

Russian Students Want Freedom, Too

By ROBERT COHEN
Collegiate Press Service

LENINGRAD, U.S.S.R. — The life of the Russian student is a most fascinating phenomenon for an American student to see.

Surprisingly, the desire for more student freedom, which is so basic to student movements in America and abroad, is also present to a large extent in Russia. This period marks what could be a most important change in relationships between the Soviet student and his government.

Students are not satisfied with the status quo—they want rapid change and are living a life which centers about learning as much as possible about Russia and the world.

Were an American student to meet his Russian counterpart on the street, he would be immediately surprised by the great Western influence. His clothes are Western, often purchased from foreign students although this is illegal.

Western Mannerisms

The Russian's mannerisms are those of the West, and one is instantly surprised at his knowledge of the history and current events of the West.

Attending a party at a student's house means listening to the Beatles, the Rolling Stones, Elvis Presley, and Fats Domino, not to mention the almost fanatical attachment the students have to American jazz.

These students may seem to be, as some observers say, "in

revolt" against the customs of their system. However, they are greatly dedicated to a life under Communism—but they want it to be a life where they are free to formulate their own opinions and to debate over controversial ideas. They want to know the whys and hows which were so often unknown, if not unknowable, under Stalin.

They are in the midst of a new kind of life, where the consumer has a greater voice in productions of goods, where incentive on an individual level is no longer a violation of state policy, and where experimentation with Western ideas is not heavily frowned upon.

Literature Available

There is a significant amount of uncensored literature available to Soviet university students. In the large public and university libraries, students may read The New York Times, The New York Herald-Tribune, Newsweek, Time Magazine, the London Times, Le Monde and the Daily Telegraph, even though there are few copies available and long waiting periods at many places.

In addition, there is a weekly news digest of articles printed in

the Western press, which have been translated and printed in their entirety, which is available at the universities.

Although none of this literature is available on the street, and the articles translated into Russian are usually critical of the United States and its allies, these are not their only source of information, for students are dedicated listeners to the Voice of America and other Western stations. Most of their Western songs are on tapes made from these broadcasts.

Few Questions Asked

Surprisingly, there were few questions about President Kennedy's assassination since portions of the funeral had been telecast nationally, and had left quite an impression on those of college age.

From the beehive hair does of the Soviet girls, to the modern sports clothes worn by their male counterparts, the youthful desire for rapid progress—Russians are urged by large signs to "catch and overtake the United States"—is readily seen throughout Leningrad and Moscow.

This rush towards a new life is coupled with a search for more

empirical facts to support the basic tenets of Communism. Recently, the famous experiment of Solomon Asch on the conformity of an individual to a group's beliefs was repeated at Leningrad University, and students and faculty are now using this experiment to argue for placing little importance on the individual in their society.

Talk of Elections

Also, there was talk of a modification in the system of elections; the possibility of presenting the people with a slate of two candidates in the next election, both of whom would be Communists, was seriously discussed by faculty members and students.

But in large measure, the Soviet government has recently presented these students and their society with several disconcerting problems—it has denounced Lysenkoism, a biological theory of heredity, changed its view on incentive in the economic structure, and relaxed its ideas about the control of students.

Now that the students have this new freedom, they are trying to discover why the changes were really made, where the society is going, and whether they

may exert some kind of influence over the future course. They are faced by a great barrier—the great number of politicians now in power who are products of the Stalin era.

But the winds of change are spreading over the land, and to some degree these changes are due to the searching and probing that the new Soviet student is constantly involved in. These students are fully dedicated to the Communist system—but they want to infuse their nation with new vitality to be gained by free discussion of issues and experimentation with all kinds of new ideas.

Viet Nam

The Faculty-Student Committee urges you to write or telegraph the President **immediately** expressing your approval of the suspension of the bombing and encouraging him to prolong it until a settlement can be achieved.

Student Benefits To Be Explained

Representatives of the Eugene Social Security Office will discuss benefits for students under the 1965 Amendments to the Social Security Act, today in the Student Union. Time and room will be posted.

The representatives will also help students file for benefits.

Unmarried full-time students under 22 years of age may be eligible for the new benefits under two conditions:

- 1) If he received benefits on either of his parents social security accounts and those benefits stopped when he reached 18;
- 2) If one of his parents has retired, become disabled, or died, and the student was 18 at that time.

Dean Haley, District Manager of the Eugene Social Security Office stated that there should be about 600 claims for student benefits and only about 500 have been received.

Nielson to Speak In Lecture Series

"Elements of Interior Design" will be explored during a winter term lecture series sponsored by the University's Office of Continuing Education.

Taught by Jerry L. Nielson, assistant professor of interior architecture, the course will be held Wednesdays from 7 to 9 p.m., Jan. 5 to March 9, in Room 132, Lawrence Hall.

Course enrollment is limited. Advance registration with the Office of Continuing Education is necessary. Checks for the \$15 fee should be made payable to Continuing Education.

The lectures are open to anyone who wishes to enroll. No examinations, grades or academic credit will be given.

Dorm Space Open For Women

A few spaces are now available in women's dorms, according to Miss Hilda Yee, counselor supervisor. However, several men are waiting to get into the men's dorms.

An accurate count of dorm residents cannot be made until next week after those who are leaving school have moved out.



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