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GEHEIM

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Opmerkingen:

Verzonden aan: de Minister van Buitenlandse Zaken.

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

Plein 1813 no. 4

's-GRAVENHAGE.

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PRELIMINARY USSR CENSUS RESULTS

GEHEIM

The USSR announced on 9 May the preliminary results of the general census taken in January. The announced population total of 208,800,000 is an increase of 9.5 percent since the last census, taken in 1939, and is only about 800,000 fewer than the American estimate, which was based essentially on Soviet 1956 figures and the rates of natural increase in subsequent years. Nearly 48 percent of the population lives in urban areas, compared with about 32 percent before World War II.

If the census was conducted as planned, the results should be quite reliable. The actual enumeration, which took place the week of 15-22 January, was carried out as a house-to-house canvass of the entire country by a staff of more than 500,000 persons. The results were to be tabulated in 57 machine-processing centers located throughout the country.

The last previous Soviet announcement concerning the population, made in 1956, stated that the total was 200,200,000 as of April of that year. The new census figure suggests that this total may have been somewhat high, if Soviet claims of a natural increase of more than 3,500,000 annually "in recent years" are accepted.

There are 94,000,000 males and 114,800,000 females in the USSR; this is about five million fewer males than estimated by the US. The number of males of military age may thus be smaller and war losses may have been greater than were thought, but an accurate assessment cannot be made until data are released giving population breakdowns by age. The information suggests that women may make up a larger proportion of the labor force than had been assumed, particularly in agriculture. The USSR also will have to place greater reliance on women as a source of additional labor during the years of the Seven-Year Plan (1959-65), which probably explains the vigorous efforts now under way to induce housewives to work outside the home.

The urban population is now given as 99,800,000, compared with 87,000,000 as of April 1956. Some part of this increase is attributable to the reclassification of large numbers of small settlements and fringe areas formerly considered rural; the number of cities--places with 1,000 or more adult inhabitants--increased from 923 to 1,594, and the number of urban-type and workers' settlements--with 400 or more adult inhabitants--increased from 1,454 to 2,922.

In the past several years the population of the USSR has been increasing at about 1.7 percent annually and is expected to be about 266,000,000 by 1975. The population in the United States is expected to grow at a somewhat faster rate. The population of the Urals region increased 32 percent between 1939 and 1959; West Siberia gained 24 percent; East Siberia, 34 percent; Central Asia and Kazakhstan, 38 percent; and the Far East, 70 percent.