



Local agents seek victims

By STEVE REIS
Battalion Staff Writer

The plague of seniors and graduate students at most colleges, including Texas A&M University, is the insurance salesman.

The insurance salesman injects himself into the student's life not long before graduation. He is persistent, friendly and overflowing with anecdotes and praise for the Aggie football team.

The salesman is usually plying his wares to members of his own alma mater.

He can show the student the benefits available to him in case he drops dead in his tracks or is executed by his peers.

He explains that by buying his company's product, the student will one day be making money by paying his company's premiums.

The salesman demonstrates the advantage of losing both arms instead of just one.

And this vendor of double indemnities illustrates how the student can pay for his insurance by merely mortgaging his soul rather than selling it. The buyer puts off paying until he has begun to make his way in the wild and wicked world.

These lengthy explanations usually come about after a surprise phone call early in the morning or late in the evening.

The caller proceeds by dropping familiar names and places. After a proper amount of introduction, the peddler of personal protection sets up an appropriate appointment.

Often the Aggie-turned-sales-agent may pick up his prospective client in his car, thereby erasing any chance for escape once they have reached his policy place. Here, the agent does his level best to

make the nervous and cynical student more at ease. After a comforting conversation, the insurance agent begins his infamously believable sales talk.

It is here that the true art of salesmanship becomes painfully obvious to the customer.

With a friendly smile and truthful glint in his eye, the dealer in life policies continues his speech about the retirement benefits, the disability benefits, the death benefits and the beneficiary benefits.

Using tables and graphs and statistics by the score, he shows his prospect the ways that his company is just like other companies, only different.

Confusion, slight panic and a tight feeling under the collar is not uncommon for the listener.

This is soon over. But the ordeal is not complete. The student must now make his decision. And it is not always easy to say no.

The policies are seemingly good and the demonstration convincing, the salesman trustworthy and the company, dependable.

It is here that the student must weigh for himself the value of the policy and his need for it.

But regardless of one lone individual's decision, the work of the agent is never done.

He must continue pounding sidewalks and reading mailing lists. He must plod through the thousands of possible prospects in hopes of finding that perfect percentage.

But chances are, that regardless of the difficulties he may encounter trying to find you — he will.

Soviets visit A&M during stay in U.S.

By VICKIE D. ASHWILL
Battalion Staff Writer

They met with Americans on earth this time, not high above in the darkness of space.

They came to exchange knowledge, culture, and friendship and they left, leaving behind an experience never to be forgotten by those who met them.

They were the six members of the U.S.S.R. delegation to the First American-Soviet Technology Youth Conference. Sponsored by the Federation of Americans Supporting Science and Technology (FASST) and the Student Council of the U.S.S.R., the delegates spent Saturday and Sunday of their ten-day trek across the U.S. at Texas A&M University.

Valentin Kuznetsov, vice president of the U.S.S.R. Student Council and head of the delegation, said Sunday that our nations are learning to cooperate in space and now must do so on earth. He added that such a task would be impossible to accomplish as long as people continued to accept the traditional lack of communication between countries.

All six of the delegates had little trouble communicating with students here. When there was a language barrier Vladimir Kulytgin, conference translator, or Roger Guisinger, FAAST conference coordinator and director of energy youth council, helped out.

The other delegation members were Sergei Baybakov, from the U.S.S.R. Oil and Gas Institute; Sergei Markin, Moscow Medical University; Victor Shkalikov, U.S.S.R. Power Institute; and Alexander Karpov, U.S.S.R. Natural Resources Institute. All ranged in age from 22 to 32 and most are students.

"We hope that the most important impact of our visit would be to help overcome the psychological feeling of foreigner to foreigner," Baybakov said at their last meeting with A&M students Sunday afternoon.

Baybakov said that contacts between the people of the two countries must begin at the government level out of necessity, and that it was very pleasant and inspiring that contacts between the U.S.S.R. and the U.S. were developing well on higher levels.

"But I consider that two kinds of contacts exist," he continued. "Those contacts made on a higher level and those through the immediate level of person to person contact as we are now doing. . . I am personally, with all my heart, for such contacts."

And these were the contacts that were made. On a person to person level they talked with students and professors during



Russians Visit

Sergei Baybakov was one of six delegates from the U.S.S.R. attending the First American-Soviet Technology Youth Conference.

tours of different parts of campus — Zachry Engineering Center, the wind tunnel, DeWare Field House, Kyle Field and the Memorial Student Center.

They lunched at Sbisla, went to a Texas Barbecue and rodeo, and local night club.

Kuznetsov said they were surrounded by very sympathetic and nice people. "I am not afraid to say . . . that this meeting may become a historical mark toward the future."

Education was a major area of question and discussion during their stay on campus. Kuznetsov explained education in the U.S.S.R. during their last meeting.

"Our country is a country of the young," Kuznetsov said. "More than half of the people are under 30 years of age. Our coun-

try is in an era of scientific technological revolution. . . large masses of workers are participating.

"We consider it absolutely necessary for young people to be in command of scientific technologies for humanistic purposes. . . it is the basic requirement for every youth. . . to receive serious education in these fields," Kuznetsov said.

Out of 250 million people in the U.S.S.R., 80 million are students. Each year, approximately three million students graduate from high school after ten years of required education. From there they go to various institutes (similar to colleges in the U.S.), technical schools or begin work.

Kuznetsov said that every man has the opportunity to receive an education for all forms of education are free of choice. Entr-

ance into institutes of higher learning is very competitive in the U.S.S.R., for each year there are only so many vacancies.

Kuznetsov added that students graduating from these institutes were aided in finding jobs by the government, but that the student could find a job on his own if he wished.

Entrance requirements to these institutes are similar to U.S. colleges which is basically done by academic record.

"If you are not a lazy bone," Kuznetsov said, "and you work hard, you have every opportunity to enter institutes. Of what we saw of the facilities of the learning processes here, we would be able to say that our (facilities) roughly correspond to yours."

The main goal of the Soviet educational system, Kuznetsov said, is to aid in the future of their people, stimulate their creativity and help him to have an active place in society. He added that it wasn't easy to accomplish this task for there are problems with facilities and being able to arouse the interest of teachers.

Shkalikov, a 28 year-old who should be finished with school in about two years, said that students were given an introductory course in the field they chose to go into, which went into great detail. This way, the student is sure that he has made the right decision for his future.

Conservation of energy and the environment were discussed during the last session here.

Karpov said there was no direct impact on the U.S.S.R. because of energy problems in other parts of the world.

"One reason is because we have vast areas of natural resources, that is, mineral resources, that are only in the beginning of their development," he said.

Baybakov explained that their main problem was transporting the natural resources, but while natural gas is presently largest in supply, coal may soon be in the number one position because of developments in these vast regions.

As far as the environment is concerned, the delegates said it has been a matter of concern for several years and now have enacted several laws for preservation of the environment.

Kuznetsov believes that the whole area of Siberia is the generator of fresh air for the world.

"Americans are using more air than they are producing," he continued in a jovial manner. "If we did not preserve the great forests of Siberia, we would practically be strangling the Americans!"

The Soviet delegation will complete their ten day conference attending an Energy Symposium sponsored by the White House in Knoxville, Tennessee, and at the National Aerospace Youth Forum sponsored by FAAST in Washington, D.C. Wednesday through Friday.

Green Acres Nursery

Plants from cans and dirt



By JUDY BAGGETT
Contributor
Photos by JACK HOLM

Beer cans and home brewed dirt add up to 15-cent plants at Green Acres Nursery. It's a little hard to find but most customers seem to think those inexpensive plants make the search worthwhile.

Gertrude Crenshaw, 67, began her business three years ago with only five plants. Now she has three overflowing greenhouses. More than a green thumb is needed to grow plants, she explained. It takes work—like grating cow manure and leaf mold to add texture to the potting soil.

The day begins at 6:30 for the Crenshaws. Watering has to be done early, and it takes most of the morning.

"It says in the book to water when the temperature is rising," Crenshaw said.

A wheelbarrow sits near the house. Belying her fragile appearance, Crenshaw uses the wheelbarrow to move boxes of cans, cow manure or dirt.

"If you stop working," Crenshaw said, "you sit there feeling sorry for yourself."

Potting plants in cans cuts down on expenses. Mrs. Crenshaw has sold 15-cent plants since she opened and doesn't plan to hike prices. Most people like plants just as well in cans as in anything else, she said. Customers and neighbors bring cans of all kinds to her. She and her husband, W. E. Crenshaw, cut off the tops with knives. Trimming with scissors does away with the sharp edges.

"All you have to do is soak the plants for one minute in water, tap on the bottom, and they'll come right out of the can," Crenshaw said. "Won't even mess up the roots."

Though Mr. Crenshaw helps out by cooking soil or cutting cans, he isn't always enthusiastic. The nursery keeps him from fishing as much as he would like to. The Crenshaws cook dirt in a big pot over an open fire. That kills the bacteria in the soil, and by making the potting soil at home, cuts the cost.

The Crenshaws don't advertise, but instead rely strictly on word of mouth.

"If you like my plants, tell your friends about 'em," she said. "I turn advertising money back to my customers."

Mrs. Crenshaw greets her customers as they drive up. Chatting and laughing, she walks them to the greenhouse and lets them browse leisurely.

"Why rush time?" she asked. "I'm having a good time with my customers. People come and stay for hours sometime."

"I love plants," she said. "They're my life." That may have a double meaning. Most of the money earned from the nursery goes toward medicine for her heart.



Mrs. Crenshaw's canned plants. (above) The sign marking the greenhouse driveway. (top right) Mr. Crenshaw reminiscing on the old days. (right) A&M student Suzanne DeYoung examines a hanging basket. (far left) Mrs. Crenshaw showing her wares.

