

## A Closer Glimpse Of Russia's Ruler

By Marquis Childs

MOSCOW.—After you are settled in your seat and the Soviet airliner has gained altitude, a pretty hostess, Russian model, offers the passengers magazines. There are two, the *Soviet Union Illustrated, Monthly*, a fairly professional picture magazine, and *Culture and Life*, containing articles on a variety of subjects from choosing a career to decorating an apartment.



The note struck repeatedly and consistently throughout both magazines was, first, the happiness and well-being of the Soviet people and second, their desire for peace and their abhorrence of war. To one visiting the Soviet Union for the first time, this was the initial impression of what appears inevitably as the outstanding difference between the two worlds of East and West. It is the total and complete indoctrination of the Soviet citizen.

There is nothing new in this. It corresponds with the fundamental belief of the Communist order. But to the visitor from the West, seeing for the first time how 200 million people are enclosed within this doctrinal framework, it must seem to be an astonishing phenomenon.

For the great mass of the Russians, it would appear to be taken for granted. There are some who look longingly out and perhaps a few who stray. But in the great mass of those who work so hard, so intensely, so fiercely, the number must be very small.

THIS REPORTER on his first day in Moscow had an exchange with Nikita S. Khrushchev that was proof to him that in discussing the Russian position on the issues dividing East and West, it is wrong to use the word "propaganda." The exchange took place at one of the big embassy receptions where the members of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, ordinarily so seclusive, make themselves available to all corners in a crowded cocktail party atmosphere.

Khrushchev spoke with the half-humorous, half-stern manner characteristic of him about the truth which should be evident to everyone in the great issues of war and peace. But was there not, the reporter suggested, a truth that lay somewhere between the Russian perspective and the American perspective, and wasn't it necessary to try to find that truth?

But Khrushchev would have none of that—going around in circles. As he so often does, he had recourse to a homely Russian analogy about the "White Bullock." This is a story of an old peasant woman who was forever taking her white bullock out to graze and forever coming back to the village to report that the bullock had strayed away.

To this observer, Khrushchev seemed to believe every word that he spoke. This was not "propaganda" that he was putting out for a circle of reporters and diplomats in an embassy drawing room. For in this solid affirmation this short, thick man in a nondescript gray suit was the center, the core, of national conviction as beamed to the farthest corners of the Eurasian land mass by every means of modern communication.

THIS IS the meaning of Khrushchev and the Soviet system today, and it is breathtaking in its comprehensiveness and its pervasiveness. Whatever struggle and rivalry may lie below the surface, no one may, in the ordinary course of events, see. And it is only the outsider who may speculate about what happens behind the Kremlin walls.

But what this great, solid, seemingly impervious mass means for the future and a negotiated settlement is something else. The first tentative step—cultural exchange—has been taken and the heralds of culture and learning are flying back and forth as though the great divide did not exist.

Van Cliburn was a huge success, enchanting a people who love music and for whom the tall, dramatic young Texan represented something new and spectacular. The joyous vigor and vitality of the Moiseyev dancers have similarly captivated America. The Bolshoi Ballet has been appearing in Paris, where every seat was sold out months before, and the ballet and Russia's other prize cultural exhibits are being sent to the Brussels World's Fair in a lavish display of what this country can offer.

The Philadelphia Orchestra has just won wide acclaim here, both from audiences and from reviewers, who are often critical not only of foreign artists but their own.