

From Russia with Glasnost Part II

By MELYNDA JARRATT

This is the second half of a two part series on student life in the Soviet Union. Last week's article discussed the views of Maxim Sotnikov, president of the Moscow University's Young Communist League on topics ranging from student demonstrations to their social work in Afghanistan.

This week, Sotnikov discusses Soviet opinion on issues ranging from student actions in South Korea to his hopes for world peace.

Sotnikov says that Glasnost has affected students and their lives in the USSR. The new policy of "openness" has directly given them more influence in the decision making process. Students are asked for their opinions more often and students themselves are being encouraged to be active in the Komsomol organization. He says, "New political clubs and student's disco and video clubs have sprung up. In one of these political clubs, students simulated a meeting between Shevardnadze and Shultz, which resulted in a failure to reach an agreement. Fortunately," he adds, "they were wrong."

Soviet students are well aware of what is going on in the world of politics and international relations, says Sotnikov. "We carefully follow what is going on in South Korea, and we feel concern for the students. Their actions are not only for their rights, but for freedom and democracy as a whole." In regards to Afghanistan, Sotnikov says, "We also want to see peace in that country. We have 78 students in our university who have served with the limited contingent of Soviet troops in Afghanistan. Recently, they have set up a club called "Pioneer", whose aim is to help (the country) build a peaceful life."

Asked if he had a "message" for Canadian Students, Maxim Sotnikov had this to say about Canada, hockey and peace: "The Canada Cup Tournament was held in September. I watched almost all the games, because for 10 years I had been Captain of the University's hockey team. Although we lost, it was a wonderful experience. I want to have more such experiences, I want us to meet more often, to exchange delegations and to get to know each other's views on various issues, from the problems of peace to that of self-



A summer photo of Moscow University, provided to *The Brunswickan* by the Press Secretary for the USSR Embassy in Ottawa, Victor Bogdanov.

government in students' hostels and canteens. This is essential for trust and lasting peace. In short, if I were to make an appeal to the students of Canada, my message would be that of peace and mutual understanding."

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