposes. The army has a potential reserve in the sports club numbering over twelve million, about three million being women. I saw their units in drill in every city that I visited. Parachute jumping is a favorite sport; ~~it is not~~ it is not uncommon for several hundred to jump at once. The

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movement of a regiment with its machine guns and other equipment by airplane and release of the men at a designated point by parachute is becoming a routine measure. There are a good many tactical objections to that but it is going to be one of the surprises in war that is now being taken up by Austria, Italy, France, and probably Germany. I saw the funeral of their favorite jumper, a girl about eighteen, who waited a little too long to pull on the ring.

After I had seen enough of the show places I decided to travel southward through the heart of Russia to the Black Sea and then eastward through Roumania. The Asiatic boundaries were closed for Afghanistan, Thibet, and along there. I had vaguely thought of flying through there but changed my mind in view of the difficulty, and also my leave was getting short.

There were no other restrictions on travel that I found. The only restriction on foreigners that would seem in any degree unreasonable had to do with taking pictures. It is perfectly absurd to prohibit one from taking a picture of the Red Square, the Kremlin, the new stadium, etc., especially in view of the fact that all films have to be turned over to the government for development. If you have anything they do not want you to have you do not get it back. Otherwise, the foreigner is treated with consideration that is remarkable. For example, Lenins Tomb in Red Square is open only from five to seven each day. The crowd begins to collect along about one, so that by five o'clock there are many people there. I went there just at five; there was an

officer there, in command of the guard, and I called him "Kudpolkornik", which meant Lt. Colonel, (he was a Second Lieutenant) and he said: "Walk right in ahead of the crowd." That showed that human nature is the same everywhere.

I had a glimpse just as I was leaving, of our enthusiastic friend who was always making speeches. He had lost, I think, fifteen pounds. He had a wild look in his eye and looked dazed. I had to catch a train, there was a big crowd, and I just saw him for a minute in passing. I would have given anything to talk with him but I did not have time.

Gentlemen, I advise all of you to go to Russia, but unless you are immune to hunger, thirst, fatigue, dirt, overcrowding, and poor sanitary arrangements, you had better travel first-class and stick to the beaten trails. I did not. In any case, if you intend to travel second-class and if you are afraid of such things as dysentery, you had better carry your own food and water with you.

The Ukrainians suffered severely in the famine of 1933; they had their lesson. This year their crops were good. Traveling across the Ukraine you see mile after mile of wheat fields. There were tractors on the farms as I went through there. People look more Teutonic than Slavic. I heard something about a movement to shake off the Russian yoke and affiliate with Germany. They would not get very far. The constitution, Article 17, provides that "to each union republic is reserved the right freely to secede from the U.S.S.R." I

would like to see them try it.

The heat was worse than our middlewest in summer. Once for two days and nights on a slowly moving train I sweltered in a compartment with three others, two women and a man, and I did not have anything to eat. They treated me like a brother. In fact, wherever I went they treated me that way. They had some black bread and some raw cucumbers and some watter in bottles, and that is what we lived on. The buffets at each station had been simply stripped by the traveling crowds. You can imagine what it is like with the herde of government officials, and workers for two weeks a year on leave, traveling about. I could do without the food; a piece of bread did me for two days - what I wanted most of all was a cool drink and a bath, and I did not get either until I crossed into Roumania.

Now here comes the trouble - getting out of the country. It is like the old French idea of a mouse trap - you can get in but try to get out. The customs people came down; every scrape of paper was scrutinized. I had a rough sketch of one of the prison cars. "What is that?" they asked. I said: "That is a design for a cattle car. I thought we could use it in the States." And then they started to take what little money I had. The only cuss word I know in Russian is " " (devil take it) and English is good in a pinch like that - French was not strong enough either. I said: "You are taking my money; I have been starved here for two or three days and I

want something to eat." They got me some bread and cheese and cherry wine; then I gave them the money.

My first act after leaving Russia was to get a bath. I had never been so dirty before in my life, and I threw away everything I took off, outer clothes and everything else. That evening I sat in the dining car of the train going up to Jassy, with a high official of the Roumanian government. We were getting up in the hills and the air was cool, the people had no coats and ties, their linen was clean, and I had that delicious feeling that you get when you have had a good scrub and put on clean clothes and are going to sit down at a table with a clean table cloth on it and silverware. The lights came on and outside I could still see the groups of white clothed peasant figures across the fields at their homes, they were just hovels but they were their own homes. Roumania is a wheat country; it was harvest time and the harvest was good. We sat there and drank some of that excellent Roumanian wine and the minister told me that the land which originally had belonged to the nobles had been bought from them and resold to the peasants on practically a rental basis. Ninety per cent of it now belongs to peasant owners; each man owns his farm. Then he said: "It is a strange thing, how history repeats itself. Roumania was founded by two legions stationed out here to keep back the barbarians. Now, after a lapse of nearly twenty centuries, here we are again confronting the barbarians." During a discussion of the trend of relations between Roumania and Germany which followed we finished the bottle. Then he made an appointment to

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meet me in Bucharest and went to his berth. Presently the waiter came around and gave me another bottle, with his compliments. I sat there; I was not sleeping; my mind was very active and I did not feel like sleeping. One by one the events and impressions of my Russian journey came through my mind, automatically almost, the crystallization process began to take place and I took out my notebook and wrote down some conclusions about Russia. If you like, I will read them: "The mission of government, under our concept, is to promote the well being of the people without unduly infringing on the individual liberty and initiative. In theory the Soviet system insures economic security for the laboring masses and in practice the government is trying to do so. With respect to individual liberties, in theory the system subordinates them to the interest of the state; in practice the Soviet government suppresses them entirely. Under the concept of the Party leaders, liberty for the people is not to speak or to think, it is merely to eat. The Soviet system, presupposing superlatively high qualities of leadership in the men exercising control, military power, to enforce their decisions, and a low average of intelligence among the masses, can be made to work and may provide a fair standard of living for the people. Materialism is its greatest defect and weakness. The Soviet system requires a planned economy which in turn implies complete centralization of control over products and means essential to human life. The control thus centralized in one or two individuals may be used either to promote the well

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being of the people or for exactly the opposite purpose. In the latter case, it sets in operation the most formidable weapon ever devised for coercing the population - hunger. The people of the Soviet Union are ruled by their own government, supported by a powerful army. The government is controlled by the Communist Party, which is governed by the Politburo, an inner council of ten men; and the Politburo is dominated by Stalin; thus the policies of the Soviet Union are dictated by one man. The people of the Soviet Union receive some benefits from the present government. The price paid for the benefits is governmental interference and control in every detail of daily life, the loss of individual liberty and initiative, and the disappearance of spiritual inspiration."

The writing finished, I put away the notebook and took another drink. The train rushed on through the mountains; cool sweet scented odors came through the open window. The thirst I had brought from Russia was now assuaged; the click of the rails, the noise of the train, became a monotone, restful, soothing. ***** (Dream)

We now approached the station. I saw my friend getting off and I thanked him for the wine. He looked funny; said, "That was not wine, that was Roumanian brandy."

I have tried to present a sequence of facts and impressions about the journey across Russia. After I left there I visited various capitols in Europe; I had friends in all of them, and every one spoke very freely with me. Without exception all

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said they expected a war within two years. There was no difference of opinion as to who would start the war - Germany. There was a difference of opinion as to the direction of Germany's main effort; all agreed it would be eastward against Russia, but one school held that the main effort would be made along the Baltic countries toward Leningrad, and the other along the Szechoslovakia on Corrados toward Kier as the primary objective. Either route would be old stuff; for the Germans held from the Gulf of Kiga down to the Black Sea in 1917. We have on this map these five great fronts: Karelian Front, Baltic Front, Ukrainian Front, White Russian Front, and the Black Sea Front - five great strategic areas. Japan, of course, is expected to strike in toward the bottleneck, at Lake Baikal, and thus cut off a portion of Siberia greater than Canada, and the Russians are frantically building this new Trans-Siberian line along there with forced labor, north of the Trans-Siberian line. Personally, I do not believe that the Japanese would ever rest content when their principal cities are under the menace of aerial bombardment from Russian air fleets based on Khabarovsk and Uladivostock areas. Many of the people I talked with did not agree. I talked with Walter Duranty, he did not agree - very brilliant man, and many others. Sometimes I think that people who live over there are too close to get an objective viewpoint. Personally, I do not believe that Germany will start war unless absolutely driven to it by an

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economic breakdown. Germany has, step by step, wrecked the Versailles Treaty, and brought back full political strength and control since she has built up her military power. There is just one thing she wants now - her colonies. As you know, the sun never sets on Britain's colonies; France has vast colonial possessions; Holland owns an empire in the East Indies alone which is three thousand miles from one end to the other, as far as from here to San Francisco; even Portugal has immense colonial possessions; Italy gained the empire of Abyssinia; and Japan has taken over vast areas in Asia. Germany alone has no colonies where she can get raw material without buying foreign exchange, where she can send her emigrants. This lack of colonies is the sole remaining restrictive feature of the Versailles Treaty. Now, I will ask you a question: In view of what Germany has gained since she has reestablished her military strength and taking into consideration the reaction of the German people as to past accomplishments and prospects of future gain, does it not seem that recovery of her colonies would be the next objective? As for the invasion of Russia, I believe it would be doomed to failure for three reasons: first, the defensive strength of the Russian army; second, the immense difficulties of time and space; the strategic objectives in both European and Asiatic Russia are far in the interior and the people have that philosophy thoroughly ingrained, which prevailed when Kutrisoff withdrew before Napoleon; the third, the strength

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of Sovietism in the Russian masses, particularly the youth, and the old people do not count.

During the past two years I have covered all important centers of the world and what impresses me most of all is the spread of communism everywhere. Trotsky believes in the brotherhood of man, for him there are but two classes: one the oppressor, the other the oppressed; that world revolution should be carried on concurrently with the development of communism in Russia, Stalin hold the view that if the Russian experiment is successful, the capitalist government will fall automatically, and Stalin, I think, is right. Trotsky is trying his best to get back in the United States. He is pretending now that he has to come up here for a surgical operation. I was in New York the other night when he was scheduled to speak over the telephone. There was an immense crowd - two factions in New York. Wherever I have been I have found unrest: east, west, north, south, among the masses. General Araki, war lord of Japan, told us (I had two long interviews with him in 1932) that in his opinion communism was the greatest menace to our so-called western civilization. Last summer when I came through France I was amazed at the display of the red flag everywhere, and here at home, I saw November 4, on the American ballot the familiar crossed hammer and sickle insignia. What was it that William S. Foster, the notorious communist leader, instigator of the great steel strike, wished initially above all things in the United States? Industrial unionism, the O.B.U., the communists tried to get in here and failed, but aren't we getting

something like that now?

I have tried to give you the picture, gentlemen, and in closing I have just a few words to say. We who are officers may ask: what of us? what is our role in this thing? what should we do? and my answer is that we should keep abreast of the times, inform ourselves, and broaden our vision. Let me read here the British field service regulations: "High command requires the broadest possible outlook and knowledge of social as well as military questions. War is now more than ever a social problem; a major war reflects the whole of the national life and there is a corresponding civil influence in the conduct of military operation." The army is the bulwark of the established government and the instrument of final resort in the execution of its policies. We, therefore, should broaden our outlook, keep elastic mentally, be prepared to perform any duty that the Government may assign us. I want to close by telling you what I told my two sons. They said: "What do you think we ought to do?" I said: "The first thing I want you both to learn is how to take a machine gun apart and put it together with your eyes blindfolded. Secondly, I want you to learn to think for yourselves, make your own decisions, and if an emergency comes act the part of a man, and remember this - an old Spanish proverb: It is better to live a year like a lion than a hundred years like a rat."

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DISCUSSION FOLLOWING LECTURE BY

Colonel Cary I. Crockett, Inf.

March 24, 1937.

Q. I would like to ask the Colonel what he thinks would happen in the Soviet Union if Stalin should be assassinated or was to die?

A. I think he has one or two excellent leaders there; Vorashilin and Kaganovitch; I can think of those two offhand; I think possibly they would carry on with the help of the Party.

Q. Another question on that: Is there any truth in the rumor concerning the difference of opinion between Stalin and the Commissar for Defense?

A. That talk has come up since I was there. So far as I know I do not think so. Nothing was said while I was there. Before somebody asks about the recent confessions, they are confessed as they did at this last trial, I will tell you that I agree with Walter Duranty. I will forestall that question.

Q. With this new policy in labor and agriculture of rewarding the good worker, is there a possibility there of a new growth of different classes which would be entirely foreign?

A. The Stakanovite gets much more pay, better food, better lodging, special privileges, but you will have that in any society in my opinion. Don't you think so? A good man, the superior man, is going to go above the common level; you cannot keep him down.

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Q. If I may ask, how can they tie that in with their basic principles of communism?

A. From each according to his ability to each according to his work is their present creed, and they are striving to, and they say they can, educate the people and get that idealistic condition so they will be like the Oneida Community up in New York used to be - up there the only sin was "special love "

Q. Colonel, in your visit to the Soviet factories, what was your opinion as to the technical operation and skill as compared to other industrial countries?

A. Immeasurably lower than ours. They run it on a triangle system: representative of workers, representative of the technical man, and representative of the Party. You can guess who runs things.

Q. Do you think they are making improvements industrially?

A. They are making them without a doubt, but their products even now are awfully poor. However, they are improving

Colonel Jordan: Are they running training schools for mechanics?

A. Yes, indeed, right in the factories.

Colonel Jordan: Have they good instructors?

A. They have their own people. Of course you see so much, Colonel, that you cannot tell those things. There is so much to cover one cannot go very much into detail. They are crazy for instruction, asking for it. They kick if they are detained and say: "I have got to get back to my studies." Imagine an American kicking to get back to his studies!

Q. Colonel, in case Russia goes to war will the Russian industry be able to supply and maintain a large army?

A. For the first part of the war, probably for a few months, yes; later, no. That is why they are trying to rush everything. They would break down, I am sure, if for no other reason than the transport system. They are frantically trying to improve it!

Q. I would like to ask about the tendency of the women to enter all kinds of trades and your remark about prostitution being almost eliminated in Russia. What seems to be the tendency of morality of the people among themselves, families, etc.? Do they seem to have a high standard of morality?

A. That is one subject that I really am not particularly good at - only academic knowledge of the thing. I do not believe they are quite as moral as we are, but how moral are we? - that is the question. I really would like to give a good answer to that but I do not know. I think they are promiscuous to some extent now but not like they were.

Q. With the introduction of that word "fatherland" in the constitution, which seems to be something new, and the rise of this favored working class, is there possibility that the Russian government will become conservative and follow the course of France after the French revolution and thus have the international socialist proposition break down?

A. Well, you heard what I said on that. My own opinion is that I do not think Stalin would bring it about intentionally.

Q. I did not mean intentionally - I mean they cannot help themselves.

A. Perhaps, taking a long view, but I do not think that that is their objective now. It may work out that way.

Q. I know it is not their objective, nor was it the objective of the French revolution.

A. I think it might in several decades hence. They are going strong now on this thing and think they know more than we do - they are very dogmatic. Imagine - no family, no religion, and being taught from the time they are born "We are the finest country in the world" and Cossacks shoot the people down in the streets in Capitalist Countries, etc.

Colonel Jordan: Did you get into any of the capital goods manufacturing factories in the country? Did they impress you as having machinery there which they should have for the purpose of manufacturing?

A. I got right into two or three factories. They have bought a lot of American machinery, but the machinery did not impress me as being organized, in place. You did not see it set up as we have it here for mass production. I did not go beyond the Urals where they have many of their new munition factories. My own idea on that is they can put an army in the field for a few months and then they will break down, but they are improving it all the time and are fanatically enthusiastic.

Q. You read some conversations you had with some of the representatives over there which indicated they were fanatically

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in favor of the system. Did those conversations indicate the general opinion of all the people?

A. They do of all the youth so far as I could see, but not of the middle aged and older people, who, as I have said, do not count. You are dealing with people who are people of another world entirely, who have grown up since the revolution and who have been thoroughly propagandized. I never saw a pretty woman the whole time I was over there, just to give you an idea of the situation over there - not one.

Colonel Jordan: I want to tell you gentlemen one story about the speaker that I did not tell in introducing him, which impressed me very much. He was at the War College and our friends of the Air Corps are always preaching about how dangerous it is to take a parachute jump. They preached that very religiously at the War College, so Colonel Crockett got an Air Corps man to take him up and at four thousand feet he jumped off. Then he said: "There is no reason in the world why any child should not take a parachute jump, perfectly simple, nothing to it." He is a man who wants to investigate everything that is advanced and he certainly has done it; I think his record will show that.

Colonel, I want to tell you how much we appreciate your coming down here from Syracuse and talking to us, sir. It has been a great honor to have had you, and I want to thank you on behalf of the Faculty and the Students.