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### The Shelby Daily Star Sept. 16, 1970

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By JO ANNE YATES

## A Trip To Russia

# Visit To Lenin's Tomb Brings Appreciation For American Life

JO ANNE YATES  
Third of a Series

After 46 years, long lines of people assemble daily on Red Square in Moscow and silently file by the body of Nikolai Lenin, the founder of Communism.

It was a warm, clear Sunday in Moscow on the morning the Good News Singers were taken to Lenin's tomb. As we rode through the streets of Moscow, perhaps someone expected to see families headed for church

or relaxation together in one of the parks. The streets were strangely deserted all across town, however — except for Red Square.

As our chartered busses pulled up beside the huge fortress of buildings which surround Red Square, we could glimpse the hundreds of people that thronged the outer gates of the square, awaiting admittance by one of the several armed guards stationed at the entrance.

Because we were a special group, we were quickly ushered through a small pathway in the crowd to a place in a line which wove around about three times before leading up the steps to Lenin's tomb.

Our group grew instinctively quiet as the line drew nearer to the tomb's entrance. There was an air of "pseudo-religiousness" about the whole venture — certainly Lenin was a great leader of the Russians during his lifetime, but were the

people honoring him or inadvertently showing a lack of confidence in their present leadership by clinging so desperately to past heroes? All sorts of questions arose as we climbed the steps to the entrance under the watchful eyes of two armed guards.

Once inside the tomb, we went down a series of stairs still under heavy guard, until we reached a dark, damp, refrigerated chamber where the body of Lenin lay preserved

under a glass case.

Eight guards stood poised around the case, guns in hand, ready to defend their deceased hero in an instant. Lenin lay on what seemed to be a dark brown velvet couch. His complexion, his suit, and his reddish hair seemed remarkably well-preserved for one who had died in 1924.

One of the group's chaperones asked our Russian guide if we

had really seen Lenin's body, or if we had viewed an exceptional piece of wax work. The guide thought a moment, then replied, "To a Russian, if there's one doubt that Lenin's body is in that tomb, it's just a piece of wax."

America is truly a land of promise. She has had her great leaders in the past — George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Dwight David Eisenhower, John F. Kennedy — but the American people acknowledge

the achievements of past heroes and press forward from there.

America is not known or remembered by foreign visitors as a land with tears in her eyes over past tragedies, but as a land continually making great strides forward under capable administrative leadership. This is one of the beautiful traits of the United States that many Good News Singers didn't fully appreciate until after spending a Sunday morning waiting in line at Red Square.