

## PSYCHOLOGY

# Soviet Man Unnatural

Communist system keeps going because of occasional "backsliding" of minor officials, confidential interviews with Russian refugees show.

► THE RUSSIAN Communists are able to keep on putting the Soviet system over on the Russian people chiefly because every once in a while the minor official forgets he is a Communist and, in spite of himself and the spies who watch him, "backslides" into brotherly, affectionate and easy-going human relations.

This conclusion is based on confidential interviews with 29 young Russians only recently come to this country, ranging in social class from collective farm peasants to professional men, half of whom had been Communists. The interviewing was done by Dr. Henry V. Dicks for the RAND Corporation and the Russian Research Center, Harvard University. It is reported to the Research Center for Group Dynamics, Ann Arbor, Mich., and to the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations, London.

By long training, the Russians have been taught that the people are not to be trusted and they believe that a "strong government" is needed to keep the "masses" in line. This confidence is especially strong among those who have not lost the illusion that this power comes from the people. They say of the M.V.D. (secret police) that "after all they are our own boys who see to it that people behave themselves."

To the Russian who has feared the secret police since the days of Ivan the Terrible, the terror is just an accepted part of life.

What makes it possible to tolerate the hard bosses is that every once in a while the officious, stupid factory manager is publicly degraded and punished. Thus he is made the scapegoat for the whole Soviet system.

The Russian nature is in complete contrast to that of the Soviet Man, as determined by the Communist Party line, Dr. Dicks found. The Russian is a spontaneous, generous, affectionate companion, fond of talk, good food and of bouts of drinking vodka to the accompaniment of roars of singing and laughter, back-slapping and general good fellowship. When the emotional pendulum swings back, the Russian is excessively melancholy, sullen, apathetic, and feels that he is no good.

In spite of his love of feasting and plenty, he prides himself on his manly ability to endure hardship and pain. He has a natural distaste for formality, rigid order, and adherence to time schedules. He works in spurts, which tendency may have its origin in the short Russian summer of feverish activity followed by the long period of relative indolence in winter.

On such people, the Communists are attempting to impose virtues, imported along with Marxism from Germany and other parts of the Western world. They are trying to make of them efficient, highly productive workers. Punctuality and thrift and tireless work combined with boundless and ceaseless enthusiasm are now expected of every Russian citizen. Vodka, friendliness, and even melancholy and pessimism are severely condemned.

More is expected of the leader and party member than of the common people, and it is on the leader's head that punishment falls when the people fail in what is expected of them.

A chief in industry or in the forces, Dr. Dicks reports, is required to be stern, demanding and hard-driving, always putting the general cause before consideration of the individual. Each power holder is aware that his own chief is watching him for slips or failings. There is an elaborate system of inspection, verification, and control at all levels.

Any laxity in discipline is punished. Another expected trait is the preservation of due distance between chief and subordinates; any familiarity is severely frowned upon.

Such a hard, distant master is tolerated by the people if, as usually happens, he once in a while breaks down and becomes human.

Dr. Dicks' report is part of a larger project of the Russian Research Center. His paper should not be regarded as any dogmatic exposition of the "Russian national character," Dr. Dicks warns.

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## ASTRONOMY

## Twin Stars Circle Each Other At 1,500,000 Miles an Hour

► TWIN STARS in the constellation of Cygnus, the swan, race around each other at the rate of over 1,500,000 miles an hour, Dr. Joseph A. Pearce, director of the Dominion Astrophysical Observatory, Victoria, B. C., reported to members of the American Astronomical Society and the Astronomical Society of the Pacific at a joint meeting in Victoria.

"This is the greatest value thus far discovered," Dr. Pearce stated. The stars are almost 11,500,000 miles apart. They completely circle each other in a little less than two days.

This double star team is of the ninth magnitude, thus is too faint to be seen without a telescope. Both stars are terrifically hot, their temperatures being around 60,000 degrees Fahrenheit.

Compared to our sun, the two stars are enormous. One takes up 691 times as much space as our sun, the other is 630 times as great in volume, Dr. Pearce estimates.

These stars also have much more matter in them than our sun. The mass of one is 37.3 times that of the sun, the mass of the other is 32.7 times as great. Yet the material making up these stars is relatively light. The density of each is 0.05 that of the sun, Dr. Pearce calculates.

Science News Letter, July 5, 1952



*S. S. UNITED STATES—Scheduled to sail Thursday, July 3, on her first transatlantic voyage to Le Havre and Southampton is the largest ship of the U. S. merchant marine. The luxury liner grosses 53,330 tons.*