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FIRST INTERIM REPORT ON THE FRENCH SUBSISTENCE POLICY DURING NOVEMBER
DECEMBER 1941 AND JANUARY 1942

I. Organization:

A census of landowners was taken in order to make possible efficient organization for reform measures, but since the allocation of agricultural items was to be made on the basis of such statistics, it was recognized that the figures given would be subject to exaggeration. A centralized organization was set up in order to control production and distribution of food items.

Due to an insufficient delivery of agricultural produce, the French government was forced to confiscate cereal reserves and to draft a labor force from less essential industries for diversion into agriculture. A commission was established to organize a more equitable distribution of existing reserves and to effect more rational utilization of the tillable land. Delivery quotas were set up, and these were to be followed strictly in order to alleviate the existing supply deficiencies. Besides the 34.7 million hectares of agricultural land, about 3 million hectares of agriculturally usable land and about 1.8 million hectares of sub-marginal land have been recorded.

The Ministry of Agriculture drew up the production plan and decided which agricultural produce could be yielded and which should be kept in storage. The Office of the Distributor of Food requisitioned the quantities need for supply, in which case previously established rations may have had to be changed. The newly created General Commission for Agricultural Produce advised the Secretary of the Commission for Food Supply in the preparation of his plans, consideration of regional differences having been noted. The actual distribution of food was exercised through the Commission for Food Supply.

A commission to combat the black market was formed.

On 30 January 1941, a law governing exports to foreign countries was instituted.

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II. Manpower and Work:

Workers from the cities were encouraged to go into farming employ. Financial aid was rendered to facilitate moving from the cities.

Following the German model, financial loans to newlyweds (5,000 - 20,000 francs) were made. Special loans were provided for the procurement of agricultural equipment and installations. The law dealing with the procurement of farm labor was further expanded. Farm labor was placed in the category "essential to the state", which froze agricultural jobs on the one hand, and enabled the shift of non-essential jobholders or unemployed into agricultural work. Youth in the 17-21 age groups were placed in the agriculture auxiliary service.

III. Measures to Promote Production, Shortages:

The government decreed on 3 December 1941 that all agricultural construction was to be aided in every way: credits were to be eased, and financial means were to be made available through agricultural credit unions.

A committee was set up to study the rational utilization of agricultural machinery. French agriculture was in desperate need of farm machinery. Even before the war, there were only 30,000 tractors, 370,000 sowing machines, 500,000 corn cutters, and 122,000 hay-cutters. Besides the dire shortage of farm machines, there was also a shortage of draft animals ~~was~~ caused by the mass flights in May, June 1940.

a) Grain

The price of bread has been raised by 25 centimes. It is necessary to bring up the price of grain commensurate with the price of other French products. Otherwise the farmers prefer to shift to the more lucrative cattle-raising and feeding. This danger was almost acute in France. The farmer can hardly be expected to sell wheat at 300 francs per double-centner, while buckwheat (which requires less work and requires practically no artificial fertilizer) sells for 1,000 francs per double-centner.

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A decree of January 1942 confiscates all wheat and rye supplies not yet turned to the government.

The delivery of bread grain was not satisfactory because:

1) Slow progress was made in threshing due to the official order giving the fodder grains (barley and oats) priority, causing a backlog in the production of bread grains.

2) The rumor was circulating that the government was going to increase official prices for wheat later on. Consequently, wheat was held back. The government denied this openly, and told the farmers that if they did not comply with obligatory deliveries by 31 January, they would be paid only 270 francs per double-centner of wheat if requisition by force was necessary.

b) Oil-seeds and Fibers:

A decree by the Ministry of Agriculture provided for the establishment of a commission to study increased production of oleaginous plants. It was also charged with the import of oil-seeds. Measures to increase the cultivation of such plants were taken. The cultivation of hemp again was taken up on a larger scale.

c) Vegetables:

Due to the rationing of essential foods, the consumption of vegetables in France greatly increase^d, so that the supply did not nearly meet the demand. The exploitation of all available land was ordered, so that vegetable production ^{could} be upped. A law was passed which made all suitable land in the outskirts of cities available for the cultivation of vegetables.

IV. Press Comment:

The French Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of Food Supply are worried. The crop is below expectations, greatly due to bad weather during harvest time. The deficiency could be made up if the farmers were turning in all their yield. Too often they hold back grain to feed their own poultry. The black market is aided by inadequate prices for goods.

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In Germany, wheat brings RM 19 (380 francs), while in France it brings only 290 francs. Why do we (the French) still have pate de foie gras? If the poor have nothing to eat, should corn be fed to the geese? The farmer gets only 350 grams of bread per day. Consequently, he grinds his own flour, even using coffee grinders for this purpose. If the bread ration of agricultural workers were raised, production would increase in the long run by millions of double-centners.

L'Oeuvre, 14 Jan 1942.

Marseille retained 70 percent of its traffic, which amounts to only one-sixth of the normal national traffic. During the first eight months of 1941, imports by way of Marseille amounted to:

<u>Product</u>	<u>1941 (1,000 tons)</u>	<u>1938 (1,000 tons)</u>
Fruits and vegetables from N. Africa	200	180
Oleaginous plant products	280	400
Coffee	30	16
Cacao	40	3
Rice	20	80
Grain, flour and cereal products	250	175
Wine	240	90
Sugar	29	90

One should be careful not to draw conclusions about a national increase in food imports for France by the few imports found to be increasing in Marseille now. Marseille is the only port capable of operating. In peacetime, it handled but one-sixth of the normal French traffic.

Figaro, 30 Jan 1942

Why is so little done for 13-year olds? Children of this age belong to Category J-3. They receive 350 grams of bread (instead of 275 grams) and 250 grams of chocolate per month. They no longer get the $\frac{1}{4}$ -liter of milk, but not one gram more fat, meat, or sugar than adults do. Shouldn't they receive more meat? Let it not be said that there is no meat. Adults and old people who are very healthy manage to get additional meat rations

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prescribed by their doctors. To raise the meat ration of the J-3 category would bring an end to the malpractice by some parents of selling meat rations or trading them for other foods. [It is not easy to follow the logic of this, but the original has been checked by two linguists, and that is what it says.]

Cri du Peuple, 14 Jan 1942

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