

by Keith Wells

If memory serves me, it was last summer when North Americans were first exposed to Russian television news. Every night for about a week, the Public Broadcasting Service in the United States rebroadcast Vremia, the Soviet Union's nightly news-

It was fascinating viewing. A chance to see, first hand, what the state run "TASS for television" service was feeding its 250 million viewers.

If you missed the broadcasts, and are interested in seeing Soviet television, you're not completely out of luck.

In the fall of 1987 the University of Alberta installed a \$30,000 satellite tracking system, capable of intercepting live Russian television signals — 24 hours a day. You may have seen the dish, on the

north end roof of the Old Arts Building.

Recently I dropped by the Department of Slavic Languages and spoke with Gust Olson: he's the man who monitors the foreign TV signals.

"We're starting, here in the University community, to allow students who are interested in the Soviet Union the opportunity to come watch the programs.

"What we've done is to have this viewing room (Arts 4-37 C) open from 11:00 am -12:00 pm daily for anyone who wants to come and watch," said Olson.

Vremia, the Soviet national news pro-

gram, is on every evening at 9:00 pm. With the ten hour time difference between Edmonton and the Western Soviet Union, Vremia is conveniently on, here in Edmonton — live at 11:00 am daily.

What kind of programs are on the channel during a typical broadcast day? Well, a couple of Friday's back the evening went something like this...

- 5:30 pm THE EUROPEAN FIGURE SKATING CHAMPIONSHIPS
- MOVIE
- VREMIA (news)
- PANEL DISCUSSION (on the upcoming political elections)
- VZGLIAD (a 60 minute type news magazine)
- INTERNATIONAL TELE-MESSEN-GER (world TV views, this specific program dealing with AIDS)
- NEWS (15 minutes)
- OPERETTA
- 3:30 am BEARS IN THE CIRCUS

Some interesting viewing, but do they have any commercials?

"They do have some, maybe three times an evening, in five minute blocks. I recall seeing one recently for a private cooperative in Moscow. Essentially it was just an announcer reading off a piece of paper; there was no visual element to it at all. However the commercials that the state enterprises show are often visually very entertaining."

The Department of Slavic Languages would like to let other faculties have greater access to the programming, however. "At the present time we don't have a group of translators, or haven't developed one at any rate, that would be able to go with a program to a Political Science course, let's say, that was dealing with the Soviet Union." said Olson.

Once again, if you're interested in having a look at Soviet news, you have the opportunity. Bring your lunch to Room 37-C, fourth floor of the Old Arts Building, between eleven and noon.

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