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RURAL LIVING STANDARDS IN THE SOVIET UNION

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I. Introduction

Recent research has found that per capita consumption in the USSR is only about one-third of that in the United States and well below that in most European countries, both East and West, and in Japan.[1/] This research has also demonstrated that real per capita consumption in the USSR has risen at an average annual rate of 3.5 percent since 1950. Although it would be of great interest to show such comparisons separately for the urban and rural populations in the USSR, both the framework in which relevant data are published by the Soviet government and their paucity preclude our doing so. The weight of the evidence, even with the large lacunae, shows unmistakeably, nonetheless, that the level of living of the average rural resident is still well below that of his urban countrepart but also that the gap has been substantially reduced in recent decades. My "ballpark" estimates are that per capita consumption in rural areas at present is between two-thirds and three-fourths of that in urban areas and that since 1950 real per capita consumption in rural areas has more than tripled, while that in urban areas has more than doubled. During the past 30 years the rural population has declined by 10 percent, while the urban population has more than doubled. This general assessment of the relative position of rural residents is based on an array of quantitative measures. Much anecdotal evidence, including literary writings of Soviet authors, supports my judgement that when qualitative factors taken into account, urban-rural differences in living standards are considerably greater than the quantitative evidence suggests. Both quantitatively and qualitatively, the differences vary greatly by region of the country.

The purpose of this paper is to marshall some of the evidence on which these generalizations are based. Section II considers relative levels and trends in rural and urban incomes, a proxy for which necessarily must be agricultural and nonagricultural incomes. Section III assembles the complementary data in respect to expenditures on goods and services by rural and urban households. Section IV considers some fragmentary data on investment in infra-structure serving rural and urban areas and also the role of the state and collective farms (social consumption funds) in providing health, education and cultural services to the respective populations. A final section comments on some of the qualitative factors bearing on an assessment of living conditions in rural areas.

II. Incomes

The Soviet government publishes no direct data on rural and aurban incomes. Hence, relative levels and trends in these incomes must be inferred from data on agricultural and nonagricultural wages, estimates of incomes in kind and receipts from sales of home-produced agricultural products, and indirect evidence about rural/urban differentials in wages of nonagricultural workers. In addition, both groups receive substantial incomes in money and in kind from transfer payments and free or subsidized services provided by the state. In Soviet statistics, the latter are labelled "payments and benefits from social consumption funds". The data are not published separately for rural and urban residents; they can be estimated with reasonable accuracy only for collective farm families, state farm families, and the rest of the population in 1977. These data gaps are most unfortunate. It is clear, however, that (1) such state-provided "incomes" are considerably higher in urban areas than in rural areas, and (2) that they have been rising far more rapidly as components of total inocmes of collective farm families than of incomes of the state-employed labor force. On the other hand, the number of collective farmers has declined by one half since 1950, while the number of state farmers has more than tripled.

Agricultural and nonagricultural incomes

Table 1 presents my estimates of agricultural and nonagricultural incomes in benchmark years in monetary valuations and in real terms.[2] Agricultural incomes are the sums of reported wages of state farmers, monetary payments to collective farmers, receipts from the sale of farm products by the population, and consumption in kind valued at average retail prices. Nonagricultural wages are derived from published data, as are wages in state agriculture and wages paid to collective farmers. The weakest component of these estimates is the valuation of incomes in kind, which had to be put together from a variety of sources; nonetheless, the estimates probably are not seriously off the mark. The price index used to express the incomes of both groups in real terms is an implicit deflator that has been calculated from indexes of per capita consumption of the Soviet population as a whole in current and in constant prices. This index probably significantly understates the real rate of price increase, and its use to deflate agricultural incomes is questionable.[3] The only other price index available, however, is the officially published index of state retail prices, including a calculated collective farm market price component; this index is wholly misleading, because of the methodology used in its construction.[4]

According to the data in Table 1, average annual agricultural incomes rose 5.1 percent annually during 1950-1976 in nominal terms and 4.7 percent annually in real terms. Corresponding annual growth rates for nonagricultural wages were 3.5 percent and 2.9 percent. As a consequence, the differential between agricultural and nonagricultural incomes decreased greatly. In 1950, average agricultural incomes were 56 percent of average nonagricultural incomes; the percentage was 88 in 1976. The estimates shown in Table 1 overstate agricultural incomes, because all incomes (in money and in kind) from private farming activity are attributed to agricultural workers.[5] If we assume that 10 percent of such incomes are earned by nonagricultural

workers (surely a maximum), the differential is reduced to 82 percent in 1976. The difference would be greater on a per capita basis, because rural families are larger.[6/]

In addition to earnings from work and incomes from private agriculture, the Soviet population receives substantital incomes in the form of money transfer payments (stipends, pensions, aid) and the value of free or subsidized services provided by the state. In 1977, these incomes were reported to total 99.5 billion rubles, or 384 rubles per capita.[7/] Of this amount, 14.0 billion rubles represents paid leave, which is also counted as a part of wages, leaving a total of 85.5 billion rubles, or 342 rubles per capita. A greatly disproportionale share of these funds accrues to urban residents, but no data are officially published on the distribution of these funds among population groups. Information provided in a recent Soviet source, however, makes it possible to estimate roughly the share of the total that benefits agricultural families.[8/] The key data relate to the shares of these funds in the total incomes of collective farm families and in families of state farm workers (rabochii). Using these data and related information, I have calculated that in 1977 about 14.8 billion rubles of social consumption funds (less leave payments and assuming no such payments for collective farmers) were attributed to agricultural families; their share was 17 percent). Finally, the population receives income from interest on savings deposits. In 1977, this income amounted to an estimated 691 million rubles for rural residents and 1.875 billion rubles for urban residents;[9/] expressed per capita, the respective amounts are 7 rubles and 11 rubles.

A substantial proportion of rural residents are engaged in nonagricultural pursuits.[10/] According to data from the 1970 census, 37.6 percent of all gainfully occupied rural residents were employed in activities other than agriculture and forestry, nearly half of them in industry, construction, transport and communications.[11/]

Judging from indirect evidence, average wages in nonagricultural branches are much lower in rural areas than in urban areas. This conclusion is based on the rather high correlation between average wages in these branches in the republics and various other geographic entities and the shares of rural population in the total populations. To illustrate, with few exceptions, average wages in most nonagricultural branches in the relatively more urban republics of Latvia, Estonia, Armenia and the RSFSR in 1975 considerably exceeded those in the more rural republics of Georgia, Azerbaidzhan and Central Asia (except Turkmenia).[12/] One explanation for relatively lower wages is that light and food industries with their relatively lower wages, tend to be more prominent in the industrial structures in the more rural republics. In many branches, salary levels of white collar workers are related to the size of establishment; which tend to be smaller in rural areas than in cities. Inspection of the regional wage data I have collected suggests to me that average wages of nonagricultural wokers in rural areas are perhaps about three-fourths of the average in urban areas. In 1970, nearly 20 percent of all nonagricultural workers resided in rural areas.

Assuming that these relationship held in 1976, we can approximate the non-agricultural wage bill for state employees in rural areas in that year. Combining that estimate with the data in Table 1 and using the relative shares of social consumption funds and interest on savings calculated above for 1977, we can come up with the grand calculation of total incomes in money and in kind received in rural and in urban areas. According to this very rough "ballpark" calculation, per capita incomes in rural areas were 77 percent of those in urban areas. Some heroic assumptions are used in this estimate. That it may not be too far off the mark is suggested by the assertion in a Soviet source that in 1975-76 total income per family of workers on state farms and of collective farms was no more than 15 percent below that of the family of an average industrial worker (rabochii) and that the

differential was even less in respect to money incomes alone.[13] The difference would be greater if expressed per capita. Another source states that in 1977 real income per collective farm family had reached 87 percent of that for families of all state workers and employees.[14] Our estimates provide these income profiles of the average rural inhabitant: 23 percent of his income, most of it in kind, comes from private plot activity, 56 percent comes from wages for work in the socialized sector, and 23 percent is provided by social consumption funds. In contrast, the average urban resident receives 72 percent of his income from wages in the public sector, 26 percent from social consumption funds and less than 1 percent from private plot activity. Our calculations also indicate that the average rural nonagricultural worker is better off than the average agricultural worker.

These estimates do not take into account incomes earned and redistributed in the illegal segment of the so-called "second economy". These activities manifest themselves mainly through illegal production and sales of goods and services, black market sales, and bribery and corruption. There is no way to determine whether such activities are more prevalent in rural areas than in urban areas and the size of the differences, if any. We know only that production of samogon is largely a rural phenomenon; its production could add a few billion rubles to consumption in kind in rural areas. Black market activities and corruption, perhaps, are more common in urban areas, because of the greater opportunities to acquire scarce goods as well as the higher incomes there. We do not know. In any event, activities of this kind merely raise prices and redistribute incomes and existing goods; they do not augment supply.

III. Consumption of Goods and Personal Services

The available data preclude even tolerably reliable estimates of levels and trends in per capita consumption of goods and services by rural and urban residents separately. One major difficulty was considered above -- the large but declining

role of consumption in kind of food products in rural areas and the difficulty of measuring it. Another major problem concerns the use of retail sales data to indicate the relative purchases of the two groups -- a common practice. Not only do all such data include purchases by enterprises and institutions (melkii opt) and so-called "productive services", but there are no data with which to remove these items separately from rural and urban sales. Moreover, the data on rural and urban sales represents total purchases in the respective areas, rather than total puchases by their residents. Sample surveys indicate that collective farm families made 38 percent of their purchases of nonfood goods in cities.[15/] A sample survey in the Ukraine showed that 44.5 percent of all rural families made trips to cities for the purpose of buying goods and that an average rural dweller purchased about 20 percent of his goods in cities.[16/] Similar considerations apply to the published data on sales of personal services (bytovye uslugi). As a consequence of these critical information gaps, we cite the available data on retail sales merely as rough indicators of some of the rural-urban differences that we are trying to assess. They are assembled for selected benchmark years in Table 2, along with related data on trade and service facilities, housing, and recreation services available in rural and in urban areas.

Food Although we do not have recent data, it is probable that rural residents consume about the same number of calories daily as do their urban counterparts. The rural diet is qualitatively much inferior, however, as would be expected from the relatively lower incomes of the rural population. This judgment is based on data for the 1960s (the latest such data were published in the 1968 statistical handbook) giving per capita consumption of major foods in kilograms by families of workers and employees and of collective farmers. Selected statistics will show the large differences. In 1968, per capita consumption of meat was 51 kg in worker and employee families and 37 kg in collective farm families: corresponding figures are 125 and

151 for potatoes, 142 and 172 for grain products, and 83 and 65 for vegetables.[17] Because of their relatively higher incomes, rural families other than those of collective farmers may have had a more protein-oriented diet than did the latter. The data also show that dietary quality was improving somewhat more rapidly for collective farm families than for the rest. During 1968-1979, per capita meat consumption for the nation as a whole rose from 48 kg to 58 kg, while consumption of grain products fell from 149 to 139. Unless relative rates of improvement were greatly different in the 1970s from what they were in the 1960s, the diet of collective farm families, and probably also of all rural residents, still lags well behind that of urbanites in respect to quality: Data for 1976 from a sample survey support this conclusion.[18]

As one might expect, economic development in the USSR, as in other countries, has entailed a large shift from consumption in kind and home processing of food to purchases through retail outlets. Virtually all of this shift, primarily affecting rural residents, has occurred since 1950. In that year, collective farm families produced almost all of their own food on their private plots. Rural retail sales of food per capita were a mere 40 rubles, much of it beverages, staples, sugar and flour. Since then, per capita retail sales in rural areas have risen more than 7-fold, 2.6 times as fast as per capita urban sales. Even now, however, the average rural resident produces about 40 percent of his own food. In the families of collective farmers, private plots supply 95 percent of their needs for potatoes, 75 percent for vegetables, 70 percent for meat, 82 percent for milk, and 97 percent for eggs.[19] According to Western estimates, per capita consumption of food for the entire Soviet population has increased at an average annual rate of 2.6 percent annually during 1951-79.[20] Progress clearly has been more rapid for the rural population, although the advantage cannot be quantified.

Other goods. Our information concerning rural and urban purchases and stocks of soft goods and consumer durables is limited to data on retail sales and on household stocks of selected durables. Keeping in mind the limitations of retail sales data noted above, we find that per capita retail sales of nonfood goods in rural areas in 1979 were less than half (43 percent) of those in urban areas. During 1951-79, however, rural sales per capita rose 6.4 times in current prices, compared with a 4-fold rise in per capita urban sales. There are no data on the distribution of these sales in the two areas.[21/] Information on household stocks of consumer durables is available with a rural-urban breakdown only since 1965. As these data (Table 2) show, stocks in 1965 were relatively small for both groups, but have expanded rapidly for both groups since then -- a little faster in rural areas than in cities. In 1979, urban families possessed 29 percent more of the listed durables than did rural families. Over three-quarters of all urban families owned the key household items of TV set , refrigerator and washing machine. In rural households, between 55 and 71 percent of families had them. In contrast, a substantially larger share of rural families owned motorcycles, bicycles and the like than did urban families. Data on stocks of passenger cars are not published. However, in 1975 through 1979, 1.9 million cars were sold in rural areas through state and cooperative retail trade, compared with 3.6 million in urban areas; both figures are thought to include sales of used cars.[22/]

As far as is known, retail prices are now the same in rural and in urban areas for soft goods and durables. A surcharge on rural sales was abolished in the 1960s. As for quality, there is no way to determine whether, in general, the quality of goods allocated to rural areas is inferior to that in urban areas. The Soviet press is rife with complaints from both groups about the poor quality of Soviet-made goods. Judging from such evidence it seems that supplies of desired goods, relative to effective demand, are far scarcer in rural areas than in cities.

This relative scarcity is the explanation nearly always given for the necessity for rural dwellers to go to cities, especially large ones, to make purchases, mainly of soft goods and durables.

Personal services. According to Western measures of per capita consumption in the USSR, personal services, although comprising only about one seventh of total household expenditures, have been one of the most rapidly growing components of consumption in the postwar years. These services consist of housing and utilities, transportation and communications, repair and personal care, and recreation. Per capita consumption of these services has grown 4.3 percent annually since 1950, compared with 3.5 percent for consumption as a whole. The data available permit an urban-rural split only for housing, repair and personal care, and partially for recreation. The data are assembled on Table 2.

Housing, as measured by living space per capita, has been the slowest growing component of consumption. Rural dwellers have fared a little better than urban dwellers. In 1950, per capita housing space was 4.7 square meters for both groups: in 1979, the figure was 8.8 in rural areas and 8.5 in urban areas. However, the nature of the housing is quite different. The vast bulk (about 80 percent) of rural housing is owned privately and consists of small, two or three room wooden farmhouses. Most new rural housing is built and owned privately, whereas most new urban housing is built by the state, which owns about three fourths of the total stock. During 1951-79, 29 percent of all rural housing was built by the state and by housing cooperatives, which are few in rural areas, and 71 percent was built by private persons and by collective farms. Although the share of the latter has been increasing, it appears to be small for the period as a whole. Housing built in rural areas by the state and collective farms consists mainly of apartment-type buildings and dormitories. The Soviets report that almost all rural housing

units now have electricity and that (in 1976) 59 percent of them were supplied with gas, i.e., individual houses are supplied with a propane tank.[23] In urban areas, electricity is universally available, and 69 percent of housing was supplied with gas in 1976. In recent years, there has been a lively discussion in the press concerning the kind of public housing that should be constructed in rural areas. The advocates of multi-family units evidently have influenced decisions to build such units in rural areas. This type of housing has had an adverse impact on private farming. Now that the government is once more pushing the development of that sector, schemes are having to be devised to counteract the disinclination of rural apartment-dwellers to organize the tending of animals and the growing of vegetables, when the dwelling unit and the private plot are no longer virtually one and the same.

Personal services for repair and personal care are available in minimal quantities in the USSR, both in cities and in the countryside. These services, described in Soviet statistics as "everyday services" (bytovye uslugi), are provided partly by state and cooperative shops and partly by private persons. As the data in Table 2 show, the public sector furnished such services in the amount of a mere 20 rubles per capita per year in rural areas, less than two-thirds the level in cities. These services have been developing much faster in rural areas than in cities, however: in 1970, the rural level was 29.2 percent of the urban level and in 1960 it was 10.7 percent. All of these data overstate both the urban and rural shares and the rates of growth, because a substantial and growing percentage of these reported services were made to enterprises and institutions rather than to the population.[24] As compared with cities, such services as laundry, dry cleaning, public baths, photographic, and barber and hairdressing are poorly developed in rural areas. Most of the services provided there consist of repair services, tailoring and construction of housing. In line with the lower volume

of services provided, rural areas also have far fewer service enterprises.

Soviet sources declare that the provision of these "everyday" services by the public sector lags far behind the demand for them. Part of the evidently large gap is filled by private purveyors, who evidently are more numerous in rural areas than in the cities. Only fragmentary information is available on the amount of private services. An authoritative survey for the RSFSR found that in the early 1970s such services amounted to 6 rubles per capita per year and that in 1971, 47.9 percent of services in rural areas were rendered by private persons, compared with 15 percent in cities; the respective shares in 1960 were 90.4 and 44.3. In 1970, 55 percent of private services related to the construction and repair of housing in rural areas, compared with 41 percent in cities.[25/]

The information with which to assess rural/urban differences in recreational patterns is sparse. Table 2 provides data on movie attendance and on the number of clubs. As shown there, movie attendance developed rapidly in both areas during the 1950s and 1960s, but this form of recreation was much more common in cities. In the 1970s, however, movie attendance declined (per capita) in cities and leveled off in rural areas. As data cited earlier suggest, both groups were responding similarly to the rapidly increasing availability of television sets. Clubs are largely a rural phenomenon. They are, in effect, gathering places for rural villagers, providing centers for social and cultural life there. Their number has not changed much in 30 years in rural areas, despite a drop of 10 million in the rural population, reflecting government efforts to upgrade cultural facilities in the countryside. In recent years, this effort has taken the form of establishing cultural centers in villages or on large farms that centralize various kinds of social and cultural activities. Relatively few such centers have been built yet, however, and recent sample surveys indicate that about half of the respondents gave a negative evaluation of the activities provided by cultural

and educational facilities available to them.[26]

IV. Communal Services

Education and health services in the Soviet Union are almost entirely provided by the government. They are financed mainly by the state budget, supplemented by funds from enterprises and collective farms. The latter play a major role in the construction of school and health facilities in rural areas. During 1951-79, they built 61 percent of the rural schools with 43 percent of the pupil places.[27] During 1956-79, they built preschool facilities for 2.4 million children and hospitals with 158,000 beds.[28] Although data on total construction of such facilities in the countryside are not available, the share built by collective farms clearly was substantial.

Data from the three postwar Soviet censuses show that the level of education of the rural population has improved greatly and at a more rapid rate than that of the urban population. The data are given in Table 3. In 1979, 47 percent more persons per 1,000 population age 10 and over in urban areas had some higher or secondary education than in rural areas; the corresponding figure was 83 percent in 1959. The number (per 1,000 population) having some higher education in 1979, however was nearly 4 times greater in urban areas. The rural/urban differential was smaller for the gainfully occupied population, and rural progress has been relatively greater. Thus, the urban superiority in respect to persons with some higher or secondary education was 25 percent in 1979 and 78 percent in 1959. Three times more persons (per 1,000 population) had some higher education in 1979 in urban areas than in rural areas, compared with five times more in 1959.

Despite notable quantitative progress, much evidence indicates that the quality of rural education is far inferior to that in urban areas,[29] despite the fact that the state spends more per pupil on rural schools than on urban schools. Rural schools

are smaller, poorly equipped and costly to maintain. In many isolated areas and small settlements the one-room school is common. On the average, rural teachers are less well educated than their urban counterparts and turnover is high, despite a pay supplement. Thus, in 1975/76 only 58 percent of the teachers in rural general education schools had a higher education, compared with 73 percent of those in urban areas.[30] In 1950/51, however, the corresponding figures were 8 percent and 29 percent. Apparently, opportunities to attend trade schools and to combine schooling with work are scarce in rural areas. According to survey evidence, the desire to further one's own or one's children's education is one of the main reasons for the migration of rural residents to the cities in general and for the exodus of young skilled and technically trained workers, in particular.[31]

Another source of rural inferiority is in the provision of pre-school facilities for children, a reason also often cited for the high turnover of young specialists in rural areas. In 1979, there were 573,000 permanent pre-school institution of all kinds in rural areas, with 3.3 million children accommodated; urban areas had 681,000 such facilities with 10.5 million children.[32] The share of children on the relevant age group in such child care facilities is much larger in urban areas than in rural areas. In addition, seasonal facilities are organized in summer, accommodating nearly 2 million children of pre-school age; the share of rural areas in this total is not given.

Although the Soviet government does not publish the data that would permit a quantitative assessment, it is nonetheless clear that the availability and the quality of medical services in rural areas is far inferior to those in urban areas. In the early 1970s, according to a Soviet source, only 11 percent of all doctors were located in rural areas, and the total number of visits to doctors and house calls by them per capita was three times lower there than in cities.[33] The same source

reports that hospital beds per capita in rural areas were 89 percent of those in cities, after allowing for use of urban facilities by rural residents. Another source states that in 1975, urban areas had 2.4 times as many medical personnel per 10,000 population as did rural areas compared with 3 times as many in 1965 and 1970.[34] Only 20 percent of all middle level medical personel were employed in rural areas.[35] In 1975, less than 15 percent of union republic budget current expenditures on hospitals and clinics represented outlays in rural areas.[36] Turnover is high among doctors and technicians sent to rural areas upon graduation; most of them evidently leave for the cities at the earliest opportunity. The situation with respect to medical care varies widely among geographic areas. The press reported in 1972, for example, that in Georgia, which had more doctors per capita than any other republic, there were no physicians at all in 25 rural hospitals and 127 rural out-patient clinics.[37] Writing in 1980, the Minister of Health in the Ukraine states, "today, the level of medical care provided to hospital patients in rural areas is often comparable to that received in cities, but it is significantly lower in the outpatient clinics and polyclinics. Almost half of all visits by villagers are being handled at present, not by a physician, but by a paramedic."[38]

V. An Overview

After surveying the evidence for the 1950s, Shimkin concluded that real per capita income of the average rural resident at the end of that decade was about half of that of the average city dweller.[39] My survey of the evidence for the 1960s and 1970s shows conclusively that a sizeable reduction in the rural-urban gap in levels of living has taken place and leads me to think that at present the average rural per capita income (consumption) is in the range of 65 to 75 percent of that of urban residents. This tentative assessment relates essentially to the relative quantities

of goods and services available to the two populations on a per capita basis. A large body of evidence, some of it already presented, indicates, however, that the quality of many of these goods and services available in the countryside is much inferior to those available in urban areas. Certainly, this is true of housing, retail trade and personal service facilities, education and health services, and cultural and recreational opportunities. Not captured in the quantitative indicators, either, is the relative isolation of much of rural Russia. In general, the road system of the Soviet Union is poorly developed by any modern comparison. At the end of 1979, there were 1.4 million miles of automobile roads, only 54 percent of which were paved.[40] Only 9 percent of the populated points in rural areas were located on paved roads in 1976.[41] By all accounts, the dirt roads in many, if not most rural areas are virtually impassable during rainy seasons.

It is also clear that conditions of rural life vary greatly among the union republics and within republics and smaller administrative areas. The evidence is indirect. Among the republics, the differences in wages are much wider in respect to state and collective farm wages than for nonagricultural wages.[42] Wide differences among republics are to be found in the incomes that collective farmers receive (in money and in kind) from work on their private plots.[43] Even larger differences in wage payments and social consumption funds exist among collective farms within republics, especially within the highly diverse RSFSR, stemming from differences in the income and profitability of the farms themselves.[44] Without doubt, the same is true for state farms.

Obviously, also, living standards and the quality of rural life in general have much to do with the size of rural settlements. Between 1959 and 1970, the number of rural settlements decreased from 705,000 to 469,000: data from the 1979 census have not yet been published, but a large further drop surely occurred,

especially in view of the deliberate campaign in the 1970s to liquidate small, so-called "unviable" villages. In 1970, 46.3 million persons lived in settlements with fewer than 500 persons -- 34 percent of the total.[45] Some 7.1 percent lived in villages with fewer than 100 persons. In 1970, nearly a third of the rural population resided in settlements described as "points at which are located individuaal brigades, farms, and production sectors of state farms and collective farms."[46] In 1970, over half the total settlements had fewer than 50 inhabitants, and one fifth had no more than 5 persons each. The obvious difficulties of providing social and cultural facilities and other amenities to such small settlements, along with ideological notions about what constitutes "ideal" rural living arrangements, has led to a concerted effort to consolidate rural settlements and to improve the lot of the larger ones. A long-range plan calls for the liquidation of 348,000 small villages, affecting 15.4 million persons, by 1990.[47] In the past year or two, the planners seem to have been reconsidering the scheme, for the program has had adverse affects on the supply of farm products to cities and on migration patterns. One study showed, for example, that not only had the resettlement program failed to halt the exodus of young people from the countryside in general, but many families uprooted under the program simply moved to urban areas instead of to larger rural settlements.[48] Also, some of the consolidated settlements themselves have disintegrated, thus worsening the situation. In October 1980, Pravda published a series of articles discussing the program to liquidate small villages, [49] suggesting that things may have been moving too far too fast.

Progress in reducing the differences between rural and urban living standards is slated to continue. The Directives for the Eleventh Five Year Plan (1981-1985) state the intent to gradually overcome the "basic" differences between the village

and the city.[50] The plan calls for wages of collective farmers from work in the socialized sector to rise by 20 to 22 percent, compared with 13 to 16 percent for the state labor force. The plan accords "stepped up priority" to the construction of rural housing, amenities, and child-care and cultural facilities, with investment to be increased by 25 to 30 percent. Further steps also are to be taken to bring the social security system for collective farmers more nearly in line with that for state workers and employees. Moreover, two recent decrees call for a concerted program to provide improved incentives and material support to the private agricultural sector.[51] If actually implemented, the program could materially improve peasant incomes, as well as urban food supplies. On balance, the rural population well may fare somewhat better than the urban population in the difficult decade ahead, when both economic growth and gains in living standards in the USSR seem likely to slow perceptibly.

Table 1

Agricultural and Nonagricultural Incomes in the U.S.S.R., Selected Years, 1950-1976.

	Average Annual Agricultural Incomes (rubles)	Average Annual Nonagricultural wages (rubles)	Indexes of Real Incomes Agricultural Workers (1950=100)	Nonagricultural Workers (1950=100)
1950	441	794	100	100
1960	651	1002	167	143
1970	1234	1505	280	190
1976	1616	1838	329	208

Sources: Average annual wages of nonagricultural workers and of state farmers are derived from Trud v SSSR, Moscow, 1968, p. 137 and Narkhoz SSSR, 1977, p. 385. Money payments to collective farmers and incomes of the population from sales of farm produce are given in M. Elizabeth Denton, "Soviet Consumer Policy: Trends and Prospects", in US Congress, Joint Economic Committee, Soviet Ecomomy in a Time of Change, Washington, 1979, p. 785. The price index used to deflate incomes of both groups is also given there (p. 766). The values of income in kind of agricultural workers are the writer's estimates, based on a wide variety of quantity and price data. Employment data are taken from Stephen Rapawy, Estimates and Projections of the Labor Force and Employment in the U.S.S.R., 1950 to 1990, U.S. Department of Commerce, Foreign Economic Report No. 10, 1976, p. 40. Estimates for 1976 were provided by him.

Table 2

Indicators of Rural and Urban Personal Consumption and Service Facilities in the U.S.S.R.
Selected Years, 1950-1979

	Rural				Urban			
	1950	1960	1970	1979	1950	1960	1970	1979
I								
Retail sales (rubles per capita)	80	174	334	539	383	564	874	1218
Food	40	86	185	283	234	316	485	625
Nonfood	40	88	149	256	149	248	389	593
II								
Personal services (rubles per capita)			7	20			24	32
III								
No. of retail stores (000)	190	242	279	283	109	171	221	247
Size of store (M^2)		36	49	67		54	83	109
No. of public dining facilities (000)	26	38	71	93	70	109	166	205
Seats per restaurant		34	47	61		40	57	72
No. of personal service establishments (000)			103	111			136	157
IV								
Housing (M^2 per capita)	4.7	6.13	7.8	8.8	4.7	5.8	7.2	8.6
V								
Paid Movie Attendance per capita	11	12	16	16	13	21	21	16
VI								
Stocks of consumer durables per 100 families		1/				1/		
Watches		245	309	411		375	480	557
Radios		49	55	74		67	78	90
TV Sets		15	32	71		32	61	89
Cameras		8	12	15		36	36	38
Refrigerators		3	15	55		17	43	96
Washing machines		12	26	56		29	64	79
Vacuum cleaners		1	3	12		11	16	34
Sewing machines		50	54	69		54	57	62
Bicycles and motorcycles		57	71	84		49	49	46

1/ Data are for 1965.

Sources:

I. Narkhoz 1979, p. 456.

II. Ibid, pp. 479-481.

III. Calculated from data given in Ibid, pp. 470, 473, 475, 479, 481.

IV. Mid-year stocks per capita. Urban housing stock is regularly published in the annual Narkhozy. Rural housing stock is estimated from data published there, following the methodology used in Willard Smith, Housing in the Soviet Union: Big Plans, Little Action", in Joint Economic Committee, Soviet Economic Prospects for the 1970s, Washington, 1973, pp. 422-23. Basic data are given in M^2 of "useful space", which includes hallways, kitchens, baths and closets. Ratios of .75 and .666 were used to convert useful space to living space in rural and urban areas respectively.

V. Narkhoz, 1965, p. 731: Narkhoz 1979, p. 515.

VI. Narkhoz, 1979, p. 435.

Table 3

Educational Attainment of the Rural and Urban Population

	Per Thousand Persons					
	Higher and Secondary Complete and Incomplete		of which			
			Higher		Secondary	
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
I Population age 10 and over						
1959	256	469	7	40	249	429
1970	332	592	14	62	318	530
1979	492	723	25	93	467	630
Gainfully occupied population						
1959	316	564	11	59	305	505
1970	499	748	25	90	474	658
1979	693	863	42	130	651	733

Source: Naseleniia SSSR po dannym vsesoiuznoi perepisi naseleniia 1979 goda, Moscow, Politizdat, 1980, p. 21.

Source References

1. Gertrude E. Schroeder and Imogene Edwards, Consumption in the USSR: An International Comparison, US Congress, Joint Economic Committee, Washington, US Govt. Printing Office, 1981.

2. The values in current rubles were presented in my paper "Consumption and Income Distribution", prepared for the Conference on the Soviet Economy Toward the year 2000, Airlie House, October 1980.

3. A description of this price index and its limitations is given in Gertrude E. Schroeder and Barbara S. Severin, "Soviet Consumption and Income Policies in Perspective," in US Congress, Joint Economic Committee, Soviet Economy in a New Perspective, Washington, US Government Printing Office, 1976, pp. 630-632.

4. See Morris Bornstein, "Soviet Price Statistics," in Vladimir G. Treml and John P. Hardt, Soviet Economic Statistics, Durham, N.C., Duke University Press, 1972, pp. 370-384.

5. Incomes from agriculture per se are also overstated, because wages paid by collective farms to their members include pay for nonagricultural work. Rapawy has estimated that 15 percent of collective farmers were engaged in such work in 1974 (Stephen Rapawy, Estimates and Projections of the Labor Force and Civilian Employment in the USSR: 1950 to 1990, US Department of Commerce, Foreign Economic Report No. 10, 1976, p. 38). We can ignore this fact, since our concern in this paper is to approximate rural incomes, rather than purely agricultural incomes.

6. According to the 1979 census, the average rural family had 3.8 members and the average urban family had 3.3 members. Vestnik statistiki, No. 12, 1980, p. 61 Rural agricultural families likely were larger than rural families in general.

7. Narkhoz SSSR, 1977, p. 408.

8. V. M. Popov and M. I. Sidorova, Sotsial'no-ekonomi cheskie problemy proizvoditel'nosti truda i vosproizvodstva rabochei sily v sel'skom khoziaistve, Moscow, 1979, p. 148.

Source Reference Cont..

9. Total savings deposits in rural and urban areas are given in Narkhoz, 1977, p. 433. An average interest rate of 2.2 percent was assumed for both groups of savers.

10. Wadekin has meticulously examined this matter using data for the 1950s and 1960s. He concludes that in the late 1960s, the rural population was about three-fifths agricultural and two-fifths nonagricultural and that the latter's share had been rising since 1950. Karl-Eugen Wädekin, "The Nonagricultural Rural Sector," in James R. Millar (ed.), The Soviet Rural Community, Urbana, Ill., University of Illinois Press, 1971, pp. 159-179.

11. Itogi vsesoiuznoi perepisi naseleniia 1970 goda, Vol. V, Moscow, 1973, p. 200.

12. The data, gathered from regional statistical handbooks, are cited in Gertrude E. Schroeder, "Regional Differences in Income in the USSR in the 1970s", in NATO, Regional Development in the USSR, Newtonville, Mass., Oriental Research Partners, 1979, p. 28.

13. V. M. Popov and M. I. Sidorova, op. cit., p. 148.

14. G. Sarkisian, Ekonomicheskaia gazeta, No. 34, August 1979, p. 10.

15. Narkhoz SSSR za 60 let, p. 539.

16. Ekonomika Sovetskoi Ukrainy, No. 7, July 1975, p. 48.

17. Narkhoz 1968, p. 595.

18. Narkhoz SSSR za 60 let, p. 512.

19. Ekonomika sel'skogo khoziaistva, No. 1, 1980, p. 63.

20. Gertrude E. Schroeder, "Consumption and Income Distribution", loc. cit.

21. The handbooks publish data on the distribution of sales by product group in state and cooperative retail trade and in cooperative trade. Although the bulk of cooperative trade takes place in rural areas, state outlets also serve these areas.

22. Narkhoz 1979, pp. 431-432.

23. Narkhoz SSSR za 60 let, p. 502.

Source Reference Cont..

24. Pravda, September 29, 1980

25. V. I. Dmitriev, Metodicheskie osnovy prognozirovaniia sprosa na bytovye uslugi, Moscow, 1975, pp. 44, 46, 49.

26. Sovetskaia kul'tura, September 19, 1980, p. 2.

27. Narkhoz, 1979, p. 423.

28. Ibid, pp. 426.

29. Susan Jacoby, Inside Soviet Schools, New York, Mill and Wang, 1974, pp. 134-169.

30. Narodnoe obrazovanie nauka i kul'tura v SSSR, Moscow, 1977, pp. 97-98.

31. For example, T. A. Zaslavskaia, Migratsiia sel'skogo naseleniia, Moscow, 1970, p. 160.

32. Narkhoz, 1979, p. 437.

33. K. Taichinova, Voprosy ekonomiki, No. 6, 1974, p. 50.

34. T. Kuznetsova, Voprosy ekonomiki, No. 8, 1979, p. 67.

35. Cited in A.G. Sultanov, Sovershenstvovanie sotsialisticheskii proizvodstvennykh otnoshenii derevne, Kazan', 1978, p. 192.

36. Gosudarstvennii biudzhet i biudzhety soiuznykh respublik 1971-1975 gg, Moscow, 1976, pp. 63, 65.

37. Izvestia, July 26, 1972.

38. Pravda, October 19, 1980

39. Demitri B. Shimkin, "Current Characteristics and Problems of the Soviet Rural Population", in Roy D. Laird (ed.), Soviet Agricultural and Peasant Affairs, Lawrence, Kansas, University of Kansas Press, 1963, p. 100.

40. Narkhoz, 1979, p. 337.

41. A. G. Sultanon, op. cit., p. 194.

42. Gertrude Schroeder, "Regional Differences in Incomes in the USSR in the 1970s", loc. cit., p. 36.

Source Reference Cont..

43. V. M. Popov and M. I. Sidorova, op. cit., p. 152.

44. For example, Ibid, p. 184.

45. Itogi peripisi naseleniia 1970 goda, Vol. I, Moscow, 1972, pp. 146-147.

46. R. S. Golovin (ed.), Problemy rasseleniia i urbanizatsiia v razvitom sotsialisticheskom obshchestve, Moscow, 1980, p. 41.

47. Voprosy ekonomiki, No. 5, 1978, p. 85.

48. Sovetskaia Rossiia, September 12, 1980.

49. Pravda, October 20, 27, 1980.

50. Provda, December 2, 1980.

51. Leninskaia agrarnaia politika KPSS: sbornikvazneizhnykh dokumentov, Mart 1965-Iul' 1978, Moscow, 1978, pp. 632-640.
Sel'skaia zhizn', January 18, 1981