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Having been in Russia recently for fifteen days, I keep remembering how I have spent my life trying to decide what I think about my own country. It is an uncommon day, I now recognize, when I do not brood over whether America is better or worse than I believe it to be.

How then can I offer you some certainty that any perceptions I offer of the USSR have worth? I went there in the category of individual tourist. I had no guide and did not speak the language. I made no effort to interview powerful officials. Of course, in America, a professional journalist can talk to major politicians and come up with marvelously erroneous appraisals. So I stayed away.

I only offer a few modest conclusions. If, however, I thought they had no value, I would remain silent. Indeed I tell myself that a child can have a good sense of the true emotions in the air when he enters a room full of adults. I can certify that going around Moscow and Leningrad and parts of Lithuania with about 100 words of Russian is next thing to being a child.

I say 100 words of Russian. It is an exaggeration. For two weeks, before I left New York, I studied by myself for an hour a day. Doubtless my mind brushed over some 100 words but at any given moment, once I was there, I do not suppose I could remember more than 20. They were usually the wrong words. Ordering a meal, my vocabulary would bring up the terms for laundry. That has to carry you back to the year when you were learning to talk. New connections keep twisting your thoughts! In Russian, the word for "brave" sounds an awful lot like "smelly."

(Actually, it is pronounced smih-yelly, but smelly is close enough. Some old child in you begins to giggle.)

What a distance between Americans and Russians! You think about it all the time. In America, we tend to treat strangers as friends. Our first impulse is to say yes. We feel more comfortable if we can call a man by his first name soon after we are introduced. Whereas, with Russians, it seems safe to say that their immediate impulse is usually to say "Nyet." If you hang around, if you persist, then they begin to listen more carefully. Should the Russian decide to agree, then you are quickly promoted to family. Be it said, you are entering a rude and emotional family. Russians address people they do not know with family intimacy--they scold total strangers. On the other hand, their personal warmth can be startling. The sudden love (I do not mean carnal love) that gleams in a strange Russian's eyes can be as warm and nourishing as marrow: to be accepted is to be treated with all the loving, jeering familiarity of family. One night in Leningrad, having dinner with a Russian friend who spoke English, I watched a middle-aged woman with glasses come up to me. She said in Russian (it was translated), "You do nothing tonight but feed your face. Why don't you dance with me?" On the floor, she moved stiffly like aaggodd Soviet citizen. There was more instruction from above than the nervous system can sort out quickly. Still, we progressed a little over the length of two dances. Then she gave an embarrassed smile, and took off.

Maybe in payment for this little superiority--how odd to feel cool as a dancer!--the perception of oneself as an American stays alive every hour of the day. It is as if you take on something of our presence as a nation. This sounds absurd, but you begin to feel a little responsible for our po

policy toward Russia. You walk the streets of Moscow thinking: is the Soviet Union as we have painted it, or have we painted ourselves into a corner? After forty years of reading newspaper accounts about Russia, the trouble is that it is not quite the way one expected it to be. On the other hand, it is not wholly different. In this small gap, however, sits a large question.

Let me commence with something we can understand. In Leningrad, at the Hotel Leningrad, a modern high-rise hotel not too unlike a high-rise Holiday Inn in such a place as Norman, Oklahoma, breakfast was served cafeteria-style. You put hot cereal in a bowl and small sausages on your plate, plus pancakes, sweet rolls, and tea. If you wanted more, you could add salami, cheese, yogurt, hard-boiled eggs, some kind of rice dish, pickled cabbage, plus a couple of other items I have forgotten. The price was standard--1 ruble, 20 kopeks--about \$1.65 at the official Soviet rate of exchange. The buffet dinner (\$5.33) came with soup, appetizer, a roast, vegetables, and dessert. In such Intourist hotels, it was possible to get by on \$10 a day for food.

On the other hand, one orange cost 3 rubles. That comes to about four dollars. One is supping at the table of a curious economy.

Soon, other contrasts were discovered. The headwaiter steered you to a table with strangers. The Soviet logic seemed to be that solitary diners use up too many tablecloths. Also, they veer toward being full of gloom. On the other hand, long-married couples often have little to say to one another. So, put the solitaires and the married couples together. It can't make it any more gloomy, and it certainly saves tablecloths. Our American logic: Damn it, I'm alone, and I feel like eating alone--I'll pay a cover charge for the extra tablecloth--falls on ears that

cannot hear. You are in a land where all, more or less, make do for all. If the hotel towels are rough on the skin, and the sheets on your bed feel no better than the towels, well, everyday needs cost little. Bread is almost free. Subway rides are less than seven cents. Rent for a modest two-room apartment in a modern building (when your name, after years of waiting, finally comes to the head of the list) will be less than 15 rubles a month. Income tax is nonexistent. Ditto sales tax. Medical care is free. Of course, if you want a doctor who is much in demand, and do not wish to wait two years for an appointment, you must have common acquaintances, or be able to offer a sumptuous gift, or both. Side by side with the inexpensive working economy is a secondary network of bribes, corruption, contacts, clout, and friends.

All the same, virtually everyone in the Soviet Union lives to some degree by the rules of the public economy and their income and wage scale, by our standards, is odd in the extreme.

With not too many exceptions, any male and female who is physically able and wants work, has a job. The lowest pay, as any guide will inform you, goes to the old ladies who sweep the streets with brooms made of birch twigs. They receive 84 rubles a month. Yet doctors, teachers, and lawyers receive no more from the government than 200 rubles a month. Workers in heavy industry, 500 rubles. If two or three coal miners live in the same family, they can, after waiting half a decade for their turn, buy a small car for 10,000 rubles or more. All the same, there are more cabs on the street than one anticipated.

Managers of factories make as much as 1000 rubles a month, but often work 70 and 80 hour weeks. Even when they live well, they live modestly. Those notorious dachas we have read about that the Soviet

bureaucracy goes to for weekends in the countryside are comparable for the most part to wooden cottages in Maine. Often the stude remain uncovered in the walls. Even the Premier of the USSR, Chernenko, as well as Andropov and Brezhnev before him, move into the same living quarters in Moscow. You can see the building as you walk by on the street. You are looking at an apartment house put up probably before World War I. The edifice looks as shabby as any other on this avenue. One could be strolling past any row of ~~houses~~ heavy old apartment houses on Eastern Parkway in Brooklyn, or Grand Concourse in the Bronx. Inside, it is rumored, the Premier has a duplex and it is lavishly furnished, but from the street, every propriety that speaks of the equality of life in the Soviet Union is kept up. There will be no great and obvious differences of wealth to look upon. In Moscow, only one class is to be seen and that is the middle class. The spectrum runs--by the measure of American eyes--from the lower middle-class to a seedy, medium middle-class. Nowhere does one encounter rich suburbs or slums.

Now, in private, other worlds will, of course, be found. The family of any plant manager making 1000 rubles a month doubtless has a good car, and if he is high enough in the hierarchy, he will have a chauffeur and enjoy other servants paid for by the state. His family will have access to special shops with luxury items and fine foods. The wives of such men are able to save many hundreds of hours a year by not having to wait on line to do their daily shopping. If I had acquired this much knowledge before I even went on my trip, it was arresting all the same to see how much care is paid to concealing most of the evidence of inequality. One's possessions are simply not to be flaunted. The force of social hypocrisy is as intense on this point as the concealment, let us say, of sexual

practises in small towns in the American Southwest. On Saturday night, the kids may be finding out a good deal about each other in the back seats of automobiles, but one's town reputation is kept in reasonable maintenance by regular attendance Sunday at church. So it goes with the appearance of modest living in the USSR.

There are other small shocks to one's expectations. One has heard so much of Soviet lacks that one is prepared to greet a giant but wounded dinosaur. Instead, the country is not without a certain visible substance. Passing through the flat farmlands of Lithuania between the cities of Vilnius and Kaunas, one could be in Iowa. Already, in early Spring, winter wheat is showing its first green, the silos rise frequently, and bizarre modern villages show concrete apartment houses on the plain that rise ten or fifteen stories. They are just as white, rectangular, cheap and ugly as their counterparts in America, and, for that matter, all over the world. Trucks grind by at a great rate. Television transmission towers go up every twenty or thirty miles to spike the sky. The beautiful land is pocked by ugly sights--just as in America. Some of the newer factories have the same ongoing windowless walls that numb our American senses--just that little bit--as we pass them on our own highways. The world is getting uglier everywhere, and the newer parts of the USSR and America have the same flat prosperous nerve-deadening look. In America, so much of this new architecture looks humanly repellent, looks totalitarian. So does it look totalitarian in Russia as well. Of course, the Russians at least have justification: They were desperate for cheap housing after the vast depredations of World War II. They have been doing their best ever since to catch up. So their architectural monstrosities, while quite as ugly as ours, seem, all the same, a touch less offensive.

Nonetheless, those panoramas of 15-story egg crates are as stupefying as a bruise on a bruise. Forget America and the Soviet Union. The mood of our world is being insulted equally from Calcutta to Vancouver.

But I avoid the near issue. For us, architecture seems hardly the problem. Not yet. We worry instead about how much of a police state is the USSR. No other question are you asked as often when you return. Yet how are you going to measure that? Talking to a seminar of journalists a couple of weeks after I came back, it was agreed that to the extent we invest in a particular scenario, we can always find the ongoing evidence to keep living with it. Decide that the Soviet Union is an evil force bent on war, aggrandizement and the totalitarian control of all humankind, and you will keep perceiving the country as such. But then, one difficulty with being a long-term journalist in Moscow is that his apartment will, of course, be bugged. The journalist lives in a ghetto with other journalists. The Soviets monitor his moves. How could he fail to be sensitive then to every nuance of a police state?

Yet, take an opposite scenario. Conceive of being the son of a high Soviet official stationed at the UN in New York. The boy likes to walk around the city. The father is full of Soviet horror tales about the streets of America. His fears are augmented by the knowledge that his apartment is bugged by American security forces. He is inclined to lecture the son at length about America's imperial desire for international conflict. "Look at all the evidence you find of that," he says, "in the violence on the streets." The son, however, tries to say, "The Americans I see on the streets don't seem to want war. I don't think they'll ever go to war happily here." And, of course, we know that the boy is right. The father is wrong. Americans do not have an imperial desire for

internatioanl conflict. To the degree that one is unencumbered by a false scenario, one can see in a day what others will not perceive in ten years. That is not superior perception nor intellect. It is simply the good fortune to have one's eyes saved from the tunnel vision of a scenario.

On the other hand, huge and powerful forces in America and the USSR are at work to keep those scenarios going. A good many powerful people in both countries depend on maintaining relations between these two super-powers at the same ongoing abominable level. How much power will they lose if the people of both countries cannot be kept believing that the other nation is an evil force?

Let me tell you what I think. It is with true hesitation. Still, when friends ask me here, "How big a police state do they have over there?" I respond, "Somewhat less than I thought."

Now, of course, I can hardly speak of the highest levels of Soviet life. All the same, it is safe, doubtless, to assume that the higher one rises in the bureaucracy or the Party and the more sensitive is one's work, the more complete will be the surveillance of the KGB. There is a large difference, however, between intense secret police work, spying, subtle and not so subtle methods of terror applied at the top, add the assumption that this is also true for all levels of society.

"Weren't you followed when you left your hotel?" people would ask after I came back to New York.

"No."

"Are you certain?"

"Well," I would answer, "I can't be certain. I just don't think so."

That must be a fair reply. There is a feeling to being followed:

One has a sense of privacy or the lack of it--on the street and on one's phone. "Every day," I answered my friends, "I would leave the hotel and walk around for miles. I would turn down streets and if they proved less interesting than I hoped, I would go back on my steps. I would walk into interesting courtyards and come out of them. My rambles were so purposeless that anyone assigned to follow me would have had a breakdown trying to figure out what I was up to."

"You're saying you could walk anywhere?"

"Yes. At least wherever I was--yes."

"You weren't scared?"

"Well, you don't feel much tension exploring those streets." And to make a point I would add, "Let me tell you my Leningrad story."

One night, I would explain, after going to the Maly Theatre, I decided to walk back to my hotel. It was something more than two miles but I wanted to see the canals of Leningrad at night. All went well until somewhere in the middle of this promenade. I had to pass ~~by~~ through a park. It was perhaps a third of a mile in length and a few hundred yards in width, and it seemed deserted. Around a turn, however, I came on a sight that gave me a start. In the dark, perhaps a hundred yards off, someone was sitting on a bench. As I came nearer I realized it was not one but two persons and they had some large indefinable object between them. I was ready to take a detour, but there is a magnetism to the logic of these matters, so I kept walking. Then, I came nearer still, and saw a man and a woman on that bench, with a baby carriage between them. Doubtless they were living in an overcrowded apartment and had come out to this park to put the baby to sleep.

"Then you're saying that there is little violence on the streets?"

"There's certainly not much in the air. Maybe all those people in America who keep screaming that we need safe streets to walk in at night ought to consider moving over to the Soviet Union. It's a very conservative place."

"You liked it?"

"I won't go that far. It's a sad place. I felt as if I were back on the Lower East Side of New York a hundred years ago. I could have been watching my grandparents walking by."

Ah, those Moscow faces, bundled up against the last ravages of winter. Have you ever walked through the poor streets of Chicago west of Division Street (where almost everybody who goes by is Ukrainian or Polish)? Hard-working features surround you, full of worry, doubt, long-congealed anger, much concern for family, much dread at what life will bring next. The same faces were here, a generation willing to die in harness in order that their children have a little more. You could see this determination often in Russia; "I haven't gotten what I wanted," says the expression, "but maybe my kids will." It is moving. One feels sad. All these faces, worked by life, all the weather of each personal history carved into each nose and mouth. Since everyone who is of the same age has been churned through the same historical cataclysms, so to a degree did all these middle-aged and older Russians on the streets have the same expression--such an array of plain, hard-worked faces--yes, life had come to them with a rock in each fist. These older Russians going by were as battered in their collective looks as old club fighters renowned for the dubious ability to take a tremendous punch. How many had been landed on each marked-up mug. The faces in American crowds are better-looking, but by comparison, innocent or smug.

It kept one thinking of what it meant to live in Russia over the last seventy years. Twenty million people were killed in the First World War and in the Bolshevik Revolution and Civil War that followed it. As many as ten million may have perished in the famines that followed the enforced collectivization of the farms in the early thirties under Stalin, and more than 20 million were slain by the Germans. It is further estimated that 8 to 10 million died in the forced labor camps and in purges under Stalin. Then Khrushchev, coming to power after Stalin's death, finally made public to the people of the USSR that Stalin was not only a legend but a monster. Since the average Russian, reading his highly controlled press, had the reflex by now of believing that Stalin was an infallible leader, the shock was equal, let us say, to Americans being told that Dwight D. Eisenhower was a mass murderer of children.

Psychologically, the Russians never recovered. That is comprehensible. On a smaller scale, we have never been the same since the assassinations of JFK, Martin Luther King, and Bobby Kennedy. Of course, Khrushchev was soon deposed. The bearer of such ill tidings could hardly rule for long. By the late sixties, after more than fifty years of slaughter, terror, and historic shock, of cumulative catastrophe, where on average nearly a million Soviet citizens were killed in war or perished in camps and prisons each year, the USSR now began to progress with Brezhnev through two decades of sluggish, stagnant progress. Terror diminished, and rebuilding advanced to some degree. By huge emphasis on an armaments economy, and a relative indifference to consumer goods, nuclear parity with the West was brought much closer. By now, however, the ideals of the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 had died ten times over. A vast social machine was still functioning, but the power of corruption had also swollen

swollen. The USSR was in transit from a stern, war-rationed economy, bulwarked by prodigious terror, to an immense welfare state drowning in cynicism, bribery, waste, shoddy products, and oppression.

"Why, then, do you say it's not a police state?" It's still oppressive."

"Yes, but not nearly to the degree it used to be."

I thought of a dissident I had talked to. His face twisted with aristocratic contempt every time I asked about anyone who worked high in the Soviet establishment.

"What of the terror?" I asked.

The dissident shrugged. "Years ago the secret police would come in the middle of the night. Nobody ever heard of you again. Now you're arrested and have a trial. You go to a camp, or you're exiled."

"Are the arrests as frequent as before?"

"No. For every twenty they used to arrest, now maybe they arrest one. The other nineteen are left to worry."

One could hear the same all over. The situation was not good, in fact it was considerably worse than it had been just a few years ago, but on the other hand, it was vastly improved from the time of Stalin. In those years, tens of millions had been arrested by his orders. Now one measured the political prisoners by the thousands. Helsinki Watch, which is not sympathetic to the USSR, estimates that over the past 15 years, there have been 5,000 political arrests, and that the number of dissidents who are in prison this year comes to 1,000 individuals. These are not happy figures but in proportion to the Soviet Union's population, 270 million, the ratio of political arrests is less than is found in many a Third World nation. Certainly, it's less than in Argentina before the Falklands, in Chile now, and in San Salvador.

NOTE for p. 12

Walter, let's get a box for the ratio between political prisoners and total population in Nicaragua and Cuba, San Salvador, Chile, Zaire, other Third World countries. We should use Amnesty International estimates.

Country	Total Population	Political Prisoners	%Population in Prison
Nicaragua	000,000	00,000	00%
Cuba	000,000	00,000	00%
etc.			

This, of course, is not to suggest that the KGB is quiescent. The fundamental relation of secret police to their quarry (when times are relatively quiet) remains sneaky, intimate, nasty, close, occasionally cruel--and familial. What comes through is a sense of ongoing family relations. In contrast to renowned figures like Sakharov, relatively unknown dissidents are treated not unlike ostracized members of a powerful clan. They don't get invited to family parties any more. Sometimes they are cut out of the will, or banished. Often, they are allowed to perish through neglect. But they are no longer pulled out of their beds at three in the morning.

Sitting at table in a Russian's home, discussing the regime, there is often a silence after a remark has been too critical. Someone will point to the ceiling as if to say, "They are listening." Of course, given the number of houses in which such conversations take place, the odds are considerable that this particular room is not being monitored at the moment. Maybe the KGB placed a working microphone here once, maybe they will put one in again, next month or next year, but the finger does not point to the ceiling in abject fear so much as with a wry, almost mocking respect. It underlines the sensibility of one's childhood: God is listening to my thoughts. Yet, as one soon learns--He does not strike for too little. Of course, it can take years before one gets brave enough to think: Maybe He is not listening at all. How, indeed, is one to know?

There is even a story so apocryphal that one hopes it is true. Dissidents tell it to each other as a talisman. The dear friend--let us call him Glabikov--of a famous poetess was arrested for some minor act of dissidence. The poetess in response to an old Russian tradition that esteemed artists have the right to petition the czar, now sent a letter

to Andropov. At its conclusion she wrote, "If you do not release Glabikov, I do not know what I will do."

No answer came from the Premier. "Andropov is a gross man for not replying to me," said the poetess to her friends.

Then, one day, the KGB asked her to visit. One can picture the faces she encountered. High officials in Russia have recognizable characteristics. Some may look relatively decent, some certainly don't, but a particular expression does prevail: you are looking at men with tunnel vision. In America, one can see the same faces on trade union leaders, corporate executives, mafia godfathers, some Congressmen, and--take a look--a couple of our President's close advisors.

If it helps the tale, you may also believe that the poetess was a beautiful woman, for indeed she was. Her voice was deep and sweet and mysterious and full of the awe that a good voice brings to the deep-rooted music of words.

"All right," said the leading KGB officer, "what is this last line in your letter? Why do you say that you do not know what you will do?" What does this mean?"

"It means," said the poetess, "that I do not know what I will do if Glabikov is not released."

"No, what are you saying? Do you imply that you will commit suicide? Or that you will defect? Are you going to denounce us? What sort of scandal do you propose?"

"I mean," she repeated in lugubrious tones firm in their wonder at her own uncharted depths, "I mean that if you do not release Glabikov, I simply do not know what I will do."

Legend has it that the KGB released Glabikov. How splendid if the

story is true!

Of course, it is equal to a scenario. I offer it as a counter-scenario to the other scenarios. It may be the only way to offer a portrait of Russia that is without scenario, to give, that is, a sketch of a huge and complex beast of a nation, a land difficult to live in, abrasive as steel wool, messed-up, by parts horrendous, but nonetheless a real country where people do not necessarily decide in advance that they are working for a doomed and evil machine, but instead grow up suffering and scheming, looking for better ways and means to live well and fornicate well, and even go bowling and play ball like thee and me.

Let me tell a little more. We are coming closer to the idea of what I wish to say. In Lithuania, in the city of Vilnius, I happened to wander into a Roman Catholic church around twilight. Mass was being celebrated and the church was filled to capacity with old women, a few men, a few adolescents. The service was fervid. It was also beautiful. Beauty takes on the power of addiction in the gray anti-sensuous climate of March in the Soviet--indeed pure beauty begins to feel as necessary as food. I do not know if I ever attended a Catholic service that was more intense. The point, however, is that my entrance into the church was casual, and the exit as easy. I was alone, and no policemen were outside, at least none that I could see. My good superficial tourist's reaction: "Holy cow, it's not that big a deal here any more to go to church."

A trickier example. It may reveal more. An American woman who was born in Lithuania went back to visit her relatives and they, bringing food, drove in to greet her at the hotel in Vilnius. They wanted her to come back to their village, fifty kilometers away. It's forbidden, don't you understand? she told them.

No, it's okay, they said. You can come with us.

As it turned out the woman was right. It was an exceptional case, and her relatives had no understanding of exceptional cases. So soon as they started to drive her around town, they were followed by another car. This was startling to her relatives. They were farm people. Something like this had never happened before--to them.

If you were visited by your home in America by a relative who happened to be a Soviet official, your phone might be tapped by the FBI. If you discovered it, that would be unique to your experience. Of course, there is a difference between a visit by an average American tourist to her home town in Lithuania and a Soviet official business here, and in that separation may be measured the gap in the freedoms of the two countries. But my point is that these country people in Lithuania were less afraid of the authorities than their visitor. They had not been living with our image of them. In fact, in this case, the American woman was right and the natives were wrong, but whatever else, her relatives were obviously not dwelling in prodigious daily fear.

Of course, Russia, by any measure, is a harsh country, so let me end with a harsh thought. It is sad but true that our American leaders accept fascism in other countries and do business with it. Our leaders can understand it. It is an undemocratic system led by the rich and the military. Communism, however, terrifies the American system. After all, it is the tyranny of the poor when society breaks up altogether. So in America we are encouraged to abhor it in every form. We live with the scenario that Russia is an evil force. Now, the world is on the edge of destroying itself. Can we afford the abhorrence any longer? It is significant that we have forgiven Nazi Germany for its concentration camps--

and the twenty million people that the Nazis exterminated--we do great business with Germany--but we still do not exculpate the Russians for their gulags. We talk as if the slave labor camps are as hideous today as thirty or forty years ago, and that at least--let us look to thank the Lord for the real blessings--is not true any longer. We are a great nation. Can we take the step of assuming that we will be greater yet as we come to live with some more generous understanding of all our possibilities? Our world may be the most beautiful of all the planets, but the state of our international relations is more hard-pocked than the craters of the moon.

figures from Ellen re Russian piece:

total population of the USSR: 270,000,000

total losses during the Civil War
and Bolshevik Revolution: 8,000,000

Red Army losses during Civil
War and Bolshevik RevolutionL 1,000,000

WWI losses (military and
civilian both) 12,000,000

WWII losses (military and
civilian both) 20 to 25,000,000 (none of the sources
Ellen checked is prepared to call it
closer than that)

from Helsinki Watch:

known arrests of dissidents: 5,000 over the past 15 years (there is
some "turnover" in this figure as not
everyone gets a life sentence. Some
few are released and rearrested later,
so the number of individuals involved
is a bit smaller than 5,000 but Helsinki
does not pin it down further)

number of dissidents in
prison NOW 1,000

Your figure of 8-10,000,000 in the forced labor camps and lost through
purges under Stalin--Ellen said the sources she checked basically agree--
again no one will pin the figure down too closely.

Ellen's Begins

1

~~I cannot conceive of any magazine article more difficult~~
to write than a brief piece about the Soviet Union. Having
been there recently for ^{in Russia} ~~a total of~~ sixteen days, I not only
~~lived~~ ^{keep} in much awareness of Russia but kept thinking of how
^{now} I had also spent my life trying to decide what might be true
about my own country. It is an uncommon day, I recognize now,
when I do not brood over whether America is better or worse
than I think it is. ^{Believe it to be,}

How can I offer ^{then} any certainty ^{you some} then that my perceptions ^{tiny} of the USSR are of any worth? ^{I went there} I went over as an individual
tourist ^{I had no} without a guide and ^{I did} do not speak the language. I
made no effort to interview powerful officials. Of course,
in America, ^{a professional journalist can talk to} I could talk to any number of major politicians
and come up with ^{marvelously} erroneous appraisals of them. ^{So I stayed away} Like a gambler
flipping a coin, an expert is correct about 50 per cent of
the time.

I can only offer ^{then} a few modest conclusions. None-
theless, ^{however} if I thought they had no value, I would remain silent.
^{I asked} I, however, tell myself that a child entering a room full of
adults usually has the best sense of which emotions are in
the air. ^{of the true emotions in the air when he enters a} I can certify that going around Moscow and Leningrad
and parts of Lithuania with ^{about 100} 200 words of Russian is the next
thing to being a child.

by myself

100
 I say 200 words of Russian. *It is an exaggeration. For two* In truth, I studied an hour
 weeks, before I left New York. *I studied for an hour a* a day for two weeks before I left New York. I probably came
 day. *Doubtless my mind brushed over some 200* in contact with that many words but at any given moment, I
 I do not suppose I could *once I was there,*
 could never remember more than 20, and they were usually the
 wrong ones. *words,* Ordering a meal, my vocabulary would *bring up* recollect
 the terms for laundry. That must *has to carry you back* bring one close to the year
 when *you were* one was learning to talk. New connections keep twisting
 your thoughts! In Russian, the word for "brave," by example, *sounds awful*
 is pronounced "smelly." *is pronounced more* (Actually, it sounds more like smih-
 yelly, but smelly is close enough. *Some old child in you begins to giggle* How do you keep from giggling?
how do you God, help us bring America and Russia together?

5 *What a*
 All the same, it gives a hint of the distance between
 Americans and Russians. *You think about it all the time* In America, we prefer to treat strangers
 as friends. Our first impulse is to say yes. *tend* We are comfortable
 if we can call a man by his first name so soon as we are intro-
 duced. *it seems safe to say that there is us* Whereas, with Russians, the immediate impulse seems to
 usually *If you hang around, if you persist, then they* to say, "Nyet." Happily, the second is to listen more care-
 fully. Should the Russian then decide to accept you, *agree, then* you are
 quickly promoted to family. *are* Be it said, you can be entering a
 harsh and ill-tempered *rude and emotional* family. Russians address people they
 do not know with family intimacy--they *can* scold a total stranger.
 On the other hand, their personal warmth, to an American, can
 be startling. If one is a tourist in an abrasive and lonely
 land, the sudden love *strange* (and I do not mean carnal love) that
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in Russian (it was translated), "You do nothing here but feed
your face."

She tonight ~~yourself. Why don't you dance with me?"~~ On the floor, she
like a good Soviet citizen, there was more ~~moved stiffly--she had a most middle-class back--but we progressed~~
from above than the nervous system can sort out quickly. ~~a little over the length of two dances. Then she gave an em-~~
Still, we progressed ~~barrassed smile, and took off.~~ It's ~~too~~ ^a highly directed a

country. You can sense how the Soviet citizen has his psyche
overloaded. There are always more instructions from above than
the nervous system can bear. Maybe that is why ~~some~~ ^{a great many} (Russians
move like novices on a ski slope ^{while} ~~while~~ their brain is telling
them ~~how~~ to coordinate five things at once.

to feel ~~Maybe in payment for these particular happy differences--~~
as an American stays alive every day ~~how cool and laid-back one feels as an American--you find as~~
It is as if you take on something ~~you travel through the Soviet Union that you, every hour of the~~
This ~~day, perceiving yourself as an American, even taking on something~~
begin to ~~of our presence as a nation. It sounds absurd, but you feel a~~
little responsible for our policy toward Russia. You walk the
streets of Moscow thinking: is the Soviet Union as we have
painted it, or have we painted ourselves into a corner? After
forty years of reading newspaper accounts about Russia, the
trouble is that it is not quite the way one expected it to be.

On the other hand, it is not ^{wholly} ~~vastly~~ different. In ^{this} ~~such a~~ small gap, however, sits a large question.

Let me commence with something we can understand. In Leningrad, at the Hotel Leningrad, a modern high-rise hotel not ^{too} unlike a high-rise Holiday Inn in such a place as Norman, Oklahoma, breakfast was served cafeteria-style. You put hot cereal in a bowl and small sausages on your plate, ^{plus} pancakes, sweet rolls and tea. If you wanted more, you could add salami, cheese, yogurt, hard-boiled eggs, some kind of rice dish, pickled cabbage, ^{plus} and a couple of other items I have forgotten. The price was standard--1 ruble, 20 kopeks--about \$1.65 at the official Soviet rate of exchange. The buffet dinner (\$5.33) came with soup, appetizer, a roast, vegetables, and dessert. In such Intourist hotels, it was possible to get by on \$10 a day for food.

On the other hand, one orange cost 3 rubles. That comes to about four dollars. One is supping at the table of a curious economy.

^{Seen, ~~discovery~~ other contrasts were discovered,}
For instance, you could rarely eat by yourself. The head-waiter steered you to a table with strangers. The Soviet logic seemed to be that solitary diners use up too many tablecloths. ^{year toward being} Also, they tend to be full of gloom. ^{On the other hand,} Since long-married couples often have little to say to one another, ^{so,} put the solitaires and the married couples together. ^{make it} It can't be any more gloomy and it certainly saves tablecloths. Our American logic: Damnit, I'm alone and I feel like eating alone--I'll pay a cover charge

for the extra tablecloth--falls on ears that cannot hear. You are in a land where all, more or less, make do for all. If the hotel towels are rough on the skin, and the sheets on your bed feel ^{no better than} just like the towels, well, everyday needs cost little. Bread is almost free. Subway rides are less than seven cents. Rent for a modest two-room apartment in a modern building (when your name, after years of waiting, finally comes to the head of the list) will be less than fifteen rubles a month. ^(Income tax is non-existent. Ditto sales tax.) Medical care is free. Of course, if you want a doctor who is much in demand, and do not wish to wait two years for an appointment, you must have common acquaintances, or be able to offer a sumptuous gift, or both. Side by side with the inexpensive working economy is a secondary network of bribes, corruption, contacts, clout, and friends.

All the same, virtually everyone in Soviet Union lives to some degree by the rules of the public economy and the wage scale, ^{their income and} by our standards, is curious in the extreme. ^{odd}

With ^{not too many} very few exceptions, ^{any} every male and female who is physically able and wants work, has a job. The lowest pay, as any guide ^{will inform} can tell you, goes to the old ladies who sweep the streets with brooms made of birch twigs. They receive 84 rubles a month. Yet doctors, teachers, and lawyers receive no more from the government than 200 rubles a month. Workers in heavy industry, ^{bring home} 500 ^{rubles} a month. If two or three coal miners live in the same family, they can, after waiting half a decade ^{or more. All the same} for their turn, buy a small car for 10,000 rubles. ^{It helps}

~~To explain why~~ there are more cars on the street than one anticipated.

Managers of factories make as much as 1000 rubles a month, but they often work 70 and 80 hour weeks. Even when they live well, they live modestly. Those famous dachas we have read about ^{notorious} ~~the Soviet bureaucracy goes to~~ that they go to (for weekends in the countryside are comparable for the most part to wooden cottages in Maine. Often the studs

remain uncovered in the walls. Even the Premier of the USSR, ^{as well as} Chernenko, and Andropov ^{move into} and Brezhnev before him, have inhabited the same living quarters in Moscow. You can walk by on the street, ^(see the building as you walk) and look at an old apartment house built ^{probably} before World War I. ^{You are looking} ~~edifice~~

The building looks as large and shabby as any other on the street. ^(this modest avenue) One could be strolling past a row of apartment houses on Eastern ^{any large heavy old}

Parkway in Brooklyn, or Grand Concourse in the Bronx. Inside, ^{his windows} ~~believe~~ it is rumored, ^{that} the Premier has a duplex that is lavishly furnished, ^{and it is} but from the street, every fundamental propriety of the equality ^{that speaks} of life in the Soviet Union is kept up. There are no great and ^{will be} obvious differences of wealth to gaze upon. Only one class is ^{look} ~~visible~~ ^{In Moscow only} and that is the middle class. The spectrum runs--by ^{seen}

the measure of our American eyes--from the lower middle-class ^{does one encounter} to a seedy, medium middle-class. Nowhere I ~~visited did I see~~ any rich suburbs or slums.

Now, ^{will, of course,} ~~of course~~, in private, other worlds are to be found. The family of the plant manager ^{any} has a good car, and if he is ^{making 1000 rubles a month doubtless} high enough in the hierarchy, he will have a chauffeur and enjoy

The force of social hypocrisy ^{is} as intense on this point as the concealment, let us say, of sexual practises in small towns in the American Southwest. On Saturday ^{will have}

other servants paid for by the state. His family has access to special shops with luxury items and fine foods. The wives of such men ^{are able to save} (save many hundreds of hours a year by not having to wait on queue to do their daily shopping. If I knew ^{had acquired} this much before ^{knowledge}

I even went on my trip, it was arresting all the same to see how much attention ^{care has} had been paid to concealing the evidence ^{most of the evidence of inequality}

of any large inequality. One could sense a social hypocrisy that ^{was as determined about not flaunting one's possessions as one's possessions are simply not to be flaunted} was as intense as the concealment of real sexual habits, as we can find attached to sexual mores in small Baptist towns in

the Southwest. On Saturday night, the kids may be searching out ^{out a good deal about each other}

a few new practices with one another in the back seats of automobiles, but one's good reputation in town ^{one's town} can still be maintained ^{is kept in reasonable}

by regular attendance Sunday at church. So it is with the ^{goes} appearance of modest living in the Soviet. ^{USSR}

Then there are other small shocks to one's expectations.

One has heard so much of Soviet lacks and faults and inefficiency that one is prepared to greet a giant but wounded dinosaur.

Instead, the country is not without a certain visible near-to-bursting substance. On a highway, passing through the flat farm-

lands of Lithuania between the cities of Vilnius and Kaunas, one could be in Iowa. Already, in early Spring, ^{winter wheat} the fields are

showing ^{its} their first green, the silos rise frequently, and bizarre modern villages show concrete apartment houses on the plain that

rise ten or fifteen stories, ^{they are} just as white, rectangular, cheap and ugly as their counterparts in America, and, for that matter,

all over the world. Trucks grind by at a great rate. Television transmission towers go up every twenty or thirty miles to spike the sky. The beautiful land is pocked by ugly sights--just as in America. Some of the newer factories have the same ongoing windowless walls that numb our ^{own} American senses--just that little bit--as we pass them on our highways. The world is getting uglier everywhere, and the newer parts of America and the USSR

have the same flat prosperous nerve-deadening look. In America, so much of ^{this} the new architecture looks humanly repellent, ^{looks} totalitarian. So does it look totalitarian in Russia, ^{as well} too. Unhappily, ^{Of course, the}

^{throwing up} America has less excuse. We have been creating these concrete bunkers and block houses and tall vertical boxes because it is cheaper to build offices and housing with no interesting shape ^{that have} or ornament. The profits have been ^{already mostly} shucked while everyone in America has been obliged to live looking at the sad architectural ^{is condemned to live to have to keep} result. ^{hush} The Russians at least have a justification: They were

desperate for cheap housing after the vast depredations of World War II ^{they} and have been doing their best ever since to catch up. So their architectural monstrosities, ^{while quite} easily as ugly, seem, all the same, a ^{touch} little less offensive. Nonetheless, such sights are as ^{those panoramas of} stupefying as a bruise on a bruise. Forget America and the

Soviet Union. The mood of our world is being insulted equally from Calcutta to Vancouver.

But I digress. ^{us, this seems} I avoid the near issue. For Americans, ^{hardly the problem. Not yet. We worry instead about} the first problem with the Soviet Union is to decide how much of a

police state is the USSR. No other question ^{when} are you asked as often ^{in your return}.

On return, no)
a police state it is. ~~No~~ (other question was asked of me more
often ~~after I came back~~. Yet how ^{are you} is one to measure that? Talking ^{to}
with a seminar of journalists a couple of weeks ^(after I came back) later, it was
agreed that to the extent ^(we invest in a particular) we choose a scenario, ^{can always find} we live with it.
the ongoing evidence to keep living with it.
To decide that the Soviet Union is an evil force bent on war,
aggrandizement and the totalitarian control of all humankind is
to keep perceiving it as such. ^{the country} But ^{the difficulty} the trouble with being a journalist
in Moscow is that ^{his} one's apartment is, of course, bugged. ^{will, of course, be} One lives
in a ghetto with other journalists. The Soviets monitor ^{his} your
moves. ^{could he} How can you fail to be sensitive then to every nuance of
a police state?

Yet take an opposite scenario. ^{being} Conceive of the son of
a high Soviet ^{at the UN} official who is stationed in New York. The boy
likes to walk around the streets of the city. ^{The} His father, full
of Soviet horror tales about America, ^{the streets of} knowing his apartment in
New York is bugged by American security forces, ^{His fears are augmented} might tell the
son at length about America's imperial desire for international
conflict. ^{about at all the evidence you find of that, he says, in} The son, however, could say, "The Americans I see
on the streets don't want war. ^{seems to} They'll never go to war happily
here." And, of course, ^{tries to} the boy is right. ^{I don't think they'll ever} The father is wrong.
^{we know that} Americans do not have an imperial desire for international conflict.
To the degree that one is unencumbered by a false scenario, one
can see in a day what others will not perceive in ten years. That
^{is not superior perception nor intellect,} is not superior ability. ^{to} It is simply the good fortune not to
have one's eyes constricted into tunnel vision ^{saved from the} by a scenario.

INSERT B
back of page 10

followed by B"

"You weren't scared?"

"Well, you don't feel much *(those)* *(to make a point)*

"There's no tension exploring the streets of Moscow. Much less, I think, than in Manhattan. There's very little violence

in the air. All those people in America who keep screaming *that we*

to end crime in the streets ought to move over to Russia." And *(consider moving)*

I told of wandering through an empty park in Leningrad at ten

o'clock at night. There, alone on a park bench, were a husband

and wife with an infant in a baby carriage.

"You liked it?"

"Well, I won't go that far. It's a sad place. I felt as if I were back on the Lower East Side of New York a hundred years ago. I could have been watching my grandparents walking *by, 4*
past."

Moscow
Ah, those Russian faces, bundled up against the last ravages of winter. Have you ever walked through the poor streets of Chicago west of Division Street (where almost everybody who goes by is Ukrainian or Polish)? Hard-working features surround you, full of worry, doubt, long-congealed anger, much concern for family, much dread at what life will bring next. The same faces were here, a generation willing to die in harness in order that their children have a little more. You could *often* see this determination in Russia; "I haven't gotten what I wanted," says the expression, "but maybe my kids will." It is moving. One feels sad. All these faces, worked by life, all the weather of each personal history carved into each nose and mouth. Since

*Judith - go back to the Begins Ellen goes on
Make the connections.*

everyone who is of the same age has been churned ^(into) through the same historical cataclysms, so to a degree did all these middle-aged and older Russians on the streets have the same expression--such an array of plain, hard-worked faces--yes, life had come to them with a rock in each fist. These older Russians going by were as battered in their collective looks as old club fighters renowned for the dubious ability to take a tremendous punch. How many had been landed on each marked-up mug. The faces in American crowds are better-looking, but by comparison, innocent, or smug and spoiled.

It made ^{best one thinking} one think of what it meant to live in Russia over the last seventy years. ^{1/3} ~~10 million Russian soldiers were killed~~ ^{and} ~~in the First World War, and millions more died in the Civil War~~ ^{Allied intervention} ~~and Allied intervention that followed the Bolshevik Revolution~~ ¹⁾ ~~in 1917. Six to ten million perished in the enforced collectivization of the farms in the early thirties under Stalin, and more than~~ ^{No many as} ~~20 million were slain by the Germans. As many may have died in~~ ^{may have} ~~slave labor camps over the last twenty years of Stalin's life.~~ ^{was not only} ~~Khrushchev, coming to power after Stalin's death, informed the~~ ^{the reflex} ~~people of the USSR that Stalin had not been a legend but a monster.~~ ^{that} ~~Since the average Russian, reading a controlled press, had been~~ ^{was an} ~~accustomed to believing in Stalin as the epic, even god-like,~~ ^{after} ~~leader who brought them to victory in the most costly war in Russia's~~ ~~history, the shock was equal, let us say, to Americans being told~~ ~~that Dwight D. Eisenhower was a mass murderer of children.~~

20 million people
we killed in the FLOW and in the
Bols Rev + Civil War the followed it

It is further estimated that 8-10 million
died in the forced labor camps + in purges
under Stalin

Psychologically, the Russians never recovered. That is comprehensible. *On a smaller scale, we* have never been the same since the assassinations of JFK, Martin Luther King, and Bobby Kennedy. Of course, Krushchev was soon deposed. The bearer of such ill tidings could hardly rule for long. *By the late sixties,* the USSR, after fifty years of slaughter, terror, and historic shock, of cumulative catastrophe, *more than* now *moved* began to pass with Brezhnev through two decades of sluggish, stagnant progress. *and* It was a period when terror diminished, *advanced* rebuilding progressed to some degree, and—by huge emphasis on an armaments economy, and a relative indifference to consumer goods—*brought much closer,* nuclear parity with the West was gained. By now, however, the *ideals* spirit of the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 had died ten times over. A vast social machine was still functioning, but the blood of enthusiasm had thinned, *also* the fecal power of corruption had swollen. The USSR was in transit from a stern, war-rationed economy, *prodigious* bulwarked by terror, to an immense welfare state drowning in cynicism, bribery, waste, shoddy products, and oppression.

"Why, then, do you say it's not a police state? It's still oppressive."

"Yes, but not in *nearly to the degree* the way it used to be."

aristocratic with contempt I thought of a dissident I had talked to. His lip twisted every time I asked about *any one* person who worked high in the Soviet establishment. His expression was reminiscent of an *fact* aristocrat in the world of William Faulkner talking about the Snopes family.

** and a world where on average more than a million Soviet citizens were killed (or perished) in camps (each year) (the USSR) (now) began to progress with Brezhnev through two*

"What of the terror?" I asked

The dissident shrugged. "Years ago the secret police would come in the middle of the night. Nobody ever heard of you again. Now you're arrested and have a trial. You go to a camp, or you're exiled."

"Are the arrests as frequent as before?"

"No. For every twenty they used to arrest, ^{maybe} now they only arrest one. The other nineteen are left to worry."

One could hear ^{the same all over,} in many a place. The situation was ^{considerable} not good, in fact it was worse than it had been just a few years ago with ~~detente~~, but on the other hand, it was vastly improved from the time of Stalin. In those years, tens of millions had been arrested and killed by his orders, his methods, his society, ^{political prisoners} now one measured the damage by the thousands. ~~Amnesty International,~~ ^{the Soviet Union's} highly-critical of the Soviet Union, estimates that about 2000 dissidents have been imprisoned each year in the last five years. ^{These are still} That is ~~not~~ ^{now} happy figure, but in proportion to the size of Russia's population ~~300,000,000~~ ^{270 million} the ratio is less than would be found ^{the ratio of political arrests is less than is found} in many a Third World nation.

→ Certainly, it is less than in Argentina before the Falklands, in Chile today, and ^{now} ~~by God, don't even calculate it~~ in San Salvador.

← No, in Russia today, the ^{thought of} feeling for the KGB no longer washes through one's vitals in utter and abysmal dread. Stories about the KGB men even fall into categories. One dissident, coming home from a meeting a few years ago in a taxi, became aware after a

after:
ee
racial
etc
age

After World War II, with its vast not only to the
USSR, but that over the 15 years

There are 5,000 political activists, & the

the number of days we are in prison ~~from 1945~~

came to a total of 1,000 individuals

NOTE for p. 14

Walter, let's get a box for the ratio between political prisoners and total population in Nicaragua and Cuba, San

Salvador, Chile, Zaire, other Third World countries: *we should use Amnesty International estimates.*

Country	Total Population	Political Prisoners	% Population in Prison
Nicaragua	000,000	00,000	00%
Cuba	000,000	00,000	00%
etc			

while, that she was being followed. She told this to the cab driver. He was a tough young Moscow kid, and said, "Should I do a normal?"

"Yes," she said, "do a normal."

So he pulled the cab over, stepped out, and lifted his hood. Sure enough, the car behind slammed to a stop, two huge KGB yeggs piled out and sheepishly lifted the hood of their car.

One prevailing belief in Moscow is that Andropov sent the best KGB men to foreign countries to do the more delicate work, and left the less-talented ones for the tasks at home. On the other hand, perverse pride is also taken that the KGB these days dresses better, and some even look elegant. Listening to an observer for Helsinki Watch, one hears of endless contradictory harassments that are being meted out to the dissidents who are left after these last few years without detente, and a pattern emerges to suggest that the KGB these days proceeds more or less systematically without a pattern, that is to say, some dissidents on being asked told the observer for Helsinki Watch to have Americans send them packages, others said not to, for it could cause trouble. Some requested gifts, others were cautious at the thought. Some wanted publicity, others did not. It was the same with letters and phone calls. Perhaps the KGB now saw method in sowing petty confusion. For that matter, the fundamental relation of

secret police to their quarry (when times are relatively quiet)

is usually sneaky, intimate, nasty, close, occasionally cruel, — and

sympbiotic, even familial. What comes through is the sense of ongoing family relations. In contrast to renowned figures like Sakharov, ongoing family relations. The dissidents are treated not relatively unknown dissidents are treated not unlike ostracized members of a powerful family, nephews

clan,

who have offended rich relatives. They don't get invited to family parties anymore. Sometimes, they are cut out of the will, ~~or~~^{even} banished. Sometimes, after a few years, they are accepted again. Often, they are allowed to perish through neglect. But they are no longer pulled out of their beds at three in the morning.

Sitting at table in a Russian's house, discussing the regime, there is ~~sometimes~~^{often} a silence after a remark has been too critical. Someone will point to the ceiling as if to say "They are listening." Of course, given the number of houses in which such conversations take place, the odds are considerable that this particular room is not being monitored at the moment. Maybe the KGB placed a working microphone here once, maybe they will put one in again, next month or next year, but the finger does not point to the ceiling in abject fear ~~as~~^{so} much as with a wry, almost mocking respect. It underlines the sensibility of one's childhood: God is listening to my thoughts. Yet, as one soon learns--He does not strike for too little. Of course, it can take years before one gets brave enough to think: Maybe He is not listening at all. How, indeed, is one to know?

There is even a story so apocryphal that one hopes it is true. ~~Maybe the~~^T dissidents tell it to each other as a talisman. It depends on understanding that poets are important to the Russians. Pushkin ~~comes to more in the scheme of things for them than George~~^{counts} ~~Washington, Elvis Presley, or Babe Ruth does to us.~~^{Babe Ruth, or even Elvis Presley,} So it

~~It~~^T happened that when the dear friend--let us call him Glabikov--

of a famous poetess was arrested for some minor act of dissidence,
the poetess in response to ^{an} ~~the~~ old Russian tradition that esteemed
artists ^{have the right to} ~~may~~ ^{non?} petition the czar, ^{At its} sent a letter to Andropov. ^{In}
conclusion, she wrote, "If you do not release Glabikov, I do not
know what I will do."

No answer came from the Premier. "Andropov is a gross man
for not ^{replying to} ~~answering me~~," said the poetess to her friends.

Then, one day, the KGB asked her to visit. One can ^{picture} ~~conceive~~
of the faces she encountered. High officials in Russia have
recognizable characteristics. Some ^{may} look relatively decent, some
^{certainly} don't, but ^a one particular expression ^{does} prevails: you are looking
at ^{men} tough guys with tunnel vision. In America, one can ^{see} catch the
same faces on trade union leaders, corporate executives, mafia
godfathers, mafia lieutenants, some Congressmen, and--^{take a look--} have you
^{a couple} taken a look lately?--some of our President's close advisors.

If it ^{helps} improves the story, you may also believe that the
poetess was a beautiful woman for indeed she was. ^{and her voice} Her voice at
^{was deep and sweet and mysterious} ~~its best was as sweet as a creature of the woods who has learned~~
^{awe that a good voice brings to the deep rooted music of words} ~~to speak.~~

"All right," said the leading KGB officer, "what is this
last line in your letter? Why do you say that you do not know
what you will do? What does this mean?"

"It means," said the poetess, "that I do not know what I
will do if you ~~do not release Glabikov~~ ^{is not released.}"

"No, what are you saying? Do you imply that you will commit suicide? Or that you will defect? Are you going to denounce us? What sort of scandal do you propose?"

"I do not know," said the poetess. "I tell you truthfully, I do not know what I will do."

No, tell us, in simple words;
"But what do you mean?"

"I mean," she repeated in a lugubrious ^{tones} voice firm in ^{their} its wonder at her own uncharted depths, "I mean that if you do not release Glabikov, I simply do not know what I will do."

Legend has it that the KGB released Glabikov. How splendid if the story is true!

Counter-scenario to the other scenarios, it may be the only
Of course, it is equal to a scenario. It gives us a picture of reality that ~~may or may not be true~~. I have been trying to

way to
a land
offer a portrait of Russia ~~in these words~~ that is without scenario, ~~to give, that is,~~ and thereby give a sketch of a huge and complex beast of a nation, difficult to live in, abrasive as steel wool, messed-up, by parts horrendous, but nonetheless a real country where people do not necessarily decide in advance that they are working for a doomed and evil machine, but instead grow up suffering and scheming, looking for better ways and means to live well and fornicate well, and even go bowling and play ball like thee and me.

Let me tell a little more. We are coming closer to the idea of what I wish to say. In Lithuania, in the city of Vilnius, I happened to wander into a Roman Catholic church around twilight. Mass was being celebrated ^{and} the church was filled to capacity with

old women, a few men, a few adolescents. The service was fervid. It was also beautiful. Beauty takes on the power of addiction in the gray anti-sensuous climate of March in the Soviet--indeed pure beauty begins to feel as necessary as food--I do not know if I have ever attended a Catholic service that was more intense. ^{The} My point, however, is that my entrance into the church was casual, and the exit as easy. I was alone, and as a stranger, not enormously remarked upon, and no policemen were outside, at least none that I could see. ^{good superficial tourists} My simple reaction was: "Holy Cow, it's not that big a deal here any more to go to church."

A trickier example. It may reveal more. An American woman who was born in Lithuania went back to visit her relatives and they, bringing food, drove in to greet her at the hotel in Vilnius. They wanted her to come back to their village, fifty kilometers away. It's forbidden, don't you understand? she told them.

No, it's okay, they said. You can come with us.

As it turned out the woman was right. It was an exceptional case, and her relatives had no understanding of exceptional cases. So soon as they started to drive her around town, they were followed by another car. This was startling to her relatives. They were farm people. Something like this had never happened before--to them.

If you were visited in your home in America by a relative who happened to be a Soviet official, your phone might be tapped by the FBI. If you discovered it, that would be unique to your

experience. Of course, there is a difference between a visit by an average American tourist to her home town in Lithuania and a Soviet on official business here, and in that separation may be measured the gap in the freedoms of the two countries. But my point is that these Russian country people ^{in Lithuania} were less afraid of ^{the} their authorities than their visitor. They had not been living with our image of them. In fact, in this case, the American woman was right and the natives were wrong, but whatever else, her relatives were obviously not ^{dwelling} living in prodigious daily fear.

Of course, Russia, by any measure is a harsh country, ^{so} as harsh--I will use the scatological ^{style} references of the Russians--as the paper you find in the toilet of a train. So let me end with a harsh thought. It is sad but true that our American leaders are invariably ready to accept fascism in other countries and do business with it. Since fascism is the foul disease of the rich ^{rich and accept} when capitalism breaks down, so our leaders can understand it. ^{It is an} ~~undemocratic system led by the rich and the~~ ^{system. After all, it} Communism, however, terrifies the American rich. ^{It is the} tyranny of the poor ~~when~~ society breaks up altogether. So in America we are encouraged to abhor it in every form. We live with the scenario that Russia is an evil force. Now, the world is on the edge of destroying itself. Can we afford the abhorrence any longer? It is significant that we have forgiven Nazi Germany for its concentration camps--and the ^{twenty} ~~fifteen~~ million people that the Nazis exterminated--we do great business with Germany--but we still do not exculpate the Russians for their gulags. We talk as if the

~~to the rich and the military~~

slave labor camps are as hideous today as thirty or forty years ago, and that at least--let us look to thank the Lord for the real blessings--is not true any longer. We are a great nation.

Can we
Let us take the step of assuming that we will be greater yet as *some more* of all our *possibilities*
we come to live with generous understanding *in the real horror-*
*hard-*pocked world that still lies before us. Our planet *is* the
most beautiful of all the planets, *as the*
astronauts are quick to agree, but
but the state of our international relations
is *more* *than* *the* *craters* of
is *as* hard-pocked *as* the craters of
the moon.