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Chief, Materials Division

12 June 1958

Chief, Nonferrous Metals and Minerals Branch

Review of Geographic Intelligence Review (CIA/RR-MR-54, Feb. 58)  
Article, "A Survey of Developments in Asiatic USSR"

A. General

This Branch is unable to understand why the subject article was published as a contribution to geographic (or any other) intelligence. In the instance of nonferrous metals and minerals, a number of items relative to planned expansion of the industry have been tossed together to no apparently useful purpose. This miscellany simply indicates that "something's up East of the Urals"--a fact of common knowledge to the most rudimentary student of the Soviet economy. The article gives but scant indication of the significance of developments which, in the nonferrous area at least, are among the most important occurrences in this sector of the USSR economy.

B. Specific Problems

1. Map 26117-8-57, opposite p. 2, is reproduced from a Soviet source; but is highly misleading as it appears. One of the map symbols, for example, refers to nonferrous enterprises, current and future, and includes such symbols in the vicinities of Molotov (Urals) and Bratsk (East Siberia). Inasmuch as no specifics have been released by the Soviets regarding the nature of the facilities planned for either of these areas, little purpose is served by presenting them in vacuo on a map which also contains symbols in areas where nonferrous plants of major significance are to be located. The map also has nonferrous symbols at both Turgay and Pavlodar--the first being the location of bauxite mines which will supply the latter. In the case of the Krasnoyarsk aluminum plant, the Achinsk alumina plant, and the Uzhur mines which will supply nepheline to the Achinsk alumina plant, no symbols appear; yet these three facilities together will represent one of the largest Soviet aluminum operations. It should be apparent, therefore, that the reference map can be used only with considerable care.

2. Page 10 specifies that tin and gold are found in the Far East. These items are also found in Siberia, Kazakhstan, and Central Asia.

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3. Page 12

a. The reference to Turgay bauxite should be in the plural. There are numerous deposits in the Turgay Area.

b. The reference to the Stalinsk aluminum plant appears in context to relate to the Directives on the 6th Five Year Plan. If this is what was intended, it is incorrect inasmuch as the Plan Directives did not mention Stalinsk per se.

c. We believe it is misleading to state that most of the expansion in investment in the nonferrous industry in the 6th Five Year Plan "is to be in the form of new developments in Asiatic USSR for the smelting of aluminum, copper, zinc, and lead." It is impossible to identify that portion of the investment in the nonferrous industry that is allocated for smelting as opposed to mining, refining, or fabricating.

d. Statements referring to planned expansion of existing "smelters" at Alaalyk and Altyn-Topkan are also believed to be incorrect. There are concentrating facilities, but no known smelters, in each area.

4. Map 26570-3-58, presumably indicates the major nonferrous mineral deposits, but it omits both the Salair (Kuzbass) and Bokson (Buryat-Mongol) bauxite deposits. These are believed to be of major importance to the future of the Soviet aluminum industry in the eastern areas.

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