

RUSSIAN STEPS UP THE PACE:

Since Sputnik began going round the world at five miles a second, the Russian man in the street has been on top of the world. For a time, Russia's satellite pushed everything else off the front page - as it did in the West, too. American concern at this inescapable proof of Soviet technical progress was as great as Russian pride. In both cases, quite understandable.

All over the Soviet Union, amateur and professional astronomers check the satellite's orbit - particularly at dawn and sunset, when Sputnik shines like a moving star. This star is an omen - a reminder of a truth that many in the West have been reluctant to realize; that with her steadily expanding resources, Russia is a growing technical power in her own right. No more heads in the sand; for good or ill, the wheels of Russian industry - like this huge new hydro-electric plant just opened at Kuibyshev - turn faster and faster.

Of course, Russian engineers and scientists are proud of their growing strength; but the world is less happy. In the turbulent waters of modern politics, what matters is how strength is used. And the news from the Middle East - where oil isn't the only that that's inflammable - suggests that Russia's leaders, having impressed the world, are now trying to frighten it. Posing as the champion of the Arab peoples, the Kremlin produces a scare that has all the hallmarks of a manufactured crisis. Syria, the Kremlin declares, is being threatened. Turkey's army, according to Khrushchev is preparing to cross the Syrian border. And if it does, Russia will hit back.

In London, Labour Party Secretary, Morgan Phillips, shows our representative a strange letter from Khrushchev; a request (which was refused) for talks with the Party on the Middle East. We asked Mr. Phillips for Labour's view of the crisis.

"Well that's a very big question I'm sure you realize, but this I will say that you cannot possibly hope to solve the problem of the Middle East unless Russia is brought into consultation. I think if the American government and the British Government were to get together, make up their minds that we would negotiate for oil on a Commercial basis and give economical aid to the area, remove poverty and injustice and deal with the refugee fund I think we could solve peace, the problem of peace for the next ten or twenty years".

For a Conservative view, we asked that vigorous personality, Sir Robert Boothby,

"Sir Robert, what do you think is a solution to Middle East troubles?"

"Well, that's a pretty tough question isn't it? I haven't found it, I don't think anybody has, but I would like to make it quite clear that I don't regard this Turkish-Syrian thing as the major problem of the Middle East. This is a by-product of the recent soviet diplomatic drive in the Middle East, and of course, it's an anxious business because it has given rise to great tension, but I don't think myself that it is going to result in war."

In Washington, the Kremlin offensive is discussed between Eisenhower and Prime Minister Macmillan. But now another surprise hits the headlines - Khrushchev sacks Defence Minister Zhukov, the most popular man in Russia. He saved his country three times in the war; he is a friend of Eisenhower; and he is known as a moderating influence in foreign affairs.

UNO debates Syria; but while Zhukov battles for his political future, the Kremlin tells Gromyko (on the right) to hold his fire till the issue is settled. Back to London, where the crisis gives added significance to the campaign to improve Civil Defence. This Hyde Park demonstration, by 500 men and women volunteers of the Auxiliary Fire Service, is part of the Autumn Civil Defence Recruiting Drive. It's also, by the way, the first public appearance of the new "Bikini" fire-fighting raft - inflatable, manned by two or three A.F.S. firemen, carrying three pumps, and jet-propelled by its own hoses.

There's been some debate about whether Civil Defence would be much use in nuclear war; but the Government argues that a well-manned Civil Defence force could reduce the disaster, if it should come. Meanwhile, Britain stands by its belief that the atomic age can liberate, and not destroy, mankind. At Amersham, in the Chiltern Hills, the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority opens a new laboratory at its Radiochemical Centre. During the past three years the demand for the Centre's radioactive products has trebled. They are wanted for medical purposes, in agricultural research - for a thousand different uses which can help to make life richer, longer, and safer. Their handling, of course, is a highly delicate business, hedged around with precautions, which extend right up to the packing and shipping stages, since the Centre's products have to be shipped all over the world.

One result of the Washington talks is that Britain and America will co-operate more closely in nuclear science. America's achievements in rocket research, too, may be less jealously guarded; for whatever else Sputnik has proved, it has shown that the free world must waste no time in matching Russia's ballistic missile success. These pictures from Florida show a successful test of the new Jupiter rocket, whose range is about 1,5000 miles.

Here are slow-motion pictures of the Vanguard (the rocket which will help launch America's answer to Sputnik) demonstrated publicly for the first time. Like the Russian equivalent, it can open the door to outer space - or at man's command, its mighty engine can take it roaring into the sky to carry a hydrogen bomb to the other side of the world.

Man is reaching towards the stars - and still great nations argue and threaten. Khrushchev bangs the table - and the whole world wonders what tomorrow will bring. Man has the power to destroy life on earth - or, to live in peace, and explore the heavens.....