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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY USSR

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SUBJECT Features of the Federal Veterinary College at Yerevan/Elementary and Secondary Education

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1.

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Armenians comprised about 65% of the student body, the other 35% coming from neighboring SSR's.

Instruction at the College was given in both the Russian and Armenian languages. The students were divided into two language groups which received parallel courses of instruction. The groups were about equal in size since all Armenian students who could get along in the Russian language were placed in the Russian group. It was a considerable advantage for a student to know Russian because the veterinary literature in Armenian was far from adequate for study purposes.

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Political indoctrination at the College was very intensive but its major effect was to bore and irritate the students rather than to make Communists of them. The curriculum contained two hours a day of political instruction throughout the entire five years. The political indoctrination program included courses in Political Economy, Darwinism, Marxism, and the History of the Communist Party. The Veterinary Board examinations, which every graduate had to pass before certification as a professional veterinarian, contained a political examination. The general attitude of the students toward the political courses was one of resignation to the necessity of having to pass the political examination in order to practice the profession.

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25 YEAR RE-REVIEW

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3. Were any efforts made, overt or secret, to weed out possible dissident elements?

the NKVD had none of its personnel at the school.

It was assumed, however, that some of the students and staff served the NKVD as secret informants. There was, in addition, the overt Party group at the school which had jurisdiction over political matters. Pressure on the student toward political conformity was created by the presence of Party members in the school and by the presumption that one's best friend could, conceivably, be a secret NKVD informant. From time to time students were removed from the school for suspected political unorthodoxy. Occasionally a student was removed as a result of the commission by a relative of an actual or alleged political crime. When the reason for dismissal was political, the student was so informed. Unless the student was guilty of some concrete "counter-revolutionary" act

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dismissal from school was no occasion for arrest. The student was merely denied the privilege of entering the profession which he had chosen and for which he had once qualified on all counts.

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4.

Beginning about 1935, the USSR

built large numbers of new elementary and secondary school buildings in the towns and cities. These were good modern buildings comparable in design to all except the most architecturally advanced in the US. Elementary school education (seven years) was compulsory and the parents were liable to arrest if they failed, without good reason, to send their child to school. The elementary school curriculum was established by the Soviet Government and was standard throughout the USSR in cities, towns, villages, and on collective farms. Elementary school was not only tuition-free but books, paper and all other school supplies were provided by the state.

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(b) Attendance at secondary schools was optional but, in both Tiflis and Yerevan, attendance was about 99% of the mentally and physically eligible children. Secondary school tuition was free, although books and school supplies had to be purchased by the student. There were two kinds of secondary schools, regular and industrial, and the course was four years for nearly all students in both types. Every graduate of a secondary school of either type was equipped to earn a living in a technical or semi-professional job. Students entering the regular high schools could choose their course and graduate as a medical assistant, a specialized laboratory technician of some kind, a building foreman, an elementary schoolteacher (this was only a three year course) and so on. These graduates, depending upon personal desires and ability, could then either begin work or go on to colleges and universities for full professional training in their chosen fields, eg doctor, architect, research scientist, secondary school or college teacher.

(c) The industrial secondary schools were also of four years' duration and trained their students as auto mechanics, machinists, electricians, carpenters and the like. The schools were operated in conjunction with state factories. The students worked in the factories four hours each day and attended school four hours each day. Graduates of these schools were well qualified in their crafts and were eligible to go on to engineering colleges

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for professional training. These schools provided their students with everything, even including clothes, in return for the work performed in the factories. Students tended to follow the special training of their fathers in selecting their courses in the industrial schools. The synthetic rubber industry in Yerevan maintained two of these industrial secondary schools, one for training chemical workers and one for training mechanical workers. The Federal Meat Trust in Yerevan ran a school to train meat inspectors and meat cutters. The aluminum factory also had an industrial school.

(d) As already stated, elementary schooling for the children of collective farms was the same in content as that in the cities, although the quality of facilities [redacted] was generally inferior. 25X1 Large collectives, say of 1500 or more people, usually had separate school-houses and a staff of several teachers. Smaller collectives (500 or less) frequently had only one teacher and used the church as the classroom. The seven years of elementary education was, as in the towns and cities, strictly compulsory. About 95% of the graduates received no further formal education and became ordinary farmers. About 5% of the farm children went on to secondary schools, becoming agricultural technicians or specialists in other technical or professional fields. These children had to move to a city to receive their specialized training. 25X1

[redacted] Ninety five percent of the Armenian farmers who were taken into the Army could not speak Russian, had only elementary school educations, and seemed to have profited little from what education they did have. These rural products were sent almost en masse into the infantry where the use of a rifle and a few other fundamentals would be the only things they would have to master. The navy, the air force, and the tank corps received the better-trained town and city youth.

5.

Every elementary school required two hours a week of Russian language instruction beginning in the second grade. Every high school required two hours a week throughout the entire four years, or three years in the case of students preparing to teach in elementary schools. Most secondary school graduates had learned Russian fairly well. Rural graduates of the elementary schools had generally learned little.

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