

MAJOR, 'OVER 60,' TAKES G. I. COURSE

Peter Rodyenko, Philosopher
and Soldier, Caps a World
Career on Long Island

Four evenings out of every seven, Maj. Peter Rodyenko squeezes his six-foot frame into a midget British car and drives purposefully from his home at Plandome, L. I.

Monday and Wednesday evenings he heads for Oyster Bay and Fridays for Hicksville, to attend Long Island University classes in philosophy and history. A fourth night he goes to Mitchell Air Force Base for Civil Air Patrol duties.

Often unorthodox and always positive about his ideas, the major sounds off in class about Spinoza or Kant or illustrates a point in a discussion of world affairs with an anecdote about his experiences with the Chinese Army from 1912 to 1919.

The major is the oldest student, so far as is known, attending college under the G. I. Bill of Rights. He smilingly admits to being "over 60." Records of his birth in Austria and his studies at the university in Vienna were lost long ago. United States Army papers carry 1891 as his natal year.

May Teach in Puerto Rico

Now retired, the major qualified for the G. I. education allotment of about \$100 a month by his work in World War II with the district office of the Army Chief of Engineers. A camouflage expert, he helped also to develop specifications on luminous paint.

Having begun his college classes here only two months ago when Long Island University extended evening classes to Nassau County, Major Rodyenko is entitled to four years of Government-paid education. He intends to take full advantage of it, and perhaps settle down eventually to a teaching career in Puerto Rico.

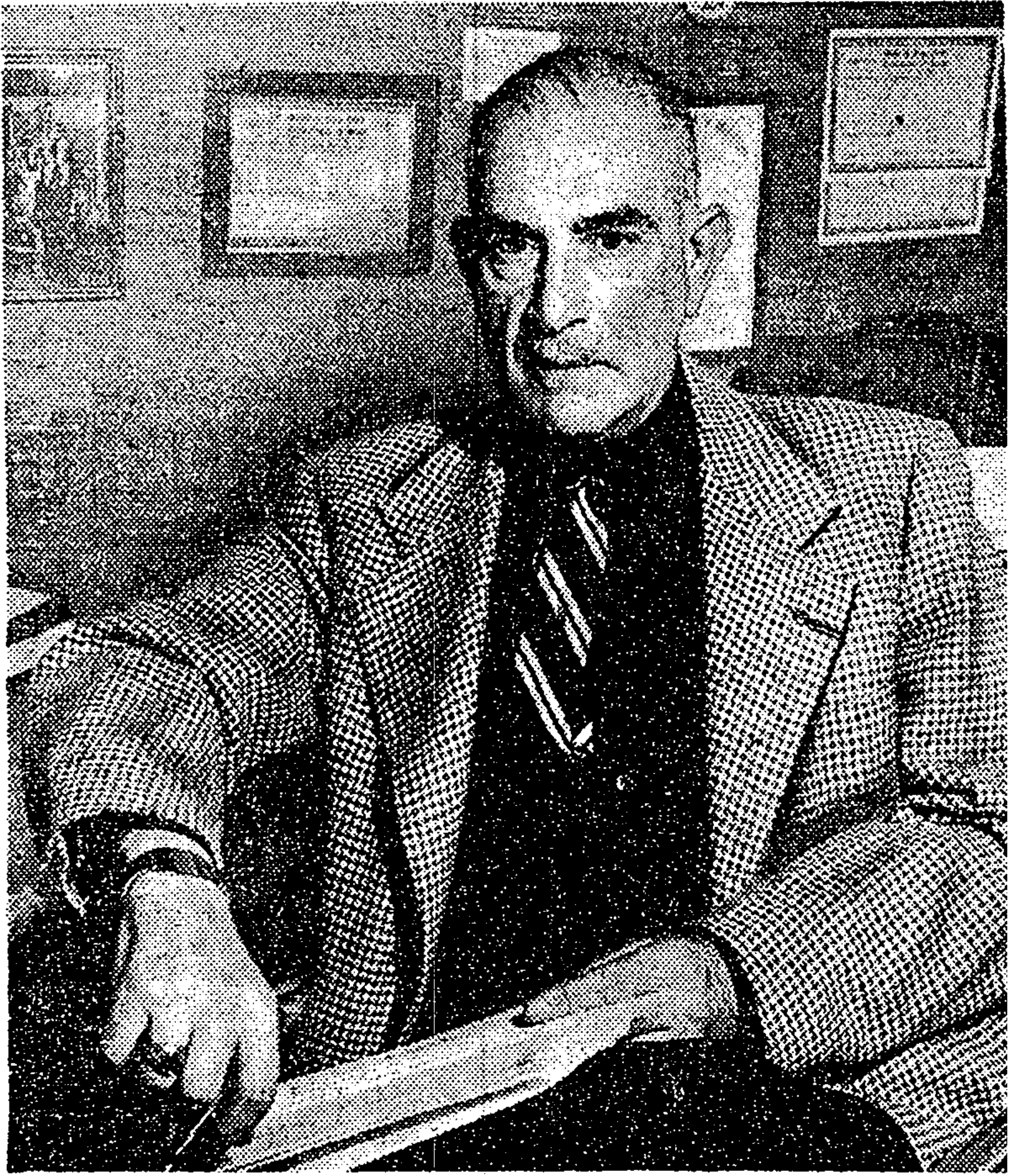
Erect, with a military bearing, small upturned mustaches and close-cropped gray hair, Major Rodyenko was impatient that he must repeat some studies of long ago to get an American college degree, but determined to see it through.

Real estate deals, writing for publication and other ventures have brought him a comfortable living and an unusual home on a knoll that has a "flying bridge" porch overlooking Manhasset Bay.

He was co-designer of the house, built along functional lines of steel, glass, wood and concrete. Sharing it with him is his wife, a playwright and former actress.

"To make money is all right, but, confound it, you are paying too much to make money," the major philosophized. "We face so many

OLDEST COLLEGE STUDENT UNDER G. I. BILL



Maj. Peter Rodyenko at his home in Plandome, L. I.

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immediate realities, we don't have the time or maybe the inclination to use our minds on semi-abstracts. People sacrifice their whole blooming lives to make money and suddenly find themselves unable to enjoy themselves. I'm not going to let that happen."

From Orient to New York

Stirrings of adventure began early in Major Rodyenko. As a young man he shipped in the British merchant marine. Later, in India, he went as war correspondent on expeditions against the Northwest tribes. He found himself in China as a correspondent for British papers, sometimes with the rebel forces, sometimes with the Government.

He became military and legal adviser to the Chinese Government, and came to the United States in 1919 after he had produced a modern version of "Napoleon" with a Chinese cast in Shanghai that had an automobile, airplane and machine guns in a depiction of the Battle of Waterloo.

In New York he wrote many magazine pieces, a few books, and added interior decoration and architectural design to his ventures. The major said he worked with Willy Pogany to design the St. George Hotel swimming pool and designed a night club.

Gravitating to things military, the newcomer became in 1923 a lieutenant in the National Guard, 244th Coast Artillery Regiment. He organized a battery made up

entirely of former enemy German soldiers. Later he organized an all-White Russian battery.

Shifting to the Corps of Engineers, Major Rodyenko was put in charge of a battalion. Eventually he was attached to the engineers district office, where he served in the last war.