

had understood. 'I've been for a walk,' she said. 'Come on, they're just going to pull up the gangway.' 'I'm staying ashore.' They were silent. 'And what about your things?' 'They're in the cloakroom.' Silence again. 'But why?' he asked. 'I don't know myself.' ('When will this blasted steamer leave?' he thought.) 'Run and get your things. You'll just make it.' She shook her head. 'But why? Haven't you been enjoying yourself?' 'Yes, of course, it's been fine . . . but I want it to be fine for you too', she suddenly added, addressing him for the first time as 'ty'. 'For me?' he said, surprised but felt at once that his surprise was phoney. 'Oh, never mind, what's the point?' 'You know it yourself.' 'What do I know?' 'You know everything—don't you remember, you said so yourself.' They started to haul up the gangway. ('At long last', thought Sergey.) 'Have you any money?' he asked, for the sake of asking something. 'Yes.' 'Plenty?' 'Not much.' ('I'm putting my foot in it,' he thought, but nevertheless went on asking questions.) 'Shall I give you some?' 'No, don't. I'll have enough.' Then she laughed and said 'You're a queer character.' 'Leningrad—what's your Post Office number?' 'I don't want you to write.' She was moving away from him, quietly drifting off to one side. 'Well, good-bye', she said. 'Greetings to Odessa.' She waved her hand. He waved in reply. ('I must say something. But what? No, I ought to have stayed behind. This is all wrong.)

A wide strip of water separated them now. He suddenly thought angrily, 'You're a liar, you know you won't stay behind.' 'Good-bye, boy,' he shouted. She smiled and waved again, then turned and walked towards the quayside station. He lay in his cabin until evening and then he drank brandy in the restaurant. In the morning, the *Vernadsky* arrived at Odessa. Taxi, hotel, district committee—he was caught up in the whirl again.

## Moscow Diary

*Robert Darglish*

A fortnight ago I found a slip of paper in my letter-box inviting me to attend a meeting of House committees Nos. 17 and 18, at which a 'communication' would be made. It was not stated what the 'communication' was to be about and the whole thing seemed

unusual and slightly mysterious. We are normally informed of such gatherings by scraps of paper pinned up on the staircase door where they do not long survive the wind and weather or the attentions of playing children. In addition, the meeting was to be at Gipromez, short for State Institute for Design of Metallurgical Plants, a fifteen-storey office block just down the road, which forms the architectural hub of our district. Our district is spread around the great avenue that runs north-east out of Moscow, about midway between the Riga Station and the National Economic Achievements Exhibition. I have passed Gipromez nearly every day for years without ever having had occasion to go inside, so curiosity about its interior would have been enough to make me respond to the invitation.

Our block, like Gipromez itself, was built some twenty years ago and at that time was one of the best state housing projects of its kind. It is not so clean-cut and modern as the new high-rises going up all around us and we do have trouble with a facing tile coming loose occasionally, which has necessitated the construction of protective wooden arches over the main entrances, giving the house a rather countrified appearance. On the other hand, our ceilings are much higher than in the new flats and we pay the same fantastically low rents as their tenants, i.e. 16.5 kopeks per month per square metre of living space,\* which does not include bathroom, corridor or kitchen, or, of course, height of ceiling.

When we first came to live in the avenue there used to be a figure of a foundry worker perched over the front portal of Gipromez about ten storeys up, but he must have looked too small right up there, or else the winter weather didn't suit him, and he had to be taken down. On the whole, until a few years ago, we were not very lucky with statuary in our district. For some time a large hoarding stood round what was obviously to be a new monument outside the Underground Station. Like everyone else, I had a peep through a chink in the boards and saw an impressive group of working men of various races led by a woman carrying a dead child on her outstretched arms. The theme was obviously peace, which was quite suitable, as our street is in fact called Peace Avenue (Prospect Mira), but I think a body of opinion in the district must have thought the dead child struck a too permanently pessimistic note. The group remained boarded up for several months, while presumably controversy raged in local government circles, and one day it was removed and the square was asphalted

\*16.5 kopeks is the standard rate for the minimum of 9 sq. m. per person. If you have more than this, as many people do, you pay three times more (49.5 kopeks) for your surplus.

over. But it turned up again, so I discover later, about half a mile further along the avenue, where it has found a permanent place on a shady boulevard in front of the local boarding school.

The real monumental achievement of our district, however, is the Space Monument, a rocket resting (though it appears to soar) on a great tail of fire made of titanium sheets. The dynamic design is striking, and so is the material. A doctor friend who visited us from England recently was deeply impressed. He is an orthopædic surgeon and uses, at great cost, small pieces of titanium for making good bone deficiencies. Incidentally, he told me that the Russians are doing well in this field too, and have in fact pioneered bone transplantation on a big scale as a more practical and immediately useful operation than heart and kidney replacement. Less spectacular, of course, but even a layman like myself can appreciate that suitable bones are easier to come by than hearts in good working order, and easier to instal. In fact, it is largely a matter of *operational ingenuity, of which, our friend told us, his Soviet colleagues have plenty, and also broad-scale organisation in which the Soviet medical service excels.*

While we are on the subject, I should mention that your correspondent, with other members of the press corps, was a guest recently of Professor A. A. Vishnevsky at his new Institute of Surgery. Professor Vishnevsky started off by performing a blue-baby operation while we watched him at work on the opened and throbbing heart on a television screen in the adjoining lecture hall. Then he showed us the new system of computer diagnosis which the institute is developing. This, briefly, consists of a central computer in Moscow, programmed to diagnose a number of diseases and linked up with medical posts as far afield as Khabarovsk on the Pacific coast. The doctor 4,000 miles away with a difficult case on hand taps out the symptoms on what looks like a teletype machine and get a highly qualified answer within minutes. Of course, a lot depends on correct noting of the symptoms, but everything has been done to tabulate these as exhaustively as possible on mathematical principles. Obviously a nationwide network of this kind can provide an invaluable aid to doctors in remote and not-so-remote places.

Since this diary is obviously going to be wildly discursive, it is worth mentioning another point about the Vishnevsky Institute (incidentally named not after its present director but after A. M. Vishnevsky, his father, the Institute's founder). The point is Vishnevsky himself. Apparently not in the least tired after his operation, he showed us round the lavishly equipped clinic wards with their closed-circuit television and infra-red lighting equipment for watching patients during sleep (the infra-red makes them visible in dark-

ness) and showed us yet another electronic device developed by the Institute. This was a small electronic box which is used for activating the lower organs (intestines, bladder, etc.) of patients with injured spinal cords, a radio frequency receiver with electrodes having been implanted in the appropriate organ. The patient places the box on his abdomen himself (we saw one do it) and is then able to perform his vital functions. Though still bed-ridden, he is thus saved from a slow and painful death. Meanwhile work continues to improve methods of speeding up regeneration processes in the injured spinal cord.

When we had seen all this, the professor treated us to a splendid luncheon and kept us entertained for another hour or so with anecdote and reminiscence and answers to our questions. ('Barnard? A splendid man! His great achievement is not so much the actual heart transplant as the impetus his spectacular feats have given to the whole field of transplantation.') Vishnevsky keeps up friendships with colleagues as far away as Dr Allende in Chile ('We surgeons are the most widespread brotherhood in the world, which is one reason why we get on so well together'). A bald, muscular man, full of cheerful exuberance and a sly humour, he is utterly unlike the heart surgeon portrayed in the film *Degree of Risk* by the veteran Art Theatre actor Boris Livanov.

The lack of similarity, however, makes Vishnevsky no less impressive nor the film any less convincing. Livanov's surgeon is beset by the problem of whether or not to operate on a heart-case friend, a brilliant young mathematician played by Smoktunovsky. The choice is not made any easier by the mathematician's acerbic running commentary on the futility of the medical profession in general ('You and your gowned priesthood with your religion of humanism, your temples of machinery and equipment . . . How pretentious compared with mathematics! Just let me, a mathematician, spend a little while with pencil and paper on your holy of holies—happiness . . .') At this point the doctor is called away by a crisis in the post-operation ward, where a patient has been left without enough of the right kind of blood due to an assistant's oversight.

Do such arguments, such crises, occur at the Vishnevsky Institute? I am sure they do, as everywhere. But between the two, actually seeing the clinic in action and seeing the film, little noticed at the time of its appearance four years ago but chosen for peak hour TV showing on Doctors' Day (another aspect of all-round medical organisation), I felt I had gained an insight into the nature and workings of this outstanding service.

But to return to Gipromez. Something that might have puzzled the foreign visitor, I thought, on entering the vestibule, was the sight of steaks, pork chops and other semi-prepared food at a

counter next to the cloakroom. What was this? Some further enticement to attend the meeting? Actually, this is common practice at many of the better organised Soviet offices and factories. To save their staff, particularly the women, shopping difficulties on top of a day's work, the offices see to it that some of the basic provisions can be picked up while you are collecting your coat, so to speak.

### A Model City

On the first floor, I entered a large auditorium which, judging by the stage and grand piano, obviously serves other purposes besides the design of iron and steel works. On this occasion it was half full of local people, several of whom I recognised as neighbours. Most of them were over thirty, and old-age pensioners (always a formidable force at this kind of meeting) were much in evidence. The 'communication' turned out to be a report by the Party Secretary of the district on measures to be taken to fulfil the recent Government and Party decision to make Moscow a model city. First we were told that there were several thousand families living in our district without proper water-supply facilities. This was rather a surprise to me for in the ten years I have lived on Peace Avenue I have seen stretch after stretch of wooden cottages with their outdoor water pumps pulled down and replaced by five-, ten- and seventeen-storey modern apartment houses. But apparently there are a good many still left, and they have got to go by 1975. Then came the next point, queues. 'What kind of model city can there be with queues like we have in the shops, restaurants and cafes?' the Secretary went on. 'The only remedy is vastly increased allocations for new shops, restaurants and so on. We now have those allocations and this is another problem that has to be solved by 1975.' And so it went on—too much drinking, the need for more public conveniences. One of the old-age pensioners rose shakily to his feet with a question. 'What are you going to do about drainage? I'm eighty-four and I'm still waiting to see the streets drained properly. Our womenfolk have to step off buses straight into puddles.'

If one does not count these criticisms as positive (which I do) what was there on the positive side? The rehousing programme is to move even faster. Apart from getting rid of all condemned dwellings, the general minimum standard of living space per person is to go up from 9 sq. m. to 12 sq. m. Two new department stores on the avenue, a subway for pedestrians crossing the avenue from the underground ('That's where your conveniences will be'). Many of these statements were obviously in response to requests or complaints that had reached the local Soviet or the Party Committee from organisations or individuals, and the Secretary in fact ended his report with an appeal to everyone to be more active in coming

forward with suggestions and in speaking out against abuses that spoiled the image of the city. He did not have to wait long for a response.

As soon as question time was announced, a stocky, balding man in a dark serge suit, open-necked shirt and sandals, who at the start of the meeting had complained of the 'acoustics', stood up and said he wanted to ask a question. 'What would you do', he said, 'if someone offered you an 80-rouble suit for 120 roubles? You wouldn't buy it, would you? Well, what does Gipromez mean by building a great house across the end of the street that's going to shut all the light out of our windows? Isn't that throwing state money to the winds?' He turned to the hall, arms spread, for all the world like a Hyde Park orator.

I was not sure of the logic of his 120-rouble suit, but he had touched a point that has been causing some concern to my neighbours and indeed myself, for the street he was talking about runs right under our windows and the house in question is a 17-storey apartment block which Gipromez intends to build for its staff in that street, and for which the site has already been fenced off. I had noticed that building operations seemed to be a long time starting and this is the reason – a movement of protesters who say there is plenty of room elsewhere. Actually the economic argument implied in our champion's 120-rouble suit may be on the side of Gipromez. Remarks have been made in the press lately about buildings being too widely dispersed with consequent rising costs of underground communications. This is particularly important where every new block has to be connected up to a central steam-heating plant. Besides, if Gipromez is given another site, hundreds of its staff will once again be bussing and training to work instead of taking a five-minute walk. These were the counter-arguments advanced by the Secretary of the local Soviet, who seemed to regard the decision as already taken in favour of Gipromez. But there may be other claimants competing for the site – the Kalibr measuring instruments plant, about ten minutes walk away in the other direction, for instance, which has also graced our skyline with four or five more modest tower blocks for its workers in recent years. There are also some co-operative flats close by from which a proprietary blast of protest may come.

Incidentally, about co-operatives. Most of the housing that goes up in the USSR is state-financed and organised, but the housing programme was given a financial boost about ten years ago by the introduction of the co-operative building system. Briefly, under this system the future tenants pay for the building themselves with an initial down payment and several instalments, after which they continue to pay, although much less of course, for the servicing and

upkeep of the house. This means that if you have a few thousand roubles to spare you need not wait till your name comes up on the housing list, but can buy a two or three-room flat out of your own pocket and probably enjoy a better quality flat, as the gradings and prices of co-operative building vary.

It has been suggested that this system endangers the democratic nature of the Soviet housing programme and in general opens the road for 'class' distinction. A little while ago, however, I looked up the actual figures for co-operative and state housing, published in the *National Economy of the USSR, 1970* (Narodnoye Khozyaistvo SSSR v 1970 godu). The proportion of co-operative house-building to all house-building is three per cent. This would seem to be well within the spirit of the socialist maxim 'from each according to his ability, to each according to his work'. It is obviously no use providing incentives in the form of money, if that money cannot buy real advantages; hence the co-operative scheme, which is also a much-needed means of soaking up accumulated savings. On the other hand, the scale of these advantages is kept well within limits by the massive state housing programme, vastly outweighing the co-operative schemes whose resources are in any case controlled by the state, so that the great majority of people still feel it is simply not worthwhile rushing into the expense and responsibilities of a co-operative flat.

### **Soviet Yogis**

One thing I sometimes feel our district (perhaps 'borough' would be a better term) lacks is a town hall. There are so many things going on, but one can quite easily miss them for want of a local information centre. Quite by chance, for instance, I learned from a neighbour of mine that yoga classes are being held in our district, in the gymnasium of another local factory. Yoga exercises have been catching on here lately in a way that Arthur Koestler certainly never foresaw. I think it began with the numerous Soviet specialists who have been to India on various projects and taken an interest in the local culture. A Soviet friend of mine for instance, while interpreting at the Bhilai project, acquired his own guru. The general intertraffic and good relations with India have also had their effect. (A special issue of *Soviet Literature*, No. 3, 1972, reveals some interesting attitudes.) A couple of years ago an article appeared in the newspaper *Trud* in which a Soviet traveller found that the Yogis were the most healthy, high-spirited and optimistic people he had met in India, and recently *Literaturnaya Gazeta* ran a whole page of comment on the merits of yoga breathing and exercises by prominent medical experts who had actually been testing them under laboratory conditions. The consensus was very

much in favour, there being only one dissenting voice, that of a doctor who said, rather naively, I thought, that modern man was subject to too much stress already without non-essential concentration.

But the biggest impression on the general public was created by the documentary film made in Kiev and called *The Indian Yogis – who are they?* This film began with a significant warning that Yoga teaching emphasises the need for moral goodness as a prerequisite for perfection of the bodily powers. It then showed a number of circus-type tricks (lying on nails, etc.) filmed in India. These, said the commentator, were to be avoided as second-rate sensationalism for commercial purposes. The film then introduced a number of Indian masters of the art who had sensors attached to their bodies and did such things as remaining for long periods in sealed chambers (slowing the heart beat) while scientists observed their condition in the laboratory. One of their pupils, the Soviet yogi, Nikolai Zubkov, was also shown demonstrating before students of Moscow University. These shots were interspersed with scenes taken at yoga classes in Delhi, the Himalayas and the Ukraine, and also some interesting comparisons of the effects obtained by Yoga with those of autosuggestion in particularly susceptible subjects (rigid body suspended between two chairs etc.). The conclusion of the film was that the art of Yoga in combination with Soviet science could be of great benefit to health.

## New Departures in Soviet Ballet

*Natalia Roslavleva*

It is now a little over 15 years since the Bolshoi Ballet opened their first memorable foreign tour at the Royal Opera House with *Romeo and Juliet* on October 3, 1956. The merits and professional qualities of both its dancers and productions were discussed for months afterwards in all the ballet magazines and British choreographers, particularly the young ones, were influenced by the spaciousness, musicality and expressiveness of the Bolshoi style.

On that first foreign visit, the company brought the two great dramatic ballets created in the 1930's, *Romeo and Juliet* (Prokofiev-Lavrovsky) and *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai* (Asafiev-Zakharov). In addition Lavrovsky's production of *Giselle* of the same period