

Assistant Director, Research and Reports

18 December 1956

THRU : Chief, Geographic Research
Chief, Geography Division

Evaluation of CIA/RR-G-16, The Volga-Ural Region

This report is a geographical analysis of a region in Eastern European USSR commonly known as the "Second Baku." This area, marked by extraordinary economic expansion since the early World War II period, has generated considerable interest on the part of the intelligence community. Since most reports on the area deal almost exclusively with some aspect of petroleum, there has been a need for a survey of the region as an integrated complex, including the important elements of population and settlement, transportation, industry, mineral resources, electric power, agriculture, and the physical environment. A study such as this provides an essential framework for evaluation of additional intelligence on this region.

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Enclosure:
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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Geography Division, ORR
Project Initiation Memorandum

TO : Chief, Geographic Research

Project No. **64-1347**

FROM: Chief, Geography Division

Date: *9 June 55*

1. Subject of Proposed Project: **Volga-Urals Region**

2. Statement of Problem: (Outline to be attached)

See over

3. Requester: **Petroleum Branch, ORR**

4. Responsible Analyst: **Unassigned**

5. Kind and Extent of Cooperation Desired from:

(a) Other divisions of the Geographic Area (include maps) **D/CC, D/CP**

(b) Other parts of CIA **IR, FID**

(c) Outside CIA **IC, USSR**

(d) D/GE domestic procurement

6. Estimated Man Hours **800**

7. Probable Completion Date: **December 1955**

8. Probable Form of Final Publication: **CIA/SR-O**

9. Special Recommendations Regarding Distribution of Finished Report:

10. Comments:

A study of an analogous region in Canada will be done by the Western Hemisphere Branch and will be coordinated with the USSR Branch as an aid in helping to estimate the expansion potential and future course of development of the Volga-Urals Region.

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Chief, Geography Division

Approved:

Chief, Geographic Research Date

Assistant Director, ORR Date

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2.

Background: Recent Soviet efforts to expand petroleum production have focused attention upon areas with geologic formations estimated to bear untapped oil reserves. The Ural-Volga Region optimistically called the "Second Baku" promises to be one of the largest of these areas under consideration. If the Soviets develop the petroleum resources of this region, we can assume there will be other related or attendant economic developments.

Problem: To examine the potential for economic development of the Ural-Volga Region as reflected by the physical and cultural conditions presently existing.

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VOLGA-URAL REGION

I. Economic structure

- A. Resource base
- B. Industrial development
- C. Agriculture
- D. Population

1. Density and distribution

- a. Rural
- b. Urban

2. Composition

- a. Soviet technicians and workers
- b. Resettled groups
- c. Indigenes

E. Settlements - Distribution and types

1. Existing cities, towns, villages

- a. Function and orientation
- b. Conditions for growth

2. Establishment of new settlements

- a. Workers' settlements
- b. Kolkhozes and Sovkhozes
- c. Urban centers

F. Transportation network

- 1. Existing railroads, roads, and waterways
- 2. Adequacy for present economic activity

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II. Physical factors affecting the economic potential of the region.

A. Land

1. Relief - slope
2. Soils-type, moisture
3. Hydrography and hydrology (water supply)

B. Climate - Seasonal variations

1. Temperatures (growing season)
2. Precipitation - amount and variability
3. Winds-direction, velocity
4. Humidity

III. Estimate of the expansion potential and future course of development based on inherent qualities of the region and comparison with the analogous region in Canada

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