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### **Engineer Relates Russian Experience**

“The Russian Five-Year Plan has been far too pretentious,” declared Ellsworth P. Ogden, consulting ceramic engineer, in discussing “Experiences of an American Engineer” in Russia at an open dinner meeting of the Student Branch of the American Institute of Chemical Engineers in Pomerene Hall Cafeteria, April fifth.

“The progress of the plan has been seriously impeded,” Ogden said, “because of the shortage of food and the dearth of foreign credit. Russians are progressing in a material way but are lacking in proper spiritual and intellectual development. The condition of the people is becoming worse and worse, starvation and famine being very prevalent. Begging, likewise, has increased tenfold.”

“Collective farms have been a dismal failure, especially as regards agriculture,” Ogden continued. The peasant has been robbed of the work at which he was formerly employed and has assumed an attitude of “what’s the use?”

The average Russian shows a lack of interest, mainly because of undernourishment, and because most of the peasants have been forced to leave home to work at jobs

they do not like. Many examples of the seeming lack of common sense are evident in Russia.

Russian goods are crude, the workmanship is poor, and the design is clumsy. The products of Russian labor are dumped on the European market at extremely low prices, seriously affecting American competitors, he said.

The communist party controls everything in Russia, although only one and one-half per cent of the entire population belongs to that group. Only those of peasant or worker origin are included. All Russians under 30 years of age have matured under communist influence.

Peasants' rations consist mainly of black bread, smoked fish, and tea. The abundance of starch in their food makes them look husky when in reality they have very little capacity for endurance. Russians shun responsibility, fearing the consequences in case of failure.

Ogden, employed by a Chicago firm, spent 13 months in one of the largest construction camps in the world, midway between Moscow and Vladivostok.

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