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Subject: Interview with Dr. Paul S. Galtsoff

The following is a summary of the information obtained from Dr. Paul S. Galtsoff, head of the Shellfishery Investigation Section, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior. Dr. Galtsoff is a White Russian who was aboard the USS Panamint as a non-participating observer at Operation Cross-roads, and because he speaks fluent Russian he had a great amount of contact with the Soviet observers aboard the ship.

Dr. Galtsoff had very little contact with Dr. Mikhail Mescheryakov who refused almost entirely to talk with him. He does not believe, however, that Mescheryakov is an NKVD (Secret Police) agent assigned specifically to watch Dr. Alexandrov, the other Soviet delegate, but he does believe that Mescherakov is a member of the NKVD. He explains that this is possible because the NKVD, unlike security forces in this country, actually participates in all branches of society in Russia and in this way there are NKVD agents on the staff of every laboratory doing somewhat productive work. He feels that these individuals are usually inferior, however, and their degrees and advancements are won by their association and not through merit. Galtsoff believes Mescheryakov may actually be a physicist, but he does not believe him to be a good one, since he answered even elementary questions on nuclear physics with vague and "childish" statements. He compared this with Dr. Soltan, the Polish physicist, whose explanations were clear and concise.

Mescheryakov spoke violently against the United States with many references to "degenerate democracy", and at a cocktail party in Honolulu he became so violent in his discussion with the Russian wife of an American Navy officer that she became hysterical. Galtsoff said Mescheryakov expressed amazement to see Japanese in Honolulu well treated and he asked why the people treated them kindly. When Galtsoff replied that they had proved their loyalty, etc., Mescheryakov said this was an example of the weakness of our government. In a similar situation in the Crimea where the large Tartar population showed an inclination towards the Germans and Turkey during the war, he said they had acted in a very efficient manner: approximately 500,000 of these people, comprising the entire Tartar population, was forcibly removed with children and wives and sent to the mines in Siberia. The Black Sea region is now completely free from Tartars. He also said that during the war there had been considerable trouble with the Autonomous Republic of Kalmanyk, east of the Caspian Sea, whose population is half Mongolian. Two and a half million of these people were sent to Siberia and the name of the Republic was stricken from the map. Galtsoff said Mescheryakov feels this is a very efficient way to handle the problem and that we are very foolish in not dealing with the Japanese population of the Hawaiian Islands in the same way. Galtsoff believes he fought during the early part of the war and I also noted that he has scars on his left ankle and left arm.

Galtsoff associated much more with Dr. S. P. Alexandrov and he said that very early in the trip Alexandrov tried to talk him into returning to Russia. His argument was that it is a land of great opportunity, particularly for scientists,

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and that the communists had great respect for the Czarists who had fought against them for their principles and that they were forgiven. However he said those traitors such as Viktor Kravchenko, former member of the Soviet Purchasing Commission, and Dr. George Gamow, physicist, who had been allowed to leave Russia and had failed to return would never be forgiven.

Mr. Alexandrov holds a very important position in Russia, being in charge of all procurement of uranium ore, although his responsibility ends with the delivery of ore to the concentrating plants. He reports frequently to the Politbureau, and when Galtsoff asked him to what Commissars he reported he mentioned Baria first of all, former head of the NKVD, Molotov, and others. This led Galtsoff to believe that Alexandrov is a member of the NKVD which he believes is supervising the work on the atomic bomb. Galtsoff says the NKVD actually constructs and operates plants with forced labor. (Note: this is not entirely true. Viktor Kravchenko very clearly stated to me yesterday that the NKVD does not in any case operate a plant, but it constructs plants for other Commissariats and supplies slave labor for the plants).

The Soviet observers were extremely sensitive, and Galtsoff said that many times Alexandrov asked him if they were behaving satisfactorily, and if their manners made them conspicuous, and he said they didn't seem to know how to sit or stand or dress. They were greatly irritated by the regular appearance of news on the front page of the Panamint Press which they considered to be against Russia. They did not say that the news shouldn't be printed, but that it was an insult to print it in the front page when it was known they were abroad.

One evening after the second atomic bomb test Alexandrov sought out Galtsoff and delivered a monologue of threat and vituperation which Galtsoff said kept him awake many nights. He was so impressed that he immediately noted the conversation in his diary and he quoted from it as follows:

"Friday, July 26th, Bikini Atoll. Time: Midnight. In the afternoon we had a meeting of the observers to discuss our impressions of the second test - Mr. Alexandrov was not present so I asked him why he hadn't attended the meeting. He said the only thing he could think about was Mr. Bullit's book or the news item which had been published about it in the Panamint Press, and that he had received a slap in the face when his letter of protest to Captain Ammon was not printed. In his opinion the whole atomic bomb test was a show to frighten the Soviets ... there was no other purpose of the undertaking. The first test was a flop and because of that it forced the U.S. to compromise on the internationalization of Trieste, which was only a face-saving arrangement by the U.S., since an internationalized Trieste will be run by the Yugoslavs according to orders from the Soviets. The second test was an equally bad mistake since only a few ships were sunk, and this failure to frighten the Soviets would cost the U.S. the peace treaty in Europe and Japan. The USSR is not afraid of America. America is vulnerable in many places and her cities like Buffalo, Pittsburgh, and Denver may be easily bombed. The Soviets have wonderful planes and a few other things which will be a surprise to the Americans. To my remark that the people who produced the A-bomb, did the research, and accomplished the industrial organization necessary are not so dumb and they deliberately planned the tests so as to get data without destroying too many ships, Alexandrov failed to reply. He remarked instead that American policy is changed since Mr. Roosevelt's death. Stalin

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has requested only six billion dollars and was refused while France and England have received the loans they asked for.

He went on to say that American espionage in Europe is very clumsy and childlike while that of the Soviets is refined and scientific. He said America has stolen about 80% of the uranium supply by acquiring uranium ores in the Belgian Congo, by getting away with large quantities of U-235 from Germany, and by taking away 100 grams (Galtsoff thought he might have said milligrams) of radium from Germany. He accused us of trying to snatch one German physicist who worked on the atomic bomb problem from the Soviet zone of Germany. Alexandrov added that four persons, one American officer and three men, were arrested in the Soviet zone as spies and the United States should not make an open complaint since it is all part of the game being played in Germany and he who loses should not talk about these things. Of course they will be shot, he said, with an announcement in the paper that they have confessed, unless, he added, we make a deal with the Americans to exchange them for Soviet spies caught in the American zone. (Note: it is interesting in this connection to note that Galtsoff believed Alexandrov had been in the Soviet zone of Germany just before coming to the United States)

He then accused the U.S. of trying to establish a Nazi regime in China and of interfering with legitimate Soviet interests there. He said the Soviet Union has legitimate rights to the control of the Mediterranean and must have a free passageway to the Atlantic. This he justified by the great size of the country, its great population, and the importance of Russia to the benefit of the world. In forty or fifty years Alexandrov thought the Soviet people would be so far beyond the Americans with their 'degenerate democracy' that the slogan of the Soviets at present is 'great and indivisible Russia.' He says the Soviets have accomplished now what the anti-Bolshevik forces only talked about.

The Soviets would never agree to the Baruch proposal for atomic energy control because this plan would leave the Americans in full possession of all industrial plants, materials, and experience in the manufacture of atomic bombs while the Soviets and all other countries would be deprived of it. Also the Soviets never would agree to the proposition to denature the plutonium since under that scheme pure plutonium would be in the possession of the United States only. (!) Mr. Alexandrov became very irritated when I mentioned that the problem of atomic energy control should be discussed from both sides and certain compromises acceptable to all parties should be reached. About the atomic bomb he said that he considered it to be a very powerful weapon, but America has demonstrated that she is not ready for atomic war.

In connection with our visits to Guam and the other islands in the Pacific Alexandrov considered that this trip was made for but a single purpose: to demonstrate American might, and he thought this in very poor taste since he considers that Guam and other bases are being fortified and maintained for the sole purpose of military action against Soviet Russia. I mentioned the lecture on the battle of Guam which was given by a former battalion commander of the Marines, and I said that these are our best fighting troops with a glorious tradition. He said: 'Send these, your good fighters, to Northern Korea and we will lick them and crush them to powder...I wish you would send them so we could show you!'"

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Dr. Galtsoff stated that while he is not a geologist or a mining engineer he got the impression that Alexandrov is rather mediocre in his field. He speaks with a rather heavy accent somewhat like a peasant and Galtsoff says his manner of speaking and his choice of words is not that of a scholar. He is about what one would expect a high-grade foreman to be according to Galtsoff. Alexandrov was extremely critical of many American customs and felt that LIFE magazine for example is an indication of our degenerate sexual exhibitionism. In the same vein he was shocked by the hula dancers in Honolulu and was very reluctant to participate in a party given by the observers in Honolulu on the return trip.

Galtsoff is concerned over the aggressive and critical attitude of Alexandrov and noted the fact that while he speaks rather good English and had rather lengthy conversations with a number of observers, he seems to have discussed the question of politics with only Galtsoff and a little with W.W. Rubey of the U.S. Geological Survey. Galtsoff suggests that since they were the only employees of the government Alexandrov may have talked to them in a deliberate attempt to transmit a subtle bluff to the U.S. Government.

An interesting incident took place when the party arrived in San Francisco on the return trip. Alexandrov asked Galtsoff to translate for him a statement he wished to make for the Associated Press. He stated that Russia is much farther along in developing an atomic bomb than most people think and when they are ready for their tests they will invite foreign observers to Siberia in the same proportion as the United States had done. (The Russians were piqued because they had no more representatives than small countries). Galtsoff was rather surprised at the explicitness of this statement and asked Alexandrov if he was sure that was what he wanted to say. He repeated it and Galtsoff translated it, then asked Alexandrov (who speaks fair English) if he had translated it accurately, and he agreed. The following day, however, Alexandrov denied the statement and said that he had not been correctly translated, that he had said if atomic bomb tests were held in Siberia, etc. Galtsoff said this was absolutely not true and even the Associated Press reporter called him up to say that he knew Alexandrov had changed his story. From that time on Alexandrov was shadowed by a girl from the Soviet consul in San Francisco who joined the group there and travelled with them to New York. She refused to give her name and Alexandrov refused to introduce her.

In connection with Poland, Dr. Galtsoff said that he spoke several times with the Polish observers who intensely disliked the Russians and were afraid of them. They said their government forced them to cooperate with the Russians and they were actually afraid not to spend a lot of time with them. Soltan was reading a copy of Kravchenko's book "I Chose Freedom" and when Galtsoff asked to borrow it he begged him not to let the Russians know he had the book. Galtsoff noticed that in their conversations which he overheard the Poles and the Russians never relaxed from a very formal and official manner of speech.

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