

Large black limousines, similar in style to a 1940 Packard, provided transportation from the airport to the city. These so-called "Kremlin cars" were so marked that they obtained the right-of-way at all crossings. The black-topped highway to Moscow passed through wooded country-side and as the cavalcade sped along one noticed a number of Russian farm folk going about their tasks with no apparent interest in the nearby traffic.

On entering the Russian capital, one noticed first the new university - a high, striking structure - and many large apartment buildings being constructed nearby. (A good deal of the labour on these buildings was apparently being done by women). The streets were clean and wide - some would hold 12 lanes of traffic - and the noticeable absence of advertising signs permitted an excellent view of the sights and gave the city a neat orderly appearance. At one point, a group of large ornate buildings, with archways, fountains and star-topped towers attracted our attention and our interpreter explained that these were part of the Kremlin itself.

It was about 6 p.m., Moscow time, and the streets presented a picture familiar in any city at that hour of the evening - heavy traffic and throngs of people obviously hurrying homeward.

The "Mansion House" had been provided for the accommodation of Mr. Pearson and his party. It was a big brick house with four large bedrooms downstairs, as well as a dining room, library and billiard-cum-theatre-projection room, as well as servants' quarters. The bedrooms provided an indication of Russian hospitality - comfortable beds with spring mattresses, double pillows about 30 inches square, large ornate desks complete with all writing materials, tables laden with overflowing fruit bowls, fruit juices, candies, tonic waters, Cognac and Vodka. A large hardwood wardrobe contained colourful dressing gowns, reminiscent of a Chinese mandarin's attire.

Mr. Moskua of the Soviet Protocol Division introduced me to the three members of the Security Guard who were to be attached to the Mansion House, Messrs. Bulionov, Ilchenko and Lopuhov. Three cars and drivers were to be at our disposal at all times and we were assured that they wished to make our stay as comfortable as possible. The Security Guard and myself were billeted upstairs and Mr. and Mrs. Pearson and the Minister's personal staff occupied the downstairs rooms. The RCAF, press and remainder of the party were lodged in the National and Soviet-skaya Hotels.

That evening all members of the party attended the Bolshoi Theatre to see the Ballerina Plesetskaya in "Don Quixote", with the Minister and Mrs. Pearson guests of Mr. Molotov. The Bolshoi Theatre is a huge place with six gilded galleries and wing boxes overhanging the main floor. The stage is about 80 feet high and about the same depth. The ballet was a wonderful performance, the dancing awe-inspiring, while the stage settings were elaborate and handled with dispatch and efficiency. During the intermission, my companions explained that it was customary for the Russians to parade around the large lobby. We went out to have a look, only to find that the RCMP uniform attracted so much attention that I thought wistfully about a remote prairie detachment.

Mr. Pearson and staff were engaged in talks and luncheon at the Spiridonovka Palace with Mr. Molotov all the next morning, but in the afternoon the Canadian party was taken on a tour of the Kremlin with its many huge buildings, assembly halls, churches and Tsar or State treasures. A number of the halls and churches were of 15th to 18th Century architecture. Some groups of tourists - including parties of school children - were also viewing the Kremlin and these people mixed freely with our delegation and made use of our guide.

The Canadian Ambassador held a reception for Mr. Molotov, Mr. Kaganovich, Mr. Malenkov and other Russian notables in the evening and later I accompanied the Minister to the Puppet Theatre production of the "Devil's Mill" - truly a work of art which lasted for about three hours. Most of the entertainment in Russia, such as ballets, operas and puppet shows, appear to be on old familiar themes or stories, but these lose nothing by repetition and are obviously enjoyed with pride and enthusiasm.

A visit to the Permanent Agricultural Fair and State Farm was on order the following day and the Minister kindly consented to let me accompany the party in civilian clothes. The Fair is a tremendous show covering some 600 acres - with separate pavilions for each of the 16 Soviet Republics - and has its own bus service. Wide promenades are bordered by huge fountains and waterworks and the entrance is marked by a great stone archway. The grain on display was similar to our Canadian varieties but the straw more hairy. Farm implements, trucks and automobiles were on the practical rather than showy side, with one car, similar in style to a 1940 Ford, about four inches higher than the average and equipped with "lug" tires. This car was designed for the North, but my immediate thoughts were of how useful it would be on some of the Prairie roads I have patrolled.