

MUNICH, 22 AUGUST 1962 (Non-Target Communist Area Analysis:  
SOVIET UNION - cz)

Some regions of the Soviet Union are enjoying bumper grain harvests this year. Normally this should be cause for rejoicing but in the unbalanced Soviet economy the high variability in yields from one year to another often results in heavy losses from bottlenecks in storage and transportation of grain.

This state of affairs - unknown in western agricultural countries - was aptly described at the XXI Party Congress by the late first secretary of the Kazakh Communist Party and Presidium member CPSU, I. Belyaev, as "grain-phobia", an occupational disease among party and farm officials faced with breakdowns in receiving, processing, and shipping of grain following a sudden good harvest.

Belyaev should know. Khrushchev fired him in 1960 for failing to bring in a "good crop standing in the fields". His career was soon in complete eclipse: a normal pattern among party officials who failed with the farms.

This year the former Stalingrad oblast, now the Volgograd region, in the lower Volga, has reaped a record harvest from the fields. This achievement in an area where the yields fluctuate greatly from year to year is by no means fully secured, as a team of correspondents from Selskaya Zhizn and Krokodil corroborates.

"Until the discovery of the railways mankind lived and was guided by two basic calendars: the Julian and the Gregorian. With the appearance of steel rails a new calendar came into being - that of the railways. And mankind turned toward the road of progress with seven-league steps.

The office of A.M. Barilov, stationmaster of Surovikino. He is deeply engrossed in the paper lying before him. The telephone rings. The stationmaster lifts the receiver, and ... his face turns to stone; he recognizes the voice of G.P. Malohov, director of the grain elevator.

- Hello. I. When are the wagons due at? In their due time. How many? As per your request - 44 wagons. You asked for one hundred? That's your will. One can ask for anything. Even for the Moon. But one cannot get it. Regards.

The elevator receives daily seven thousand tons grain. All storage buildings are filled to the brim. Tens of thousands of tons lie in piles out in the open. Not more than 2,000 tons are shipped out daily. Transporters supply wagons up to half the requirements, and then - with a delay. What should be done?

...

One's heart bleeds at the sight of the trucks and lorries not in operation, unloading which is being done without any mechanization whatsoever, everything is being done by hand, with a spade.

This is really - hooliganism, not small but colossal."<sup>1</sup>

Similar states of disorganization in processing and shipping grain can be gleaned from the Soviet press at will from now until the end of harvesting in the autumn. Heavy losses in grain stocks are suffered through spoilage, theft, and seepage for lack of resources in transportation, mechanized processing facilities, and experienced manpower. So a big gap exists between the claimed harvest yields on the farms and the actual disposable grain stocks in Soviet elevators. Clearly much is still to be done before the grain problem is solved.

---

<sup>1</sup>Selskaya Zhizn, 16 August 1962.

JAR/17:07