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GEHEIM

Aan Zijne Excellentie Prof. Dr. J.E. de QUAY
Minister-President

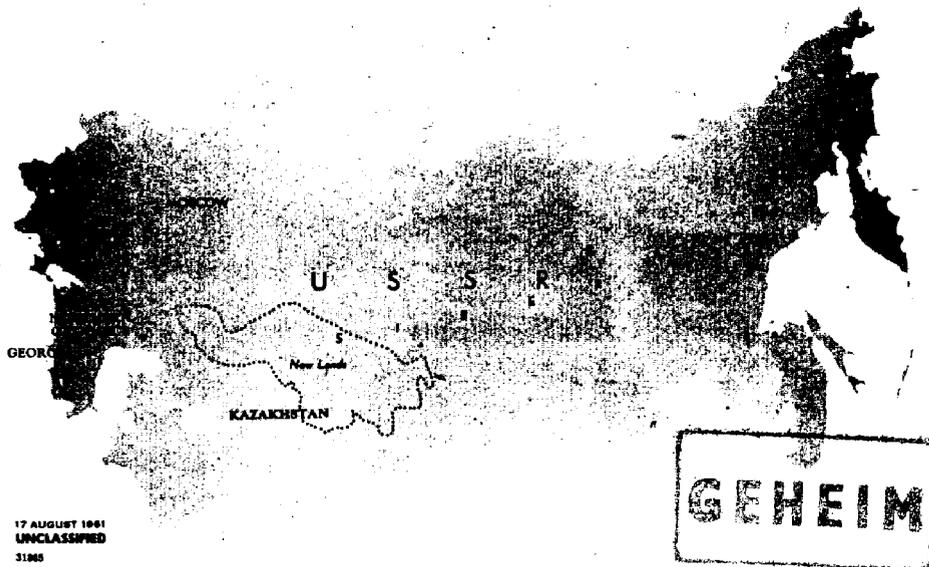
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17 August 1961
CROP AND LIVESTOCK PROSPECTS IN THE USSR

With harvesting in full swing in many areas of the Soviet Union, prospects for a

already equaled that for all of 1958. The harvest is also proceeding well in the RSFSR.



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bumper harvest, approaching the record of 1958, continue to be favorable. In the southern part of the European USSR, the harvesting of an excellent winter grain crop is nearing completion, and good yields are reported from other areas. Prospects for spring grains, however, remain uncertain, especially in some important areas of the New Lands where the moisture supply has been inadequate during much of the growing season.

In a major speech on 7 August, Khrushchev implied that the amount of grain procured this year would be 35 percent greater than in 1960 and about 11 percent above the record set in 1958. Although Khrushchev's claim is probably overoptimistic, Soviet agricultural production this year will undoubtedly be well above the mediocre harvests of 1959 and 1960. In the Ukraine, with the corn crop yet to be harvested, grain procurement by 5 August had

Khrushchev's speech, however, avoided assessing crop prospects in the New Lands, which annually produce about 40 percent of Soviet grain. The harvest there--to begin late this month--will probably be only average at best. Although the area had an early spring which permitted early seeding, inadequate rainfall, especially in Kazakhstan, and high temperatures in May have seriously reduced soil moisture.

Despite a recent dry spell in main growing areas which may reduce yields a bit, a good corn crop is in prospect and may help to offset any shortcomings in the harvest from the New Lands. Some 19,000,000 acres of corn are to be harvested as grain--rather than as silage--6,400,000 more than in 1960. Although the dry spell also affected areas planted to sugar beets, sunflowers, and other crops, the outlook continues favorable for them as well. Indications are that the 1961

cotton harvest will exceed the mediocre one in 1960.

Although the total production of meat was probably lower in the first half of 1961 than in the same period of 1960, prospects for the Soviet livestock industry appear quite favorable. The early, moist

spring promoted early grass growth, and generally satisfactory growing conditions during the summer have provided ample forage. Sufficient winter feed supplies seem probable in the light of the excellent winter grain harvest and the prospects of a good corn crop.