

Aug. 2. Tourist Camp  
outside Alma Ata

Dear Mom and Dad, and Joan

You must have thought that I dropped dead or something. Sorry not to have written much, much sooner. However, until now we have been so busy you can't imagine. We were 4 days in Alam Ata, which I guess I described to you. However, now were at the tourist camp outside Alma Ata and a getting 8 hours of sleep a night, regular meals etc.--last time I can remember doing that was in high school. This is certainly not the place for any excitement--alot of the kids are going on snort hikes. Our group leader, Mrs. Baldwin, was sick today and yesterday, but I think that she will pull thro okay. We will be here 9-11 days and then back to Moscow.

We were all pretty discouraged when we arrived here. First we were told that there would be no hiking with Soviet youth and second that each of us would have to go on 2, and 5 day hikes. About 5 of the ~~ix~~ kids had been sick in either Tashkent or Alma Ata and we ~~ixixixixix~~ said we wouldn't do it. So one of our guides called our project leader, Mr. Fisher in Moscow and also our national host, the Committee on Youth Organizations. And now everything is straightened out; the students seem in chipper spirits, the sun is shining after a rain last night, and I'm looking forward to the ~~next~~ ten days to do most of my AP work and to get in alot of sleeping in this wonderful mountain air. This setup reminds me alot of Yellowstone and Estes Park. I'm writing this perched upon a rock overlooking the mountain stream, the stately pines and the snowcapped moutains. Really great. By the way, I have been fine--in fact the doctor here weighed each of us yesterday and to my chagrin, I've gained.

In Alma Ata, we had a series of discussions with students, visited a number of institutes and industries. Also visited a ~~exixix~~ state farm, which is big business in anyone's languages--the farmers work for wages instead of for a share of the crop as they do on collective farms.

The farmers here are communters also--in the sense that they all live in villages and then move out to the fields in the mornings. We also visted xome of the farmers homes--this was really a rare experience, for seidon does one get inside a Soviet home. Believe me, that old place we used to live in was ten times better than anything we saw--except it had an inside toilet and one water facet. The place we now live in would have been to them heaven. Most of the homes were 3 or 4 rooms--the bedsteads were of iron; the living rooms were adeuate with chests of drawers and sofas and tables. The kitchen was the most inconvenient room in the house...a sink about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  foot long, a stove about 3 feet high, usually painted white, a chipped cupboard about 4 feet high. Unfortunately, I didn't get to see the johns.

I think that my impressions of SU are beginning to jell...and I think that I have gotten info and insights that will allay the fears of AP that we see only the glorios parts of the country. Perhaps my impressions can be explained by a wonderful experience. The day we visited the observatory outside Alma Ata we were told that Sputnik would be flying over~~xxx~~ the city about 2 a.m. ~~the~~ So three of us went back up to the observatory that night and stayed until about 4 in the morn. Everyone saw the satellite and its rocket--except me--but they showed us up the stony dark path with a very dim flashlight that they had to generate by pressing a lever by hand. Hence they may be able to launch a 2 ton satellite but it is certainly at the expense of any personal conveniences for the workers.

The little man is about to go down the mountain to call Moscow again, so I guess that I best close...only way to get letters mailed. I do hope that you are all fine, not working too hard Am looking forward to a stack of letters from you when I return to <sup>M</sup>oscow.

Will be seeing you soon--hardly seems possible that Over a mo. ago we left Qubbenc.

Love,