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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY 25X1

REPORT

INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY **China**

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SUBJECT **Availability of Medicines**

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1. In estimating China's requirements for medicine, it must be remembered that 90% to 95% of the people do not know or use the modern products of the Western World. They rely on the native remedies handed down from their ancestors which have little therapeutic value. The supply of modern medicines would supply only the military and the small educated group of civilians.
2. The lack of industrial development leaves China without a local source of most raw materials such as aniline, and phenol. Medicinal plants grown are rhubarb, licorice, digitalis, ephedra, and opium poppy.
3. The National Vaccine and Serum Institute [Peking] is the largest and only important producer of vaccines and sera. These covered typhus, small pox, typhoid, yellow fever, and tetanus. Production was ample for normal use.
4. China Biological Laboratories made sulphas but in a limited quantity of perhaps 50 pounds daily. Since they are dependent on imports of aniline, the output today is problematical.
5. There was no useful production of antibiotics. The National Vaccine and Serum Institute had a small experimental penicillin plant. It is unlikely there is any important volume produced now; if so, the quality would be poor.
6. China was dependent on importation of quinine for anti-malarial use. There had been no synthesis of atabrine although this could be done in useful quantity since the dosage is small. Since quinine can be obtained from India and production of atabrine requires imported phenol, production of the latter is unlikely.
7. DDT was made but in negligible quantity. Supplies were being imported and it was replacing pyrethrum which had been imported from Japan. The only insecticides made from local raw material were from camphor and were ineffective. Any important output of DDT now is improbable as they would lack phenol.

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