

Pollution Soviet's legacy

WASHINGTON — Long after communism is forgotten, its legacy will linger in the poisoned bodies and environment of the vast region it once ruled.

"No other great industrial civilization so systematically and so long poisoned its land, air, water and people," write the authors of "Eccide in the USSR," a book detailing the environmental degradation of the Soviet Union.

Among the findings:

- In 1990, the life expectancy of Moscow residents was 10 years below what it was in 1970.

- Nearly three-fourths of surface water in the former Soviet Union is classified as polluted and one-third of that total is untreated.

- The Soviet government banned use of the pesticide DDT in 1970, two years before the United States acted. But use of DDT in Soviet agriculture continued secretly until the late 1980s.

- Because of the intense use of pesticides in rice growing areas of the Caucasus "in some farming villages of that district cancer is the only cause of death."

Co-authors Murray Feshbach, a Georgetown University demographer recognized as the leading Western authority on Soviet demographics, and journalist Alfred Friendly Jr. describe a health care system beset by ill-trained doctors and shortages of such basic materials as aspirin and disposable hypodermic needles.

"Two out of five young graduates of medical schools entered service unable to read an electrocardiogram," wrote Feshbach and Friendly. They also noted that in a group of 400 pediatricians in Kazakhstan half "proved completely ignorant about the properties of 16 widely used drugs." Even well trained physicians must cope with shortages beyond the comprehension of their American counterparts.

"A few physicians were forced on occasion to substitute safety razors for scalpels in performing appendec-



Life expectancy at birth
(Number of years on average at birth)

USSR				United States			
Time period	Total pop. (millions)	Males	Females	Time period	Total pop. (millions)	Males	Females
1958-1959	68.6	64.4	71.7	1958-1959	69.9	66.8	73.2
1970-1971	69.4	64.5	73.5	1970-1971	71.1	67.4	75.0
1980-1981	67.7	62.3	72.5	1980-1981	74.2	70.4	77.8
1984-1985	68.1	62.9	72.7	1984-1985	74.7	71.2	78.2
1988	69.5	64.8	73.6	1988	74.9	71.5	78.3

KEY
 Air pollution
 Water pollution
 Groundwater depletion or contamination

Births, deaths, natural population growth and infant mortality in the USSR

Year	In thousands			Rate per 1,000 of population				
	Number of births	Number of deaths	Number of deaths (under one year of age)	Natural pop. growth	Births	Deaths	Natural pop. growth	Rate of deaths prior to one year of age per 1,000 live births
1950	4,805.3	1,745.0	394.6	3,060.3	26.7	9.7	17.0	80.7
1960	5,341.0	1,528.6	187.7	3,812.4	24.9	7.1	17.8	35.3
1970	4,225.6	1,996.3	103.3	2,229.3	17.4	8.2	9.2	24.7
1980	4,851.4	2,743.8	131.9	2,107.6	18.3	10.3	8.0	27.3
1985	5,374.4	2,947.0	139.8	2,427.3	19.4	10.6	8.8	26.0
1989	5,062.2	2,874.5	116.3	2,187.7	17.6	10.0	7.6	22.7

Source: *Eccide in the USSR*, M. Feshbach and A. Friendly, Jr.

tomies," they wrote. "Fear of infection from unsterilized needles and unsafe vaccines has driven parents to put off immunizing their children. One result was a 1990 outbreak in Moscow of more than 700 cases of diphtheria, a disease that strikes one or two Americans at most a year."

Soviet farming techniques were strikingly inefficient and to make up

for it, wrote the authors, "Soviets resorted to the massive but untutored use of toxic agricultural chemicals. They even spread tons of DDT long after other nations banned it, so much for so long that 25 million acres of cropland are still overloaded with the poison."

No environmental disaster in the Soviet Union received the worldwide

attention of the explosion and fire at the Chernobyl nuclear power station April 26, 1986.

The Russian government still claims that only 32 people have died as a result of the nuclear accident at Chernobyl. Feshbach thinks the number is in the thousands and the ultimate toll won't be known for decades.

Entertaining foreign dignitaries costs taxpayers millions

WASHINGTON — A few days before allied forces launched a ground war against Iraq, Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney was the host at a reception for Saudi Arabian and other VIPs in the desert kingdom. The February 1991 party cost U.S. taxpayers \$8,000.

Closer to home, there was a black-tie dinner in Washington for Czechoslovakia's defense minister in June 1991. The tab: \$9,900.

State Department budgeted \$4.8 million, Defense gets \$1.4 million

In both cases, the money came from a \$1.4 million annual entertainment fund allocated by Congress to the Defense Department. The 13 other Cabinet departments each have their own allowance, from millions to a mere \$2,000 a year.

On the high end is the State Department. U.S. embassies around the world share \$4.8 million to hold din-

ners and receptions. Secretary of State James A. Baker III and other top diplomats have an additional entertainment budget, but department spokeswoman Shayna Steinger was unable to provide the amount.

At the other end, the Interior Department spends about \$5 a head on lunches for volunteers. Foreign dignitaries are the leading

beneficiaries of this publicly funded largess: They get the most lavish entertainment and more of the gifts, such as paperweights and pens emblazoned with a department's official seal.

The funds are at every Cabinet secretary's disposal, along with the other perquisites — including chauff-

Radicals face defeat in Iran, backers of Rafsanjani triumph

TEHRAN, Iran — The government predicted Sunday that backers of President Hashemi Rafsanjani would win a landslide victory in parliamentary elections, bolstering his drive to liberalize the economy and mend ties with the West.

The early results from Friday's election appeared to be a sharp setback for more radical followers of the late Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, who have dominated the 270-seat parliament, or Majlis.

Iran's official news media said 55 of the 123 candidates who won enough votes to capture a seat outright were members of the Society of Combatant Clergymen, whose leader is Rafsanjani.

The other 68 decided races were in remote areas and the affiliation of the winners was not immediately clear.

But the fact that the government-run news agency was predicting victory early indicated confidence that the measures Rafsanjani took before the vote to eliminate as many radical critics as possible proved successful.

A week before the election, the Council of Guardians, a 12-man review panel of religious and civilian legal experts, eliminated one-third of the 3,000 candidates.

About 13.5 million votes had been counted in 189 districts as of Sunday, with final results from all 196 districts expected within two days, the Islamic Republic News Agency said.

Marx leaves mark on Hazard

HAZARD — This town of 78 people located 40 miles west of Grand Island was once a place you whizzed past on Highway 2.

That anonymity has changed. A song called "Hazard," written and performed by pop singer Richard Marx, has given the town a lot of notoriety.

Residents have received calls about the song from disc jockeys in other Midwestern states.

"I guess it's about time we put Hazard on the map," said Mike Long, Hazard mayor.

The song tells of the mysterious death of a woman named Mary and the town outcast who is accused of her murder. The story is fictional.

Paul Freundlich, Marx's publicity agent in New York, has noticed the attention.

"It has piqued the curiosity of listeners and people who view the videos," he said. "I think it's interesting that people are stopping at the Hazard sign and taking pictures of it. That kind of interest is out of the ordinary."

The song is No. 12 on this week's Billboard magazine's Hot 100 chart, which makes it Marx's 11th top 15 single, Freundlich said.

Marx has made two versions of the "Hazard" video, which give clues as to who is responsible for Mary's death. The black-and-white videos are shot in a moody, slow-motion style.

Marx has said he chose Hazard because the setting felt like it should be in Nebraska. He asked Chambers of Commerce to fax him all the town, village and city names in the state.

Long said Marx has been invited to Hazard Days in August, which will include a tractor pull, barbecue, horseshoe throwing and a street dance.

"We faxed him an invitation, but we haven't heard back from him yet," Long said.

Most Hazard residents think it's kind of funny the town has received so much recognition over this song.

Gadhafi set to release 2 suspects in bombing

TRIPOLI, Libya — Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi has agreed, with some reservations, to accept the U.N. resolution demanding that two bombing suspects be turned over to the West for trial, a spokesman for Egypt's president said Sunday.

Mohammed Abdel-Moneim told The Associated Press of the conditional acceptance after Gadhafi met with President Hosni Mubarak on defusing the accelerating crisis.

The U.N. resolution calls for international sanctions to be imposed on Wednesday unless Libya surrenders the suspects in the 1988 bombing of Pan Am Flight 103.

Egypt's official Middle East News Agency reported that Mubarak had said Gadhafi accepted the resolution. But Abdel-Moneim contradicted that report.

"The president said the Libyans have reservations on the resolution," Abdel-Moneim said. "The president said the Libyans accepted the resolution with reservations."

Mubarak did not reveal the reservations, Abdel-Moneim said.

And Diego Arria, Venezuela's U.N. ambassador, who was president of Security Council when sanction resolution was passed last month, said no modifications can be made to the resolution.

"No conditions are possible ... There is no room for compromise," he said.

So far, Libya has agreed only to turn over the two men to a neutral country, an offer which is rejected by the West.

Also Sunday, the official JANA news agency distributed a statement saying Libya would cut all international travel and communication links Tuesday as a sign of mourning for a 1986 U.S. air strike that killed 41 Libyans.

Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi apparently chose to observe the air raid anniversary a day early to avoid the U.N. sanctions overshadowing his gesture.

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