

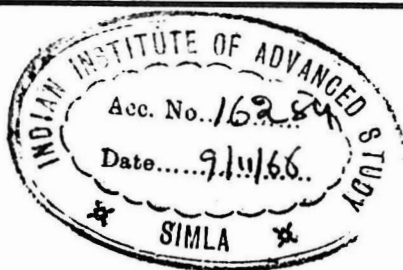
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RUSSIA'S NEW LOOK

By F. J. ERROLL, M.P.

Lecture delivered to the Royal Central Asian Society on December 1, 1954, Admiral Sir Cecil Harcourt, G.B.E., K.C.B., in the chair.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Erroll, who has kindly come to speak to us this afternoon, is an engineer by profession and of considerable experience. He is now also Member of Parliament for Altrincham. It was in that capacity that he went to Russia with the Parliamentary Delegation which has recently returned from that country. I now ask Mr. Erroll to describe "Russia's New Look."

IN a few brief introductory words I would like to tell you where we went and what we did. Then I propose to show a number of photographs which I personally took, the slides for which have been specially made for this talk, and from which you will be able to understand something of the Russia the Delegation saw. Following the photographs I shall turn to one or two of the main points which we learned from our visit and which are of particular interest today.

I must admit that the Delegation had a very limited view of Asiatic Russia. We were, however, able to visit some of the principal centres, and as Moscow dominates the whole of Russia perhaps what they do in Moscow and in the cities nearby may serve as a pointer to the type of policy which may be pursued in Siberia and Asiatic Russia itself.

We left England and flew to Stockholm, picked up a Russian aeroplane at Helsinki, and from there we flew down to Moscow, where we spent two or three days. From Moscow we went by train to Leningrad and back again to Moscow in time for the Arsenal-Dynamo football match on October 5. We left, hurriedly, the next morning by aeroplane for Stalingrad on the bend of the Volga. After a couple of days in Stalingrad the Delegation split into two groups: one going south to the Caucasus, the Crimea and back to Moscow; the other and smaller group, of which I was a member, going north and east and flying over part of Kazakhstan and up to Sverdlovsk, where we spent two days and then flew back to Gorki (formerly Nijni Novgorod). After two more days in Moscow we returned by air to England.

In showing some of the photographs I took on the tour I would like to call attention first to a most impressive building, the new Moscow University, an immense structure of which the slide only shows part. It has been built since the war over a period of about three years. The Russians are, naturally, very proud of the building and claim that it symbolizes the new development going on in their country. The building is just as handsome inside as outside, as you can gather from the photograph of the main assembly hall, which is one of the finest I have been in. The Delegation were all most impressed by what they saw here. And it was in Moscow that we had an opportunity of seeing the rest of the educational system at work. Here, for example, is a classroom in school No. 500; the Russians



told us it was not one of their best schools nor one of their worst, but a good average school in an industrial part of Moscow. Practically all the photographs were taken by myself, but I include this one taken by the Russians to show exactly how free we were to take photographs wherever we went. You will note the various members of the Delegation talking to the teachers, and a Press photographer, who was actually giving advice to one of the members of the Delegation as to what exposure he should use for his own photographs. So you will see that we had cordial co-operation."

From Moscow we went to Leningrad, where we saw another type of post-war construction—a vast stadium entirely built in Leningrad since the war. It is really a mound of earth in the shape of an oval with seats for over 100,000 people. This stadium is typical of the grandiose schemes of public works of which the Russians are so fond today. But not only did we see public works; we were also taken round a number of factories, and this view taken by Russian photographers is typical. It shows us going round the Electrosilia Kirov Works, which correspond roughly to any of our larger electrical engineering firms. Indeed, there was a close affinity before the war, these works having an arrangement with one of the best-known of British electrical firms for exchange of technical information.

From Leningrad we went to Stalingrad and saw the large tractor works there. You might like to see their production notice-board, which is such a common feature of the factories we visited. The factories are supplied with norms or targets, and a bonus is paid to workers and management in accordance with the percentage by which they exceed their targets. The notice-board has on it the target figures set for the different departments, and chalked in are the percentages by which the targets are being exceeded. On the left is a propaganda poster and on the right some notices which I have not yet had an opportunity to translate.

We saw a good deal of Stalingrad and were particularly impressed by a block of workers' flats, owned by the tractor works and used to house the workers employed in the factory. The block looks shoddy by Western standards and is rather crowded inside. The standard is one family to one room. But everybody seemed clean and comfortable. We gate-crashed unannounced into one flat in order to see what the conditions were like and so that we could be sure nothing was specially prepared. The children were especially pleased to see us, and in one place they asked if we had any coins from England or any English stamps we could let them have. When we had done our best to oblige, the children insisted on giving us something in return. One took an English penny from me and insisted on handing me her Communist badge.

Here you see the photograph of a typical industrial worker in Stalingrad off duty. He is not the Russian one is accustomed to think of; he is an assembly-line man earning a good wage in Stalingrad today. You see him leaning against the bonnet of one of the many luxurious cars which took us wherever we went. His dress is not bad and he has reasonably good shoes; a man with a sure outlook on the limited life he is allowed to lead. Of course not all Russians are looking like that, as this photograph of building workers in Stalingrad shows. This is typical of the construction workers we were to see in all the cities we visited.

While we were in Stalingrad we were taken on a trip along the Volga river in order to see the Volga-Don canal, another example of Russian fondness for grandiose schemes of public works. The canal links the Volga and Don rivers. Although it should have been in the height of the traffic season, the canal being frozen over for six months of the year, we did not see any barge traffic on the canal in either direction. Here is the entrance to the canal taken from as near as I was allowed to use my camera. The whole scene is dominated by the fine statue of Stalin looking benignly out over the Volga.

In several cities we visited we were shown the plans for "the reconstruction of the city," so it was no surprise when in Sverdlovsk that, on entering the mayor's parlour, we had the plans for the reconstruction of that city explained to us. The photo shows a large model in the foreground, and in the background the architect is explaining the form and nature of the various public buildings the Russians are proposing to erect. These plans, however inspiring they may seem on the first occasion, pall when one sees them over and over again, and make one feel that it is very much easier to have the plans than to put them into practice. The plans appear to be a substitute for a really energetic municipal building policy.

On this occasion, feeling slightly mischievous, having seen so many large secular buildings projected, I asked if they were going to build a large new church in the centre of the city. There was a rather awkward pause, but the architect rallied and said that on the corner of the plan—pointing to somewhere just off the photograph—there would be a plot of land on which believers could build places of worship if they wanted to. As the following day was Sunday we said we would like to go to church if possible. Oh yes, they said, there were still two churches left in Sverdlovsk, a city of 600,000 people. There was a little obstructionism, but we insisted on going to church, and here I show the church to which we were taken. You can see people flocking into a quite small church crowded to the doors. The service was already in progress when we arrived, but that did not prevent the priest from coming out to see us. He was a fine figure though pathetic and tragic withal.

I will deal later with the religious problem in Russia, but I would like to include here a passing reference to two other aspects of life there. This photo shows a Russian cemetery and the old woman and the children sit rather disconsolately beside one of the hedges, while another woman is laying a wreath on an adjacent tomb. While there are these evidences of interest in religion in Russia, the fact remains that the authorities do all they can to keep young people away from the churches and away from religious influence. This was typified when we went the same afternoon to see what was called a Pioneer Club, which is simply an organization of young Communists too young to be full party members. Their whole Sunday is filled with secular pastimes and pursuits, so as to make it impossible for them to attend any church service or receive any religious education. A concert was given in our honour, and four little lads played accordions very well indeed and kept us entertained for nearly an hour. You will notice the badge and the insignia of the movement with the motto "Be prepared."

Practically all the Delegation's time was spent in the cities, but we did have one opportunity of going into the countryside from Sverdlovsk. We went to the workers' settlement of Amaryl. It was a grey day and therefore not easy to take photographs, but the one I show gives some impression of the uniform greyness and drabness of the Russian scene when the sun is not shining. We also saw in this picture some soldiers off duty, obviously enjoying themselves in a traditional Russian way.

After we had been round a collective farm—a somewhat arduous affair during which I gave my head a nasty crack on the roof of a collective pigsty—the head farmer, or shief of the *kolkhoz*, insisted on the party taking lunch with him in his little farmhouse, where we enjoyed traditional Russian hospitality. The farmer was not able to raise it all out of his own resources, so the equivalent of Fortnum and Mason in Sverdlovsk had sent a truck and a couple of waitresses out in order to do honour to the occasion.

This picture of the farmhouse shows the typical Russian furnishings we found in many houses: a large cabinet in the corner filled with ornaments and glasses and so on; also a standard radio set which the Russians drape with embroidery, and a type of standardized celluloid doll for the entertainment of their children, which we saw in many places. The lunch followed the usual form of caviare and smoked ham and smoked salmon, washed down with vodka and brandy. Then we came to the serious business of large steaks with eggs on top, bottles of wine and all the rest.

From Sverdlovsk we went to Gorki and were taken round the famous Molotov Vehicle Works. You can see the Delegation walking down the assembly line. The car in production is a copy of the Standard Vanguard, much sought after in Russia and some Scandinavian countries. These superbly laid-out works produce a large number of motor vehicles.

There is a free market at Gorki where peasants can sell their products at uncontrolled prices. Here is one old woman only doing a small trade in mushrooms, but some of the others were full of life and gaiety. I think it appropriate to conclude showing the photographs on that note, because that is a picture which is typical of a great deal of Russia today. I started with a photograph of the new Moscow University, but I wanted to end with one of a typical smiling cheery peasant woman because that still represents a very large part of the Russia of today.

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You will realize that we had an opportunity of seeing a great deal; in fact, our great difficulty throughout was to sort out our impressions and at the same time get a general overall picture. That was, perhaps, our greatest difficulty, because, while we could talk to the individual factory manager about his own factory, he, on the other hand, would not or could not tell us about the industry as a whole of which his factory was just a part. Only in Moscow could one hope to get the whole picture, but if we had stayed all our time in Moscow we would not have had an opportunity of seeing what the other big cities were like.

I have often been asked whether we were shown what we wanted to see or only shown what was good for us to see. I feel that the Russians played extremely fair in that respect. Naturally, they had to arrange some

sort of tentative programme for us, otherwise we might have criticized them for not having organized anything at all. Having offered a tentative programme, they asked for our suggestions, so in Moscow I seized the opportunity of putting in a list of plants and installations I wanted to see. I included one or two "hot potatoes," such as a gold mine, a prison labour camp, the port installations at Leningrad and an aircraft factory. By the end of the visit I had seen every single one on my list, including a gold mine, a prison labour camp and an aircraft factory. In fact, the Russians went one better. I had only asked to see a civil aircraft works because I did not think it fair to ask to see a military works, which we would not be prepared to show the Russians if they came to our country. But they were not to be outdone, and insisted on taking me round a large modern works where they were making jet-engined bombers. That was a most impressive sight, and I counted myself fortunate in being invited to climb into one of the bombers, look at the controls and generally to have a look round.

I compiled the lists of plants and installations to give me as far as possible a good general picture of Soviet heavy industry. I therefore tried to specialize so far as possible in that subject during the tour and to leave it to other members of the Delegation to concentrate on agriculture, social services, hospitals and education. I believe the factories I saw were a fair and representative cross-section of modern Soviet industrialization. The important point to bear in mind in regard to Soviet industry is that it has a high priority in the Soviet economy. Those who have read histories of post-Revolution Russia will know already that it was one of the great aims, both of Lenin and of Stalin his successor, that Russia must develop her heavy industries if she was to catch up with, equal, and perhaps exceed the lead of the Western Powers. They have therefore devoted a great deal of the national effort to developing factories, power stations, mines, railways and civil works of all sorts.

Let me now give a few details of one or two of the factories I went to, so as to convey to you some sort of picture of Soviet industrialization. We were fortunate in going to two machine tool factories, one in Moscow and one in Gorki. The works in Moscow were making lathes, and it was most impressive to see the way in which the Russians had standardized on one particular type of lathe and were producing it on mass-production lines. It was a good simple robust lathe, the sort of lathe one would be given as an apprentice in England, because one could not do much harm to it, so sturdy and robust was the tool. That was right and practical from the Russian point of view, as they are training more and more ex-peasants to take a hand in heavy industry. The lathes we saw were right for the job and they were also accurate. I was invited to take measurements on one of the lathe beds, and the lathe was certainly up to its specification. At the other machine tool works in Gorki there was much the same procedure for milling machines. The management had standardized on one type of milling machine and arranged the shop floor on mass-production lines. This works was of particular interest because it also made large heavy machine tools of a type which are withheld under the terms of the strategic ban from being exported from Great Britain to Russia. It is a

moot point as to whether we have been wise to maintain the ban or not. On the one hand, we have slowed down Russian industrial development to a certain extent; on the other hand, by withholding these important machine tools from them we have compelled the Russians to manufacture for themselves. They now realize that they can produce machine tools of a size and accuracy that they had not previously believed themselves to be capable of making; we have taught the Russians by necessity to make for themselves what they previously had to import.

At the large Ural-Mash Works in Sverdlovsk we saw heavy engineering at its best; we saw steel rolling mills under construction, also large excavators of the heaviest types and a variety of other equipment for mines, such as crushing units, winding gear and the like. I had an opportunity of going round their drawing office and meeting the chief designer. The drawing office employs no less than 350 people out of a total working force of about 8,000. The drawing office compared well with what one would expect to find in an English works in the Midlands.

Nevertheless, standards vary in Russia. At the Diesel Engine Works at Gorki the standard was lower because the priority for diesel engines has been lowered now that they can be imported into Russia once again. On the other hand, at the aircraft works I visited, the aircraft were obviously priority No. 1. Not only were the workers working faster and better than in other factories, but also they were liberally supplied with power-driven hand tools and the best type of jigs and other equipment to enable them to achieve the maximum rate of output.

The gold mine to which I went provided quite a different example of what the Russians can achieve. It was a modern gold mine, the main shaft having been sunk in 1951. From that mine the Russians are bringing up ore at the rate of 1,000 tons a day. The mine was well laid out and the underground haulage was by electricity. The working space was adequately ventilated and lit, and the equipment compared favourably with what one would expect to find in a metalliferous mine anywhere else in the world. It was interesting to observe that the planners in Moscow had decided that gold mining was of a sufficiently high priority to warrant a diversion of modern equipment for increasing the output of gold in the Soviet Union. It is a pointer to their foreign exchange policy and to their need to export in order to pay for their current imports that they are prepared to increase their output of gold at the present time.

My general verdict would be that the Russians are extremely capable in this field and very practical, but unless they have the benefit of foreign designers—and we know they have taken away a large number of German designers from East Germany—they remain copyists rather than inventors. It was the same story at the Gorki Vehicle Works, where the lorries were a copy of American lorries; the lorry engine was designed in 1941 and has been in production ever since. We have not a lorry engine of that age in current production in this country. When I put the point to the works director, he asked: "Why should we worry to change? We have a very good design. Why alter it?" The answer could only be: "You do not know how lucky you are; you have no competition to have to stand up to." In this regard they are following the view of Lenin, their great master, and it is perhaps

worth quoting from one of his revolutionary books an apt illustration of his plan for industrial development. Lenin wrote: "We do not invent, we take ready-made from capitalism: the best factories, experimental stations, academies, etc.; we need only adopt the best models furnished by the experience of the most advanced countries." Lenin wrote that in 1918, but I can assure you it is as true today as when he wrote it.

I want next to say a few words about the Church in Russia. You have seen a photograph of the church in Sverdlovsk and the old priest. May I remind you of the Russian Constitution in which it is said that there shall be freedom for believers to worship but there must also be, equally, freedom for anti-religious propaganda. That is typical of so much that is said in Russia. It looks fair on the surface, but it is manifestly unfair in practice, because if it were really fair there should be equal freedom for pro-religious propaganda as well as for anti-religious propaganda. In actual fact the anti-religious propagandists make all the running; the pro-religious propagandists, the priests and believers, are only allowed to say what they believe in inside churches to those who care to go there. One member of the Delegation asked a priest what his attitude was towards anti-religious propaganda which was pouring out in spate at the time of our visit. "Oh," said the priest, "that is really nothing to do with me. That propaganda is all politics." He knew perfectly well that the only way he could go on being a priest was by saying nothing about the anti-religious propaganda which was assailing his congregation throughout their daily lives.

We were taken to see an anti-religious museum in Leningrad, or, rather, having heard of its existence, we insisted on being taken to it. Here we saw the crudest misrepresentations of the Roman Catholic faith in the form of tableaux, sketches and diagrams all designed to throw ridicule on the Christian faith. Here it is that the anti-religious propagandists have been so clever, because they have not attacked their own Russian Orthodox Church. That would arouse too much opposition. Instead they attack the Roman Catholic Church, which in many forms has outward similarity and which in Russia is practically non-existent. They can attack the Roman Catholic Church with impunity, and at the same time get their points across extremely well and forcibly.

There was at the time of the Delegation's visit a strong anti-religious campaign going on in the Press. The theatre shows often included, by some means or other, a slighting reference to religious belief, such as the spectacle of a Russian peasant crossing himself in front of an ikon or a priest performing a bogus marriage ceremony as a result of being bribed ostentatiously by one member of the company. Those instances usually provoked laughter and titters. The fact remains that the Russian campaign has been not only continuous but is continuing with ever-increasing vigour. A belief in religion is regarded as incompatible with certain callings. One may not really be a member of the Communist Party and a believer; belief in religion is incompatible with being a teacher; and I should imagine that any show of belief makes life rather difficult for factory managers, works directors and State department officials.

You may have noticed that recently Kruschkev has announced that there is to be an easing up of anti-religious propaganda, and there are

certain Russophiles who have taken that up and said that it shows what progress is being made in Russia today. I do not think it means any such thing. It is simply timed to coincide with the presence of British Churchmen in Russia. They are today being received by the Moscow Church, so that I believe it is nothing more than a device to lull them into feeling that perhaps things are on the mend in Russia today. I see no reason why they should be letting up unless the campaign has been too crude in the past and so is arousing a certain amount of opposition.

The great skill in this anti-religious campaign is that there should be no martyrs; the opposition must never have an opportunity of turning itself into a group of martyrs. I should mention, because it will be of interest to you, that I did not see or hear anything of any campaign against the Islamic faith. I much regret that it did not occur to me to ask more specifically about that. The campaign against belief as explained to us was essentially against belief in the Christian Church; I heard no reference to Islamic believers. That does not mean the campaign is not being pursued against Islamic believers in Moslem areas.

I could, of course, talk for a long time on the different aspects of the Russian scenes we saw, but I feel I must confine myself to one final aspect, and that is the political situation, particularly as regards Russia and the Western world. As you will see, in some respects there is a new look in Russia today. The standard of living is increasing and improving. The large schemes of public works, many extravagant and wasteful, will provide, nevertheless, appreciable improvement in transport and other facilities. But while we have the new look we also have the old ideals, and the old ideals are entrenched in the Kremlin as firmly as ever.

As a Delegation we were extremely fortunate in having an audience with Mr. Voroshilov, President of the U.S.S.R., and also with Mr. Malenkov, who received us in his own office unaccompanied by anyone else save Mr. Molotov and one official interpreter. As a courtesy he invited the British Ambassador to be present, and we had a most stimulating and worthwhile talk with Mr. Malenkov and Mr. Molotov for one and a quarter hours before we left. I obviously cannot give you the conversation verbatim, but what follows is in some respects a kind of summary of the questions and answers. I should mention that Mr. Malenkov obviously enjoyed the debate. He liked being asked awkward questions and gave spirited answers. The only paper on his desk was that containing a list of the names of the members of the Delegation and which party they represented. As we had a shot at him he, in turn, slanted the answer according to the party affiliation. That is pretty good. After all, England is a small island a long way away from Moscow. We felt it was a compliment that he had taken so much trouble to know our political views.

We asked him about peaceful coexistence, and he said he thought peaceful coexistence could continue until the World Revolution. Pressed further, he admitted that they still believed in a World Communist Revolution and in the ultimate establishment of a World Communist State, but he hastened to add that there need be no war of weapons to bring it about; it need only be a war of ideas, and he added: "A war of ideas in which we are bound to win because the Communist way of life is so very much

better than yours." We thought that as he had never been outside Russia, except to visit Communist China, it might be a good thing if he were to visit the Western World.

We then pressed him about peace, and he explained that he was very concerned about the warlike intentions of the United States of America and the Western democracies. He asked us point-blank if we had seen any evidence of preparation for war anywhere in the Soviet Union. I was tempted to say I had seen very good evidence in the aircraft factory I had visited on the previous day, but I felt that would divert the conversation on to matters of detail. He also asked if we had seen evidence of air raid shelters anywhere. I would have liked to say that the only place in which I had seen them was in the aircraft works because the workers there were those the Russians wanted to protect more than any others. There is, of course, plenty of evidence of Soviet military preparation, of which the aircraft factory is only one example; other examples were the large numbers of troops to be seen in every town and the high proportion of lorries coming away from the Molotov Vehicle Works and being handed over to Army units.

We said: "Be that as it may, the Western world are very doubtful about your good intentions; will you as a gesture abandon the Cominform?" Oh no, he could not possibly abandon the Cominform because that was an information exchange centre and was similar to the Socialist Internationale, to which he understood the British Labour Party already subscribed. So we told Malenkov that we were very worried over Poland and Czechoslovakia; how could he possibly justify keeping such large numbers of troops in those countries, and did he not realize that by keeping Russian troops there he invited the British and the Americans to keep troops on the Continent of Europe? "Well," he said, "we could not possibly withdraw our troops from Poland or Czechoslovakia because that would be a breach of faith on our part." He pointed out that the Polish and Czechoslovakian Governments had both been freely elected and, as a result, had unanimously invited the Russian troops to go to the protection of those countries and save them from aggressive American imperialism. As one of the members of the Delegation remarked afterwards, if you can believe that you can believe anything. But it does serve to underline the great difficulty which confronts anyone who tries to deal or treat with the Russian Government. They want to have it all their own way; they believe they can only have their security provided everybody else is insecure.

You may say: Surely this drive for friendship is evidence of a new approach, a new attitude, in Moscow. It is certainly evidence of a new tactic, but it does not indicate as yet any change in the fundamental strategy of ultimately securing a World Communist Revolution. My reading of it is that the Russians realize that the method of Korea was wrong, that armed intervention only causes strong reaction in the Western world, and that they must go softly in future instead of being so aggressive. One must also remember that the West is now strong. We have N.A.T.O. We have armed forces encircling the Soviet Union and a degree of unity amongst the free countries which we did not have a year or two ago. Why

should Russia be friendly now? Surely only because the West is strong. Let us not be taken in by the friendship drive. I feel that Mr. Malenkov gave it away when he said: "If Britain and Russia are friends no one in the world will dare to attack us." He means, quite clearly: If only Britain could be wooed away from the alliance with the United States of America, then Russia will be far and away the strongest Power in Europe and be able to pursue that plan of Communist expansion.

The Russians are now pursuing, if they can, a battle of ideas rather than a battle of weapons, and the battle of ideas is one which should be taken very seriously. In every hotel we encountered delegations from the countries of Free Asia—an Indian delegation, one from Indonesia, another from Thailand, and delegations from other countries. In the remotest parts we came across these Asiatic delegations all being shown the Communist way of life under most luxurious personal conditions. I only regret we are not doing anything on that scale in the free countries of the world in order to show these new peoples that we have a way of life which is a very much better way indeed.

In the battle of ideas one may be quite certain that the Russians will cheat whenever they can, and we must be ready and prepared for it. I know this sounds frivolous, but I would not be at all surprised if Spartak had not been told to lose to Wolverhampton Wanderers in order to prove to the British that the Russians are good sportsmen! That is the extent to which they are prepared to go in the development of their battle of ideas.

You may say that this all sounds very pessimistic; is there no hope for the future? I am sure there is plenty of hope for the future, but I do not think we should be taken in by the present friendship drive. Maybe there will be a change of heart, and it will be quite easy to see when that change of heart has taken place. There are one or two fundamental requirements, and when those are met I am sure a change of heart will have occurred.

To begin with, there must be unrestricted travel from Great Britain into Russia, and Russians must be able to come and visit us whenever they want to and without special formalities. Then there must be the right of free assembly in Russia itself. That simply is non-existent today for all proper purposes. We were told of one example. When Sir John Hunt went to Moscow to lecture about his wonderful ascent of Mount Everest, the British Ambassador tried twice to get a public hall in Moscow so that Sir John could deliver his lecture in public. The Ambassador's two applications were never even answered or acknowledged by the Russian authorities, so when Sir John arrived he could only speak to the staffs of the other Embassies gathered together in the British Embassy.

Russia is a long way from being a free and independent country. Not only must there be travel from the Soviet Union and to the Soviet Union; there must be unrestricted domestic travel also. At present one can only buy a railway ticket if one has permission from the police beforehand to do so, so that people are not allowed to move about freely even within the confines of Russia. There must be unfettered radio and TV programmes, so that the U.S.S.R. can learn the ways of the West. If they would only permit free broadcasts we would be well on our way to winning the battle

of ideas. Finally, and most important of all, there must be real freedom for the Christian Church. To put it in a nutshell, the day that Mr. Malenkov becomes a Christian is the day I can believe there has been a change of heart in the Soviet Union.

There is no evidence of any of these fundamental changes having taken place so far. The so-called "friendship" is being used cynically as the new weapon in the fundamental war of ideas—a war which is of their making, and which could be avoided quickly if the minds of Russia's rulers could be opened to the free world.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Erroll said he would be pleased to answer questions, so I take the opportunity to ask the first question. We saw that a worker received extra pay for exceeding his output target. What happens if a worker does not reach the target?

Mr. ERROLL: If a worker fails to reach the target set for his job he may be summoned before the Workers' Committee, who tell him he has to do better. Also the trade union official, so far from being the worker's friend, will admonish him and try to see what the trouble is. If the worker still fails to maintain his target he is disciplined by the Workers' Committee and the manager must act upon the recommendation of that committee. The worker may be fined or made to work for a longer period for lower pay or compulsorily transferred to another works on lower priority production. If the worker still continues to be a slacker he may go to a forced labour camp somewhere east of the Urals.

Group-Captain H. ST. CLAIR SMALLWOOD: The lecturer mentioned Sverdlovsk. I would like to ask if there is any memorial to the Tsar's family there? Is the murder condoned or is it looked upon as a good thing?

Secondly, I would like to know whether there has been any attempt to develop the Lena goldfields, which were believed some years ago to be immensely rich in ore?

Mr. ERROLL: As regards the Tsar we asked the Russians about the place where the Tsar was said to have been assassinated. In Sverdlovsk, by luck, on the first day the driver of my car when going along the road turned to the interpreter and said, "That's the house where the Tsar was assassinated," and the interpreter, being new to Sverdlovsk, did not know that he should not have passed that remark on. Later I asked to see the house and the mayor told me that the house no longer existed, and when I said, "That's funny; I saw it this morning," he replied, "Dear Mr. Erroll, you must have been misinformed." The following day, as luck would have it, the Pioneer Club was practically opposite the house that had been pointed out by the car driver, so I said I would walk back to the hotel after the visit to the club so as to have a look at it. The response was: "Dear Mr. Erroll, you will catch a cold because it is raining." I replied that I was hardier than the Russians and would not catch a cold. "Well, dear Mr. Erroll, you will be late for dinner." I said: "It is two hours to dinner; I only have to walk four hundred yards to the hotel." So dear Mr. Erroll got out of the car and proceeded to walk, as I thought, alone to the house, but in two or three minutes I was followed and caught

up with by an English-speaking Russian from the Sverdlovsk Soviet who wanted to know what I was nosing around for. I told him I was trying to find my way into the house where the Tsar was assassinated. He replied: "You are misinformed; the house was in another part of the town. It has been pulled down." When I returned to England I obtained a copy of an old French book in which there was a photograph of the house in which the Tsar was assassinated, the book having been published in 1922 or 1923. I was astonished to find that the photograph of the house in that book exactly tallied with the one I had seen in Sverdlovsk.

As regards gold-mining, I do not know anything about the Lena gold-fields. Industrial managers usually know only about their own enterprises. I learned there was one deep shaft in Eastern Siberia which was the deepest in Russia, but the manager who mentioned it would not give me the exact location.

Major E. AINGER: May I touch on the subject of ideological weapons? Did the lecturer get any idea of the views of the students when talking to them? Were they beginning to ask questions? Are the sons of officials of the type of Molotov taking life seriously? I had a chat with another member of your Delegation and he could throw very little light on that aspect. My mind goes back some twenty years, when there was a good deal of ill-feeling between the officer class and the technological people, the idea being that the former grew fat on caviare while the latter lived on tea and biscuits.

Mr. ERROLL: As regards young people, we had some opportunity of cross-examining the students, men and women in their early twenties. We used to ask: "What do you think of England? We are from England. What would you like to ask us?" We asked that in order to try to find out what they were thinking about. In general, they possessed the ideas put into their heads by newspapers and radio. One question we were asked was: "Are the workers in England only allowed to work five days a week and have to starve the other two days?" Another student wanted to know why all the schools in London had been closed down. Another wanted to know how up to date Charles Dickens was, and particularly *Oliver Twist*, because he thought it gave an idea of life in present-day England. I do not think it is possible to say what it is the young people in Russia think. They think, as far as we could tell, what is said in the Press and on the radio.

As regards the officials' children growing fat and becoming playboys in Moscow, I am not quite sure what the questioner had in mind.

Major AINGER: Are they interested in amusements only and not interested seriously in life?

Mr. ERROLL: We were staying at the best hotel when in Moscow, and there was a dinner dance on three or four nights of the week. We watched it from the gallery, which was as near as we could get. It looked a very dreary affair.

Major Ainger's third point was in regard to the officer class *versus* the technologists. We never met any officers at all except one elderly Field-Marshal at one particular function, so that I cannot speak from personal knowledge. We were, however, told that at present the Russian Army is

well content and is very well looked after; it has a high standard of living by Russian standards.

Mr. LANGE: We saw two photographs showing stylish automobiles of a rather luxury type. Were they a Russian production or is there a great deal of importation of foreign luxury cars into Russia?

Mr. ERROLL: No, the cars you saw were made in Russia and we actually saw them being made. The Zim car, that which you saw the worker leaning up against, is a Russian copy of the American Chevrolet. They are good cars and run extremely well; officials get them on a system of allocation. We were told that anyone who had the money could buy one of those cars; I had the impression that there was a long waiting list. When I asked if I could see a motor showroom in Moscow the subject was changed quickly.

Judge AMEER ALI: I think it is pretty well established that propaganda against the Moslem religion in the Soviet Union is just as strong as against any other faith. There were complaints recently in Russian Central Asia that the religious habits of some of the population had slowed down production because they would fast for a month and pray on occasions. There was a statement in the Press recently to the effect that a more moderate method of anti-religious propaganda in Russia was called for owing to previous tactlessness. It was urged that more subtle forms must be used. It was further stated that moderation now being urged in this connection was evoked by the drive for further Soviet influence in the independent Moslem countries, in Persia and Afghanistan, etc. Anti-religious propaganda in those countries would not further Russian political projects.

Mr. ERROLL: I fully endorse what the questioner has just said. The Russians are going slow with their anti-religious campaign because they feel they were rather too hot on it previously, although they have no intention of letting up on it altogether. They intend to be more subtle. That is in keeping with the friendship drive. They must be more subtle in their political propaganda than in the past.

Sir NIGEL DAVIDSON: The lecturer mentioned that he visited a forced labour camp. Could he tell us what the conditions were like there?

Mr. ERROLL: I could give a whole talk on that subject. It was not actually a forced labour camp but a prison labour camp, where the convicts were put to work. The camp was thirty miles out of Moscow. They were all men there, all first offenders. I was invited to pick out any I wished to talk to. They were serving sentences varying from three to five or ten years for offences such as knocking a friend over the head with a vodka bottle or, in some cases, appropriating funds of a State department, which has a somewhat familiar ring about it. They were put to work in a factory where they produced kettles, pots and pans, aluminium spoons and such-like things. They received wages up to £3 10s. a week, which they could send to relatives or save up until they were released, or spend in the canteen where they could buy butter, eggs, biscuits, fish and even caviare. So you see all is well; even prisoners have caviare in Russia. They could also buy clothes to send out to the peasants if they wished. The object is to put into the mind of the prisoner the idea of steady regular work which will fit him to take his rightful place in the Soviet Union.

Mr. S. S. HAMMERSLEY : Did Mr. Erroll during the whole course of his tour meet any persons in a position of authority other than the proletariat or who had risen from the proletariat; in other words, would we be right in thinking that the whole of the former official ruling class has been eliminated?

Mr. ERROLL : That is a very thoughtful question and of course we only got very scattered impressions in regard to such a big matter. As regards works directors in the various factories, we found that they had invariably risen from the shop floor and in most cases from the floor of the shop of which they were in charge. As regards the municipal officials, the equivalent of the mayors of towns or cities, they were, again, almost invariably men who had risen from the bottom in their own town. The principal officials in Moscow, where we did meet them, were men who had come up and come on with the growth of the present Soviet régime. Here and there we did notice a person of a different stamp and, on making tactful inquiries, we learned he probably had some blood in him from the former régime and was "the son of a gentleman," as we would say in England. It was difficult, travelling so much in so short a period, to get used to the different facial types, but even on a quick and concentrated visit we were able to pick out one or two isolated cases of some survival from the old official ruling class. In one particular works I remember noticing that the assistant works manager was plainly of a different calibre from all the rest. Apart from the few odd exceptions I think it fair to say that the ruling classes of the past have been entirely wiped out. As another example there was a butler in one of the hotels who was very old but obviously had previously waited upon some well-to-do family in the district. He behaved quite differently from the present run of servants and had a style and a charm about him which singled him out from the others. Apart from those odd isolated examples, the whole of the top end of Russia consists of the new men and the new women who believe utterly and completely in their Soviet Communist Party.

The CHAIRMAN : It remains for me to thank, on your behalf, Mr. Erroll for his astonishingly interesting and thoughtful lecture, most delightfully given. I am sure most of us envy his Delegation their trip to Moscow. His talk has confirmed the determination of all here that we must continue to stand on our guard. Thank you very much indeed, Mr. Erroll.



