

# Russia Called 'Wasteland of Suspicion'

**EDITOR'S NOTE** — Felix R. McKnight, vice president and executive editor of the Dallas Times-Herald, is one of 12 U.S. editors who recently went on an 8,000-mile, 23-day tour of the Soviet Union. Following is a condensation of a series of articles he wrote on his findings.

**By FELIX R. MCKNIGHT**  
DALLAS (AP)—The Soviet Union I saw is a wasteland of suspicion—simply because it has never been told the truth about the United States of America.

It is buried in doubt and distrust, thoroughly propagandized to view us as greedy war profiteers unconcerned about peace and the rights of man.

The Russian reads only what they want him to read and he does what he is told to do.

Only a few hours after our group of editors left an old DC-3 type plane in the central Asian area of Samarkand, clutching rosary beads and saying Methodist prayers because of a misbehaving right engine, it fell in the wilderness near Tashkent.

**16 Killed**

Sixteen were killed — one American from Detroit survived. But not a single word was printed in the newspapers. We learned of it through the American embassy four days later.

Russians had not even been told about Telstar, the magnificent American achievement in international communications satellites when I left the Soviet Union—although we were constantly needed about joining the Soviets in "atoms for peace."

The Soviet Union is a massive conglomeration of incredible contrast. It is vital and progressive in the fields of science and technology—but it is pathetically primitive in the area of living.

No longer is there visible terror in the Soviet Union. Khrushchev deadened the fear of the midnight knock from the NKVD.

Khrushchev is wily, cunning, shrewd, tough, able—and determined. He stands 5 feet, 5 inches tall and a disproportionately small head sits atop a bulky body.

But he also stands tall and firm as premier of Russia and is likely to remain there for some time.

Now he has the people with him.

He has improved their lot tremendously in recent years through housing and the general elevation of living standards.

Master politician who plays a tough game of international politics, Khrushchev acts like a man who doesn't want war. But not for one minute does it mean that he will abandon the pressures that have kept the world off-balance.

The big goal is still there—world domination.  
The man is wildly jealous of the United States and he will go to the limit to reach our levels. He spoke of it in his conference with us. From what I saw, he will never make it. The know-how just isn't there on too many things. The thinking, particularly on agriculture, is primitive.

Khrushchev is pushing, threatening and gauding to get their sagging agricultural program into some semblance of orderly production.

**Farms Top Interest**

"What interests us most in America?" the premier asked in his July 13 conference with us. "It is organization of farm production. In this field you have a great experience worthy of being studied. And the organization of agricultural work in the United States is better than in the Soviet Union. You have a better range of machinery, especially for stock farming."

But, of course, he added that "we will surpass you."

"The main thing is persistence and work. Time is needed, because nothing can be done at once. It is essential to train cadres . . ."

The Soviet Union, its eyes riveted on youth and the future, is bringing along the new generation in the country with tender hands. It lavishes the utmost, from kindergarten through college, on the pliable young.

In all of the Soviet Union, there are 739 higher educational institutions—and the lights burn long on the six-day-a-week schedule. One of the most impressive sights in the Soviet Union is the University of Moscow.

And over the 15 republics of the Soviet Union there is a new skyline—thousands upon thousands of apartment houses.

It is the Russians' desperate drive to solve their gravest problem, housing.

If the goal is achieved, and state-set goals are achieved by main strength in Russia, 22 million apartments will be occupied by the end of 1965, conclusion of the current seven-year plan—roughly, 50 new cities the size of Dallas in seven years!

If you see the forest of apartments from the air, or even from a few hundred feet, you

get a first impression of approval.

But construction in the main is appallingly crude. Maintenance of the hastily built apartments and buildings is even worse.

Mass transportation in the Soviet Union is skillfully handled, with equipment that outshines that of many American cities.

It is a fortunate man, indeed, who owns an automobile in Russia. Consequently, the burden falls on subways, motor-driven and electric buses, electric street cars, superb railroads and the one and only state-owned

airline, Aeroflot.

Ninety-nine per cent of the Soviets rely on public transportation—and they get the best the state can offer.

What is the conclusion to be drawn after seeing, first hand, the fountain of communism in the Soviet Union?

Crises, tensions and struggles for the minds of uncommitted peoples will be the world's sad lot for some time to come.

War? No signs of it—but the threat of it to plague mankind, perhaps interminably.

The Socialism I saw in Russia is stultifying. It is a dreary

sameness that stifles initiative and incentive.

Communism, despite platitudes of "peaceful coexistence," plans faithfully to follow its original course—domination of the world.

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