

## TV: A Gracious Visitor

### Svetlana Alliluyeva Displays Winning Personality at First News Conference

By JACK GOULD

THE three television networks interrupted their games and soap operas yesterday afternoon to introduce a woman who in due course should become a star attraction of the American medium: Svetlana Alliluyeva.

The live coverage of the news conference held by Stalin's daughter at the Plaza Hotel had the absorbing quality so characteristic of the power of TV. After all the recent headlines about Mrs. Alliluyeva, there emerged a living human being of history's stage, a woman plainly dressed but emotionally touching in her description of how religion had entered her life, quick to catch the nuances of questions with international political overtones and unswervingly firm in her belief in the freedom of the writer.

To the prepared questions asked by Alan U. Schwartz, the lawyer who accompanied her from Switzerland to the United States, Mrs. Alliluyeva answered in careful English, but in the very simplicity of her language it was a thoroughly winning gift for a varied expression.

Her halting explanation of her conversion to religion, coupled with her appreciation of Catholicism, Hinduism and Christian Science, had the ring of poetry by one who had found God but was not yet sure of all the discovery's implications on her own life.

Mrs. Alliluyeva was nothing short of delightful in graciously turning aside some of the stupid questions that came her way. With a soft smile she suggested, for example, that to learn her father's political credo it might be simpler to read Stalin's works.

Indeed, the poise of Mrs. Alliluyeva at the forbidding ritual of a huge Western press conference was nothing short of remarkable. The woman who for so long had

led such a secluded life under her father's regime in the Soviet Union took all journalistic confusion in stride.

The flashbulbs of the jostling press photographers did not appear to bother her in the slightest. She turned her face as instructed by the aggressive still cameramen pleading: "Over here, madam, please."

Mrs. Alliluyeva diplomatically hinted that she would not be averse to a display of reciprocity on the part of the press. After answering questions, she said she hoped for peace and privacy in the days ahead. The spell of her personality made a viewer hope that her request would be honored.

The visitor, who had no previous experience in public life, was immediately in command of the occasion. The image of such a gracious daughter of such a despotic father was its own editorial on humanity's wondrous diversity.

Only about 38 of the 300 questions submitted were actually asked. And the caliber of many of the questions used was not excessively stimulating.

But the important portrait remained: one of an infrequently attractive woman who at one and the same time promises to be a rich source of historical data, a continuingly controversial figure on the international scene, a mother separated from her children and a warm individualist.

As her book—or books—come from the presses, Mrs. Alliluyeva will have her choice of TV appearances, and it was no secret yesterday that negotiations to that end were under way. Moscow has reason to be apprehensive over the impact of Stalin's daughter on the mass mind; she is charmingly video-genic.