



Pan American World Airways

YALE MEN RETURN FROM SOVIET UNION: Members of the Yale Russian Chorus arrive at Idlewild. They spent five weeks in the Soviet Union, singing on street corners and talking in Russian with crowds that gathered to listen. They got a "warm" response.

YALE'S MINSTRELS BACK FROM SOVIET

Singing Commercials Helped
Group Sell U. S. Views
on Street Corners

A group of Yale students returned yesterday from the Soviet Union, where they held a series of street-corner meetings.

To hold their meetings the students, all members of the Yale Russian Chorus, had to indulge in a bit of a ruse. They would start singing American and Russian songs in the street. A crowd would gather and soon a political discussion would begin.

All went well during the trip, the students reported upon their arrival at New York International Airport, Idlewild, Queens. The Russian crowds were in general friendly and so interested that some of the meetings lasted until 3 A. M.

The discussions on the five-week tour were facilitated by the fact that most of the nineteen singers in the group spoke Russian.

Discuss Living Standards

"We started our singing around 8 P. M.," one of the chorus, 24-year-old John Francis, said. "A crowd of from 200 to 1,000 would gather and we would begin discussing American cultural life and other questions. They were interested in our living standards and in the purchasing power of American wages."

Another student, Charles Neff, 24, said:

"The idea was a shot in the dark. But the crowds came to us to listen to the songs and then they began to question us. They

were very enthusiastic. While some were critical, they were never hostile.

"In fact the response on the whole was certainly warm. The people came to us honestly seeking information on the American way of life. Some of them had a pretty good picture of us. We detected no hostility or suspicion of us. We were never booed. We were challenged sometimes. But the general response was warm and interested."

Dennis Mickiewicz, the musical director of the group, commented that he thought the tour, which was financed by private groups, had brought the cultural exchange idea to the level of the man on the street. He said that some persons had asked questions in a manner designed to agitate. But on the whole, he said, the political and cultural questions asked of the singers were put "in a polite fashion."

The only complaint of the visitors was the fact that they had difficulty in seeing some of the things they desired. They wanted, for example, to attend lectures at Moscow University. Permission was granted only on the last day of their visit.