

*Up 2 Antarctic*  
*X Pure 3 Gennadi*  
*TARAKANOV*

# U.S. Base in Antarctic Adopts Soviet Scientist as Its Mascot

By ALLYN BAUM

Special to The New York Times

McMURDO SOUND, Antarctica, Oct. 4 — The mascot of McMURDO is a shy, pot-bellied, avuncular Russian with twinkling blue eyes behind gold-rimmed glasses.

When Dr. Gennadi Tarakanov, an exchange scientist, arrived here from Leningrad, where he is dean of meteorology at the Institute of Hydro-meteorology and a school for meteorological and hydrological engineers, his vocabulary in English was limited to one word, heavily accented—"please."

Six months of daily joshing, American movies, rock 'n roll music, political banter, and a class he conducted in Russian for the wintering-over party at McMURDO have made him proficient in American vernacular. His favorite expression is, "Not bad."

"It has been necessary for me to talk by radio with Mirny [the Soviet Antarctic base, 1,800 miles away] just to keep my hand in my native Russian," he said. "I have already forgotten several words. I've had to go back to my dictionary to look them up."

Dr. Tarakanov had been somewhat apprehensive about his reception at this American base. However, he was soon put at ease by the commanding officer, Comdr. Robert Marvel, and taken in tow by the scientists of the United States Antarctic Research Program. He was immediately nicknamed "Gin."

"What kind of name is this for a scientist?" he declared. "What does it mean? But then everyone begins calling me Gin so, alright, I'm Gin."

Dr. Tarakanov, a veteran of

the Battle of Stalingrad, is 39 years old. Married, he has two children, Sergei, 12, and Mariya, 6.

When Dr. Tarakanov arrived here, he wore a Russian polar outfit—wool shirt and underclothes, leather jacket, trousers and felt boots lined in shearling.

He has since taken to wearing Navy issue clothing—"one doesn't like to be a white crow"—although while working over his charts, he often wears a tubeteika, a small skullcap that is part of the national dress of Tashkent in Uzbekistan.

Dr. Tarakanov has been working on 13 daily weather studies.

Dr. Tarakanov's hobbies have included playing the piano and photography.

The high point of his stay came on May Day, a few weeks after the Antarctic darkness had really set in. American personnel gave a party for him that was, as he described it, "a helluva smash." He was given a movie camera and a four-tiered cake, trimmed in red and inscribed in Russian.

Dr. Tarakanov has developed some opinions, too.

He dislikes Western movies—"too violent." He loves bourbon—"warms the gullet." He swoons over cheeseburgers—"they're like our cosmonaut—out of this world."

He also thinks Americans are wonderful—"a warm, warm people"—finds the Antarctic weather intriguing—"it's so unpredictable"—and would like to visit McMURDO again—"I've had a magnificent time."



The New York Times (by Allyn Baum)  
**GENIAL METEOROLOGIST: Dr. Gennadi Tarakanov, of Leningrad, is popular with Americans at McMURDO Sound.**