

MUNICH, July 2, 1962 (Research and Evaluation -- cz)

250 In a speech before agricultural officials and Party functionaries of the north central region of the Soviet Union, immediately upon his return from Rumania, (made on June 26 and first published on June 30), Khrushchev announced plans for a profound change in the functional relationship between the local Party and state apparatus in the management of the nations' agriculture. Hereafter, it is proposed, local Party officials are no longer to interfere in the direct management of collective and state farm.

In fact, the Central Committee of the CPSU, Khrushchev claimed, is considering abolishing the districts (raions) "as having outlived the potentialities... during the transition period" and amalgamating them to correspond with the new territorial Production Directorates.

This change would amount to a radical reorganization of the entire political-administrative apparatus of the Soviet State. In 1961, there were 3,447 administrative districts (raions) of a non-urban classification; city raions numbered only 336.(1) Since March (1962) reorganization of agricultural management slightly more than 900 Agricultural Production Directorates were established to manage agricultural production. Thus, about four raions with all their staffs would be amalgamated into one political-economic administrative district. As each rural raion is currently staffed by about 300-400 Party and state officials, employed in 20 or more Party and state organs, the projected amalgamation would amount to a mass transfer, as well as a liquidation, of existing staffs.(2) The surplus Party officials, secretaries

(1) Narodnaye Khozyaistvo V 1960, 1961, p. 65. Thus the careers of the majority of Party officials were crucially linked with the performance of agriculture in the local districts.

(2) Selskaya Zhizn, 11 February 1962 for the data on raion staffing.

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of raikoms, as an example, would become deputy secretaries in the higher Party organization while the others would enter the ranks of the Territorial Production Directorates: the more gifted as "inspector-organizers" or Party organizers, the others as their deputies. So it appears that Party control from professional apparatchiks will be more intensive than under the existing order where agronomists and other technicians seem to be more numerous in the Directorates. This presents by no means an abnegation of Party control, rather it will get closer to production.

The projected reorganization grew out of the incessant conflict between the district Party Committee (raikom) and the Territorial Production Directorates over "who was above whom".

While the bulk of Khrushchev's two-hour speech was of a hortatory nature intended to inspire officials for better performances, he did hold out hope that this year's grain harvest could be a record yield of 9 to 10 billion poods compared to 8.7 billion poods last year. It all depended on thorough cultivation of the raw crops and a rapid harvesting of the grain crops. Such optimistic advance reports on the harvest are annual morale boosting proclamation by the First Secretary in accordance with his prognosis of peasant psychology made in his first US television appearance: "Do not get the peasant disturbed over the harvest... I know how he reacts... Not until the grain is stored away in the autumn should he be told of the year's overall harvest." (New York Times, 26 May 1959).

The annual RFE grain harvest forecast for the Soviet Union will appear this week.

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