

Munich, 15 March 1963 (Non-Target Communist Area Analysis
Department: USSR - cz)

In his first exclusively agricultural speech of the year, delivered before a conference of Production Directorate farm and party officials from the territories and autonomous republics of the Russian Federation, the First Secretary of the CC, CPSU and Chairman of the Buro of the CC, CPSU for the RSFSR, N. S. Khrushchev, repeated his familiar exhortations to improve farm output through better management and the adoption of progressive practices based on science and advanced experience. There was little which was substantially new, save for the anecdote on Stalin. Coming only four days after the conciliatory speech on Stalin before the Artists' conference, it is significant that the late dictator was cast in an unflattering light compared to the image projected of Khrushchev.

Discussing the measures to raise livestock productivity, Khrushchev added another anecdote to the list of Stalin-Khrushchev lore on agriculture:

"I remember a meeting with Stalin when I described the extremely low milk yields in Georgia, where the average yield per cow was only about 300 kilograms a year. Stalin then reproached me that I did not consider the special conditions of Georgia where there were mountain breeds of cows, not the steppe type. Today, however, these mountain cows give 1,200 kilograms instead of 300."

(Pravda, 14 March 1963)

Here is an uninhibited comparison showing that under Khrushchev's leadership the Georgian cows increased their yields four times, while under Stalin's direction they staggered along giving little more milk than mountain goats.

Khrushchev had his sharpest words for "some party officials" within the new Production Directorates who continue to administer agriculture in a "bureaucratic and shameless manner" by sending out endless and useless directives instead of helping the farmers work out their production problems directly on the farms. Some secretaries of partkoms order the chairman of the Production Directorate about instead of working together like "brother and brother." He clearly delineated the duties (MORE)

of the officials: the chairmen and specialists are to work on the farms and in the brigades; the party secretaries, also "in production but from a different position," are to work from within the primary party organization by education and propaganda mediums.

Khrushchev questioned the feasibility of maintaining dual ministries of agriculture -- at the All-Union and the union-republic levels. Since their work today is concerned with research and education, this makes for duplication and is of no economic value, he claimed. It seems apparent that a reorganization in the ministerial structure is in order.

In the field of the amalgamation of farms, Khrushchev revealed that in some areas this process has gone too far and is to be cut back. Some huge amalgamated state farms in the Moscow oblast contain 7,000-10,000 hectares cropland and are spread out over 50 to 60 inhabited settlements, making for difficulties in management; these farms also show financial losses. The farm workers, former collective farmers, all have their own private livestock which are fed from sovkhoz feed supplies, while the socialized cattle often go underfed. Khrushchev called for a correction of this practice but failed to say that in 1958 an order was promulgated giving sovkhoz workers 2 to 3 years to dispose of their private cattle. He cited the new Minister of Agriculture as being an opponent of private plots for sovkhoz workers. He also cited a hitherto unknown Lenin dicta -- "under no circumstances should workers on state farms be allowed to keep their own livestock."

Although some western news sources claimed that a downgrading of the goals would be forthcoming, Khrushchev still adheres to the broad goals of the Seven-Year Plan: the 1965 meat target remains at 16 million tons (1962 output 9.2) and the milk output at 100 million tons (1962 - 64 million tons). The theme of the speech, "In the Fifth Year of the Seven-Year Plan Let Us Attain New Frontiers in Agriculture," deftly compared the Federation's 1962 performance in commodity deliveries with those of 1953, the all-time low. In this stacked comparison the achievements were impressive. What Khrushchev forgot (MORE)

to mention was that in contrast with 1958 -- the base year of comparison for the Seven-Year Plan -- the available supplies of grain, meat, and milk in 1962 were less per capita than four years ago, and that overall progress during the four years was an average increase of 1 percent a year compared to an envisaged annual growth of 8 percent! KES/1841