

impressions were possibly a little more valuable than they otherwise would have been because of the fact that we were on an official visit and therefore were able to see and talk with the leaders of the Soviet State. That was a privilege indeed, in the sense that it made it a little easier to understand the sources of Soviet power and the nature of that power. The result was not always reassuring but it was valuable.

My abiding impression, and I have said this already since my return from Russia, was one of great power on the part of the state, of massive power, massive strength, indeed of great collective wealth and of inflexible purpose. It is a socialist society, of course, and because of that it starts from the collective and works to the individual. That was dramatized for me when I visited Stalingrad -- a city which had suffered so terribly in the war and the bravery of whose people and of the soldiers who defended it has become legendary. This city has shown almost as much courage in reconstruction as it did in war, but the reconstruction began with collective enterprises - schools - theatres - parks - offices, and all that kind of thing, even at a time when the people were living in deplorable conditions. Only afterwards did they move from the collective to the individual and begun to take care of his problems such as housing. In our society, based on the individual, and rightly so, we start from the individual and work to the collective. I think we might gain a little from their approach, though we should not go too far, by emphasizing more in our society its collective side, though not of course at the expense of the individual.

Then I also got the impression, as every visitor does, the impression of total control on the part of the government; the omnipotence and omnipresence of the state; and may we be saved from that in this country! That is their system. Complete subordination of the individual, it is stifling and crushing to us but it does not seem to be so stifling or crushing to them.

Also we should not forget that the deprivations which the individuals there suffer, if "suffer" is the right word, would seem very difficult for us who are accustomed to a high standard of material living and where the luxuries of today become the necessity of tomorrow. They would be deprivations to us but they are not to the Russian because he has no other standard of comparison than that which he experienced in the past. By that basis of comparison his condition is improving.

He also has no other standard of political comparison than the conditions which existed in the past. Therefore, it is not a comparison with our freedom, so he may not feel the political deprivations which would mean so much to us in this free country.

One certainly does not get the impression after visiting Russia that they are a beaten, servile, lifeless people. One does not even get the impression that they miss their freedom as we would miss it. Indeed they have a kind of freedom; if you obey the dictates of the state you are free to do everything you wish to do within those limits. It is not our freedom but it is a kind of freedom.