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PRIVATE CONSUMPTION IN THE USSR: CHANGES IN THE ASSORTMENT OF GOODS 1940-1959

A knowledge of the scope and composition of retail trade is of decisive importance for the study of private consumption. This is even more particularly the case for the USSR than for countries with a market economy, for in the latter other sources of supply for the private household often play a significant part. In Germany, for example, supply to the private consumer by the artisan retailer or directly by the manufacturer form an important part of retail trade, whereas the Soviet system of distribution does not recognize these forms of supply.¹ As for private consumption of agricultural products, the Soviet household has only the kolkhoz market (in which the collective farms sell direct to the public) to supplement the state and cooperative retail network, and this has greatly contracted in its scope and by 1959 accounted for only 4.7% of the whole volume of retail trade.² The significance of the kolkhoz market consists in its provision of certain agricultural products (principally fruit, vegetables and animal products) which the state and cooperative network does not yet provide in adequate quantity. But in recent years even the sale of foodstuffs on the kolkhoz market has tended to decline; its share in the total sale of food has fallen to 7.9%.² State and cooperative trade remains, therefore, the principal supplier of foodstuffs and, in practice, the sole supplier of goods other than food for the private household. The extent and structure of retail trade can therefore be taken as representative of the scope and composition of private consumption in the USSR. Soviet statistical data on the breakdown of retail trade by separate commodities or commodity-groups are relatively detailed and provide a revealing picture of the changes of the consumption pattern since 1940.

The first thing to be noted is the decline of the share of foodstuffs in total turnover and the corresponding rise in the share of all other goods. This trend has slowed down since 1955, if we consider only the relation between food and non-food items; but within these two groups there have also been significant structural changes since 1955. In the food sector there has been a significant shift from the simple

TABLE I

COMPOSITION OF SALES IN RETAIL TRADE (STATE AND COOPERATIVE) IN THE USSR
(Percentage of retail trade, in order of size as at 1959)

Commodity	1940	1950	1955	1959
Alcoholic and other drinks	12.4	12.8	14.5	13.9
Bread, flour, flour confectionery ..	20.7	17.6	12.2	9.9
Sugar and confectionery	6.5	8.4	8.4	8.3
Meat and sausage	6.1	4.5	4.6	5.8
Fats	3.3	4.3	4.0	3.7
Milk and milk products	1.2	1.1	1.5	2.6
Fruit and vegetables	2.0	1.5	1.7	2.3
Fish	1.8	2.0	1.9	1.6
Tinned goods	0.5	0.8	1.3	1.5
Potatoes	1.0	0.6	0.4	0.5
Eggs	0.6	0.4	0.3	0.4
Other food	7.0	4.4	4.1	4.1
Total food	63.1	58.4	54.9	54.5
Clothing and textiles	15.1	19.7	20.6	20.3
Footwear	3.6	5.0	4.8	4.9
Furniture and household goods ..	3.0	2.2	4.1	4.8
Soap, cosmetics, haberdashery ..	4.0	3.5	3.2	3.3
Tobacco products	2.9	2.8	2.4	1.9
Building materials	0.5	0.9	1.8	1.9
Other non-food	1.8	1.5	1.6	1.6
Total non-food	36.9	41.6	45.1	45.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Sources: *Narodnoye khozyaistvo SSSR v 1958 g.* pp. 722 ff.; *Narodnoye khozyaistvo SSSR v 1959 g.* pp. 646 ff.

basic foodstuffs to the more valuable and dearer products of agriculture and the food-processing industry; compare, for example, the sharply declining share of bread, flour, flour products and potatoes with the increasing share of sugar, milk, tinned goods and so on.

Qualitative changes have also occurred in the composition of expenditure on consumer goods other than food. While the commodity groups described as 'clothing and textiles', 'footwear', 'furniture and household goods' as well as 'building materials'³ have considerably increased their share, those of 'tobacco products' and 'soap and cosmetics' have contracted. In the non-food sector also, therefore, it is the more costly goods that have increased their share to the greatest extent, thus demonstrating the increased purchasing power of the Soviet public and their change in consumption pattern associated with this.

Development of the volume of retail trade 1955-1959

1955 seems to be the best year to take as a starting point for the study of the development of trade in value terms, since the price-level

of consumer goods has remained virtually constant since that date, whereas in each year from 1949 to 1954 there were substantial price reductions which (at least in part) counteracted the extremely high rise in prices since 1940. Since adequate official Soviet data on the real trend of the volume of retail trade are not available, we must consider the real increase in consumption only from 1955 on.

TABLE 2

DEVELOPMENT OF RETAIL TRADE (STATE AND COOPERATIVE): 1955 TO 1959
(milliard old rubles, in order of increase 1955-9)

Commodity	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959	increase %
Milk and milk products	8.0	11.3	14.2	16.4	19.1	139
Eggs	1.7	2.0	2.4	2.9	3.4	100
Fruit and vegetables ..	8.5	9.4	13.0	15.2	16.7	96
Meat and sausage ..	23.1	27.9	32.3	36.0	42.3	83
Tinned goods	6.4	6.6	8.4	10.1	11.1	73
Potatoes	2.2	2.8	3.4	3.4	3.8	73
Sugar	20.9	25.0	27.7	30.7	32.9	57
Alcoholic and other drinks	72.6	74.6	87.4	96.2	100.6	39
Flour and macaroni ..	20.2	22.4	24.7	27.0	27.7	37
Fats	19.8	23.5	24.7	26.2	26.9	36
Confectionery	21.1	22.1	24.6	26.3	27.6	31
Fish	9.6	10.4	11.2	12.1	11.8	23
Bread and bakery ..	41.2	40.8	41.1	43.6	43.9	7
Other foodstuffs	20.0	20.6	22.7	23.5	24.8	24
Total food	275.3	299.4	337.8	369.6	392.6	43
Electrical equipment ..	1.5	2.0	2.5	2.8	3.3	120
Sewing machines ..	1.1	1.4	1.7	2.1	2.3	109
Furniture	6.9	7.6	8.9	10.7	13.5	96
Radio and musical ..	4.0	4.8	5.7	6.7	7.7	93
Sports and games ..	2.6	3.0	3.7	4.2	4.6	77
Cycles and motorcycles	2.5	2.7	3.4	3.6	4.4	76
Clocks and watches ..	3.3	3.9	5.1	4.8	5.0	52
Building materials ..	9.1	9.4	10.3	11.8	13.8	52
Soap, cosmetics, haberdashery	16.7	18.3	21.4	23.3	24.9	49
Stationery and printed matter	7.7	8.6	9.5	10.4	11.5	49
Footwear	24.1	26.3	30.4	33.1	35.3	46
Clothing and textiles ..	103.0	112.2	132.2	138.6	146.0	42
Glass, china, metal household goods	7.1	7.6	8.4	8.8	9.4	32
Matches and paraffin ..	2.5	2.8	3.2	3.4	3.3	32
Tobacco	12.0	12.7	13.1	13.6	14.1	18
Other goods	22.5	24.7	27.7	29.7	27.5	22
Total non-food	226.6	248.0	287.2	307.6	326.6	44
Total	501.9	547.4	625.0	677.2	719.2	43

Sources: *Narodnoye khozyaistvo SSSR v 1958 g.* pp. 722 ff.; *Narodnoye khozyaistvo SSSR v 1959 g.* pp. 646 ff.

The total volume of retail trade has increased by some 43% between 1955 and 1959 (food and non-food increasing equally); this means, in *per capita* terms,⁴ an increase in the volume of trade from 2,560 old rubles in 1955 to 3,410 old rubles in 1959. This increase did not however comprise a similar increase in consumption among all groups of the population; one must deduct the fact that former kolkhoz peasants (in part supplying themselves with foodstuffs) have become sovkhos or industrial workers with definite wages and have thus increased the number of market purchasers. The tendency of recent years to replace payments in kind by payments in cash in the collective farms has also led to the expansion of the market sector. These reductions apply, however, only in respect of food; they have no meaning in respect of industrial consumer goods, the increase in the volume of sales of the latter clearly indicating a significantly better supply of goods to the population and thus a raising of their standard of living. This was due to the reorientation of Soviet economic policy in 1953 with the aim of a better satisfaction of the wishes of the consumer. The emphasis on agriculture and light industry succeeded in extensively increasing the supply of foodstuffs and industrial consumer goods, while the continuous rise in wages (about 2% *per annum*), the increasing of minimum wages and pensions (1956-57) and the abolition of forced loans (1958) led to an increase in total purchasing power and made it possible to dispose of the increased production.

Table 2, which sets out clearly the absolute volume of trade from 1955 to 1959, indicates which goods principally absorbed the increasing purchasing power and which lagged behind the general rate of increase. When the series are ranked in order of their rate of increase, the highest rate among foodstuffs is shown by milk and eggs, the lowest for bread and bakery products. Among non-food items, certain consumer durables show the highest rates of increase; matches, paraffin and tobacco show the lowest. These data confirm what we have already observed, that the Soviet consumer has tended towards the qualitatively more valuable products to an ever-increasing extent since 1955.

Comparison of the structure of consumption in the USSR and in West Germany

The following Table compares the structure of Soviet consumption (principal commodity groups) between 1955 and 1959 with the corresponding data for a west European industrial country—West Germany.

The data which underlie Table 3 comprise not only retail trade, but also that of other sources of supply for the private household, i.e. for

TABLE 3
CONSUMPTION STRUCTURE IN WEST GERMANY AND THE USSR
(Share of commodity groups in total consumption, %)

Commodity group	1955		1956		1957		1958		1959	
	WG	USSR	WG	USSR	WG	USSR	WG	USSR	WG	USSR
Food	55.5	62.9	54.7	61.9	54.4	60.2	54.3	60.4	54.2	59.8
Clothing and footwear ..	21.4	20.5	21.6	21.1	21.5	22.3	20.6	22.0	20.4	22.2
Household goods ..	11.9	3.7	12.4	3.9	12.5	4.1	12.6	4.2	12.8	4.6
Other goods ..	11.2	12.9	11.3	13.1	11.6	13.4	12.5	13.4	12.5	13.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Sources: Calculated from: *DIW-Wochenbericht* 19 August 1960 and *Narodnoye khozyaistvo SSSR v 1959 g.* pp. 636 and 646-8.

West Germany goods supplied by the artisan retailer (e.g. the baker, butcher) and goods supplied directly from a factory to a customer's order; the Soviet data include kolkhoz market trade. In both countries consumption of its own produce by farming has been estimated.⁵

Since kolkhoz market turnover as well as agricultural consumption of own produce consists dominantly of foodstuffs, the relationship between the two commodity groups 'food' and 'non-food' in total consumption differs quite significantly from their relationship in state and cooperative retail trade turnover.

Soviet consumption structure according to:

	Goods consumed		Trade turnover	
	1955	1959	1955	1959
Food	62.9	59.8	54.9	54.5
Non-food ..	37.1	40.2	45.1	45.5

Similarly, the weight of the two groups 'textiles, clothing and footwear' and 'household goods' in total Soviet consumption is less than that of the corresponding items in retail trade turnover as indicated above.⁶ Due to the decline of the kolkhoz market and of consumption of own produce within the agricultural sector, this difference between the pattern of actual consumption and that of retail turnover is becoming less from year to year, however.

The comparison with West Germany shows the following similarities and differences:

In both countries the share of expenditure on food is falling; that of expenditure on clothing and footwear in the two countries is at about the same level. There is a difference in the size of the share of expenditure on food, which is lower in West Germany than in the USSR, corresponding with the noticeably higher standard of living in the former. There is a greater difference in the trends for the group

'textiles and footwear', which declined between 1955 and 1959 in West Germany and increased in the USSR. In the latter case one can describe the situation (corresponding to that in West Germany in 1951-52) in recent years as a first 'clothing wave'. One may also note that prices for clothing and footwear—in terms of the prices of other consumer goods—are extremely high in the USSR.

The extremely low share of the group 'household goods', which consists primarily of consumer durables, demonstrates that in this field the USSR still lies well behind West Germany. In considering the low consumption of furniture, household goods and so on, one must bear in mind that the housing situation in the USSR is still unsatisfactory. In 1958 housing space in the USSR was about 8 sq. metres per head, while in West Germany the corresponding figure was about 17 sq. metres.⁷ Consequently, the need for furniture and household goods must be less in the USSR than in West Germany due to the lack of space in which to put the goods. However, the building activity which has been proceeding apace during recent years leads one to expect a rapidly increasing demand for all kinds of household equipment.

The share of 'other goods' is surprisingly high in the Soviet consumption structure, which is partly explained by the very limited part played by the household goods group. In addition, the Soviet statistics include under 'other goods' items which are not considered as private consumption in West Germany (e.g. building materials for private use) or which are no longer of importance in German consumption (e.g. paraffin).

Variations in the consumption pattern

All the data concerning consumption trends in the USSR which we have adduced to date are averages, which eliminate variations in the level and structure of consumption as between one group of the population and another. We cannot investigate in this article regional variations, which can be explained by climatic or traditional factors leading to particular consumption habits. It will suffice to observe that in a land of the immense size of the USSR, which comprises very diverse climatic zones and nationalities of many cultural environments, these factors must carry great weight. In so far as these territorial variations in consumption are independent of climatic factors, they must have become much less intense than they were before the war, in view of the extensive redistribution of the population. This redistribution of population consisted principally of the continuous shift of labour from the land to the towns and was intensified and extended by the wartime and postwar situation. The transfer of industry from

the European to the Asiatic part of the USSR and the settlement of new lands in Siberia and Kazakhstan have led to population mixture on a great scale, which doubtless brought in its train a certain levelling of consumer habits.

It is self-evident that the extent and composition of the consumption of private households depends primarily on the size of their disposable income; as income increases, consumption increases also, but individual commodities or groups of commodity are variously affected in this increase, and consequently their weight in the totality of consumption alters. These income-linked variations can be derived from information concerning the budgets of private households; but in examining them one must take either households with the same number of persons or else use the average income per member of the household as a basis, so that calculations based on the size and total income of the household to derive the level of consumption should not be exaggerated or over-emphasised.

The Soviet Central Statistical Administration collects individual data for about 50,000 households in the form of budget records.⁸ The absolute information of these private records of income and expenditure is not published, but we have some data, including the structural breakdown of consumption in groups of households with various income levels. The households were divided into four groups according to the average income per family member. The actual amount of the income per family member is not specified; the lowest per capita income is that of the families in Group I, while in each successive group the per capita income is a little more than one-third greater than that in the preceding group. The Soviet data do not comprise all expenditures on goods, and thus do not provide a complete analysis of the structure of consumption; they do however show the variations in the consumption of the principal groups of commodities (food, clothing, furniture and household goods), which account for more than 85% of all expenditure on goods.

TABLE 4
STRUCTURE OF HOUSEHOLD EXPENDITURE IN VARIOUS INCOME-GROUPS IN THE USSR
(percentage of expenditure on all goods)

Commodity group	Income-group			
	I	II	III	IV
Food ^a	66.0	59.0	54.4	52.5
Clothing, footwear	17.8	21.4	23.7	25.0
Furniture	1.4	2.0	2.4	2.9
Household goods	3.2	4.5	5.5	6.1

^a includes alcohol, tobacco and restaurant expenditure.

Source: *Sovetskaya torgovlya* 1961 no. 4 p. 10.

Presented in this way, we find a surprisingly regular pair of trends for food and non-food respectively. As per capita income increases, the percentage of income devoted to food steadily falls, while that devoted to all other goods rises from group to group. This phenomenon, of a steady fall in the proportion devoted to foodstuffs as income rises, is one which was put forward about 1870 by the German economic statistician Engel as a universally valid law, and is now evident in the experience of a country with a centrally planned economy. In spite of the decline in the proportion devoted to food, the absolute level of expenditure on food tends to rise with rising income. This observation holds for the USSR as it does for other lands.

TABLE 5

EXPENDITURE ON FOOD PER HOUSEHOLD MEMBER IN HOUSEHOLDS OF VARIOUS INCOME-GROUPS (GROUP I=100)

Food	Income-group			
	I	II	III	IV
Milk and milk products	100	118	136	151
Meat and meat products	100	125	156	192
Fish and fish products	100	125	151	175
Butter	100	116	133	150
Eggs	100	166	233	267
Sugar	100	111	122	127
For comparison: income per member	100	137	184	253

Source: *Sovetskaya torgovlya* 1961 no. 4 p. 11.

In the higher income groups, the increase of expenditure on food per capita is most emphatic in the cases of eggs, meat and meat products, while the smallest increases are found for sugar and animal fats. In the more prosperous families, therefore, an increase in the consumption of those foodstuffs which go with a generally higher standard of living is emphasised at the expense of an increase in the consumption of basic foodstuffs.

These differences in demand structure are affected not only by the level of income; the type of employment and the cultural level of the family members also play a part in the household's consumption pattern. The Soviet budget statistics for workers and employees show that while workers' families have a relatively high expenditure on food, they spend relatively less on furniture and cultural goods—and also on culture and entertainment—than, say, the families of doctors or engineers, even when the families concerned have the same income.⁹

Excursus on variations in the quality of foodstuffs dependent on household income

In addition to the income-correlated variations in consumption pattern, which express themselves in the volume and assortment of

goods purchased, we may also observe (though unfortunately only for foodstuffs) variations in quality which depend on income. The average price paid by an income group for one kilogramme of a particular food increases as income increases; i.e. families with relatively higher purchasing power tend to buy dearer foods. This is demonstrated in the following table, which also sets out for comparison the corresponding budget data for a lower and a medium consumer group in West Germany.

TABLE 6

EXPENDITURE ON FOOD (PER KG.) IN HOUSEHOLDS OF VARIOUS INCOME-GROUPS IN THE USSR AND WEST GERMANY IN 1959 (GROUP I=100)

Food	Income-group				West Germany	
	USSR				I	II
	I	II	III	IV		
Bread and bakery ..	100	109	126	123	100	105
Vegetables	100	109	119	127	100	102
Meat and meat products	100	106	109	113	100	108
Fish and fish products ..	100	103	108	116	100	112
Cheese	100	107	114	123	100	108
Eggs	100	106	106	107	100	100
Confectionery	100	106	115	122	100	104
Unweighted average ..	100	106.6	113.9	118.7	100	105.6
For comparison: Income per household member	100	137	188	258	100	154

Sources: *Sovetskaya torgovlya* 1961 no. 4 p. 12; *Statistisches Jahrbuch für die BRD* 1960 pp. 531 ff.

The various differentiations of quality emerge clearly from the comparison given in Table 6. These differentiations are naturally due to variations in living standards; in the generally prosperous conditions of West Germany, foods of inferior quality are in virtually no demand, and in consequence are not produced. The variations in quality and price of comparable foodstuffs are relatively slight; according to the data of the Statistical Department of the West German Government, although the medium consumer group have a per capita income of 54% greater, they pay only 6% more for a kilogramme of the foods listed in Table 6 than the households comprising the lower income group. In the USSR however an income change of 37% between Group I and Group II produces a qualitative change of 7% in expenditure on foodstuffs, the increases being still more significant for the two higher groups. We may therefore assert that the variation of living standards in the USSR at the present time is much greater than it is in West Germany. One may note in general that the steady trend to improvements in quality associated with an improvement in living standards will apply in the USSR also more than it has done in the past.

Production per capita, consumption per capita and supply targets: (a) Food

In his speech on 'Measures for the further development of agriculture in the USSR' Khrushchev set as the goal of the government's food policy: 'to reach such a level of food consumption as is necessary for the harmonious development of a healthy human being, on the basis of scientifically established nutritional standards'.¹⁰

Khrushchev's idea has since been put into quantitative terms by the elaboration of the so-called 'rational standards' by the Nutrition Institute of the Academy of Medical Sciences.¹¹ These standards, which establish the annual per capita consumption of the principal foodstuffs, have been published together with a direct comparison with actual per capita production in 1958 and that planned for 1965. The next table completes these data by adding 1959 per capita production, so that we can observe how the trend towards the planned target is developing.

TABLE 7

USSR: FOOD PRODUCTION PER CAPITA COMPARED WITH THE SO-CALLED 'RATIONAL CONSUMPTION'

Food	Production per capita (kg.)			Rational consumption
	1958	1959	1965 Plan	
Cereals	683	598	786	120-170
Meat (dead weight) ..	37	42	70	73-91
Fish (weight of catch) ..	14.1	14.6	20	7-16
Milk and milk products (in terms of milk) ..	284	293	458	292-585
Fats	9.7	12.4	13.6	14-19
Sugar	26	28	44	27-33
Eggs (number)	111	120	162	180-365
Potatoes	418	411	642	55-219
Vegetables	71	70	160	150-180
Fruit	20	35	62	

Sources: calculated from *Narodnoye khozyaistvo SSSR v 1959 g.* pp. 159, 314, 320; *Kommunist* 1959 no. 15 p. 78.

If we compare the standards with the corresponding values for 1958, it is clear that in 1958 the USSR fell far short of the target in the high-grade foodstuffs (meat, fats and eggs), and that the plan targets of 1965 also do not quite reach the level of these rational standards. However, one should not over-stress the meaning of the rational standards; they are not limited strictly by the range of values indicated, but represent a guide to the planners rather than an objective scale of quantities.

If we compare output in 1959, the first year of the current seven-year plan, with the corresponding data for 1958, we observe different tendencies for the various commodities. While the production of

cereals, potatoes and vegetables per capita did not attain those of the record year 1958, the output of all the other items listed here was higher than in the previous year. If we assume that a similar absolute increase were to take place in each of the seven years of the plan period, the progress in milk production and fish would be too little to attain the average scale of increase; that of meat, eggs and sugar would be satisfactory, while with fats and fruit the plan would be well exceeded. In general terms, the USSR advanced in 1959 towards the goals of the seven-year plan and the rational standards for food production. If the planned quantities are reached by 1965, the USSR will have assured a structure of food consumption which will bring it into line with those West European states which have the highest living standards. The present position of the USSR as to food consumption compared with other countries can be seen from Table 8:

TABLE 8

FOOD CONSUMPTION PER CAPITA PER YEAR—SELECTED COUNTRIES (KILOGRAMMES)

Food	USSR 1958-9	West	Great	Italy 1959	USA 1959	Japan 1959
		Germany 1959	Britain 1959			
Cereals (in terms of flour)	150	88	84	142	66	151
Meat	39	53	71	27	94	6
Milk ^a	6	6	7	4	8	1
Fats	16	25	22	16	21	4
Sugar	26	28	50	20	41	14
Eggs (number)	120	218	251	145	364	73
Potatoes	149	145	88	53	47	66
Vegetables	70	40	59	138	97	72
Calories per diem	3,000	2,940	3,290	2,670	3,110	2,210

^a in terms of milk fat; includes milk and milk products, excluding butter.

Sources: USSR per capita consumption according to data supplied by the Soviet Minister of Agriculture Matskevich in *Trybuna Ludu* 20 March 1960. Consumption of fats calculated by the DIW (*Vierteljahrshefte zur Wirtschaftsforschung* 1960 no. 4 p. 401). Consumption per capita for all other countries from Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations, Rome, *Production Yearbook*, vol. 14, 1960 pp. 245 ff.

The USSR with a daily consumption of 3,000 calories stands at about the same level as West Germany and the United States, and well above that of Italy and Japan. The very high consumption of cereals, compared with Great Britain, West Germany and the USA and the correspondingly low consumption of meat, compared with the same countries, demonstrates the significant difference between the food structure of the USSR and Western countries. Obviously, the high Soviet calorie consumption is due to a large extent to cereal pro-

ducts and potatoes, while the consumption of concentrated foodstuffs (livestock products) is still low. On the other hand, the Soviet consumption of meat—though inadequate—is much higher than in Italy or Japan, as is also the consumption of sugar; but the nutritional requirements of these countries due to climatic factors must be taken into account.

(b) *Textiles and footwear*

As for manufactured consumer goods, standards have been published for only a few items in the textile, clothing and footwear industries, together with per capita production in 1958 and that planned for 1965, to which we add in the next table production data for 1959. The table also includes the per capita production of textiles and footwear for West Germany, as a country which is comparable in its level of industrial development.

TABLE 9

PRODUCTION OF TEXTILES AND FOOTWEAR, USSR AND WEST GERMANY, COMPARED WITH THE SO-CALLED 'RATIONAL CONSUMPTION STANDARDS'

	per capita production			W. Germany 1959	rational consumption standard
	USSR	USSR	USSR		
	1958	1959	1965 plan		
Cotton cloth sq. m. ^a	20.8	21.9	26.0	25.4	26-52
Wool cloth sq. m.	1.9	2.0	2.9	3.2	3-6
Linen cloth sq. m.	2.1	2.3	2.6	0.8	3-5
Silk cloth sq. m.	3.3	3.1	5.2	5.2	4-10
Stockings and socks, pairs	4.3	4.4	5.4	6.3	10-19
Leather shoes, pairs	1.7	1.9	2.2	2.7	2-4
Knitwear (under- clothing), units	1.9	2.1	3.4	5.5	2-8
Knitwear (outwear), units	0.5	0.5	0.7	0.9	1-3

^a Soviet textile production in sq. m. calculated from data in *Narodnoye khozyaistvo SSSR v 1959 g.* p. 245.

Sources: calculated from *Narodnoye khozyaistvo SSSR v 1959 g.* p. 245; *Kommunist* 1959 no. 15 p. 80; *Die Textilindustrie der BRD im Jahre 1959* (Frankfurt/Main, 1960) pp. 6 ff.; *Statistisches Jahrbuch für die BRD* (1961) pp. 21 and 231.

The standards for textiles, clothing and footwear, compared with per capita production in 1958 and 1965, show a similar picture to that for the foodstuffs standards, i.e. the per capita production in 1958 of all the specified items lies well below the rational standards, which even in 1965 will be attained for only some of them. The increase in production between 1958 and 1959 varied from one branch of the textile and footwear industries to another; while silk production fell

and wool cloth and hosiery increased inadequately (by the standards of the seven-year plan targets), there were adequate or above-average increases in the manufacture of footwear, underwear, linen and cotton cloth. A comparison of the per capita production of the USSR and of West Germany in 1959 shows a decided superiority of the latter in all items except linen textiles. However, if the USSR attains its production targets by 1965, it will reach approximately the level in per capita production of textiles and footwear which West Germany had in 1959.

The available supply of textiles and footwear in the USSR can hardly be affected by imports and exports—as it can in West Germany—so that Soviet production per capita of these articles is virtually identical with consumption per capita. We have the following information as to per capita consumption of clothing fibres in various countries in 1957, to give the international comparison:

TABLE 10

PER CAPITA CONSUMPTION OF CLOTHING FIBRES IN SELECTED COUNTRIES, 1957^a (KILOGRAMMES)

	USSR	West	Great	Italy	USA	Japan
		Germany	Britain			
Total clothing fibres	7.8	11.5	11.7	6.3	15.5	7.9
including:						
Cotton ..	5.8	5.7	5.8	3.2	10.3	4.4
Wool ..	0.9	2.2	2.4	1.2	1.1	0.8
Cellulose and						
Rayon ..	1.0	3.3	3.0	1.6	2.9	2.3
Synthetic fibres	0.07	0.30	0.54	0.28	1.15	0.42

^a including imports and exports of semi-finished and finished goods.

Source: *Die Textilindustrie der BRD im Jahre 1959* (Frankfurt/Main, 1960), Internationale Übersichten pp. 4 ff.

These figures demonstrate Soviet backwardness in textile consumption per capita compared with the highly industrialised countries of the West. Soviet textile consumption—on a per capita basis—amounts to about two-thirds of West German or British, and about one half of American consumption. Italy, on the other hand, was exceeded by the USSR in 1957, while Japan was at about the same level—both on a per capita basis. We must however, in making this comparison, take note of the climatic factors which permit, and even require, a lower demand for textiles in Italy and Japan compared with the USSR.

(c) *Consumer Durables*

No standards have yet been published relating to the supply to the population of durable consumer goods; the long-range goal is the

provision of such domestic equipment as refrigerators, washing machines, sewing machines and the like, in every household.¹² No Soviet data on the present provision in households of these durable consumer goods are available, but it is possible to estimate their approximate extent from the output data of recent years, during which such goods have been put on the market in significant quantities. On the basis of the output data for 1952-1959, and assuming an average family size of four persons,¹³ I have calculated the following distribution for the USSR, to which I have added for comparison the corresponding information for West Germany:

TABLE II

PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLDS IN THE USSR AND WEST GERMANY WITH CONSUMER DURABLES

	USSR 1959	USSR 1965 Plan	West Germany 1959
Refrigerators	3.0	13.8	29
Washing machines	3.6	21.0	29
Television sets	7.8	29.5	14
Sewing machines	28.9	66.2	65

The Soviet figures are derived from the following:

	Sales of equipment in USSR (millions)				
	1952-8	1959	1952-9	Plan 1959-65	1952-65
Refrigerators	1.2	0.4	1.6	6.7	7.9
Washing machines	1.2	0.7	1.9	10.8	12.0
Television sets	3.0	1.1	4.1	13.9	16.9
Sewing machines	12.1	3.1	15.2	25.8	37.9

Sources: *Narodnoye khozyaistvo SSSR v 1958 g.* p. 104; *Narodnoye khozyaistvo SSSR v 1959 g.* p. 265.

The average population for 1959 was taken as 210.7 millions; for 1965 as 229.1 millions. (See: Ernst Eisendrath, *Das Bevölkerungspotential der Sowjetunion. Sonderheft des DIW*, new series, no. 53 (Berlin, 1960) p. 46.) Taking the average household as 4 persons, we have approximately 52.6 million households for 1959, and about 57.2 million for 1965.

The data for West Germany derive from a consumer survey of over 4,000 households carried out in the first half of 1959. See: Robert Radler, *Der Markt für langlebige Gebrauchsgüter*, in *Jahrbuch der Absatz- und Verbrauchsforschung* (1960) p. 179.

The extent to which households were supplied with goods listed above in 1957 differs markedly as between the USSR and West Germany, the difference being noticeably less with regard to television sets and sewing machines than with refrigerators and washing machines. The proportion of West German households with a television set or a sewing machine is approximately double the proportion in the USSR, whereas washing machines and refrigerators are some eight or nine times as common in households in West Germany compared with the USSR. If the targets set for production and distribution by 1965 are met, this will mean that by that date the USSR

will have passed well beyond the stage reached by West Germany in 1959 with regard to television sets and will have reached this stage with sewing machines, while the position regarding refrigerators and washing machines will still be well in arrears of the 1959 West German situation. In estimating the extent to which households will be equipped with consumer durables in 1965 I have assumed that all equipment bought since 1952 will still be in use; since this is open to question, as the quality of the products may not justify this conclusion, we must regard the level attained by 1965 in the discussion above concerning consumer durables as a maximum level.

Summary

The analysis of Soviet consumption, both over time and by comparison with other countries, demonstrates several conspicuous trends and tendencies:

While the price level has remained virtually stable, the volume of retail trade has increased by some 43% between 1955 and 1959. The fact that the population is better supplied with goods is demonstrated not only by the increase in the total volume, but also by changes in the share of certain commodities and groups of commodities in the total, a shift which is even more apparent if we compare 1959 with much earlier dates—say 1940 or 1950. We can clearly discern a relative fall in the share of foodstuffs in total trade, with a corresponding increase in the purchase of manufactured consumer goods, while within both groups (food and non-food) there has been an above-average increase in expenditure on more valuable goods.

In this trend of development the structure of Soviet consumption shows unmistakable similarities with the development of other industrial countries with a rising standard of living, as is indicated here by the case of West Germany.

In conformity with the experience of other countries, the tendency of consumers with increasing incomes to buy goods of higher quality corresponding to their needs for a better standard is on the increase in the USSR also.

In terms of per capita consumption of foodstuffs and manufactured consumer goods, the USSR has reached a level which—apart from calorie consumption—is still well below that of the USA, Great Britain or West Germany, while for certain specified goods the average level of consumption is very substantially below these countries. Compared with West Germany, the backwardness of the USSR in respect of certain consumer durables is still very great, and even by 1965 the gap will not have been closed. On the other hand, the USSR in 1965 should have come close to the position reached in West

Germany in 1959 with respect to the structure of food consumption and the quantity of textiles and footwear consumed.

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APPENDIX

An estimate of consumption in the agricultural sector

The starting point for an estimate of the consumption of its own produce by the agricultural sector is the sum total of food production in the USSR at factor cost, which amounted in 1958 to 186.9 milliard old rubles (according to a calculation carried out by the DIW). The conversion of this figure into the corresponding figure for retail prices was carried out as follows:

		(mlrd. rubles)
Factor cost	= 100% =	186.9
+ Transport	= 10% =	18.7
		205.6
+ Manufacturing costs	= 40% =	82.2
		287.9
+ Turnover tax	= 50% =	143.9
		431.8
+ Retail margin	= 7% =	30.2
		462.0
Food production at retail prices	=	462.0

We must subtract the turnover of state, cooperative and kolkhoz market trade from this sum of food production at retail prices. The 1958 total for this turnover as indicated in Table 2 above requires amendment in certain respects to convert it to total food production at retail prices as follows:

	(mlrd. rubles)
Total retail trade turnover in food	369.6
+ Tobacco products	13.6
— Fish and tinned fish	15.5
— Restaurant profit	8.4
	359.3
+ total kolkhoz market turnover in food	38.3
	397.6

CHANGES IN ASSORTMENT 1940-1959

The difference between the total of food production at retail prices (462.0 mlrd. rubles) and trade turnover (397.6 milliards) comprises agricultural consumption of its own produce and amounts to 64.4 milliard rubles in 1958. The consumers of this produce are to an overwhelming extent kolkhozniki and their families. Since there were 18.8 million kolkhoz households in 1958, each household consumed on the average foodstuffs to the value of 3,427 rubles at retail prices (own production plus payment in kind from the kolkhoz). I have assumed that this figure—which is of course only an approximation—remained constant throughout the years under investigation. Since the number of kolkhoz households has declined since 1956, the total of their consumption of their own produce has also diminished. The particularly strong reduction between 1956 and 1957 is due to the forced conversion of kolkhozy into sovkhozy in the latter year: the peasants in question were converted thereby into agricultural labourers with fixed wages and possessing a considerably smaller scrap of land to satisfy their needs than the kolkhoz peasantry possessed. Multiplying this annual consumption figure by the varying number of kolkhoz households, we have the value of consumption of agricultural produce for the years 1955 to 1959:

	No. of kolkhoz households (millions)	Agric. consumption (mlrd. rubles)
1955	19.8	67.8
1956	19.9	68.2
1957	18.9	64.8
1958	18.8	64.4
1959	18.5	63.4

Sources: *Narodnoye khozyaistvo SSSR v 1958 g.* p. 494; *Narodnoye khozyaistvo SSSR v 1959 g.* p. 423.

This method of calculating the extent of agricultural consumption of foodstuffs is open to various objections, as any such calculation must be. The calculation is founded on several hypothetical assumptions, all of which involve sources of error. We may compare the estimate of the consumption of produce by agricultural households made by Hoeffding and Nimitz,¹⁴ which amounts to between 70 and 90 milliard rubles, according to which of four different hypotheses is adopted. The calculation which we present here gives a result of 60 to 70 milliard rubles—i.e. less than that of Hoeffding and Nimitz, and also tending to decline—and is regarded by the author as tentative, in view of the fact that the process of urbanization and the developing tendency to pay cash wages in the kolkhozy has a stronger effect than the contrary tendency for the peasant to increase his food supply by increasing his own private production.¹⁵

¹ Goods produced by Soviet artisan cooperatives are sold in the cooperative retail shops and are therefore included in retail trade.

² Kolkhoz market trade turnover has developed as follows:

Year	Turnover (milliard rubles)	% of total sales	of which: food (milliard rubles)	% of total food sales
1955	48	8.7	46	14.2
1956	42	7.1	40	11.7
1957	40	6.0	37	9.9
1958	40	5.6	38	9.4
1959	35	4.7	34	7.9

Sources: Calculated from *Narodnoye khozyaistvo SSSR v 1959 godu* p. 636 and pp. 646 ff. and *Narodnoye khozyaistvo SSSR v 1958 godu* p. 707 and pp. 722 ff.

³ Sales of building materials to private persons are included in the USSR in retail trade turnover and so in private consumption.

⁴ The following population figures have been taken as annual averages: 1955, 196.3 million; 1959, 210.7 million (calculated by DIW).

⁵ For an estimate of the agricultural sector's consumption of its own produce in the USSR, see Appendix.

⁶ Cf. Table 1.

⁷ According to a study (as yet unpublished) of Soviet housing by Albrecht Kruse, which will shortly be published by the DIW as a monograph.

⁸ *Vestnik statistiki* 1960 no. 9 p. 16.

⁹ *Sovetskaya trgovlya* 1961 no. 4 p. 11.

¹⁰ *Izvestiya* 15.IX.53.

¹¹ F. I. Kotov, *Voprosy truda v semiletнем plane* (M., 1960) p. 152.

¹² *Planovoye khozyaistvo* 1960 no. 8 p. 55.

¹³ No official information has been published as to the average size of the Soviet family. Strumilin bases his calculations for 1965 on an average size of 4.5 persons (*Literaturnaya gazeta* 2.xii.58), which seems too high.

¹⁴ O. Hoeffding and N. Nimitz: *Soviet National Income and Product 1949-1955* (Santa Monica, 1959) pp. 56-57 (Rand Corporation).

¹⁵ See on this point J. A. Newth, 'Soviet Agriculture: the private sector 1950-1959', in *Soviet Studies* vol. XIII pp. 160-171.

(A German version of the above article may be found in *Vierteljahrshefte zur Wirtschaftsforschung* 1960 no. 3 pp. 275-293.)

THE VIRGIN LANDS PROGRAMME 1954-1960

It is now a little over seven and a half years since Khrushchev made his rather startling proposal that the USSR embark upon a project of ploughing up and putting under crop several million hectares of virgin and fallow land in Kazakhstan, Siberia, the Urals and the north Caucasus.¹ During this period the sown area of the USSR has increased by 46 million hectares—an increase which the Soviets boast exceeds the total sown area of England, France, the German Federal Republic, Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Belgium combined.² Forty-one million hectares of this increase, or almost 90%, are the result of Khrushchev's Virgin Land Programme.³ During this same period grain production has increased by about 50%, output of livestock products by about 60% and overall agricultural output by about 50%.

While the agricultural branch has been subjected to a multiplicity of measures and reforms during this seven and a half year period, when measured in terms of costs the virgin lands programme by far dwarfs all others. In an attempt to explain the programme this paper will cover (1) Soviet efforts at ploughing up virgin land prior to 1954, (2) the reasons, background and description of the 1954 programme, (3) year by year progress with respect to ploughing and grain production, (4) impact of the programme on agricultural output since 1953, and (5) difficulties encountered to date.

I. The Ploughing up of Virgin and Fallow Lands in the USSR prior to 1954

As an examination of the agricultural statistics of the USA will reveal,⁴ there is nothing spectacular in the fact that sown area in the present boundaries of the USSR has increased from 118 million hectares in 1913⁵ to 203 million in 1960.⁶ The uniqueness of the Soviet experience, rather, lies in the intensity and scale on which new lands have been put under plough during certain periods of economic stress.

A. 1928-1932: The first of three periods of large-scale ploughing up of new lands in the Soviet era occurred in the years 1928-1932. As a short term solution to the increasing shortage of off-farm grain, which by 1928 had become critical,⁷ it was decided to organize large-scale state farms for 'ploughing up new land, mainly in the more arid regions of the north Caucasus . . . in Siberia and in Kazakhstan . . .',⁸ 'where the new farms would not encroach on the lands already cultivated by the peasants'.⁹ As a result of this decision, a total of 228 grain sovkhozy with a sown area of 12.8 million hectares were organized during the period 1928-1932.¹⁰ By 1938, total sown area of all types of sovkhozy had reached 15 million hectares, most of which was newly cultivated land.¹¹

B. 1940-1944: The second period of putting new lands under crop on a large scale began in 1940 in accordance with the trend toward an increased development of the eastern regions of the country which the growing threat of war had dictated. A decree of 20 April, 1940 ordered that 4,345,000 hectares of virgin and fallow lands be ploughed up and put under grain by 1942,¹² a plan which required the migration of approximately 111,000 peasant households.¹³ The subsequent German occupation of an area which accounted for between a third and a half of Soviet pre-war grain production,¹⁴ forced a step-up in plans and during the period 1942-1944 an additional 12 million hectares of new land were put under crop in the eastern regions of the country.¹⁵

II. Reasons for, and Description of, the 1954-1960 programme

The most recent period of ploughing up new lands on a large scale began in 1954. Briefly stated, this latest programme was Khrushchev's 'way out' of an impasse formed, on the one hand, by Malenkov's promise to the Soviet people in August 1953 of 'an abundance of food products ... in the course of the next two or three years',¹⁶ and on the other hand, by the fact that the long 'neglected'¹⁷ agricultural branch of the Soviet economy was clearly incapable of delivering this promised abundance.

While it is true that the promise of more food products was followed up by a host of new material incentives to the peasantry,¹⁸ it is also true that these alone were not adequate to effect the 'sharp increase' promised by Malenkov in the short term. Were Malenkov's promise to be fulfilled, a crash programme of some sort was imperative. Hence the virgin lands project of 1954, which it was hoped would bring about a rapid increase in the supply of grain available for human consumption, livestock feed and sale on the world markets to finance the importation of more consumer goods which had also been promised.

The question of ploughing up new land was discussed during the September 1953 Plenum with agricultural officials from Kazakhstan,¹⁹ and the prospecting, drawing up of plans, and in some cases the actual ploughing,²⁰ began before the year ended. Other than the fact, however, that by the end of 1953 the press was speaking of the vast reserves of unutilized land available for cultivation in the eastern regions of the country,²¹ the first formal notice to the public that the party was considering the ploughing up of several million hectares of virgin and fallow land seems to have been in Khrushchev's speech of 23 February, 1954. In this speech he spoke of the necessity to increase government grain procurements during the course of 1954-1955 by at least 35-40% over the 1953 level, and as a way of doing this he mentioned the some 40 million hectares of unutilized land suitable for ploughing up in 14 provinces of the RSFSR and 8 provinces of Kazakhstan alone; 13 million

of which, he argued, could be ploughed and put under crop by 1956.

His proposal was accepted and embodied in a party decree of 2 March, 1954 and a joint Party and Government decree of 27 March, 1954. The original plan, broken out by year and institution, was as follows (in hectares):²²

	1954	1955	Total
Kolkhozy	1,800,000	6,900,000	8,700,000
Sovkhozy	500,000	3,800,000	4,300,000
Total	2,300,000	10,700,000	13,000,000

Of the 13 million hectares earmarked for ploughing, 6.3 were located in Kazakhstan,²³ with the remaining 6.7 located in the RSFSR (of which 2.3 were in Altai krai).²⁴ Other than these facts, we have not found any data concerning the geographical breakdown of the original plan. A rough idea of the geographical distribution, however, can be gained from an examination of the results to 5 November 1954, which were reported as follows:²⁵

	KOLKHOZY		SOVKHOZY	
	(thousand hectares)	% of plan	(thousand hectares)	% of plan
RSFSR	6,162	131	2,571.2	125
Altai krai	2,055	103	264.4	86
Omsk province	866	144	151.0	111
Chkalov P.	559	224	522.5	116
Novosibirsk P.	557	143	108.7	109
Krasnoyarsk krai	450	113	163.9	205
Chelyabinsk P.	301	125	202.7	124
Bashkir ASSR	282	282	118.6	115
Kurgan P.	226	113	60.7	121
Tyumen P.	212	151	0.5	—
Chita P.	159	398	18.0	360
Irkutsk P.	151	151	9.2	—
Kemerovo P.	145	104	14.5	132
Stalingrad P.	—	—	193.8	141
Saratov P.	167	209	320.5	128
KAZAKHSTAN	5,007	125	2,737.1	122
of which:				
Kustanai P.	1,169	117	537	120.4
Akmolinsk P.	926	128	708.4	118
Kokchetav P.	824	118	582.1	107.5
Pavlodar P.	785	121	190.4	190
West Kazakhstan P.	429	172	104.7	193.9
North Kazakhstan P.	394	113	359.9	102
Aktyubinsk P.	364	146	36.9	245.8
Karaganda P.	116	155	115.3	125.3
Semipalatinsk P.	162	—	23.5	157

The plan was greeted with considerable scepticism as to its agricultural and financial soundness, not only in the West but also within the party hierarchy of the Soviet Union where it evoked opposition from the 'anti-party group'. Molotov branded it as an 'adventure'²⁶ and along with Malenkov, Kaganovich and other members of the Central Committee, argued that the project was both economically and financially unsound.²⁷ Even after government and party approval of the project, Malenkov, who at the time was Chairman of the Council of Ministers, continued 'in every way to hinder the formation of new sovkhozy'.²⁸

When one examines the magnitude of the enterprise, and in particular the climatic conditions in the regions where it was to be undertaken, the scepticism which has been voiced by many appears, even in retrospect, to have been well founded. The scale of the operation, which has rightly been termed 'spectacular' and 'really colossal',²⁹ is perhaps best understood when it is realized that the total land area of England itself is only 13,170,000 hectares,³⁰ and that to date thrice this area has been ploughed up. This feat, a difficult one in itself, was complicated by problems of logistics, manpower recruitment and construction, arising out of the fact that most of the land earmarked for ploughing was located in remote and sparsely populated regions,³¹ poorly endowed with communications. All of the machinery and the 'largest part'³² of the work force estimated at two million persons³³ required to carry out the plan, had to be transported in from other Republics,³⁴ along with large amounts of construction equipment and materials.

Several hundred completely new rural settlements had to be constructed in the empty and treeless steppes. This entailed the construction of living and feeding facilities for the work force, storage and repair facilities for the machines, the organization of the supply and storage of spare parts, repair equipment, fuel, lubricants and water, plus the construction of facilities for the transportation and storage of the anticipated flow of grain.

The precariousness of the operation is brought to light when one examines the continental climate, the aridity and short vegetational period characteristic of most of the regions where the operation was to be carried out. In the northern provinces of Kazakhstan, where over 40% of the new lands are located, average annual precipitation varies between 20 and 40 centimetres,³⁵ and while most of this occurs in the summer months, it is only an average. Frosts begin about the end of August or the beginning of September, and snow about the middle of October, with a permanent snow cover of over 50 centimetres forming by the second or third week of November. The average mean January

temperature in these regions is from minus 16 to 18 degrees³⁶ Centigrade, with temperature drops to minus 40 and 45 degrees common.³⁷ The snow thaw ends about the middle of April, but frost, and sometimes snow, occur until the first or second week in May.³⁸

In the face of opposition based not so much on the magnitude of the undertaking, as on the climatic conditions prevailing in the regions earmarked for ploughing, Khrushchev cited examples of farms in these areas which were getting grain yields of up to 22 quintals per hectare, and argued 'even if we get yields of only 10-11 quintals per hectare on these new lands, it will give us a supplemental grain supply of 13-14.5 million tons'.³⁹ In view of the fact that the average grain yield in the Ukraine for the period 1949-1953 was only 10.7 quintals per hectare, 7.0 for the USSR as a whole, and in Kazakhstan, where most of the ploughing was to take place, only 6.2,⁴⁰ his argument seemed, and seems, absurd.

III. Year by Year Progress in Ploughing and Results in Grain Production

1954: Considering the magnitude of the enterprise, and particularly the distances involved, work in the virgin lands progressed at a surprising speed. By 10 August, 124 new sovkhozy had been created and more than 150,000 persons from state enterprises throughout the Union had taken up work in these regions.⁴¹ In contrast with the original plan which called for ploughing up of only 2.3 million hectares by the end of 1954, a total of 13.4 million had been ploughed, 3.6 million of which had been put under crop.⁴² By the end of 1954 a total of 17.6 million hectares had been ploughed.⁴³ Encouraged by these early successes, a decree of 13 August, 1954 announced that the original goal of 13 million hectares had been raised to 28-30 million for the end of 1956, 15 million of which were to be put under crop in the spring of 1955.⁴⁴

The crops from these previously uncultivated lands also had a greater success than had been predicted,⁴⁵ particularly in Siberia, where the yields ran between 15 and 20 quintals per hectare.⁴⁶ 'Caught unprepared'⁴⁷ by this bumper crop, and despite the traditional harvest-time mobilization of the populace, the Soviets were forced to leave an undeterminable, but certainly large, proportion of the crop to rot in the fields for want of transportation and storage facilities. The press, surprisingly, recognizing that there had not been sufficient time for construction, was somewhat forgiving of the lack of storage facilities, but was severely critical of the fact that in the 'confusion of the harvest' officials had not even taken the elementary precaution of covering the grain which had been left piled in the fields.⁴⁸

Despite the high losses and the relatively small amount of new land put under crop, the 1954 virgin land harvest was by up 14,793,000 tons, or 65% over the 1949-1953 average for these regions. As can be seen in Table IV, however, this substantial increase was only slightly reflected in the Union's total grain output that year of 85,568,000 tons, which was up by only 4,620,000 tons, or 6% over the average for the period 1949-1953. This fact is explained by the drought conditions and the resulting poor harvest in the Volga Basin and the Ukraine.⁴⁹

1955: The rapid pace set in 1954 was continued through 1955, and by the end of the year it had become possible to report that since the beginning of the programme a total of 250,000 persons had left for work in these areas,⁵⁰ 200,000 tractors (in terms of 15 hp) had been sent,⁵¹ 425 new sovhozy created,⁵² and a total of 30 million hectares of land ploughed up, 20 million of which had been put under crop.⁵³

Although expectations of the 1955 virgin land crop had been high, not only in Russia but also in the West,⁵⁴ the harvest was an exceptionally poor one. This was a result of drought which affected most of the virgin land areas, and in particular Kazakhstan,⁵⁵ which received only one-tenth of its normal rainfall.⁵⁶ The extent of the drought in Kazakhstan is illustrated by the fact that although sown area in 1955 was almost double that of 1954, the grain harvest was down by more than 35% from the 1954 level.⁵⁷ In the virgin land districts of the RSFSR, in contrast to a 20% increase in sown area, the grain harvest was down by 20% from that of 1954.⁵⁸ As to the Union harvest, the events of 1955 were reversed. Whereas in 1954 the excellent virgin land harvest had more than offset the effects of drought in other regions of the country, in 1955 good weather and an excellent crop in the Ukraine, Moldavia, the central black earth districts and several other regions of the country⁵⁹ resulted in a Union harvest of 106,733,000 tons, thus exceeding the 1949-1953 average by more than 30%.

The virgin lands near disaster of 1955 seems to have considerably shaken the confidence of Khrushchev's supporters. Opposition to the undertaking rekindled to the extent that even Khrushchev was forced to admit to the XX Party Congress that⁶⁰ 'certain comrades can well ask if we have acted correctly in ploughing up new lands in regions subject to drought'. He continued to maintain, however, that the project was economically sound and argued that 'if in a five-year period we get only two good harvests, one average, and nothing the remaining two years, then in comparison with the relatively small cost of producing grain under these conditions we can get grain cheaply and carry on grain production with a big profit'.

In addition to affirming that the party had indeed 'taken the correct course', and that the project would be continued, he went on to point out new lands, suitable but hitherto not earmarked, for ploughing up in Krasnoyarsk krai, Irkutsk province, Khabarovsk province, and Primorski krai.

1956: After 1955 there were no new grain sovkhozy created on new land in the virgin land districts⁶¹ and the rate of ploughing slowed down considerably. While this is perhaps due to the fact that the goal of 30 million hectares had already been fulfilled, it does seem that the disaster of 1955 considerably dampened the enthusiasm manifested during the course of 1954 and 1955 for a large overfulfilment of plans. During the course of 1955, only 5.9 million hectares of new land were ploughed up, bringing the cumulative total to 35.9 million.⁶² Sowings in the new lands, however, increased by 13 million, bringing the total of new lands put under crop since 1953 to 33 million hectares.⁶³

Given the opposition to the project from within the party hierarchy, there is the question as to what might have been the fate of both the enterprise and Khrushchev's political career had the crop failure of 1955 repeated itself.⁶⁴ As the 1956 crop in these new lands, however, was the best to date, the question is an academic one. The virgin land crop that year was 63,236,000 tons, up by more than 180% over the 1949-1953 average in these regions, and 90% over the two-year 1954-1955 average. In Kazakhstan the harvest was five-fold that of 1955 (see Table IV). In the virgin land districts of western Siberia and the Urals it was more than double that of 1955, and in eastern Siberia and the Volga basin, which had not been too severely hit by the 1955 drought, approximately the same as in 1955. The Union grain harvest that year of 127,582,000 was up by more than 55% over the Union's 1949-1953 average, and this despite unfavourable climatic conditions and a poor harvest in the Ukraine.⁶⁵

1957: During the course of 1957 an additional 3,125,000⁶⁶ hectares of new land were ploughed up, bringing the total to approximately 39 million. Because of the attenuating effects of crop rotations, sowings in the virgin land regions were only 31.7 million over 1953.⁶⁷ Owing to unfavourable climatic conditions in several areas of the country, in particular the Volga Basin, the Urals and several provinces of Kazakhstan,⁶⁸ the results were somewhat of a disillusionment. The virgin lands crop was down by more than 40% from that of 1956, and in Kazakhstan down by over 50%. The Union harvest of 105,041,000 tons was down by 18% from that of 1956, but yet almost 30% greater than the 1949-1953 average.

1958: The misfortune of 1957 seems to have killed the small momen-

tum remaining to the programme after the 1955 failure, as during the course of 1958 and 1959 there was almost no new land ploughed up in these regions. The crop from these new lands in 1958, however, was an excellent one—58,385,000 tons, only 8% short of the record of 62,263,000 tons set in 1956. This fact, plus favourable weather conditions and excellent harvests in all other regions of the country, resulted in a Union grain harvest of 141,216,000 tons—the best in history to date and up by 75% over the average for the pre-virgin land period of 1949-1953.

1959: The results in 1959, while good, were somewhat of a disappointment to Khrushchev who had been promised a record virgin land crop by Polyanski and Belyayev at the Party's XXI Congress held in January. The Ukraine, however, was afflicted by a drought, and in the last week of August heavy rain and considerable hail played havoc with the harvest in several regions of the RSFSR. Because of the exceptionally favourable weather conditions which had prevailed in Kazakhstan up to the end of August, Khrushchev nevertheless remained confident that the virgin land harvest would be better than that of 1956 and would offset the losses sustained in the other regions of the country.⁶⁹ The harvesting season in most of the virgin land areas, however, was a rainy one,⁷⁰ and the difficulties engendered by rain being complicated by a host of organization difficulties, some 1.8 million hectares of crops were left to be covered up by snow⁷¹—a default to which Khrushchev reacted vigorously (see his speech to the December 1959 Plenum and the subsequent dismissal of Belyayev).

In spite of these misfortunes, the virgin land crop that year of 54,571,000 tons, while down about 6% from that of 1958, can by no means be termed a poor one. It was almost two and a half times the 1949-1953 average, and about 20% better than the 1954-1958 average. In Kazakhstan, while the crop was down by about 10% from the 1958 level, it was almost five-fold the 1949-1953 average and almost 40% better than the average for the period 1954-1958. The Union's grain output of 125,905,000 tons, while down about 10% from 1958, was some 55% over the 1949-1953 average and 11% better than the 1954-1958 average.

1960: A new impetus to the programme was given by the two consecutive good harvests of 1958 and 1959. While figures are not available for the virgin land districts of the RSFSR, 1,648,000 hectares of new land were ploughed up in Kazakhstan alone,⁷² and by the end of 1960 Khrushchev was able to announce that a total of 41 million hectares had been ploughed up.⁷³ A partial geographical breakdown of this 41 million hectares is as follows:⁷⁴

1954-1960

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TABLE III

RSFSR 16,000,000		(URALS 4,000,000)	
Altai krai	2,873,000	Orenburg Province ..	1,673,000
Krasnoyarsk krai ..	1,311,000	Chelyabinsk P. ..	873,000
Novosibirsk province	1,546,000	Kurgan P. ..	602,000
Omsk P.	1,408,000	Bashkir ASSR ..	564,000
Chita P.	1,079,000	Sverdlovsk P. ..	105,000
Tyumen P.	720,000		
Irkutsk P.	426,000		
Kemerovo P.	301,000		
Tuva Aut. P.	310,000		
Buryat ASSR	262,000		
Tomsk P.	111,000		
		KAZAKHSTAN 25,000,000	
		Virgin Land krai	17,000,000

Although a severe winter had spoiled most of the winter wheat in the Ukraine, necessitating a resowing in the spring,⁷⁵ expectations for the virgin land crop were high because of the large snow fall in those regions.⁷⁶ A late spring in northern Kazakhstan, however, compounded by organizational difficulties, resulted in a prolonging of the planting.⁷⁷ The summer rainfall was much better than average, but as it was the coldest summer in fifty years,⁷⁸ yields were only 8.4 quintals per hectare—far short of the unrealistically high plan of 10.5 and slightly less than the 1959 yield of 8.7.⁷⁹ The virgin land crop of 58,116,000 tons was slightly better than that of 1959 and substantially the same as that of 1958. In Kazakhstan, the harvest of 18,523,000 tons was down slightly from that of 1959 and about 15% less than that of 1958. The Union harvest of 133,186,000 tons, while slightly better than the 1956-1959 average, was considerably short of the planned 152,000,000 tons,⁸⁰ but in any case, up by almost 65% over the 1949-1953 average.

Mention should perhaps be made of the fact that in line with a very marked increase in propaganda given to the programme since the latter part of 1960, a decree of the Kazakhstan Supreme Soviet dated 26 December, 1960, organized the provinces of northern Kazakhstan (Akmolinsk, Kokchetav, Pavlodar and North Kazakhstan) into an administrative unit known as Tseliny Krai (Virgin Land Territory). In March 1961, at the suggestion of Khrushchev who objected to the fact that the name of the capital of this territory meant 'white grave', Akomolinsk was renamed Tselinigrad (Virgin Land City).

1961: Climatic conditions to date seem, on the whole, to have been quite favourable, and Khrushchev has once again hazarded his annual prediction of a record crop.⁸¹ While the summer in northern Kazakhstan was a very dry one, the tone of the press seems to indicate that the virgin land harvest will approximate to the 1958-1960 average. As to the non-virgin land regions, the press seems less spotted with the traditional harvest time complaints concerning unrepaired machinery,

TABLE IV⁸⁶
SOVIET AGRICULTURAL OUTPUT 1953-1960

	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959	1960	1965 Plan
SOWN AREA (mil. of hectares)	157	166	185.8	194.8	193.7	195.6	196.3	203	
GRAIN PRODUCTION (mil. tons)	82.487	85.568	106.773	127.582	105.041	141.216	125.905	133.186	164-180
of which virgin lands	26.894	37.237	27.726	63.263	38.145	58.385	54.571	58.116	
of which RSFSR	21.455	29.579	22.972	39.440	27.570	36.394	35.486	39.583	
Kazakhstan	5.439	7.658	4.754	23.823	10.575	21.991	19.085	18.533	
CATTLE (mil. head)	56.6	55.8	56.7	58.8	61.4	66.8	70.8	74.2	
MILK (mil. tons)	36.5	38.2	43.0	49.1	54.7	58.7	62.0	61.5	100-105
MEAT (carcass wt., mil. tons)	5.8	6.3	6.3	6.6	7.4	7.7	8.9	9.3	16.0
EGGS (bil. units)	16.1	17.2	18.5	19.5	22.3	23.0	25	25.8	37
BUTTER (thousand tons)	497				754	779	845		
VEGETABLES (mil. tons)	11.389	11.918	14.100	14.298	14.766	14.865	14.774		
COTTON (mil. tons)	3.853	4.200	3.881	4.332	4.211	4.373	4.681	4.400	5.7-6.1
WOOL (thousand tons)	234.9			261.1	288.9	321.8	355.5		584.0
SUGAR BEETS (mil. tons)	23.179	19.844	31.049	32.488	39.672	54.392	43.942		76-84

delays, etc., and many regions of the country are reporting more grain than in 1960.⁸² The harvest in the Ukraine and the Kuban was an excellent one.⁸³ In Tambov province grain procurements by 15 September were double those of 1960 and in Voronezh province up by over 40%.⁸⁴

IV. Impact of the Programme on Total Agricultural Output since 1953

In examining the results of Soviet agricultural policy since 1953, one cannot help being impressed by the approximately 50% increase (Soviet index)⁸⁵ during the period 1954-1959—especially in view of the fact that agriculture is considered to be the lagging branch of the economy. Production figures for selected crops and years are as opposite.

The multiplicity of reforms which have been effected in agriculture since 1953 renders it impossible to determine what percentage of these increases can be imputed to the virgin lands programme. We shall, however, attempt to give at least an approximate idea of the important role played by this programme in bringing about these increases.

A. *Production of grain:* Although the grain harvest from the new lands, and in Kazakhstan in particular, has fluctuated considerably from year to year depending on weather, when one examines the results of the undertaking over the period, one finds that the deciding factor in the increase in grain output since 1953 was the ploughing up of the 41 million hectares of new land. Using five-year averages to eliminate the vicissitudes of nature, it can be seen from Table V that while Soviet grain output was up during the period 1956-1960 by an average of 45,630,000 tons per year over the average for the period 1949-1953, 32,052,000 tons, or 69%, of this increase has come from the virgin land areas.

TABLE V⁸⁷
AVERAGE ANNUAL GRAIN PRODUCTION
(thousand metric tons)

	1949-1953	1954-1958	1956-1960	increase in 1956-1960 over 1949-1953
USSR	80,948	113,326	126,584	45,636
Primary districts of ploughing up new land	22,444	44,951	54,496	32,052
Kazakhstan	3,942	13,760	18,799	14,857
Virgin Land districts of the RSFSR	18,502	31,191	35,697	17,195

The imputation of only 69% of the increase in Soviet grain output to the virgin lands, as arrived at in the preceding paragraph, however, understates the role of the project. This figure, which was arrived at

solely on the basis of tonnage, does not show the changes which have taken place in the assortment of grain making up the total harvest. It must be borne in mind that the expansion of sowings to wheat in the virgin lands has enabled other regions of the country to effect a partial shift from the production of wheat, which gave an average yield for the Union of only 8 quintals per hectare during the period 1954-1958,⁸⁸ to the production of corn (maize), which during the same period gave a yield of 16.1 quintals.⁸⁹ This fact, plus of course other measures (abolition of compulsory deliveries, a seven-fold increase in the price paid by the government for grain, increase in fertilizer and machinery, improvements in planning, etc.), permitted an increase in grain tonnage coming from the non-virgin land regions despite a decrease in their area sown to grain. If during the period 1953-1959 there was an approximate 6 million hectare decrease in the area sown to wheat in the non-virgin land regions of the country,⁹⁰ there was an increase of over 5 million hectares in the area sown to corn.⁹¹ The result was that the corn harvest increased from 3,697,000 tons, or 4½% of the total grain harvest in 1953, to 12,000,000 tons, or 9½% of the total in 1959.⁹²

B. *Procurements of grain*: The evolution in the volume and geographical distribution of government procurements of grain since 1953 is seen in Tables VI and VII. It will be noted from Table VII that

TABLE VI⁹⁴
GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT OF GRAIN
(million metric tons)

	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959	1960
USSR	31.107	34.601	36.902	54.107	35.411	56.864	46.637	46.7
Virgin Land Regions	10.8	17.8	11.2	36.7	16.9	32.8	27.7	28.9
Kazakhstan ..	2.4	4.0	1.7	16.1	4.8	15.0	11.5	10.4
R.SFSR ..	8.4	13.8	9.5	20.6	12.1	17.8	16.2	18.5

TABLE VII⁹⁵
AVERAGE ANNUAL GRAIN PROCUREMENTS
(million metric tons)

	1949-1953	1954-1958	1956-1960
USSR	32.8	43.6	47.9
Virgin Land Regions	9.8	23.1	28.6
Kazakhstan ..	1.8	8.3	11.6
R.SFSR	8.0	14.8	17.0

while the volume of procurements in the non-virgin land districts was 3.7 million tons⁹³ less per year during the period 1956-1960 than in the period 1949-1953, there was an increase of 18.8 million tons in the virgin land regions, the result being that total grain procurements

during the period 1956-1960 were up by 15.1 million tons or 46% over the period 1949-1953. Whereas during the period 1949-1953 the virgin land regions accounted for less than 30% of total grain procurements, corresponding figures for the period 1954-1958 and 1956-1960 are 50% and 59% respectively, and in 1960, 62%.

C. *Exports of grain*: The increase in the marketable surplus of grain stemming from the virgin land programme has enabled the USSR 'to move into a leading position as an exporter of grain, principally wheat'.⁹⁶ Grain exports since 1950 have moved as follows:

TABLE VIII⁹⁷
SOVIET GRAIN EXPORTS
(thousand metric tons)

1950	2,885	1957	7,413
1955	3,683	1958	5,100
1956	3,215	1959	7,009

While the largest part of the increase has been to the Eastern European satellites, exports to non-communist countries have also increased. In discussing the significance of this increase for the West at the US Congressional Hearings on Soviet Growth, W. E. Hamilton gave as an example the case of the Netherlands.⁹⁸ In 1957 the USSR exported 2,000 tons of wheat to the Netherlands, in 1958 5,000 tons, and the estimate for 1959 (based on the results of the first six months) was 300,000 tons 'plus a substantial amount of feed grains'. After pointing out that 'these sales represent lost markets' for American and Canadian farmers, he warned that 'we should be prepared for a substantial rise in Soviet wheat exports'. Another Western observer, A. Lindsay,⁹⁹ estimated that the Soviets will be able to export as much as 10 million tons per year. However, in view of the fact that Khrushchev has mentioned the possibility of reducing government purchases of grain,¹⁰⁰ it would seem that the limiting factor with respect to exports may be the Soviet ability to conclude trade agreements rather than the Soviet productive potential.

D. *Other products*: The direct effects of the virgin land programme (the part of the increase in output coming from these lands) in bringing about the increase in other products have, to date, been far less important than in the case of grain. Insufficiencies in the geographical refinement of the data available to us have made it impossible to determine the output of non-grain crops in the virgin lands. The data available, however, do permit us to arrive at a figure capable of illustrating the small role of the virgin land programme. In the case of the production of meats and fats, for example, available data show that of the Union's

increase of 3.1 million tons for the period 1953-1959, .9 million¹⁰¹ came from the Volga basin, the Urals, eastern Siberia, western Siberia, the Far East and Kazakhstan. All of this .9 million, however, cannot be attributed to the virgin lands programme, because of the fact that of the many provinces and territories in western Siberia, for example, the only ones in which there has been any large scale new ploughing are the Tyumen, Omsk, Tomsk, Kemerovo and Novosibirsk provinces and the Altai territory. In eastern Siberia and the Far East, only Krasnoyarsk territory and the Irkutsk, Chita and Amur provinces would fit the definition of 'basic virgin land regions'. In the Urals only the Sverdlovsk, Kurgan, Chelyabinsk, Orenburg provinces and the Bashkir ASSR are virgin land regions and in the Volga basin only Saratov and Stalingrad provinces. For want of a better figure, however, if we attribute all of this .9 million increase to the virgin lands programme, we find that it is still less than a third of the increase for the Union, and only 17% of the Union's 1953 output. Figures arrived at on a similar basis for other products are as follows:¹⁰²

TABLE IX

	Increase 1959 over 1953	Increase as % of 1953 Union Output
MILK		
Union	25,267,000 tons	70
Virgin Land	6,756,000 "	18
Kazakhstan	826,000 "	2
EGGS		
Union	9,160,000,000 units	56
Virgin Land	2,677,000,000 "	10
Kazakhstan	307,000,000 "	1
MEAT		
Union	3,096,000 "	53
Virgin Land	996,000 "	17
Kazakhstan	205,000 "	3½
VEGETABLES		
Union	3,385,000 tons	30
Virgin Land	1,248,000 "	11
Kazakhstan	212,000 "	2
SUGAR BEETS		
Union	20,769,000 tons	91
Virgin Land	1,555,000 "	7
Kazakhstan	424,000 "	2

The above percentages, however, in no way reflect the increases in the agricultural output of the non-virgin land regions stemming from

the improvement in regional specialization made possible by the programme. Prior to the virgin lands programme, the inadequacy of the Union's marketable grain surplus forced almost all regions in the country to try to be self-sufficient in grain production—often to the detriment of livestock production and the raising of industrial crops.¹⁰³ The increased flow of grain from the new lands, however, has enabled the government to free many regions of the country from the obligation of selling grain to the government. Thus we find in the non-virgin land regions not only a reduction in the volume of grain procurements, but a diversion of some 8 million hectares¹⁰⁴ (6 million of which were wheat) from grain to industrial and fodder crops, with a concomitant rise in the production and procurement of livestock products and non-grain crops. To take for example the case of Belorussia, by no means unique, where, while government procurements of grain fell from a level of 448,000 tons¹⁰⁵ per year during the period 1949-1953 to 245,000 tons in 1960,¹⁰⁶ sales by the government to the Republic reached 45,460 tons (five times the amount sold to the Republic in 1950).¹⁰⁷ This easing of the Republic's grain problem permitted a reduction in the area sown to grain from 3,481,000 hectares in 1953 to 2,743,000 in 1959, and a diversion of this 738,000 hectares to other crops. During this same period the number of cattle increased from 2,678,000 head to 3,472,000, output of meat from 240,000 tons to 433,000 tons, milk from 1,861,000 tons to 2,859,000 tons, eggs from 571 billion to 868 billion, sugar beets from 91,000 tons to 305,000 tons, flax from 20,000 tons to 57,000 tons.¹⁰⁸ During this same period in the Ukraine,¹⁰⁹ the area sown to grain fell from 20,041,000 hectares to 17,366,000. Sugar beet production, however, rose from 16,444,000 tons to 27,015,000 tons and sunflower seed from 951,000 to 1,276,000; meat increased from 1,421,000 to 2,248,000 and milk from 7,731,000 to 14,808,000 tons. Similar changes, to a greater or lesser extent, could be shown for almost all the other Republics of the Union.¹¹⁰

E. *Reported results on the financial plane:* Despite yields which are normally below the Union average, and the wastes and inefficiency which have been associated with the programme, the Soviets have persistently maintained that the programme has been a financial success. Our purpose here is not to assess the financial results, but to report the Soviet statements made in this connection. We are informed that due to the economies of large-scale production, the cost of producing grain in the virgin lands is less than the Union average with the result that in 1954 the cost of producing grain in the kolkhozy of western Siberia was only 43% of the Union average, 49% in Kazakh-

stan and 68% in eastern Siberia.¹¹¹ The 1957 production costs per quintal of grain in the kolkhozy of western Siberia were stated to be 37 rubles, in the Ukraine 34 rubles, in Kazakhstan 53 and in the North Caucasus 37. In Smolensk province that year a quintal of grain cost 172 rubles to produce, in Kalinin province 166 and in Belorussia 119.¹¹² Prices paid by the government for grain averaged 74 rubles in 1958.¹¹³ The average grain yields in the Ukraine and Belorussia in 1957, when the cost of production was 43 rubles and 119 rubles per quintal respectively, was 14.8 and 7.5 quintals per hectare respectively, and the Union average was 8.4. Yields and costs in Kazakhstan are stated as follows:¹¹⁴

TABLE X

	Yield (quintals per hectare)	Cost per quintal (rubles per quintal)
1956	10.6	29.97
1957	4.6	53.00 (37 in the provinces of northern Kazakhstan)
1959	8.7	40.00 (provinces of northern Kazakhstan)
1960	8.4	45.83 (plan 39.59)

In Altai krai of the RSFSR where to date some 2.9 million hectares have been ploughed up, average cost of producing grain for the period 1954-1958 was given as 26 rubles, and in 1960 as 33.3 rubles.¹¹⁵

During the period 1954-1960, government investments in the virgin lands totalled 44 billion rubles over and above the usual level of capital investments in these regions prior to 1954. In this same period, as a result of the increase in the production of marketable grain, the government got supplementary turnover tax receipts and profits of more than 76 billion rubles. This would show a profit to the government of 32 billion rubles for the period. In addition to these 32 billion rubles, fixed capital in the sovkhozy, RTS and procurement organizations in these regions increased by about 35 billion.¹¹⁶ Corresponding figures for other years are as follows (cumulative totals, in billions of pre-1961 rubles):¹¹⁷

TABLE XI

	Total Investments	Received by government as supplementary taxes and profits	Profits	Increase in the state's fixed assets (sovkhozy, RTS and procurement organizations)
1958	30.7	48.9	18 ^a	24
1959	37.4	62	24	30
(Kazakhstan)	20	31	11	14)
1960	44	76	32	35

^a RSFSR 9.3, Kazakhstan 8.9.

V. Difficulties Encountered to Date

In spite of the economic and financial success of the programme it has been associated with waste and inefficiency to the extent that 'output in the virgin lands is only 50% of what it might be were the operation correctly run'.¹¹⁸ The greatest difficulties to date have been: (1) shortages of machinery, (2) shortages of manpower, (3) shortages of repair facilities and spare parts, (4) low degree of machine utilization, (5) shortage of grain storage facilities, (6) extremely poor living conditions, and (7) transportation difficulties.

A. *Shortages of machinery*: Although some 40-50% of the new tractors and combines coming off production lines since 1954 have been dispatched to the virgin land areas,¹¹⁹ we find that as late as 1961 one of the complaints commonly voiced by virgin land officials concerns the inadequacy of the machine parks. In Kazakhstan, for example, as at the beginning of 1959 there was only one tractor for each 218 hectares of sown area, as against 190 for the Union, and 35 (1959) for the USA.¹²⁰ The frequency with which the question was raised at the conferences of the leading agricultural workers of the Virgin Land krai and Siberia in March 1961 moved Khrushchev to remark that 'many comrades . . . have raised the question of machine shortages and the necessity of allocating more machines to the virgin land districts. This is a justified request.'¹²¹ In a country, however, where agricultural machinery is in short supply everywhere these complaints are not surprising.¹²² According to one Soviet official, 'the agricultural machine building industry is not capable, under any conditions, of delivering within the next two or three years the quantity of machines the Ministry of Agriculture is requesting'.¹²³

B. *Shortage of repair facilities and spare parts*: Shortages of repair facilities and spare parts have long plagued agricultural production in all regions of the country,¹²⁴ and it is not surprising to find that the situation is more acutely felt in the virgin lands. While no overall statistics seem to be available, the acuteness of the situation can perhaps be illustrated by the case of Pavlodar province where only 21 out of a total of 89 sovkhozy have repair shops. 'The same situation is observed in other virgin land provinces',¹²⁵ with the result that repairs are conducted in tents and often in the open.¹²⁶ The Union shortage of spare parts is aggravated by the confusion which still reigns in the distributive system and inventory accounting in these regions. Tractors have been forced to remain idle after dark for want of a common headlight bulb.

C. *Manpower shortages*: Although the government has been offering many attractive material incentives (relocation bonus, transportation

and moving expenses, high rates of pay and home construction loans)¹²⁷ to attract skilled personnel to settle in the virgin lands, the climate and living conditions there are such that the recruitment programme has fallen far short of its mark. Most of the personnel leaving for the virgin lands to date have been younger people without experience, primarily from among the Komsomol groups, responding to or unable to evade patriotic calls, lured by adventure, seeking to escape or redeem past errors.¹²⁸ As a consequence, machines, which themselves are in short supply, are very often either operated by inexperienced teenagers or left standing idle.¹²⁹ Altai krai in March, 1959 was 30,000 machinists short of the number necessary to ensure round-the-clock operation of equipment,¹³⁰ and it was much the same in Kustanai and Akmolinsk provinces.¹³¹ In Omsk province combines very often stood idle for want of operators in 1958 and 1959,¹³² and in 1960 in many sovkhozy of the province there were only 10 combine operators for every 100 combines.¹³³

To cope with similar shortages in Kazakhstan, a Republican decree called for the full-time training of 65,000 new tractorists during the winter of 1959-1960 and the training of an additional 50,000 in off-duty time. Only half that amount, however, were trained, and in March, 1960, while there was a need for 236,000 tractorists in the republic, only 140,000 were available.¹³⁴ In 1961 there was a need of 100,000 combine operators for the autumn harvest, while on 12 July there were only 40,000 available.¹³⁵

While taking steps to resolve the problem in the long term (primarily via the creation of better living conditions) the government, as a short term solution, has been transferring tractor and combine operators from the southern regions of the country after completion of the harvest there. Every year an estimated average of about 250,000 skilled personnel and students have been sent in from other republics for temporary work in the farms of Kazakhstan.¹³⁶ This short term solution, however, is a costly one. In Akmolinsk province the cost of bringing a temporary worker into a sovkhos comes to about 1,600 rubles for travel expenses alone.¹³⁷ Nor is it simply a question of money. As Khrushchev has pointed out many times, student labour is of very low productivity,¹³⁸ and even in the case of the skilled worker, being there only temporarily and on a piece-work basis, he has no interest in the care and upkeep of the machinery entrusted to him with the result, for example, that a CK-3 combine costing 39,000 rubles and designed to last for 7 years is useless at the end of one season.¹³⁹

D. *Low degree of machine utilization:* The shortages of manpower, spare parts and repair facilities are reflected in the low level of machine

utilization. In Kazakhstan in 1959 some 18,000 tractors, or 15% of the tractor park,¹⁴⁰ did not participate in the spring ploughing with the result that 'when it was time to be getting ready for the harvest, they had just finished sowing'.¹⁴¹ In the same republic, in the autumn of that year, 32,000 combines, or more than a third of the combine park, stood idle, with the result that 1,618,000 hectares of grain were left to be covered with snow.¹⁴² In Akmolinsk province in the spring of 1960, even in good weather, one-third of the tractor park stood idle.¹⁴³

E. *Shortage of storage facilities:* Each year 'literally millions of poods of grain rot or spoil'¹⁴⁴ owing to the inadequacy of storage facilities in these regions. While the press in 1954 was willing to admit that there had not been sufficient time for construction, with 'plans for the construction of grain receiving points remaining unfulfilled year after year'¹⁴⁵ and the 'problem is growing worse every day',¹⁴⁶ the tone of the press has become increasingly acrimonious.

In the virgin land districts of the RSFSR, while the grain harvest in 1959 was up by almost 17 million tons over the 1949-1953 average, the capacity of grain storage facilities had increased by only 10 million tons since 1954.¹⁴⁷ In Kazakhstan, as against harvests of 23.8, 21.9 and 19.1 million tons respectively in 1956, 1958 and 1959, the capacity of grain storage facilities in 1960 was only 10 million tons.¹⁴⁸ Owing to this discrepancy in the size of the harvest and storage facilities, grain is very often temporarily stored in open bunkers on the farms for subsequent transfer¹⁴⁹ (often the following year),¹⁵⁰ to receiving points—a practice which in many regions results in as much as 10% of the harvest being lost.¹⁵¹

The shortage of storage facilities gives rise in many cases to excessively long distances between the fields and the receiving points. In Kustanai province, for example, while 46% of the farms are located at distances of up to 20 km. from the receiving point, 34% are located at distances exceeding 40 km.¹⁵² Distances of up to 100-150 km. have been cited in other provinces.¹⁵³ These distances are striking enough, apart from the traditional harvest-time reports of trucks driving through piles of grain, rolling to the procurement points listing and with grain leaking out, the numerous reports of the roads strewn with grain, etc.¹⁵⁴

The lack of mechanization of the receiving, cleaning and drying of grain at the receiving points has also caused very serious bottlenecks in some districts. Cases have been cited of as many as one to two hundred trucks standing in line for up to 8 hours before they could be unloaded.¹⁵⁵

F. *Turnover of managerial personnel:* While the solution to the shortages of manpower, repair shops and storage facilities, which are at the root of most of the difficulties to date, is to be found only at the Union level, the blame is being placed on these at the bottom of the hierarchy. In addition to the well-publicized sacking of Belyayev at the republican level, there has also been considerable shuffling at the sovkhos level. In Akmolinsk province during the period 1958-1960, 88 out of 120 sovkhos directors were replaced, in Kustanai province 92 out of 195 and in Pavlodar province 57 out of 89.¹⁵⁶

G. *Living conditions:* The uppermost problem in the minds of those who have gone there to live and work is that of living conditions. While a discussion of this question more logically belongs to a sociological study, it must be mentioned here because, as Khrushchev has pointed out many times, it is at the root of the manpower shortages and the many difficulties ensuing therefrom. As a result of pitiful living conditions in these areas, the government not only has great difficulty in recruiting people to leave for the virgin lands but also a difficult time retaining those that are there.¹⁵⁷ During the period 1957-1960 24,000 specialists of all types were sent for work in the virgin land districts of Kazakhstan, while during this same period 14,000 specialists left because of unsatisfactory living conditions.¹⁵⁸ It was for this same reason that several thousand persons left work in the virgin land sovkhos of the RSFSR during 1960.¹⁵⁹

The overall Soviet housing situation being a poor one,¹⁶⁰ it is not surprising to find that it is especially acute in the virgin land regions, particularly in Kazakhstan where the rates of industrial, agricultural and population expansion have considerably exceeded the national averages. This republic, which in January 1959 had a population of 9,310,000,¹⁶¹ has seen its population increase by 3 million during the period 1954-1961.¹⁶² And while 1.5 million of this increase has been in rural areas,¹⁶³ as a result of the competing demands of capital construction in industry and agriculture only 218,000 houses have been built in rural districts of the republic in this same period.¹⁶⁴ If during the four-year period 1954-1957 the number of workers in the state farms of Kazakhstan increased by some 332,000 persons,¹⁶⁵ during this same period only 1,800,000 sq. m. of housing were built.¹⁶⁶ Even on the assumption that the ratio of workers to inhabitants on these state farms is a rather high 50% this would mean that the new settlers in the state farms of the republic had only 2.7 sq. m. of permanent housing per person in 1958. This is little more than half the Union urban average of 4.97 for that year,¹⁶⁷ and less than one-third of the health norm of 9 per person mentioned by Sosnovy.¹⁶⁸

The housing problem in these areas is compounded by the tremendous size of the virgin land sovkhos, which in 1961 averaged 63,500 hectares.¹⁶⁹ This size has made daily commuting to the fields impossible in many cases, with the result that many of the workers in the virgin land sovkhos are forced to live in the fields at a considerable distance from the sovkhos village in a tent or trailer and separated from their families, sometimes for as much as several months out of the year.¹⁷⁰

Shortages of drinking water are a matter of concern in many of the virgin land districts.¹⁷¹ In Akmolinsk province, for example, many of the farms are forced to melt snow down in the winter time, to transport water several dozens of kilometres and ration it out in litres during the summer.¹⁷² Throughout these regions the situation seems to be critical with respect to the number of hospitals, schools, public baths and recreational facilities.¹⁷³ Officials are particularly concerned with the shortage of canteens and kindergarten because a large number of women might otherwise be freed for work in the fields.¹⁷⁴ The poor living conditions have in turn made the recruitment of doctors and teachers difficult, shortages of them being reported in all the virgin land regions.¹⁷⁵

The distributive system not being able to cope with the rapid expansion of the population,¹⁷⁶ many articles of common use and in plentiful supply in other parts of the Union are not to be found in the virgin land stores.¹⁷⁷ In Akmolinsk province, for example, which has received many settlers from the warmer regions of the country, during the course of 1959 only 150 overcoats were made available for sale by the republican trading organization.¹⁷⁸ In Barankul district of this province there was no furniture available for sale throughout 1960.¹⁷⁹

H. *Transportation:* While space does not permit a discussion of the strain placed on the main rail lines by the increase in shipments of agricultural machinery, construction materials, trucks, etc., into, and the increased flow of grain out of, the virgin lands,¹⁸⁰ mention should at least be made of the problem within the virgin lands. The fact that the new sovkhos were set up in places 50-100 or more kilometres from rail lines,¹⁸¹ and often without even the most primitive roads, necessitated a substantial programme of narrow gauge railways in 1954¹⁸² and by August 1957 a total of 3,000 km. of narrow gauge railways and highways had been completed in Kazakhstan alone.¹⁸³

The present condition of the roads in these regions is pitiful. In Kazakhstan, in 1958, only 3.3% of the total road mileage was hard-topped, and in Altai krai only .26%.¹⁸⁴ In discussing the poor condition of the roads at the conference of the leading agricultural workers of

Virgin Land krai, however, Khrushchev said 'I think, comrades, that in any case it is necessary first of all to construct houses, schools and hospitals. Let us get shaken up a bit on the bad roads, but it will be worse if the sovkhos workers don't have dwellings, schools and hospitals'.¹⁸⁵

I. *Soil erosion*: Despite the expectation of some Western observers that the virgin land project would end up in a dust bowl,¹⁸⁶ from the relatively little that this question has been discussed in the Soviet press, it does not seem that there has been any large-scale soil erosion to date. While *Izvestiya* of 4 January, 1957 warns that if some farms continue to raise wheat year after year 'the advantages of the virgin lands will be negated in the next few years' and the same paper of 7 May, 1958 reports new areas of soil erosion in the eastern parts of the country as a result of ploughing up sandy soils, there seems to be very little concern over the problem. In his many speeches concerning virgin land problems, Khrushchev has devoted only a few passing words to the subject. While it is true that in the spring of 1960 the Western press was reporting huge dust storms in the Soviet Union, it seems that the origin of these storms was in the Kuban and the Ukraine, where moisture conditions were the worst since 1928.¹⁸⁷

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¹ Speech of 23 February 1954.

² *Ekonomika selskovo khozyaistva* 1961 no. 6 p. 4.

³ In his speech of 14 March, 1961 to the conference of leading agricultural workers of Virgin Land krai, Khrushchev announced that since 1954 a total of 41 million hectares had been ploughed up in the virgin land regions. This figure does not include the millions of hectares put under crops in other regions of the country as a result of draining swamps, clearing rocks and bushes. In Belorussia, for example, during the period 1954-1961 one million hectares of swampy land were drained and put under crop. See speech of Mazurov to January 1961 Plenum, *Pravda* 13.i.61.

⁴ Harvested cropland in the USA increased from 67,305,735 to 145,493,000 hectares during the period 1879-1929. *World Almanac 1957* (New York, 1957) p. 673.

⁵ *Selskoye khozyaistvo SSSR: statisticheski sbornik* (M., 1960) p. 127.

⁶ Annual economic report for 1960, *Pravda* 26.i.61.

⁷ For a brief and clear explanation of this problem see Maurice Dobb, *Soviet Economic Development since 1917* (London, 1957) pp. 213-25.

⁸ *Ibid.* p. 225.

⁹ Alexander Baykov, *The Development of the Soviet Economic System* (Cambridge Univ. Press, 1950) p. 138.

¹⁰ P. Lyashchenko, *Istoriya narodnovo khozyaistva SSSR* vol. 2 (M., 1956) p. 346.

¹¹ T. Urkin, *Puti glubokovo uluchsheniya raboty sovkhosov* (M., 1955) pp. 4-5 and 17-18.

¹² P. Lyashchenko *op. cit.* pp. 473-4.

¹³ V. Katkoff, *The Soviet Economy 1940-1965* (Baltimore, 1961) p. 205.

¹⁴ M. Dobb *op. cit.* p. 27.

¹⁵ C. Bettelheim, *L'Economie Soviétique* (Paris, 1950) p. 83.

¹⁶ See Malenkov's speech of 8 August 1953.

¹⁷ See Khrushchev's speech of 3 September 1953.

¹⁸ Very briefly: an increase in prices paid to the peasant, and a reduction of his taxation in specie and kind. See Tax Law of 8 August 1953 and decrees of 21 September 1953.

¹⁹ See *Ekonomika selskovo khozyaistva* 1960 no. 12 p. 8.

²⁰ *Ibid.* and Khrushchev's speech of 23 February 1954.

²¹ See *Pravda* 11.xii.53, 25.i.54 and 3.ii.54.

²² *Pravda* 28.iii.54.

²³ *Ibid.* 25.iii.54.

²⁴ *Ibid.* 26.iii.54.

²⁵ *Ibid.* 8.xi.54.

²⁶ Bulganin's speech at December 1958 Plenum, *Pravda* 19.xii.58.

²⁷ Belyayev, *Pravda* 31.x.60.

²⁸ *Ekonomika selskovo khozyaistva* 1959 no. 3 p. 5.

²⁹ Edward Crankshaw, 'Russia's Food Supply', *The Listener*, London, 11.xi.54.

³⁰ *World Almanac 1957* p. 379.

³¹ As against the Soviet's Union's population density of 9.4 inhabitants per sq. km. in 1959 Kazakhstan had only 3.4 and Aktyubinsk province only 1.3. *Narodnoye khozyaistvo SSSR v 1959 g.* (M., 1960) pp. 27-32.

³² Khrushchev's speech of 23 February 1954.

³³ Crankshaw *loc. cit.*

³⁴ Khrushchev's speech of 23 February 1954.

³⁵ N. I. Pyalikov, *Ekonomicheskaya geografiya SSSR* (M., 1958) p. 297.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ A. Fichelle, *Géographie Physique et Economique de l'URSS* (Paris, 1946) p. 146.

³⁸ *Pravda* (22. v. 1960) reports that there was snow in Akmolinsk Province on 9 May 1960.

³⁹ Speech of 23 February 1954. He used the figures 800-900 poods.

⁴⁰ *Selskoye khozyaistvo SSSR* p. 214.

⁴¹ *Partiya, organizator krutovo pod'ema selskovo khozyaistva SSSR* (A collection of decrees, M., 1958) p. 319.

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ Annual economic report for 1954, *Pravda* 21.i.55.

⁴⁴ Decree of 13 August 1954.

⁴⁵ See *New York Herald Tribune* (European Edition) 7.ix.54.

⁴⁶ *Le Monde* 20.x.55.

⁴⁷ See Crankshaw's account in *The Observer* 10.x.55.

⁴⁸ See for example *Pravda* 11.ix.54 and 27.vi.55.

⁴⁹ Annual economic report for 1954.

⁵⁰ Khrushchev's speech to XX Party Congress, *Pravda* 15.ii.56.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² Annual economic report for 1955, *Pravda* 30.i.56.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ See for example *New York Herald Tribune* (European Edition) 7.ix.55.

⁵⁵ Annual economic report for 1955.

⁵⁶ *Le Monde* 23.viii.55.

⁵⁷ Sown area: 1954-11.5 million hectares, 1955-20.6. Grain harvest: 1954-7,658,000 tons, 1955-4,754,000 tons (*Selskoye khozyaistvo SSSR*) pp. 224 and 226-7.

⁵⁸ Sown area: 1954-43 million hectares, 1955-51. Grain harvest: 1954-29,579,000 tons, 1955-22,972,000 tons (*Ibid.*).

⁵⁹ Annual economic report for 1955.

⁶⁰ Speech of 14 February 1956, *Pravda* 15.ii.56.

⁶¹ There were, however, several hundred grain-producing sovkhosy organized on the basis of existing kolkhozy—see data in *Selskoye khozyaistvo SSSR* p. 43. There were also 138 sovkhosy specialized in the production of potatoes and vegetables created in the regions surrounding the industrial and population centres of Kazakhstan. See speech of Kunayev, *Pravda* 12.i.61.

⁶² *Selskoye khozyaistvo SSSR* p. 223.

⁶³ *Le Monde* 8.viii.56.

⁶⁴ For example the editorial of *Ekonomika selskovo khozyaistva* (1961 no. 6 p. 6) after praising the results of the virgin lands programme goes on to say: 'The eliminated anti-party group, which took an early stand against the decision of the Central Committee to cultivate the virgin and fallow lands, now appears particularly bankrupt. The party was completely correct in throwing out these unbelievers and capitulators out of touch with reality and not believing in the great creative forces of the Soviet people'.

⁶⁵ Annual economic report for 1956.

- ⁶⁶ *Izvestiya* 20.x.57.
⁶⁷ *Selskoye khozyaistvo SSSR* p. 224.
⁶⁸ Annual economic report for 1957, *Pravda* 27.i.58.
⁶⁹ See Khrushchev's speech of 30 August 1959.
⁷⁰ *Pravda* 12.x.59.
⁷¹ Khrushchev's speech of 25 December 1959 to Party Plenum, *Pravda* 29.xii.59.
⁷² Kunayev, *Pravda* 12.i.61.
⁷³ Speech to conference of the leading agricultural workers of Virgin Land krai, *Pravda* 19.iii.61.
⁷⁴ Khrushchev, *Pravda* 21.i.61, 7.iii.61, 12.iii.61 and 19.iii.61.
⁷⁵ *Pravda* 10.iv.60.
⁷⁶ *Pravda* 28.iv.60.
⁷⁷ Kunayev, Speech at January 1961 Plenum, *Pravda* 12.i.61.
⁷⁸ *Pravda* 19.xi.60.
⁷⁹ Kunayev, *Pravda* 12.i.61 and *Selskoye khozyaistvo SSSR* p. 214.
⁸⁰ *Voprosy ekonomiki* 1960 no. 1 p. 3.
⁸¹ Cited in editorial of *Pravda* 23.viii.61.
⁸² See *Pravda* 13.viii.61 and 24.vii.61.
⁸³ *Pravda* 22.vii.61.
⁸⁴ *Pravda* 17.ix.61 and 19.ix.61.
⁸⁵ Index of Soviet agricultural production; 1953—100, 1956—132, 1957—136, 1958—151, 1959—151. *Selskoye khozyaistvo SSSR* p. 21.
⁸⁶ 1953—1959: *Selskoye khozyaistvo SSSR* pp. 132-3, 226-7, 202-3, 262, 349, 350, 355, 360; 1960: Annual economic report for 1960, *Pravda* 26.i.61; 1965 Plan: Khrushchev's speech of 27 January 1959, *Pravda* 28.i.59.
⁸⁷ Figures for period 1949-1953 and 1954-1958: *Selskoye khozyaistvo SSSR* pp. 226-7; figures for 1956-1960: *Ekonomika selskovo khozyaistva* 1961 no. 6 p. 5; Kazakhstan: Khrushchev's speech of 21 March 1961, *Pravda* 26.iii.61; RSFSR: by process of subtraction.
⁸⁸ *Selskoye khozyaistvo SSSR* p. 217.
⁸⁹ *Ibid.* p. 221.
⁹⁰ Arrived at on the basis of data in *Selskoye khozyaistvo SSSR* pp. 150-1.
⁹¹ *Ibid.* pp. 132-3 and 156-7.
⁹² *Ibid.* pp. 202-3.
⁹³ This is the result of an approximate 37% reduction in compulsory deliveries of grain in 1954, and the fact that since 1958 many regions have been freed from grain sales to the government.
⁹⁴ 1953-1959: *Selskoye khozyaistvo SSSR* pp. 228 and 229; 1960: Annual economic report for 1960, *Pravda* 26.i.61; Virgin Land regions: *Ekonomika selskovo khozyaistva* 1961 no. 6 p. 5; Kazakhstan: Kunayev, *Pravda* 12.i.61; RSFSR: by process of subtraction.
⁹⁵ 1949-1953 and 1954-1958: *Selskoye khozyaistvo SSSR* pp. 226-7; 1956-1960: calculated on basis of Table VI.
⁹⁶ W. E. Hamilton, Director of Research, American Farm Bureau Federation, testimony of 20 November 1959 to hearings of the Joint Economic Committee of the U.S. Congress on 'Comparisons of the United States and Soviet Economies'. US Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. p. 202.
⁹⁷ 1950-1958: *Narodnoye khozyaistvo SSSR v 1958 g.* pp. 802-3; 1959: *Narodnoye khozyaistvo SSSR v 1959 g.* p. 720.
⁹⁸ See footnote 96.
⁹⁹ A. Lindsay, *The Growth of Soviet Economic Power and Its Consequences for Canada and the USA* (1959) p. 16.
¹⁰⁰ Speech at December 1958 Plenum, *Pravda* 19.xii.58.
¹⁰¹ See *Selskoye khozyaistvo SSSR* pp. 338-9.
¹⁰² *Ibid.* pp. 230, 240, 355, 349, 348.
¹⁰³ See speech of Georgian delegate to December 1958 Plenum, *Pravda* 18.xii.58.
¹⁰⁴ Calculation made on the basis of data in *Selskoye khozyaistvo SSSR* pp. 147 and 150-1.
¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.* pp. 94-95.
¹⁰⁶ *Ekonomika selskovo khozyaistva* 1961 no. 5 p. 36.
¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*
¹⁰⁸ All figures for Ukraine and Belorussia, *Narodnoye khozyaistvo SSSR v 1959 g.* pp. 458-484.
¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*
¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*
¹¹¹ Matskevich, Minister of Agriculture, *Pravda* 11.ii.56; *Ekonomika selskovo khozyaistva* 1959 no. 3. p. 6.
¹¹² Khrushchev's speech of 15 December 1958, *Pravda* 16.xii.58.
¹¹³ See section II, Decree of 31 June 1958.

- ¹¹⁴ See V. L. Shtipelman, *Tsenoobrazovaniye kollektivnykh produktov v SSSR* (L., 1959) p. 40; *Ekonomika selskovo khozyaistva* 1960 no. 11 p. 16; Mr. Sokolov, *Pravda* 13.i.61; Kunayev, *Pravda* 12.i.61.
¹¹⁵ *Ekonomika selskovo khozyaistva* 1959 no. 3 p. 6; *Pravda* 10.i.61.
¹¹⁶ Khrushchev's speech of 17 January 1961, *Pravda* 21.i.61. This is almost verbatim.
¹¹⁷ 1958: *Ekonomika selskovo khozyaistva* 1959 no. 3 p. 7; 1959: Khrushchev's speech of 28 November 1959, *Pravda* 13.xii.59; Kazakhstan: Beluayev, *Pravda* 23.xii.59; 1960: Khrushchev, *Pravda* 21.i.61.
¹¹⁸ Khrushchev's speech of 25 December 1959, *Pravda* 29.xii.59.
¹¹⁹ This estimate, which seems too high, is based on the increase in the tractor and combine parks in the Volga Regions, Urals, Eastern and Western Siberia, the Far East and Kazakhstan since 1954, compared with the increase for the Union. See *Selskoye khozyaistvo SSSR* pp. 411 and 414.
¹²⁰ Sown area divided by number of tractors (physical units), *Selskoye khozyaistvo SSSR* pp. 224 and 411. Figure for USA is from *Economic Aspects of Soviet Agriculture* (US Department of Agriculture, May 1959) p. 31.
¹²¹ See his speeches of 8 and 14 March, *Pravda* 12.iii.61 and 19.iii.61.
¹²² During the course of 1959 even the Ukraine received only one half of its needs in tractors and it was expected that it would only receive that percentage of its needs in 1960 (*Pravda* 25.xii.59).
¹²³ Director of the Rostselmash Combine Plant, speech to December 1959 Plenum, *Pravda* 25.xii.59.
¹²⁴ Repair facilities: for a description of the situation in 1953 see Khrushchev's speech of 3 September 1953 and for a description of the situation in 1958 see *Voprosy ekonomiki* 1958 no. 11 and the speech noted in footnote 123.
¹²⁵ See footnote 73.
¹²⁶ Letter to *Pravda* 10.iii.60.
¹²⁷ For a partial list of incentives offered see Party Decision of 17 March 1954, French translation in *Notes et Etudes Documentaires* (La Documentation Française) no. 1926 of 28.ix.54.
¹²⁸ See the review of Soviet playwright Pogodin's 'We Three Have Gone to the Virgin Lands', in *France Soir* 23.iii.56.
¹²⁹ *Pravda* 8.viii.58.
¹³⁰ *Ibid.* 8.iii.59.
¹³¹ *Ibid.* 3.iii.59.
¹³² *Ibid.* 23.v.60.
¹³³ *Ibid.* 8.xii.60.
¹³⁴ *Ibid.* 4.iii.60.
¹³⁵ *Ibid.* 12.vii.61.
¹³⁶ *Ekonomika selskovo khozyaistva* 1960 no. 12 p. 16.
¹³⁷ *Ibid.*
¹³⁸ See speech of 25 December 1959, *Pravda* 29.xii.59.
¹³⁹ *Ekonomika selskovo khozyaistva* 1960 no. 12 pp. 17 and 18.
¹⁴⁰ Khrushchev's speech of 25 December 1959, *Pravda* 29.xii.59. Kazakhstan's tractor park on 1 January 1959 was 128,000 (physical units). *Selskoye khozyaistvo SSSR* p. 415.
¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*
¹⁴² *Ibid.* At the end of 1959 there were 97,100 combines in Kazakhstan (*Selskoye khozyaistvo SSSR* p. 415).
¹⁴³ *Pravda* 22.v.60.
¹⁴⁴ Khrushchev's speech at June 1959 Plenum, cited by *Pravda* 24.vi.60.
¹⁴⁵ *Pravda* 24.vi.60.
¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.* 1.viii.58.
¹⁴⁷ *Selskoye khozyaistvo SSSR* pp. 228-9; *Pravda* 20.v.60.
¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*
¹⁴⁹ See *Ekonomika selskovo khozyaistva* 1961 no. 4 p. 31; *Pravda* 8.xii.60.
¹⁵⁰ See for example *Izvestiya* 2.vii.57 and *Pravda* 8.xii.60.
¹⁵¹ *Ekonomika selskovo khozyaistva* 1961 no. 4 p. 31.
¹⁵² *Ekonomika selskovo khozyaistva* 1961 no. 4 p. 30.
¹⁵³ *Pravda* 3.iii.61.
¹⁵⁴ One interesting article in *Izvestiya* of 20.iv.57 tells how a person visiting a certain area for the first time would have no difficulty in finding his bearings. If the grain was strewn like light snow over the road he would know that it was the route to the grain receiving point and if it were heavily strewn with grain he would know that it was the way to the grain elevator. In Altai krai some persons have gleaned from these routes as much as a ton and a half in a month (*Izvestiya* 8.ix.58). See also *Trud* 20.viii.55, *Pravda* 13.ix.58, 3.viii.60, 22.x.60, 14.vii.61 and 22.vii.61.

- ¹⁵⁵ *Pravda* 13.ix.58 and 30.ix.60.
- ¹⁵⁶ Khrushchev's speech of 14.iii.61, *Pravda* 19.iii.61.
- ¹⁵⁷ Belyayev, *Pravda* 23.xii.59. See also speech of delegate from Adamovsk district, Orenburg province at the December 1958 Plenum, *Pravda* 17.xii.58.
- ¹⁵⁸ Khrushchev's speech to conference of leading agricultural workers of Virgin Land krai, *Pravda* 19.iii.61.
- ¹⁵⁹ Speech by Grishin to January 1961 Plenum, *Pravda* 24.i.61.
- ¹⁶⁰ See Timothy Sosnovy, 'The Soviet Housing Situation Today', *Soviet Studies* vol. XI pp. 1-21.
- ¹⁶¹ *Narodnoye khozyaistvo SSSR v 1959 g.* p. 35.
- ¹⁶² Khrushchev's speech of 21 March 1961, *Pravda* 26.iii.61.
- ¹⁶³ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁶⁵ *Selskoye khozyaistvo SSSR* pp. 454-5.
- ¹⁶⁶ *Izvestiya*, 16.ii.58.
- ¹⁶⁷ T. Sosnovy *loc. cit.* p. 4.
- ¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁶⁹ *Ekonomika selskovo khozyaistva* 1960 no. 11 p. 14.
- ¹⁷⁰ For example in the sovkhos 'Komsomol' (Adamovsk district, Orenburg province) 14 field tractor brigades are working in fields 150 km. from the sovkhos village and are thus forced to live for seven months of the year in trailers and separated from their families (*Pravda* 3.iii.61).
- ¹⁷¹ See Belyayev's speech at the December 1959 Plenum, *Pravda* 23.xii.59.
- ¹⁷² *Pravda* 27.ii.60.
- ¹⁷³ See for example Sokolov's speech at the January 1961 Plenum and *Pravda* 13.i.61; *Partiinaya zhizn* 1961 no. 8 p. 34.
- ¹⁷⁴ To illustrate this problem, Khrushchev in his speech of 14 March 1961 (*Pravda* 19.iii.61) gave the example of Kustanai province where some 150,000 women between the ages of 18 and 55 live, most of whom play no role in sovkhos production. He also cited the case of a district where out of 9,000 able-bodied women, more than 5,000 do not work because of lack of facilities for children of pre-school age.
- ¹⁷⁵ See speech of Sokolov, *Pravda* 13.i.61.
- ¹⁷⁶ For English language account of the shortage of consumer goods in the Virgin Land areas see Max Frankel, *New York Times* 29.xi.59.
- ¹⁷⁷ A survey conducted in the Kharkov selpo of Vyshnivski district revealed that there were 60 items not available for sale. These same 60 items, however, were to be found in the selpo warehouse. In the stores of the Spaski, Samarski and Atbaski selpos of this same province, there were 130 articles which could not be found. Investigations, however, revealed that they were in stock in the inter-district warehouse (*Pravda* 27.ii.60).
- ¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁷⁹ *Pravda* 25.xi.60.
- ¹⁸⁰ See T. A. Sarasin, *Rol zheleznykh dorog v razvitii selskovo khozyaistva SSSR* (M., 1958).
- ¹⁸¹ *Izvestiya* 23.vi.56.
- ¹⁸² T. I. Urkin *op. cit.* p. 25.
- ¹⁸³ *Izvestiya* 25.viii.57.
- ¹⁸⁴ T. A. Sarasin *op. cit.* p. 89.
- ¹⁸⁵ Speech of 14 March 1961, *Pravda* 19.iii.61.
- ¹⁸⁶ See for example *New York Herald Tribune* (European Edition) 1.ix.55.
- ¹⁸⁷ *Time* 20.vi.60 pp. 20-21, citing Moscow Radio.

STRUCTURAL AND FUNCTIONAL EVOLUTION OF THE SOVIET JUDICIARY SINCE STALIN'S DEATH: 1953-1956*

EXTENSIVE changes have taken place in the field of Soviet law since the death of Stalin, changes which have had a pronounced effect on broad areas of social and individual behaviour in the country and which have, in one way or another, deeply affected most of the public and private rights of the citizens. The most evident of these ameliorative reforms have occurred in the sphere of substantive and procedural law. Just as important, however, though less apparent perhaps at first glance, have been the concurrent developments dealing with the structure and functions of the Soviet court system. In the latter area, it is primarily through a series of piecemeal adjustments and pragmatic, short-term reorganizations that the regime has chosen to carry out, and has succeeded in carrying out, a major programme designed to eliminate many of the judicial excesses of the Stalinist era, introduce more rational and palatable techniques of law enforcement, and initiate new, more liberal practices in the administration of justice.

The process of restructuring the Soviet judicial apparatus in the post-Stalinist period has evolved through three consecutive stages, closely interrelated, of course, yet quite distinct as to their specific aims and methods. The first phase, from March, 1953, to May, 1956, represented essentially a practical attempt immediately to rectify the most obvious abuses of the past and to liquidate, as rapidly as possible, the more objectionable aspects of the preceding regime's policies in the field of justice. The second stage, from May, 1956, to December, 1958, was primarily devoted to the task of improvising new approaches to, and methods of, judicial activity through experimentation and trial adoption of a few original devices, accompanied by an overall theoretical reappraisal of accepted practices in preparation for the pending general reform in the entire field of law. Finally, the third period, which began in December, 1958, focuses on the contents of the new federal legislation defining the basic principles of criminal law, criminal procedure and court organization, and the subsequent republican enactments regulating these matters in detail, seeking to provide authoritative commentaries on, and operational interpretations of, the latest formulas introduced into the fabric of Soviet jurisprudence.

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For the purposes of this study the definition of judiciary which is used is identical to the one the Soviets themselves employ, embracing the established system of regular and special courts, but excluding the comradely courts and the most recent so-called social tribunals.

The first measure adopted by the successor regime affecting the structure of the judicial system inherited from Stalin's rule was promulgated on June 24, 1953.¹ It ordered the fusion of line courts of railroad and water transport into unified line transport courts and of the railroad transport and water transport procuracies into a single transport procuracy, ostensibly because, 'as many years of experience showed, there was no need to have separate courts of railroad and water transport'.² Concurrently, area railroad transport courts were reorganized into area transport courts and the Railroad and Water-Transport collegia of the USSR Supreme Court were joined in one Transport collegium. Except for combining the two parallel judicial branches into one, the decree made no substantive changes in the jurisdictional power or functions of these special tribunals.

A few weeks later another organizational question regarding the judiciary was raised, this time in connection with a draft plan to replace the existing network of people's courts based on the precinct (*uchastok*) with a system of unified district (*raion*) courts. Accordingly, 'in July, 1953, the USSR Ministry of Justice examined concrete practical proposals concerning changes in the structure of the people's courts and found them deserving of attention. And the commission created by the USSR Ministry of Justice found it advisable to implement said changes'.³ In the middle of July, these suggestions calling for an extensive reorganization of the people's courts were studied by the Ministry's collegium which decided to submit them to a general discussion with widespread participation by persons engaged in practical court work. However, for various extraneous reasons, and in spite of an allegedly overwhelming response on the part of the personnel of the ministries of justice and of the judiciary in favour of the proposal, the plan came to naught at this time.⁴

In the meantime, a number of radical reforms of indirect, yet crucial, concern to the regular judiciary were effectively implemented by the Soviet leadership throughout 1953, including a series of measures, (the exact provisions of which were never divulged), radically curtailing the police and quasi-judicial prerogatives of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and its subordinate agencies. As early as 17 March, pursuant to the initial post-Stalin drive for enlarging some ministries and reducing their overall number by eliminating others, the State Arbitration Board was placed under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Justice with the rank of department.⁵ At, or about, the same time, in line with the current downgrading of the role and power of the secret police, all corrective-labour institutions (corrective camps and colonies) were transferred to the authority of the Ministry of Justice, the structure of which was accordingly supplemented with the Main

Administration of corrective-labour institutions (GULAG).⁶ Then, all the military tribunals of the MVD troops were abolished.⁷ The military tribunals of divisions and army corps were liquidated and 'a single structure of military judicial organs created'.⁸ Finally, by a decree of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet of 1 September, 1953,⁹ the dread Special Board of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, which had long enjoyed broad extra-judicial powers of repression, was abolished,¹⁰ as a consequence of which, it was said, 'all categories of criminal cases came within the competence of judicial organs'.¹¹

Some of the transformations consummated by these secret enactments were confirmed indirectly by the contents of the decree of 11 September, 1953,¹² which continued the liberalizing trend that had been gaining ground in the area of Soviet law and justice ever since Stalin's demise and Beria's downfall. This time it was on the power of military tribunals that some drastic restrictions were imposed. As a result, courts-martial retained jurisdiction only in cases involving military personnel and trainees, as well as the operative staff of the organs of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the USSR and persons on the command staff of the Main Administration of camps and colonies of the USSR Ministry of Justice, thereby explicitly verifying the fact of the liquidation of the MVD's private court system and the subordination of its members to regular military tribunals. Furthermore, henceforth civilians could be tried by courts-martial only for espionage, with indictment before ordinary courts now mandatory for various other offences formerly handled by military tribunals under the inordinately inflated powers conferred on them by Stalin. Similarly, the personnel of the regular police, which until then had been subject to military law, also was now divested of this special status and transferred to ordinary civilian authority.

Following this rapid sequence of innovations, the judiciary was granted a brief respite, in order, presumably, to consolidate and adjust itself to the new procedures. The next seven months witnessed no further modifications in the formal structure and functions of the courts. Beginning in April, 1954, two changes were made in the duties of the judiciary. On the 24th of that month, a decree of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, 'On the procedure for releasing on parole persons convicted of crimes committed before the age of 18',¹³ directed that courts located at places of confinement shall rule, at the recommendation of the administrations of such institutions, on the question of paroling individuals in this category or reducing their sentences. A companion decree of July 14, 1954, 'On introducing release on parole from places of confinement',¹⁴ established the general rule that courts at places where sentences were being served would

pass accordingly on all requests for the release of inmates on parole on the basis of recommendations by the respective camp, jail or colony administration.

In the meantime, two other developments occurred with obvious, albeit indirect, implications for the future of the judicial branch. Thus, in May, 1954, the USSR Ministry of Justice and its republican organs were the sudden targets of serious criticism directed at them for alleged excessive departmentalization, failure to 'devote proper attention to questions of organization of the work of the court', 'weaknesses in enforcing judicial decisions . . . particularly in alimony cases'.¹⁵ This was followed in short order by even more explicit complaints, stressing the numerous shortcomings generally observed in the matter of the Ministry's guidance of court work. In particular, its manner of conducting inspections of people's courts was said sometimes not to benefit the latter at all because the reviewing process was carried out in a strictly formalistic fashion, focused primarily on drawing up an abstract statistical report of judicial performance without really delving into the substantive facets of its activity. It was also noted, *inter alia*, that 'it was far from a rare occurrence for the ministries and departments of justice to react inattentively and perfunctorily to complaints by workers, to pass these on without need from one bureau to another, or to be satisfied with a formalistic-bureaucratic reply instead of offering a considered solution addressed to the substance of the complaint'.¹⁶

The second, more positive, measure represented a long overdue attempt to limit to some extent direct Party interference in court work, almost a standard phenomenon during Stalin's regime. It was now forcefully brought to the attention of all concerned that 'in order to understand the importance of the question regarding the correct functioning of organs specially called upon to combat violations of legality, it is requisite to guide oneself by the recently adopted resolution of the CC of the CPSU on facts of interference by some local party organs in the decision of court cases'. The resolution reportedly 'noted that some local party organs, instead of providing political guidance and control over the work of judicial and procuratorial organs, take the path of unlawful interference in the decision of court cases'. After condemning certain specific instances of such behaviour, the Central Committee's directive generally

pointed out that such interposition by local party organs in the decision of judicial cases undermines the authority of the courts, disorients the judges and pushes them into adopting illegal verdicts, violates the principle of the independence of judges and their subordination solely to the law as established by the Constitution of the USSR, deprives the procuratorial and judicial organs of their autonomy and inculcates irresponsibility on their part.¹⁷

In August, 1954, the process of reorganization of the judicial apparatus, temporarily suspended, save for some functional modifications, since the previous September, was once again resumed. Both measures passed in that month dealt with the important, and troublesome, problem of 'post-audit' jurisdiction (*nadzor*) under which a criminal sentence or civil judgment which had already become final could be reopened for review, and they initiated a major decentralization of the system hitherto in operation. By the decree of 14 August, 1954,¹⁸ presidia or review benches were established in the Supreme Courts of the Union and autonomous republics, in the *krai* and *oblast* courts and the courts of autonomous regions. These new agencies comprised the president of the corresponding court, his deputies and two members of the court, appointed by the presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the respective Union or autonomous republic or the executive committee of the *krai*, *oblast*, or autonomous *oblast* Soviet. In effect, however, 'in those regions where the staff of the *oblast* court is small (4-5 persons), the entire staff forms its presidium. Actually, in these instances the *oblast* court acts in its plenary capacity and as such is endowed with the functions of the presidium of the *oblast* court'.¹⁹

The presidia of the Supreme Courts of Union republics could examine civil and criminal cases submitted to them for review by protests of the Procurator-General of the USSR, the President of the USSR Supreme Court, the procurator of their republic and the president of the republic's Supreme Court, and their deputies, against sentences and judgments of their court's judicial collegia. The presidia of the Supreme Courts of the autonomous republics, the *krai* and *oblast* courts, the courts of the autonomous regions and the two city courts of Moscow and Leningrad,²⁰ were in turn empowered to review civil and criminal cases brought to their attention respectively by protests of the procurator of the given territorial division and the president of the Supreme Court of the corresponding autonomous republic, the president of the *krai* or *oblast* court or the court of an autonomous region against the cassational rulings of their court's judicial collegia and the sentences and decisions of lower people's courts which had already become final.

The review of cases in the presidia was to be conducted with the participation of the procurator of the corresponding administrative unit. It was also stipulated that the decisions of the presidia of the Supreme Courts of Union republics could be brought up for further review before the judicial collegia of the USSR Supreme Court by the Procurator-General of the USSR and the President of the USSR Supreme Court. Conclusions of the presidia of the lower courts could be submitted for a fresh review by protests of the procurator of

the Union republic and the president of the Supreme Court of the Union Republic before the corresponding collegium of the Supreme Court of the Union republic.

A parallel development took place at this time within the military judiciary whereby the rights of the military tribunals of military areas and fleets were considerably expanded. They were granted the competence to review sentences of lower military tribunals which had already become final. The amendment was said to be 'a serious measure aimed at further strengthening legality, increasing responsibility in the work of all levels of the military-judicial system, and improving the administration of justice'.²¹

On the whole, both enactments undoubtedly represented major reversals in long established policy and introduced significant modifications in the existing structure and procedures of the Soviet judiciary. However, even then, the new laws still failed to resolve *in toto* many of the problems which they were intended to eliminate, and, in fact, created a number of other substantive difficulties which eventually required yet more legislation in order to assure the smooth functioning of the revised arrangement.

Clearly, among the chief reasons for the innovations introduced by the decree of 14 August was the urge to implement within the Soviet judicial system the decentralization programme already realized for the most part with respect to the other branches of the country's public administration. Moreover, it was asserted that such a reorganization would ensure the effective protection of 'socialist legality', a concept which was given considerable prominence by Stalin's successors following Beria's liquidation, and indeed, served as one of the very excuses offered *ex post facto* to justify that step. An immediate practical effect of these reforms, according to Soviet sources, was that 'these measures considerably raised the role of the *krai* and *oblast* courts in the implementation of judicial review . . .',²² which is indisputable. Finally, it was claimed that 'the formation of presidia in *oblast* courts in many ways contributes to the correction of judicial errors. A particular accomplishment of the work of the judiciary is the speed with which protests are examined, that is, the absence of dilatoriness.'²³

The alleged elimination of the latter defect was especially singled out as a major achievement of the reform. It was now openly admitted that the judicial system created by the 1938 Law on the Judiciary 'already was no longer capable of successfully resolving those responsible tasks which were placed on the judicial organs by the directives of the party and government concerning the work of the Soviet public apparatus'.²⁴ In fact, it was noted that, even prior to the 1954 amendments, sheer necessity had already forced the higher courts to circum-

vent the letter of the 1938 act. Thus, the Supreme Courts of the USSR and Union republics, then endowed with a monopoly of review powers, were nevertheless obliged to refer cases being 'audited' by them and on which they generally lacked adequate information to *oblast* courts for their conclusions. But, instead of then settling the matter, as they were presently empowered to do, under the old system the latter would have to return the dossiers with their suggestions back to the Supreme Courts for final action.²⁵ The entire operation defeated the very purpose which had inspired the regime's decision to centralize the 'post-audit' function in 1938 and brought about a situation in many respects even worse than the one the reform was intended to remedy. As a result, the USSR Supreme Court reportedly had long ago recognized the ineffectiveness of the 1938 arrangement and had for some time back been proposing that the difficulty be resolved precisely through the creation of presidia at the *krai*, *oblast* and republican level.

In spite of the explicitness of its language, the decree of 14 August, 1954, still left a number of important questions of substance and form unanswered. It was critically noted, for instance, that the enactment had failed to establish presidia in *okrug* courts, where such subdivisions existed, although the latter served both as courts of first instance equal to *oblast* courts and as courts of cassation for lower people's courts. Because of the resulting uncertainty as to the proper procedure for securing the review of sentences and judgments rendered by *okrug* courts, a Resolution of the Plenum of the USSR Supreme Court of 17 August, 1954, was used to explain that the 'post-auditing' in these cases would be done by the respective republican Supreme Courts, thereby by-passing the presidia of the *krai* and *oblast* courts to which the *okrug* courts were subordinate, a solution which generally drew adverse comment.²⁶

A second, even more important procedural question centred on the right of judges repeatedly to sit on the same case in the successive instances in which it was being ruled on. Occasionally, for example, where the *oblast* or autonomous *oblast* courts had a total membership of 3-5 judges, including the president, the members of their collegia for criminal and civil cases inevitably became members of the presidium. It sometimes happened, therefore, that the same judge would first decide on a case in cassation in the collegium, then take part in its review in the presidium, and, if it were returned to the collegium for cassational action, would then again decide on it in that capacity. Contrary to all hitherto recognized precedent,²⁷ such a procedure was expressly sanctioned by the same Resolution of the Plenum of the USSR Supreme Court of 17 August, 1954, which, in approving it,

now allowed for its use at any time regardless of the existence of special circumstances such as the small number of judges available, the resulting double duty of the judicial personnel, etc.

Response to the solution elected by the court was highly critical and it was suggested instead that a way out of the difficulty should have been sought in having the decisions of the judicial collegia at the autonomous *oblast* level where such conditions obtained reviewed not by the presidia of their own courts but by the presidia of the superior *krai* courts. Similarly, the review of decisions of collegia of *oblast* courts with a limited staff would then lie with the judicial collegia of the respective republican Supreme courts. In both instances, these somewhat emasculated *oblast* presidia could continue to function usefully as review agencies for subordinate people's courts.²⁸ This proposal was, in the main, adopted shortly after.²⁹

Another period of retrenchment and consolidation, lasting almost a year, followed this series of reforms which had, so far, focused almost exclusively on special tribunals and the intermediate echelons of the judicial hierarchy. In March, 1955, the process of revision was resumed and now also affected to some extent the functions and powers of the people's courts. Thus, the law of 14 March³⁰ withdrew from the competence of the people's courts cases involving disputes between State, cooperative (except *kolkhoz*) and other social organizations over sums up to 1,000 rubles and ruled that such controversies would hereafter be settled by their superior organs. This relieved the already overtaxed lower courts of a heavy burden of miscellaneous quarrels between offices and enterprises which could best and more speedily be resolved by administrative arbitration.

Next, the decree of 21 April, 1955,³¹ defined the rules for court examination of cases concerning early release of prisoners from confinement and their release on parole in elaboration of the two enactments of April and July, 1954, which first outlined the newly revived practice. It directed that cases of this nature were to be submitted by the administration of the place of detention and acted upon by the corresponding Supreme Court of the Union or autonomous republic, or the *krai*, *oblast* or autonomous *oblast* court or, if these courts were at a considerable distance, then by the nearest people's court. However, action on petitions seeking the release of persons convicted for counter-revolutionary crimes, as well as for premeditated murder, banditism, robbery and large-scale theft of State and social property, could be taken up only by the higher instances and never by the people's courts.

Fresh modifications were introduced in the *modus operandi* of the recently created court presidia as a consequence of the passage, on 25

April, 1955, of the new law on the procuracy,³² in order to eliminate various discrepancies caused by differences between the latter's formulations and the contents of the law of 14 August, 1954. A companion decree was accordingly passed on the same day³³ which redefined in part the procedures for the examination of cases in court presidia and reconciled the earlier rules with the conflicting provisions of the latest legislation. Thus, it was formerly specified that the Procurator-General of the USSR, the President of the USSR Supreme Court, the procurator of a Union republic and the president of a republican Supreme Court, and their deputies, had the right of protest in the presidium of a republican Supreme Court against sentences, judgments and resolutions of that court's judicial collegia. Now, the Procurator-General of the USSR, the President of the USSR Supreme Court and their deputies were authorized to protest any judicial decision in the presidium of any court. Concurrently, republican procurators and the presidents of the republican Supreme Courts, and their deputies, were empowered to lodge protests with the presidia of all republican courts. Presumably, the reason for this broader enunciation of the protest right of the higher officials of the procuracy had its source in the consideration that 'the right of voicing a protest before the presidium of the Supreme Court of a Union republic presupposes the possibility of lodging protests by the same persons in lower courts as well'.³⁴

The decree of 25 April, 1955, also addressed itself to another problem which had arisen in connection with the innovations instituted by the 1954 legislation. Because of prevailing uncertainty regarding the place of national *okrug* courts within the new 'post-audit' scheme, the law explained that sentences, judgments and resolutions of *okrug* and national *okrug* people's courts could be protested by the republican procurator, the president of the republican Supreme Court, and their deputies, in the corresponding collegium of the republican Supreme Court. In addition, the new act further spelled out that protests could be submitted anew to the appropriate organs and for proper cause against fresh sentence or judgment rendered after an earlier repeal in cassational or *nadzor* proceedings, thus sanctioning repeated reviews of successive sentences in the same case.

The 1955 enactment sought to formulate, too, some necessary procedural and substantive rules to guide the practical work of the presidia, a subject on which the preceding legislation had been strangely uninformative. It determined, for instance, that a presidium quorum consisted of a majority of the presidium's members. It stressed again that *nadzor* proceedings in presidia required the mandatory presence respectively of the republican procurator or his deputy, or the pro-

curator of the autonomous republic, *krai*, *oblast* or autonomous *oblast*. Decisions of the presidia were to be adopted by a simple majority of those voting and a tie would be considered as a rejection of the protest. Minority opinions could be expressed in separate statements to be attached to the majority brief.

The decree resolved yet another juridical problem which had provoked considerable controversy both in theory and in practice ever since the 1954 law had first introduced it and the Plenum of the USSR Supreme Court had sought, unsuccessfully, to answer it. Namely, the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet now expressly forbade a member of a court presidium who had already taken part earlier in another capacity in deciding or reviewing a case from acting on it once again as a member of the presidium. If a majority of the members of a given presidium had participated in ruling on a case before, for *nadzor* purposes that case would then have to be brought before the next higher court. Thus, a well established precedent, shattered in 1954, was reinstated, and the Resolution of the Plenum of the USSR Supreme Court of 17 August, 1954, which had sanctioned the departure from long accepted practice, was repealed on 6 May, 1955, 'as contrary to the rules of judicial procedure defined by the law and adopted in excess of powers granted to the Supreme Court of the USSR'.³⁵

The closing article of the 25 April, 1955, law contained a further modification of the existing rules, thereby continuing a trend set the year before. Indeed, one of the novel features of the decree of 14 August, 1954, had been the fact that it had granted the right to lodge a protest with the presidia of the Supreme Courts of the Union republics not only to the republican procurators and the presidents of the republican Supreme Courts, but also to their deputies. It was stated at the time that, 'in itself, the novella is rather expedient and sanctions a practice functioning *de facto*'.³⁶ Accordingly, while the 1954 measure had given the right to protest against rulings of court presidia only to the Procurator-General of the USSR and republican procurators and the presidents of the federal and republican Supreme Courts, the 1955 legislation further broadened that authority by extending it to their deputies as well.

The tendency toward decentralization apparent in the regime's policies in the matter of court organization, as well as in other areas of government and administration, was reflected in yet another step taken very soon afterward. On 30 April, 1955, administrators of the republican Ministries of Justice attached to *krai* and *oblast* Soviets were empowered to appoint court marshals on the nomination of the people's courts. On the other hand, in Union republics without *krai* and

oblast breakdown and in the autonomous republics, the authority to appoint court marshals remained with the respective republican Ministry of Justice. By contrast, under the previously operating arrangement, the right to select court marshals had been uniformly vested in the republican Ministries of Justice, with no separate nominating procedure mentioned at all. As has been noted,

since court marshals come very close to the people by virtue of their duty to enforce civil judgments, collect fines, and see to the execution of sentences, the manner of their nomination is important. The new decree may have been inspired to bring their selection a little closer to the people among whom they perform their function.³⁷

Furthermore, since the people's courts would now have the privilege of nominating court marshals it also implied that the latter would function only at the primary judicial level, instead of, as heretofore, also serving with *okrug*, *krai*, *oblast* and autonomous *oblast* courts and the Supreme Courts of Union and autonomous republics.

Of course, the measure may have also been motivated simply by the regime's desire to curtail to some extent the powers of the Ministries of Justice, a sequel to the serious criticism to which their work had recently been subjected, consonant, too, with the various other steps taken at this time to expand the rights of the intermediate echelons of public authority and perhaps foreshadowing the impending dismantlement of the apparatus of the Ministry of Justice at both the central and local level which was to be consummated soon afterward.

The close of this first phase in the post-Stalinist history of the Soviet judiciary witnessed, in addition, a development which, though without immediate practical effects, soon after was to have important consequences for the future structural evolution of the court system of the USSR. Sometime in 1955, shortly before its liquidation, the USSR Ministry of Justice reopened the question of the proposed substitution of a network of single *raion* people's courts for the *uchastok* system then in use at the primary level, a suggestion already discussed back in 1953 and left without action at that time. Another debate now ensued, which was to prove equally indecisive, at least at first.

For instance, in 1956, the plan was studied by the Commission on legislative proposals of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR, which again rejected it as unacceptable. Since the preliminary draft of the 'Bases for legislation on the court organization of the USSR' then being circulated initially did not stipulate exactly what system of courts was to be adopted, the draft of the BSSR law on the judiciary originally envisaged the retention of the existing *uchastok* structure of people's courts. The reasons cited for the Belorussian preference for

the *status quo* included arguments to the effect that: (1) the creation of district people's courts would ' estrange the people's courts from the population, the people's judges from the electors'; (2) a district system would 'lower the responsibility of the judges for the cases entrusted to them, generate difficulties in the organization of the work of the people's courts'; (3) the population already had a specific image of what a people's court and a people's judge represented, while *raion* courts with many members organizationally would simply resemble small *oblast* courts only without collegia for criminal and civil cases.³⁸

At the time, most of the republics apparently took an attitude similar to that of the BSSR, but later that year the system of district people's courts was nevertheless introduced, on a trial basis probably, in the Armenian, Georgian and Estonian SSRs.³⁹ Within a short period the innovation seems to have gained favour with the proper authorities⁴⁰ and, eventually, after the December, 1958, reforms, was to become the accepted rule for the organization of the primary level of the judiciary throughout the USSR.⁴¹

On another score the initiative of the Ministry of Justice had quicker results. With its help,

the question of *spetskamery*, instituted to examine cases of petty theft and hooliganism, was resolved and their further existence deemed inexpedient and, consequently, these categories of cases, in full accordance with the Law on the Judiciary, were transferred for handling by the people's courts on the basis of territorial jurisdiction.⁴²

With that, another extraordinary judicial device, one of the few still remaining, improvised by Stalin to implement his personal, and extreme, views on the role of the judiciary in a 'socialist' society, which severely detracted from the normal rights and duties of the regular courts, was at last eliminated. In May, 1956, with the abolition of the USSR Ministry of Justice the stage was set for the second phase in the current process of reorganization of the Soviet judiciary.

As previously noted, the dominant orientation of the regime's policy on the question of the judiciary's reorganization during this period was essentially negative, that is, in the sense that, initially, its reform programme concentrated almost exclusively on measures designed to remedy past errors and eliminate certain objectionable legal features fostered by Stalin's rule. This is not meant to imply that, because the government's early programme was primarily corrective, it did not fulfil an important function. In fact, some of the more meaningful accomplishments of Stalin's successors since 1953 in the field of law reform stemmed precisely from their readiness to rectify the major defects and malpractices tolerated and/or encouraged by the preceding regime.

Particularly noteworthy, and of special significance for the future course of Soviet legal development, has been the consistent effort of the present Soviet leaders since coming to power to limit the overt role of the extra-judicial punitive organs and curtail their wide exercise of administrative repression and, at the same time, to circumscribe the jurisdictional rights of other special agencies to mete out penalties for a variety of common offences. This policy has radically affected not only the Ministry of Internal Affairs, its secret police apparatus and other offices, but also the branch of military justice, heretofore endowed with broad powers of trial and punishment vis-à-vis not only military personnel, but the civilian population as well.

What is more, this revolutionary downgrading of two such powerful agencies in so short a period of time and evidently without any marked repercussions is an indication both of the strength of the successor regime even then and probably also of the widespread popular and administrative support it was able to mobilize in favour of these moves. Concomitantly, the rights and responsibilities of the regular judicial bodies expanded correspondingly.

Since most of the measures adopted by the regime at this early stage in the field of judicial reorganization were basically of a remedial nature, they did not in general cause any legal difficulties of either implementation or interpretation. Moreover, the primary effect of most of them was to re-establish the *status quo ante* Stalin and to reinstate a juridical situation with which Soviet lawyers and jurists were familiar because it had already obtained once before. This applies equally to the revival of the concept of release of prisoners on parole and the reduction of sentences of model inmates, the transfer of civilian cases from military tribunals to regular courts, the liquidation of the special jurisdiction of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, even the creation of court presidia, all of them reforms which in most respects served to bring about a state of affairs similar or identical to procedures in operation prior to the 1930s when they were supplanted by the draconic legal techniques directly inspired by Stalin.

Apart from the radical demotion of the various 'control' organs which had become too powerful under Stalin's regime, the chief change accomplished by the new measures was the appreciable decentralization of the judicial structure, comparable to the parallel process then transforming the character of much of the fabric of Soviet administration. However, initially at least, the effects of this decentralization benefited primarily the intermediate levels of government at the expense of the higher echelons of the official hierarchy, but without very substantive devolution of authority to the primary agencies of public power. Thus, the top State agencies in the Union

republics and in the medium range embracing the various autonomous units and in the *krai* and *oblast* class witnessed a considerable expansion of their rights and duties, the apparatus at the *raion* level and below was but slightly affected by the reforms while the federal administrative machine lost many of its functions to the republics.

Most of these readjustments, as previously noted, caused but little substantive or procedural objection. The lone exception was the decision to revive court presidia together with the measures subsequently devised to ensure the satisfactory performance of these bodies, a plan the practical implementation of which is still the source of much practical difficulty and the subject of considerable doctrinal controversy.

Most Soviet legal authorities concur in the opinion that '... experience with the implementation of the Decree of 14 August 1954 showed its practicality and timeliness'. However, there have also been indications of dissent in some quarters from this general estimate, since it has been openly admitted that 'some Soviet jurists have had doubts concerning the necessity for the existence of presidia of *krai*, *oblast* and other courts at that level. In that connection, the opinion has been expressed that, having concluded their work of correcting judicial mistakes which have been allowed to happen in past years, court presidia would have to be abolished in the interests of increasing the stability of judicial sentences and judgments.'⁴³ This definitely seems to have been a minority feeling.

The single most beneficial consequence of the revival of the presidia system, according to most Soviet sources, has been the sheer resulting physical decentralization of the judicial review function. Evaluating the *nadzor* process inaugurated by the 1938 Law on the Judiciary, it was conceded that at the time 'the concentration of the review power over all the courts of a republic in one judicial organ [the republican Supreme Court] facilitated the establishment of a uniform enforcement of the law in the cases under review'. On the other hand, this was now immediately qualified with the admission that 'the entire system of judicial review was excessively centralized':

This hampered the review of sentences and judgments which had entered into force. It is characteristic that even the Supreme Courts of the Union republics were deprived of a full measure of rights in exercising judicial review. The sentences, judgements and resolutions of the judicial collegia of these courts could only be reviewed by the Supreme Courts of the USSR.

Because of the situation thus brought about, minor cases reached through successive instances the Supreme Court of the USSR and there were sometimes repeatedly examined. In order to protest a sentence, the unlawfulness of which was evident on the spot, it was necessary to submit it to the President of the Supreme Court or the republican Procurator.

The established procedure for the review of sentences, judgements and conclusions generated irresponsibility on the part of presidents of *oblast* and *krai* courts and the Supreme Courts of the autonomous republics for the quality of the work of people's courts.

In view of the large volume of protests and cases which the Supreme Courts of the Union republics were forced to check and re-examine they had no time left for the comprehensive analysis of judicial practice in the lower courts, while the lack of full authority in the field of judicial review in a number of instances deprived them of the possibility of correcting errors and rectifying judicial practice.⁴⁴

Added to this there was the fact that 'the transformation [in 1938] of the Supreme Court of a Union republic into the sole judicial instance in the republic examining protests against sentences and judgments which entered into force, led to a situation where the Supreme Courts of the Union republics were practically deprived of the possibility of exercising judicial review in the strict sense of the concept'.⁴⁵ Today, all the above defects are said to have been eliminated through the passage of the decree of 14 August, 1954.

Aside from the question of the desirability of the newly created presidia as such (a point which is generally though not unanimously conceded in informed circles in the USSR) other disagreement over broad policy aspects of the presidia's operations, as opposed to criticism of particular shortcomings, has centred on the evaluation of the quality of their actual performance. While most Soviet sources choose to emphasize the positive achievements of the presidia since they began functioning, there have also been cautious comments to the contrary. Indeed, on occasion there have been statements to the effect that 'the activity of the *krai* and *oblast* courts in the new conditions is characterized not only by positive features; in their work there have also been shortcomings, the causes of which require deep and careful study in order not to permit their proliferation and transmission to the other parts of the judicial system'.⁴⁶ It has also been noted that 'in the work of the presidia there are still evident some errors in the re-examination of judgments and rulings in review proceedings. Individual presidia adopt incorrect positions, allowing inexactitudes in the interpretation of the law and thereby disorienting the people's courts'.⁴⁷ Frequently, this has found expression in a judicial tendency to favour one's own (*vedomstvennost*) in the handling of protests (the Moscow *oblast* court was singled out as a particular offender in that connection),⁴⁸ to the extent, it has been said, that

it is a characteristic feature of some judicial-review organs that in the main they decline protests submitted by the procurator and almost never reject the protests lodged by the president of that judicial-review organ in which the protest is being examined.⁴⁹

Apart from these general assessments of the overall functioning of the presidia system, there have been a number of critical statements addressed at various specific facets of their structure and activity. These may be conveniently grouped into four broad categories.

The first focuses on the procedural question of the proper sequence to be followed in protesting against a sentence or judgment or in seeking its re-examination by a review organ. The enactment of 14 August, 1954, failed to define the channels of progression of review actions from the *oblast* level upward. In fact, the sole express condition it imposed on that score was that the presidia of the republican Supreme Courts could examine protests only against the rulings of the judicial collegia of their own courts, and the presidia of the Supreme Courts of the autonomous republics, and of the *krai*, *oblast* and autonomous *oblast* courts too could only review cases already passed on by the collegia of their courts. However, since the procurators at the upper levels and the presidents of the higher courts, and their deputies, could initiate review proceedings through protests submitted directly at the judicial collegia level, thus effectively by-passing lower review instances, actually the rule only worked to render review in presidia of both the federal and the republican Supreme Courts a remedy but one step removed. Moreover, even this unsubstantial restriction was later eliminated by the provisions of the decree of 25 April, 1955, which sanctioned outright the prerogative of said officials and their deputies to submit protests respectively in the presidia of all courts or the presidia of all republican courts.

In the absence of any precise, formal definition of the proper procedures for filing protests calling for review action, it has been left to the courts and to judicial practice to evolve and improvise the necessary techniques. The general tendency has apparently been to disregard any consistent sequence of consecutive ascensions of cases under protest through each successive review instance in the order of hierarchical superiority as witness a recent comment to the effect that

for example, in the Supreme Court of the RSFSR until not long ago protests were filed and cases were examined in review proceedings through by-passing the presidia of *krai* or *oblast* courts and the Supreme Courts of the autonomous republics. In the course of four years following the creation of presidia the Supreme Court of the RSFSR frequently replaced lower courts in the exercise of judicial review, interfered in cases which should have been decided locally, in the presidia of the corresponding courts. In that way, the Supreme Court of the RSFSR exercised review not over *oblast* or *krai* courts, the Supreme Courts of the autonomous republics and the autonomous *oblast* courts, but acted parallelly with them.⁵⁰

The same unsatisfactory picture also emerges from other Soviet observations indicating that

for instance, the judicial collegia and the presidium of the Supreme Court of the RSFSR in 1956 examined in review proceedings approximately as many cases as the presidia of all the lower courts of the RSFSR taken together, and the President of the Supreme Court of the USSR and his deputies during the same period filed as many protests calling for review as all the presidents of *oblast* or *krai* courts and the Supreme Courts of the ASSRs.

Again, the conclusion offered was that 'thereby the Supreme Court of the RSFSR in many instances was substituting itself for the presidia of lower courts'.⁵¹

In the other Union republics of the Soviet federation a similar practice prevailed, to judge from some of the data cited by an acknowledged Soviet authority on the subject:

One cannot, for example, recognize as normal the following situation: for the period from January to November, 1955, the Supreme Court of the Belorussian SSR directed three protests for examination by the presidium of the Grodno *oblast* court and at the same time from the same *oblast* 99 protests were submitted for consideration by the Supreme Court of the Belorussian SSR. As a result, the aims envisaged by the Decree of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet of 14 August, 1954, are not achieved, and the Supreme Courts of the Union republics remain as heretofore overloaded.⁵²

The above development has attracted widespread and severe criticism which culminated in an *ex officio*, albeit highly authoritative, statement declaring that 'such methods of work cannot be recognized as correct, for they do not correspond to the legislative acts concerning the expansion of the rights of *oblast* or *krai* courts and the Supreme Courts of the ASSRs and the measures now being implemented to expand the rights of local organs of government'.⁵³

Another source of difficulty in connection with the activities of the new presidia has been the question of the precise nature and place of the *nadzor* function in the regular scheme of judicial procedure. Unanimously, Soviet authors have stressed the principle that the 'legislator in creating presidia regarded them not as a third judicial instance, but as an extraordinary organ for reviewing without excessive delay sentences and judgments which had already become final'.⁵⁴ The problem of confining review agencies strictly to the role of special courts of last resort has not, however, proved easy. In fact, their failure to do precisely that in the thirties has generally been advanced as the reason for their elimination in 1938, *inter alia*, on the quite valid grounds that as a result 'the process of judicial review was to a considerable extent transformed from an extraordinary device for reviewing cases into a normal procedure equal to that of cassation, and the presidia and plenums of *krai*, *oblast* and other courts were turned into normal third instances of the judiciary, although the law foresees only two such instances—the primary and the cassational. This brought about the

instability of judicial sentences which had become final and undermined the authoritativeness of court sentences.⁵⁵

Ever since the revival of court presidia there have been repeated warnings against a reversion to past practices of this type and there has, at least as yet, not been any real indication of frequent incidence of such deviations. On the other hand, a note of caution has already been sounded claiming that 'at present there has appeared a serious danger of multiple reviews of the same cases by presidia of courts, which inevitably leads to delays in the solution of criminal and civil cases'.⁵⁶

Yet a third controversial issue lies in the apparent tendency of the lower echelons dealing with the administration of justice broadly to interpret the terms of the applicable laws. One troublesome aspect of this has been the question of procuratorial participation in *nadzor* proceedings before court presidia particularly at the lower levels. The decree of 14 August, 1954, stipulated that 'criminal and civil cases are examined by the presidia of the Supreme Courts of Union and autonomous republics, *krai*, *oblast* and autonomous *oblast* courts with the participation correspondingly of the procurator of the Union or autonomous republic, the *krai*, *oblast* or autonomous *oblast*'. The language of the decree of 25 April, 1955, was even more explicit in that it ruled that 'cases in review proceedings on a protest are examined by the presidium of a court with the mandatory participation correspondingly of the procurator of the Union republic or his deputy, the procurator of the autonomous republic, or of the *krai*, *oblast* or autonomous *oblast*'.

The latter enactment thus broadened somewhat the circle of procuratorial officials authorized to take part in *nadzor* actions (by adding the deputy of the republican procurator) and then made such attendance obligatory. In spite of the evident desire on the part of the legislature unambiguously to circumscribe the category of eligible participants, it has been noted that 'the practice of the local procuracies and courts in this respect is rather variegated':

Some *krai* and *oblast* procurators interpret the above requirement of the Decree in the same sense that the term 'procurator' is explained in para. 4 of Art. 23 of the UPK of the RSFSR, and delegate their deputies, the heads of sections and even procurators of sections to the sessions of presidia.⁵⁷

On the whole, *krai* and *oblast* procuracies seem to have been the prime offenders in this regard and have been severely criticized for it on the grounds that such an approach 'constitutes a violation of the law and ultimately has a most harmful effect on the stability and authority of sentences and judgments which have entered into force'.⁵⁸

A final, and notable, deficiency apparent in the legislative provisions dealing with presidia lies in the failure of these enactments to

establish the periodicity of review sessions and the procedure for convening them. To compensate for this oversight working rules have apparently been devised on an *ad hoc* and *de facto* basis by the individual courts, particularly the Supreme Courts of the Union republics. As the practice of republican Supreme Courts for 1954-1959 shows, formal agendas are prepared for the sessions of the presidium which are convened regularly. Thus,

in the Supreme Court of the RSFSR one of the deputies of the president of the Supreme Court is specially in charge of questions of organization of the work of the Presidium, which sits regularly twice a week. At one of the sessions it examines criminal cases only, at the other, civil and criminal cases. The day of examination of every case is determined beforehand (approximately 7-10 days).

The work of the Presidium of the Supreme Court of Belorussia is planned, as a rule, personally by the President of the Supreme Court. The Presidium meets usually four times a month. At each session it considers both civil and criminal cases, selected beforehand for the given session.⁵⁹

However, throughout this period the regime completely failed to prescribe any standard set of procedural rules for the work of the presidia or even to specify a minimum frequency for their sessions, thereby allowing for appreciable differences between the solutions chosen for these questions by each republic. The remainder of the objections formulated by Soviet legal specialists against various aspects of the procedures or operational methods of the presidia are of a more specialized nature, and while not unimportant in themselves, represent essentially technical differences of opinion on how best to organize or plan the internal functioning of these agencies.⁶⁰

On the whole, then, the dominant characteristic of this period of reform in the structure of the Soviet court system is the primarily 'curative' nature of the measures undertaken. This explains the *ad hoc* and expedient element so apparent in all the legal amendments adopted by the successor regime in these first years following its assumption of public power in the USSR, clearly indicative of the basically negative motivation which inspired them. Because of this urgent need to rectify as soon as possible the glaring abuses of the past, the regime apparently felt under considerable pressure to act immediately and in most instances, initially at least, elected to accomplish the desired ends not by gradually evolving or elaborating novel principles of law and justice but through the short-term device of refashioning institutions or propositions identified with Stalin and reverting to pre-Stalinist practices, which had the added advantage of having been tried and tested once before and could afford a quick relief of recognized worth.

It is only after the ground was thus cleared of the more objectionable Stalinist features and that the pressure for rapid improvement had to

some extent abated that the successor government undertook to formulate some original judicial principles and methods of its own inspiration. That, however, only came later, essentially after May, 1956. The period between March, 1953, and May, 1956, apart from serving as a purgative stage for the liquidation of now undesirable practices, also served therefore as an incubating phase for subsequent reforms. That would help to explain, for instance, the apparent reluctance of the regime at this time to legislate outright on some of the more evident defects and shortcomings in the revised judicial system, despite general unanimity among experts in the field as to the need for corrective action.

In the case of the presidia system, in particular, it would seem that the authorities deliberately chose to leave certain lacunae in the operative provisions with the idea of forcing local organs of justice to improvise whatever solutions seemed most suitable to them, thus allowing the regime to endorse, at the appropriate moment, the one which proved itself best in actual practice. To some extent, too, this failure on the part of the central agencies to spell out every detail of the operation of the judiciary was probably due to revived emphasis, still current today, on the need for greater local initiative in certain areas, including that of law-making and law-enforcement. In that sense, the tactics of 1953-1956 were a direct precursor of, and excellent training for, the momentous decentralization of the legislative power consummated in 1957 through the transfer of the rights of codification from the federal government to the Union republics. In the end, it was the individual Union republic which faced the sometimes thankless task of finding the most appropriate and acceptable answers, within the overall bounds, of course, set for it by Moscow.

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¹ Text in *Sbornik zakonov SSSR i ukazov Prezidiuma Verkhovnoho Soveta SSSR* (1938 g.-noyabr 1958 g.) (M., 1959) p. 577.

² I. T. Golyakov, *Sovetski sud* (M., 1958) p. 17.

³ F. G. Tarasenko, *Voprosy organizatsii i deyatelnosti Sovetskikh sudov* (M., 1958) p. 64.

⁴ *Ibid.* p. 65.

⁵ N. Ananov, *Ministerstva v SSSR* (M., 1960) p. 34. This situation did not last long.

⁶ M. V. Kozhevnikov, *Istoriya Sovetskogo suda 1917-1956 gody* (M., 1957) p. 377. This source also mentions, however, that 'soon after, the Ministry of Justice of the USSR was relieved of all these functions which exceeded the bounds of judicial administration'.

⁷ Ya. N. Umanski, *Sovetskoye gosudarstvennoye pravo* (M., 1960) p. 337; S. S. Maksimov, 'Osnovniye voprosy organizatsii i deyatelnosti voyennykh tribunyalov', in S. A. Golunski (ed.), *Voprosy sudoproizvodstva i sudoustroystva v novom zakonodatelstve Soyuzna SSR* (M., 1959) p. 416; D. S. Karev, *Organizatsiya suda i prokuratury v SSSR (kurs lektsii)* (Minsk, 1960) p. 100.

⁸ S. S. Maksimov *op. cit.* p. 416.

⁹ M. Mikhailov, 'Nekotoriye voprosy Sovetskoi konstitutsionnoi praktiki', *Sovetskoye gosudarstvo i pravo* 1956 no. 9 p. 15.

¹⁰ The first Soviet reference to the liquidation of the Special Board appeared only in January, 1956. See the editorial 'Za povysheniye roli pravovoi nauki v kodifikatsii Sovetskovo zakonodatelstva', *Sovetskoye gosudarstvo i pravo* (SGP) 1956 no. 1 p. 3: '... as early as 1953, the Special Board under the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the USSR was abolished, with the transfer of all categories of criminal cases to the jurisdiction of the organs of the general judicial system'. Since then, there have been many similar assertions, for instance, F. G. Tarasenko *op. cit.* p. 13; M. V. Kozhevnikov, *Istoriya Sovetskogo suda 1917-1956 gody* (M., 1957) p. 350; R. A. Rudenko, 'Zadachi dalneishevo ukrepleniya sotsialisticheskoi zakonnosti v svete reshenii XX s'ezda', SGP 1956 no. 3 p. 17.

¹¹ M. V. Kozhevnikov *op. cit.* p. 350. For some Western doubts regarding this proposition, see V. Gsovski, *Problems of Communism* 1956 no. 3 p. 52; G. Ginsburgs, "'Socialist Legality' in the U.S.S.R. since the XXth Party Congress", *American Journal of Comparative Law* 1957 no. 4 p. 555; *Chronique de Politique Etrangère* 1956 no. 6 p. 803.

¹² For text, see *Sbornik zakonov SSSR . . .* (1938 g.-noyabr 1958 g.) pp. 575-6; D. S. Karev (ed.), *Ugolovno-protsessualnoye zakonodatelstvo SSSR i Soyuznykh Respublik, sbornik* (M., 1957) p. 28.

¹³ For text, see Ministry of Justice of the RSFSR, *Ugolovny kodeks RSFSR* (M., 1957) p. 134; D. S. Karev (ed.), *op. cit.* p. 29.

¹⁴ For text, see *Ugolovny kodeks RSFSR*, pp. 134-5.

¹⁵ 'Sovetski gosudarstvenny apparat . . .', SGP 1954 no. 5 p. 11.

¹⁶ I. T. Golyakov, 'Pravosudiye v Sovetskom sotsialisticheskome Gosudarstve', SGP 1954 no. 8 pp. 21-22. Also A. Rubichev, 'Povysit uroven raboty sudov i organov yustitsii', *Sotsialisticheskaya zakonost* (SZ) 1954 no. 6 pp. 20-21.

¹⁷ 'Za dalneisheye razvitiye nauki Sovetskogo gosudarstvennoho prava', SGP 1954 no. 7 p. 9. Also K. Gorshenin, 'Sovetski sud i evo rol v ukrepleni sotsialisticheskoi zakonnosti', *Kommunist* 1955 no. 2 p. 67.

¹⁸ *Vedomosti Verkhovnoho Soveta SSSR* 1954 no. 17 art. 360; S. A. Golunski (ed.), *Istoriya zakonodatelstva SSSR i RSFSR po ugovnomu protsessu i organizatsii suda i prokuratury 1917-1954 gg., sbornik dokumentov* (M., 1955) p. 591.

¹⁹ R. D. Rakhunov, *Peresmotr prigovorov i opredelenii v prezidiumakh sudov* (M., 1956) p. 9.

²⁰ *Materialy k izucheniyu kursa 'Organizatsiya suda i prokuratury SSSR'* (M., 1960) p. 90 note.

²¹ S. S. Maksimov, *op. cit.* p. 432.

²² D. S. Karev *op. cit.* p. 101; L. N. Smirnov, 'Novoye Polozheniye o Verkhovnom Sude SSSR i evo pervy Plenum', SGP 1957 no. 7 p. 23.

²³ K. S. Banchenko-Lyubimova, *Peresmotr sudebnykh reshenii, voshedshikh v zakonnyy silu, v poryadke nadzora* (M., 1959) p. 49; 'Konstitutsiya SSSR i dalneisheye ukrepleniye sotsialisticheskoi zakonnosti', SGP 1956 no. 10 pp. 5-6: 'In accordance with the Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR of 14 August, 1954, presidia have been formed in the supreme courts of the union and autonomous republics, in *krai* and *oblast* courts, which strengthens the role of the supreme courts of the union and autonomous republics and the local courts in the execution of judicial supervision and eliminates inconveniences for citizens in filing complaints'.

²⁴ F. G. Tarasenko *op. cit.* p. 93.

²⁵ *Ibid.* p. 95.

²⁶ E.g. S. P. Bityukov, 'Protsessualniye voprosy, svyazanniye s primeneniye Ukaza Prezidiuma Verkhovnoho Soveta SSSR ot 14 avgusta 1954 g.', SGP 1955 no. 3 pp. 98-99.

²⁷ *Ibid.* p. 99; for a survey of the background of this problem, see V. D. Arsenev, 'K voprosu o protsessualnom polozhenii sudei v Sovetskom ugovnom protsesse', SGP 1954 no. 6 pp. 92-93.

²⁸ S. P. Bityukov *op. cit.* pp. 99-100.

²⁹ Cf. art. 8 of the Decree of 25 April, 1955.

³⁰ For text, see V. P. Chapurski (ed.), *Grazhdanskoye protsessualnoye zakonodatelstvo SSSR i Soyuznykh Respublik* (M., 1957) p. 17.

³¹ *Sbornik zakonov SSSR . . .* pp. 583-4; D. S. Karev (ed.) *op. cit.* p. 30.

³² *Vedomosti Verkhovnoho Soveta SSSR* 1955 no. 9 art. 222; *Sovetskaya prokuratura v vazhnykh dokumentakh* (M., 1956) pp. 481-93.

³³ *Vedomosti Verkhovnoho Soveta SSSR* 1955 no. 7 art. 166; *Materialy k izucheniyu . . .* pp. 91-93.

³⁴ R. D. Rakhunov *op. cit.* p. 49.

³⁵ K. S. Banchenko-Lyubimova *op. cit.* pp. 35-36 note 1.

³⁶ S. P. Bityukov *op. cit.* p. 100.

³⁷ J. N. Hazard, 'Governmental Developments in the USSR since Stalin', *The Annals* January 1956 p. 21.

³⁸ I. D. Vetrov, 'Nekotoriye voprosy sudoustroystva Belorusskoi SSR (K proyektu Zakona o

sudoustroistve BSSR', in *Voprosy ugolovno prava i protsessy*, (sbornik statei) (Minsk, 1958) vypusk 1, seriya yuridicheskaya p. 202.

Per contra, cf. I. Perlov, 'Ob organizatsii i ustroistve sudebnoi sistemy Rossiiskoi Federatsii', *Sovetskaya yustitsiya* (SY) 1957 no. 2 pp. 39-44; N. Kalinin, 'Ob organizatsii raionnykh sudov' *ibid.* 1957 no. 7 p. 42.

³⁹ D. S. Karev *op. cit.* 103; *idem*, 'Dalneisheye sovershenstvovaniye Sovetskoi sudebnoi sistemy' SGP 1959 no. 2 p. 64; P. I. Kudryavtsev, 'Vazhnyy etap v razvitiy Sovetskovo zakonodatelstva i v ukrepleniye sotsialisticheskoi zakonnosti' *ibid.* p. 16.

⁴⁰ Thus, on 8 August, 1957, the *raion* system was inaugurated in the Latvian SSR; on 25 December, 1957 in the Azerbaïdzhan SSR; and on 5 August, 1958 in the Lithuanian SSR.

⁴¹ Art. 1 of the Bases of Legislation on the Judiciary of the USSR, Union and Autonomous Republics, of 25 December, 1958.

⁴² M. V. Kozhevnikov *op. cit.* p. 377.

⁴³ D. S. Karev *op. cit.* (note 39) p. 66.

⁴⁴ S. V. Borodin, T. N. Dobrovolskaya, *Verkhovny Sud Soyuznoi Respubliki (Ustroistvo suda i organizatsiya raboty)* (M., 1960) pp. 50-51.

⁴⁵ F. G. Tarasenko *op. cit.* p. 101.

⁴⁶ E. I. Zgurskaya in 'K voprosu o reforme sudebnovo upravleniya v SSSR', SGP 1957 no. 10 p. 126.

⁴⁷ K. S. Banchenko-Lyubimova *op. cit.* p. 50; D. Perov, 'Sushchestvenniye oshibki v rabote prezidiuma Voronezhskovo oblastnovo suda', SZ 1955 no. 8 p. 59.

⁴⁸ E. Polotski, 'Serezniye nedostatki v rabote prezidiuma Moskovskovo oblastnovo suda', SZ 1955 no. 7 p. 56.

⁴⁹ K. S. Banchenko-Lyubimova *op. cit.* p. 50.

⁵⁰ S. V. Borodin, T. N. Dobrovolskaya *op. cit.* p. 57.

⁵¹ V. I. Shind, *Rassmotreniye ugolovnykh del prezidiumami sudov* (M., 1960) p. 68.

⁵² R. D. Rakhunov *op. cit.* p. 51.

⁵³ 'Povysit rol oblastnykh, krayevykh sudov i Verkhovnykh sudov ASSR v osushchestvlenii sudebnovo nadzora', SY 1957 no. 3 p. 7.

⁵⁴ F. G. Tarasenko *op. cit.* p. 101.

⁵⁵ M. S. Strogovich, *Ugolovnyy protsess* (M., 1946) p. 490.

⁵⁶ F. G. Tarasenko *op. cit.* p. 98.

⁵⁷ S. P. Bityukov *op. cit.* pp. 100-101.

⁵⁸ F. G. Tarasenko *op. cit.* p. 109.

⁵⁹ S. V. Borodin, T. N. Dobrovolskaya *op. cit.* pp. 99-100.

⁶⁰ E.g. *ibid.* pp. 100-105; F. G. Tarasenko *op. cit.* pp. 130-2.

THE CPSU PROGRAMME: HISTORICAL AND INTERNATIONAL ASPECTS

Background and Main Characteristics

THE new programme of the CPSU adopted by the XXII Party Congress¹ is intended as a document dealing with all basic aspects of international life and with all the complex tasks facing Soviet society. Inherent criticism even of all its major aspects would require the writing of a book, since the programmatic statements would have to be discussed in connection not only with their ideological background but also with present conditions and possible developments. The following comment is restricted to discussion of problems which appear to the present author as central to the subject of this article, which deals with the interpretation of present international developments by the authors of the Programme. A second article will deal with their interpretation of communism as being built in the USSR.

The new programme is the third in the history of the Bolshevik party, after those adopted by the II Congress in 1903² and by the VIII Congress in 1919. The length of the last interval, embarrassing though it was in view of the central importance of a programme for party-political education,³ is explicable by the fact that a programmatic embodiment of some of the innovations of the later Stalin period in the field of social policies would have involved a politically undesirable going back on some of the promises of the 1919 programme.⁴ The gap is also explicable by the theoretical sterility of that period. Near the end of his life Stalin wrote his Economic Problems of Socialism with a view that it might serve as the basis for a new programme, and the XIX Party Congress decided accordingly, Stalin himself heading the Commission elected by the Congress for elaborating the new programme. If this commission had come into operation, the CPSU would now have had a programme envisaging, as an immediate task, the gradual replacement of market relations by direct commodity exchange and, in a slightly longer perspective, the nationalization of the collective farms; of course it would have had to amend it.

A party programme, in particular that of a party in power, is neither a systematic reformulation of basic theory nor a comprehensive plan of practical action: it is a meeting place between established party ideology (in the Soviet case, of the bodies professionally concerned with political indoctrination) and the requirements of practical policies (including, in particular, the definite demands requiring satisfaction in order to make a regime more popular and effective). The former

tend to preserve as much as possible of the formulae to which they are accustomed⁵ and on the continuity of which, in their opinion, the party's authority depends: the latter fill the old formulae, even if preserved, with new content. For the student as well as for the practical politician the element of change counts more than the continuity of certain given tenets. Particular efforts may be required in order to overrule these tenets. The form in which this can be done may vary between: (a) delay of application—or correction—of some tenet by postponement of its tackling (this way has been pursued, in the present programme, as regards the eventual fusion of the two types of socialist property, the eventual 'withering away' of money incentives, and the distribution of output according to needs beyond a point which still may be described as a radical variety of the welfare state); (b) intentional vagueness of formulations so as to allow for future restatements of theory (this holds, for example, true as regards non-orthodox possibilities of the transition of underdeveloped countries to socialism); and (c) straightforward dropping of a traditional tenet, such as the inevitability of major wars as long as monopoly capitalism survives, or the necessity of proletarian dictatorship for the whole transition period from capitalism to communism.

The institutional function of the programme as an instrument of political indoctrination makes for its homogeneity and systematic nature. These qualities are far superior in the new programme to that of the 1919 programme—which only too clearly showed the traces of the emergency conditions in which it was drafted and the paucity of practical experience on which its introduction of new concepts had to operate. These requirements have caused, on the other hand, tiresome repetitions in the 1961 document, which tries to find some place, fitting or otherwise, for every statement in traditional use. There is also a tendency of government departments to get programmatic sanction for their current activities and to increase their appeal to students choosing their future careers;⁶ quite a few of the amendments suggested in the course of a very modest discussion point in the same direction.

Apart from the requirements of party-political education, developments since the XX Party Congress called for an authoritative definition of policies and general prospects. These topical problems may be brought under three main headings:

(1) Effective agrarian policies require a clarification of the party's approach to the future of the kolkhoz system, and the closely associated question of whether the transition to communism requires an immediate or only a very gradual fusion of the two forms of socialist property. After a period of intense discussion and experiment⁷ (which may represent the major *internal* contribution to the shaping of the new

programme) a very gradual step, transferring the main transition to the second decade of the plan period and preserving meanwhile even the private plot, has been adopted in the new programme.

(2) During the last six years, the feel of an insufficiency of the existing planning methods developed: from the very start the current seven-year plan was conceived as a transitional link between the traditional five-year plans and the continuous planning then aimed at and now explicitly required in the new programme. Already in his report to the XX Party Congress Khrushchev envisaged that the new party programme should be drafted together with a long-term economic plan: this combination makes sense from the standpoint of bringing party aims (in particular the 'transition to communism') closer to reality, and from that of improving planning. The association of the improvements promised in the programme with an elaborate plan for the development of the resources available for fulfilling them resulted in an extreme paucity, in the published part of the discussion preceding the party congress, of suggestions exceeding the scope of explanation or of departmental self-assertion. Most of the exceptions⁸ concern improvement of institutional arrangements for the implementation of principles already elaborated in the draft programme. Suggestions made in the course of the discussion in the party organizations and accepted in Khrushchev's report include precisions on the draft as regards the location of one of the new metallurgical bases in the Kursk area and as regards the housing programme: existing substandard and overcrowded accommodation is to be replaced during the next decade. Khrushchev sharply rejected suggestions from the 'dogmatic' ideological side which were directed against the programme statements about the obsolescence of the proletarian dictatorship in the USSR and against the continuation of the kolkhoz market.

(3) At least as important as the internal are the *international* urges towards a programmatic clarification of the party's attitude. Partly, these reflect a consciousness of the conditioning of all progress possible in the USSR by what is happening in the world as a whole and in particular by the preservation of peace, which is impossible without a combination of those forces all over the world which oppose attempts to undo the changes which followed World War II as well as military interference with developments in the uncommitted countries. The two issues are closely associated in that nations sympathetic to a final settlement of the German question, to China's admission to UNO, etc., dislike being confronted, for their own development, with the sole alternative between the American and the Soviet way. Western readers, who are used to regarding it as unfair that West Germany will have to pay for its adherence to an alliance directed against the USSR

by a final acceptance of the *status quo*, or that Laotian neutrality is being defined as non-alignment with either bloc yet not as an exclusion of any possible ways of internal development, should keep in mind that each of these solutions has also an aspect less agreeable from the communist point of view and hence open to criticism within the Soviet bloc.

There is, however, no need to look for anti-'Maoist' implications of the self-reliance with which the Soviet way of building socialism is treated as the typical one, or of the very sharp rejection of the 'personality cult', directed not solely against the dead individual Stalin but against any replacement of the authority of the collective by any individual, however outstanding. Polycentrism has sufficiently developed in the communist camp to enable the Chinese leaders to by-pass even such features of the new programme as its failure to mention the 'People's Communes'. (Presumably the Soviet leaders assume that the Chinese, having to face the same difficulties as the Russians met in 1929-31, also repeat the ideological mistakes current in those days. In general, enormous difficulties, requiring from those who have to overcome them superhuman efforts, tend also to produce Leftist ideologies.) But although I have met, in diverse lands, young communists who brought what I would describe as revolutionary impatience under the heading of 'Maoism', I find it difficult to guess rational objections which Mao, or any other Marxist sharing his general views on dialectics and on the dynamics of revolutions in underdeveloped countries, could raise against the statements of the programme (Chapter V) about the peaceful transition to socialism, possible in some countries by democratic means (still described as a variety of the dictatorship of the proletariat), or those in Chapter VI on peaceful coexistence, defined as a rejection of war as a means of settling international disputes and as the prevention of thermo-nuclear war. Surely, such a war is particularly abhorrent for a nation with an enormous population concentration in large cities and without a nuclear deterrent of its own. Even from the ideological standpoint, concepts of an alleged inevitability of major war are hardly relevant for the leaders of a party which even less than the CPSU accepts the reality of the 'affluent society' in the West and which glances mainly at the underdeveloped countries, where revolutions for internal reasons are obviously in the cards. As to dogmatics, the authors of the new programme are clearly right when stating, in Chapter V, that the communists never based all their revolutionary expectations on a new war.

But differences were bound to arise, and may continue, on the interpretation of the likely development tendencies of the new un-

committed states: a chain of disagreeable experiences from Kerala to Egypt, though in Marxist terms explicable as due to the unavoidable vacillations of the national bourgeoisie, may look different from the angle of observers convinced that they can build the new society by their own unaided efforts and from that of politicians who gained power by what was, all in all, a successful peasant revolution directed against the national bourgeoisie. The current disagreements on the assessment of international developments made their impact upon the drafting process as well as upon the shape of the programme. Nearly all that is known about its preparation centres on the discussions between the diverse communist parties which were concluded by the adoption, by the Conference held in November 1960, of a document⁹ containing all the basic statements now embodied in the first, general, part of the CPSU programme. This procedure sharply contrasts with that observed at least since 1924 in Comintern, the Congresses of which were to be convened after the Russian but before the other national party congresses, and thus were intended to serve as an agency of transmitting Russian policy decisions to the other parties.

The new programme is more orientated towards the analysis of international relations than were any of its predecessors. In spite of its own extension, caused by a more elaborate detailed approach, the second, practical, part of the new programme occupies just slightly more than half the total length (in the programme of 1903 it occupied three-fifths, in that of 1919 more than three-quarters). Within the general part the economic analysis of capitalism and its tendencies, which fully occupied this part in 1903 and still dominated it in 1919, now occupies only two of the eight chapters. The shift of emphasis to international relations, in itself shared by all students of social relations who wish to rise above a parochial standpoint, is particularly important in a document intended to serve as the basis of Marxist thought for a period of decades: it ends the predominant emphasis on domestic issues characteristic of the century during which Marxism, up to now, has operated as a guidance of the socialist movement.

While a virtue of communist consistency has been made out of restating the general character of capitalist economies as described by Marx more than a century ago¹⁰, the changes in international relations brought about by the emergence of the 'socialist camp' and by the colonial revolutions of the last decade are too obvious and too promising from the communist point of view, for more than rearguard battles to be fought by defenders of some formulation of Stalin's or of Comintern. Still, they did occur: as P. Gapochka¹¹ points out, 'the dogmatists deem that . . . the old description of our period as a period of imperialism, imperialist wars and proletarian revolutions should be preserved';

they oppose this traditional formulation to that of the new programme which describes our period as that of the world-wide transition from capitalism to socialism and communism, mentioning as its basic characteristics the struggle of the two opposed systems (but not wars), the fall of imperialism and colonialism, and socialist revolutions as well as revolutions directed at national emancipation. (Since this was written, it has emerged at the Congress that Molotov submitted to the Central Committee a criticism of the Draft Programme on these lines.)

The Working-Class Movement in the Capitalist Countries (Chapters IV and V of the Programme)

The association of the programme with party-political education helps to broaden its outlook beyond the traditional Marxist pre-occupation with labour conditions but becomes a handicap in the treatment of those traditional subjects: a machine catering for homogeneity of doctrine is likely to combine the diverse past stages of doctrinal development in a way which reminds one of geological strata, without much bother about the relevance of those strata for the present. This shortcoming is most in evidence where the authors have to assert the inherent necessity of socialist revolutions (not necessarily violent) in the old-established capitalist countries (no particular difficulties are encountered in our days in demonstrating the inherent necessity of anti-colonial revolutions).

The drafters of the 1903 programme, like those of all the pre-1917 socialist programmes, believed that a mere demonstration of the inherent contradictions of capitalism, plus the necessarily increasing weight of the industrial proletariat, amounted to a demonstration of its tendency eventually to overthrow capitalism. (The classical elaboration of this concept is Chapter XXIV of the first volume of *Capital*.) Without suggesting that the overthrow of capitalism would necessarily occur in consequence of an economic depression, the programme of 1903 concluded its description of the economic cycle with the statement that slumps 'even quicker [than the normal course of capitalist development] lead to a relative [in relation to the rising incomes of the capitalists] and sometimes even to an absolute deterioration of the conditions of the working class'. This statement was repeated without change in the 1919 programme and is repeated, again without change, in the present programme. In 1903 it was treated only as one important element amongst those aspects of capitalist society which increase the workers' class-consciousness (as slumps undoubtedly do): yet the immediate task facing the Russian working class was then described as overthrowing Tsarism—and a democratic revolution was surely on the cards. In 1919 the statement, like all the definitions of capitalism

taken over from the 1903 programme, was intended to show that capitalism had not lost its basic features. But the revolution which had meanwhile taken place in Russia, and those which were expected in other lands, could easily be explained by the general disruption caused by the war, independently of the effects of the economic cycle.

When subsequently being confronted with a stabilization of capitalist relationships the communists, unwilling to base all their revolutionary prospects on a new war, had to look for tendencies to a depression of working-class conditions even in 'normal' post-war capitalism. As early as 1922 Bukharin asserted the existence of *absolute* pauperization in the capitalist system as a whole (i.e. leading capitalist countries plus the colonies exploited by them): he reproached Kautsky for having confused the issue by his emphasis on a merely *relative* pauperization of the working class in the leading capitalist countries (i.e. a lagging of the increase in its standard of life behind the rise of profits). Readers of the new programme, having found in the mentioned re-quotation from the 1903 programme a documentation of Marxist attitudes before World War I, will find the attitudes of the period between the wars revived in Chapter IV, where a discussion of unemployment and of the conditions of the masses in underdeveloped countries is followed by the statement that the decay of world capitalism does not imply full standstill nor exclude the growth of capitalist economies in individual periods and individual countries. Yet the position of the working class in the capitalist world as a whole is said to deteriorate, notwithstanding the occurrence of individual successes in its economic struggle. In our days, the conditions of Negro workers in the South African gold mines or in the Rhodesian copper belt play a more immediate part in a world-wide conception of revolutionary developments than they could in the twenties. But a statement such as that quoted can hardly make a relevant contribution to the interpretation of the behaviour of the workers of the leading capitalist countries. Readers of the programme get no positive help in assessing the new phenomena.

Of post-war capitalist developments only state-monopoly capitalism gets a treatment of some length: this is almost exclusively devoted to the rejection of assertions about its allegedly near-socialist character and about a possibility of overall planning and of overcoming the contradictions of capitalist society without abolishing private ownership in the basic means of production, etc. At the end of these paragraphs it is, however, said that state-monopoly capitalism represents the complete material preparation for socialism. In the following chapter (V) it is stated that the proletariat demands far-reaching nationalization measures under conditions as favourable to the people as possible, the nationalized industries and all the economic activities of the state being

subject to control by parliament, by the trade unions and by representative bodies. The reservations of Chapter IV against nationalizations as strengthening the power positions of monopoly capitalism are thus being reduced to an emphasis on the impossibility of achieving a socialist planned economy without a radical change of government. The progress of automation and of other aspects of the present technical revolution is narrowed down by capitalist relations of production; even in so far as it can take place in these conditions, it is bound to increase unemployment and to pauperize the small producers.

In the two chapters here under discussion, there are no straightforward references to advances made in capitalist countries in social services and to transfers of income (i.e. to the phenomena usually described in the West as the Welfare State, not necessarily with a tendency to idealization but in opposition to earlier conceptions of the state as not concerned with social security problems). In Chapter V, in the most general terms, it is said that the bourgeoisie, having drawn some lessons from the October Revolution 'applies new means to cover the ulcers and diseases of the capitalist system: these means, although they complicate the activity of the revolutionary forces in the capitalist countries, cannot weaken the antagonism between capital and labour'. The programme explicitly mentions the Welfare State only in Chapter VII (which is devoted to the struggle against hostile ideologies)¹² as an ideological tool of anti-communism, i.e. of defamation of the socialist system and falsification of its aims and policies, apart from really propagandist theories such as assertions of an alleged 'people's capitalism', 'dispersion of capital ownership', equalization of incomes, etc. The authors appear to ignore the topical issues of political struggle in the USA and in Britain, or anti-communist literature in the ordinary sense of the word which, since Kravchenko's days, uses the denunciation of Soviet socialism as a convenient means to attack social reforms nearer home. One feels the sectarian blinkers of the professional propagandist who regards the political disputes of our days as essentially conducted between communists on one side and Social Democrats, Yugoslav Revisionists etc. on the other side. It is this approach—with its counterpart on the Western side of the 'curtain'—which in our days makes so much for ignorance of conditions in the 'opposite' part of the world.

The extreme reserve with which the economic issues allowing for day-to-day reform are tackled may be associated with a fear of loss of identity in the broad political combinations recommended by the programme. In the issue of war and peace these combinations have to include all reasonable strata of the bourgeoisie; broad strata of the lower middle classes should help to form a front against the big

monopolies, the mainstays of armaments and, in some countries, of fascist threats. To the Social Democratic parties—presumably the left-wing variety, since the right-wing Social Democrats are regarded as the main supporters of the rejected concepts of a possible democratization of monopoly capitalism—even fuller collaboration is offered 'not only in the struggle for peace, for the improvement of the workers' living conditions, for the preservation and extension of their democratic rights, but also for the conquest of power and the construction of a socialist society'. The programme states that the communists prefer to establish a working class regime 'by peaceful means'¹³ without civil war: if the ruling classes, however, violently oppose the will of an overwhelming majority of the people (destroy the parliamentary institutions, outlaw communist parties, etc.) the conquest of power by violent means has to be envisaged.¹⁴ But after a further consolidation of the socialist system (on the international stage) the bourgeoisie of some countries may voluntarily accept nationalization, if compensation is paid to the former owners of the means of production. The forms of transition and its institutional setting thus will differ from country to country, but whatever their shape, they are interpreted as varieties of the dictatorship of the proletariat. In practical terms, this appears to mean that the transition, once carried out, would be irreversible.

The remarkable thing about this approach is, not that it has been formulated with such frankness (in substance, it was contained in Khrushchev's report to the XX Party Congress in 1956) but that it appears to meet only moderate objections within the world communist movement.¹⁵ These objections are (a) that in the present setting the achievement of working-class aims short of a conquest of power is impossible (and hence the issue of further progress towards a socialist transformation would not arise), and (b) that the struggle against the capitalist monopolies (including partial nationalization measures) and for the defence, or restoration, of democratic institutions might form, not a preparatory step on the road to socialism but a means of consolidating a slightly reformed bourgeois regime. As to (a), the programme states, positively, that the working class of many countries, if rallying broad strata of the working people

can force the ruling circles to stop the preparation for a new world war, to waive the initiation of local wars, to use the national economy for peaceful purposes; it can defeat the attacks of the fascist reaction, achieve a realization of a national peace programme, of national independence,¹⁶ of democratic rights, and of some improvement in the people's living conditions.

As to objection (b), the programme says, apparently in polemic against internal critics, that 'the common democratic struggle against

the monopolies does not delay the socialist revolution but brings it nearer. *The struggle for democracy is an inherent part of the struggle for socialism.*¹⁷

The Socialist System and the Emancipation Movements in the Underdeveloped Countries

In development of accepted communist concepts the programme describes the international setting discussed in its general part as the third stage of the general crisis of capitalism (the first one was associated with the October revolution, the second with the extension of the communist system over a whole group of countries). This third phase, as the authors of the programme emphasize, did *not* develop in connection with a world war; Khrushchev's now familiar argument is elaborated in Chapter VIII which puts the struggle for peace into the centre of the efforts of all reasonable people. The *possibility* of war cannot be excluded but, with the strengthening of the socialist system and the colonial emancipation movements the imperialist powers (more precisely, the most aggressive of the monopolies urging towards war) are deprived of reasonable prospects of success in a world war: if the peace forces remain vigilant, the great transformations of our days can proceed without interruption by other than local conflicts which are sometimes unavoidable in the course of colonial emancipation movements (still, Ghana and Guinea, which achieved their independence by peaceful means, are regarded as truly national democracies). The programme excludes from the process of the extension of the socialist system to other countries even local wars other than those fought in self-defence of the socialist states against 'export of counter-revolution'.¹⁸ 'The revolution does not proceed by order: it cannot be imposed on a people from outside: it arises in consequence of the deep internal and international contradictions of capitalism. A victorious working class cannot impose any blessings on an alien people without thereby undermining its own victory.' This statement is supported by the mention, in Chapter III, of national prejudices and of the residua of former national hatred, as one of the most stubborn and persistent obstacles to progress in the socialist part of the world: clearly, these difficulties would increase by successful 'exports of revolution'.

The concept of 'peaceful competition' of states with different social systems, by which the USSR wishes to replace the 'cold war', is elaborated in Chapter VIII: it involves, not an abrogation of class conflict (which, according to basic Marxist tenets, is in any way beyond the powers of negotiators) but its being shifted to the more civilized rails of propaganda by example and economic help. In particular in the

atomic age, 'War cannot, and must not, serve as the means of deciding international disputes'.

During the present decade, Soviet output per head is expected to surpass the present level of USA output. This is not an easy task since (according to A. Notkin's calculations) in 1959 over 40% of the American level was reached, but even its completion would not imply the achievement of the highest consumers' standards in the world since, in the USSR, so much higher a share of output is re-invested.¹⁹ A period perhaps even longer than the twenty years envisaged in the programme would have to pass before any difference in standards of life could tell in favour of the establishment of communist or near-communist systems in some of the developed capitalist countries.

Academician Strumilin elaborates the long-term prospects of the programme (in *Kommunist* 1961 no. 13), giving two alternative estimates of the relative strength of the three types of national economies to be expected after twenty years. The first estimate, supposing continuation of the present distribution of the three types of states and extrapolating present development trends of population and output in each of them, yields an absolute superiority of the socialist camp in production potential but not in population. The second alternative, an absolute superiority (54 per cent.) even in population, is derived on the assumption that during those twenty years 10% of the population of the presently monopoly capitalist countries and 30% of the 'other' (i.e. underdeveloped yet still capitalist) countries turn socialist. The communists are not the only students of international affairs who expect that the observable differences in the rates of growth, and the achievements of socialist countries which a short while ago were themselves underdeveloped, may influence the choice of countries looking out for the best way of development: Strumilin may be on more controversial ground when he expects those 'other' countries which do not make this choice to remain in their present state without any further formations of monopoly capitalist structures occurring.

Chapter VI of the first part is headed 'The National Emancipation Movement'. Very differently from what would have had to be expected even a few years ago, only a few lines are devoted to the still continuing independence struggles of some colonial peoples: the emphasis lies on those nations which have already achieved states of their own and on the choices facing them.

The young sovereign states belong neither to the system of imperialist states nor to the system of socialist states; but the overwhelming majority of them have not yet extricated themselves from the capitalist world economy, though they occupy a particular position within its framework. This part of the world is still exploited by the capitalist monopolies: until these states bring their economic dependence on

imperialism to an end, they will play the part of the 'rural backwater of the world' (*mirovoi derevni*) and remain an object of international exploitation.

The changes suggested to end such a state of affairs are treated on three successive levels:

(1) National independence can become a reality only if political sovereignty is supplemented by breaking the power of the foreign monopolies and of the feudal strata within the countries collaborating with them, and only if it is strengthened by the people's active participation in government. Solution of the new nations' problems requires consistent struggle against imperialism, not only against the imperialism of the former colonial power but also, and mainly, against American imperialism which is the present main stronghold of colonialism. In most countries the struggle for achievement of these aims proceeds under the banner of nationalism but the nucleus of the national front should be formed by an alliance of the working class, as the most consistent opponent of imperialism, with the peasantry. Marxists, says the programme, make a difference between the nationalism of an oppressed, and the nationalism of an oppressing nation; they recognize that the former, within certain limits, has its progressive and democratic aspects; they also recognize the progressive part played by the national bourgeoisie of the formerly dependent countries in the struggle against feudalism and imperialism.²⁰ But with the development of the internal class struggles the national bourgeoisie, possibly in a complicated process passing through diverse stages, develops its reactionary aspects and becomes inclined to compromises with its former opponents.

(2) A nation which has achieved national independence has the choice between the capitalist and the non-capitalist ways of development. (The implications of these two alternative ways of development for the diverse strata of the population, including the national *intelligentsia*, are explained in what will presumably become the most impressive part of the international section of the programme.) The choice between these two ways of development depends on each nation's free decision, conditioned by the relation of class forces within it. (This is to say: the communist bloc will treat even those former colonial countries which choose an independent, though capitalist way of development, as friendly neutrals.) Yet the present relationships of forces on the world stage and the availability of effective support from the world socialist camp allows the peoples of the former colonies the choice of the non-capitalist way, if they so desire. This way corresponds to the interests of the absolute majority of the nation (the workers, peasants and intellectuals); it requires

certain concessions on the part of the bourgeoisie but these concessions will be made in the national interest and would allow all strata of the population (including the bourgeoisie) active participation in the reconstruction.

(3) Having defined the non-capitalist way of development of former colonial countries, the programme recommends the State of National Democracy, based on a bloc of all progressive and democratic forces, as the institutional framework for the completion of a consistently anti-imperialist, anti-feudal and democratic revolution. Presumably intentionally, the formula is loose in that it does not answer the question whether the State of National Democracy is a mere framework within which the choice between the two possible ways of industrializing a backward country has to be made, or is already the institutional setting established once question (2) has been decided in favour of the non-capitalist way; nor does it answer the question whether this institutional setting provides a specific form of building a socialist society, with implications as regards the general validity of the concept of proletarian dictatorship. In the course of the discussion it was suggested²¹ that these issues should be clarified by explicitly describing the State of National Democracy as 'the first, initial stage of the non-capitalist development' of underdeveloped countries. The failure to be explicit on these issues may be a consequence not only of diplomatic tact but also of the extreme variety of the phenomena coming under that heading, ranging from Ghana and Indonesia to Cuba, and also of uncertainty as regards the speed with which the division of the world into hostile blocs (and thereby also the definition of a certain group of countries as neutralist) may be overcome. But the possibility of latent disagreements even on so basic a point of communist theory as the hegemony of the working class in the socialist revolution should not be excluded *a priori*. Already, in the Chinese and Yugoslav revolutions, the temporary destruction of the industrial party organizations has been made good by successful peasant guerrillas: still, these were led by parties originating from the struggles of the industrial workers and eager to use their triumph for reconstruction on Marxist lines, with whatever modifications appeared desirable in view of the enormous part played by the peasants in the struggle. It need not be regarded as a mere accident that these two parties, the only ones in whose triumph Soviet support played a merely subordinate part, have also shown, though in very different ways, the largest degrees of independence from Soviet leadership. There exists, however, already the Cuban example of a peasant-based revolution which, by the counter-pressure of the threatened American interests, has been driven into diplomatic and ideological proximity to communism²² without

in any serious way accepting the principle of proletarian hegemony.²³ The Soviet leaders may expect such movements to be converted by their experiences to Marxist socialism. Alternatively, they may expect a very prolonged transition period to be dominated by the cooperation of highly industrialized Marxist states with diverse varieties of peasant socialism, with a leadership recruited from the *intelligentsia*. They have no urgent reason to bind their judgement prematurely at this stage to such an extent as to drop the traditional Marxist concepts.

Indirect conclusions on the attitude of the authors of the programme to efforts at achieving socialism by unorthodox methods may be drawn from their description of the essential features of the existing socialist camp, keeping in mind that any admission of the possibility of different ways is likely to enter their statements by omission of possible negative argument rather than in positive terms. Chapter III of the first part, which deals with the emergence of the world socialist system as one of the elements in the international transition from capitalism to communism, enumerates the existing members of the camp, adding that Yugoslavia, too, has entered the socialist road but that her leaders by their revisionist policy put the country in opposition to the world socialist movement; thereby they are said to have brought about the danger of a possible loss of the revolutionary achievements.²⁴ In the further course of the chapter the argument about the political and economic dangers involved in attempts to construct socialism in isolation from the socialist camp is repeated without specific reference to Yugoslavia. It appears that, in the opinion of the authors of the programme, an effort to build socialism without the direct help of the camp does not imply a contradiction in terms; it may be suggested that heterodoxies of a level comparable with the Yugoslav ones, if originating from a country without claims to present the true interpretation of Marxism-Leninism (and hence without appeal to deviationist tendencies in the existing communist parties) would be more charitably dealt with, however obvious might be the dependence of joint economic planning on the achievement of some degree of political unity.²⁵ Chapter VI of the second part, dealing with the Cooperation of the Socialist Countries, recommends a development of coordinated planning and specialization as well as an increase in commercial exchanges: a future development in which all of the then existing socialist states might share in the second but only a nucleus in both forms of economic coordination, would not exceed the intellectual framework of the programme.

Too broad an interpretation of the geographical scope of the socialist camp to be expected in a near future is contradicted by the prospects for the transition to communism developed in that chapter. The time

lags existing between the socialist revolutions in the diverse bloc countries and their different levels of economic development²⁶ are said to preclude a simultaneous entrance into the period of communist construction; yet by coordination of their economic efforts and full use of the experience achieved by the more advanced of them 'the time required for the building of socialism may be shortened to such an extent that the transition to communism may take place more or less simultaneously, within the limits of one historical period'.²⁷ Concepts such as 'one historical period' and, as we shall later see, 'transition to communism', are too loose to allow for precise delimitations; still it is clear that the authors of the programme (a) expect the transition to communism to take place in some parts of the world while, in others, capitalism still survives, and (b) regard socialism, that is to say a state of things in which the new attitudes to work can develop on the basis of full nationalization of the means of production yet still under the impact of the familiar material incentives, as a necessary transition stage to communism. From these two premisses it follows that during the later stage of the transition period, alongside with capitalist and communist, there will be socialist systems, some of them fairly advanced but some very backward, applying non-capitalist methods for carrying out their industrialization. It follows that the above quoted statement can refer only to the existing members of the camp, perhaps plus one or the other fairly advanced nation which might join before long. It is apparently intended as another of those expressions of the equality of status of all the nations forming the camp of which the programme is full. It is worth noting in this connection that point (d) of the section on the moral-educational tasks of the party is headed 'development of proletarian internationalism and Soviet patriotism'; the order is inverse to what it would have been in the later Stalin period.

RUDOLF SCHLESINGER

¹ English translations in *The Current Digest of the Soviet Press* 1961 nos. 28 and 29; and *Programme of the CPSU (draft)* (M., 1961). Readers may be warned against basing their judgement on fragmentary reports and interpretations which are coloured, in some cases, not only by the customary biases but also by a journalistic tendency to overlook the very cautious formulations in which some of the promises of the programme are clothed.

² The programme written by a near-outsider, Struve, on behalf of the abortive Minsk Congress of 1898 never made a major impact. In the preparation of the 1903 programme it played a smaller part than the drafts elaborated by Plekhanov in the eighties and the Erfurt Programme (1891) of German Social Democracy. The (1928) programme of Comintern has some relevance for the new CPSU programme in so far as the latter puts a major emphasis on international issues: comparisons, however, show the enormous change in atmosphere.

³ Art. 1 of the party Rules (preserved by the Bolsheviks since the 1903 Congress) requires from every member a knowledge of the programme.

⁴ Part of the responsibility lies with the authors of the 1919 programme themselves, not only in that they could not foresee the requirements of the industrialization of an isolated socialist country, forced to maintain quick tempos in view of a threatening hostile invasion (such insight would have been superhuman in the conditions of 1919) but also, and mainly, in that, having enacted a list of *desiderata* in the field of the protection of labour, such as four weeks' holidays for all, they added a rider, in the corresponding section, that 'temporary retreats' from these demands had been made necessary 'by the extreme ruin caused by the war and the attacks of international imperialism'. In fact, after all the achievements of the last decades the USSR has only now become strong enough to envisage the general introduction of a four weeks' holiday for the time when the new programme will be completed, i.e. for about 1980. In other respects, such as the length of the working day, the USSR is already now well ahead of the 1919 programme, which kept to the traditionally demanded, and then just legally established, eight-hour day.

⁵ A characteristic example is the repetition of the definition of the capitalist economy as given in the 1903 programme by both its successors: this re-appears exactly and in inverted commas in the programme of 1919, and materially, with explicit reference to the repetition of all the essentials of the old texts, in the first chapter of the present programme. Reasons other than mere sentimental attachment favoured such repetitions after intervals the length of which would surely have allowed for more than stylistic improvements: in 1919 this motive was given by the desire to emphasize the Bolsheviks' continuity with the old party (which was disputed by the Mensheviks) and by Lenin's rejection of Bukharin's treatment of monopoly capitalism as something fully new and superseding 'classical' capitalism (cf. Lenin's *Sochineniya* 4th ed. vol. XXIX pp. 144 ff.). In our days, the motive is a desire to reject 'revisionist' assertions about an alleged obsolescence of Marx's basic economic doctrines.

⁶ See, for example, the forecast in the programme of 'a further strengthening of the monetary and credit system, of the Soviet currency, a continued rise in the course of the ruble based on its increasing purchasing power, a strengthening of its role on the international stage'. The last point is merely a different expression of the elsewhere forecast rise of the economic power of the Soviet bloc. The first point may have got in as a confirmation of the—already elsewhere expressed—intention *not* to envisage in a foreseeable future a 'withering away of money'. The party leaders' interest in such emphases may have helped the finance people to get the most uncertain problems of currency policies into a long-term programme.

⁷ Cf. *Soviet Studies* vol. XIII pp. 144 ff.

⁸ In this connection I may mention the suggestion of a group of members of a farm in Kiev province (published in *Izvestiya* 23.viii.61) that elections of Kolkhoz chairmen should be by secret ballot so as to prevent the enforcement of unpopular candidates upon the kolkhozniki, and the demand of some officials of Gorky sovnarkhoz for a restoration to the sovnarkhozy of such autonomy in matters of supply and of disposal of excess production as they were originally granted in 1957, but deprived of in 1959. F. M. Strogovich, writing in *Kommunist* 1961 no. 14 p. 86, demanded explicit formulation of the demand for full protection of the citizen's right in all fields of political and social life against infringements, from whatever quarter they might originate, of the independence of the judges who are subject only to the law, of equal status of prosecution and defence in the trial.

⁹ *Kommunist* 1960 no. 17.

¹⁰ See note 5.

¹¹ Writing in *Kommunist Ukrainy* 1961 no. 9 p. 20.

¹² Like the *Communist Manifesto* and all programmes on the Bolshevik period, the new programme has such a special section: as in the 1919 programme (where it is restricted to a few paragraphs criticizing the 'bourgeois distortions of socialism', namely the right-wing and centrist social democrat concepts) it stands in the midst of the programme, following the analysis, and preceding the explanation of the political tasks. Since the present programme is *de facto* international in character, the tasks of the communist parties outside the USSR are explained already in the course of the analysis.

¹³ Italics in the original.

¹⁴ This is in substance the position taken by Engels in his article *Socialism in Germany*, written in 1895. From the position of the Linz programme of Austrian Social Democracy (1925) the new communist programme differs in that proletarian dictatorship, once established in the course of resistance against an anti-democratic bourgeois coup, would not be abolished short of the final consolidation of socialism.

¹⁵ In view of the obvious international implications of public arguments of some non-Soviet communist parties against the CPSU, the objections, if existing, were bound to be levelled in private: their character can only be guessed from such arguments as the drafters of the programme found necessary to make against possible objections.

¹⁶ As distinct from the corresponding passage of the November declaration, which speaks of many *capitalist* (my italics) countries, the addressees of Chapter V are unspecified—except in that the countries concerned must have been industrialized at least to some extent so as to have a working class of their own; hence the meaning of the sentence may vary as between semi-colonial countries where direct issues of national independence are involved and, say, some European member-states of NATO, where the statement would amount to the enforcement of a neutralist policy (the passage in the November declaration does not mention national independence in this connection).

¹⁷ Italics in the original.

¹⁸ The authors of the 1919 programme, to whom the inevitability of civil war in the individual countries carrying out a socialist revolution was self-evident, expected it to be combined 'with revolutionary wars of the proletarian countries acting in self-defence as well as of the oppressed peoples rising against the yoke of the imperialist countries': already in that programme an initiative of the socialist countries in a settlement of *international* contradictions by armed force was excluded. But armed anti-socialist intervention from outside, and hence also an occasional necessity to reply by counter-strokes (such as in 1920, when Pilsudski's offensive against Kiev was followed by the Soviet offensive against Warsaw) could be taken for granted: the Red Army, if victorious, would in 1920 no more than it eventually did in 1945 have refrained from establishing in the country from which the intervention had originated a reliably friendly regime. In 1919, and much later, up to Stalin's death, the capacity of imperialism to start anti-socialist wars was taken for granted: hence a rejection of 'export of revolutions' did not exclude a perspective in which future victories of communism were regarded as most likely in the event of war.

¹⁹ A. Notkin in *Voprosy ekonomiki* 1961 no. 7 pp. 13-14.

²⁰ The elaboration of these positive aspects of the all-national stage of the colonial emancipation movement is far more explicit than in the November Declaration.

²¹ By G. Starko, writing in *Kommunist* 1961 no. 13 p. 87. The opposite description of National Democracy as a progressive bourgeois state was suggested by D. I. Chesnokov, reporting at a discussion meeting convened in late March by the philosophical faculty of Moscow State University (reported in *Voprosy filosofii* 1961 no. 9 pp. 123-4); a number of speakers, however, opposed this interpretation. The Congress issue (14) of *Kommunist* contains (on p. 45) a formulation which implies a definition of National Democracy as the institutional form of a non-capitalist development. Khrushchev, in his programme speech, describes it as 'a state which expresses the interests, not of any individual class, but of the broadest strata of the people, and which is destined to solve the tasks of the anti-imperialist, national-emancipation revolution'. To any Marxist this means socialism, and Chesnokov's interpretation is thus rejected: the question asked by Starko remains, however, open.

²² This point, with the corollary that by denouncing Fidelism as a variety of communism, the Americans have made communism popular all over South America, has been made by authors so different as J. D. Morray, writing in the special Cuba issue (vol. XIII no. 3-4) of the *New York Monthly Review*, and J. Halra Ferguson, in his Chatham House address of 31 January 1961 (reprinted in *International Affairs* July 1961).

²³ In his article (see note 22) J. D. Morray makes the point that the urban workers, at least the skilled ones, achieved in the Cuban revolution no palpable benefits comparable with those of the agricultural labourers; hence communist party activities are required to secure their continued integration in the revolutionary front. The same issue of *Monthly Review* translates an article by Major Che Guevara, one of the military leaders of the Cuban revolution, which suggests that all over South America the eventual triumph of socialism will result, not from the struggle of the industrial workers but from the conquest of the towns by armies of *campesinos* 'fighting for their own great objectives, primarily for a just distribution of land'. True, he adds that the *campesino* army, when conquering the towns, will 'enrich the contents of its own ideology' by its contacts with the industrial workers, and adopt Marxism. But such a concept of the impending revolutions, however realistic, is not Marxism but left-wing *narodnichestvo*, the working class being conceived as an important but subsidiary ally of the peasantry (instead of *vice versa*, as with Lenin). I make this point only in order to illustrate how difficult it is for the Russian Marxists, whose ideology has been shaped in the struggle against *narodnichestvo*, without revising some of their basic concepts to accept Fidelism as more than an ally.

²⁴ In the November Declaration, there was no reference to Yugoslavia as a socialist country but there was a much sharper denunciation of the attitude of the Yugoslav leaders, who appear not merely as the representatives of erroneous views but as ideological enemies.

²⁵ For comparison it may be remembered that in the Western camp the advocates of the European Common Market, which is supposed to operate upon a free market economy and hence should be in less urgent need of political integration than a planned economy, take the need for at least some kind of such integration for granted and differ only as regards its extent,

some going to the length of demanding eventual federation. The new programme of the CPSU does not go beyond the demand for coordinated policies.

²⁶ The November Declaration of the Communist Parties says on this point: 'The world socialist system has entered a new stage in its development. The USSR is successfully developing the construction of a communist society. Other countries of the socialist camp are successfully laying the foundations of socialism, and some of them have already entered the period of constructing a developed socialist society'. This explicit description of the existing differences makes the programmatic statement quoted in the text even more problematical than it appears already at first glance.

²⁷ In the original the quoted sentence is put in italics.

RATIONALITY AND EFFICIENCY: A FURTHER NOTE

IN 'A Note on Rationality and Efficiency in the Soviet Economy' in *Soviet Studies*, April and July 1961, the section on steel (July 1961 p. 35) started with the statement: 'This item should have been handled by Gardner Clark of Cornell'. It had been, but much too late, regrettably, to be used in the 'Note' (see his 'Economics and Technology: The Case of Soviet Steel', a paper read at a conference in Bloomington, Indiana, in February 1961; the report on the conference was published as *Study of the Soviet Economy*, edited by Nicholas Spulber, Bloomington, Indiana, 1961). Clark's findings are based on a thorough study over many years of the metallurgical industry in the USSR, USA and Western Europe. Particularly helpful was his visit to the USSR in the company of high American specialists in 1958 (visit of the American Steel and Iron Ore Delegation; the report, edited by Clark, was published as *Steel in the Soviet Union*, New York, 1959).

According to Clark, the Soviets are fully on a par with and partly even superior to the United States in coke production, beneficiation of ores, smelting in blast furnaces and some phases of smelting in open hearths. He reports a case which would be unbelievable if it did not come from an absolutely reliable source, namely that the late Soviet metallurgist Ivan P. Bardin, a great scholar, it is true, was able to give advice to the manager of a large American enterprise in Chicago, by following which the monthly output of a blast furnace was raised from 54,000 to 74,592 short tons (*Study of the Soviet Economy* pp. 20-21). Clark and apparently the whole delegation is extremely emphatic in stressing Soviet achievements and sounding a warning to the West.

However, beneficiation of iron ores, coke production, operating blast furnaces and open hearths are all, or mostly, production of semi-finished goods. The primary end product of ferrous metallurgy is rolled steel. On this Clark writes: 'The most important branch from the viewpoint of capital invested and manpower employed'—and of, let us add, performing the service for which the steel is produced, namely to serve as material for output of machinery and implements and of course armaments—is steel rolling and finishing. Therein the Soviets are clearly inferior, not only in quality of product and plant layout and equipment, but also in the technical skill and the size of their operating and maintenance crews' (*op. cit.* p. 19). Clark adds: 'Much of the Soviet ingot steel'—rolled steel is produced from ingot steel—'would not meet the high American standard of product quality'.

Thus the successes attained are primarily in ensuring quantity. Quality is sacrificed. The poor quality of Soviet machinery was shown in the 'Note'. One, perhaps major, reason for this was defects in the quality of steel used in its production.

The competent Bardins do not decide on everything in the USSR and even they are likely to make errors, because they are forced to act on incorrect data or use incorrect procedures. The gains from improved operation of blast furnaces or open hearths may be greatly over-compensated, for example, by improper location of the metallurgical enterprises. And in this respect Soviet metallurgy is certainly defective. The changes in location which have taken place have been brought about by the aim of dispersal from the Donets basin (Donbass) for defence reasons. However, the shift to the area with lower production costs (the East) was inadequate, while the shift to regions with high to very high production costs and/or poor quality of the raw materials was clearly in evidence.

Two great locational blunders (the construction of the high-cost plants at Cherepovets and in the Transcaucasus) were discussed in the 'Note'. The plant based on the use of the miserable Kerch ore (which contains a great deal of phosphorus and even arsenic, which is still more harmful) is a sacrifice of both quality and production costs. The metallurgical plants in Central European Russia (Lipetsk and Novo-Tula) are likewise high-cost producers.

Even as calculations on the basis of existing prices indicate, pig iron and steel are cheaper to produce in the Urals and Western Siberia than in the Donbass. Actually the difference is much greater than that indicated by these calculations. It seems, however, that the iron and steel industry is not allowed to take into consideration that the existing prices of Donbass coal and consequently coke (the price of coke is naturally based on the existing price of coal) are very inadequate and that Donbass coal is subsidized to an extent exceeding 25 per cent. (Donbass coal used for coke production is subsidized even more). Properly computed, the production costs of Donbass coke is much more than double that in the Kuzbass in Western Siberia.

The failure to take into account the subsidizing of Donbass coal naturally affects adversely the long-term expansion plans for pig iron and steel production in the USSR as a whole.

The most recent statements on the Kursk Magnetic Anomaly (KMA) are much more hopeful than those on the basis of which the respective statements in the 'Note' were made. *Pravda*, 14 September 1961, reports that high-grade iron ore, and moreover open-cast ore, is actually shipped from the area in large quantities. The KMA may ultimately develop to become a very valuable asset. But not a decisive

one. The high production costs of the Donbass coke (those in Pechora and Transcaucasus, the only other sources of it in European Russia, are even more expensive) will remain a decisive factor as long as coke remains indispensable in pig iron production.

Since it is impossible to appraise the harm done by the deficient quality of the steel produced, the total amount of irrationality and inefficiency in iron and steel is impossible to estimate. It may well be that the inefficiency and irrationality is smaller in this branch than in some others.

Analysis of the other mainstays of heavy industry, fuel and electricity, seems to make it certain that generalization from successes of the Soviets in handling blast furnaces or beneficiation of iron ores may easily mislead.

While we are at it, let a couple of other items be mentioned. In the 'Note' (*Soviet Studies* April 1961 pp. 370-1) the production costs of electric power by the small enterprises were estimated at double those of the large. In *Pravda*, 28 August 1961, an engineer, P. Bordashkin, gives the investment per unit of power in small electric stations at 5 to 8 times those in large stations. Production costs, also per unit of power, are given at 10-15 times higher. While these estimates seem to be too high, that in the 'Note' may well be too low.

In the April 1961 issue, p. 367, a Soviet source was erroneously interpreted as stating that the hydro-electric power station at Kakhovka on the Dnieper was included among the targets of the seven-year plan for 1959-65. According to the source the plant was completed prior to 1959. The same error was made in my *Soviet Industrialization, 1928-52*, p. 249.

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REVIEWS

Economy and Economics of the East-European Countries: Development and Applicability (The proceedings of a seminar). Special Number 1961 of *Øst Økonomi*, published by the Office of Eastern Economics, Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, Oslo (Parkveien 12). 96 pp. \$1.

THIS special number contains, as its main part, five articles:

1. Michael Kaser: Economic Development in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, with Special Reference to Statistics;
2. Maurice Dobb: Operational Aspects of the Soviet Economy;
3. Knud Erik Svendsen: The Economic Relations between the East European Countries;
4. Ragnar Frisch: Economic Planning and the Growth Problem in Developing Countries; and
5. Leif Johansen: Economic Problems in a Rich Country—Capitalism versus Socialism.

Together they cover a wide range of interesting problems of which a short summary may first be given.

Kaser's article provides the reader with a very helpful survey of some of the more relevant quantitative studies on the economies of Eastern European countries, starting out with the well-known question of the rate of development of Russian production and proceeding to attempts to fit a production function to these figures and to compare capital-output ratios. Rightly the author observes that our knowledge on production functions is in its infancy still (p. 18); equally rightly, for the time being, he takes the Cobb-Douglas function as a reasonable framework for the decomposition of growth into the influence of manpower, capital and technical progress.

It is interesting to note that Seton's analysis does not show, for manufacturing industry, parameters for the Soviet Union which are far apart from the figures often found for Western countries. A striking feature is the different results for agriculture, where Frank found that production 'rose 13% less [between 1928 and 1955] than did measured inputs of labour, capital and land' (p. 15). Kaser also quotes the lower values, found for the Soviet Union, for the capital-output ratio—a favourable feature; he does not mention, however, to what extent this may be due to the neglect of the housing section until recently.

Dobb's paper is very helpful too, for obtaining a quick impression of

some of the main problems of the Soviet economy. The article concentrates on planning procedures, and is less explicit on the use of instruments of economic policy generally. The author rightly points out that the planning process is conducted as a trial-and-error or 'planning in stages' process and adds some information on the flexibilities which even in the Soviet Union are considered necessary in order that the high degree of centralization does not lead to disequilibria. There is no discussion about the interesting question to what extent a planning process should in fact begin, as the article suggests, from the 'bottom'. In passing the author remarks that welfare economics has not so far led to a clear definition of a welfare optimum. This could have been formulated somewhat more helpfully, in the reviewer's opinion, by stating what choices have to be made—either with regard to interpersonal comparisons of utility, or with regard to income distribution, in order to make the concept precise. Interesting information is added on the number of items planned and the degree of decentralization in marketing. Further, a summary is given of the discussion on the methods of appraising investment projects and their interesting evolution, ending up, for the moment, with the standard yield figures applied for different industries, ranking from 0.1 for transportation to 0.3 for some manufacturing industries. No critical comment on this policy is given, however.

Svendsen's article describes the interesting development in trade relations between Eastern European countries and in trade concepts as well. Here again the well-known evolution towards Western concepts can be traced. In addition, the question of the prices to be applied in their mutual trade is discussed, particularly the question whether these should or should not be Western prices. Mendershausen's critical analysis of the prices applied by the Soviet Union is mentioned (p. 45), but an analysis of the reasons why there may be differences in prices between the Western and the Eastern world is hardly offered. Some evidence is supplied of an equalization tendency for incomes per head between the 'socialist' countries.

Frisch writes about his well-known Oslo decision model for investment programming, representing the most sophisticated planning method developed by Western econometrists. Before giving a positive description of it, the author describes the framework within which it has to be seen; and the role to be played by policy makers, planners and the executive. He also distinguishes between programming and what he calls pre-programming methods; with this phrase he indicates a number of simpler approaches in wide use. In the critical remarks he makes on the latter he seems somewhat over-critical by attacking what do not seem to be the best among these simpler approaches. The choice of the

savings ratio, for example, or the rate of development is not, the reviewer feels, as arbitrary as suggested. The criticism offered by the author on the concept of balanced growth might be easily answered, in the reviewer's opinion.

The positive part of the article is a very useful explanation of the basic principles of the Oslo model. As is well known, it solves by a simultaneous set-up the problem of choosing an investment programme out of a large stock of individual (or grouped) projects, whose characteristics may be that they have an arbitrary time shape of inputs and outputs with a non-linear preference function and non-linear influences exerted by one project on the others. The article finishes up with some pages on computing problems. Concrete figures are not offered but may be available soon.

The reviewer has great admiration for the intellectual effort involved and admits not to be able to appraise fully the method's power; a reason why, in his own practical work, he uses more pedestrian methods, probably of the pre-programming type!

Johansen's contribution to the special number consists of an ingenious and novel comparison of 'capitalist' and 'socialist' economies, emphasizing more particularly their efficiency in dealing with inflationary tendencies, with the existence of the demonstration effect and with the existence of public goods. Roughly speaking his contention is that, at a high level of well-being, a 'socialist' system will do better than a 'capitalist' system, which is an interesting counter-argument to the well-known proposition that with increased well-being a more decentralized organization of production will be better.

Discussing inflation, the author holds that, in free-enterprise economies, full employment cannot be maintained without an upward pressure on wages and hence prices. This can be accepted, but the cure is not necessarily socialization. A planned wage policy may be another answer. This presupposes, to be sure, a state of sufficient confidence and contact between trade unions and governments; which may be called a socialist element in the reviewer's opinion (but probably not in the author's opinion).

Johansen makes a quite interesting contribution to the problem of the demonstration effect, set out more precisely in an appendix, where he defines the goods concerned by postulating that utility derived from them does not depend on the quantity consumed but on the quantity consumed more than by other individuals. No doubt the author is tackling an increasingly interesting subject, touching the famous one of passenger transportation: is the system of individual cars really optimal or are Western countries wasting resources by so doing?

The third main point dealt with by the author concerns the size of the public sector; he adds to the arguments given by others that in a country like the United States it is too small and his explanation runs in terms of a resistance against tax increases. The elaboration of this point is not pushed very far, however; he hits on the well-known difficulty of defining social welfare, but seems to assume that this difficulty does not exist under a socialist system.

While Johansen's arguments are often ingenious, they do not go into the question whether a mixed system might not be a solution; he keeps the comparison in black-and-white terms. Certainly a mixed system might also cope with his problem of the 'consumption race' which he sees as a necessity for capitalism to maintain full employment.

In an attempt to appraise the seminar and its proceedings, the reviewer wants to sum up what, in his opinion, should be the subjects to deal with in an analysis of the Eastern economies. They seem to him to be the following:

- (A) Description of the structure and evolution of the operation of the economies;
- (B) Empirical research on the same topics;
- (C) Theoretical analysis, i.e. a theory of the optimum policy and organization of economies, which may imply critical statements on both Western and Eastern economies, to the extent that they show deviations from the optimum pattern;
- (D) Possibly, in addition, a theoretical analysis of the planning process in somewhat the same way as indicated under (C).

The seminar has succeeded in bringing together several of these elements in an admirable way. Thus, the articles by Dobb and Svendsen make contributions in group A, that by Kaser in group B, the one by Johansen in Group C and those by Dobb and Frisch in group D. As already pointed out, many interesting facts and thoughts have been presented. Perhaps one critical remark is in place. Not very much has been undertaken, by the various authors, in the form of a critical analysis, within the aims of the economies themselves, of the means used. It is the reviewer's feeling that price policies, the methods of appraisal of investment projects, some of the methods used in planning could have been so analysed. One seminar cannot deal with all possible subjects, of course. Maybe the organizers will another time take up one of these subjects.

To finish with, one quantitative remark. The number of (let us say) printing errors is large; that is a pity.

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THIS is the single most informative work on Soviet wages in the post-war period that has come to this writer's attention. The articles which its authors have published in *Sotsialisticheski trud* in recent years, together with the book under review here, suggest that the serious study of wages is once again under way in the Soviet Union. If this also augurs the publication of the kind of wage statistics which appeared in the 1920s and early 1930s, students of Soviet wage structure will have much cause to rejoice. We refer in particular to the extremely useful sample surveys of occupational earnings and the distribution of the wage bill.¹ They were discontinued following the October 1934 survey but were resumed in March 1956. However only fragmentary data from the more recent surveys have appeared. The sweeping wage and salary revisions undertaken in the last five years give hope that the Soviet government will find it useful to resume the publication of such statistics. Until then we should be grateful to Messrs. Aganbegiyan and Mayer.

We may forgo the book's presentation of Soviet wage administration and the authors' extended restatement of the need for labour productivity to increase more rapidly than wages, and concentrate on the illuminating sections on Soviet wage structure.

The ranking of industries by average wage levels, a staple item in pre-war statistical sources on wages, is extended to 1940, 1950, and 1956. No substantial change in the general pattern of this ranking occurred between 1940 and 1956. The coal, iron ore, ferrous metallurgy and oil industries, which ranked 1-4 in 1956, were in approximately the same position in 1940; the same may be said about most of the light and food industry sectors which ranked at the bottom of the list in both 1940 and 1956. The most significant change in the ranking was the shift of the paper and woollen industries from position 14-15 (both at the same wage level in a group of 17 industries) in 1940 to positions 5 and 9 respectively in 1956.

But the general similarity in the ranking of industries by wage levels in 1940 and 1956 should not obscure the fact, also revealed by the authors, that wages in several traditionally low-paid sectors (the fur, food, linen and woollen industries) grew at more rapid rates than did wages in the oil, chemical and machine-building industries and at electric power stations (p. 190). While inter-industry wage differentials are still extremely marked (monthly earnings of coal miners in 1955, as in 1940, were about $2\frac{1}{2}$ times the earnings of workers in the butter- and cheese-making industry), the authors expect such differentials to decline in the future. Recent and forthcoming increases in

minimum wages can be expected to operate in this direction. However, there is no suggestion that workers in industries like coal, iron ore and ferrous metallurgy will be replaced in the wage ranking by a new labour aristocracy from the food and light industries.

The central feature of the wage reform initiated in 1956 has been the narrowing of basic rate differentials between skilled and unskilled workers within industries. The range of extreme rates being introduced at the time this book was published was typically in the neighbourhood of 2:1, compared to a range of 3.6:1 in the pre-war period and 2.8:1 in the immediate post-war period (pp. 134-135). The authors treat this decline in skill differentials as a 'stable tendency' rather than as a temporary measure intended to reduce excessive differences in wages. Indeed, more recent publications have projected basic rate ranges of 1.8:1 and 1.6:1 by 1965.² As Aganbegiyan and Mayer note, the partial shift away from the piecework system (particularly the progressive piece-rate form) will reinforce the narrowing effect of reduced differentials in basic rates.

Of particular interest are the data on the relative earnings of workers and engineering-technical personnel (p. 202). While a decline in the relative wage position of engineering-technical personnel comes as no surprise, the extent of that decline is most unexpected. With average earnings of workers taken as 100, the earnings of engineering-technical personnel were 236 in 1935, 210 in 1940, 175 in 1950 and 165 in 1955. Now that the struggle against equalitarianism is considered to be largely won, one may ask how much further this type of wage equalization can go. The retention of substantial inter-industry wage differentials, combined with the marked narrowing of engineering-technical vs. worker wage differentials has produced a most interesting feature in the Soviet wage structure. The *average* earnings of workers in some of the high-wage industries (coal and non-ferrous metals, for example) exceed the *average* earnings of engineering-technical personnel in some sectors of food and light industry (pp. 187, 202).

The earnings of white-collar employees in the *sluzhashchiye* category have also declined relative to those of wage workers (from 126% of the latter in 1935 to 88% in 1955). Aganbegiyan and Mayer expect the relative earnings position of this category to improve in the future as the introduction of computing and office machinery releases chiefly low-paid clerical personnel.

The book is also of interest for the number of suggestions on wage structure which its authors are prepared to make, suggestions which do not merely repeat official pronouncements on wages. Thus the authors propose that urban-rural differences in teachers' salaries be eliminated, that the salaries of teachers with a higher education be set

at the same level as those of engineers at industrial enterprises, that future wage increases for lower-paid workers be not only relatively, but absolutely, higher than those for workers in the highest wage grades.

But one can only deplore the authors' need to treat all these and other interesting aspects of Soviet wage structure (regional wage differentials, differentials within the engineering-technical category) without presenting the relevant ruble earnings figures. The wage data which appear are confined to percentage relationships in earnings (with the exact year to which they apply not always indicated) and to absolute figures on basic wage rates. Similar practices have been abandoned in other branches of Soviet economic statistics; their removal in the area of wage statistics is long overdue.

What does emerge rather clearly is the picture of Soviet society in the midst of far-reaching wage revisions. Some of these revisions are reversing earlier trends in wage structure (differentials between skilled and unskilled workers); others are reinforcing earlier trends (differentials between wage workers and engineering-technical personnel). But all are operating to reduce wage inequality in the future. Against this background the student of Soviet social thought will find it all the more interesting that the authors repeatedly dissociate the projected reduction of wage inequality from equalitarian sentiments. Wage differentials are being reduced as a consequence of 'objective' factors, i.e., the increased supply of skilled personnel, the reduction of differences in skill requirements as between skilled and unskilled work, manual and intellectual work. Does the need to reassert anti-equalitarianism in the midst of a policy designed to reduce wage inequality represent the relics of a habit developed in a period when every statement of wage policy had to be accompanied by a denunciation of equalitarianism? More recent publications have not hesitated to speak of the 'gradual reduction and, finally, the complete [our emphasis—M.Y.] overcoming of differences in the material well-being of people, without which there can be no communist society'.³ Is it conceivable that equalitarian sentiments which are rooted in (the still alive) socialist tradition, combined with the realities of everyday Soviet life, will give rise to a new, unofficial, slogan of Soviet wage policy: 'Equalitarianism is dead. Long live equalitarianism'?

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¹ TsUNKhU SSSR, *Zarabotnaya plata rabochikh krupnoi promyshlennosti v oktyabre 1934* (M., 1935).

² E. Kapustin, 'Nekotorye voprosy dalneishevo sovershenstvovaniya organizatsii tarifnoi sistemy', *Sotsialisticheski trud* 1961 no. 4 p. 23.

³ S. P. Figurnov, *Realnaya zarabotnaya plata i pod'em materialnovo blagosostoyaniya trudyashchikhsya v SSSR* (M., 1960), p. 86.

J. M. Bochenski and T. J. Blakeley (ed.), *Studies in Soviet Thought*. ('Sovietica' series of the Institute of East European Studies, University of Fribourg, Switzerland.) D. Reidel Publishing Co., Dordrecht, Holland, 1961. x+140 pp.

A. S. Yesenin-Volpin, *Vesenni list/A Leaf of Spring* (Russian original with translation by George Reavey). London: Thames & Hudson (New York: Praeger), 1961. 173 pp. 15s.

ONE of these books consists of brief surveys from Professor Bochenski's team at Fribourg of their work so far on various fields of Soviet philosophy. It also generalizes certain aspects of the experience of these studies. The work of which this volume provides a conspectus affords a very much closer view of official Soviet philosophy than has yet been available. The second book, the contents of which were smuggled out of the USSR for publication abroad, contains a 'Free Philosophical Treatise' written in 1959 by a young Russian mathematical logician (who observes that whereas there is no freedom of publication in Russia, thought is free). This treatise is the first work to become available from unofficial modern Russian philosophy (as distinct both from official Marxism or the unofficial Sophiology type of Russian metaphysical speculation), and it brings us face to face with the silent Russian participation in professional (worldwide) philosophy as closely as the work of the Fribourg school is doing with the official kind. For this reason, attention is here drawn to the two books together. The Fribourg works and Yesenin-Volpin's treatise will no doubt receive appropriate professional attention (including, it is hoped, in this journal) in due course. The intention of the present review is to note some features of their wider interest for study of the USSR.

With the possible exception of the mainly American work on Soviet economic statistics, the Fribourg school on Soviet philosophy is the first systematic team effort on an adequate scale and standard in the field of Soviet studies, and the experience of this school commands attention accordingly. The present 'conspectus' volume includes two papers which may be regarded as generalizations of this experience, one by Professor Bochenski on the training necessary for such work and one by Dr. Buchholz (who is not, however, a direct member of the Fribourg team) on recent and current philosophical interaction between the Soviet and Western worlds. Bochenski sees the word 'Soviet' as most conveniently used of all communist-governed countries, with 'Sovietology' as study of the whole area but with special reference to the USSR where the pattern has been evolved. Thus, any work on communist China would be within the field of 'Sinosovietology'. A

specialist on the economics of communist China should have done post-graduate work, preferably to Ph.D standard, in economics, another three years in general Sovietology—which would involve, amongst other things, sociology and philosophy—followed by adequate sinological studies, with research beginning in the second (Sovietological) stage. Similarly, Marxism (Marx and Engels), Leninism and Soviet thought are three distinct full specializations, knowledge of the earlier being essential for the later but not the reverse. Bochenski sees, as one of the serious external obstacles to Sovietology and its regional and subject specializations, the immense quantity and variety of dilettantism (he gives a list of principal varieties). He does not note the specific dilettantism of endeavours to relate the specializations, for example within study of the USSR: this dilettantism seems foredoomed to failure by its very nature, at least until the social sciences, each developing in its own right, find sufficient ground in common to make possible the systemic study of a modern society. Nor does Bochenski consider, in this paper, whether fuller knowledge or future evolution (or revolution) might not reveal differences between independent communist countries sufficient to strain his conceptual unity; or the bias within his scheme towards finding similarities. His own school, working on European state communist philosophy, has the advantages of being completely based on documents and of much homogeneity (for political reasons) amongst the texts: a single bibliography can be the basic tool of the team's work. However, such comments seem cavils in face of the value of Bochenski's paper as a step towards professionalization.

Dr. Buchholz surveys very briefly the fields of interaction between Soviet and Western thought over the past few years, concentrating (but not exclusively) upon the influence of West on East. The material used is a collection of some 250 Russian 'refutation' items, mostly articles, which show that 'There is hardly one argument against Soviet philosophy which is left unanswered', even if all answers consist essentially of a repetition of fixed arguments. Effects of Western criticisms are noted in a number of fields of thought, in that they aggravate discomforts already felt from internal inconsistencies, or draw Soviet attention to such inconsistencies, or expose more specifically (via the refutations) internal discomforts as targets for further attack. This is war, and none the worse for that when the war is for truth. Attack on the scale envisaged by Dr. Buchholz (and already powerfully begun by the Fribourg scholars) may, of course, have the net ultimate effect of helping Soviet official philosophy to greater internal consistency and viability if its ground plan is not such as to foredoom it. (It may be foredoomed, whatever its general structure, by

the oafishness, ignorance and hypocrisy to which it seems so hospitable in the USSR.) The war, if genuinely fought as a war for truth, may also discover from its minute inspection of published Soviet thought important assistance to Western intellectual life: Russia has stepped into the modern world in circumstances so different from growth elsewhere that new views of standard problems are inevitable. Such discoveries of new ideas may already have been made at Fribourg, for example in Dr. Müller-Markus' study of the controversy, essentially between the philosophers and physicists in Russia, on Einstein. Whether the Fribourg scholars, with their own *partiinst*, envisage the possibility of a communist contribution in more traditional fields, is another matter. Buchholz envisages the effect of their work as assisting in a possible collapse of communism through the inability of its philosophy to accommodate and serve the needs of men as individuals, in the sense of religion. He does not touch on the question whether some or even most of such needs may not be satisfied within the general structure of communist philosophy refined and practised in a tolerable political structure if that is possible. Nor does he note the high proportion of people in the Christian area who appear not to require or to manage without an organization or doctrine for the satisfaction of the needs he mentions.

A full-scale study by Dr. Buchholz on the subject of his short paper (which is evidently devoted to reporting interim results of detailed work) will be awaited with interest. He observes at one point that 'reports of Russian tourists' are disappointing, in that they show little effect of Western arguments inside Russia. It is not clear whether he means Western visitors to Russia or Russian visitors to the West, and the translator may be at fault here. The present reviewer's experience of recent visits may be relevant. It was not difficult to meet, quite casually, students and older people willing to discuss topics of wide interest, including Marxism, with an informed foreigner. A number of simple ideas proved to be of strong interest in some instances. This was the case with the proposition that a Marxist must look at Marxism historically, and must not regard it as a finished system. He will find at least two precursors to its main idea—namely, that the fate of man is to progress through the experience of struggle and suffering, after an initial state of innocence or ignorance, to a new condition at a higher level. The precursors are the Old Testament story of the fall, and Christian theory: the first states the truth of human experience in a very simple mythological form and the second states the same truth in far more elaboration, using a dialectical philosophy and incorporating a theory of history, but still in essentially mythological form. Marxism brings the knowledge and experience

gained by Marx's time to construct a theory of the same basic truth, also dialectical in philosophy, but with less mythological and more scientific content than the Christian theory and with the place of God taken by Law. Perhaps Marxism is half way towards a scientific understanding of man's condition, perhaps less, perhaps more. At any rate it seems to be on the right lines but has far to go, especially in the incorporation of truths of human experience which, as a new and embattled stage in the basic theory, it has so far had to reject. In any case, no human experience can be alien to a fully scientific theory of man.

Keen interest was also apparent on more technical but equally simple suggestions. For example, that the vexed problem of dialectical v. formal logic may be resolved into the fact that there is a unique phenomenon, the only one to which formal logic is appropriate, namely human reasoning, which depends on the static distinction between *is* and *is not*. Man-made auxiliaries to human reasoning such as arithmetic or computers are built to work on the same logic. All other phenomena are more effectively studied with a richer logic of interaction and motion, but the study itself, being an operation of human reason, must proceed by steps consistent with formal logic.

Similarly, in Soviet Marxist political economy one of the several difficulties arises from a refusal, probably on grounds of ideological sentiment, to classify 'labour power' in a socialist economy as a commodity. (In the Marxist model of capitalism it is a commodity because its ownership is transferred: it is sold by the worker to the employer, for wages, and the employer actually gets the labour, which exceeds the purchased labour power, the excess being 'surplus value', which is the source of high living and investment.) It was suggested that if, in the model of the Soviet economy, all citizens have a special aspect as collective owners of the means of production (and thus as the collective employer of labour), and at the same time all working citizens have also the special aspect of 'labour power' as employees of the collective owner, this difficulty could be overcome. Many points immediately arise as to the extent to which this model fits the actual situation. Such experimentation with models of Soviet (and of Western) society makes conversation productive and interesting, as indeed the rudiments of social science should.

Marxism (in Professor Bochenski's sense of Marx's own construct) is a generous body of theory and enquiry, and much of it has been incorporated or developed anew in the Western social and psychological sciences. Like all great attempts to systematize large fields of knowledge, it fertilizes in its disintegration. All educated young Russians have had several hundred hours' lectures in Marxist theory,

and many of them (despite the personal excellence that one may be privileged to meet amongst the lecturers and the organizers of these courses) have hated the crude dogmatism of it but feel there is something there. In the reviewer's experience, such young people are very ready to accept help in working from within the subject as taught towards wider and more open horizons. Dr. Buchholz includes in his list of Western intellectual influences the use of points from within Marxism in terms of Soviet outlook. There is a difference, however, between invasion from another citadel and a cooperation in enquiry between members of the two cultures. One is continually impressed, in intercourse with Russians, by a point plain enough from reading their books (whether Marxist or Sophiological), namely the strength of Platonism in their intellectual world as distinct from Aristotelianism in the more empirical West. Engagement of these two modes is probably essential for intellectual progress. The work of the Fribourg school, whatever may be the criticisms of it, opens up possibilities on a new scale for such interaction within the field of scholarship.

The remaining items in the book are listed in a footnote.¹

From the information provided by the publisher on the author of *A Leaf of Spring* we learn that he was born in 1925, the natural son of the poet Yesenin, has lived mainly by writing on mathematics and logic (his last published article was in *Voprosy filosofii* July 1959) and translating or abstracting from foreign publications in six languages, gained his Candidate's degree in 1949, conducted seminars at Moscow University without a staff appointment, and was refused an exit visa when invited to read a paper at an international mathematics symposium in Warsaw in September 1959. He was first arrested in 1949 and sentenced to five years, spent in a prison mental hospital and in Karaganda. Released in the amnesty after Stalin's death he has since been several times arrested and interrogated and was again imprisoned in 1959, since when he has been detained, officially on grounds of mental instability. It was in anticipation of this last arrest that Yesenin-Volpin set down in one day, without even time to read over what he had written, his 'Free Philosophical Treatise: an instantaneous exposition of my philosophical views'.

In addition to the treatise, the book contains some thirty poems, all but two written between 1941 and 1951. In handing over the poems and treatise for publication in the West, he requested that his real name be used.

In a short statement on his writings (p. 6) Yesenin-Volpin mentions two other works which he would like to see published in the West

when completed—after which prison would not worry him. These works are not contained in the volume, nor are they referred to in the publisher's introduction.

The book is evidently intended for circulation not only in the West but in Russia, as everything, including the publisher's introductions, is in Russian and in English on facing pages.

The conditions in which the treatise was written do not make for easy reading. There is, for readers of the English version, the additional difficulty of the translation, which is non-philosophical. Errors noted by the reviewer which affect the meaning most directly are indicated in a footnote.² No help is to be found in an introduction to the treatise (pp. 97-107) provided by the publisher, which is also non-philosophical.

The special value of the treatise appears to the reviewer to lie in the degree of its scepticism. If it in fact has any such value, then this is in a sense a gift of Soviet intellectual totalitarianism to philosophy. Whatever Yesenin-Volpin's innate abilities, which are high, his readiness to question assumptions must have been accentuated by the conditions of his life, as the whole book shows. Perhaps the strongest point in the treatise is his remark at the outset: 'Incidentally philosophy does not have to be a system. I am quite prepared to assume that it cannot become a system.' This is not the removal of attention from philosophy recently familiar in the West, but a radical questioning of an assumption held to be common to all modes and schools of philosophy and merely made explicit in the Russian platonist and marxist traditions.

Yesenin-Volpin first discusses the law of the excluded middle (logical divisibility into two parts, e.g. *is* and *is not*) and defines it as the principle of the simplest models. An associated point he makes is that we validly use predicables such as 'truth' although they are diffuse, i.e. not in themselves subjected to logical definition via the law of the excluded middle: for example ' $2 \times 2 = 4$ is true'.

A series of 'pseudo-problems' (i.e. problems due to the imperfections of thought and language but which look like problems of actuality) are discussed in the treatise, and to Yesenin-Volpin's regret his handling of them leaves him no time to embark on real problems. The first pseudo-problem is, familiarly enough, the reality of being, but he makes the useful point (p. 119) that any conclusion on the reality of being does not entail any particular conclusion on materialism.

Determinism is dealt with as comprising two separable pseudo-problems, necessity and law, both of which are pure concepts and have nothing necessarily to do with reality. With these categories as pseudo-problems, causality becomes a pseudo-problem also.

Monism, the next pseudo-problem, is the product of the human craving for the intellectual ease of a single system. The argument for

monism from the unity of the subject (the observer) falls because the subject is not necessarily a unity: Yesenin-Volpin finds no proof that his own experiences belong to one and the same ego. Here, as throughout the work, he notes the difficulty that philosophy depends on language, but his observations here on this familiar point are useful: language probably developed with intercourse which demanded differentiation of each ego (p. 145). The argument from instinct or intuition is relevant only to the clarity of the concept 'ego' but not to its existence, and the moral argument for the ego is relevant to other fields than philosophy. Finally, since history and nature presuppose monism, they too are probably fictions (p. 148).

Faith is a pseudo-problem. It may be necessary for deductive reasoning, which must proceed from premisses, but the method of philosophy is descriptive-analytical, not deductive. 'All doubts are permissible, but not all of them excite the same curiosity. The assertion " $2=2$ " is not doubted . . . because of the lack of a sufficiently interesting alternative' (p. 152).

The last pseudo-problem dealt with is the general one of death and immortality, in which the treatise leaves the strict philosophical field (from which, naturally enough, it has made many excursions in the earlier sections). The argument here is acute enough, but its naïvely anti-Christian tone (distaste for becoming an angel, etc.) is reminiscent of a period in Britain when fundamentalist religion was much stronger than it is now. In the same way, the occasional anti-marxist asides elsewhere in the treatise are a reminder, sometimes dramatic, of the other and dominant part of the fundamentalist intellectual world in which the treatise was written.

The remaining pages of the treatise are less systematic, but not less acute and stale by turns, than the treatment of pseudo-problems (from which only a selection of the arguments have been noted above). Whatever interest the document may or may not prove to have for philosophers, it has much for students of the USSR as the first anti-orthodox instance of philosophy in the empirical trend to come out of modern Russia. The same trend is becoming very evident, perhaps predominant, amongst the published works in two fields where needs and doctrine clash most sharply: economics, where the stimulus has come from mathematics (Kantorovich) and statistics (Nemchinov), and cosmology, as in the discussion on Einstein, where it has come from mathematical physics. In the present case, in which the observable process spreads into philosophy itself, it has come from the fact of higher education as much as from mathematical logic.

The response of the 'establishment' to Yesenin-Volpin, which consists of a prison asylum, gives us its own estimation of the strength

of the doctrine it protects. There is, however, no necessary clash between philosophical scepticism and a philosophical construction of the Christian or Marxist kind: perhaps it would be more true to say that people are, in many instances at least, so made as to live the double mental life of large provisional understanding and testing doubt; of the large concepts and of detail. This is, of course, the mode of all experience and, in more consistent form, of philosophy and science. Russian thought has a most deeply ingrained habit of confiding in the largest current concepts, a habit which can conveniently be labelled platonist. The habit is unlikely to be quickly or easily rooted out by the inevitable growth of empiricism inside Russia and the influence of empirical cultures outside, which themselves are using or seeking to create philosophies which reputedly use the tradition of large constructs. Whether the present official incumbent of Russian platonism, namely Soviet Marxism, collapses or not, the interaction process over a long period remains unavoidable, and it may have great contributions to make to the world in philosophy, faith and science, as it already has made during the nineteenth century in literature. Within science, for example, when the work was confined to fields normally accessible to our senses (in speed, size, etc.) there was no need to consider the universal conditions of scientific enquiry because they were given by our normal experience. Now, however, when the phenomena extend, to put it crudely, from the sub-microscopic to the supra-telescopic, the problem of truly universal universals has come up again—and this has been the peculiar concern of the platonist tradition, of which Russia is the cultural repository, at least in Europe. To the question whether Russian platonism, or even its marxist present form, can civilize itself enough to play its part in the world's intellectual life, both the treatise and imprisonment of Yesenin-Volpin return an answer that is sadly negative in the short run.

At the end of his treatise Yesenin-Volpin notes the loneliness of original thought in the USSR: 'Much that is written here is not new, but in Russia every student who has arrived at philosophical scepticism by his own thinking may consider himself a Columbus'. To read Yesenin-Volpin's treatise and poems is to watch a mind of outstanding strength and honesty struggling for survival against what he calls 'an alien power . . . an alien faith, an alien law . . .' in a poem (p. 64) that stands high in the unhappy genre of prison poetry. All comment from easier countries necessarily has an armchair character. The impression made by the book is not different in principle from what one is liable to bring back from chance contacts in Russia with ordinary educated people, and their predicament is by no means necessarily political. This book should at least help to provide a better perspective on the

official world of words in the USSR, such as the new programme of the CPSU.

J. MILLER

¹ The other studies, some of them already published, which are summarized or reported upon by their authors in the present volume are: Method in Soviet Philosophy by Blakeley (who proposes a model of the combination of revealed truth with the form of scientific method, in a study now published), Bochenski on Soviet Logic (noting its great development since 1947), Küng on Mathematical Logic (which has developed much more in Russia in the same period), Lobkowitz on the treatment of Contradiction (published 1960 in German), Dahm on Laws and Principles, Fleischer on Categories (a study of the literature since 1954), Müller-Markus on the Einstein discussions (vol. 1 published in German, 1960) and Jordan, Lobkowitz and Vrtačić on the recent Polish, Czech and Yugoslav philosophy respectively. The publishers are the same as for the present volume.

- ² p. 111 line 7 up: for 'hypotheses' read 'propositions'.
 p. 113 second full para: for 'defined' read 'clear'. For 'personal' read 'our own'.
 p. 113 fourth para, third sentence: 'In "continuous" cases, which are most natural, the depth of conviction will usually diminish as the subject of the clause which expresses it approaches the "middle", i.e. the in fact non-existent place where we would like to draw the boundary line.'
 p. 113 line 3 up: for 'erected' read 'set out to deny'.
 p. 113 line 2 up: 'A = A', as in the Russian, is enough.
 p. 113 last line: delete comma after 'the A's'.
 p. 115 top: for 'assumption' read 'proposition'.
 p. 121 line 14: read 'To act thus amounts essentially to a refusal to study the role . . .'.
 p. 121 line 20: delete 'state'.
 p. 121 line 5 up: for 'speculative' read 'mentally constructed'. Next line: for 'immaterial' read 'not important'.
 p. 127 line 10: for 'these principles' read 'this principle'.
 p. 127 for lines 12 and 13 read: 'understand; and sometimes another principle, namely:—'.
 p. 127 line 3 up: read ' . . . the materialist hypothesis of the reducibility of'.
 p. 129 last para: for 'representations' read 'notions'. Third line—insert 'notions' after 'both'.
 p. 139 lines 17 and 19: for 'sensible' read 'workable'.
 p. 143 last line: for 'admissible way' read 'inadmissible way'.
 p. 153 line 5 up: for 'is beyond doubt' read 'is not doubted'.
 p. 161 middle: for 'interprets' read 'is played by'.
 p. 167 line 2: for 'more absolute thinking' read either 'improved thinking' or 'less imperfect thinking'.
 p. 167 fourth para: for 'you are obligated *not to do this*' read 'you must *not-do this*'.
 p. 167 fifth para: read, after first sentence: 'It would be a most simple grammatical reform of Russian to introduce this "mustnot" as one written word with the stress in speech transferred to the "not"'.
 p. 169 line 8: for 'no useful purpose is served by' read 'there is no validity in'.