



With the site of Hitler's suicide bunker in the background as a reminder of the past, two O.U. students view the somber reality of the present: East Berlin separated from freedom by the Wall.

A View from the Wall

Sooners study the Soviets in a summer seminar established by O.U. in Germany

THE small, red bus, bound for West Berlin, stopped after passing the death strip of barbed wire, land mines, trenches and watch towers which separate East Germany from the West. The thick-set Bavarian driver opened the door and a pudgy East German soldier entered to check our passports.

"*Griess Gott*," said the driver.

"*Guten Tag*," the soldier replied.

A former U.S. Army colonel sitting next to me explained that the brief exchange of greetings dramatically portrayed a significant difference between the East and the West. The driver had said, "May God greet you," the standard Bavarian greeting. But the soldier could only answer with a prosaic "Good day."

So began a long weekend for those of us attending the first University program established abroad, a six-week seminar in Germany, co-sponsored by O.U. and the Institute for the Study of the U.S.S.R., located in Munich. Thirty-one Americans (14 from O.U.) and 17 others from Europe and Africa had arrived in June to take part in the program.

The Institute provided a vastly different atmosphere for the Oklahoma students accustomed to the sprawling Norman campus and the sweltering summer heat of the Southwest. The Institute was located in a tall, narrow building, which like many German buildings looked compressed, squeezed inward by the adjacent structures which flanked the winding, cobblestone street. Although the Alps couldn't be seen from Munich, their nearness was evident from the coat-comfortable climate and the punctual rainfall from the thin, grey clouds, which meandered by each evening.

Gaul was divided into three parts, and

the six-week seminar was divided into three *parties*. Each was sponsored by the Institute and marked changing degrees in the progress of the school and the relationship of its students.

After the first two weeks, when we had become settled and established some sort of a daily routine, the Institute held its first party. We O.U. students had not really become well acquainted with the European and African students until this gathering. The party was complete with *bier*, *weiners*, *brodt* and a balalaika orchestra (a balalaika is a triangular-shaped, guitar-like musical instrument common in Russia), which played not only Russian melodies but American twist tunes.

European students were from Italy, Germany, Austria, Turkey, Spain and Belgium. They included two Roman Catholic priests, one a teacher of Soviet studies from a Vatican college and the other a Catholic magazine editor from Milan. One of the German coeds was the daughter of the West German Minister of the Interior. Another girl recently had escaped from East Germany with her family.

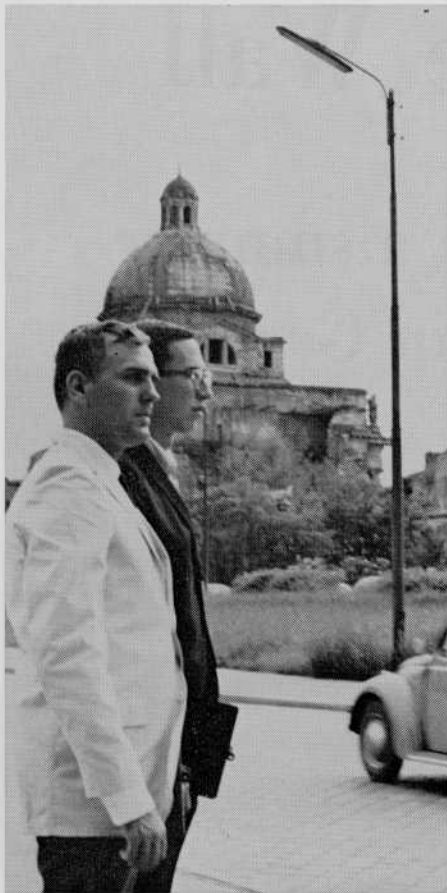
The African students were from Ghana, Togo and Guinea. Each of them, and an Austrian student, had previously studied in Moscow.

At the party the students and faculty had a chance to know each other better, and the friendships begun made the program more valuable to all of us. The Institute faculty was outstanding and well-equipped. Panas Fedenko, a Ukrainian, was in Leningrad during the 1917 Revolution. He had a first-hand acquaintance with many of the leading figures in the Bolshevik movement, but in 1920 he became dissatisfied with post-Revolution developments and emigrated to the West. (Continued)



Russian soldiers pass in front of one of Berlin's historic monuments, Brandenburg Gate.

Photos and Text
By HUGH MORGAN



Ken Studebaker (left) and Paul Gregory survey their Munich "campus." Reichstag building, unrepaired since the war, is in the background.



Oklahoma-accented German plus some confusing gestures have these two Bavarians mystified.

A VIEW FROM THE WALL

the primary purpose of the Institute always has been to conduct research

Arkady Gaev was a former correspondent for *Pravda* and had written for various Soviet magazines until he fled from Russia in the closing months of World War II. Other teachers included Nikolai Galay, editor of the monthly Institute bulletin, and Mrs. Antonina Freyburg, a private tutor of the Russian language.

Two University of Oklahoma professors, Dr. John G. Eriksen, associate professor of history and associate dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, and Dr. Robert Vlach, associate professor of modern languages and editor of the literary quarterly, *Books Abroad*, also were members of the Institute faculty. Drs. Eriksen and Vlach taught courses in the literature, government, sociology and language of the Soviet Union.

In the days following the first party, we settled down to our studies. Most of the courses required 15- to 20-page papers written in Russian. During the fourth week a Russian emigre theater group organized by a niece of the Russian writer Fedor Dostoevsky provided a pleasant combination of education and entertainment with an Ostrovsky play about life on a Russian country estate during the mid-1900's.

The next party was held in mid-July

upon the conclusion of an Institute-sponsored symposium on the literature and life in the Soviet Union which attracted scholars from throughout Europe.

The second gathering signaled the beginning of the home stretch—two weeks to go. The Americans, Europeans and Africans had a real Good Neighbor policy going, and the rapport among all was apparent. Research papers were now almost completed, and we Americans had become expert in finding ways to overcome language handicaps.

The highlight of the third two-week period was the trip to Berlin. A chartered bus, driven at an exasperatingly slow 25 miles per hour, took us to the famed city deep in East Germany. Here we collected our most vivid memories. We toured not only West Berlin, a thriving city that literally throbs with life, but also East Berlin, a city where the traffic lights in the busiest sections are disconnected because there are not enough cars to require them.

We all brought back memories. Some of us talked in Russian with Russian civilians and soldiers in East Berlin. Two girls were accompanied by West German soldiers on a tour of the Wall. Two of us stood out-



Dr. John G. Eriksen, who arranged the University's first foreign program, addresses students at the Institute. Dr. Vlach is at far right.



Our correspondent takes time from his studies to examine a beer barrel.



Sharon Davis and Sam Vinson listen as Dr. Achminow reads Pravda.

side the Russian Embassy one night and listened to the sounds of a party inside. Two others clowned around grim Communist statues of a woman carrying a shovel (she couldn't have been an American) and a man carrying an ax. One girl who loves jazz tried in vain to find a place that played her kind of music. The closest she found was a frenetic establishment which blared American rock-and-roll.

But the most haunting memory was the Wall. After seeing it, we were able to understand the wild emotional response West Berliners gave to President Kennedy's speech there a few weeks earlier.

After the whirl of final examinations and a ceremony at which we received our certificates of credit came the third party. It was really an ice cream social-type affair, and the mood was mixed with joy at the completion of the program and sadness at the prospect of its all being over. There were goodbys and address-swapping, songs and a few short speeches, and a realization of the value of the past weeks in Munich.

The University would not have initiated such a project had it not been for a trip to Germany and the Soviet Union taken last year by Dr. Eriksen. While in Munich Dr. Eriksen visited the Institute and conferred with its staff. After learning of its work, he became interested in beginning a summer school program in Russian language and Soviet area studies. In establishing a program which would offer college credit, Dr. Eriksen worked with members of the Institute staff and Dr. Oliver J.

Fredericksen, adviser for the American Committee for Liberation, an anti-Communist organization which provides partial support to the Institute.

The Institute was founded in 1950 to conduct objective research on the Soviet Union and to make the findings available to the Western nations. Dr. Fredericksen pointed out in a talk to us on our arrival that "although the Institute has the primary duty of performing research and has not done much educational work, there has been a great call of late for us to use our resources for educational purposes. The joint summer school is just another step in this direction."

In July 1962, the Institute held a seminar for about 25 students. College credit, however, was not offered. Last November, 44 Mexican labor leaders came to the Institute at their own expense for a two-week seminar on Soviet problems. Prompted by the threat of Communism in Latin America, the group attended the Institute to obtain authentic facts about the Soviet Union and Communist methods.

The labor seminar was so successful that a second group of industrial leaders came to a session in April. The researchers have found the contact with American students refreshing, Frederickensen stated at the seminar's conclusion, and he hopes it will continue.

Work is already being done in organizing the seminar for 1964. As one who attended, I hope O.U. not only continues the school but expands it.



"But the most haunting memory was the Wall."