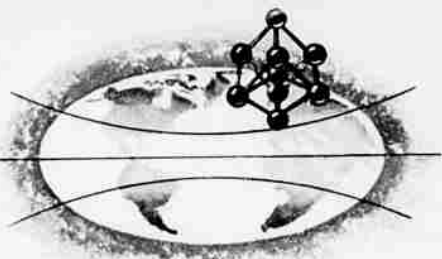


a great fair serves as a stage



for our

the world shows off at Brussels



THE WORLD holds up a mirror to itself in Brussels this year.

What it sees are impressive strides in science and industry, new horizons in architecture, a history of accomplishment and progress. And something else—a giant atom hanging over it like a sword of Damocles and two dominant powers contending for popular favor.

The mirror is the \$400-million Belgium World's Fair which almost succeeds in its goal of showing "the cooperation among nations and the advancement of humanity"—almost succeeds.

The advancements are reflected in each of the exhibits and pavilions sponsored by 41 nations, eight international organizations, and numerous commercial institutions. But the spirit of "cooperation" has turned, as in the world itself, to a spirit of competition.

Symbolically, the two biggest and most popular pavilions are those of the United States and the Soviet Union.

achievements and hopes—also for cold wars and girl-watching.

Built directly opposite each other, they vie for fair-goers just as they do for influence in the world outside.

Their exhibits are studies in contrast. The Russian pavilion is massive and museum-like; the U. S. one, graceful and airy. Russia's presentation of her culture is deadly serious; America's, bright and witty. Tourists complain that the many heroic statues in the U.S.S.R. pavilion make them feel like they're being watched by Big Brother. But there are complaints about our presentations, too—particularly the high prices for hamburgers and hot dogs, almost as expensive as Russian caviar.

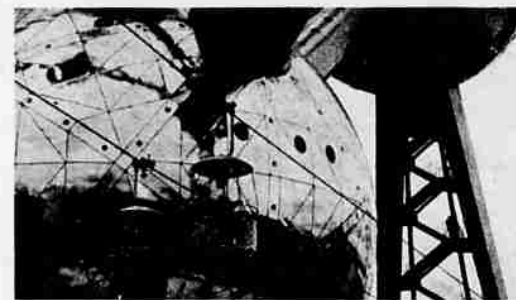
Other countries may have smaller exhibits, but they have not been overshadowed by the two colossuses. The Dutch, for example, have displays of miniature working machinery to show how they salvage precious land from waters of the Zuider Zee. West Germany depicts its accomplishments in post-war building with a handsome pavilion constructed from prefabricated parts in only 18 hours. Israel, celebrating its 10th anniversary as a nation, contrasts modern achievements in agriculture and industry with scenes of the Holy Land in Biblical times.

On the lighter side, but equally significant, is an amusement park featuring a trip to "outer space" for children. A giant "rocket ship" uses motion-picture screens as windows to give youngsters the illusion of blasting off from the fairgrounds and soaring over Brussels before circling the moon and returning.

Another symbol of our age, the Atomium, hovers dramatically over all the exhibits. Representing a crystal of iron enlarged 150 million times, the structure consists of eight burnished metal spheres surrounding a "nucleus." The spheres, many occupied by scientific exhibits, are connected by slim tubes which enclose escalators. Visitors who ride to the top "electron," 320 feet high, can enjoy French cuisine in a swank restaurant whose view commands the entire fairgrounds.

Officials expect 35 million persons to visit the fair this Summer. So far, the parade of sightseers has been particularly fascinated by the Russians' display of their beloved Sputnik and the relatives of its dog passenger, the late Laika. Yet the U.S. appears to have trumped this Soviet ace with an age-old weapon—pretty girls in stunning dress at a daily fashion show.

But it's a rather hollow victory—only one of the models is American.



Aerial gondolas travel much of the fairground area to save visitors' feet for the lengthy walks around the exhibits.

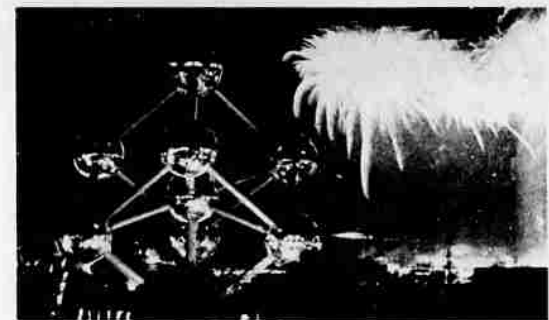


Much of U. S. pavilion is parklike. Said a Russian visitor upon seeing pool: "We'd have put a machine there!"



Faces of visitors from all nations reflect interest in a United States display. Our presentations include panoramic views

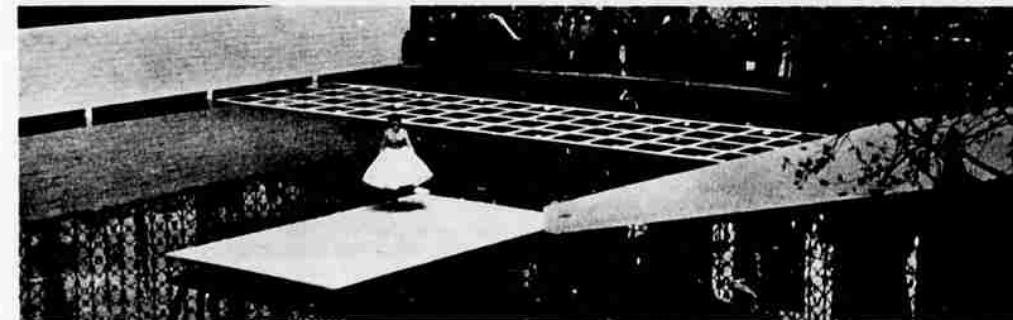
of Philadelphia and electronic brain that answers in 10 languages any history question from 4 B. C.



At night, lights of each sphere flash to represent orbits of the electrons as they move around nucleus of Atomium.



The Soviet pavilion is popular, but gay fair-goers find little fun here—just "hard sell" propaganda.



Things are different at the American pavilion. High spot is a fashion show which, so far, has even outdrawn Sputnik

and the sturdy miss who trains dogs for space travel. But Russian cultural events are topnotch.