

Radio Free Europe/Munich
Evaluation and Analysis Department
Background Information USSR

13 June 1960

HARVEST/POWER PLAY IN THE KUBAN

The release of D. M. Matyushkin as First secretary of the Krasnodar territory CP committee for "serious deficiencies in the guidance of the kraikom's agriculture, especially livestock" is of more than routine interest in recording the ebb and flow fortunes of Party apparatchiki in the Soviet Union (Pravda, 10 June 1960).

For Krasnodar territory -- the Kuban of the north Caucasus -- is no ordinary administrative-economic region. It is the richest agricultural area in the USSR, unusually endowed with fertile soil and optimum weather conditions (by Russian standards) where a wide variety of crops have quite consistently yielded abundant harvests. Historically it has been known as the "garden spot of Russia;" more recently Khrushchev has even compared it to the bounty of Iowa. The expanded oil and gas resources, food processing plants, and seaport have raised its industrial potential considerably.

Politically, the soil, too, of the Kuban has been fertile. In the post-war period two of its first secretaries were catapulted into the Presidium of the Central Committee, both because of their capabilities as agricultural specialists as well as experienced political administrators. The dynamics of the recent political leadership in Krasnodar territory is indicative of the area's strategic role.

	<u>First secretary</u>	<u>Present status</u>
1949-52	N. G. Ignatov	Presidium member CC CPSU
		Deputy Ch. of Council of Ministers USSR
1953-57	V. M. Suslov	Unknown
March 1957 -	D. S. Polyansky	Presidium member CC CPSU
March 1958		Ch. C. of M., RSFSR
March 1958 -	D. M. Matyushkin	Dropped 9 June 1960
June 1960		

Thus 50 percent of the alumni reached the highest organ in the Soviet hierarchy while the other half sank into apparent anonymity. This is a brilliant performance for any oblast/region. There should be no dearth of job candidates.

Matyushkin had been second secretary since April 1956 and served under Suslov and Polyansky.¹ He enjoyed a record

¹ Pravda, 15 April 1956.

harvest in 1958 but the uncontrollable vagaries of biology and weather apparently led to his undoing. Mindful of the Eldorado route of his predecessors, he likely overplayed his hand in pledging a three-fold rise in livestock products output (after the fashion of Riazan's Larionov²), at the 1958 December plenary session of the Central Committee, and then was forced to recant abjectly this spring at a local conference:

"at the rate we are going it will take many of our farms three years to fulfill our 1960 meat goals...."³

The Kuban was also the seat of violent dust storms that raged from 19 to 23 March of this year which caused the loss of a third of the 1.2 million hectares of winter wheat⁴ seeded last year. This area had to be resown to other grains of a lower yielding potential. Outstanding Party officials are supposed to take in stride most natural calamities. But the most telling blows to Matyushkin's tenure in high office are graphically documented by a few statistics that are as shattering as falling grain kernels in a sleetstorm.

Average Grain Yields - Krasnodar Territory⁵

1958	-	25.7	centners	per	hectare
1959	-	13.8	"	"	"

The dimensions of this debacle must be seen in the perspective of its totality: over 2.4 million hectares are sown to grain in the Kuban, making it one of the largest grain areas in the USSR. It ranks first among the corn areas, with fully a million hectares sown to Khrushchev's favorite crop.⁶

The table is a telling reminder on the logistic difficulties in planning agricultural production in the Soviet Union. It also underlines the decisive power biologic factors play in the career of a powerful Party official:⁷ the dialectic of the harvest. It will be remembered Khrushchev never

² First secretary at Riazan Oblast, who refused a Khrushchev offer of a post in Moscow to "stay at work in the country."

³ Pravda, 12 March 1960.

⁴ See Background Information, 31 May 1960.

⁵ Selskoye khozyaistvo, 20 Feb. 1959; Pravda, 12 March 1960.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Agronomic.

had to face a harvest at a local level.

The newly appointed First secretary, G. I. Vorobyev, was formerly the chief of the CC department for agriculture in the RSFSR, and is a product of the Leningrad apparatus. Whether this shift can be considered a promotion or demotion depends on further shifts in the Kremlin power alignment: who is/will administer agriculture in the Secretariat of the CC, now that Ignatov (a Vorobyev sponsor?) has been released from the Secretariat. Nevertheless, to the new secretary, the path of glory must beckon.

The Pravda report wound up with the sparse statement that Aristov, Presidium member of the CC and deputy chairman of the Buro of the CC of the RSFSR (Khrushchev is chairman), participated in, and spoke to, the conference. As the officiating head of this vital Party ceremony, it measures the present status of Aristov since his transfer (4 May 1960) from the Secretariat of the CC to Khrushchev's deputy on the powerful Buro of the CC for the RSFSR. Unlike the Kuban wheat fields this spring, this represents no erosion of power for Aristov in the year of a Party reorganization of its leadership.

CZ

9
USSR

"THE IDEOLOGICAL WEAPON OF COMMUNISM"

(N.Matkovsky in Pravda, June 12, 1960)

"THE IDEOLOGICAL WEAPON OF COMMUNISM"

The search for a separate path to socialism for each country individually, the desire to build socialism on the basis of imperialist handouts or attempts to skip entire historic stages serve only the enemies of the working class interested in weakening socialism. Unmasking the false, anti-marxist views of the advocates of "separate paths", Comrade N.S.Khrushchev said: "If such a point of view is adopted, it may well result in so many 'paths' that people will get lost, as in a forest, and will not know how to reach their goal. In life there is only a single, Leninist path toward the construction of socialism and Communism, a path tested by historical experience, the path of the great October socialist revolution..."

V.I.Lenin demonstrated the unsoundness and harm of the slogans of the leftists who rejected the idea of Communist compromises with other parties and groups. He said that the leftists, though considering themselves Marxists, had forgotten the fundamental truths of Marxism. Vladimir Ilyich (Lenin) recalled a statement by F.Engels who once criticised the Blanquists (followers of Blanqui, an early French Communist) for wanting to skip through all intermediate stages directly to Communism without taking account of the new historical development, and remarked that if power will be in their hands, "Communism will be introduced" the day after tomorrow. Engels described as childish naivety the Blanquists' attempts to put forward their own impatience as a theoretically convincing argument.

"Naive and utterly inexperienced people," Lenin wrote, "imagine that it is sufficient to admit the permissibility of compromises in general in order to obliterate the dividing line between opportunism, against which we wage and must wage an uncompromising struggle, and revolutionary Marxism or Communism.

"But if such people do not yet know that all dividing lines in nature and in society are mutable and, to a certain extent, conditional, they cannot be assisted in any way other

than by a long process of training, education, enlightenment, political and everyday experience."

Creatively developing Marxist-Leninist theory under the new conditions and generalising the great experience of socialist construction in our country in full accordance with the principles of social development, the Twenty-first Party Congress laid out a well-grounded, full-fledged programme for the transition from socialism to Communism. That programme is the concrete embodiment of the general line of the Communist Party in the present stage.

Characterising the process of transition from socialism to Communism, Comrade N.S.Khrushchev told the Twenty-first Party Congress:

"We must not hurry and hastily introduce what has not yet ripened. That would lead to distortions and compromise our cause. But neither must we rest on our laurels because such a course would lead to stagnancy."

The course of social development is objective. We consider erroneous and incorrect the statements of leftists in the international Communist movement to the effect that since we have taken power into our hands we can at once introduce Communism, by-passing certain historical stages in its development.

Such statements contradict Leninism. Lenin taught us that to try to anticipate the result of a fully developed, fully consolidated and established, fully unfolded and matured Communism amounts to the same thing as to try to teach higher mathematics to a four-year-old child.

The left-sectarian sentiments and tendencies against which Lenin's book was directed find their expression in some places even in our time. Some persons mistakenly consider the course of the achievement of peaceful co-existence of our countries with different political systems, the struggle to halt the arms race and to strengthen peace and friendship among peoples and the talks between leaders of socialist and capitalist countries as some kind of deviation from the positions of Marxism-Leninism.

Lenin taught that the very complex struggle for Communism and the struggle against the international bourgeoisie could not be waged while renouncing in advance agreements and compromises on specific questions with possible, even if temporary, unstable allies for the exploitation, even though temporarily, of contradictory interests among the enemies.

While pursuing in some cases compromises in the name of the interests of development of the revolutionary movement, Communists never depart from positions of principle. "In questions of ideology," said Comrade N.S.Khrushchev, "we have firmly stood and will continue to stand firmly, like a rock, on the principles of Marxism-Leninism..."

V.I.Lenin's book teaches us a truly creative approach to the solution of practical problems arising in life and serves as a mighty ideological weapon of the Communist and workers' parties in the struggle for peace and socialism.

Forty years have passed since the publication of the first edition of Left-wing Communism - An Infantile Disorder. During that time the conditions of the class struggle have changed repeatedly both in the international and in the national arenas. A world-wide socialist system has been formed and the balance of power has changed radically in favour of socialism.

There has been a great increase in the number of Communist and workers' parties. While there were a total of forty Communist parties and groups when V.I.Lenin wrote his book, there are now Communist and workers' parties in eighty-six countries, with a total membership of more than 36,000,000 people.

In recent years the Communist parties have demonstrated great creative enthusiasm. True to Lenin's behests, the fraternal parties are creatively developing Marxist-Leninist theory and applying it to present-day conditions. A great contribution to the cause of the further development of Marxism-Leninism was made by our Party at its Twentieth and Twenty-first Congresses.

Of major importance for international affairs have been the decisions of the congresses on such questions of principle as the peaceful co-existence and competition of the two systems, the possibility of preventing war in this era, the form of

transition of various countries of socialism, and the ways of strengthening the world socialist system. The congress decisions were approved unanimously by all Communist and workers' parties.

All the basic statements in Lenin's book are still vital at the present time. They are directed against rightist opportunists, present-day revisionists and leftist doctrinaires. The Communist parties, while regarding revisionism as their greater danger, draw attention at the same time to sectarianism and dogmatism, which can also represent great danger at certain stages of development of a given party...

The great force and vitality of Leninism lie in the successful and multifaceted activity of the Communist and workers' parties. They are reflected in the fiery speeches of Communists for peace, against war, for general disarmament, and for peaceful co-existence of countries with different social-political systems. The vitality and force of Leninism are also evident in the upsurge of the workers' movement in the capitalist countries and in the successes of the national liberation movement of peoples against colonialism. The vitality and force of Leninism are also found in the great achievements of the Soviet people in successfully building Communism and in the victories of all socialist countries that unswervingly pursue Lenin's course.

(N.Matkovsky in Pravda, June 12, 1960)