

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY USSR

SUBJECT Past Crops and Estimate for Near Future

PLACE ACQUIRED

DATE ACQUIRED

DATE OF INFORMATION

ORR 6124

DATE DISTR. 4 Apr 1953 50X1

NO. OF PAGES 4

NO. OF ENCLS. (LISTED BELOW)

SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO.

50X1

50X1

50X1

THIS DOCUMENT CONTAINS INFORMATION AFFECTING THE NATIONAL DEFENSE OF THE UNITED STATES, WITHIN THE MEANING OF TITLE 18, SECTIONS 793 AND 794, OF THE U.S. CODE, AS AMENDED. ITS TRANSMISSION OR REVELATION OF ITS CONTENTS TO AN UNAUTHORIZED PERSON IS PROHIBITED BY LAW. THE REPRODUCTION OF THIS FORM IS PROHIBITED.

THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

[Redacted]

50X1

1.

[Redacted]

50X1

[Redacted] rye, wheat, oats, and barley principal cereal grains. In 1932, according to the information at the Mosnenskiy and Lyubanskiy MTSS, which combined about 300 kolkhozes, the wheat crops amounted on the average to 8 centners per hectare; rye, 11 centners; and oats, 10 centners. In 1933, the average wheat crop was 7 centners per hectare; rye, 9 centners; and oats, 10 centners (a centner equals 100 kilograms).

50X1

The 1934 crop situation in Sovkhoz [Redacted] was different. There, only 6 centners of wheat per hectare were collected, due to the terrible, dry winds prevalent during that year. Moreover, because of the shortage of spare parts for tractors and agricultural implements, 35% of the tractors were out of repair, and we were, therefore, late with the sowing and dropped the seeds into the dry earth. The crops were: barley, 11 centners per hectare on the average; rye, 7 centners. The oats perished almost completely; we did not collect enough even for the sowing. As far as wheat was concerned, although it had been sown much earlier than usual, it yielded 4 centners per hectare. In order to combat humidity, the People's Commissar of Sovkhozos ordered through the Party organization the sowing of wheat by hand in spite of the fact that snow still covered the fields in places. In three days, 150 persons sowed the land which had been tilled back in autumn, seeding it between the tilled but unharrowed ridges. In a few days, under the action of dry winds and the sun, the ridges turned into dry clods. When it became possible to harrow the soil and we broke up the clods, the grain was found exposed, dried out by the wind, and unable to sprout.

50X1

In 1935, the standing wheat crop after flowering was estimated at 24 centners per hectare. But when it came to harvesting, the yield was only 9 centners per hectare, because the crops had been infected with rust and kidney vetch [Zona, probably misprint for zola]. Bread baked with this wheat was dark and bitterish in taste. [Redacted] collected 11 centners of rye, 9 centners of oats, and 9 centners of barley per hectare on the average. The crops in the kolkhozes surrounding our sovkhov were even worse than ours.

50X1

STATEX		NAVY X		AEC X		SECRET/SECURITY INFORMATION		DISTRIBUTION		ORR EV	
ARMY X		AIR X		FBI X							

SECRET/SECURITY INFORMATION

50X1

50X1

There was just one method for estimating crops. A special commission designated by the Rayon Land Section from among its own membership and augmented by people from Party organizations, and the authorized agent of the People's Commissariat of Supplies visited the fields twice, the first time, immediately after the flowering of the grains, and the second time, when the grain was fully ripe. The commission cut the grain in several sectors on an area of one square meter. These ears were dried in ovens and the grain was threshed by hand and weighed. Let us say, 140 grams of wheat were obtained from one square meter in the first sector, 150 in the second, 160 in the third, and 110 in the fourth. These figures were added and a total of 560 grams was obtained. This divided by four gave an average of 140 grams of wheat per one square meter on all sectors; 140 was multiplied by 10,000 square meters, making 1,400,000 grams, or 1,400 kilograms, which is equal to 14 centners. The commission drew up a statement, which was signed by the commission and the sovkhos or kolkhoz administration, to the effect that the wheat crops in Sovkhos [redacted] had been found to average 14 centners per hectare on the entire area sown with wheat. The quantity to be delivered to State grain elevators was assessed on the basis of such a document. This method of estimating crops helped to turn hundreds of responsible workers into slaves, because the real situation after the crops had been collected never corresponded to that envisaged by the commission.

50X1

50X1

50X1

Of course, nowhere and never did those figures represent the real situation on a farm after the harvest. The difference between the estimate of standing crops and the yield after threshing fluctuated between two and four centners per hectare.

50X1

2.

There were always losses of grain during the gathering of a crop both in kolkhozes and sovkhos. The losses, as mentioned above, amounted on the average to 2-4 centners per hectare; they almost never varied.

50X1

50X1

The main reason for losses during the harvest were as follows:

Poor organization of labor. This poor organization stems from the fact that neither the laborers nor the members of the kolkhozes and sovkhos have any interest in production.

Absence of personal initiative. The absence of interest and individual initiative in the kolkhoz men is explained by the fact that they are paid for their work per work-day after the State taxes have been turned in, after the MTS has been paid in kind for tilling the soil, after the seed reserves have been set aside, after the insurance and cultural funds have been set aside, after the kolkhoz livestock has been provided with fodder for the next year, after a fund for public construction has been established, and after grain has been delivered in payment for the "voluntary" State loans. After all these items have been taken care of, one or two kilograms are left to be paid for a work-day even in the best of kolkhozes while in the medium and poor ones only 300 grams, at most, 1 kilogram are left for a work-day.

There is no initiative in the sovkhos because a laborer makes at most 120-150 rubles a month working 10-12 hours a day. In addition, one must take into account the poor housing conditions, the collective quartering of workers in houses and hotels, the shortage of food, clothing, and footwear,

SECRET/SECURITY INFORMATION

SECRET/SECURITY INFORMATION



- 3 -

50X1

the strict financial discipline, and cheap prices paid by the State for grain and meat. Money allotted to a kolkhoz for living expenses covers only 50-60% of the needs of the kolkhoz members.

Inadequate technique, the absence of spare parts for tractors and complex agricultural machinery, the absence of adequate numbers of male workers, and the shortage of specialists and mechanization promoters who understand the machines are further reasons for losses during the harvest. In addition, there is a custom in the USSR of flooding the kolkhozes and sovkhoses during the harvesting season with "volunteers" from towns and cities in order to help with the gathering of crops. These workers arrive in a kolkhoz or a sovkhos after a hard working day in their industries and are obliged to put in another three or four hours of work in the fields. Students who have dreamed of a vacation are driven to work in kolkhozes and sovkhoses. Kom-somols and Pioneer schoolchildren, who have dreamed of enjoying nature, are also forced to work in the kolkhozes. All these "volunteers", who have no idea of farming, who work gratis, without incentive, who have neither knowledge nor physical ability for such work, are only a burden on the kolkhoz food supplies and do more harm than good to the kolkhoz.

But the State ignores this and sends tens of thousands of them to the country, because it is afraid lest the crops be left for the winter under the snow. It chooses the lesser evil: It is better to suffer a loss of 2-4 centners due to the exploitation of strangers who have nothing to do with agricultural economy than to leave the crops in the fields for the winter.

50X1

Another very important cause is the absence of transport in the sovkhoses and kolkhozes. In order to deliver 7,000 tons of grain during a period of 20 harvesting days, from the fields to the State grain elevator, a distance of 30 kilometers in the specific case [redacted] needed to transport 250 tons a day, while [redacted] in the sovkhos were four trucks. Sixty trucks were sent down from towns, but 50% of them were under repair or were completely lacking in spare parts. These trucks were loaded directly from the combines and carried grain to the elevator. Every trip of every truck showed a shortage of 70-80 kilograms of grain; sometimes the losses amounted to as much as one centner. The drivers and loading men did not steal the grain en route because they were accompanied by a Party member belonging to the organization. Because of the shortage of grain sacks, however, the grain was poured directly into the vehicles, and this caused considerable losses due to the movement of the trucks. These are the main causes of losses of crops. Secondary losses were sustained in the cutting, stacking, drying, transportation to threshing machines, threshing, or rainy weather, etc.

50X1

50X1

3.

50X1

50X1

[redacted] that crops in the USSR will not improve in the next ten years under prevailing agricultural conditions. If conditions are improved, the crops may be increased, but very slightly, by 10-15 %.

50X1

50X1

This 10-15% improvement in the crops will be achieved through forestation, construction of irrigation systems, and an increase in the production of mineral fertilizers. With respect to organic fertilizers, there never will be any in the USSR, because kolkhoz men are deprived of the right to own livestock; and livestock in kolkhozes does not easily increase because the kolkhoz men have no interest in it. The absence of private initiative, the intensification of Party and political control, the resultant enslavement, the miserable existence of millions of peasants and the absence of any hope for the future, restrains the peasants, or rather strengthens the passive resistance of the peasant masses against

50X1

50X1

SECRET/SECURITY INFORMATION

SECRET/SECURITY INFORMATION



- 4 -

the Soviet regime. It is absurd to maintain, as the Bolsheviks would have it, that crops will be doubled in ten years. Where there is no free economic initiative, no political freedom, where a man cannot enjoy the fruits of his own labor, where he works under the whip, in fear of death or complete slavery, the level of a free producer cannot be attained. A number of methods are used by peasants in their passive resistance in the field of agriculture. Among them are the following: The kolkhoz men in the role of passive resistance against the government almost always are late with the sowing in the spring and in the fall. They do not sow all the grain intended for sowing. They till the land badly and sow weeds on the black soil. They pollute the wheat with oats, barley, millet, and other cultures; they deliberately augment the losses during harvests. They stack so that rain may penetrate inside the stacks. When they thresh, they place the drums in such a manner as to prevent the ears from being thoroughly threshed. They are late with the repairs of agricultural equipment. They build the threshing floors in such a way as to increase the losses in threshing. No Party control is able to detect or prevent all these machinations.

- end -

SECRET/SECURITY INFORMATION