

x/8 RUSS AND CURT "WHERE ARE YOU HIDING, AGRONOMIST?" F-III

Munich, 25 July 1963 (Non-Target Communist Area Analysis: Soviet and Bloc Agriculture - c.z.)

The reluctance of graduates of agricultural institutions to work on collective and state farms has been a common phenomenon in the agriculture of the Soviet Union and the East European bloc countries since their socialization. As far back as 1950 Khrushchev castigated such backsliders as "deserters" for having accepted a free education from the state and instead of going to work on the farms as agronomists "they turned up in Moscow as conductors, dispatchers, warehousemen, photographers, waiters..." These observations of the then first secretary of the Moscow regional party committee provided an unintentional index of the low esteem of the rural intelligentsia and the difficulties the regime is confronted with in recruiting talent to administer the socialized farms.

Two recent developments bring this "flight from the land" to date. The situation in Poland today almost coincides with the state of affairs described by Khrushchev in 1950. The organ of the Trade Unions, Glos Pracy,<sup>1</sup> in a revealing article called out, "Where are you hiding, agronomist?" It established that about 70,000 young men have completed a higher or secondary course of study in agricultural institutions in Poland, but among the 4,000 managers of state farms not even one thousand persons could produce a diploma. Many are employed in their profession "nicely nested" in administrative jobs far from the farms.

"However, about 43 percent of the graduates have nothing in common with agriculture apart from the diplomas. You can find these people working as waiters in restaurants, as managers of barber shops, as drummers in bands and directors of funeral parlors."

<sup>1</sup>2 July 1963.

(MORE)

In Soviet Kazakhstan, three thousand kilometers away, in the heart of the virgin lands, the problem is similar. Out of 55,726 agricultural specialists, the first secretary of the Kazakh CC disclosed, only 42 per cent of the farm educated graduates work directly in agriculture.<sup>2</sup> Graduate agronomists and engineers, party boss Yusupov complained, are to be found working in "factories and construction sites, in communal feeding enterprises, among workers in the cinema and clubs..." All this at a time when in the huge field brigades of the Virgin lands territory 90 per cent of the brigade-leaders are without even any specialized education, let alone a diploma from a secondary agricultural institution. This is a sad commentary on the state of affairs in the virgin lands ten years after Khrushchev ordered the big plow-up with the dispatch of hundreds of thousands of workers and technicians as reinforcements.

These recurrent incidents provide an unmistakeable index of the low esteem held by the graduates of the Soviet and bloc agricultural institutions on working "directly" on the socialized farms.

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<sup>2</sup>Kazakhstanskaya Pravda, 2 July 1963