

during 1929-31. The results, apart from human lives, included the slaughter of fully half of the Soviet Union's horses and cattle and two-thirds of its sheep and goats.³² The long-term consequence was that basic farming skills were lost and were not recovered by succeeding generations.

Today, at last, the process of collectivization is beginning to be reversed. But the immensity of the challenge was underscored by Margaret Skok, the agricultural counsellor in the Canadian embassy in Moscow, who remarked almost casually that technical assistance is needed in every aspect of the farm sector because there is "no farming class left".

Among the examples of agricultural technical assistance cited during the Committee's visit to Russia and Ukraine were a need for advice on farm management and credit institutions, basic information on the production of cattle feed, crop storage, processing, transport, wholesaling and retail of the crop, and waste reduction. Joint ventures are also possible in all of these areas though, once again, potential investors should be willing to go in for "the long haul".

The Committee gained some insight into the scope of the problems when it met with Yuri Borisov, the Deputy Premier and Head of Procurement for the Moscow City Government, who talked of the challenges and frustrations of attempting to feed 20 million people on a daily basis.³³ He lamented the fact that, in his words, "we were very quick to destroy [the old] planning systems". The result is that the winter of 1992-93 could be fearful. One of Mr. Borisov's chief aims is to organize "food reserve zones" in different regions in order to try to ensure a steady source of supply. His advice on how Canada could help avoid catastrophe was to supply the new farmers with our experience.

According to Ms. Skok, the Russians will continue to buy Canadian grain despite the higher cost. However, they have requested the Canadian Government to consider including freight costs in the \$1.5 billion line of credit that was just signed with the Canadian Wheat Board over a five-year period since they are pitifully short of hard currency. Considering the importance of grain sales to Canada and the plight in which Russia now finds itself,

The Committee recommends that, as a matter of urgency, the Government or the Canadian Wheat Board meet the request of the Russian Government to include freight costs within the \$1.5 billion line of credit agreement recently signed with the Canadian Wheat Board.

One simple idea that the Committee thinks could be of use comes in response to a lament that farmers lack the most basic information on such things as markets and daily prices and that such information should be readily available in newspapers and other media. The Committee proposes that Radio Canada International should consider expanding or focussing its current broadcasts to the former Soviet Union by making agriculture and farm issues a significant feature of its programming, and advertising locally to that effect. It could provide a kind of agricultural extension service that would become associated in Russia, Ukraine and other republics with the very name of Canada. Accordingly,

The Committee requests that Radio Canada International devote a substantial portion of the programming it beams toward the former Soviet Union to agricultural issues. RCI should seek funding through the Task Force on Central and Eastern Europe to this end, including funds in order to advertise in the local media the fact that Canada is providing such an agricultural extension service by short-wave.

³² Isaac Deutscher, *Stalin: A Political Biography*, 1966, p. 325.

³³ His figures were based on roughly 10 million inhabitants of Moscow, 7 million in the surrounding region and 3 million who came into the city every day.