

*After five trips to Russia a
British-based journalist offers
some advice for American tourists
foolish enough to visit the U.S.S.R.*

To Russia With Care

by L. Norman

■ WELCOME TO THE SOVIET UNION! The invitation by the official Russian travel bureau, Intourist, sounds friendly enough.

By Boeing and boat, Tupolev and train, the travelers arrive: politicians mending fences and kowtowing, businessmen expanding East-West contacts with commercial contracts for huge credit sales, kook culturists out to promote world harmony with a song and a dance, Comrades on pilgrimage to their ideological shrine, and a sprinkling of defectors on the lam, dropouts of the Western World. Then come the tourists, pure and simple, their Russophilia carefully induced by Dr. Zhivago movies, songs about Mos-

cow nights, and a hankering for Beluga, blini, and borscht.

The Soviets ought to be pleased with the traffic that flows their way, but what they do right with their right hand, they often undo with their left fist. A memorable example: When the Kremlin sent the Red Army marching into Czecho-Slovakia, the Intourist Comrades across Red Square winced at the hosts of tourists who double-timed out of the U.S.S.R. while a legion of others cancelled their intended visits.

Millions of rubles have been spent to lure foreign visitors with promises of superb ballet, art festivals, and low-cost spas, yet a paradoxical Soviet attitude views the same foreigner with