

University of Minnesota Morris Digital Well

University of Minnesota Morris Digital Well

Campus News Archive

Campus News, Newsletters, and Events

1-19-1976

Roland Guyotte's Trip to Russia

University Relations

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.morris.umn.edu/urel_news

MORRIS (1/19/76) -- When University of Minnesota, Morris history instructor Roland Guyotte returned home recently after a 10 day holiday sojourn in Russia, he found the temperatures here bitter by comparison to the weather he experienced in Moscow.

Guyotte attended the Russian Winter Education Festival Dec. 27 to Jan. 5, touring Moscow and Leningrad with a group of 180 U.S. educators and students. The tour was under the auspices of the Center for the Study of Socialist Education at Kent State University.

While in Russia, the group visited with a representative of the Ministry of Education, as well as with Russian college and high school students. They also toured a Russian kindergarten.

Other highlights included a tour of the Kremlin, a visit to Lenin's Tomb (with an hour wait to get inside), a New Year's Eve party Russian style, the Stanislavsky Ballet and the Moscow Circus.

In Leningrad they heard Ukranian folksingers, visited the recently restored former Summer Palace of the Czars at Pavlovsk and toured the world renowned Hermitage Museum, in addition to making sightseeing trips around the city.

Like all groups who tour the USSR, they were guided by a representative of the Soviet Intourist visitor's agency. Such guides, according to Guyotte, are uniformly well-informed and speak English well. They also conduct tours with incredible energy.

Guyotte felt that Russian students are perhaps more serious than their American counterparts. They tend to specialize in sciences and applied sciences or in languages. To get a degree in language at a Russian university, a student must demonstrate proficiency in a minimum of four languages. The university course is five years long.

Competition to enter the university is keen even though scholarships are offered to all Russians by the state. Moscow State University admits only one student for approximately every 10 applicants. It is a university of more than 40,000 students.

Russia has a 10 year educational system roughly equivalent to our elementary and secondary set up. All students are required to acquire a general "leaving school certificate." Vocational training also is available for those who choose it. Extracurricular courses are offered to the brightest students, and are pursued during students' spare time, five days a week and all day Saturday, by the Young Pioneers, a social, academic and political organization.

"Emphasis in Russian higher education, as I see it, is on the mastering of techni-

(continued)

Roland Guyotte

ques, rather than on the stimulation of originality. In Russia, education is highly practical," said Guyotte.

He added that, "I'm sure my experience in Moscow and Leningrad will be reflected in a lot of things I teach. It is already making me rethink a lot of old questions."

-UMM-

(M:13;A1:2;A2)