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ECONOMIC AND INDUSTRIAL AFFAIRS

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3 April 1984

EAST EUROPE REPORT

ECONOMIC AND INDUSTRIAL AFFAIRS

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AGRICULTURAL LAND MANAGEMENT ISSUES ADDRESSED

Stricter Protection Needed

Prague RUDE PRAVO in Czech 11 Jan 84 p 1

[Editorial: Stricter Protection of Agricultural Lands"]

[Text] Ask any farmer, miner, construction worker and even glass worker or environmentalist what is involved in their work. Land is the object of their interest. That stems objectively from the fact that many conflicts in which the most divergent opinions clash concern precisely the protection of agricultural land resources. The city would want to spread primarily in the most fertile areas, for example, southwest of Prague, where deposits of gravel are also located.

A similar situation has also developed south of Brno and in the vicinity of Bratislava, Ostrava, Olomouc and Ceske Budejovice, not to mention the North Bohemia kraj, with its mining centers. One could follow the same line all over our republic, which is a country with a small area but very densely populated.

It was not long ago that anything used to have priority over our fertile lands; slices were cut off quite recklessly from the pie of our common wealth--agricultural land is in fact the greatest and irreplaceable wealth of every state. From this viewpoint the results achieved in the protection of our agricultural land resources over approximately the past 3 years are very advantageous. A change has taken place in the consciousness of our people and in the attitude of our entire society toward our fertile land, as confirmed also by the survey report of the People's Control Committee of the CSSR which was discussed by the Presidium of the CPCZ Central Committee and by the Government of the CSSR.

Most of the regulations contained in the law on protection of agricultural land resources and the measures adopted by governmental decision in 1981 are being fulfilled, although the intensity and quality of the achievements still fluctuate. The survey indicated fewer applications for expropriation of land for nonagricultural purposes; investors applied for less acreage and land of less desirable categories. The emphasis is on restitution and recultivation, on using small, uncultivated lots for the development of small gardens, etc.

All that may be documented also with specific statistics on the situation of our arable and agricultural lands. Thus, for instance, the Sixth 5-Year Plan in which the average annual loss, in particular on the protected most fertile or reclaimed areas, amounted to approximately 1,500 hectares, was down to 550 hectares in 1982. In 1976-1979 the permanent loss of agricultural land resources amounted annually on the average to 20,094 hectares, while in 1982 the acreage of agricultural land was reduced by only 2,373 hectares.

However, protection of land resources and the concern for their improvement and rational utilization are so important--literally, vitally important--for our society that the positive achievements must be regarded only as the first step toward the solution of this whole issue. After all, the complexity of this system of tasks appears also from the decisions of the 16th CPCZ Congress, which stressed that the protection of every acre of land and prevention of land waste are of vital interest to our entire society. Protection of our land cannot be considered as some kind of a static, one-shot action, "putting things in order" or "fencing in" the plots by regulations and ordinances, with the result that later everything returns to the same conditions. On the contrary, this is an ongoing task. Interested ministries and our government will annually review the situation of our agricultural land resources and study new proposals for their better protection.

One cannot simply rejoice over the achievements for another reason as well. The data in the land register refer to simple differences in increases and losses but they tell us very little about the qualitative aspect of these issues. Recultivation of reclaimed areas may return the land resources thus far unused to the agricultural management, but may a hectare of reclaimed land, say, in the foothills replace the biological potential of a seemingly identical hectare in the Hana or Polabi [Elbe River] region? There is no need to stress that the reclamation of 1 hectare of devastated land in the more difficult areas now costs as much as Kcs 100,000. From the societywide perspective it is therefore more efficient to use for construction other lands than fertile fields and meadows.

Furthermore, the Presidium of the CPCZ Central Committee emphasized some other measures concerning land preservation. First of all, it is absolutely necessary to improve the work of land protection agencies, to review efficiently the fulfillment of all adopted measures, and to penalize more consistently all organizations, enterprises and individuals for violation or evasion of the law on land protection. More rigorous economic policies which are not being prepared will also contribute to more efficient protection of our agricultural lands.

However, daily life has convinced us that even the most rigorous penalties and ordinances are useless if people fail to comprehend the essence of these issues and if they do not know the reasons why this or that must be done and why it is important. Therefore, there will be greater demands placed on political and especially educational and organizational programs.

Indeed, we cannot just shrug our shoulders when we see a little boy trampling a croissant on the pavement of a sidewalk and his parents do not stop him. Who should be educated first, the parents or the children? After all, one's attitude toward bread and food in general expresses figuratively one's attitude to the soil, to land--to the nurturing earth. Also, with the assumption of the leadership in the village by the younger generation--people who never experienced hunger--something seemed to have changed for the worse in the attitude toward the fields and meadows. How else could strips of fields in some places remain uncultivated, weeds burgeon, a road be cut straight through the middle of the field, etc. In the past people were literally dragging each other to court over every boundry in the field, but today many agricultural enterprises are simply trying to get rid of their land. It may be alot on the hillside, dispersed or small, but that is no excuse for anybody's indifference. Our agriculturists have the duty to cultivate the land, or at least to assure its use for some other agricultural purposes. A situation in which tens of thousands of hectares remain in evidence as temporarily uncultivated cannot be tolerated.

For that reason it is necessary to continue the path which began with recultivation and amelioration, so that gradually no land registered as meadows or pastures or even as arable land will in fact be overgrown with worthless brush or trees. Such "no man's land" in which neither the foresters nor the agriculturists show any interest is a poor testimony and a reproachful reminder to us of the indifference to the land in the past. Land that is carefully cultivated--naturally, following all biological laws, such as organic fertilization, crop rotation, maintenance of the soil structure, etc.--will not be left barren or turned into a swamp, endangered by water or wind erosion, and consequently it will not require large state grants and financial aid for reclamation.

Positive results do not mean that success has already been achieved but rather that shortcomings have been remedied. Thus, the necessary thing is not to rest on our laurels but to step up the efforts of our agriculturists and other branches for the protection of our land. In this respect national committees play a meaningful role; organizations of the National Front must help here. It is desirable that party organizations intensify their control activities in agriculture and in the village. Each of them should also put in the forefront of its program of operations issues concerning the reclamation and exploitation of agricultural land resources. It is imperative to influence public opinion continuously and to create an atmosphere where individuals, enterprises and organizations are not permitted to treat the land recklessly and disrespectfully. This is an issue of primary importance--a societywide concern.

Problems Encountered

Prague RUDE PRAVO in Czech 18 Jan 84 p 3

[Letter to the editor by Frantisek Hlavicka, chairman of the Defenders of Peace JZD in Lysa nad Labem, Nymburk okres: "Let Us Protect Every Are of Our Land"]

[Text] I read in the RUDE PRAVO editorial "Stricter Protection of Agricultural Lands" on 11 January 1984 that the Presidium of the CPCZ Central Committee, the CSSR Government and the CSSR People's Control Committee had dealt again with the problem of the practical protection of agricultural land resources in our country. I am pleased with the statement that a change has taken place in the attitude of our society to our fertile lands, that the appeal of the 16th CPCZ Congress--to protect every are of land, to prevent anyone from abusing our land--has brought and is still producing positive responses from all who have some connection with the soil. Indeed, this is a vitally important question for our society--the amount and the quality of our land will determine whether we, our children and our children's children will have enough to eat.

The struggle for our land, however, has not ended; today and every day we must beat the drum in alarm vigorously, address the conscience of our agriculturists as well as all those who are directly, so to say, officially affected by the problems of our land.

I remember the attitude to the land at the time I was beginning my work in agriculture in 1947. Perhaps everybody understood that land was the alpha and omega of our agricultural production. I am certain that fertile land is still being wasted to this day--despite all commendable strict decisions.

For instance, here in Lysa on the Elbe, we are very much concerned about the inadequate maintenance and care for streams and main drainage canals. The Mlynarice brook which flows through about 10 km of our cadastre has not been dredged for more than 15 and perhaps as long as 18 years. One consequence is that in the past years more than 100 hectares here could hardly be cultivated and did not produce any crops at all.

It is only now that something is being done about that situation. Streams, whether main or branch, must be dredged continuously, as needed. Another effort aimed at exploitation of the lands in our JZD [unified agricultural cooperative] involved the dredging of drainage canals by the Nymbur Agrostav. In some locations the mud was up to 80 cm deep. Water from drain pipes drains into the above-mentioned canals. If those pipes get clogged, they cannot serve their purpose and the investment in drainage is in fact wasted.

Contracting branches also bear responsibility for the protection of agricultural and arable lands. Let us consider, for example, machine engineering. In the past, agriculturists used to have at their disposal the required models of plots. Different types were used for loam, black soil, clayey or sandy areas. Deliveries of machinery are planned according to value indicators and, in recent years, also according to the line of production, which already indicates certain improvement. Nevertheless, this still does not meet the higher demands of quality, economy and efficiency of our agricultural production. The total value of machinery delivered to our agriculture (expressed in the price of the machinery) may be higher, but the amount, type structure, line of models and their quality may still fall short of the needs of our production in the fields and stables. Conditions

for our country's agriculture differ widely and this fact must be borne in mind.

Compacted soils are a frequently discussed topic. Indeed, this is a very serious matter; good aeration of the topsoil is certainly not helped by the heavy tractors and tractors that are available to us, while lighter rotary machinery is unavailable. Nevertheless, subsoil used to get compacted under the topsoil even in the past, when the plows were dragged by horses. However, in those days the soil used to be regularly deepened and the plows were furnished with turning blades; now, when much greater traction is available, turning blades are not among the usual accessories for plows.

Agriculturists are to blame for many things. Because I come from a farm, I always stress that manure is the beginning and manure is the end. If we fertilize most lands with organic manure, we increase their actual yield as well. About 40 tons of crimson clover used to be sown annually for green fertilizer in the vicinity of Lysa on the Elbe. This clover species has an excellent root system which aerates the soil. Last year it took literally great pains to obtain 200 kg of it at least for our own propagation. It is suitable precisely for shallow soil and under early potatoes, in other words, for our area. This is nothing new; it has been known for a long time. We cannot understand why the seed producers are not obliged to produce what is needed.

Furthermore, protection of fertile lands is a question of good fertilizers, which in many respects does not meet the needs of our agriculture. For example, scores of wagonloads of nitrolime used to be applied in our area, which grows cauliflower and vegetables in general; in recent years practically no nitrolime has been available. Why? How, then, can we speak of practical application of R&D achievements? After all, nitrolime is a fertilizer and at the same time it protects the vegetation.

In my opinion, the errors stem from the assortment of fertilizers, their type structure and also from the observation of delivery schedules. All that is linked with the question of the environment and water resources. The problem of liquid fertilizers is now very urgent, particularly in areas where water sources are located; it should get the green light. Application [of liquid fertilizers] should lead to the best possible utilization of the nutrients and not to their flushing down into the subsoil. Fertilization in reserve, now widely practiced, is inefficient; it helps only halfway and causes great waste especially in lighter soils. If the supplier branches fail to cooperate with our agriculturists, however, it will be difficult to change the accepted practice and new information of science and research on plant nutrition will be in most part further ignored.

After all, the main objective is not that the manufacturers of fertilizers sell their products; for societywide interest it is immaterial how they fulfill their various economic indicators. From this viewpoint only specific increases in the yields of the crops are important and relevant. Frankly speaking, our agrochemical enterprises are "bending over backward" to get the sales and to fulfill their outputs. They are less interested in the structure of fertilizers and the quality of work.

What about the attitude toward the land on the part of other enterprises? If you would look at the roads built straight across cultivated or unharvested fields, your heart would ache. Land should be protected more rigorously when various railroads, water mains, etc. are built. The fact that the cooperative is paid Kcs 0.80 or 1.00 per square meter is no remedy, because money cannot replace the ruined harvest. The thought still prevails that if the land belongs to the JZD, we can just drive in with impunity and build our road right through it. Some enterprises have adopted the same inconsiderate attitude toward agricultural and arable lands when building capital investment. However, we must bear in mind that such losses do not affect the JZD "alone," but all of our society. It is a simple fact that land is irreplaceable.

Reclamation Urged

Prague RUDE PRAVO in Czech 8 Feb 84 p 3

[Letter to the editor by Eng Stanislav Stys, manager of the reclamation department at the general directorate of the State Economic Council in Most: "Investment in the Future"]

[Text] I read with interest Frantisek Hlavicka's contribution "Let Us Protect Every Are of Our Land" (RUDE PRAVO 18 January 1984). Coal mining is the major cause of appropriations and temporary disuse of lands. Return of lands to further use is therefore a much discussed issue in which the greatest variety of speculations are set forth. For that reason I should like to share some of my experience.

Strip mining of coal requires long-term appropriation of land. Free spaces are needed not only for the quarries proper but also for waste dumps of the overlying rock. The need for such areas increases year after year, and thus the North Bohemia Bituminous Coal Mines occupy about 22,000 hectares of land. Its absolute majority has undergone such extensive changes over the years that it cannot be returned to its original use without a complex, long-range process of reclamation.

The tradition of reclamation in North Bohemia is more than 30 years old. At this time reclamation costs Kcs 250 million annually. In 1952-1983 reclamation was launched on 9,858 hectares of land, of which 4,366 hectares have already been returned to their users. Because of the complex character of mining, lands are being released at a slow pace, which precludes any faster progress of the operations. Therefore, survey commissions active in every mining enterprise are assessing the opportunities for releasing the greatest possible number of areas for reclamation. In individual cases we also proceed with the so-called interm reclamation program, so that the devastated areas, which are under consideration for future mining operations or as waste dumps, do not needlessly deface the environment. Because of such efforts we have succeeded in pinpointing more than 5,000 hectares suitable for reclamation until the end of this century.

We are not concerned only about the restoration of individual areas. So-called "patchwork" reclamation would be inappropriate. Reclamation must create first of all a new landscape, with all the laws and requirements for its blending into the surrounding environment. This is not an easy task because the reclaimed lands do not consist of fields alone; communications and water flows pass through them, reservoirs are built on them, forests are planted and sites designated for public recreation are created. Part of the whole process also involves many auxiliary facilities, such as various agricultural projects--storerooms for fruit, vinery centers, etc. Despite certain problems we have succeeded in many respects. Among our successful achievements are the orchards and vineyards around the city of Most, some afforested waste dumps, and new swimming pools.

Good result of reclamation depends on its planning even before the mining proper begins. This involves the concept of the mine construction and the location, shape and inclination of waste dumps, because all such factors affect beforehand the appearance of the future landscape and determine whether the reclaimed territory will be suitable for agriculture, afforestation, or for the construction of a reservoir.

Our agriculturists are interested most of all in the reclamation of agricultural lands. This problem has been discussed intensely, often from opposite points of view. It has been said that there are various experiments under way but the results are nowhere in sight. That is not true. For agricultural reclamation we are using topsoil and loess which we have in ample supply. Since 1952 we covered more than 23 million cubic meters. We cover with topsoil areas designated for agricultural purposes, thus helping to improve some areas with agricultural lands of inferior quality. Reclamation has been highly effective, as compared to the 1983 yields of vineyards, where, for example, the original agricultural land in Chranec produced 6.5 tons of grapes per hectare and the reclaimed waste dump of the Smeral Mine in Cepirohy on the average more than 15 tons of grapes per hectare. Similarly, the yields of grain crops, sugar beets and other crops increased up to 150 percent in fields improved by a made-up layer of topsoil.

However, reclamation calls for good planning preparation and thorough application of technology which surpasses our potential. The capacities within the coal basin cover 60 percent of the tasks, and therefore the assistance rendered to us by enterprises from other krajis is much appreciated. This concerns primarily Prumyslove Stavitelstvi [Industrial Construction] in Kosice, Uranove Doly [Uranium Mines] in Pribram, Dopravni Stavby [Transportation Construction] in Olomouc, and Vojenske Stavby [Military Construction], which helped considerably in stripping and transporting the topsoil. Neither could we manage the agrotechnical part of reclamation by ourselves. It would not make much sense for us to build up a fleet of agricultural machinery and to try to procure seed, fertilizers and chemicals for the cultivation of several thousand hectares spread from Tusimice up to Usti on the Elbe. Therefore, on the basis of an agreement with the kraj agricultural administration, that part of operations has been taken over by agricultural enterprises. Our cooperation is mutually

advantageous; moreover, the agriculturists have developed better attitudes toward the lands which after all will be transferred to their use; they have convinced themselves of the necessity of reclamation and contribute their suggestions concerning possible changes. It is a pity that the opportunities of agricultural organizations for cooperation with us have been recently reduced by the bureaucratic approach to the allocation of motor fuels. There was simply no consideration of the fact that some state farms and cooperatives in North Bohemia will also plow, sow and harvest the reclaimed fields which thus far have not been included in their land resources. Here, too, planning calls for better foresight.

Cooperation of the coal basin with every agency involved in reclamation has reached a truly high level. The long-term concept for reclamation has been defined. Specialized organizations which are now being planned in the future will have important input into that concept. Attention and help in the restoration of the landscape defaced by mining are specific expressions of our society's interest in environmental protection and creation. We have gained valuable experience while seeking better methods to be applied in our future programs.

Present Practices Criticized

Prague RUDE PRAVO in Czech 15 Feb 84 p 3

[Letter to the editor by Anton Tazky, retired, of Banska Bystrica: "More Respect for the Nurturing Land"]

[Text] I must admit that I felt sad after reading Comrade Hlavicka's contribution "Let Us Protect Every Are of Our Land." From socialism we expected a better life, fair jobs and decent wages and that is what we got. There is nothing that we lack; we live without care, but the good living seems to make people overly lackadaisical and often enough irresponsible, even with respect to our nurturing land.

It is almost unbelievable that more than 700,000 hectares of land were "lost" in our country over the past 30 years and more--as Professor Juraj Hrasko wrote in RUDE PRAVO. Lands had to be appropriated for the construction of factories and new housing developments, but there would have been no need to appropriate so much land had our officials and agriculturists themselves been more respectful toward the land. I remember how in the years of the First Republic the people in Cierny Balog, my native village, used to secure pieces of land and to work on them with hoes to improve the soil, how they would tote rocks from their little fields up in the hills just to be able to plant some potatoes or sown barley and oats. In those days there was no income, thousands and thousands of the unemployed were eager to work, and those who owned a bit of land, no matter how tiny, at least could have some potatoes, which often were the only food in the poor villages on the upper Hron River.

Sadly enough, people today pay no attention to small uncultivated plots. Even their owners, cooperative farmers, are not interested in the

exploitation of even much larger areas. It bothers me that many barren areas exist around Banska Bystrica. Three years ago I called them to the attention of the managers of the okres agricultural administration and of a representative of the local national committee. Years went by, but the situation has not been remedied. There were instances where arable land which could be plowed with tractors was allotted to small gardeners who built on it little cottages and who are now competing in growing vegetables and other crops. Some meadows transferred to the State Forest Administration are now being gradually afforested. However, many lands remain unutilized, particularly those on hillsides where thus far no machinery can be used, and the plots need manual work, which is what we used to do in the past. If those hillsides were recultivated, they would be excellent pastures and we would obtain more hay of good quality.

However, in some communities one encounters such cases as, for example, the following: the officials of the MNV [local national committee] are hesitant to appropriate land in the village proper for construction; they prefer--with the approval of the okres officials--to "slice a piece" from the JZD fields. They do this because there are allegedly no sites for construction available in the community, which is not true. But the administration of the community does not want to "get in hot water" with a neighbor or a brother-in-law who owns an excessively large garden. That is wrong. Too much land has been lost that way.

I am following with interest every article in RUDE PRAVO that deals with the protection and exploitation of land, and I wish to add to Comrade Hlavicka's article: We must provide better protection not only for every are but for every square meter of our land and we must finally realize that thus far we have treated our nurturing land shabbily and irresponsibly.

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WEST SLOVAK KRAJ FARMERS PREPARING FOR SPRING

Bratislava PRAVDA in Slovak 1 Feb 84 pp 1-2

Article by Eduard Fasung: "Seed Being Shipped, Machinery Repaired; Preparations for Spring Agricultural Work in West Slovak Kraj"

Text Bratislava--Even though the worst of the winter has only now caught hold in our towns, the farmers and mechanics of agricultural enterprises are already intensively looking forward to the beginning of spring agricultural work. They are concentrating primarily on the preparation of machinery, seed and seedlings. These are difficult tasks, to be sure, because in addition to meeting annual plan objectives, most agricultural enterprises have more than a few responsibilities in terms of making up backlogs from preceding years which came about as a result of unfavorable weather and, in a number of cases, from objective reasons as well. They would gladly bring this unpleasant burden up to social expectations.

With this commitment, the farmers of the West Slovak Kraj are proceeding with the preparation for spring agricultural work. Information provided to us yesterday at the Kraj Seed Enterprise in Trnava indicates that for the time being this work is proceeding well. Machinery repair and seed preparations are moving along at a faster pace than projected by their schedules.

Additional Worries

"It is true that the current situation in the preparation for spring agricultural work must be evaluated in a broader context," explained Eng Jan Adamovic, agronomist at the Kraj Agricultural Station [KPS] in Bratislava. "Among other things, there are definitely more problems this spring than in recent years with the wintering over of winter crops. At the time of the first inventory at the beginning of December last year we had poorly developed or incomplete stands of wheat on an area of almost 45,000 hectares, which meant that we had no guarantee that we would meet our harvest targets. We therefore were considering plowing these under this spring. So far the relatively mild weather of this winter and the heavy rainfall have to a certain extent enabled us to avoid plowing under the winter crops and have offered somewhat greater optimism to agronomists regarding spring work.

Nevertheless, in the West Slovak kraj consideration is being given to the plowing under of almost 15,000 hectares of winter crops. For this reason they

are procuring enough seed not only for their planned spring grain sowings, but also for the possible replacement of plowed-under winter crops. Seeds, as we were informed yesterday by the deputy production director of the Trnava Seed Enterprise, Eng Jan Matula, are prepared somewhat ahead of time, as indicated by the fact that almost half of the spring barley seeds have already been shipped to agricultural enterprises. The preparations of pea seeds is proceeding even better, with more than 5,000 tons out of a planned total of 5,600 tons already having been shipped to farmers.

Enough Seed

"We have enough seed to cover sowing needs in the event that plowing under is necessary," Eng Matula assured us. "However, for the time being we can ship farmers only the seed for the planned spring planting. For the time being, figuratively speaking, we cannot give the farmers a single seed to be sown on plots that might be plowed under. Bear in mind that for every seed an agricultural enterprise wants from us in excess of the plan, it must contribute a counterdelivery of grain to the central fodder fund. This is a practice not much to the liking of farmers, who would like to receive seed without having to offer offsetting deliveries. This, however, must be approved by the Ministry of Agriculture and Food of the SSR, and since this has not happened yet we cannot distribute any seed in excess of the plan."

Because strict controls also exist over the grain, and particularly the fodder stock, it is high time to decide whether and to whom exceptions will be granted to consume seed in excess of the plan so that there will be enough time to ship them without excess anxiety.

In the West Slovak kraj they have also been planning to cover with their own seed resources sowing needs for lucerne, field clover and legumes. There is also enough seed for the corn crop, even though the seed scientists have not yet received a decision as to who will receive distributions of which hybrids, because there is a wide assortment of them and every corn producer should receive only those hybrids which produce the best harvests under his growing conditions. A special commission is making a decision about this distribution.

Focus on Initiative

When the conversation turned to the preparation of machines for spring work, a representative of the Bratislava KPS assured us that in this area as well they have been able so far to meet the adopted schedules. The equipment for the first stage of spring work has been almost fully prepared to embark on the spring offensive for the fulfillment of the tasks outlined in this year's national economic plan. More and more enterprises are gradually joining in the initiative which was first proposed by the agricultural enterprises of the SSR in honor of the 40th anniversary of the Slovak National Uprising, the anniversary of the liberation of Czechoslovakia by the Soviet Army and the 35th anniversary of socialist agriculture. Their challenge creates sufficient opportunity for the activation of creative problem-solving forces, which will be the center of attention particularly during various discussions related to the 10th United Agricultural Cooperative Congress.

TASKS IN AGRICULTURE OUTLINED

Prague RUDE PRAVO in Czech 1 Feb 84 p 2

[Summary of the background material for the discussion prior to the 10th statewide congress of Unified Agricultural Cooperatives: "For Further Agricultural Production Increase"]

[Text] In accordance with the decision of the CSSR Government, Central Committee of the CSSR National Front and Union of Cooperative Farmers [SDR] the 10th Statewide Congress of Unified Agricultural Cooperatives [JZD] will take place in Prague from 29 November to 1 December 1984. Part of the preparation of the congress, which like all preceding ones will significantly contribute to the further development of socialist agriculture, is the pre-congress discussion, the background material for which was issued by the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Central Committee of the Union of Cooperative Farmers and Central Committee of the Trade Union Association of Workers in Agriculture. The purpose of the discussion is to win over cooperative farmers and other workers for the fulfillment of 1984 tasks and of the entire Seventh 5-Year Plan, to devise a specific procedure of how, under the conditions of each enterprise, to meet and in socially desirable directions surpass the plan targets, in accordance with the resolutions of the 16th CPCZ Congress to express the resolution to build and defend our socialist fatherland, and thus actively to contribute to the maintenance of world peace.

As the document points out, during 35 years of building socialism Czechoslovak agriculture achieved significant progress in the development of production, in the improvement of social and living conditions of farmers as well as in their social status. Under the leadership of the CPCZ a transition was made to the large-scale production work organization in which increasing attention has been paid to research and development.

Agricultural production has more than doubled in the last 35 years. In most crops the yields per hectare have substantially increased and a significant increase has been registered in livestock production. Meat production per hectare of agricultural land has increased more than fourfold, and that of milk approximately two and one-half times. Labor productivity in agriculture has increased almost fivefold. With 0.44 hectares of agricultural land per capita almost 95 percent of food consumption is covered by domestic agricultural production.

The goal of the Seventh 5-Year Plan is to attain a 5.2 percent increase in agricultural production primarily by the increase in crop production, which accounts for 87 percent of the increase. At the same time, changes will be carried out in the internal structure of crop and particularly livestock production, where 70 percent of the increase will be achieved by cattle breeding.

From these basic goals of the 5-year plan it is evident that its fulfillment will be primarily decided upon by the utilization of reserves in agriculture-- that is, intensification of production through maximum utilization and most efficient use of all resources, particularly soil, biological efficiency of plants and domestic animals, fertilizers, chemicals, fodder and energy. This means to obtain the maximum production effect from each hectare of soil and every kilogram of fertilizers and fodder, from every energy unit. The basic precondition to achieve this objective is the more effective application of research and development results, improvement of professional knowledge, increased initiative and activity of workers in every agricultural enterprise and the overall raising of management standards.

The results of the first 3 years of the Seventh 5-Year Plan have demonstrated that most of these intentions are being gradually implemented. Crop production increased more rapidly, livestock production could do with smaller imports, fodders, fuels, energy and industrial fertilizers were utilized more efficiently. The material-technical base has been strengthened, economics of agricultural enterprises has been consolidated and the market supply with food has improved.

However, some shortcomings in management still persist. In the first place, there are considerable interannual fluctuations in the harvest of basic crops, legumes, technical crops, quality and structure of roughage. In some enterprises, an extensive tendency still prevails in the development of livestock production along with insufficient coordination between their own fodder resources and production of roughage. Also inadequate is the degree of application of scientific and technological findings through biological and technical services as well as the creation of conditions for increased exports of sugar, malt, hops, and the dependence on import of protein-rich fodders.

The share of individual agricultural enterprises in attaining the 5-year plan targets so far, of course, varies. Apart from those which successfully discharge their tasks, there are many enterprises and work collectives in which the shortfalls are considerable. The road ahead lies not in finding the objective causes of failures, but in the more consistent orientation toward production intensification and efficiency, research and development, more efficient utilization of fixed assets, more effective production organization and management.

Crop production increase depends particularly on better care of soil, its utilization and increased fertility. Agricultural enterprises will have to review the existing system of tilling and choose a structure of crop production which will ensure maximum production with increased soil fertility.

The foremost task remains the comprehensive implementation of the grain-growing program. One of the ways of attaining self-sufficiency in grain production is the replacement of grain in fodder by a larger consumption of forage crops. As to the technical crops, particularly sugar beets, the goal is to secure enough raw material for the needs of our economy as well as for export. The rationalization of our people's diet presumes an increase in both fruit and vegetable production and the adaptation of its structure to the consumers' needs.

In view of the fact that the biggest reserves exist in the low intensity of roughage production on the arable land and insufficient use of meadows and pastures, there are good prospects for increasing animal production by breeding cattle and sheep. On the other hand, it cannot be expected, due to the limited supply of grain fodder, that pig and poultry breeding will significantly increase during the remaining 2 years of the Seventh 5-Year Plan or in the subsequent period. Every agricultural enterprise must carry out a more intensive grain fodder conservation program without delay. Comprehensive health care of animals must play an important role in livestock production.

The increase in agricultural production efficiency requires a more effective utilization of all material and technical resources. On the average they account for approximately 70 percent of total production cost. The value of machinery and equipment in our agriculture represents 10.4 percent of the total value of equipment in our national economy. One of the fundamental problems at the present time is its rational utilization and multishift operation, even in the form of cooperation. An improvement in care of equipment also represents an important reserve. Systematic attention must be paid to the conservation of fuels and energy, particularly diesel fuel. Although their consumption was significantly reduced during the 1981-1983 period, ways must be found for their additional conservation. Under no circumstances can it be tolerated, however, that the conservation be achieved through simplification and still less by omitting some agronomic operations. It is also imperative to speed up the use of nonconventional sources of energy, such as solar energy, geothermal energy, waste heat produced by cooling of milk and in the long run also biogas, and power generated by small hydroelectric plants.

The Seventh 5-Year Plan anticipates large investments in agriculture. It remains to be determined how the investment funds should be most effectively used for increasing soil fertility, for reducing losses in storage of plant products and in nutrients, for fuels and energy conservation. Reconstructions and modernizations must be regarded as the fundamental way of increasing particularly livestock production.

An increase in associate production and services to the population is also an important part of operations in individual enterprises.

To carry out the tasks of agricultural production today calls for raising the standard of management in general, making use of people's talents and initiative, and stimulating their interest in the results of their work.

This is also the purpose of measures aimed at the improvement of the planned management system in agriculture. In most enterprises, however, its principles have not yet been worked out and used to such an extent as actively to affect the behavior of individual work collectives and individuals. In particular, increased emphasis must be placed on the khozraschet principle of intraenterprise planning and management, to which the brigade form of work organization and remuneration is closely linked.

Approximately 75 percent of working cooperative farmers and 80 percent of workers on state farms participate in socialist competition in JZD's at the present time. BSP's [Socialist Labor Brigades], KRB's [Comprehensive Rationalization Brigades] and other forms of work and creative initiative must further increase their share in and contribution to comprehensive agricultural production increases in the future.

With the increasing use of funds of cooperatives and other agricultural enterprises, together with the Union of Cooperative Farmers, ROH [Revolutionary Trade Union Movement] and other organizations of the National Front, more care must be devoted to the improvement of farmers' working conditions. This applies particularly to cafeterias, health care, medical treatment in spas, recreation, housing construction and so on.

The expansion of large-scale agricultural production significantly affects the living environment. Its protection and improvement must begin with the management of soil and protection of purity of water resources. It is also necessary to realize fully the problems caused by the increasing use of chemicals in crop production, and scientifically to control human diet and plant protection more consistently. Among other things, attention must be paid to landscaping, order in agricultural buildings, planting and maintenance of green areas and maintenance of country roads.

The pre-congress discussion will also examine the past activity of the SDR, the results of its mass and political-educational work, cooperation with the SSM [Union of Socialist Youth], ROH and other organizations of the National Front and national committees in the development of the socialist villages.

(The complete text of the document for discussion prior to the 10th Statewide Congress of Unified Agricultural Cooperatives will be published in ZEMEDEL'SKE NOVINY and ROLNICKE NOVINY on Wednesday 1 February.)

10501
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SURVEY OF POTATO GROWING IN SLOVAKIA

Bratislava ROLNICKE NOVINY in Slovak 8 Feb 84 p 5

[Article by Eng Michal Smalik, CSc, Agricultural Cultivation Research Center Velka Lomnica: "Potato Growing Is Increasing--Several Comments on the Results Achieved in 1983 and in the Seventh 5-Year Plan"]

[Text] Agricultural use in 1982 extended worldwide to 1,356 million hectares of arable land. Of that amount 17.7 million accrued to potatoes, which placed 11th among plants. However, in Europe potatoes with an area of 12.23 million hectares occupy the third place, in the CSSR with an acreage of 0.20 million hectares the fourth place and in the SSR with an acreage of not quite 67,000 hectares the same place. The average worldwide potato yield per hectare in 1982 was 14.4 t, in Europe (including the USSR) 14.7 t, in the CSSR 18.2 t, in the SSR 16.4 t for total acreage, 17.3 t for acreage of the socialized sector.

At any rate, in Slovakia the potato harvest evaluation and assessment of the level and effectiveness of inputs must be based on yields per unit of acreage in the socialized sector. According to statistical data the yield of potatoes per hectare in 1951 was 9.5 t, in 1960 8.1 t, in the socialized sector 7 t. In the Fifth 5-Year Plan it averaged 12.4 t, in the Sixth 5-Year Plan 13.8 t. In 1981 farmers grew 16.7 t, in 1982 17.3 t, last year 15 t. This trend in their harvesting stands as proof of the sensitivity of this root crop to changes in production technology, but also to the great efforts exerted by growers toward improving their yield.

Thus, on the whole it can be said that Slovak potato growers in the course of the Seventh 5-Year Plan fared well in comparison with the worldwide or European average. However, that is no cause for complete satisfaction, because we still keep lagging behind many top cultivators. While the harvest achieved in the SSR in 1982 represented 118 percent of that of Poland, 112 percent of the Finnish harvest, it amounted to only 92 percent of the European harvest without the USSR, 89 percent of the GDR harvest, 84 percent of the CSR harvest, 49 percent of the harvest of Denmark and 40 percent of the harvest of Switzerland.

It All Started With the "Poprad Movement"

Potato growing in the SSR in 1960 was characterized by a drop in the volume of production and in yields per hectare in the socialist sector. The main cause of this was the small-scale production type of cultivation and low-efficiency seeding material. New technology of cultivation and seed from improved cultivation of more efficient strains in connection with specialized assistance provided by the Research Cultivation Improvement Station in Velka Lomnica became the basis for the "Poprad Movement" for achieving a 20 t yield of potatoes per hectare.

With adherence to plant agrotechnology, particularly beneficial effects on yield were obtained through the introduction of new strains. Thus, the Poprad district that received priority deliveries from the cultivators at the Agricultural Cultivation Research Center in Velka Lomnica in the form of improved seeds achieved as early as 1964 a yield of 25.4 t per hectare, in 1968 23.8 t, and has been maintaining that average at the 20 t level with more than 70 per cent of potato acreage being reserved for seed growing. Similarly, the Spisska Nova Ves district achieved in 1961 an average yield in excess of 20 t, in 1966 it was 21.1 t and the yield has stayed above 21 t every year.

An even more conspicuous example of the effects of efficient strains and cultivated seed on the amount and annual stability of potato harvest is offered by individual growers. Two enterprises are listed as an example: the unified agricultural cooperative in Smlzany, Spisska Nova Ves district achieved in the Sixth 5-Year Plan on an acreage of 220 hectares a yield of 25.44 t per hectare, in 1981 25.14 t, in 1982 28.63 t, and last year 26.62 t. The Slovak State Farm in Velka Lomnica, Poprad district, achieved in the Sixth 5-Year Plan on an acreage of 500 hectares 20.20 t of potatoes, in 1981 21.84 t, in 1982 24.48 t, last year 20.73.

Prerequisites for Intensification

Thus, strain and seed are becoming the most important input factor for the intensification and stabilization of potato harvests in the SSR, admittedly with the proviso of providing and maintaining a comprehensive plant and strain agrotechnology of cultivation on which attainment of the potential harvest from the strains cultivated in each year depends. Strains alone cannot make up for gross agrotechnical mistakes. At the same time, the attainable harvest under SSR conditions is considered to be that achieved in state strain cultivation experiments. It is achieved in approximately identical climatic conditions and under equal exposure to infection by diseases and pests that in a given season affect harvests conventionally grown in the vicinity. The difference between attainable harvest and the harvest obtained in practice is primarily the result of the different level of agrotechnical acts and measures indispensable for utilizing the productive capacity of the cultivated strains.

Tests conducted at the present in state strain cultivation experiments cover all key SSR potato-growing regions with the exception of Zahorie and central Povazie, thus providing an objective basis for comparison with practice and background for an analysis of the primarily subjective causes relative to the achieved yields.

Statistically documented yields per hectare in the SSR socialized sector (involving 45,000 hectares of potato acreage) for 3 years of the Seventh 5-Year Plan are 16.33 t. Due to aggravated climatic conditions the yield for 1983 is lower by 1.33 t than this average. Growths were also afflicted by root diseases, delays in the planting bulbs, sparse planting in small numbers, irregular ripening and an unsuitable structure in sizes.

Individual groups of strains reacted to these conditions in different ways. The lowest attainable yields in the state strain cultivation experiments were registered for very early ripening strains. The highest yields, in excess of 50 t, were provided by transitory-type strains (Otava, Karin and hybrids VL-20 and VL-30). The key group of semi-early ripening strains (Radka, Rema, Iva, Sosna and hybrids VL-25 and VL-31) achieved a yield in excess of 40 t. If we compare the yields of these vegetative groups of strains with 1982, which was more favorable for potatoes from the viewpoint of climatic conditions, we can see that standard yield was maintained by the semi-early ripening strains and hybrids while a significant drop occurred in the case of very early ripening strains.

The highest yield in the SSR state strain cultivation experiments was achieved by the hybrid VL-20, namely 52.4 t per hectare. The Rema strain also exceeded its SSR yield average (43.8 t). A good standard was maintained by the Sosna strain (39.1 t) and Iva strain (38.2 t). A high yield capacity was confirmed by the early hybrids VL-30 (48.6-46.1 t) and VL-25 (42.4-40.2 t). Conditions during the year favored these types of strains and they confirmed their yield capacity also on productive acreages in practice where they yielded 50-73 percent of their attainable yields. The well-known Radka and Nora strains made best use of the environment and weather progress in August and September to offer high yields. The Radka strain (44.6 t) provided a high yield mainly because last year's conditions did not favor the occurrence of rot.

Some strains were extraordinarily afflicted in 1983 by leaf spots. Under conditions marked by a high deficit in irrigation and in areas where use was made of straw-laden unripened manure, the Resy and Eba strains were totally wiped out. The year 1983 in the SSR once again showed that potatoes are a resilient plant, managing to withstand detrimental thermal and moisture shocks. It was once again confirmed that they can resist dryness and heat better than excessive moisture and cold. Nevertheless, these "shocks" do show some aftereffects. For example, there occur many deformations, physiological cracks, formation of cavities, and dry matter also becomes afflicted. Under extreme heat and deficit irrigation after sowing as well as during the planting and growth of bulbs, very early ripening strains, as the earliest ripening vegetative groups, suffer the most.

The Importance of Organic Fertilization

A positive influence on elimination of dryness and excessive heat in the earliest ripening strains in 1983 was produced by organic fertilization. It became confirmed that a regular, high dosage of organic fertilizers is indispensable for potatoes and that it cannot be replaced by even high doses of mineral fertilizers, particularly nitrogen. The difference in yields with identical dosage of nitrogen potassium phosphate was more than 5 tons of bulbs in organic fertilization.

Practical experience confirms that cultivation enterprises which regularly provide a long-term and high dosage of organic fertilizers for the soil, including liming, achieve a high and stable yield of potatoes as well as high effectiveness per kg of nitrogen potassium phosphate.

Potato cultivation is a part of plant production. As such it can be intensified and developed in the subsequent years of the Seventh 5-Year Plan only within the plant production system of each cultivation enterprise. Since it involves an intensive root crop, it is required that potatoes be grown under the most intensive conditions using an intensive system. The decisive factor of intensification remains herein the biological material, nutrition and systematic preparation of soil.

8204

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COMMUNIST PARTY AKTIV ON SLOVAK AGRICULTURE

Bratislava PRAVDA in Slovak 9 Feb 84 p 2

/Article by Eduard Fasung and Josef Sedlak: "The Effort To Fulfill the 5-Year Plan Is Intensified"/

/Text/ A meeting of party and economic activists among the prominent party and economic workers of the West Slovakia kraj took place in Bratislava on 8 February 1984. The meeting was attended by CPSL Central Committee Presidium member and leading secretary of the ZSKV KSS /CPSL West Slovakia Kraj Committee/ Ignac Janak; CPSL Central Committee Secretariat member and PRAVDA editor in chief Bohus Travnicek; Federal Minister of Agriculture and Food Miroslav Toman; CPSL Central Committee department head Jan Sterdas; SSR Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Food Jan Sebik; ZSKV KSS Secretary Ivan Knotek; and SV ZDR /Slovak Committee of the Union of Cooperative Farmers/ Deputy Chairman Jozef Gajdos. The meeting dealing with the problems of agricultural production and food industry reviewed the fulfillment of 1983 plan, intended activities of the ZSKV KSS in the implementation of the 1984 plan and honoring of combined socialist pledges in the cooperation districts as well as their focal point this year.

This meeting of activists confirmed that the appeal of 22 agricultural enterprises in the SSR to fulfill--in honor of the 40th anniversary of the SNP /Slovak National Uprising/, 40th anniversary of Czechoslovakia's liberation by the Soviet Army and 35th anniversary of socialization of Czechoslovak agriculture--all production tasks of the Seventh 5-Year Plan has met with an enthusiastic response in our most productive kraj. The West Slovak farmers proved this among other things by assuming new combined socialist pledges, resolutions of dozens of enterprises supporting the goals announced by 22 agricultural enterprises.

Certainty of Dynamic Development

The meeting was opened and chaired by Comrade Janak. The keynote speech was made by Comrade Knotek, who not only offered a politically thorough and concrete analysis of last year's economic results and outlined the principal directions of the kraj farmers' effort this year, but also truthfully analyzed past experiences from the movement of combined socialist pledges. He pointed out that their principal goal in the remaining 2 years is the fulfillment of the tasks of the Seventh 5-Year Plan.

The combined socialist pledges which originated in the initiative of the Piestany and Sala cooperation district with the active participation of the workers from the party work departments in agriculture, food industry, forestry and water management, CPSL Central Committee, CPSL ZSKV and PRAVDA editors gradually grew into a big movement. This is borne out by the fact that 20 cooperation districts operating on 52 percent of the kraj's agricultural land assumed them already last year. Their positive contribution is convincingly reflected in a Kcs 92 million increase in gross agricultural production above the plan. Specifically, in the Piestany cooperation district they fulfilled their resolution to make up for the grain production loss in previous years, surpassed grain production by 3,240 tons and thus presented a challenge to all enterprises in the West Slovakia kraj to carry out production in accordance with the original intentions of the Seventh 5-Year Plan. The combined socialist pledges restored the dynamic pace in milk production. The Little Carpathian cooperation district, for example, surpassed the plan of state milk purchase by 3.34 million liters, the Pobedim district by 3.132 million liters and the Sala district by 1.072 million liters. Purposeful work of cooperation councils was reflected also in the better management of lagging JRD's [unified agricultural cooperatives] and SM's [state farms].

Comrade Knotek emphasized the following: "Although we have achieved some successes (13 of 22 lagging enterprises have attained the average), we cannot be satisfied with the existing state of consolidation. Combined socialist pledges and the activity of cooperation districts never intended to, nor can it, replace the actual activity of the party organization or of economic management of the lagging enterprise or responsibility of the supervisory okres and kraj organs for the implementation of intensification programs. However, what must be improved and accelerated is the informal application of methods and forms of management and work organizations of the best enterprises in the lagging enterprises."

Jaromir Algayer, KPS [kraj agricultural administration] manager in Bratislava, described specific tasks of the 4th year of the Seventh 5-Year Plan in which the farmers of the West Slovakia kraj are to attain a 3.2 percent increase in crop production and a 2.2 percent increase in livestock production. These two reports were followed by an extensive, very stimulating discussion during which the farmers spoke not only of the results, but also of their plans for the next few years.

Not at Any Price

Special attention was paid by the participants in this meeting to the statement of the Federal Minister of Agriculture and Food Miroslav Toman. At the beginning of his speech he expressed appreciation for the initiative of the farmers in the West Slovakia kraj which they have launched for the fulfillment of planned tasks and efficient intensification of agricultural production by redoubling collective effort and increasing responsibility for the attainment of set goals through combined socialist pledges in the cooperation districts. In evaluating the situation in the food market both here and abroad we must pay increased attention to production efficiency: we cannot afford to produce even food at any price. For this reason, we must strictly control production. Comrade Toman compared

the West Slovakia kraj with the South Moravia kraj, the CSR results with the SSR results. The outcome of this comparison was not laudatory for the farmers in Slovakia, who lost their primacy even in those indicators which had been their domain for decades. Both management and agricultural practice must reflect upon that. The way out of this situation is the consistent application of the improved system of planning in the agroindustrial complex, rapid application of the khozraschet principles and brigade forms of work organization and remuneration. "In the discussion of the 10th Congress of unified agricultural cooperatives the demand was expressed," Minister Toman stated, "that attention should be primarily directed to their own ranks because the causes of success and failure are in your own backyard and should be eliminated by the forces of your collective."

The meeting was concluded by CPSL Central Committee Presidium member and CPSL ZSKV leading secretary Ignac Janak. He emphasized the necessity of making more consistent use of the reserve in management and organizational work, of paying more attention to the training of people--of teaching them how to work progressively, how to use the latest scientific findings and experiences of the prominent enterprises, how to multiply the effort to increase the quality and efficiency of production on the basis of combined socialist pledges in the cooperation districts. Past experiences have unequivocally demonstrated that combined socialist pledges remain the most effective form of mobilization of workers' creative initiative for raising the standard of management of agricultural enterprises, for more rapid application of scientific achievements in practice.

10501

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CENTRAL SLOVAK KRAJ FODDER YIELDS STILL LOW

Bratislava ROLNICKE NOVINY in Slovak 9 Feb 84 p 3

[Article by Peter Fafarik: "Making Use of Grass Stands"]

[Text] Bulk fodder. It is spoken about frequently at harvest ime, but even more often when there is a lack of it in the winter. In the Central Slovak kraj these fodders are the base for the feeding of beef cattle and sheep. For this reason they are also the object of continual attention by farmers. This was the case recently at a meeting of Central Slovak fodder growers which took place at the united agricultural cooperative (JZD) in Selcie.

Meadows and pastures make up a significant percentage of the agricultural land in the Central Slovak kraj. This is a consequence of local natural conditions. In the Sixth Five-Year Plan there was a turn for the better in the utilization of permanent stands of grass. Fodder production increased by more than 40 percent in comparison with the previous five-year plan. This resulted mainly from an expansion of the area of grass stands due to the completion of collectivization, and to a lesser extent because of a desirable increase in per hectare harvests.

As it was pointed out at the fodder grower's meeting, the harvests taken from meadows and pastures in the first three years of the Seventh Five-Year Plan, and especially those from last year, have once again confirmed that the growing of fodder on grass stands is the weakest part of plant production. It may be stated that even in the current five-year plan no substantial steps forward have been taken. Results differ widely not only between agricultural enterprises but also from one okres to another. For example, last year more than 5 tons of hay fodder per hectare were harvested from the meadows in the Liptovsky Mikulas okres, i.e., 5.05 tons, and 5.04 tons in the Martin okres. At the same time yields in several other okreses did not exceed 4 tons per hectare.

The differences between agricultural enterprises in fodder harvests from meadows are still greater. The results attest, however, to an overall mastery of the management of permanent grass stand use, comprehensive agricultural equipment, and harvesting. It is indeed true that

the weather last year did not treat the farmers well, but despite this, several enterprises still had excellent harvests. This was especially true of the Sebedin JZD in the Banska Bystrice okres, where 9.21 tons of meadow hay were harvested per hectare. The cooperative members in Selcie harvested 7 tons per hectare, and those of the Slovak National Uprising JZD in Banska Bystrice 6.81 tons. The employees of the Zavadka nad Hronom State Farm lagged far behind, as did those at the JZD in Sumiac and in Brezno, even though account must be taken in these cases of inferior natural conditions and of very hilly terrain. On the other hand, these three operations were at a certain advantage in terms of the amount of precipitation they receive.

In the Cadca okres the highest per hectare yield of meadow fodder was at the Radoli JZD--6.22 tons, but at the Rudina JZD there were only 3.36. In Orava the cooperative workers at Tapesov stood out in terms of their fodder harvest, taking in 9.03 tons from their meadows. On the other hand, the Oravska Lesna JZD managed only 1.2 tons per hectare, and at Oravska Polhora only 3.06 tons.

In the Liptovsky Mikulas okres a comparison may be made between the superior fodder growers at the Liptovsky Ondrej and Vichodna JZD and the much less successful ones at the Pribylina JZD. In the Lucenec okres inferior results were achieved by the cooperative farmers at Mytna, Uhorsko and Ratka, with better performance turned in at Cinoban and Tomasovcie. Similarly, a superior performance of the Dubovo JZD may be compared with a weaker one at the Martin Stage Farm. Or one can take the Rimavska Seca, Lenartovcie and Kalos JZD where yields of from 7.75 to 9.95 tons per hectare were achieved, while the Gemersky Jablonec JZD harvested only 2.28 tons per hectare and the Hodejov JZD 3.13 tons. Similar differences in harvests exist in the other okreses of the kraj as well.

What Is Retarding Development?

Let us attempt to find an answer as to the sources of this lack of success. It is often heard that last year the weather was very dry, but at other times that it was very damp. The great differences between enterprises and okreses in the yields that were achieved place another light on this objective cause.

Fodder growing experts, on the other hand, see the reasons for lack of success as lying in subjective factors, such as the chronic failure to fulfill targets for surface preparation, cleaning, fertilizing and other factors in intensification. For example: in the fall of last year, out of a target of more than 113,000 hectares of mechanical and surface cultivation of grass stands only about 50,000 hectares were actually tended. This is less than half. The same was true of fertilizing. At the same time, it is frequently emphasized that autumn fertilizing of permanent grass stands, especially in dry areas, is important from the viewpoint of nutrient usability, with the objective of fixing

and using the winter moisture. This is particularly important for the first cutting. Neglecting these tasks means that fertilization does not achieve its desired effect.

Another issue with similar consequences for the intensification of fodder raising is the underestimation of surface preparation and the cleaning of meadows and pastures. This results in lowering the quality of the environment for permanent grass stands of multiple intensity levels to the disadvantage of the more intensive types of grass.

Lags in the surface preparation of meadows and pastures have not been a phenomenon only of recent years. It may be stated that this has been a primary reason over the past 10 years at least for a significant decline in meadow area as a percentage of the total area of permanent grass stands. Over this period about 21,000 hectares of meadow have been lost so that they now represent 35 percent of the area of permanent grass stands. At the same time more than 17,000 hectares were added to this category, mainly from the stock of arable land. This of course should have been evident in an increased meadow area.

More Productive Meadows

This kind of development is not in accordance with the conceptual plan for the management of permanent grass stands. It does not meet the objective of increasing the percentage of more intensive grasses at the expense of the less intensive. The plan projected that grasses of levels 3-5 of intensity would represent 48.3 percent of the total as of last year, or 169,000 hectares. Reality, however, does not match up well with this, with a shortfall of some 37,000 hectares in this area. It should be noted that the target for increasing the percentage of higher intensity grasses was met only in the Dolny Kubin okres.

These, then, are the main factors which have been retarding the more intensive development of the fodder growing industry. They have been discussed critically, openly and in much detail at kraj fodder grower conferences. It is because of these ongoing shortcomings that the current fodder balance is less than desirable. After accounting for winter supplies, there were 2.21 tons of fodder in the kraj per large cattle unit. If, however, the agricultural enterprises had met their targets for the substitution of higher intensity grasses for lower, there would have been fodder crops from an additional 37,000 hectares to harvest for the winter and the current situation would be better, in the sense that there would be about 113,000 tons of additional fodder supplies, meaning that there would be 2.56 tons per large cattle unit.

In the near future fodder grower groups will also meet in individual okreses. They will analyze the performance of the fodder growing industry in still more detail and look at concrete cases. All of them, without exception, will certainly conclude that adequate fodder crops can be assured only by implementing new organizational forms for the management of permanent grass stands.

SLOVAK IRRIGATION SYSTEM SURVEYED

Bratislava ROLNICKE NOVINY in Slovak 11 Feb 84 p 3

[Article by Stefan Mesaros: "Contribution of Irrigation--What the Survey of Available SSR Irrigation Revealed"]

[Text] Man has been using water since time immemorial to improve the yield of his fields and has built ingenious devices to bring it as close as possible to the fertile soil. He has invented and constructed various types of machinery and systems to make water supply available as easily as possible, until he ultimately came up with irrigation systems.

We have been experiencing their contribution to our agricultural practice for many years now. Surprisingly, even the large-acreage irrigation systems in Slovakia have been in existence for over two decades and, last year alone, those that were operational in individual agricultural enterprises covered an area in excess of 211,000 hectares. Yet, despite the fact that farmers are familiar with them and know all that can be accomplished with their aid, when it comes to their utilization complications frequently tend to set in.

They vary in their nature. We have become accustomed to dividing them into subjective and objective. However, to reduce to the minimum the possibility of subjective excuses for not using irrigation by blaming them on objective causes, personnel of the State Amelioration Administration in Slovakia last year took a significant step forward toward their effective utilization-- a survey of available irrigation systems.

What Was Their Contribution?

Last year's survey of irrigation systems revealed that where, e.g., irrigation detailing is concerned, it does not fully cover the capacity of pumping stations. While 100-percent coverage was short by only 3 percent, this general information cannot be accepted at face value, because it involves a considerable distortion of the actual situation. This is so simply because there are areas where operational irrigation facilities are amply available, sometimes with capacities to spare, but there are also regions where there is a shortage of irrigation facilities.

Among regions in the latter group, i.e., those that suffer from a shortage of operational irrigation facilities, are agricultural enterprises in the Trebisov and Michalovce districts. For example, functional coverage by irrigation facilities in the Trebisov district amounted last year to only 30 percent and in the Michalovce district to 51 percent. And how, you ask, is it possible that they had so few irrigation facilities?

It must be stated openly that the major part of these damaged irrigation systems have long since outlived their planned useful service life, a fact that accounts for their poor operational readiness. However, the farmers in these districts are also not entirely blameless. This involves not just maintenance, but the fact that the problem concerning the worn-out irrigation facilities did not come into the foreground until last year. The problem has been common knowledge for a long time and, as such, should have been tackled sooner before it acquired such huge dimensions. At present, however, "a start has been made" because, as we were informed by Eng Jan Cvecko, director of the State Amelioration Administration in Slovakia, farmers from several enterprises have already sent in their orders for procurement of replacement parts and components.

However, this step was not taken everywhere. This applies not only to the irrigation personnel from the two mentioned districts, but also to those in other parts and components. This is also borne out by the fact that last year, according to the performed survey, among strip irrigators alone 1900 were not capable of operation. While a substantial part of them can be repaired, the existing damages cannot be eliminated instantly and definitely not just by themselves.

Water as the Prerequisite of Success

In last year's survey of irrigation systems the personnel of the State Ameliorization Administration concentrated their attention not only on checking irrigation facilities, but also on other facts of substantial importance to the utilization of irrigation. They also monitored sources of water for the existing irrigation facilities. They found out that the situation is none too favorable in this respect, either, since the key problem is constituted by limited availability of water and also by its cleanliness.

Afflicted by a shortage of water last year were, e.g., irrigation networks in Senec, Zahorska Ves and Radosovce, and still other irrigation systems come to mind. After all, almost 3,600 hectares of irrigation systems could not be used during some months in Slovakia because of a shortage of water.

As we have already pointed out, an equally important problem attendant to the operation of irrigation systems is the cleanliness of water. This problem is highly topical and ought to be dealt with, if for no other reason than that the purity of water is not improving. It also accounts for considerable increases in the cost of operating irrigation systems.

Another problem that precludes more effective utilization of irrigation is the removal of algae from irrigation water. This problem appeared last year

in epidemic proportions in the irrigation system of Horny Zitny and, as we were told at the irrigation center in Sala, its elimination at full operation was impossible even with the help of work brigade members. It can be handled only with the use of a great number of people and with the requisite mechanisms.

Potential Approaches

The irrigation survey uncovered several problems that last year literally obstructed even better utilization of the intensification factor. Even though the irrigation deficit in the soil from last year as well as from the preceding years is high, it appears that the amount of irrigation needed in the current agricultural season will be on the order of last year.

This makes even more gratifying the fact that not only have problems been pointed out, but realistic approaches are being devised for their elimination. Irrigation users will be most gratified by the fact that at a meeting with representatives of the SSR Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Agricultural Needs, and of the State Amelioration Administration the personnel of the Sigma enterprise in Olomouc promised to deliver as early as the current quarter of the year the replacement materials required for the restoration of operational irrigation facilities. The fact that in the distribution of replacement parts and components they will proceed in accordance with the results of the irrigation survey and supply them first to places where most irrigation facilities became damaged is also of importance.

Thus, last year's draught did make a positive contribution to the utilization of irrigation. It not only roused farmers to their even more effective utilization but, as can be seen, inspired all those who come into contact with irrigation to higher activity. This is a gratifying statement to make. However, the point is that this added impetus met with favorable reception also in those agricultural enterprises which still do not attach the requisite degree of importance to irrigation. And once we achieve all over Slovakia a state where irrigation is used by farmers at 100-percent capacity--not in terms of area coverage or some other yardstick, but according to actual need--we will be able to say that the barrier of misgivings regarding irrigation has been scaled. Nevertheless, we can state now that personnel of the State Ameliorization Administration, through their survey of irrigation systems and through having "provoked" the Sigma Olomouc producer on the occasion of their visits to decisive action, have already started literally to undermine that barrier.

8204

CSO: 2400/250

METHODS OF INCREASING SOIL FERTILITY DISCUSSED

Prague RUDE PRAVO in Czech 14 Feb 84 p 5

/Article by Jan Svoboda: "How To Increase Soil Production Capacity Further" /

/Text / The Research Institute for Basic Farm Machinery at Hrusovany near Brno has succeeded in developing the agro-technical principles necessary for growing efficient grain varieties in terms of reduction of labor, production cost and energy. Due to the cooperation of research workers with practice the progressive methods found a large-scale application particularly in the South Moravia kraj. Comprehensive rationalization brigades /KRB / established in individual areas and ensuring the use of the most appropriate equipment and grain seeds have already fulfilled their mission in most instances.

Today hardly anybody recalls the resistance to the introduction of new elements such as methods with a minimal amount of tilling, sowing without prior plowing, correct rotation of crops and so on. The people from the institute who participated in the comprehensive rationalization brigades made considerable effort to promote this beneficial thing. The combination of forces paid off, management took hold of the matter and the innovations were eventually adopted in practice.

By now the workers at Hrusovany near Brno can state that the goal set for KRB's and selected agricultural enterprises in the okreses has been reached. The yields per hectare have reached approximately 5 tons of grain in the potato-growing area of the kraj, 5.5 tons in the corn-growing area and 6 tons in the turnip-growing area. These figures were supposed to be reached at least once during the last 5-year plan, but in fact this happened several times.

Science and research are now expected to have an important say with regard to the soil fertility increase. Hardly a day passes that the institute is not visited by representatives of agricultural enterprises who are interested in increasing crop production ahead of livestock production--a problem which is closely related to the condition of our soils.

"Practice wants to receive a reply soon, this is understandable. On the one hand we know that everything takes its time, but on the other hand it is our

duty to make available our findings while they are 'fresh' and to popularize them without delay. We will link research to practice as we successfully did in the agronomy of grain crops," says Eng Vladimir Krejci, manager of the Hrusovany institute.

As of now negotiations have taken place at Citonice in the Znojmo region and at Rakvice in the Breclava region. These will be the KRB bases for the potato-growing and corn-growing areas. At the preliminary meeting in Citonice the procedure for increasing crop production ahead of livestock production was outlined. It is formulated as harmony between the requirements of livestock production and potentialities of crop production with the optimal utilization of soil. It is, of course, imperative to create necessary fodder reserves.

At the same time, the future KRB's will focus on order in livestock production, reduction of losses in the preservation and consumption of fodder. The initial negotiations were attended also by the representative of the Research Institute for Animal Nutrition at Pohorelice, which will be also represented in the new brigade. In addition to the agronomists, this brigade will comprise zoo-technicians, tractor operators, fodder experts, feeders and livestock keepers. The okres agricultural administration in Znojmo welcomes this initiative and participates in its preparations, and the representative of its production department will become a member of the brigade.

"Harmony between crop and livestock production which presumes that crop increase will take place some time ahead of livestock increase is definitely a matter with which not only the agronomists are concerned. It is important not only to produce on the fields as much as possible, but also to harvest the crop with the smallest possible losses, to store and conserve fodder properly, to feed the animals economically while observing high nutritional standards," said Eng Miron Suskevic, CSc.

In every agricultural enterprise crop production is the key factor in determining the appropriate crop structure and the state of soil from the standpoint of fertility. It is necessary to know the acidity of individual strips of land as well as the calcium, phosphorus, potassium content and so on, and also to know what interventions are required. In cooperation with livestock production, the requirement that 24 percent of arable land be fertilized with high-quality barn manure in the necessary quantity is expected to be met.

Soil compaction, which is beginning adversely to affect the yields as well as petroleum consumption, must be "mapped" and measures must be adopted to prevent its further deterioration. This means the selection of the most appropriate system of tilling, the reduction of the scope of field crossings, the use of two-tire wheels, the adaptation of the network of field roads, changes in the size and shape of lots according to needs. The loosening of the soil below the level plowed under will be considered. The minimization of soil tilling must be borne constantly in mind. The use of two-level tillers, manufactured by the Syrovice JZD [unified agricultural cooperative] in the Brno-countryside okres, may replace deep plowing in some instances.

Research will study variants of soil loosening and tilling of soil in accordance with various conditions in individual areas. While the problem of soil compaction is worldwide, the solution must be based on concrete conditions. The recent international conference in Brno dealing with this topic demonstrated that findings from other countries are not applicable on a large scale here. It is obvious that the problems related to soil fertility increase and harmony between crop and livestock production must be studied by all agricultural research institutes, which must combine their forces and closely cooperate with practice. The sooner this happens the better.

10501

CSO: 2400/251

SUGAR BEET HARVEST FOR 1983 REVIEWED

Bratislava ROLNICKE NOVINY in Slovak 15 Feb 84 p 4

[Article by Lora Nedelceva: "Results of Analyses: A Mosaic From the Lights and Shadows of the 1983 Sugar Beet Harvesting Campaign"]

[Text] The sugar beet harvesting campaign of last year was influenced--quite negatively--by many factors. Above all was the extreme weather, which at particular stages of the vegetative cycle did not provide the sugar beets with what they needed. This influence could not be completely compensated for either by improved soil preparation in comparison with previous years, or by sowing a larger number of plants per hectare, or by the fact that all the seed used by the farmers was of top quality. The end result was that the harvest was lower, and the procurement plan for Slovakia for sugar beets was fulfilled by 85 percent. The sugar processing plants processed 1,727,763 tons of sugar beets.

To be sure, when we were monitoring the course of the picking we could have expected better fulfillment of the sugar production target, because even though the harvest was lower the sugar content of the beets, as an average for the entire campaign, was 14.47 percent, which was 1.87 points higher than in 1982. At the same time, the sugar processing plants had been able to reduce production losses from the planned 0.78 percent to 0.75 percent, which is .07 percent less than last year. The unfavorable weather conditions intervened, however, by affecting the chemical composition of the beets, thus influencing their technical quality and making processing more difficult. More sugar than prescribed by the standards leaked into the molasses so that production targets for it were exceeded while sugar production targets were met at only an 80 percent level.

The Subject Also Critical

In reviewing all of this we could make the dry and quite unambiguous statement: "The growers and processors of sugar beets certainly expended great efforts to achieve better results in their work but the weather, i.e., an objective factor, caused the failure to fulfill planned targets." To stop with this statement, however, even though it is to a large degree true, would be too comfortable and not rigorous enough.

We therefore must proceed further in our evaluation of this not completely successful campaign. We could recall, for instance, the failure to fulfill the target for the sowing of sugar beets, or the unacceptably high losses. Particularly where six-row harvesters were used, these losses ranged from 18-22 percent and in places reached 27 percent. This means that 20 percent of the harvest was lost, an amount equal to that by which the procurement plan was underfulfilled. In this case as well there was an objective reason--the higher losses were caused by harvesting from dried-out soil. But here as well one cannot close one's eyes to the fact that 10 Kleine harvesting machines working right alongside the others, and under any special conditions, had losses of 6 percent. It is no accident that experts pored over these results with their pens and calculators and calculated that the exchange of the unfavorable machinery for the more advanced would pay for itself in approximately one harvest season, by obtaining excess sugar and reducing harvest losses. Now it is a matter of not stopping with the calculations but of continuing with the implementation of the proposed variants for resolving these issues.

More Consistent in the Processing Plants

An evaluation of the recent harvesting campaign from the perspective of the processing industry contributes still more suggestions and new measures. Clearly, and this cannot be forgotten, in addition to reducing production losses, processing plant workers have made other steps forward in comparison with preceding years. The utilization of the theoretical processing capacity at a 95.26 percent rate represents, for instance, a 3.06 percent increase over last year. This is the result of the utilization by the sugar processing industry of the interharvest period to allocate resources to the maintenance or reconstruction of "the most sensitive places" in the seriously obsolete equipment of the sugar processing plants. This is also reflected by a reduction in down time which, per thousand tons of processed beets, amounted to 9.17 minutes in 1981, 6.95 minutes in 1982 and was down to 4.3 minutes last year.

Last year there was also a more marked and longer lasting concern for obsolete enterprises. A significant improvement in the course of the beet harvesting campaign was recorded in the processing plants at Sladkovicov (where facility use was improved by 12 percent), Rimavska Sobota, Nitra and in Pohronsky Ruskov, even though we cannot be content with the results achieved.

Underutilized Equipment and Employee Capacity

There were, as they say, positive aspects to the recent campaign, bright moments which point the way to the future. But the dark spots which were identified throughout the sugar processing industry and in every sugar processing plant can also be instructive. These are frequently brought out through comparisons between individual enterprises. For instance, sugar plant workers in Trencianska Tepla, Rimavska, Sobota, and in Sered have been able to utilize 100 percent of the production capacity of these facilities, while those at Pohronsky Ruskov achieved only 86.37 percent utilization. Per thousand tons of processed beets 9 minutes of down time was recorded in Sladkovicov, 10 minutes in Pohronsky Roskov, but only 3 minutes in Trebisov and 1 minute in Trencianska Tepla.

Of course, down time is to a great extent a function of the condition of equipment, which may often be just hanging together. It has also been shown, however, that people have also on occasion failed, whether at the time of preparation for the harvest season or during the processing of the sugar beets. For this reason, at every sugar processing plant employees of the general directorate of the Cukor-Cukrovinky VHJ have participated in a detailed analysis of the entire course of the harvest campaign, which has led to the formulation of further measures for this and future years. They wish once again to devote special attention within the VHJ, while attending to maintenance and personnel improvements, primarily to the lagging enterprises, which included at the end of this year's campaign the processing plants at Pohronsky Ruskov, Trnava and Sered where, to be sure, they more than met their facility quota, but had serious problems with extraction and the making of molasses.

Experiences from the sugar beet harvest of 1983 also called attention to the necessity for intensifying supplier-consumer relations, even though the employees of the sugar processing industry have already done a lot in this regard. They seek out and maintain close contacts with the growers, have signed long-term contracts with them which they are systematically evaluating, and have arranged for soil analyses which the growers are using more and more. Last year they increased the supplementary payments for the harvesting and delivery of sugar beets in accordance with the projected schedules, a move aimed at decreasing losses incurred in storage.

The many positive results from these measures are an indication that we should continue in this direction, and still further involve the Agronomy Service of the processing plants in the achievement of results in agricultural enterprises, more consistently to fulfill schedules and avoid the creation of "black" storage areas somewhere in the fields, where the sugar beets cannot be protected. Last year the number of these declined, to be sure, but similar cases of an unaware attitude toward public requirements still occurred and contributed to a reduction in the technical quality of an extraordinary raw material.

These are among the areas of underutilized capacity about which the sugar processors are thinking right now so that they can make the best possible preparations for the next campaign.

9276

CSO: 2400/248

SUGAR BEET GROWING LAGS BEHIND PLAN

Prague ZEMEDELSKE NOVINY in Czech 18 Feb 84 p 1

Editorial: "Debt to the Beet-Growing Tradition"

Text Greatly fluctuating results in sugar beet cultivation show that this important crop is still not receiving the attention that it deserves considering its importance. From the national economic point of view it is highly valued as a raw material for the food industry and as a rich source of bulk fodder. Nor is the way in which a good or bad sugar beet harvest influences our foreign trade going unnoticed. Sugar is, bear in mind, an export product for which we readily obtain foreign currency resources in freely exchangeable currencies. In this sense it is a very good crop for us, and difficult to replace with another food product. It is therefore understandable that it is in the public interest to make better use than before of all possibilities for increasing the production of sugar beets and sugar, even those which are offered to us on foreign markets.

Our sugar processing plants, even though they are for the most part more than 100 years old and have equipment that is far from state of the art, are able to produce those special types of sugar that are most in demand worldwide and therefore understandably bring the best prices. However, they need enough raw materials to process. Obtaining these, both in terms of quality and quantity, is a matter of considerable uncertainty. Two years ago it appeared that better sugar beet times were on the way when the CSR not only fulfilled but exceeded the planned procurement target for beets. Unfortunately, this year that positive result was not repeated, meaning that beet growers in the CSR now owe the Seventh 5-Year Plan a total of more than 1,800,000 tons of sugar beets. Moreover, their quality does not stand up either to current foreign performance or to the previous levels in our country. This is confirmed, among other things, by the fact that in the 1978-1982 period our sugar processing plants consumed an average of 9.21 tons of sugar beets to produce a ton of sugar, while in the 1921-1930 period only 8.47 tons was needed to produce the same amount of sugar.

Blame for the sugar beet failures of the Sixth and Seventh 5-Year plans has often been placed on new cultivation techniques, most of which replace manual labor with mechanization to a great extent. However, specific practical examples do not confirm that this view has universal applicability. A number

of agricultural enterprises working a large area in sugar beets, and where no other technology is considered other than the maximum amount of mechanized work, achieve good results even in the worst years. Last year, for instance, when an average of only 3.28 tons of refined sugar was obtained per hectare in the CSR, the united agricultural cooperative JZD in Otice nad Opava had an outcome more than 2 tons per hectare better, even though it was growing sugar beets on an area of 345 hectares. This yield of 5 tons of refined sugar per hectare and more was not exceptional, as confirmed by the sugar beet record of the growers of the Kylesovice and Katerinka JZD's in the Opava okres. The republic-wide average was also exceeded substantially by growers in other okreses, such as at the Petrvald JZD in Novojicinsko, the Dolany JZD in Nachodsko, the Vysovice JZD in Prostejovsko, the Orasice JZD in Lounsko, the Bezno Seed Testing State Farm in Mladaboleslavsko, the Kromeriz JZD in Kromerizsko and a number of other growers who, after a few years, are now joining the Jampol-Prostejov movement, which is directed at obtaining the maximum yield of refined sugar from every hectare sown in sugar beets.

Also worthy of attention were last year's results of 18 selected agricultural enterprises which, at the urging of the Czech Committee of the Rural Farmers' Union, concluded a friendly socialist commitment with the sugar processing plants, Oseva and other partners. All are making joint efforts to increase the sophistication of sugar beet cultivation, harvesting and processing so that over the next few years the production of refined sugar will stabilize at a level of 6 tons or more per hectare. There is still a long way to go to reach this goal, but these selected growers already have the first steps behind them. This is indicated by the fact that last year with two exceptions all of them achieved per hectare yields that were from 10 to 25 percent better than the average for the okres in which they were operating.

These and other examples confirm that where initiative is taking in the utilization of the available possibilities for improving the sophistication of our sugar beet industry, consistently positive results can be achieved even in unfavorable years. The further development of the Jampol-Prostejov movement should play a significant role in this regard, as it is based not only on both our and the Soviet Union's proven experiences and newest findings in the areas of agricultural equipment, nutrition, protection, storage and processing of sugar beets, but also on the exemplary initiative of all those who participate in the production and processing of sugar beets, including service enterprises, engineers, chemists and brigade workers for the thinning, digging and manual secondary picking of the bulbs at harvest time. All of these people, along with the farmers and sugar refiners, will decide how much sugar will be available for export after we cover the needs of our domestic market.

9276

CSO: 2400/247

DISTRIBUTION OF SEED FOR SOWING REVIEWED

Prague ZEMEDELSKE NOVINY in Czech 16 Feb 84 p 1

Article: "Seed Situation in Czech Krajs Before Spring Sowing"

Text Present scientific knowledge and practical experiences confirm that one of the basic conditions of a good crop is the time sowing of quality seed. This year the seed for spring grain crops, legumes and sugar beets is ready and for the most part has been shipped to agricultural enterprises. The following statements by the leading workers of the Oseva kraj seed distributing enterprises offer a well-rounded picture of the situation in individual krajs in mid-February 1984.

Eng Frantisek Zugar of Oseva Prague: "We supply the entire Central Bohemia kraj with the seeds of basic crops, but we are a monopoly enterprise for the entire republic with regard to the processing and shipment of sugar beet seeds. We have finished shipping spring wheat by now and are about to complete oats shipments, and shipping of spring barley is at its peak right now. We turned over the required quantity of field peas to the legume growers, and if necessary we can supply additional seed. Although the deadline for shipping sugar beet seed has been shortened by 2 weeks this year, we are able to meet it. This means that we will have shipped seed for both basic crops and sugar beets by the end of February with the sole exception of the genetically monocotyledonous variety of sugar beet, which will be imported and tested by us. The quality of the sugar beet seed will be better this year because we will deliver all seed exclusively of first class quality. Seed with more than a 90 percent germination will account for 60 percent of the Dobrovicka A variety, and for more than 45 percent of monocotyledonous seed."

Bohumil Kolar, Oseva Luzany: "Shipments of spring seed in the West Bohemia kraj have proceeded on schedule so far. We have completed the shipments of spring wheat, agricultural enterprises already have 95 percent of the required quantity of oats seed and 80 percent of spring barley, that is, approximately 90 percent of spring grain crops. Likewise, we have shipped all required field peas, field beans, meadow clover seeds and 78 percent of spring peluska. The rest of the seeds of grain crops and peluska will be shipped by 28 February at the very latest. The variety structure is in accordance with the requirements of the kraj variety commission.

"Due to the course of vegetation and precipitation last year, particularly during the harvest season, we had difficulties with the germination of spring barleys and with barley smut [? bzunka jecna] on oats. By purchasing larger quantities of these seeds and their transfers from other krajs, we succeeded in securing an adequate quantity of quality seed. We have in fact created a reserve for possible plowing under in spring."

Eng Jaroslav Sich, Oseva Tabor: "By now we have already shipped 78.6 percent of spring grain seed and met the plan target with regard to spring barley. We expect to clean the remainder of grain seed by 20 February and to ship it by the end of the month. Because of the rains in August we had to obtain 12 percent of spring barley seed and 5 percent of oats from the areas cultivated at the present time. According to the germination tests, however, this did not qualitatively affect the seed. As to the legumes, we surpassed the pea shipping target by 5.5 percent, and 73 percent of the beans and peluska quantity agreed upon have already been shipped. A very good situation exists with regard to meadow clover. After filling the orders for this seed this year, we will still have a reserve of 900 tons of this seed for the next year."

Eng Oldrich Cerny, Oseva Litomerice: "According to the plan, we are to supply the farmers in the North Bohemia kraj with more than 12,600 tons of seed for spring sowing--including 7,082 tons of spring barley and 4,751 tons of oats. Although the plan called for 795 tons of spring wheat, we actually delivered 1,050 tons in order to provide enough seed for additional sowing in the area where winter crops did not take root or were damaged. For this purpose we have prepared another 5,000 tons of seed for spring crops above the plan, largely consisting of spring barley. We have already shipped 1,010 tons of pea seed, 794 tons of peluska and 648 tons of beans. We have already shipped 93.3 percent of grain crops seed, and 101.7 percent of legumes. The rest will be delivered prior to the set deadline which is the end of February."

Jiri Kolek, manager of the regional seed cleaning station at Hranice in Moravia: "Our regional seed cleaning station at Hranice in Moravia ships seed for grain crops and other special crops to 93 agricultural enterprises in the Prerov, Novy Jicin and Vsetin okreses, and border regions of the Karvina and Frydek-Mistek okreses. Of the planned quantity of 5,600 tons of seed for spring sowing, we already shipped 4,919 tons by mid-February. We still have to ship approximately 700 tons, which is a matter of 10-12 days. With our own trucks we deliver 60-100 tons of seed for spring grain crops and other special crops every day. Agricultural enterprises in our delivery area will have seed for spring sowing in their warehouses prior to the end of February."

Eng Josef Bartonek, Oseva Brno: "We organize the shipment of seed in the South Moravia kraj in such a way as to link them to agronomic deadlines set for sowing. During the first stage we shipped seed for spring wheat and peas by 10 February. During the second stage, which will end on 29 February, we will deliver to the agricultural enterprises other grain crops, 88 percent of which have already been shipped, as well as legumes for fodder. In addition, we have already delivered 96.5 percent of alfalfa seed and over 81 percent of clover seed. At the present time we are cleaning the growers' own clovers seed."

10501

CSO: 2400/246

NEW AMORTIZING SYSTEM EXPLAINED

Budapest FIGYELO in Hungarian No 8, 23 Feb 84 p 3

[Article by Janos Radnotzi: "A New System of Amortization: Falling in Line with the Reimbursement"]

[Text] A new system of amortization has been introduced in 1984. The previous system was functioning with minor amendments, which did not affect its underlying principles, almost over 20 years. The earlier amortization accounting system, which was based on the principles of production cost related price system, became obviously contradictory to the principles and practice of the new competitive price system. The old amortization system became the target of severe criticism because of its passive role in the allocation of capitals and its conservative impact upon the structures.

The changes were preceded by discussions lasting over a couple of years. Our goal was to create and introduce a new amortization system which is in accordance with the complex development of our macroeconomic management system and which falls in line with the new aspects of the regulations. The implementation of this goal required the establishment of both new theoretical principles and fresh practical solutions.

Instead of Various Thousands Only 70

As a consequence of the competitive system of price-shaping, the earlier interpretation of the functions of amortization, i.e. that the time and performance based reimbursements of the capital investment are to be determined by detailed government regulations, is now obsolete. It became necessary to change that earlier principle (and goal) of the government regulations that amortization has to follow, as closely as possible, the consumption process. This was underlying to those detailed and complex regulations which, bent upon to approximate as accurately as possible the expected profitable running time, have set forth amortization norms for thousands of groups of fixed assets. Of course not even such a particularly detailed regulation could exactly measure the length of the consumption process. The register of the amortization norms, including the amendments, decreed in the meantime, became baffling for all practical purposes as a result of the proliferation of the statutes.

In accordance with the changing trends in price and finance regulations it became necessary to create a new amortization system which based on the reimbursement function of amortization may play an active role in the allocation and/or regrouping of capitals. This can only be achieved if the actually reimbursed capitals provide a reinvestment possibility (development fund) for the enterprises. The logic of the system based on reimbursement justifies also such amortization rules which make it possible for the enterprises to flexibly adapt themselves to the changing market conditions of reimbursement. Thus it became necessary to change an earlier rule in terms of which the enterprises were obliged to account--independently from the reimbursement--for depreciation along the lines of centrally set norms (in which words they were obliged to create a development fund from the non-reimbursed capital investment through amortization).

Thus in the framework of the changes the reimbursement function of amortization coopted its earlier role in the consumption process. This does not entail a contradiction between the two processes, but only the rational differentiation and/or separation of the principles prescribed centrally from a businesslike interpretation. From the viewpoint of the government regulations the only important thing is that the reinvestment possibilities fall in line with the reimbursement of earlier capital investments, while the consumption process becomes a business administration category. The latter constitutes the recognition in the regulations of a high degree of entrepreneurial independence in the amortization of certain fixed assets.

On the basis of the principles outlined above it became possible to carry out the most conspicuous change, i.e. a radical reduction of the number of amortization norms. In contrast with the earlier register of thousands of norms, the new one contains only 70 groups of fixed assets on which amortization norms are prescribed. But what is even more important than the reduction and simplification of central regulations, is the new rule concerning the application of these norms. The gist of the new regulation is that the enterprises must enter all their fixed assets into groups corresponding to the slots of the norm-register and they have to apply the norms on the total value of each group thus established (on the total gross value of the fixed assets listed in each group). With this method, by showing the structure of its stock of fixed assets by means of the different norms applied to the various groups of fixed assets, each enterprise can calculate the total amount of amortization it can account for over a given period of time.

The aforementioned amount constitutes the upper limit of accountable amortization. The enterprises may account for less amortization (even going as far as not to account for amortization at all). Yet it is a compulsory rule that the amount of depreciation cannot be accounted for in such a way that it results in negative figures. It is through this rule that the requirement that only recovered amortization can be accounted for and can provide the basis for a development fund becomes operational.

The amount of amortization calculated on the basis of centrally prescribed norms constitutes the accountable amortization for the entire enterprises in a given period of time, i.e. this amount can be accounted for as amortization

among the operational expenses (and the taxable income can be reduced by the corresponding amount). Yet the government norms are not compulsory with respect to the depreciation of individual fixed assets, nor are they applied when accounting for such depreciation. Within the full amount of depreciation the enterprise is free to estimate the depreciation of its individual fixed assets within a given period of time. This faculty falls better in line with the businesslike principle that depreciation should be adjusted to the consumption of an asset.

Acceleration by Own Decision

Within the framework of the present regulations there is already a possibility for the enterprise to apply accelerated depreciation of such fixed assets which are particularly vulnerable to technological or moral obsolescence and to the periodical fluctuations of the market, by making the depreciation of other less sensitive fixed assets slower than the centrally fixed norm. The only limitation is that the yearly depreciation of one given fixed asset cannot be more than 30 percent and no fixed asset can be depreciated below zero. The rules concerning delay in depreciation are flexible, both when applied on account of the exclusive rule in case of deficitary business or based on the decision of the enterprise management. For if an enterprise accounts for less amortization than permitted over a certain period of time, it can show the amount of the postponed amortization in its balance sheet. In further course the enterprise in question can at any time raise the amount of depreciation over a given year to the limit of the amount of amortization postponed, except of course the case of deficitary business, and may speed up depreciation in order to "catch up" with the postponement. Thereby the enterprise can accommodate itself with the changing conditions of the market when accounting for amortization (i.e. reimbursement).

The system makes some exceptions in the free apportionment of amortization, i.e. vehicles of transportation, fixed assets related to the exploitation of mining property and fixed assets purchased second hand do not belong to the category of assets whose amortization timing is free.

The faculty of the enterprises to virtually freely establish the amortization pattern of their fixed assets made it necessary and justifiable to change the financial rules of waste and utilization.

The net book value of the destroyed, sold and sorted out fixed assets will not have to be charged to the account of the performance, as it was the rule thus far, but can be discounted directly from the stock of fixed assets. One of the consequences of this new rule is that in case of the sale of fixed assets the net value does not affect negatively the performance of the enterprise. Another consequence however is that development funds cannot be created from the remainder of the net value. (The enterprise is compensated by the fact that the net value which existed at the time of utilization does not affect negatively its performance and thus it can rely on larger profits to form its development fund).

The economic argument in favor of the aforementioned charging on the stock of fixed assets is that the net value that the books show is the non-recovered amount of the capital investment. Following utilization that refund can no

longer be realized (and thus--according to the rules of amortization--it cannot serve for the formation of a development fund). We have conscientiously created the possibility for the enterprise to decide whether or not to accelerate the depreciation of its affected fixed resources during the periods of time preceding the sorting out of assets (of course against the postponement of the depreciation of other assets). All this is part of our effort to induce the enterprises to pursue "fixed assets business management" that was earlier out of the question or very restricted as a result of the binding rules of the amortization system.

The rule which stimulates the enterprises into mobilizing their assets says that the entire income from a sale must be put into the development fund.

The change in the financial rules of utilization became necessary among other things because the earlier regulations provided possibilities for covert accelerated depreciation. This is because the enterprises have the possibility of accelerating the depreciation of some of their fixed assets by reducing or postponing the amortization of other assets, relying on the fact that when sorting out (selling) the existing net value will anyway function as amortization. The covert accelerated depreciation would ultimately enable the enterprises to manipulate the taxable assets in their own "sphere of authority."

We may have observed on the basis of the above analysis that the system is flexible "downwards" (i.e. concerning the retarding or interruption of amortization) but it is stiff "upwards" (with respect to accelerated depreciation).

We cannot ignore this lopsided character of the amortization system that was introduced in 1984, and it is not worthwhile to "ideologize" it. As a matter of fact we have carried out very important theoretical and practical changes in the amortization system, but these constitute only such first steps of a long-term development on which further conceptual changes can be built. We must realistically consider certain restrictive factors, which in 1984 still prevent the consistent implementation of our principles.

Centralization and Taxation

The partial centralization of the amortization system, which has often been strongly criticized, subsists unchanged, as a result of the realization and implementation of the realities. The requirements of the strict rules concerning investment purchasing power did not yet make it possible to solve the problems of amortization thoroughly.

The accelerated depreciation acquires a new meaning by the solution of the problem of clearing the amortization. It is really in this way that the benefits obtained by accelerated depreciation are becoming perceptible (by way of the reduction of the taxable income). Thus the accelerated depreciation and the complete clearing are closely related. However we have to emphasize that the macroeconomic management makes accelerated depreciation dependable on government permission, with a view on longterm development. Since it is related to taxes, this may be obvious for everybody. Yet the central regulations do not constitute, in the first place, individual licenses for depreciations, but their meaning is rather that the state grants benefit through the accelerated depreciation for

certain purposes of overall importance. Thus the depreciation system--similarly to certain methods used in the free market economies--might be considered as a means or form of state allowance. This method has the advantage, in comparison with the forms of subsidy which have been used thus far, that only such enterprises can make use of it in which the investments, which include also the accelerated depreciation, are valued by the market by means of the prices. This form of "subsidy" has the advantage that it channels capitals to market-friendly areas which yield high income and generate big investments.

On the basis of all this we cannot say that the 1984 changes in the amortization system have solved all problems in this particular area, but the system as it has been developed is capable of changes, as it has been here hinted at.

The Amortization Norms of a Few Fixed Assets Since 1 January 1984

<u>Description</u>	<u>Amortization Norm in %</u>
Mining machinery and equipment	12
Metal-working machines, unipurpose metal-cutting machine-tools, assembly lines, wire-drawers and cable-making machines, communication and vacuum-technical machines	8
Machines of the construction material industry	8
Chemical operations equipment	12
Imitation leather making machines	12
Machines and equipments of the meat and dairy industry, packing machines of the food industry	12
Machines of the construction industry in general	8
Telecommunication devices and equipments	7
Management-technical equipments and tools, calculation-technical and steering-technical fixed resources	15
Motor vehicles, vehicles without power drive in case of time-related depreciation	15

Note: A complete list of the amortization norms is included in the government decree No. 3/1983 (XII.20) National Planning Office-Collection of Finance Decrees.

12312

CSO: 2500/241

BOBROWSKI RECAPS ADVISORY GROUP'S ILL-FATED PROPOSALS ON KEY ISSUES

Warsaw ZYCIE GOSPODARCZE in Polish No 51-52, 18-25 Dec 83 p 3

[Article by Czeslaw Bobrowski, chairman, Economic Advisory Group: "Three Key Issues"]

[Text] During the closing weeks of each year serious decisions are undertaken--the annual plan, the budget, the credit plan, etc. This year one additional huge problem looms on the horizon, namely, the increase in food prices. The Economic Advisory Group took a position on these matters, conveying its opinions to the authorities, likewise as a rule informing the press regarding them. It is my intention to recapitulate briefly and state precisely these opinions and their prospects. For we feel that it is our responsibility not only to take a stand regarding government plans but also to apprise the public and above all the economic community of their contents.

It is possible that I would not have written regarding the question of the Central Annual Plan [CPR] for the year 1984 (inasmuch as we released a summary of our observations on the "assumptions" in issue No 9 of ZYCIE GOSPODARCZE) were it not for the particular wording of a PAP communique concerning a meeting of the Council of Ministers which endorsed the CPR plan. I have in mind a phrase stating that the Planning Commission gave consideration to the opinion of the Economic Advisory Group [KRG] in its plan. This requires specificity. We have expressed our opinion as to the "CPR assumptions"; however, due to technical reasons we did not have an opportunity to render an opinion regarding the CPR itself--in its final form. And so the CPR naturally exceeds the wording of the "assumptions" and in such instances the KRG opinions could not be considered, simply because there were none.

For example, this concerns the issue of sharing amortization between enterprise and the national treasury. The CPR resolved this matter by assigning to a series of branches preferential rates on a portion of the amortization retained by enterprises in that branch. I imagine that this only partially successful solution could be still improved upon. The point specifically is that within that very same trade, depreciation of production equipment and

its accompanying need for renovation are very different. For "young" enterprises a given norm can be excessive, but for "old" enterprises it can cover only a part of the needs. It seems that within the framework of the general norm for branches, the rate of allowance remaining in individual enterprises can be modified on the basis of the readily available coefficient of the rate of depreciation. The issue in question is an exceptionally simple example of the diversity of views.

Incomparably more complex is the issue of investment policy and the so-called restructuring of the economy. To a certain extent consideration was given to our view promoting newly undertaken enterprise investments which--as analysis disclosed--have more favorable characteristics for many reasons (a short implementation cycle, a limited amount of construction work) and undoubtedly, in a majority of cases, are undertaken for the purpose of modernizing and restoring the most depreciated fixed assets, i.e., they satisfy the real criteria in the present phase. The issue of other decisions essential in curtailing the investment front appears less promising. They appear to us to be too little aggressive, whereas the CPR concept of priorities, which is supposed to represent the criterion for bank procedures, is vague and would be useful only if priorities of this type were the product of intense, comprehensive analysis which we are presently waiting for.

Allocation issues and market equilibrium issues assume a more general character. I shall return to them in discussing the budget and finances, confining myself at this point only to the statement that there is no evidence in the CPR resolutions mentioned of this decisive struggle for equilibrium, which is our desire for next year.

Finally, allow me to indulge in a little impishness. It is quite clear that the decisionmaker does not always approve the opinions of experts. In many of my statements I have stressed that I am not indignant or discouraged when this occurs--this is the normal lot of an advisor. On the other hand, I do not understand why no consideration was given to technical correction, when the material conservation index was called into question. I published a letter on this subject in issue No 48 of ZYCIE GOSPODARCZE, indicating that progress in this area is practically three times greater than the index which appeared in the "assumptions" and--unfortunately--remained in the CPR text. Is this a simple oversight, or subconscious yielding to the temptation to complain about enterprises even when they are worthy of praise?

In issue No 49 of ZYCIE GOSPODARCZE, in a reference to the text of our observations, we noted that KRG proposals regarding the budget were not given consideration. In this draft there was a certain inaccuracy, namely, the text of the budget bill proposed to the Sejm did not consider our corrections, but from the interviews which I already held following the presentation of the plan to the Sejm, I conclude that there is no "antagonistic conflict" here but, on the contrary, there exists the possibility of considering our requests during the course of executing the budget, at least if it concerns the basic matter of decreasing the budget deficit for the benefit of internal equilibrium.

In our observations submitted to the Council of Ministers (for technical reasons literally at the last moment) one basic observation had a methodological character. Specifically, this concerns the relation of the budget and credit plan to the CPR. The duty of having special concern for equilibrium and anti-inflation endeavors rests with the minister of finance and the president of the National Bank of Poland. During the prereform period, the budget and credit plan simply registered the financial consequences of objective decisions adopted exclusive of them. Under conditions of the persisting acute lack of equilibrium, the chief problem is the issue of striving for its return. Under these circumstances some sort of opposition of financial plan criteria to the assumptions of the economic plan would be desirable. During his time Khrushchev divided the Gosplan into two separate institutions: short-term plans and long-term plans, with the understanding that each of these two instruments had among its responsibilities the criticism of the other's plans. Without going that far, I personally feel that without clear opposition in the final phase of the decisionmaking process of two separate criteria, namely that of equilibrium and that of objective planning, it is difficult to assure the problem of equilibrium satisfactory treatment: internal interministerial coordination favors the planners as compared with financiers.

Our observations had and continue to have practical significance concerning the budget deficit--almost twice as large as that of 1983. Our present situation, characterized by excessive demand over supply, represents a very serious danger. This deficit arises, among other things, from the subordination of the CPR. This in itself concerns the financial documents of the National Bank of Poland, which simply adopts the figures of the CPR in the balance of public income and expenses in the division of credits into centralized and decentralized. In order to avoid vagueness, I shall repeat or add that naturally in the final result of the decisionmaking process the numbers of both types of documents should agree, but this agreement should be the consequence of arbitrage against a background of two clearing opposing optics.

The exorbitant and dangerous level of the budget deficit is a matter of fundamental significance for internal equilibrium. This deficit should be unconditionally reduced, and in light of interviews conducted after confirming the draft of the budget bill, I conclude that it can be reduced. In striving for this, I made several modest proposals in the name of the group which did not guarantee, to be sure, a full solution of the issue, but which were feasible for implementation within the framework of the budget to be passed by the Sejm. A substantial increase in the turnover tax on, among other things, durable goods would represent huge and immense progress (I shall return to this issue when discussing the plan for food prices); furthermore, I do not think that it would be possible to help oneself without mechanical cuts to which, after all, there has been recourse many times in the past in Poland, and the same occurs abroad.

I think that 2-2.5 percent of the total budget should be impounded. Simply put, during the course of the first half year, budget payments should be limited to 45 percent of the quota assigned for the year. At mid-year a

decision would have to be made as to total or partial activation of idle resources. An approach of this type would guarantee that, in any case, the budget deficit would not exceed half of the sum assigned today, and possibly it would be even less. Is this the best formula? I would prefer a clear cut off the top. A better method than the one proposed above to reduce the deficit radically possibly exists. The latter--I repeat--is, however, essential and possible. The formula referring to the disapproval of our proposals in the issue of the budget, although formally correct, (to my great satisfaction) was not therefore in substance completely concise.

And, finally, we have the issue of an increase in food prices, which is of different character, because a decision in this matter now confronts us. Following the "price revolution" of February 1982, it seemed that fluctuating price increases, typical of the prereform period, could be avoided. Unfortunately, lack of adequate progress in the sphere of money-goods equilibrium, an unrelenting high level in the inflationary curve, and certain threats awaiting us in the coming year as well as in 1985 influence the introduction of such an increase. It is a matter of what should be increased and by how much. The Office of Prices plans appear to be unilateral to us, inasmuch as they comprise food exclusively, omitting industrial products. So, for a host of reasons--economic as well as social--an increase in food prices is a particularly complex operation. The CPR assumes that it is necessary to raise prices in 1984 by 9 percent, which would conform to the 15-16 percent growth in the average cost of living, on account of the reaction in the coming year to certain increases already enacted this year. Variant II in the Office of Prices plan anticipates an increase in food prices exhausting significantly more than half of the anticipated increase in the cost of living by virtue of the new price surges. At the same time this rather peculiar draft anticipates, in comparison with Variant I, an increase in consumer encumbrance by 44 billion zlotys, with the understanding that additional profitability to the budget and equilibrium would amount to only 16 billion zlotys. I will not discuss it, because it simply does not lend itself to discussion.

Unfortunately, even Variant I is not devoid of serious weaknesses. Each price increase requires some sort of public compensation. According to Variant I, this compensation was expected to amount to 30 percent of the encumbrance growth, so that it is partially an allocation operation and not an operation intended to strengthen money-goods equilibrium.

Secondly, this is not the way to construct a really correct system of compensation that is applicable to the individual situations of specific families. I do not know if it is worth mentioning examples here which virtually everyone knows about from the media, from press releases, etc.

An additional issue is the question of minimum wages. It is an extremely provoking matter if someone earning tens or even several zlotys less than the amount set by the minimum wage parameter receives compensation, whereas someone surpassing the minimum wage by those very same several or tens of zlotys does not receive it. Moreover, if one regards the employed, then it can be feared that minimum wage compensation will not be responsive to consolidation of the posture supporting the incentive system of wages.

Finally, if the proposal of allowances for children eases conditions for large families in a significant manner, then sorely felt inequalities must arise in the anticipated system of equalization, for example in the case of two-person retired families on the old and intermediate retirement system. As it happens, in 25 percent of families of this type only one pension is drawn--this is less per person than in situations where there are two pensions. I repeat: every system of cash compensation must be defective, and since one cannot continue without it in the face of increased food prices, one should strive to reduce the strain of those defects by decreasing the scope or sphere of increases. For this very reason I reject Variant II in general, and would be most eager to see a reduction in Variant I. Is this possible? Only under the condition of including industrial goods in the pricing operation, principally durable goods.

In contrast to increases in the price of food, increases in the cost of industrial products of various sorts possess a series of advantages. The first of them is that if food is of interest to practically the entire population, then only a small percentage purchases industrial goods of various sorts. During the next 3 years not more than 5 percent of all households will purchase automobiles, not more than 10 percent will purchase automatic washing machines. One can postpone the purchase of durable goods, but not of food. Furthermore, it is necessary to consider that access to durable goods under normal circumstances, i.e., without coupons and bribery, accompanied by price increases and an adequate production and importing policy will improve--the waiting period for delivery will be shorter than at today's prices and ailing market conditions.

From a social point of view, the difference is glaring: the less affluent the family, the greater the outlay for food from the family budget. Consequently, the rise in food prices by the amount assumed in the plan of the Office of Prices would amount to 10 percent of expenditures per person for those earning less than 5000 zlotys, and 6 percent per person for those earning in excess of 10,000 zlotys. It is the opposite with durable goods--in the least affluent families scarcely 1.4 percent of total expenditures is designated for that purpose, whereas in families with income exceeding 10,000 zlotys per person outlays for these products approach 13 percent of the budget. Further arguments advocating increases in the price of durable goods are linked to their market conditions, which presents an unlimited amount of imperfections and speculative activities--from coupons through bribes, up to the accumulation of several washing machines and freezers in cellars and bathrooms. The latter is the consequence of, among other things, profits from speculation in durable goods. This income will not be completely abolished by supervisory, police or social action, and from the tax viewpoint it is out of the question to catch it.

Finally, we have the last argument, which is especially significant to me personally. We shall not achieve full market equilibrium that rapidly, and that which exists is still largely the result of limiting demand through the ration card system. If the solution to the problem in its entirety is difficult and remote, then it is necessary to strive to resolve it in stages--piecemeal. Several spheres exist in which we can sooner, i.e., not

by that much in 1984 but already in 1985, attain partial equilibrium, ending the round of nightmares and demoralization surrounding the entire turnover process. There are not too many of them, and therefore those few--which I consider to be genuine (I will not mention them at this time, wishing to devote some additional study to the matter)--should not be forgotten. However, the attainment of this goal is not possible through increased production alone, nor even through increased imports, which of course are possible only on a small scale. This likewise requires the use of pricing or tax instruments. I do not promise crisp bread rolls for tomorrow, but I am convinced that during the course of 2 years at most it would be feasible to achieve fundamental improvement in several sectors, and if it is permissible for me to dream--following the passage of those 2 years, a period of slight gradual price decreases for those products could follow.

Finally, I wish to make clear something which is a surprise for practically all my interlocutors. In comparison with 1973, the prices of most (not all) durable goods increased less than other product groups. Food is five times more costly, the bulk of non-food products four times more costly, but an automatic washing machine is not quite three times more expensive, and a Fiat 125 p, sewing machine, vacuum cleaner--no more than three times more costly. If the price of these products is compared with the average wage, then it is evident that it is generally necessary to pay one-third less of monthly income to purchase a given product than it did 10 years ago.

The subject of higher food prices is a serious factor in striving for the return of money-goods equilibrium next year, and furthermore, naturally, it concerns or even fascinates the general public. That is why I discussed this in an interview with POLITYKA. We have not yet decided whether to publish a text of the extensive observations which had been forwarded to Prof Krasinski and submitted to the authorities. However, I felt that I cannot disregard this in discussing the attitude of the KRG towards current problems. I presented this attitude separately regarding each of them. But a common theme runs throughout all of this--the problem of equilibrium, in whose restoration we certainly have not yet achieved satisfactory results, and which I regard as the main problem for 1984.

9981

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LIGHT INDUSTRY CHIEFS CALLED TO ACCOUNT FOR LOW PLAN TARGETS

Warsaw RZECZPOSPOLITA in Polish 17 Feb 84 pp 1, 4

/Article by CH: "The Central Annual Plan in Chemical and Light Industries: Downgraded Plans for Market Production"/

/Text/ A session dedicated to a discussion of tasks derived from the Central Annual Plan /CPR/ for 1984 was held on 16 February with the participation of some 600 directors of enterprises, industrial associations, and central trade offices subordinated to the Ministry of Chemical and Light Industry.

In the session, chaired by Edward Grzywa, minister of chemical and light industry, the following people took part: Deputy Prime Minister Zbigniew Szalajda; Stanislaw Gebala, head of the Economic Department in the PZPR Central Committee; representatives of the Planning Commission of the Council of Ministers, of several concerned industries, and of the Sejm commission for light industry.

The Central Annual Plan assumes a four percent growth of marketed products, a modest but a feasible one. There are, however, somewhat alarming reports on enterprise plans which fall short of the CPR premises. This concerns chiefly some projects linked with the intensification of production and with improvement in efficient management.

Inquiries and soundings initiated by the Ministry of Chemical and Light Industry indicate that the industry's offer provides for accomplishment of production levels derived from the 1984 CPR in a few assorted products only. The turnout of most products was assumed to be lower, even though the procurement of necessary raw materials had been safeguarded. Moreover, the downgrading of some plans has been accompanied by deterioration of some economic results. Among the most essential ones, one could pinpoint excessive--but not justified by increased labor productivity--wage demands, as well as unjustified pleas for tax relief and preferences of various kinds.

This, obviously, does not refer to all the enterprises. There are many cases of plans prepared according to the CPR, or even going beyond its indices. Such is the case, for instance, of the Stilon Chemical Industry Plants in Gorzow, of the Wolczanka Garment Factory, or the Polmerino Cheviot Spinning Mill in Lodz.

To maintain the present level of production, or even to achieve its growth, the enterprises have to look for all opportunities to increase export and to raise its profitability. That is the only way to obtain foreign currency for import of raw materials and components, as well as spare parts necessary for production. The 17 percent growth of export assumed by the CPR can be achieved mainly due to improved quality of production.

However, a totally different situation obtains. The checkups indicate fairly universal evasion of more difficult or labor-intensive kinds of products, as well as simplification and curtailment of the technological processes.

The successful fulfillment of production quotas depends also on the effects of the enterprise austerity programs. Unfortunately, many of those programs are not properly linked to the enterprise plans, that is to say, to the general financial results achieved by the enterprise.

During the debate some enterprise managers, while explaining why their production quotas are lower than those assumed by the CPR, pointed out difficulties due to reform solutions now in force. Such solutions, for instance, in the state light industry enterprises, allow achievement of higher profits despite reduced productive efforts. It is not the wages in their enterprises that are too low, but those in the other ones that are too high, the managers claimed.

Summing up the session, Deputy Prime Minister Zbigniew Szalajda assessed many remarks and opinions voiced during the debate. Replying to those who had criticized the mandatory ratio according to which depreciation costs are divided between the enterprise and the state budget, he declared that such a solution had been made unavoidable by the need to modify the structure of the national economy. The financial means received under that title and appropriated by the budget will contribute to the development of those industrial branches which satisfy social needs. Despite some critical opinions, the liabilities put aside for the State Fund for Vocational Activation will remain unchanged. The fund has an anti-inflationary character, and thus contributes to the recovery of the economic situation in the country.

Neither should the producers expect a change in the foreign exchange rate of the zloty. Its rise would amount to the sanctioning of the low effectiveness of production, and therefore would slow down the process of overcoming the crisis phenomena in the economy. The current year, Deputy Prime Minister Zbigniew Szalajda said, is the first one in which the prospect of small but perceptible progress in overcoming the crisis emerged, the prospect of a rise in national income and establishment of relatively satisfactory market equilibrium. Whether the chance will be made use of depends on the enterprises themselves, on their fulfillment of tasks imposed by the plan, on the increased production for the market and for export, and on their improved management effectiveness.

12584
CSO: 2600/676

REFORM TASK FORCE, MINISTRY OFFICIALS CONFER ON CONSUMER GOODS DILEMMAS

Warsaw ZYCIE WARSZAWY in Polish 22 Feb 84 pp 1, 2

[Article by T.B.: "The Market Continued; Monopoly vs Monopoly; Consumer vs Planning; Commission Wage System; Distribution Still Going Strong"]

[Text] Either, or: either the speakers were indisposed, or the matter under consideration was an unrewarded task. Anyhow, the Tuesday meeting of Task Force 4 of the Economic Reform Commission on Market Operations, with the participation of the top officials of the Ministry of Domestic Trade and Services, was a rather sad event.

Professor Tadeusz Szucki in his contribution said, inter alia: "We simply have to impose the reform." Whereupon Professor Zdzislaw Sadowski cut in: "That's a good idea..." That was the only joke produced during the task force's deliberation, and it was not all that funny, either.

This hapless market is usually associated solely with trading and its operations. It is possible that this kind of narrowing down of the problem provokes fairly sterile arguments, as well as rather alarming conclusions.

How else then, if not with alarm, can one listen to such demands as the establishment of some high-placed center for solving market problems, or the creation of a nationwide enterprise which will order goods for the entire trade network, since only in this manner would trade be able to face the monopolistic associations of producers. Monopoly vs. monopoly?

There were other motions as well: to define by legislation the functions of a central market-steering body. Somebody else moved to found a special enterprise whose task would consist of exacting governmental orders.

Those are only some examples, but they illustrate the mode of thinking of many people--not all of them, to be sure--on how to solve the market's sore points.

The aforementioned Professor Sztucki recalled that in 1981 Task Force 4 had worked out a blueprint for market reform, going far beyond the sphere of trading and involving the economy as a whole. This concept has never advanced beyond ideas, directions, or targets. This was, obviously, the result of the market disequilibrium which has brought about the pathological

relationship between trade and producers. According to Prof Sztucki, the authors of the market reform idea did not envisage it solely as consumption conforming to plans, though that was what has actually happened. It was supposed to be "consumer's planning," but the endorsed economic plans have restricted consumption to "leftovers" after all other needs are met.

Associate Professor Teresa Palaszewska, speaking in the name of the Consumers' Federation, also pointed out that despite the socialization of planning (consultations) its idea remained unchanged: the consumer, who was supposed to become the object of planning, has still remained its object.

The situation is as it is. What can be done about it? Professor Zdzislaw Sadowski called for an answer to this question.

There were numerous voices concerning the need for finally daring to introduce equilibrium prices on nonessential goods in order to curtail black marketeering. The concept of equilibrium prices has gained more and more advocates.

Another issue concerned the wage system in the trade sector: Tadeusz Przyborowski, deputy minister of trade, announced a modified wage system which would increase the part of the turnover commission and broaden the scope of the economic and financial principles according to which the so-called Large Trade Organizations now operate, and which would include the entire trade sector.

All those internal problems of our trade sector stand a good chance of living to see their solution. But everybody knows that not they, but full shelves only, will determine the quality of the market.

We are, therefore, in for continued distribution, steering, etc. The Central Annual Plan, as many speakers pointed out, does not presage supply sufficiently increased to bring perceptible improvement in the market. As long as no improvement is perceived, recourse is needed to all those distribution indices and steering, to operational programs and governmental orders. Provided only that such "ersatz" instruments are not used beyond necessity, provided that all the interim solutions are given up as soon as possible, while systemic solutions become permanent--that was what Prof Marian Struzycki, the task force's chairman, called for.

"A motif of doubt over whether all our efforts have any sense has surfaced here," Prof Strozycki said in summing up the debate. "But let us not drown in this dissatisfaction, lest at the same time we drown the whole issue. This would mean that we are not strong enough to overcome all those impossibilities. After all, we cannot give up..."

12485

CSO: 2600/675

PROSPECTS FOR GOOD DEVELOPMENT OF WINTER CROPS REVIEWED

Good Moisture Reserves in Soil

Bucharest ROMANIA LIBERA in Romanian 13 Mar 84 pp 1, 3

[Excerpts] Yesterday, in the majority of the agricultural zones, the weather was cold and damp, with snow in Moldavia, most of Transylvania and, locally, in the Banat. Precipitation in all three forms--rain, sleet and snow--was noted in Oltenia, Wallachia and Dobrogea. Since, in general, the precipitation skipped the western and northwestern parts of the country, the preparation of the land and the sowing of early crops continued there. As of yesterday, 950-1,100 hectares had been sown to various crops in Caras-Severin, Timis and Arad counties. Smaller areas had been sown in Satu Mare, Hunedoara and Bihor counties.

This spring, we have a moisture reserve in the soil which is incomparably better than in previous years. According to information from the Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology, in the southeastern zones of the country the precipitation which fell during the period of accumulating water in the soil (1 November 1983-10 March 1984) was more abundant than during the same period last year. During this period, the largest quantities of precipitation occurred in Oltenia and most of Wallachia, followed by Baragan, southern Moldavia and Dobrogea (150-300 liters per square meter). In the rest of Moldavia, Dobrogea and part of Transylvania, the amounts ranged between 100 and 150 liters per square meter. The smallest amounts of precipitation (under 100 liters) were recorded in central and northern Transylvania, the Somes plateau, the Somes plains and the northwestern part of the Suceava plateau. The precipitation which fell this year is twice as much as that which fell last year during the same period in the southern and eastern zones of the country.

The amount of water in the soil varies from one zone to another. The largest water reserves, at a depth of 0-150 cm are in the majority of zones in the southern part of the country and, locally, in western Moldavia (2,400-3,000 cubic meters per hectare). In most of Moldavia, the water content of the soil is within the optimal limits up to a depth of 75-100 cm. (Here, the lack of moisture continues at depths greater than 100-120 cm). Optimal water reserves for plants are found only at depths of 50-70 cm in northern Transylvania and most of the Somes plain. In the rest of the western zones, the water content of the soil is higher, frequently between 2,000 and 2,600 cubic meters per hectare.

However, in places where the rain has been more abundant, especially in the southern part of the country, there has frequently been excess moisture and swampy areas on lowlands, and in river meadows. In Oltenia and, locally, in Wallachia we find such swamps, phreatic waters, covering, in isolated cases, as much as a meter on the soil. In Moldavia, on the lowlands, where there are heavy soils, microzones with excess moisture can be seen. Similar situations can be even found in Dobrogea, in isolated cases.

Warm Weather Favorable to Vegetation

Bucharest ROMANIA LIBERA in Romanian 10 Mar 84 p 3

[Article by Th. Marcarov: "Attention to the Wheat"]

[Excerpts] Eng Octavian Berbecel, chief of the Agrometeorology Laboratory of the Specialized Institute, tells us: "The lack of precipitation in the fall has caused most of the fall-sown crops, especially those sown after the preliminary crops were harvested and the land was cleared, not to have the necessary moisture for sprouting. Therefore, normal sprouting occurred with the majority of the seeds remaining in the dry soil. Subsequent supplies of moisture resulting from precipitation started the germination process which took place very slowly because of the generally low temperatures of the soil. The evolution of the weather in January and February and the changes occurring in the rainfall pattern, especially in the southern and eastern parts of the country have had a favorable effect on the water reserves in the soil. The water resulting from the precipitation has been able to penetrate gradually to the deepest layers of the soil and to avoid stagnation of water at the surface.

The excessive heat during the last half of December and most of January and February--when a total of positive temperatures of 100-150 Celsius was accumulated in the southern part of the country, including Dobrogea, and in southern Moldavia and the western part of the country--produced a slow and long-lasting resumption of vegetation on the part of the fall-sown crops. This made it possible for the crops in the zones mentioned to sprout and the density of the plants was corrected and their strength improved, to a great extent."

Recent weather conditions are favorable to the development of vegetation (it can be seen that where the crops have not sprouted the seeds are viable and about to sprout), which will create conditions for obtaining the optimum density on the majority of the areas sown. If an optimum leafing index is not achieved on all areas sown to wheat, this is because, in central Transylvania, the optimum density was not assured when the seeds were sown, there is a lack of nutritive elements, and there are diseases and competing plants.

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