

This is a recording by G. D. Cartwright for Beverly Smith, Jr., of the Saturday Evening Post

MISCELLANEOUS COMMENTS ABOUT LIFE AT MIRNY

The two big recreational things were music and movies. During the summer when we had all the tourists--summertime crew--movies were held every night. At first, of course, I had very great difficulty in following them. Sound tracks were often muddy because they had been played a lot and the Russians like things loud so the voices weren't very clear sometimes. I didn't go to the movies very often at first because I felt I wasn't getting much out of them and I could make better use of the time. But the fellows were really keen for me to go and they often insisted that I stay ~~in~~ after supper to watch the show, particularly if it was one that they liked and thought was a good example of life in Russia or just a good picture.

One of the boys at the MET station, Semyon Gaigerov was, as I have said, possibly the keenest movie fan of anyone. He had seen all these pictures. I don't think there was one he hadn't seen at least once and some of them he had seen three or four times. Of course this was true of a lot of the other fellows, too, because since television has come to Moscow they do see lots and lots of films. Apparently there is no question about the rights for putting a film on television as there was in the U. S. Also, he had been on one of the drifting stations--k that is, one of the drifting ice floe stations in the Arctic Ocean up near the North Pole which the Russians have been manning from time to time since way back in 1937 or '38. Semyon was really a died-in-the-wool movie fan. The favorite movie by far was called the "Age of Love." It was an Argentinian film featuring Lolita Torres and it was played more than any of the other pictures. In fact, some of the fellows said they had seen it 20 times. I couldn't believe this but as I

got to know ~~know~~ the picture I came to think probably it was true. As a matter of fact, I saw the picture myself five times, more than I've ever seen any other picture, and I enjoyed it the fifth time almost as much as I did the first. It wasn't a great picture but it was ideally suited to this situation at Mirny. Lolita Torres is ~~xx~~ a very vivacious, bright Latin star. It had good music. It had a simple but rather appealing story and a fair portion of pretty girls, also it was quite funny. This ~~simple~~ combination is exactly what the Russians at the base liked.

The picture was obviously popular even in the Soviet Union because they had Russian artists singing some of the songs from the film. This was interesting because it made a good contrast, made a little study in music and the arts which I found worthwhile. It was no doubt that the Russian female singer had a better voice and was better trained than Lolita Torres, but there was also no doubt that the original singing by Lolita was superior in its impact and human quality. So I believe this was one of the first films I saw at the base. My good friend, ~~some~~ Kunyin was still there and he insisted on acting as interpreter. Of course this was helpful in understanding the film but it really didn't help my Russian because I was always listening to his interpretation. Also, it was a bit annoying to the other fellows around close by. They never complained but I felt embarrassed because he had to interpret audibly and it sometimes interfered with hearing the picture. It was interesting, too, to notice that Lolita was the only real pin-up girl at the base. This was ~~xxx~~ true of the first year, I think the second year we acquired some magazine pin-ups which the fellows copied photographically, but they were not very common, certainly nothing like the ~~xxxx~~ big spread which I understand existed at Little American and some of the other American bases. The pin-up of Lolita was simply a fetching pose, a face portrait.

It might be interesting to review the various films which were popular and those which were unpopular and tell something about the variety of films which they had. I remember before the old group left, being strongly urged to stay for a picture, stay after supper. It turned out that I had picked up my wrong glasses and we were sitting way in the back so I really didn't get too much out of this picture. It was ~~xxxx~~ a war story of one of the isolated forts which held out against the Germans for an unbelievably long period of time and apparently had been surrounded and cut off. The picture was quite well done, I thought. It was a bloody thing and some of the battle scenes were remarkably realistic, they may have used actual newsreel materials for it. It was the story of a small group of men and women who held this tiny outpost, a very—almost impregnable building of concrete and steel, under terrific bombing and assaults from the land over an amazingly long period of time.

This was a great story to the Russians. It emphasized that they still remember very vividly the attacks and the devastation ~~sk~~ which the Germans caused and some of the fellows used to say, "Well, we really got this fellow Hitler, didn't we?" I think they gave full ~~xxx~~ marks to the support and the fighting which the Americans did in this battle against Hitler—Gitler, as they call him.

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When the winter set in—that is after the ships had left, ~~XXXXXX~~ taking all the summer people away with them, the frequency of films dropped off somewhat. We had, I think three or four a week, but occasionally there were more. I gradually got so I could follow them more or less. It was an interesting insight into Russian character to watch ~~xxxx~~ their reactions to films, and to see the kind of films which they liked best. There were no American films but there was a rather good variety of others. No British films, except one, which was in English with subtitles. That was a kind of a

kind of a Thief of Baghdad story which they liked but it certainly wasn't as good as Douglas Fairbanks in the "Thief of Baghdad." But they had—I just might run down the films which were most popular. I'll speak of the Russian films a little later on.

There were two Finnish films which I found excellent. One was the story of ~~the young~~ a relatively young married woman, married to a middle-aged railroad man. It was a very simple film, really without props and the story had to do with the gradual shifts of interest of the young woman from her husband to a younger man and the tragedy which resulted.

The other Finnish film was brilliant in my opinion. It was a story of an aging woman, beautiful but aging woman, with a young, budding daughter. The husband had died, ~~and~~ apparently under rather unpleasant circumstances, so the woman's attentions began to fix ~~on~~ on a more eligible man in the community. He was interested but his interests soon shifted to the young daughter and the battle between the mother and the daughter was brilliantly portrayed. The strength of will of the mother and the extremities to which she went to prevent the daughter from having this man was something frightening to watch. But in the end the daughter won and the mother, recognizing her defeat, found her balance again. I remember the ~~the~~ remark of—there was some mixed feeling about this picture. Some of the men felt it was too depressing for a base like that, they wanted something lighter, something they could laugh about.

I remember the remark of my most avid fan, when he said, "Just think of it, here is a tiny country of only 3 million people and they can turn out a wonderful picture like that. I just can't understand it." ~~It~~ This remark was made in contrast to the disgust or disapproval of some of the Soviet films, particularly those which came out of Odessa. Apparently they were trying to start up a new film industry there and the results were

really very poor--monotonous, long drawn out and, always, of course, with a strong political flavor. The fellows didn't mind the political flavor particularly if it were well done. They seemed to go along with it at least.

Among some of the other films were several very good Italian films which practically without exception they liked. "Rome at 11 O'clock," which some of you may have seen, was all took place in a couple of days and was just a tremendous film which/centered around ~~the~~ an advertisement for a stenographer which brought a large number of girls to this one small building. While they were waiting you see the development of character and the mixture of human foibles and tragedies which had been gathered by this little advertisement, the stairway collapses and this brings out a lot more details in the character of these people. The men, almost without exception, thought this was a tremendous film. Of course, one of the great appeals was the beauty of the Italian women.

There was another Italian film (I can't remember the name of it) but it had to do with three young girls who worked in a dress department--or a dress manufacturing store. It portrays in very simple realism the lives of these three girls, how they interplay one on the other and something of the day-to-day living of the Italians after the war. This was a very popular film.

But I think of this type one of the most popular was a French film called "Mother, Father, the Maid and I." It was simply done, without props, a simple French film with a setting in Paris--I'm not sure whether the setting was in Paris--really you saw very little of the city. It shows a family, all of them working, he was a professor and the son was working also in the university; the mother had a job, too. So they were troubled with getting maid service. They finally hired a ~~young~~ young girl who ~~adds~~ adds a tremendous spark to the family and, of course, she raises lots of complications. The

young boy falls in love with her and sees her. I guess that's it. She's a young married woman whose husband has died, a widow with a child, and the young chap meets her first and then persuades his mother to ~~hire~~ hire her as a maid. It was terrifically funny and the Russians just loved every bit of it. This picture was shown a number of times.

Another French film was "Mr. Taxi," a very simply done, none of these were Hollywood films with the spit and polish, but well done, human interest stories. This was a story set in Paris about ~~the~~ the life of a very homely but loveable taxi driver and his dog. He gets into all sorts of complications, but reasonable complications and you get also an insight into family life which the Russians were tremendously interested in. I just can't tell you how much they seemed to enjoy getting an insight into the way other people lived.

I often wondered why they showed these films and you could argue that they were shown because some of them represented rather seamy sides of the life in these places but they weren't meant to be social criticisms I don't think. Certainly from the point of view of the producer they must have been just good human interest stories. Of course, at a base like this, isolated from women, any female interest is always very much appreciated. I remember one Hungarian film called "The Criminal Ingeborg" (I think her name was). It was a story set in Vienna—or I guess set in Berlin—about a ~~young~~ mature girl who seems to ~~have~~ have a very restless eye and she falls in love with a young judge, a very handsome young man and a very serious young man. The girl is really not <sup>a</sup> very sound character and she plays around with this chap in a way which he finally comes to understand, but the point of this story that I'm telling is that there was a very torrid bedroom scene and I was interested to see that the Russians reacted in exactly the same ~~way~~ way that any American audience would. They were highly ~~excited~~ excited by this and the comments were pretty illuminating.

Oh yes, I said that there were very few pin-ups. One of the ways that they got pin-ups--and you have to remember that in Russia there is nothing that compares with the type of female art magazines and men's magazines that you find here, they just simply don't have them. This is one reason why there weren't any pin-ups. So when there was a film with an ~~xx~~ unusually beautiful star or in which there were rather interesting scenes, some of the fellows would bring their cameras with them and after having seen the ~~xx~~ picture a couple of times they'd know where the good parts were so they'd get set up in the front row of the movie place with exposures and lens openings and all organized and when the appropriate scene came they'd just snap away then develop the films and there would be your pin-up. During a particularly good movie the whole front row might be loaded with cameramen. This was really no problem, it occurred at infrequent intervals but there were sort of surges of interest in this kind of thing just as there might be anywhere.

Oh yes, we had I think ~~two~~ two, but certainly one, very good film by the Indian producer actor, Raj Kapoor. This was the story of justice gone astray and it may have been for this reason that the Russian authorities had put it among the films provided the base. Also, it had rather strong musical background and I think it is indicative of Russian character that they, many of them, are fond of oriental music. Here ~~again~~ again it showed their intense interest in the lives of other peoples. Still, the picture was a good one and it might show with considerable ~~x~~ success in the United States. It was one of these films which was quite long and consequently shown in two parts. Apparently this is rather common in the Soviet Union. It is a little bit similar to the old serials ~~ix~~ which the U. S. used to have except normally they only have two, or I suppose at most, three parts to a given film.

Two other films come to mind. One was a South African film dealing with the race question. It was a story of a young mixed colored boy who had gone to the university and reached a pretty high level of intellectual awareness. He was not fighting the racial problem as such at the time but then he goes off on a holiday where he--I guess he returns home ~~k~~ after having spent a long time away from home, and there he encounters the old family troubles. You see the mixed--colored as they call them in South Africa as apart from the Negro itself--you see the colored groups in their squalid little villages, you get some idea ~~with~~ of the kind of life they lead, they have their own joys and pleasures. But he seemed a bit apart and was concerned about these special racial problems, then he is suddenly thrown in contact with an attractive, blonde daughter of one of the big land owners, a white man, who has his time with the Negroes. He has his special Negro women, but he hates them as a race. The young girl falls in love with this ~~and~~ handsome colored boy. Of course this means only tragedy and this picture moves to a very dramatic and horrible climax. This picture caused a great deal of discussion and I think the fact that it did cause discussion indicates they were not of one mind about it. I couldn't follow all the discussion but I don't think that left to their own devices, the Russians, any more than any other group, pass off these racial problems as easy of solution. I think they understand that there are real differences in races and peoples, differences of heredity and differences of immediate cultural backgrounds. I remember when the Little Rock, Arkansas, trouble came up it was very much played up on Moscow Radio, naturally, as it was all over the world. Some of the fellows asked me about it. I told them that I had lived in the south and felt that while I was not a southerner I knew something about their problems and I tried to explain that ~~was~~ where you had these very great racial differences, with large percentages of Negroes, it really was a problem, there wasn't any reason to say it wasn't. Even ~~was~~ with the best will in the



world there would be difficulties in adjusting, and I deplored the Little Rock situation as much as anyone but felt there was no question that ~~xxxxxx~~ it was a serious problem that required deep understanding and a lot of sacrifice on everyone's part had to be faced. I think they really had sympathy for this view, ~~it~~ casting aside, of course, the political implications of it.

The other picture came during the summer, that is it arrived after the long winter had been ended. It was really a stinker. I don't know how we happened to stay for it because at this stage my relief was there and we were spending a lot of time working on common problems. But we did stay and felt pretty red in the face as a result. It was the story of a ~~xxx~~ setting on the Mexican border. It was a Mexican film and a violent attack on the American brutality and (sigh) exploitation of people. It was built around the old "wet backs", that is, the Mexicans and others who tried to cross into the United States illegally by sneaking across the Rio Grande at an unguarded spot. The picture was really a very stupid one because it showed these people picking of all places to cross, the exact spot where there was ~~x~~ virtually a fort. It was a watch tower apparently heavily guarded with sirens and huge searchlights and machine guns all set up and when these men were spotted in the river, the American border patrol ruthlessly machine-gunned them down. There were lots of other scenes in the picture, American employers going across the river and hiring these Mexicans to work on railroad chain gangs, practically. They weren't in chains actually but they were pretty brutally treated by the foreman. And there were the girls, brought by the company, apparently, to entertain the men. A very unsavory impression given of America and I couldn't understand why the Mexican authorities would release a picture like that. I didn't realize that feeling against America ran ~~as~~ as high as that at this time down there. Of course it could have been an old film.

Here again I think--we didn't talk about it very much, but I think the people with whom we did talk felt that it probably was much overdrawn. They realized that it was just so stupid in many respects.

Now, what were the Russian films like? They were a very mixed collection it seemed to me. They had some of the best films I've ever seen and they had some of the worst. Of the better films there was the absolutely delightful "Twelfth Night", Shakespeare's "Twelfth Night," I couldn't imagine how it could have been done better. Superb actors and actresses and marvelous setting in the Caucasus and very well directed. I think this picture has been shown in special theatres in America.

We had, ~~if~~ of course, the two part, epic series of the "Life of Peter the Great," a really epic film and I think very revealing of Russian character and I found it a thoroughly enjoyable picture although the man who paid the part of Peter was such a powerful and almost overpowering character that he dominated the film in a tremendous way. The man who took the ~~h~~ part of his son, the weak son, was played by one of Russia's greatest male actors--his name doesn't come to mind at the moment.

Then there was a ~~xxx~~ very fine epic of Admiral Shernetrov(?), I believe, the hero of the battle of the Black Sea against the French. This was in soft color and while the pictures are not sharp some of the effects are quite beautiful. It must have been a very expensive film to make and was more or less of a Cecil B. DeMille epic type, with large casts and elaborate sets and battles at sea. It shows the meeting of the Admiral with a number of famous men from other countries, such as Napoleon and Lord Nelson. There was considerable bias I thought, generally making the Russians appear great, humane creatures ~~xxxxxx~~ with the men of other countries as being somewhat mean and small. This is not entirely true--armies as well.

The next type of film which was possibly the best of all from a dramatic point of view was the ~~next~~ so-called ~~спектакль~~ "spektacl" (?), which is the word "spectacle." It has a little special meaning. These films were made I believe almost entirely by the so-called "Little Theatre." Here the meaning of the word "little" is in contrast to the Bolshoi, or great theatre. It doesn't mean "little theatre" in the American sense. This is, I believe, the finest dramatic group in the Soviet Union. These spectacles were usually plays, or stories, which were dramatized commonly in a relatively limited setting, although this wasn't necessarily so. But oftentimes they appear to be done in one or two sets. I remember one of these was the story of a wealthy widow land owner who was constantly scheming apparently to gain a little more control or to protect her own holdings. It had a rich cast and every one was superbly played. Here, even though you couldn't follow all the subtleties of the language the skill of the actors made up a great deal for anything you might have missed in the text. I was trying to think of the name of the author of this story who apparently is still very widely read and whose stories are often used as a basis for the theatre--Lamonosov(?) or someone of that character--name of that sort.

One of the ordinary run films which I found first class was the story of a fickle woman married to a fine medical doctor. The woman, a young, attractive thing, was much taken by the Bohemian life and her house was constantly filled with arty people, musicians, painters, poets. The husband was long-suffering and <sup>while</sup> it seemed he was very puzzled by these characters he seemed willing to put up with them as long as his wife was happy. But she finally gets heavily involved with a new member of the group, a very ~~stunning~~ dashing painter who takes her away. She finds out that life with the painter isn't all it is put up to be and comes back, contrite for a while, but soon drifts into her hld ways. The husband simply shakes his head and wonders. He eventually is stricken by typhus and dies, leavir

finally her/to realize what an absolute fool and what a heartless creature she had been. The part of the doctor was played by one of the Soviet Union's very good young actors, by the name of Bondarchuk. The setting was in the latter part of the last century and his portrayal of this role was something wonderful to watch, it reminded me very much of the acting of Paul Muni, where the skill is so beautifully intertwined into the characterization, the use of the hands and the sense of timing to produce an effect was just absolutely worked to perfection.

Of course we did have newsreels. These got even more boring than the pictures after three or four showings. They were heavily weighted with propaganda. Although they were interesting to see from an historical point of view and to find out what kind of news the Russian people were seeing. There was the visit of some of the leading political figures to the Soviet Union, agreements being signed and, of course, the visits of Voroshilov and Khrushchev and others to other countries. I found the visit to Finland extremely interesting. It was portrayed as being a great success with the Finns giving a hearty welcome to the group. I couldn't believe that this was actually true. I tried to judge from the things which were portrayed whether the Finns were really enthusiastic and I found it hard to judge. ~~There were~~

There were some rather amusing incidents shown. Voroshilov is a rather stolid man, looks always disgruntled but he did several little things which pleased the Russians. They were entering a house during an inspection, for example, he forgot to wipe his feet before he entered and one of the other men sort of caught him up so he turned around and went back and wiped his feet, throwing a rather sheepish glance at the cameraman.

Some of the newsreels were sports events. One in particular which I remember was the weight lifting contests in which Paul Anderson of the United States took part. He

was a great favorite with the Russians. They seemed to be quite free in their admiration for excellence in whatever field. Another was a gymnastic competition in which the Russian excel over all the world. This seems to be one of the U. S. complaints about the Olympic games, that the Russians concentrate on these gymnastic events which oftentimes bring them to top place in the Olympics. I don't know that this is unreasonable competition, it just happens that they are interested in gymnastics I suppose and haven't developed some of the field sports to the same degree we have.

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I said that the films and music were the two big/recreation at the base. Music was largely through what is usually called the "translatzia." The big stock of recordings, both the normal disks and tape recordings were held by the radio center. Every house, in fact every room practically, had an inexpensive loudspeaker which was connected by wire to the radio center. Over this translatzia system came all the news, special announcements from the base such as: "The bath is on today from 9 to 6 p.m." We had a little radio gazette which was written by the Pravda correspondent several times a week during the summer but this also was the channel for broadcasting music. The news came on three times a day, morning, noon and the last thing at night--no, I guess it came on twice during the evening, once about supper time and the other at the end of the day, which was 11 p.m.

The music was varied. They had whole operas, mostly Russian opera, but they had Rigoletto, Carmen and some of the light operas of Kallmann. They even had bits of Rose Marie, which apparently was quite popular in the Soviet Union. Then they had what they called "estradnaya"--concerts---these were music hall sort of things, miscellaneous songs, monologues, or comical dialogues and that kind of entertainment. Most of the non-classical music was called "narodnii" or folk songs. It seems that everything which

is not classical but which is written by any of the eastern composers is called people's or folk song. Some of ~~it~~ it I found quite ordinary, in fact I had the strong impression that modern music in Russia was very little better than it is anywhere else and popular Russian music is, on the whole, mediocre.

I think there was somewhat this feeling on the part of the Russians, too. It was significant, I thought, that Shostakovitch was scarcely played. I don't remember any of his music being played during the time I was there. ~~He~~ He did appear in some of the newsreels—not some of them but on one or two occasions, where big musical festivals or events were being photographed. Some of the people were definitely outspoken in their dislike for his music.

There is no doubt that Tchaikowsky is still the great musical idol of present day Russia. I believe he wrote eight operas but only two of them seem to be played very much. We had both of these: "Eugen Onegin" and "The Queen of Spades." It was hard to say which was the most popular but in some respects I think "Eugene Onegin" is the greater opera. Musically it may not be but from the point of view of the story, which was written by Pushkin, the ~~humanity~~ humanness of the drama, I think there is no doubt that it exceeds "The Queen of Spades." I mention this because of something which happened toward the end of my stay. Before I left ~~for~~ the United States to join the Russians I heard that the opera which would open the Metropolitan season in New York would be "Eugen Onegin." Being a keen opera fan I thought quite a bit about this and mentioned it to some of my Russian friends at the base, saying what a fine thing it would be if we could hear the opera, ~~xxx~~ either by direct interception or by having a tape recording made and sent down. They were enthusiastic about this so I sent a radiogram to Mr. Bing, Director of the Metropolitan Opera, telling him of the situation and asking him if there was some

possibility of getting a tape recording to the base. I don't know whether the telegram ever went to Mr. Bing but I did get by ~~my~~ ship a recording of the Metropolitan Saturday afternoon broadcast of this opera.

At first I was a bit annoyed that I had the broadcast since it contains a lot of fill-in material between the acts. But as it turned out this proved to be extremely interesting to my Russian colleagues. I had this for several days, in fact I believe more than two weeks before we got around to playing it. I picked a select group, small group, who either knew English or who were keenly interested in music and in hearing an American version of their favorite opera. We went over to the radio station and into the little room where we did most of our radiophone contacts, a kind of very plain studio you might say. They had a tape recorder and player there. We fiddled around quite a lot getting the thing to operating for some reason, I don't remember why. Oh yes, Oscar Krichak wanted to try to re-record the tape so he could take it back with him to the Soviet Union.

Anyway, we got the thing going. I complained very much about the quality of the sound but we finally got some improvement in that. There we were, myself and I think five Russians. They were interested in the arrangements for the broadcast and the advertising by Texaco. The first thing that caught their attention, however, was the pronunciation by Milton Cross and we had some amusing moments over that. Then the opera started and you could sense the feeling of criticism in the air. I felt very much on edge about the whole thing because I valued their musical opinions and naturally I wanted to have this thing make as good an impression as possible.

We got through the first act and the general reaction was quite favorable. They loved the girl who played the part of Tatyana; they thought Onegin was very good, George London sang this role. Then came the musical interludes which the Metropolitan interjec

into the thing. They were quite disturbed by these, feeling that they tended to break the natural dramatic progression of the opera and certainly they wouldn't have agreed to them in the normal production. I had boasted a great deal about the tenor, ~~the~~<sup>rogue</sup> who plays the role of Lensky. I have always been a great admirer of Tucker but they said, "Oh, no, no. Lensky is a stripling, a man who is new in love," while Tucker sang the role like Pagliacci, with the great verve and intensity of the Italian style. They commented particularly in the duel scene where Lensky and Onegin introduce this scene by talking of their past friendship and the unhappy state that has come upon them but they both insist that they must go on with the duel. They felt that Tucker played this with much too great a sense of passion and argumentative approach. In the true Russian sense he is melancholy and said ~~x~~ over this unhappy turn of events. I mention this to show what a keen understanding they have of these roles. One of the men thought the orchestra was outstanding yet he had a comment to make about the French horns; he felt they lacked the mellow quality of truly great French horn playing. I had to agree with him once he had called my attention to it.

Then there came the commentary on the operak by Boris Goldovsky. I hadn't realized it although I had listened to Goldovsky over a number of years, that he was in fact a Russian. His commentary on this opera was probably one of the greatest he had ever given, at least it seemed so to me, and it was very much ~~x~~ enjoyed by the Russians, particularly when he quoted some of ~~Pushkin's~~ Pushkin's original lines. This was a kind of a thrill to them to hear clean Russian language coming from this so-called America. But what really seemed unfortunate to them was the ending of the opera. Apparently, more or less in line with this plan to recapitulate the major themes~~xx~~ the opera closed with the addition of about four bars beyond Tchaikowsky's original s score. I didn't recognize this but the orchestra, instead of ending on the tragic note, carried on and



they all literally jumped to their feet and shouted, "They've spoiled it; they've spoiled it; they've spoiled it." I thought this was a final example of the intimate feeling they had for this great opera and how much it means to them in their cultural life. ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~

Of course the story on music wouldn't be complete unless we recall some of the locally generated music. Oscar Krichak was, I suppose, the keenest about music, although he may not have been the top musician. He played the piano by ear mostly but also by note and one of the Russian stringed instruments called the domerie. He also tried his ~~best~~ hand at composing and wrote three Antarctic pieces, a march, a waltz and I've forgotten the type of the other, with words written by the Pravda correspondent. One was "White Iceberg" the other was "Antarctica" and I've forgotten the title of the third. But these were very much played, of course there were lots of rehearsals, and these were sung and played at all the big ~~gathering~~ entertainments in the mess hall. He told an interesting story that illustrates again the Russian temperament and their good sense of humor. When the Youths Festival--I think it was the Sixth International Youths Festival which was held in Moscow in July, 1957, they sent a wire to the Antarctic asking them if they would be good enough to record a brief musical program which might be played some ~~in~~ time during the Youths Festival. This excited them quite a bit so they had several rehearsals. Finally came the time to do a recording on tape. So they did this and the radio people took it over and on one of their contacts with Moscow they sent this tape through. Apparently the transmission was very ~~poor~~ poor, in fact Moscow sent back a message saying that they could neither understand the ~~music~~ music nor the words, and apparently suggested that some ~~of~~ other arrangements be used in making the recording. They tried it again and still had very little success.

This reminded Oscar of the story which is attributed to Krilov, called "Quartet." It seemed that several animals, a monkey, a donkey, an elephant and a tiger had found some musical instruments in the forest, so they sat down to try to play. They scraped away and blew for a while but it sounded pretty bad, so the monkey, being the smallest of the group, said, "Well, look, the trouble is we're not sitting down right. Let's move around a bit and you sit over there and you sit over there." So they did this and tried it again but it was still pretty bad. So after about three or four tries in the seating arrangement a little bird that was watching this performance looked down and said, "Say, down there, it doesn't matter how you sit, you're still not musicians." Oscar's view was that Moscow felt that no matter how the ~~little~~ little orchestra sat down they still wouldn't come out with anything.

Finally they did get a recording which was acceptable and it was broadcast during the Musical Festival and in fact we heard it coming back over Moscow Radio to Antarctica. I thought this was quite a tribute to Oscar's orchestra which he called "The Icicle" and to his own composition. He had a tape recorder which was not the usual thing, I think there was only one other on the station, which could be used as a phonograph. I had a small RCA 45 rpm player. I have mentioned this player and the difficulties I had with it on the earlier part of the tapes.

Oscar was very keen about my recordings. I took them over one night and played some of them in his room. At first he wasn't very impressed, as a matter of fact I wasn't too keen about them except for one record and that was "My Kit Fair Lady." I liked it immediately and he was rather taken by it. When we got settled into winter Oscar asked one of the radio people to fix up our own translatsia system. He often worked in his room whereas I worked over ~~in~~ in the MET station, so he had a ~~micro-~~ microphone and a switching arrangement so that he could broadcast over our own translatsia

the phonograph output either of his own phonograph or of mine. Then he would sit in his room and announce the programs that were coming over. So I told everybody that Oscar was our disc jockey. They all soon learned this word and they used to joke a lot about it whenever he'd come over the translatain system announcing the program. It x really was quite interesting because he knew many of the performances well and could describe the musical composition.

Later as this thing became well established we often laughed about our company which in Russian was called the "shumin brozi shumin" (?) and which I translated as the "noise and clamor brothers." This always created a lot of good fun when we referred to our company.

I found the Russians so accustomed to having music that they really felt lost if there wasn't something coming over the translatain and they often badgered me about playing the little phonograph for them. I found I could work better without the music but whenever they insisted I always would go back to the room and set up a program, maybe ten or twelve records which would carry through for an hour and a half. Many of the records they came to like very much but on the whole they were notik keen about jazz, that is the real orchestral jazz for which we are so famous. Some of them they did like—"St. Louis Blues" I think they liked; some of Glenn Miller's recordings and so on. But most of them did not like Benny Goodman or Dixieland or Tommy Dorsey even.

I talked at some length with Oscar about this because he was very keen on music and tried to explain the way jazz developed and something about the character of modern jazz, as little as I knew. He immediately caught on and became a keen fan. He thought the Benny Goodman Quartet was extremely good.

I also had "High Society", the recording from the film of the same name with Bing Crosby, Grace Kelly, Frank Sinatra and Louis Armstrong. Well, they just loved Louis

everybody thought it was absolutely fabulous. I remember when the new men arrived and there were lots of parties going on quite a bit of the time, Oscar got some of the men to his room—I was over at my room but could hear the conversation that was going on and it was a lot of fun to see these Russians taking up this music and Oscar felt quite possessive about it. He was explaining all the little ~~my~~ innuendoes and even though they didn't understand any of the words they got a great bang out of ~~listening~~ listening to Louis and Bing and Frank Sinatra.

This is the difference, I think. They like modern music, that is popular music, if it's tuneful; they like sentimental things; and they were extremely fond of Latin American music. In ~~fact~~ fact I think the most popular record I had—most popular with them—was Tom Kelly singing Latin American songs. There was just no doubt, it was the one most asked for whenever we had any kind of a concert.

I should mention that I had one boogie-woogie record. Many of them would ask to hear this and some of them intimated that they liked ~~it~~ it but on the whole they didn't like the music. It was such a novelty, however, that they would often ask me to play it. It is true that when a party was on and they were feeling a bit high they would then almost invariably say, "Get out your boogie-woogie record," and away would go the roughhouse dancing. I got so that I hated to play the thing because it usually led to some pretty wild maneuvering on the "dance floor."

I think this is the termination of this side of the tape.

(end of reel)