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Impressions of/visit to the  
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I accompanied the President during his recent visit to the Soviet Union. We spent 15 days there, visiting Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev, Sochi, Stalinabad (Tadzhikistan Republic), Samarkand (Uzbekistan Republic) and Tashkent (Uzbekistan Republic). The Soviet Government unrolled the red carpet for the President. To go about the country in such august company has advantages for the visitor so far as material comforts are concerned. On the other hand, a visit under such auspices is apt to give an unreal picture of conditions in a foreign country. Nevertheless, an unprejudiced observer, who keeps his eyes and ears open, can form some idea of the conditions about him. Restrictions on foreigners in the Soviet Union are much fewer than before, and even ordinary visitors have opportunities of meeting and talking with the people of the country. Free movement and free contact are, of course, out of the question even today.

2. The President had a warm and enthusiastic reception wherever he went. The warmth of the reception seemed to increase with time. The receptions at Leningrad, Kiev, Sochi and other places were much more tumultuous than at Moscow. Moscow is a big and busy city and that might account for the relatively less noticeable demonstration in public. There were the usual crowds lining both sides of the road, bouquets thrown at the cars or on the streets, clapping and cheering. These receptions must have been organised in advance as they are in India too. Still from the way people were rushing out of shops and houses as the procession passed along, it was evident that the people themselves were curious to see the distinguished visitor and show their respect to him.

3. In the socialist (communist) countries the First Secretary of the Communist Party is the most important person whether he holds an office (e.g. Khrushchev or Novotny, President of Czechoslovakia) or he does not (Gomulka or Ulbricht). Similarly in each constituent Republic of the Soviet Union the First Secretary of the Party seemed to be more important than the Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet or the Chairman of the Council of Ministers.

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At official lunches and dinners, while the President of India sat at the right of the host, who was the Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, the First Secretary of the Communist Party sat next to the President. In formal speeches there were few references to the Party. Even in talks and discussions such references were only incidental, e.g. in paying tributes to the Communist Party for the progress achieved in 40 years. In the Asian republics of Tadzhikistan and Uzbekistan there were more frequent references to "the great Soviet Union", "the Soviet people" and "the Communist Party". One had the impression that the leaders in these republics were anxious to demonstrate their loyalty in public to their Soviet connection and to the Party.

4. At Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev, Stalinabad and Tashkent the Soviet leaders gave detailed descriptions of the progress made by their country during the last 40 years. These statements were supported by detailed statistics. Indeed the ease with which everywhere the leaders of Government and officials would reel off from memory detailed statistics on every conceivable subject, whether it was agricultural production or industrial output or progress in education or health or transport, was most amazing. Detailed figures were also quoted in regard to each industry, each separate agricultural crop, schools, colleges etc. There is no reason to doubt the authenticity of these figures. It was obvious that the Soviet competition was with the United States of America. In the hall of the Exhibition of Economic Reconstruction at Moscow, where each Republic is represented by a separate pavilion, and most leading industries have their own pavilions, figures of output in the Soviet Union and in the USA are displayed side by side. In industrial and agricultural output the Soviet Union has gone ahead of countries in Western Europe and Soviet ambition is now to beat America. Mr. Khrushchev has declared that the Soviet Union will beat the USA in total industrial output and per capita production by the end of the next Seven Year Plan. By 1972 the Soviet Union will emerge first in physical volume of production and per capita output. At present the industrial output of the USSR is 50% below and her agricultural production 20% below those of the USA. The USA per capita industrial output is more than double that

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of the Soviet Union and the US per capita agricultural production is 40% higher than that of the Soviet Union. But the USSR surpasses the USA in both the rate and annual physical growth of production. At Kiev we were told with pride by the Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Ukraine Republic that in per capita production of butter the Soviet Union exceeds the USA. According to Mr. Mikoyan, the per capita production of milk will exceed that of the USA in 1961. These figures regarding milk and butter were supported by the visual evidence of plentiful supply of milk and milk products everywhere in the Soviet Union including the two Asian Republics we visited. While the Soviet leaders spoke with pride about their hope of beating the USA in industrial and agricultural output, there were no slighting references to the USA. Mr. Khrushchev in his talk with the President made a few humorous sallies, but they were without rancour.

5. In the Soviet Union today the basic necessities of life such as milk, butter and bread are not at all expensive. The people, whether they were in the ~~RS~~ USSR, Ukraine, Uzbekistan or Tadzhikistan, looked well-fed. One of the best tests of the material condition of a people is the quality of their footwear. Even in the Asian Republics men, women and children were on the whole well shod. Travelling in the Asian republics, I was careful to look at the feet of the people and not at their faces. They looked generally more poorly dressed than the people in European Russia, but one could not say that they were ill dressed. The other consumer goods and fresh supplies are extremely expensive, particularly green vegetables. At present tomatoes cost nearly 20 roubles (Rs.10) per kilogram. I was told by the Embassy officials that the price of tomatoes goes up to 60 or 70 roubles during the winter when nothing but potatoes are available. It would not be correct to say that people generally looked more prosperous today in the Soviet Union than in the UK, France or West Germany. One point struck me. Looking at the people, whether in the streets or at public places, one could not say whether a particular person belonged to any particular class or what his material condition was. The standard of dress is generally the same for everybody. This was particularly noticeable in Sochi where the large majority of holiday makers were workers. Men, women and children

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enjoying themselves on the beaches or on the roads and in parks, all seemed well dressed and contented.

6. The President paid a visit to a collective farm called "Peace" some kilometers out of Leningrad. We took the occasion to pay a surprise visit to a peasant's house. The inside of the house was reasonably well furnished. There was nothing artistic about the furniture either here or elsewhere. But one could see that the old peasant and his family were living a good life. The old man said that he has two sons, one an engineer and the other reading for a medical degree. His daughter, a very strongly built young woman of 19 or 20, served us food - cold chicken, bread, fruits and wine. Everywhere large quantities of bread were placed on the table. I was told that an average Russian consumes 5 or 6 thick slices of bread at every meal.

7. The housing problem is being tackled with vigour, but much leeway remains to be made. During the war most of the cities in European Russia suffered terrible destruction. In Leningrad, which, we were told, was invested by the Germans for 900 days, more than one million people died of starvation. The entire city of Kiev was almost razed to the ground when the Germans left after occupying it for nearly two years. Nowhere, however, are traces of devastation noticeable today. The cities have been rebuilt. New extensive housing projects have been undertaken in all the cities and even in the rural areas. Approaching Moscow from the airport, one can see huge 6 to 7 storeyed buildings, all constructed within the last three or four years. These consist of flats of one, two or three rooms with separate kitchen and bath and running cold and hot water. We were shown a housing colony which had grown up in the Moscow University area. We were told that about 30,50,000 square metres of housing had been built in the whole of Moscow since the war. These housing colonies are self-contained with markets, schools, theatres etc. Already 2,00,000 people have been accommodated in the new housing colony in the University area. At present the houses are being built with pre-fabricated blocks and are completed within two months. The allotment of houses in Moscow, as elsewhere, is made by the trade unions, and the size of the family is one of the main considerations in making the allotment. The new housing colony in the University area

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has 245 new shops and 460 schools. I was informed by a senior Foreign Office official accompanying us that in Moscow no child has to walk more than 5 minutes to reach his school. According to Mr. Khrushchev, in the first year of the current Seven Year Plan 2.2 million flats have been built in the cities and industrial towns, and about 8,00,000 houses in the countryside.

Incidentally, in Moscow, under Khrushchev's orders, building of skyscrapers, which were favoured by Stalin as symbols of Soviet grandeur, has now been discontinued.

8. Stalin's portraits and pictures were conspicuously absent in Moscow, Leningrad and Kiev. In Sochi we saw two statues of Stalin in public parks. Stalin's statues seemed more in evidence in Tashkent and Samarkand. Talking of portraits and statues, I noticed with interest that in Brezhnev's room at the Kremlin, behind his chair on the wall hung the portrait of Lenin. Then came pictures of Khrushchev, Marx and Engels. In Khrushchev's room there were only two pictures - Lenin's and Marx's. Stalin's pictures and statues were so universal throughout the Soviet Union during his life time that it would be difficult to remove them altogether from public places, particularly as in many pictures and statues he and Lenin were juxtaposed.

9. As one moved about in Moscow, Leningrad or Kiev, one was impressed by the complete lack of tension in the faces of the people. Life seemed to be going on normally. Everyone was active. The Gorky Park of Culture in Moscow was crowded in the evening. In this Park there are open air concerts, theatres and facilities for all manner of outdoor activity and recreation, and thousands of people were enjoying themselves till late in the evening. Similarly, the large crowds at Sochi were enjoying their holidays as normally and naturally as at any of the summer resorts of West Europe. According to our Ambassador, people are now more inclined to talk to foreigners than in the old days. The senior Foreign Office officials who went with us spoke about their families, their holiday plans, their work etc., and this, according to our Ambassador, would be inconceivable in Stalin's time.

10. At the reception given by our Ambassador to our press party, who accompanied the President, I had an opportunity of

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speaking to more than one British and American correspondent stationed in Moscow. All of them told me that the recent U-2 plane incident and the break-down of the Summit Conference had made no difference to the treatment of the US correspondents by the Russians. They continued to be treated with courtesy and no restrictions were placed on their movement. In their public speeches the Soviet leaders, of course, maintain an extremely critical attitude to the United States of America. Mr. Brezhnev took the occasion of the Presidium's reception to the President and our reception to him to bring in political topics and criticise the American policy. This appears to be the Soviet way. Mr. Mikoyan indulged in similar criticisms of the USA at receptions to him during his recent visit to Norway much to the dislike of his hosts. (This has been reported by our Ambassador to whom the Norwegian Foreign Minister spoke on the subject.) In fact the Austrian Chancellor took exception in public to some remarks of Khrushchev during his recent visit to Austria. This is a peculiarly East European practice. Otherwise on social occasions, relations between the Soviet Government officials and Western representatives seemed normal and cordial. For example, at the American Independence celebrations which took place at Moscow after our departure Mr. Mikoyan and Mr. Kozlov stayed long and had friendly talks with the US Ambassador. It seems that while the Soviet Union would miss no occasion to assert in public their views on world problems and would almost aggressively assert their equality with Western Powers, they wish to observe the normal pattern of friendly behaviour in private intercourse with Western representatives and visitors from Western countries. The old Stalinist rigidity has disappeared and even Mr. Gromyko knows how to smile.

11. Education has made remarkable progress throughout the Soviet Union. Even in the Asian republics literacy is 100 per cent. In 1959 the Soviet Union had 2,267,000 students, i.e. 107 for every 10,000 people. Last year the higher schools in the Soviet Union graduated 108,000 engineers while the USA graduated 38,000. Tuition is entirely free. I went in detail into the question of how the Soviet authorities have solved the multilingual problem; also how they have prevented an excessive output of trained University graduates for whom no immediate work would be available. We were told by the Chairmen of the Uzbek

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and Tadzhik Republics that even the highest education is given in the regional languages. For this purpose all books needed have been translated into the Uzbek and Tadzhik languages respectively. The local teachers know both Russian and the regional language. Education is given in Russian to the students of Russian parentage, of whom there is a substantial number in the Universities in Uzbekistan and Tadzhikistan. (In the crowds standing by the roadside to greet the President at Tashkent, Stalinabad and Samarkand almost 20 to 30 per cent appeared to be Russians. We were told that these people had settled permanently in these areas and had little connection with European Russia.) The Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of Uzbekistan Republic, Madame Nasridinova, told us that one foreign language is taught to every student in the schools. Students can choose from English, German, Hindi and Urdu. We were shown text books published in Hindi. She said that about 60 different nationalities live in the Uzbek Republic, each one different from the others and each with its own dialect. The majority, of course, are Uzbeks. In Uzbekistan there are facilities for teaching in Russian, Tadzhik, Kazak and Kirghiz. I had no time to examine in further detail what exactly were the arrangements to teach in so many different languages. It is possible that on this particular point there was an element of exaggeration.

12. Admission to Universities is limited to the number required under the Plan in the different years for various professions in which University education is essential. There can therefore be no question of unemployed graduates. Since the number of boys and girls who pass out of the middle school (corresponding to our matriculation) is much larger than the number of seats in the Universities, admission to the Universities is regulated as follows:

- (1) 20% to students who have passed out of the middle school on the result of admission tests.
- (2) 30% to students who have finished middle school course and have worked for two years in a factory or collective farm or done some other kind of manual labour.
- (3) 50% to demobilised personnel.

(The percentage figures may not be exact)

What happens to those who are not admitted to Universities? They are found jobs in factories, collective farms and in other

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professions. Provision is made for this in the Gosplan. I enquired repeatedly how a particular young man or woman is chosen for employment in a particular field, e.g. a factory or an agricultural farm. To my queries I thought I did not receive any precise answer, but my general impression was that while account was taken of the special aptitude and the wishes of a young person, ultimately the decision was taken by those in authority. One high official told me that if a young man does not accept the job offered to him, he will have to remain unemployed, and after some time he will be forced to seek some employment. Apparently work on collective farms is in favour partly because there is a patriotic appeal to young people to volunteer for agricultural work and partly because work on an agricultural farm would seem to entitle one to better consideration for admission to higher technical institutes.

13. Roads were remarkably clean, even in the rural areas of Uzbekistan. On enquiry I was told that there is a general sense of civic responsibility among the people and everybody takes pride in keeping his surroundings clean. In the villages too the same feelings prevail. "Activists" see to it that instructions about cleanliness as about other matters are observed by all. By "activists" was probably meant Communist Party cadres. It was difficult to get a direct answer to the question whether these cadres are full-time employees, but I was told by someone who ought to know that they are. Apparently at every level there are party workers to ensure compliance with party decisions. I was unable to find out whether party cadres function even in Government offices, e.g. the Foreign Office. But from the fact that Gen. Zukhov had to depart because of his resistance to the spread of party influence in the Armed Forces, it seems that representatives of the Party are associated with the administration of the Army. They certainly were during Stalin's time, e.g. Political Commissars. (Marshal Bulganin was, I believe, not a regular Marshal of the Army.) Whether these representatives are associated at every level and how they function today remained obscure.

14. Cultural activities are encouraged by the State. At Stalinabad we attended an opera where almost all the artistes were Tadzhiks. The orchestra also consisted mostly of Tadzhik personnel. Similarly at Tashkent there are two operas and all the artistes who entertained us were Uzbeks. Some of these artistes had won high distinctions, being either

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"People's Artists" - the highest distinction for an artist in the Soviet Union - or "Merited Artists". In the whole of Uzbekistan there are 22 theatres and 17 amateur theatres, all financed by the State.

15. Although religion is officially discouraged, old churches and monuments are being carefully and almost reverently looked after and maintained. For example, a good deal of money is being spent and much care is being bestowed on the preservation of Ragistan, an old madrassah in Samarkand built in 1469 by Ulug Begh, Taimur's celebrated grandson.

16. Women are entirely free and have the same rights and obligations as men. Every woman works. Ambassador Menon told me that the Russian women who knew his wife were surprised to hear that she does not work. "Yes, there is the house-keeping, but what do you do?" they keep asking. In a textile factory which we visited in Tashkent, 75% were women workers. There are women doctors, teachers and civil servants even in the Asian republics. The director of the technical institute in Tashkent is a woman. Women work very hard indeed. In the hotel at Leningrad where we spent two days I saw an old woman, easily over 70, working in the lift from 8 in the morning to 12 midnight. Old women are employed in the less skilled work because they are not suited to other kinds of work. Shri K.P.S. Menon told me that it was pathetic to see old women breaking ice in the depth of winter on Moscow roads to keep the streets clear of snow and ice. Mr. Khrushchev has said that by the end of 1960 a working day of 7 hours for ordinary work and 6 hours for work which is extraordinarily difficult would be established and that by 1964 there would be a 35-hour week for ordinary workers and 30-hour week for heavy work. I found the girls who were serving us at the country houses at Tashkent and Stalinabad working from morning till late in the evening. I asked whether no hours of work were fixed for them. I was told that they would have a day or two free after we left. It is possible that these persons were made to work extra hours because the Government wished to employ with us only trained and reliable persons, and they did not want us to deal with too many servants.

17. While waiting to catch the plane at Stalinabad I asked an old porter where he came from. He said that he was a Tartar who had come to Stalinabad 20 years ago and was hoping to retire next year, when he would reach 60. He would then get a pension of 600 roubles a month from the State. On a similar enquiry

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at the textile factory at Tashkent we were told that while the minimum wage of a worker was 550 roubles, the director who was in control of the factory was paid 2,500 roubles. Wages vary not according to any hierarchical pattern, but according to the nature of the work and the ability and performance of the person. Thus, an efficient foreman who has to deal with molten metal from a blast furnace might get more than an engineer who would probably supervise him. (This point remains to be verified.) The authorities are rather ruthless in eliminating inefficient people. Mr. Novikov, the first Soviet Ambassador in India, took to excessive drinking and was posted as a deputy head of department in the Soviet Foreign Office with a status corresponding roughly to that of Deputy Secretary in our Foreign Office. Similarly, Mr. Likhaichov, who is a relatively young person, is the head of a department in the Foreign Office, while among his deputies is at least one who has served as a head of a mission in a foreign country.

18. It would be interesting to repeat here what Mr. Khrushchev stated on July 7 at a radio and television address in Vienna: "In 1959 we spent 230 billion roubles in social insurance payments - on pension, students' scholarships, free education, medical service and other benefits for the working people. This <sup>is</sup> about 2.5 times as much as we spent on our military needs."

19. Particular care is taken of every young boy or girl in the Soviet Union. Boys and girls between the ages of 7 and 15 join Pioneer organisations. I paid a visit to a Palace of Pioneers in Tashkent. The present is a holiday season in the Soviet Union. Nevertheless, a fair number of boys and girls turned up and treated us to music, dance, gymnastic display etc. On enquiry I was told that there were three such palaces in Tashkent. These catered for all the boys and girls between 7 and 15 in Tashkent. There are similar organisations in the rural areas also. Nothing seems to be left to chance in this country; and, of course, the State spares nothing to meet the needs of the younger generation.

20. It seems that for every person in the State, from his infancy till death, the State takes the responsibility. From the earliest childhood a boy or a girl is encouraged and taught to think of himself or herself as a member of a community and to place the communal well being above his or her individual comfort and interest. Certain ideals and aspirations are implanted in them, and growth of individual consciousness

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is discouraged. All anti-social tendencies are repressed. No comic magazines are published in the Soviet Union or permitted from outside. Pictures, movies etc. are carefully selected and access is denied to books and magazines dealing with sex, crimes etc. Indeed the behaviour of men and women in public, in the parks or elsewhere, was unexceptionable. The Ambassador and I used to go out for long walks in Kiev and Leningrad in the late evenings. Nowhere did we find young men and women indulging in scenes which are so common in the parks and public places in some of the Western countries.

21. The Soviet Union has abolished different classes and strata of society. This is however only a general statement and is true in the sense that birth and heredity do not confer any special privilege. It is not possible to say by looking at the people's appearance and dress what an individual's position in life is. Nevertheless it was interesting to see that in all formal gatherings members of the Presidium stood in a group by themselves; and even Ministers, scientists, judges and others kept at a respectable distance from them. This was evident at the receptions to our President at the Moscow airport on his arrival and departure, at the reception given by the members of the Presidium to the President at the St. George's Hall in the Kremlin, and the President's reception to Mr. Brezhnev and Mr. Khrushchev. At the Soviet reception some artistes from the Bolshoi Theatre entertained us, and chairs were provided only for the members of the Presidium and some members of our party. All others stood at a respectable distance behind. Among the latter I noticed the Chairman of the Supreme Soviet (corresponding to our Speaker of the Lok Sabha) and the Chief Judge of the Supreme Court, both of whom visited India some time ago. This crowd also included the Ambassadors and others. I also noticed with interest that at the President's reception to Mr. Khrushchev and Mr. Brezhnev, while Mr. Khrushchev stood near the head table, Mrs. Khrushchev stood inconspicuously with others at some distance, and at all such gatherings Marshal Malinovsky stood with lesser officials at some distance from the members of the Presidium. Did the members of the Presidium form the new aristocracy?

22. There is no attempt apparently to abolish all manner of inequality. Ambassador Menon told me that in 1952, when he first arrived in the Soviet Union, there was only one class on trains; today there are 4 classes. Similarly, no rigidity

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is observed in fixing wages and emoluments for different classes of labour. The Director of the cotton textile combine which we visited told us that while the minimum wages are fixed at 550 roubles, there is no limit on the highest emoluments although he himself gets only 2500 roubles. The Soviet policy in this regard was stated by Mr. Khrushchev at the 21st Party Congress:

"The socialist position on the principle of equal pay for equal work means that one and the same yardstick is applied to different people. That yardstick is labour. Socialism excludes class inequality; there remains only the inequality of the share received in the distribution of goods. Inasmuch as different people have different skills, talents and working ability and different-sized families, it is natural that with equal pay for equal work, they have in fact unequal incomes. This system is inevitable in the first phase of communist society."

The above explains why scientists have in the Soviet Union whatever they want and more. Academicians and other distinguished scientists have cars and dachas at their disposal. I was told by an official of the Foreign Office that an academician gets more pay than a Minister - in the region of 6,000 roubles a month. He draws this salary as long as he lives, and gets additional emoluments if he works as a professor in a University.

23. The other side of the picture must also be stated. There is severe restriction on the import of foreign newspapers. Indian students of the Moscow University complained to some members of the Presidential party that they do not see any Indian newspapers. The University library subscribes for only the New Age, Navyug and Swadhinata (Bengali). The only foreign newspapers that I saw in the hotel in Kiev were the Daily Worker of London and the Worker of New York (organ of the Communist Party of America, I was told). The government prints millions of foreign books, but the selection is made by them. Apparently books which would create antagonism against the principles on which the Soviet system is based, are not allowed to reach the Soviet public. The Soviet newspapers Izvestia and Pravda contain only such news as the Soviet Government would like to reach their public. The newspapers contain a number of news items about production at various factories within the Soviet Union, standards of performance, suggestions for improvement of technique etc. News from abroad is scanty, and only such items of foreign origin are allowed to appear as will support the Soviet point of view. While there is considerable freedom in many fields, in matters relating to ideology and Government policy there is hardly any. Incidentally, I was told that the Soviet publications in English which sell so cheaply in India, cost 5 or 6 times higher in Moscow.

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There is, however, no restriction whatsoever on the import of scientific magazines, literature etc. Matters relating to politics and ideology other than those favoured by the State and the Communist Party are taboo; matters relating to science and technology are free.

REFLECTIONS:

24. A visit to the Soviet Union has been extremely rewarding. Not that the condition of the ordinary working man and woman is better in the Soviet Union than that in West European countries. As a welfare state the record of the UK, for example, is quite impressive. One has however to remember that in 1917, 80 per cent of the people in the Soviet Union were illiterate; that since 1913 per capita income has increased 16 times and national income 25 times; that in industrial capacity and output the Soviet Union is second only to the USA. That the Soviet Union should have been able to reach such heights of prosperity and material progress and secure for the average man and woman such a high standard of living within a period of only 40 years, despite the devastation caused by a five-year war, has a lesson for other underdeveloped countries. That the same standard of prosperity and material benefit should have been achieved by the people of the Central Asian republics who were far more backward than we were in India in 1917-22 is still more impressive. I have made detailed notes about Uzbekistan and Tadzhikistan. These are appended. The question immediately strikes one: What is the secret of the progress and advancement achieved by the Soviet Union in barely 40 years?

25. It would be unwise to base firm conclusions on a fortnight's experience and on information gathered in course of hurried visits from place to place. I might however hazard some comments.

First and foremost, planning is the basis of the Soviet Union's economy at every level. There is a plan for each aspect of Soviet life, whether it is industry, agriculture, education, health, culture - for each year, for each region, sub-region, down to the smallest rural unit. The efforts of all in the Soviet Union, from the highest to the humblest, are concentrated on work according to the plan - on fulfilling and exceeding the plan targets. There is therefore no frittering

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of energies on non-essentials. And the essentiality of a particular service is determined by the general framework of the system which embodies the ideals, aspirations and necessities of the people as a whole.

26. Next come hard work, unity and discipline. Hard work would not alone have achieved the present rate of progress if there had not been complete unity and discipline in the entire nation. The people of the Soviet Union have undergone heavy sacrifices and terrible hardships in reaching their present height of material prosperity. During his recent visit to Austria, Mr. Khrushchev stated:

"Realising that if we ate everything we made we would condemn ourselves to endless vegetation and endless backwardness and poverty, we channelled all our resources in the early years of Soviet rule into making new plants and factories and building up heavy industries. We realised that only the creation of heavy industries, the manufacture of means of production, as the economists call them, would give man the means of multiplying the material values, easing his toil and releasing his energies."

This indeed is an understatement. Millions perished from hunger alone in the late twenties and the thirties of the present century when the Soviet Union, under Stalin's leadership, concentrated most of its resources on heavy industries and neglected agriculture. But these hardships were amply compensated by the victory in the Second World War, which would not have been possible, had there not been such a high degree of industrialisation of the country. (It is interesting to recall a statement which Mr. Khrushchev has repeatedly made. It is that now that the Soviet Union has become so strong, other under-developed countries need not have to go through the same experience as the Soviet Union did in reaching a high stage of development. The obvious meaning is that the Soviet Union would be there to assist countries which would either join the Socialist alliance or adopt friendly relations with the Soviet Government.)

27. What is it that ensures such unity and discipline among the Soviet people? There can be no question but that the entire Soviet people are proud of the achievements of their country and enthusiastic about fulfilling the Seven Year Plan. Even if there were individuals who would wish to deviate from the official policies, they would not be permitted to do so. The harsh ways of Stalin are gone for

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ever. Seven years ago, a Malenkov or a Molotov would have lost his head. Today Malenkov manages an electrical station and Molotov represents his country in Outer Mongolia. In fact, since Beria's death, no leading person in the Soviet Union has been put to death on account of his political beliefs. That does not mean, however, that any ideological deviation or opposition to party creed or government policy would be permitted.

I am convinced that this mass enthusiasm and full support to the Party policy have been possible only because a single party functions in the State and no confusion or controversy is permitted about the aims and ideals of the party. In each sphere and at every level there are party "activists". In course of their talks with us, the Soviet officials referred to party cadres. I did not consider it discreet to find out in detail how the party cadre functions. But I was told by at least one informant that there are party functionaries at each level and in each sphere. The business of the party functionaries is to ensure that there is proper understanding of the aims and objects of the Party and whatever is done is in accordance with the policy of the Party. In a factory, for example, the Party members among the workers would meet and discuss the needs and achievements of the organisation from the Party point of view, criticise the management, if necessary, and take steps to set errors right. There are periodical "rectification campaigns" which keep up mass enthusiasm and correct faults which may appear on the surface among any particular group of people or in any particular sphere. It is not that plans are superimposed from above. We were told at the textile manufacturing factory which we visited at Tashkent that the plan relating to the factory is discussed by the workers first and only then it is passed on to the higher level.

28. It would be wrong to think that the present generation is not satisfied with the system under which their State has made such remarkable progress, or that there is any questioning of the basic ideology of the system. How could there be any doubt when from their earliest boyhood or girlhood Soviet children are brought up in adoration of the Party and have no access to any literature, newspaper or other material which would open their minds to any other point of view? Pioneer organisations perform a very useful function in providing an

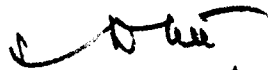
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outlet for youthful enthusiasm, in instilling into boys and girls love for work, for outdoor life and for the finer arts. Brought up in an atmosphere which provides them with a full life, the Soviet youth do not miss the things to which the youth in the Western world are accustomed. On the credit side, they are also protected from unhealthy influences which in other countries are apt to promote juvenile delinquency.

29. Basic to the entire Soviet system, therefore, is the existence of one single party. The unique role of the Communist Party is expressly recognized in article 126 of the Soviet Constitution, which states that the party is "the vanguard of the working people in their struggle to strengthen and develop the social system". Moreover, by article 141, "the right to nominate candidates is secured to public organisations and societies of the working people, Communist Party organisations, trade unions, cooperatives, Government organisations and cultural societies". Multi-party representation in the public life of the country is out of the question.

30. What lesson can we draw in India from the Soviet experiment and Soviet experience? I am convinced that we cannot achieve the same rate of progress as in the Soviet Union if we do not apply Soviet experience in full. But will our people be prepared to sacrifice the values which we have been taught to appreciate and which are enshrined in our Constitution, freedom of thought, speech, religion? Will our people willingly accept one party rule which is basic to the Soviet system? Nevertheless, there is much that we can learn from the Soviet Union - comprehensive planning for every single activity in which every single individual will fit, further levelling down of social and hereditary inequalities and provision of better and fuller opportunities of development to the younger generation.



(S. Dutt)  
Foreign Secretary  
15-7-60





An account of the Soviet Socialist Republic of Uzbekistan given to the President by Madame Nasridinova, President of the Supreme Soviet of the People's Republic of Uzbekistan, on 4-7-60.

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The Republic was established in October 1924. It has an area of 4,14,000 square metres. In 1924 its population was 4.56 million. In 1960 it is 8.16 million. More than 60% of the people live in villages.

2. There are 60 nationalities in Uzbekistan, each different from the other and each with its own dialect. The majority of the people are Uzbeks - 5.1 million. In addition to Uzbek, teaching is imparted in all institutions in Russian, Tadjik, Kazak and Kirghiz languages. There are newspapers in all these languages; also radio broadcasts. There is one autonomous republic within Uzbekistan - Karakalpa, comprising 7 districts.

3. In the whole of Uzbekistan there are 31 towns and 112 districts. Election to the Supreme Soviet takes place once in 4 years, each 15,000 people electing one member. At the last elections held in 1959, of the 444 members elected, 129 were women, including 112 Uzbek women. Of the total number of members, 325 are Uzbeks.

4. Uzbekistan sends 10 members to the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union.

5. Since the revolution, progress has been made in industries. At present there are 1,300 factories in 70 different industries. There are factories for gas, chemicals, oil, machine building, textile and other light and heavy industries. The total output is 17 times that in ~~1924~~<sup>1913</sup> and 3 $\frac{1}{2}$  times that in 1950.

Under the Seven Year Plan the industrial output will increase 1.8 times.

In 1913 there were 16,000 workers; in 1960 there are 3,00,000, of whom 30,000 are engineers and technicians.

6. Natural gas has been discovered near Bokhara. The reserve contains 1 trillion cubic metres of gas. Pipes are being laid from Bokhara to the Ural, a distance of 7,000 kilometers. The gas from Bokhara would be the cheapest in the world and would meet the entire requirements of Samarkand, Bokhara and Tashkent. It is expected that by 1965, 18,000 million cubic metres of gas will be produced.

6. Under the,.....

6. Under the Seven Year Plan 45,000 million roubles will be invested in Uzbekistan. This will be several times more than all the previous Five Year Plans.

7. Agriculture has been completely mechanised. There are 1134 Kolkhozes and 169 State farms. By far the larger area is irrigated.

In 1913 there were 2.179 million hectares (1 hectare = 2½ acres) of land under crop; in 1960 there are 3.46 million hectares.

During the Seven Year Plan 4,34,000 hectares of new land will be brought under irrigation.

Uzbekistan has the largest area under cotton in the whole of the Soviet Union. In 1913, 423 hectares were under cotton; in 1960, 1,38,400 hectares. The total cotton crop in 1913 was 5,16,000 tons; in 1959 it was 31,63,000 tons. At the end of the Seven Year Plan more than 4 million tons of cotton will be produced.

Produce per hectare:

|        |              |                              |
|--------|--------------|------------------------------|
| 1913 - | 12 centnairs | (1 centnair = 100 kilograms) |
| 1959 - | 23 "         |                              |
| 1965 - | 25 "         |                              |

65 per cent of the total agricultural produce in the whole of the Soviet Union comes from Uzbekistan and 85 per cent of the total silk production in the Union.

8. Before the Revolution, hardly 2% of the people were literate. They were trained in madrassahs. Literacy is now 100%.

In 1913 there were 167 schools with 70,000 students, mostly sons of rich people. In 1960 there are 6,300 schools with 13,50,000 students. There are more than 80,000 teachers of whom 70,000 are women.

There are 23 residential schools, 2 Universities, 31 colleges, one medical college, one railway engineering institute (the Chairman of the Republic herself is a graduate of this institute), one irrigation institute, one art college, one textile institute and one institute of economics.

More than 1,00,000 students are taught in technical institutes. There are 79 special technical students.

There are schools for mechanisation of agriculture and workers in agricultural farms study in these schools.

Students are taught in their respective languages -

Russian,.....

Russian, Tadzhik or Uzbek. Each student can take any one foreign language from among English, German, Hindi and Urdu, according to his or her wishes. (The Chairman showed us some Hindi text books.)

In 1943 an Academy of Sciences was established. Under it there are 27 research institutes. In 1957 were established an Academy of Agriculture and an Institute for Atomic Research. In these institutes 9,100 scientists work, including 205 Doctors of Science and 2,303 candidate Doctors.

9. In the whole of the Republic 2,00,000 agricultural experts are employed.

10. There are Uzbek members of the Soviet Academy.

11. Before the Revolution there was no doctor in Uzbekistan. In 1960 there are 10,620 doctors and 37,000 medical practitioners (corresponding to our licentiates). For every 789 persons there is one doctor.

12. Before the Revolution women were sold as chattel. When a man died, his wife was taken over by his relations. The women were under purdah and had no political rights.

Women now enjoy full political rights. There are 46 women civil servants. The Director of the Technical Institute is a woman.

13. There are 22 theatres and 17 amateur theatres financed by the State, and 1,500 cinemas. There are also philharmonic orchestras.

14. 312 newspapers are published in Uzbekistan, with a total circulation of 12,50,000, in different languages.

15. There are textbooks in all the languages. Admission to the University is on the basis of examinations, but special facilities are given to workers.

The plan lays down how many engineers, technicians, agricultural experts etc. will be needed, and provision for teaching is accordingly made in Universities and institutes.

If 30 or 40 students in towns or 10 or 15 students in villages wish to have education in a particular language, their wishes are complied with.

16. There are 6 stadia in Tashkent.

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A short note on Tadzhikistan

The total area of the Republic is 1,43,00 square metres, and the population is 2 million.

2. In the old days there was no mechanisation of agriculture and all the land was owned by Russian landlords. The agricultural produce was not sufficient to meet the needs of the people.

There was not a single school, no doctor, no newspaper; literacy was nil. *now literacy is 100 per cent.*

3. During the last 30 years 300 new factories have been established and the annual value of the goods produced is 6.5 milliard roubles. There are 250 coal and other mines.

During the past year 1,200 million roubles were spent under the Plan.

During the Seven Year Plan 11,000 million roubles will be spent. The cement produced in the Republic will be increased 18 times and textile mills will produce 105 million metres of cloth.

There are 6,500 mechanics in the Republic.

4. The biggest power station is being built at a place 80 kilometers from Stalinabad. It has a capacity of 2.7 million kilowatts and it will produce the cheapest electric power in the world. (During his recent visit to Austria Mr. Khrushchev stated that during the Seven Year Plan there will be three hydro-electric power stations in the Soviet Union, at Bratsk, Krasnoyarsk and Stalingrad, each more powerful than the biggest power station in the world, namely the one at Kuibyshev. The one at Bratsk will have a capacity of 3.6 million kilowatts and the one at Krasnoyarsk 5 million kilowatts.) The height of the dam at Staling<sup>abad</sup>rad will be 300 metres.

5. In 1925 there were 20,000 hectares under crop. In 1959 there were 2,24,000 hectares. During the Seven Year Plan 1,56,000 hectares of new land will be brought under cultivation.

The cotton produced in 1913 was 35,000 tons; in 1960 5,00,000 tons, the biggest crop in the Soviet Union.

Tadzhikistan received the Order of Lenin in 1957 for the best cotton produced.

There are 13,3000 tractors in the Republic.

56  
6. There are.....

6. There are 2,585 high schools and 25 special schools, one University, one technical college, one medical college and 3 agricultural institutes. At present there are 3,50,000 students. The number is expected to increase to 5,00,000 by the end of the Seven Year Plan. During this period 355 new schools will be established.

There is an Academy of Sciences in Tadzikistan, with 1,800 scientists including 450 Doctors of Science.

Education is in Tadjik language. Textbooks in Tadjik for the primary schools were produced in 1923-25 and for high schools in 1930. There are textbooks in Tadjik also for the technical schools. In these books Russian technical words are used.

Since the Revolution 70 million books have been published.

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On the 25th June 1960, I accompanied the President to a collective farm named "Druzba", some kilometres out of Leningrad. The collective farm comprises two villages which formerly had 1,020 families with a population of 4,200. After the Revolution, six collective farms were formed of these two villages. Now these have been amalgamated into one.

2. The total area of the collective farm is 5,607 hectares. There are 2,300 cattle including 780 cows, 3,400 pigs and 10,000 chickens on the farm. The farm owns 38 tractors, 20 combines, 27 lorries and 3 cars.

3. This farm specialises in the production of sugar beet which covers 750 hectares. Each hectare has 100,000 plants.

Besides, maize, jowar and peas (for human and cattle consumption) are also produced in the farm.

In 1953 one hectare produced 850 kilograms of wheat. In 1959 the produce was 2,550 kilograms per hectare.

One hectare produced in 1953, 14,500 kilograms of sugar beet. The output per hectare in 1959 was 24,500 kilograms. In 1960 it is 26,000 to 36,000 kilograms. The sugar beet contains 15% sugar.

4. The meat produced on the farm has increased because of the increase in the production of maize which is used as cattle fodder. The production of meat is as below:

|       |                  |
|-------|------------------|
| 1953: | 91,200 kilograms |
| 1959: | 384,000 "        |
| 1960: | 768,000 "        |

5. The production of milk in the farm is as below:

|       |   |
|-------|---|
| 1953: | 3,800 centnairs (1 centnair = 100 kgs.) |
| 1959: | 18,830 "                                |
| 1960: | 24,000 "                                |

In 1959 each cow gave 3,840 kilograms of milk. Before the Revolution the yield was 1,011 kilograms.

6. Each peasant is allowed to retain half to one hectare of private land. The produce of this land belongs to the peasant and he is free to keep or sell it according to his wish. The peasant is also helped by the ~~K~~ Kolkhoz to cultivate his private holding. A small charge is made for the purpose.

7. The following illustrative information was given to us:

In 1959 one family of two persons worked on the Kolkhoz. They earned 13,000 to 14,000 roubles. They were also given 2,000 to 2,500 kilograms of wheat. These two persons worked for 200 days in the year - 8 hours a day.

The family also got milk, sugar and potato.

8. Rules for the management of the farm are made by the peasants themselves. At a general meeting the decision is taken as to what should be produced and how much. The managing committee is elected by the peasants themselves.

9. A young woman who milks cows was produced before us. She said that she earned 16,000 roubles during 1959.

Another person who was a slacker and worked only 50 days got only 1,000 roubles.

10. The income of the farm during 1953 was 850,000 roubles. In 1959 it was 8,100,000 roubles.

11. Only recently a club house and community centre has been built. It is an imposing building and we were taken round it.

12. The visit ended with the President seeing a newly constructed house occupied by a peasant. It was a two-storeyed wooden structure, fairly well furnished. The old peasant had his wife and an unmarried daughter with him. They have two sons, one an engineer and the other working for a medical degree.

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