

THE FIFTEEN SOVIET REPUBLICS
TODAY AND TOMORROW

TURKMENIA

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Turkmenian Soviet Socialist Republic

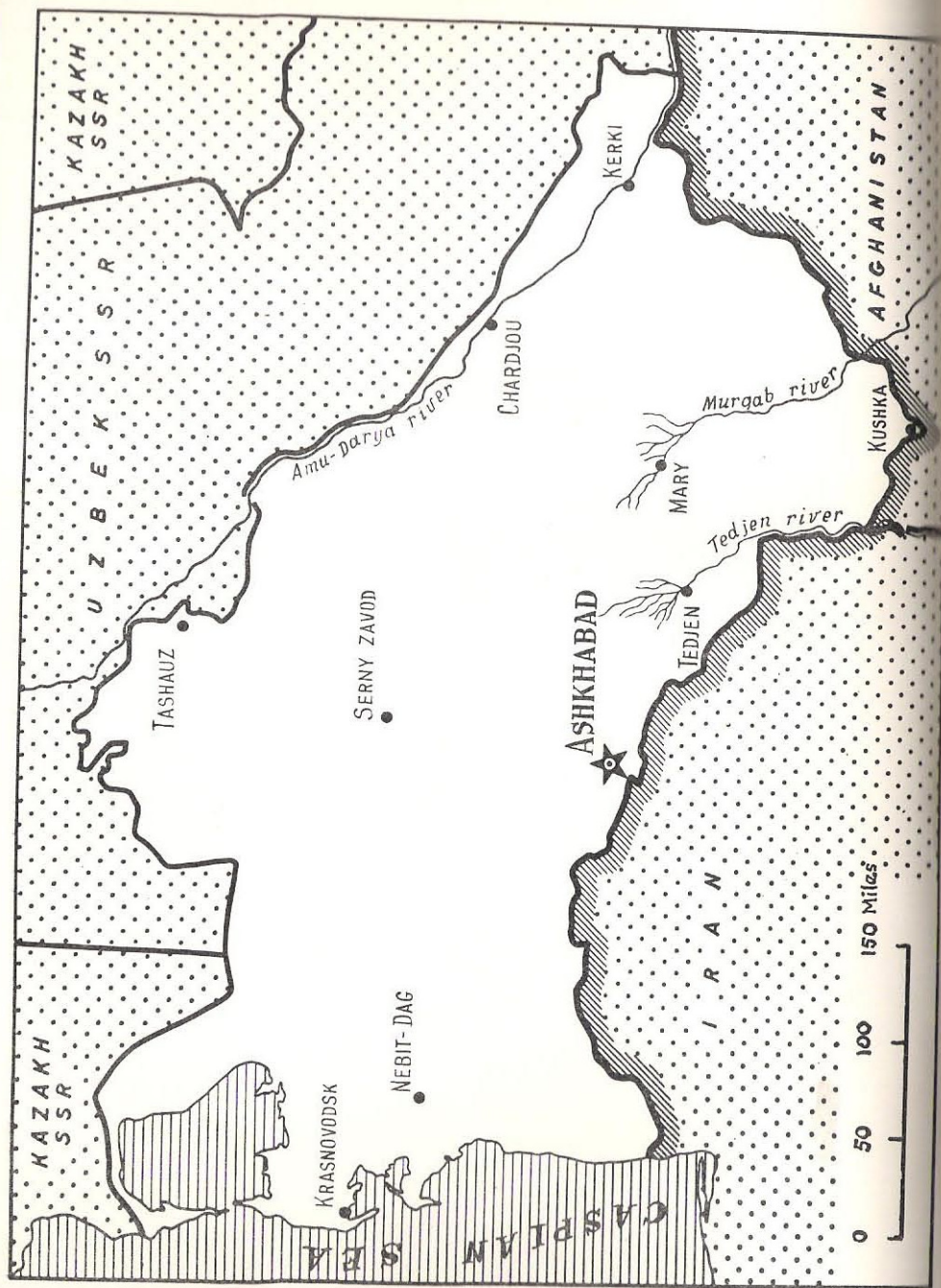
by

Balysh Ovezov

**Chairman of the Turkmenian SSR
Council of Ministers**

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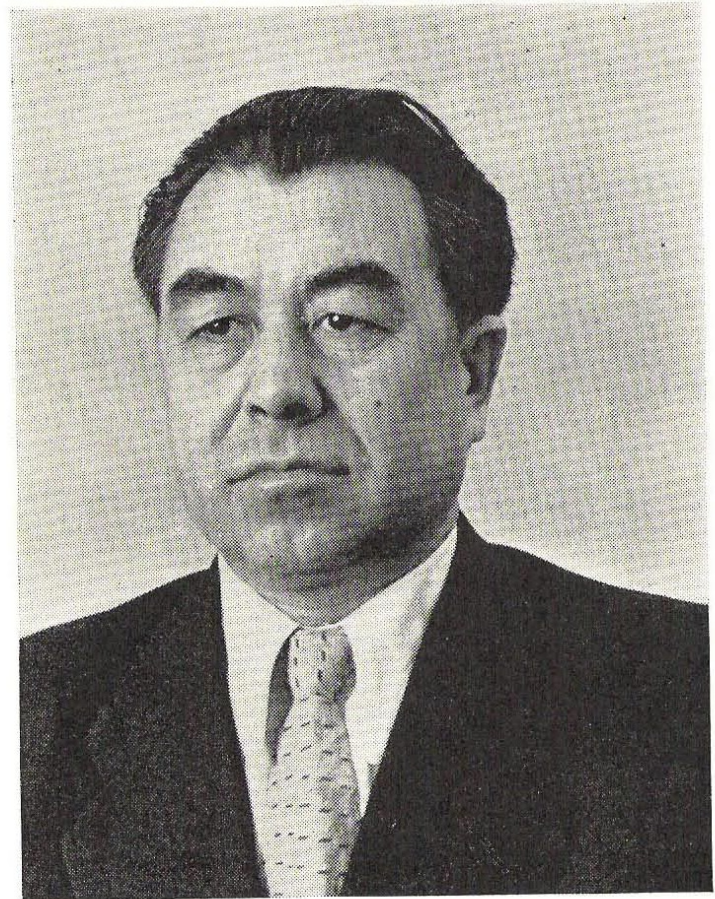
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BALYSH OVEZOV

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A Note on the Author

BALYSH OVEZOV was born into the family of a Turkmen peasant in the village of Bederkent in 1915. He became an orphan at ten and was taken to a children's home.

In 1931 he graduated from the Tashauz teacher-training school and started working, first as a teacher and then as an instructor of a local department of public education.

As an able organiser he was promoted to the post of Deputy Commissar of Education of the Turkmen S.S.R.

Combining work with studies, Balysh Ovezov graduated from the history department of the Ashkhabad Pedagogical Institute. For a number of years he held leading Party and governmental posts in Soviet Turkmenia.

At present Balysh Ovezov is Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Turkmen S.S.R. and its Minister of Foreign Affairs. He is also a Deputy of the Supreme Soviet of the Republic.

Balysh Ovezov has been decorated with two Orders of Lenin and the Order of the Red Banner of Labour.

Turkmenian Soviet Socialist Republic

Sunny Region

SITUATED in the south-west of Central Asia, the Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic extends over a 684-mile stretch from west to east, from the Caspian shore to the Amu-Darya valley, and over a distance of 464 miles from north to south. The Kushka area, the southernmost point of the Republic, is also the southern extremity of the Soviet Union.

With an area of 195,000 square miles (almost equal to the territory of Spain), the Turkmen S.S.R. has a population of 1,520,000 (according to the 1959 census). In addition to the Turkmen who make up 60 per cent of the population, the Republic has among its inhabitants Russians, Uzbeks, Kazakhs, Armenians, Azerbaijanians and representatives of other fraternal nationalities of the Soviet Union.

Turkmenia has a continental climate, and deserts occupy a considerable part of her territory. The summers are long and hot, with a large number of sunny days. The winters are short, but at times quite severe.

The long and hot summers combined with irrigation create favourable conditions for the cultivation of cotton and other warmth-loving crops. Rich crops of dates and olives, pomegranates, citrus and other fruits are grown in the Sumbar and Atrek valleys, in the extreme south-west.

Not for nothing is Turkmenia called by the Soviet people a sunny region.

A large portion of Turkmenia's territory (almost 90 per cent) is occupied by the Karakum (Black Sand) Desert, one of the biggest waterless sand deserts in the world.

In the words of a Turkmen proverb, "when a bird flies over the Karakum Desert, it sheds its plumes, and when a man walks across it, he loses his legs. . . ."

In Soviet times, however, man has become master of the land, of all its wealth, and he conducts a victorious offensive on the sands, reclaiming more and more land for the cultivation of crops, for orchards and vineyards.

Turkmenia is rich in mineral resources. Oil, gas and ozocerite deposits are worked in the west of the Republic (Nebit-Dag, Kum-Dag, Cheleken). The water of the Kara-Bogaz-Gol Gulf contain Glauber's salt, common salt and magnesium sulphate.

Coal and gas, sulphur, potassium salt, lead and other ores are also found in the Republic. All this wealth is used for the good of the Soviet people.

Ancient Civilisation

Inhabited from times immemorial, Turkmenia is a country with an ancient civilisation. Some of the memorials of material culture excavated there by archaeologists date back to 4000 B.C. It was once the land

of the Parthians, who established a powerful state with a highly advanced original culture.

Soviet archaeologists are at present conducting excavations on the site of Nissa, the Parthian capital, in the environs of Ashkhabad.

A splendid memorial of twelfth-century Turkmen architecture is the Sultan Sanjar Mausoleum. Rising to a height of nearly a hundred feet, it towers over the ruins of ancient Merv, in the Karakum Desert.

The Najm-ad-din Kubra Mausoleum, as well as the Kutlug-Timur mosque and minaret, all dating back to the fourteenth century, have survived the ravages of time in the Kunya-Urgench District, in the North of the country. Fifteenth-century architectural memorials are found among the ruins of Bagabad, "the dead city of towers".

Along with memorials of material culture, history has brought down to our days memories of battles for freedom fought there. It has preserved the memory of Mukanna, courageous leader of the revolts of the peasants and herdsmen of Merv against their feudal oppressors in the eighth century.

History has on record too, the heroic revolts of the Turkmenians under the Mongol rule, against the satraps of the Khans of the Golden Horde.

Turkmenistan's union with Russia in the eighties of the nineteenth century opened a new chapter in the history of the Turkmen people, marked by their gradual *rapprochement* with the Russian people and a joint struggle against tsarism.

New class forces with progressive tendencies arose in the economic and social life of Turkmenia and the people were initiated into the advanced Russian culture.

In Turkmenia, just as in other regions with a non-Russian population, the tsarist policy was one of colonialism. Tsarist officials stirred up national discord, doing everything to sustain patriarchal and tribal order and retarding the economic development of the region.

The bulk of the arable land, pastures and water sources was concentrated in the hands of the feudal landlords and *beys** while the Turkmen peasants suffered from land hunger and scarcity of water. Weighed down by the heavy burden of taxation and debt, they led a miserable existence.

The people of Turkmenia were freed forever from tsarism and feudalism by the October Socialist Revolution of 1917 which was carried through under the leadership of the Communist Party.

All the wealth of the country became the property of the people.

The Turkmen fought shoulder to shoulder with their Russian brothers, defending their freedom against the internal counter-revolution and foreign intervention (the British imperialists in this case), and took the destiny of their country into their own hands.

* District governors.—Ed.

A Dream Come True

A dream cherished by the Turkmen people for ages came true: they were at last able to unite, to acquire their own statehood, a fact which was to be of great value for the progress of the Turkmen nation.

In February 1925 the Congress of Soviets of Turkmenia adopted its historic decision on the formation of the Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic and the petition for its admission into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics as a sovereign state, on an equal footing with other constituent Republics.

Under the Soviet Government's reforms the land and water were made the property of the state. They were placed at the disposal of all working peasants—men or women, married or not. The right to irrigated land was denied to those who owned it by heredity, who did not cultivate the land but leased it to tenants.

These reforms ushered in a new era in the history of the Turkmen people. A shining highroad was opened to them by the Communist Party and the Soviet Government, and the dawn of a new life and happiness rose over the sunny region.

Sovereign Republic

A sovereign Republic, the Turkmen S.S.R. joined voluntarily with other equal Soviet Republics in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics for the purpose of mutual assistance on economic and political questions, as well as for defence.

Soviet Turkmenia has the right to secede from the Soviet Union, and her territory may not be altered without her consent.

A citizen of the Turkmen S.S.R. is a citizen of the Soviet Union.

Turkmenia (just as all the other Soviet Socialist Republics) has its own state arms, flag and anthem.

All power in the Republic belongs to the working people of town and country as represented by the Soviets of Working People's Deputies which constitute the political foundation of the Turkmen S.S.R.

All the wealth of the country belongs to the people.

The Supreme Soviet of the Turkmen S.S.R., the highest organ of state power in the Republic, is elected on the basis of universal, equal and direct suffrage, by secret ballot, for a term of four years.

The Supreme Soviet adopts the Constitution of the Republic and controls its observance; it approves the national economic plans and state budget, forms economic administrative areas, controls the banks, industrial, agricultural and trading enterprises and organisations, and decrees laws on the courts and on judicial procedure.

The highest executive and administrative organ of state power, the Council of Ministers of the Turkmen S.S.R., is formed by the Supreme Soviet of the Republic.

The working people of town and country are well represented in the supreme organs of state power. Their interests are expressed by the deputies, people who operate machines in the factories, work in the fields, advance the progress of Soviet culture, science and technology.

There are 282 deputies in the Supreme Soviet of the Turkmen

S.S.R. They include 139 workers and collective farmers. There are 96 women among the deputies.

Among the deputies of the Soviet Turkmenian parliament we find Saltyk Udayev, a driller employed in the Turkmenburneft oil-fields, Aman Kulmamedov, an actor of the Turkmen State Drama Theatre, Tovshan Yagmurova, a woman member of the Thaelmann Collective Farm, Atabai Kurdov, a fitter employed in a cotton ginney, Tazegul Mamedova, a woman weaver and Sogonbai Turkmenbayev, a zoo-technician.

This is symbolic of the general composition of the Supreme Soviet.

The Turkmen have elected their most authoritative and respected sons and daughters to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R.

The Turkmen S.S.R. is represented in the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. which expresses not only the common interests of all the Soviet people, but also the specific interests of each nationality of the country.

In the capital of the Soviet Union, Moscow, the deputies of the Turkmen people to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. decide, on an equal footing with the representatives of all the other fourteen Republics of the Soviet Union, questions relating to the most important state affairs.

From Backwardness to Sweeping Progress

Before the October Socialist Revolution Turkmenia was a backward border region of the Russian empire with an underdeveloped industry composed mainly of small enterprises for processing agricultural produce.

All that the Turkmenian cities had was a few cotton ginneries, soap factories and cotton oil factories; the biggest enterprise was the locomotive and car repair works at Kyzyl-Arvat.

No more than a thousand workers were employed in industry; doing exhausting toil for a mere pittance, they lived in squalid barracks and soot-stained tents.

Agriculture presented an equally wretched picture. Miserable strips of land leased from the *beys* were cultivated by the peasants by means of the wooden plough and hoe; they suffered from the chronic scarcity of water which was in the hands of the feudal lords and the rich.

Little wonder that crops were always small, the average cotton yield, for example, being no more than 8 cwt. per acre.

One of the most important and urgent tasks undertaken by the Soviet Government was the abolition of the economic and cultural backwardness of the young national Republics.

In its directives for the First Five-Year Plan, the Fifteenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (1927), emphasised that the plan should lay special stress on doing away gradually with the economic and cultural backwardness of all underdeveloped regions, including the outlying national territories, taking due account both of the needs of these regions and of the general requirements of the Soviet Union.

This Leninist national policy has borne remarkable fruit. Turkmenia has accomplished in the space of a few decades what would have taken centuries to accomplish under other social and political conditions.

The Republic has built up its own oil refining, chemical, gas, light, food and printing industries, industries for the production of building materials and modern electric power plants.

Turkmenia today has 1,200 state industrial enterprises equipped with modern machines. It is indicative that under Soviet government gross industrial output in Turkmenia had grown more than twenty-one times by the beginning of 1959, and the production of electric power 240 to 250 times.

The Republic is one of the important producers of oil, sulphates, sulphur and ozocerite in the Soviet Union, and a supplier of fish from the Caspian fisheries.

Cotton ginning is being successfully advanced. Turkmenian cotton goes to the textile mills of Moscow and Ivanovo, Latvia, Estonia, the Ukraine and Armenia; it is exported to Czechoslovakia and Poland. In Turkmenia itself production of cotton textiles has grown 2.5 times between 1940 and 1959.

There were hardly any skilled workers among the Turkmen in the old times. Skilled specialists for various branches of production have been trained in the Soviet period.

In place of thousands of small individual peasant households, which cultivated small strips of exhausted land, Turkmenia now has big collective farms engaged in more than one branch of agriculture.

They are well equipped with modern machines and they make extensive use of the achievements of agronomy. Altogether, there are 348 collective farms and forty-one state farms.

The crop yields have grown considerably, the cotton yield, for example, being double that of before the Revolution.

The main jobs in the fields are done with machines. More than 10,000 tractors and over 35,000 other farm machines are used in the collective-farm fields.

All this has lightened the labour of the collective farmers and raised its productivity.

This land, in which the oases spread fanwise to clasp the Karakum Desert in a vast semi-circle, is a traditional home of stockbreeding, which today is making great progress.

It is enough to say that in the middle of 1959 the number of sheep on the collective farms and state farms was three times greater and the herds of cattle 2.6 times greater than in the pre-war year of 1940.

Turkmenia is one of the main suppliers of karakul* pelts.

Turkmenia is an economic administrative area subject to the jurisdiction of one National Economic Council which is responsible for the management of all the industries of the Republic, and it is therefore in a position to ensure the most rational use of the local resources in the interest of the national economic progress of Turkmenia and of the Soviet Union as a whole.

Turkmenia today is a country with a highly advanced economy which is being developed in accordance with the provisions of the seven-year plan.

State capital investments in the Republic during the seven-year period

* Karakul fur is commonly known in Britain as astrakhan.

will amount to 15,700 million roubles, which is more than the total invested in Turkmenia since the establishment of Soviet power.

The largest portion of these investments is assigned to heavy industry. As compared to the previous seven years, capital investment in the oil industry will be raised by 170 per cent, in the mining and chemical industries by 220 per cent, for the production of electric power by 250 per cent.

The sum of 5,400 million roubles will be spent on oil and gas prospecting and on the equipment and development of new deposits.

Gross industrial output is to be doubled in the Turkmen S.S.R. during the seven-year period. Raw cotton production is to go up by 40 per cent. Production of consumer goods will be greatly increased. Meat, milk, wool, karakul, vegetables and fruit will be available in much greater amounts.

By fulfilling the seven-year plan the working people of Turkmenia will improve their living and cultural standards.

U.S.S.R.'s Third Biggest Oil Producer

Western Turkmenia, which adjoins the Caspian Sea, is called "a treasury of natural wealth". The principal wealth of this region, and of the Republic as a whole is oil.

Soviet Turkmenia is the third biggest oil producer in the U.S.S.R. after the Russian Federation and Azerbaijan.

Rich deposits of oil are concentrated at Nebit-Dag, Kum-Dag and on the Cheleken Peninsula. The oil fields in these regions are equipped according to the latest word in engineering.

The existence of oil on Cheleken (which was once an island, before the isthmus had been alluviated by the sea) was known for a long time. Its commercial exploitation by the British capitalist, Noble, was started at the end of the nineteenth century.

The deposits were worked by semi-handicraft methods and the output did not exceed several thousand tons even in the peak years. The workers were ill-housed; they suffered from a scarcity of water and worked in the most difficult conditions for a mere pittance.

After the Socialist Revolution, the oilfields, along with all the wealth of the country, were converted into the property of the people, who have since developed the fields like an efficient manager.

The Cheleken oil-fields have undergone a complete transformation. Equipped with the latest Soviet machines, they are provided with an abundance of electric power, compressors and drilling units. Output of oil has greatly multiplied.

The oil workers earn well; they live in modern brick houses with all conveniences.

The city of Cheleken is well supplied with water; its tracts of greenery are being constantly widened; there is an automatic telephone exchange, and a sports stadium; the city has motor bus lines and its inhabitants are looking forward to the completion of the local TV centre in the immediate future.

Or let us take Nebit-Dag, a city born in Soviet times. Although only

slightly over twenty years old, the city has grown sufficiently to earn the name of "the oil workers' capital".

Beautiful buildings line its wide asphalt streets; the luxuriant greenery makes one forget the nearness of the desert sand dunes.

A popular haunt of the citizens is the oil workers' Palace of Culture which has a fine theatre, a library, numerous rooms for amateur art circles and other facilities.

There are other clubs, too, and cinemas, libraries and other places of amusement.

Vyshka ("Derrick") is the name of the local newspaper.

The local technical school trains specialists for the oil industry.

The output of oil at Nebit-Dag is growing from year to year. Production has grown from slightly over 3 million tons in 1956 to 3.8 million tons in 1957, 4.2 million tons in 1958, and nearly 4.5 million tons in 1959, an increase of 660 per cent, as against the pre-war year of 1940.

These rates of growth have been achieved thanks to the extensive use of the latest equipment and more efficient methods of work.

New Life for Oil Workers

The appearance of these regions has changed, and so has the life of the oil workers. Let me illustrate this by a concrete example. Durdymamed Nazarov and his brother Hajkurban worked in the Cheleken oil-fields back in the old days. For many hours they worked in the merciless sunshine, drawing the oil up with buckets from a shallow well.

When Durdymamed's nephew Khalmamed came to consult him about the choice of an occupation, the old man said after a moment's thought:

"Your late father was an oil worker, and I too worked in the oil fields. It was hard work. Had you asked me about it thirty years ago, I wouldn't have advised it. It's different today. The oil worker is respected and honoured. And it is much easier to work now. See how many machines he has now to help him! If you feel you want to go to work in the oil fields, do!"

And Khalmamed went there. He began as an unskilled worker, and then studied at the technical school and became a specialist.

Before long he realised that in order to work properly these days greater knowledge is required, so he decided to become an engineer. The management of the oil fields sent him to study at the Azerbaijan Industrial Institute in Baku.

College years sped by. Khalmamed went back to Nebit-Dag, a certified engineer. He is now employed as chief engineer of Field No. 2.

"For all that I possess, my education, interesting work, my happiness, I am obliged to my country, to the Communist Party, to the Soviet Government," says Khalmamed Nazarov. "And I feel that it is my duty to do as much as possible for my Motherland. . . ."

Turkmenia's oil workers are working enthusiastically on the fulfilment of the seven-year plan. As much as 8,382 million roubles out of a total of 15,700 million roubles of the Republic's capital investments is allocated under the seven-year plan for financing the development of the oil and gas industry of Turkmenia.

Turbine drilling will attain wide dimensions in the next few years, and electric drilling will be started. Special stress is laid on deep drilling (11,000-13,000 feet). More effective methods will be used (the method of sustaining internal pressure in the layers, for example).

Extraction of oil is expected to increase in the seven-year period by 80 per cent, and of gas by 370 per cent, which means that in 1965 the Turkmenian oil workers will turn out 7.5 million tons of oil.

"White Gold"

Cotton, Turkmenia's "white gold", occupies about 50 per cent of her irrigated territory.

Cotton, of course, is a valuable raw material for industry, and essential to the national economy. Cotton is used in the production of textiles and garments, paper and absorbent cotton, film, and so on.

Most valuable is the cotton with a fine, long, silky and strong fibre. It is used in the production of superior fabrics and in many industries. The average yield of fine-fibre cotton in the Republic is 16 and more cwt. per acre.

Ordinary cotton is grown in many regions of the southern part of the U.S.S.R., but the fine-fibre cotton requires a longer period without frost and higher temperatures during the summer.

These conditions exist in the Mari Region (Murgab Valley) and in the Tedjen Valley of Turkmenia. This Republic is justifiably called the home of Soviet fine-fibre cotton: its best varieties have been developed at the Iolotan experimental station, the Murgab Oasis.

Thanks to irrigation and virgin land development, the territory under cotton in 1956 was three times greater than in 1913.

Powerful machines and advanced agronomy have become the cotton farmer's assistants. The main jobs in the cotton plantations, such as sowing and harvesting, topdressing of the plants and combating plant pests are performed with machines.

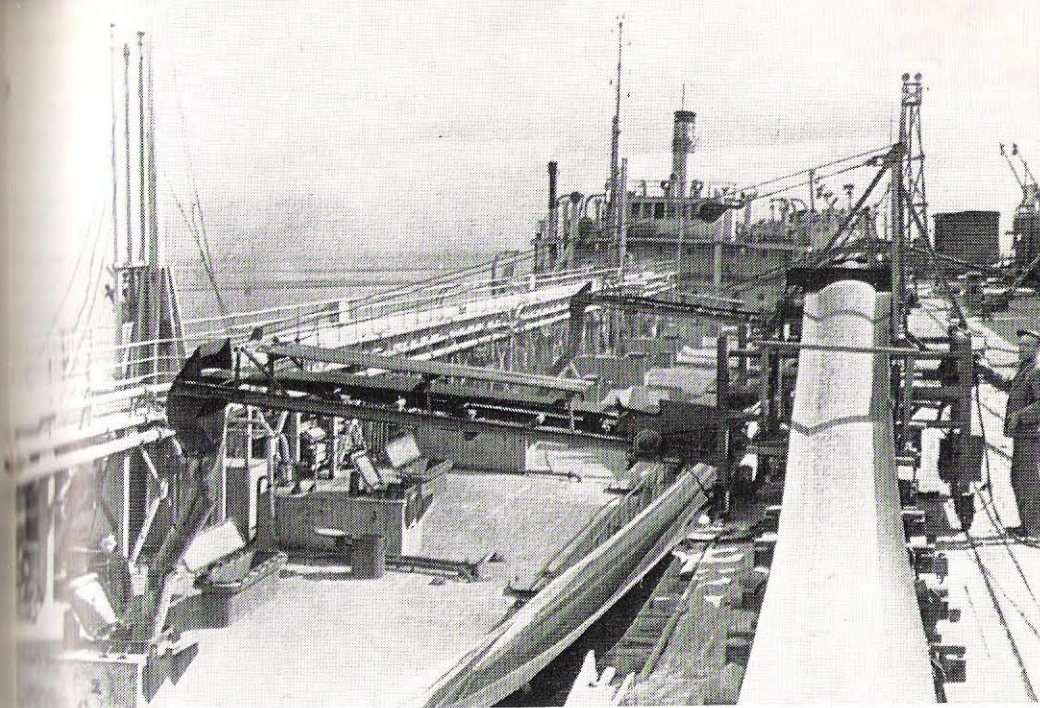
Cotton production is growing year after year. In 1957, state purchases of raw cotton amounted to 372,000 tons, double the 1940 figure; in 1958, the cotton growers of the Turkmen S.S.R. supplied their country with 384,000 tons of raw cotton.

Our cotton farmers belong to big collective farms. They have received the land from the state for perpetual use free of charge; the state has also provided them with numerous machines and agricultural specialists.

An idea of the life of the Turkmen collective farmers may be gathered from the example of Soyun-Ali, a village located in the fertile Murgab Valley. Thirty years ago, 500 families pooled their land, livestock and farm implements together and formed a collective farm which was given the name "Communism".

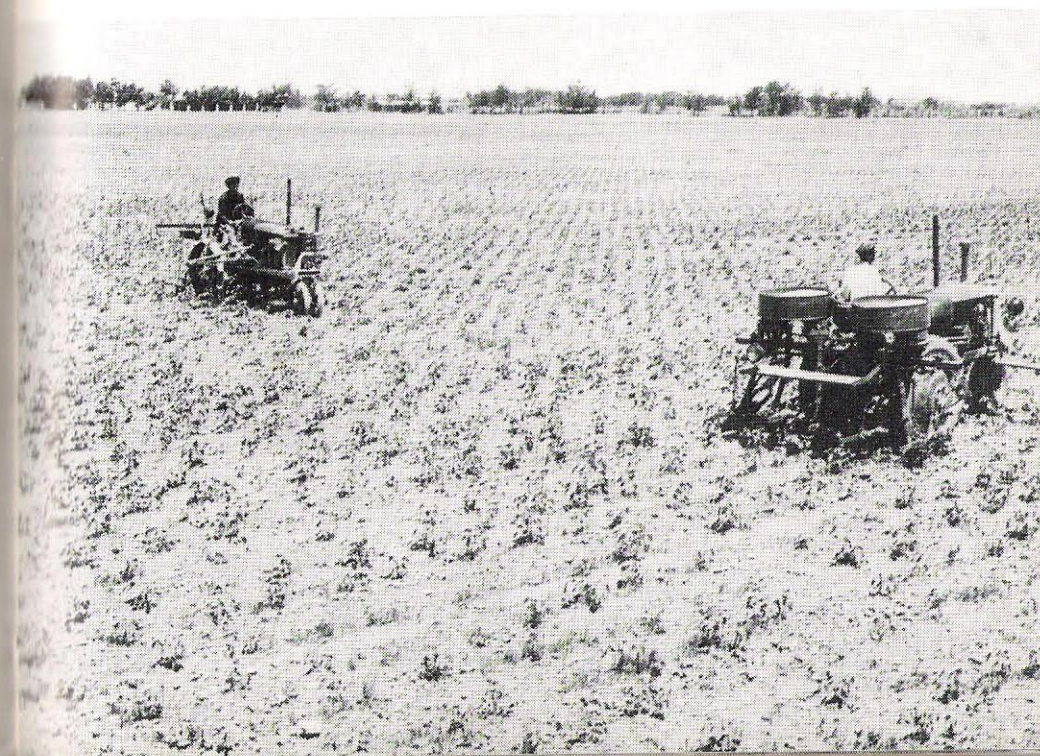
How do the members of this collective farm fare today? The farm has some 1,750 acres of irrigated land under cotton, apart from pastures, orchards and vineyards; there is a flock of 25,000 karakul sheep, more than 500 head of cattle and a poultry section with incubators.

In 1957, when the machine and tractor stations began to sell their machines and implements to the collective farms, the "Communism" col-



Loading grain at Krasnovodsk for shipment across the Caspian Sea.

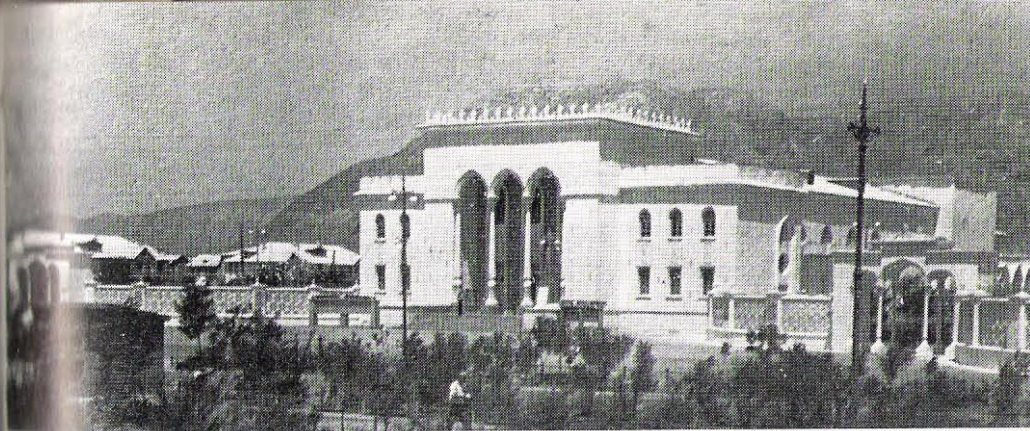
Cultivating cotton plants sown by the square-cluster method.





Loading the new cotton crop at Krasnovodsk, on the Caspian Sea.

Horse-breeding occupies a large place in Turkmenia. Below, we see Annaverdy Shakhferdiev, in sheep-skin hat. He is a stable-man at the Stalin Collective Farm, Ashkhabad Region.



Oil-extracting and refining is centred around Nebit-Dag in the west. Above is seen the Palace of Culture of the oilworkers. Behind it stands the rugged Nyeftyanaya (Oil) Mountain.

Below, oil workers among the drilling rigs.



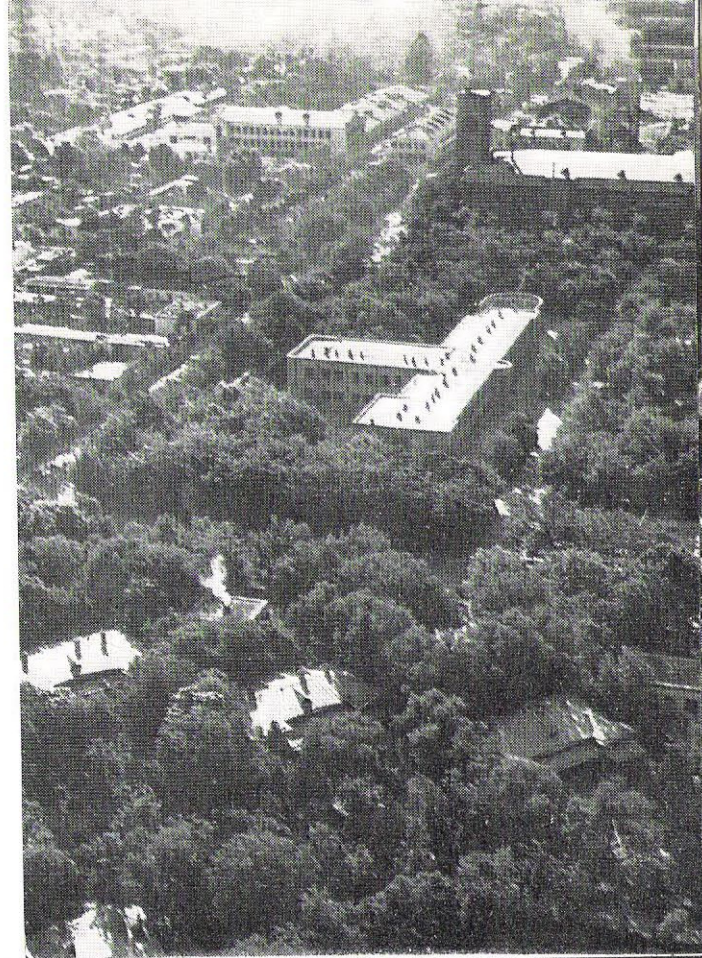


The Medical Institute in Ashkhabad.

The Supreme Soviet and the Council of Ministers of the Turkmen Republic are housed in the building below.



With so much desert around them, the Turkmenians appreciate all the trees capable of growing! In this view of the capital, Ashkhabad, we see the textile mill, with the workers' club in the centre, and houses in the foreground.



Below: The Drama Theatre in Ashkhabad.



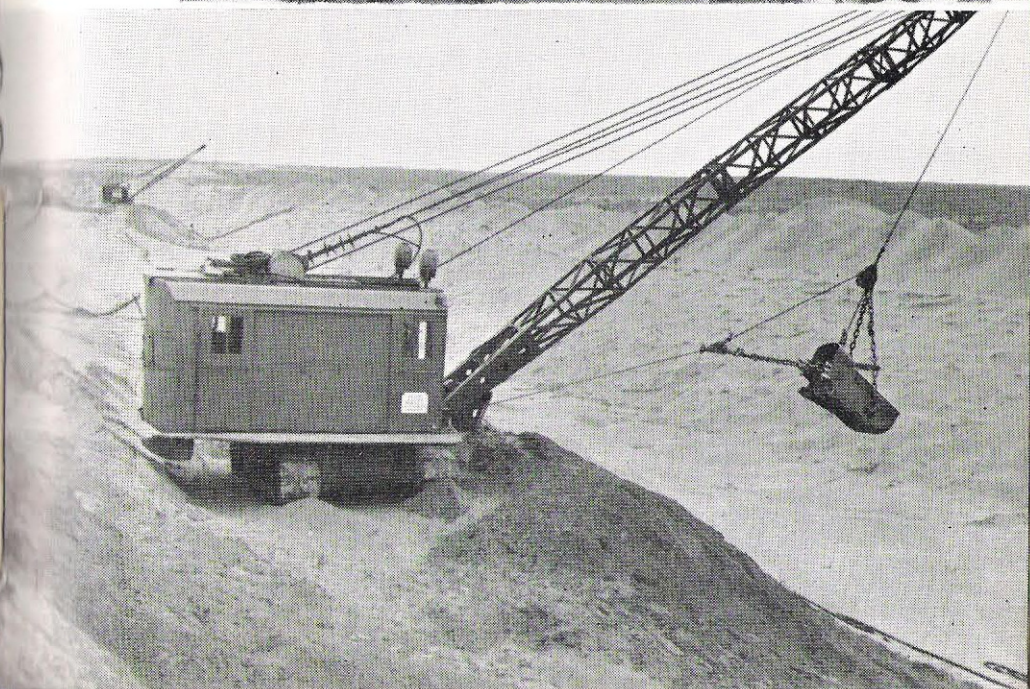


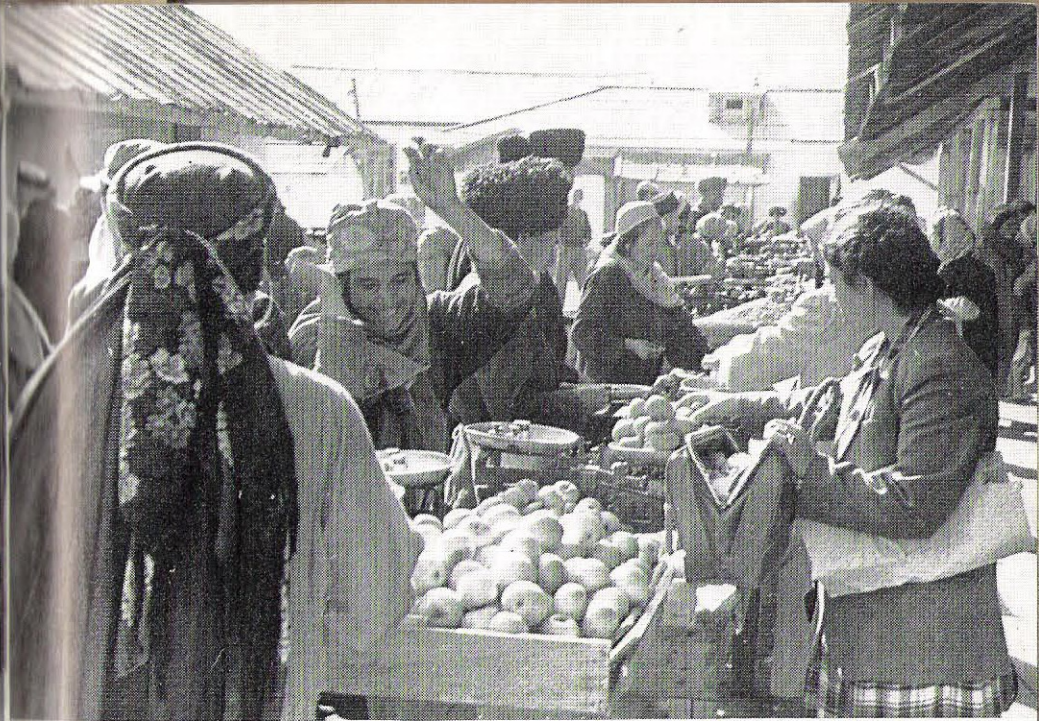
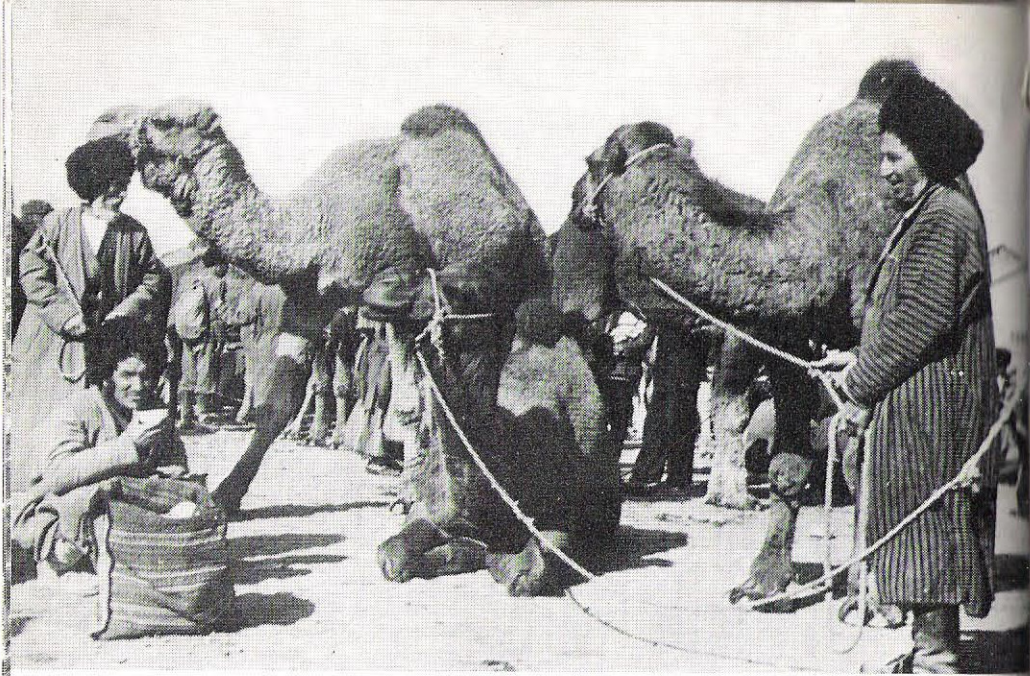
WATER
AGAINST
SAND

The shortage of moisture and abundance of heat converts more than three quarters of Turkmenia's territory into a desert—the Kara Kum. But work proceeds apace on canal and irrigation projects which will take the waters of the Amu-Dar'ya across the desert, bringing new life to many parts of the Republic.

Left: An aerial view of a section of the Kara Kum Canal. Below: Three young geologists of the Turkmenian Academy of Science prospecting in the Kara Kum. The sand temperature here can exceed 116 deg. F. in summer.

Below: At work on a section of the Kara Kum Canal.

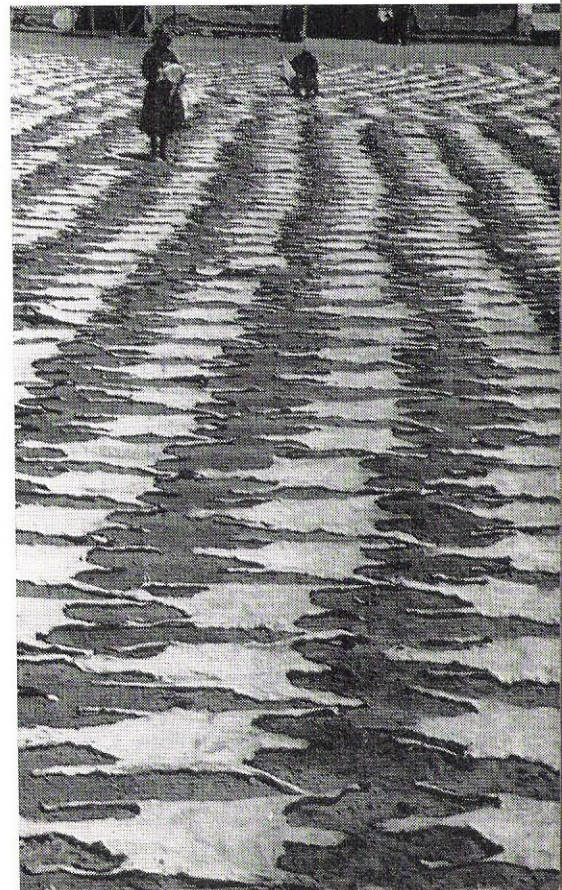




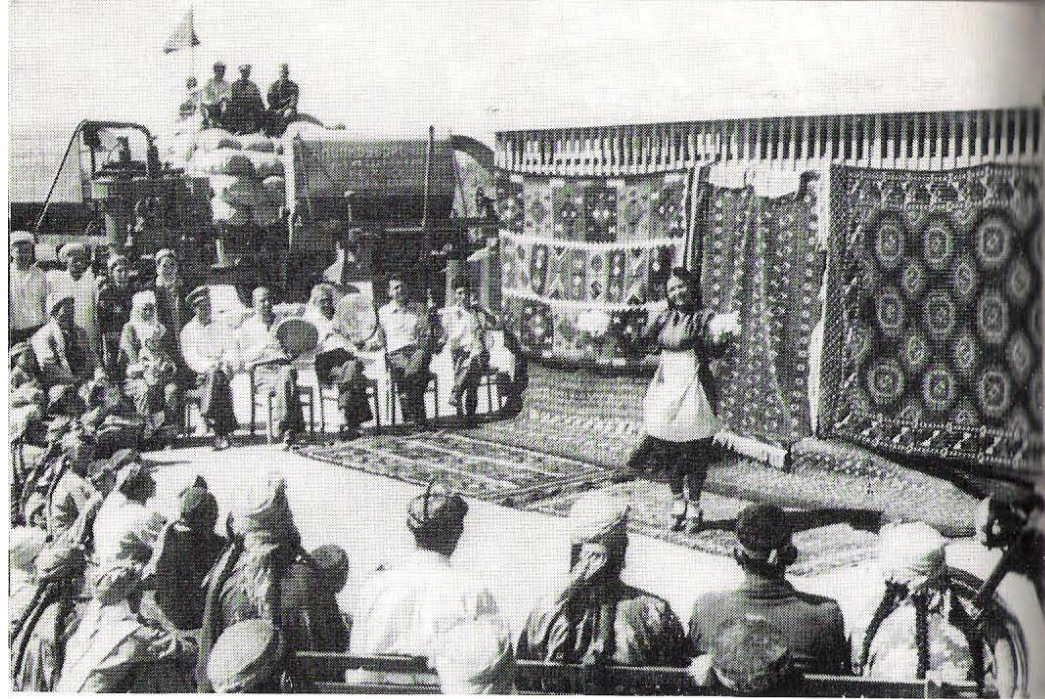
These two pictures will give an indication of the climate. Camels are not usually thought of in connection with the Soviet Union, but they are widely used here. Their drovers look very colourful in their dark red robes and black sheep - fleece hats.

Left: An aerial view of Ashkhabad, in the foreground of which can be seen a theatre —with no roof.

The collective farm market at Mari.



On the right: Expensive fur coats in the making. These are karakul pelts laid out to dry in the sun.



Carpet designing and weaving are very important crafts and industries for Turkmenia, and are taught in the schools. Right: A weaving lesson in progress at School No. 20, Ashkhabad.



Below: Students of the Turkmen State University.



"Harvest Home" calls for a dance anywhere in the world. Here in Turkmenia it is the cotton harvest, some of which can be seen with cotton-picking machines in the background, above. The dancer performs the "Cotton Picking Dance" to the music of national instruments. The stage and backcloth are beautiful Turkmenian carpets.

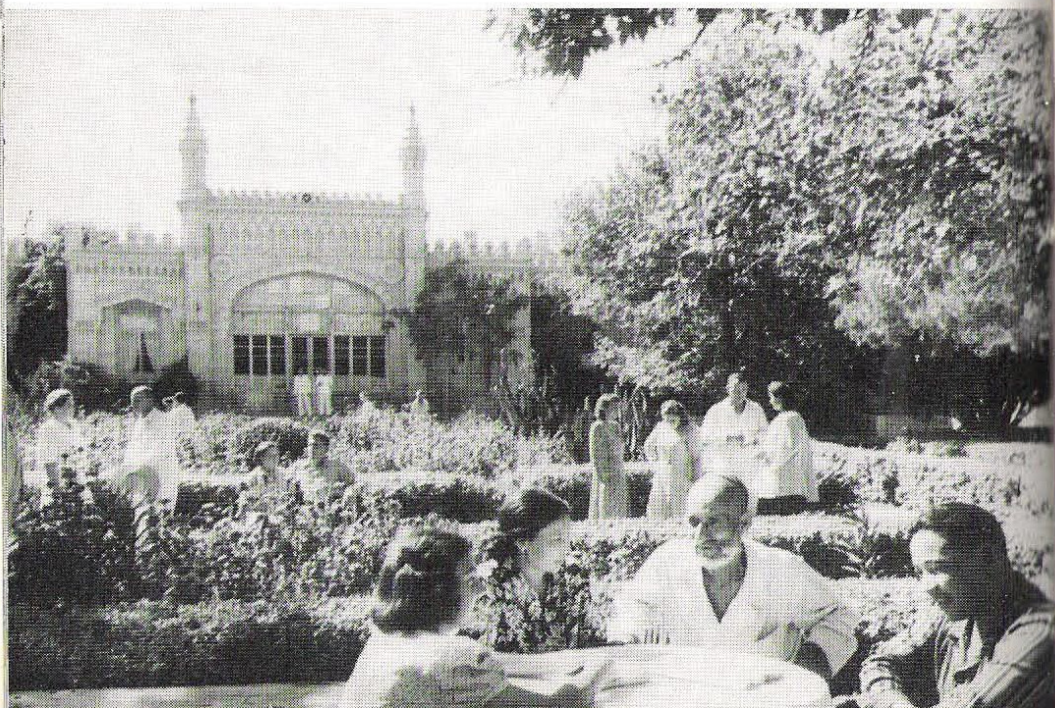
The old and the new. Bairam Kokaev, a tractor driver, returns home in his car. Passing his father, Koka Togonov, he is probably discussing the reliability of various forms of transport.





Chess under the cherry trees — or some kind of fruit — on the Sandykachy State Fruit Farm.

Below: In the gardens of the Bairam-Aili rest home and sanatorium.



lective farm bought 2 million roubles' worth of farm equipment: eighteen tractors, twenty trucks and two motor-cars, harvesting machinery, drills, cultivators and cotton ginning machinery.

The use of machines, adequate amounts of fertilisers and progressive methods of cultivation enabled the farm to raise cotton yields from 6 to 20-24 cwt. per acre. Its annual income runs into millions of roubles.

During the last four years, from its own resources the "Communism" collective farm has built a big club, a store, special premises for a kindergarten and a hospital.

Since 1957, four hundred families on this farm have had housewarmings in their new, comfortable homes.

Another example is the "Leninism" collective farm, which engages in several branches of agriculture. New houses are conspicuous in every street of the village. More than fifty families in this village moved into new homes on the eve of the celebrations of the forty-second anniversary of the October Revolution.

Attractive buildings for a secondary school and a hospital, an open air theatre surrounded by a park, and a hotel were erected in the centre of the village in the last few years. The village also has a dining hall and bakery.

Prosperous Farmers

As for the growing prosperity of the rural population in Turkmenia, that may be judged by the following figures.

In 1940, the money incomes of Turkmenia's collective farms amounted to 445 million roubles; this sum increased to 2,400 million roubles in 1958.

An increase of 1,200 million roubles was registered during the last three years.

Most of the Republic's collective farms have very high incomes, the average income of a farm exceeding 5.5 million roubles. Many collective farms net as much as 30 million roubles a year.

The family of Ishankuli Annakuliev, an ordinary family on the Kirov collective farm, may be cited as an example to illustrate the share which a collective farmer receives from the collective farm income. There are three members in this family. For work performed on the collective farm in 1957, it received 102,000 roubles and 6 tons of grain. The families of Muhammed Khalyiev, Dzhemal Charyieva and others had approximately the same income.

The labour of the collective farmers and state farm workers of Turkmenia is fully appreciated by the Soviet people. The title of Hero of Socialist Labour has been bestowed on 223 Turkmenian cotton and live-stock farmers; thousands of other collective farmers have been awarded Soviet Government Orders.

The Turkmen S.S.R. has been presented with the Order of Lenin in recognition of its achievements in agriculture, especially cotton growing.

Like other collective farms of the Republic, the Stalin collective farm of Chardzhou Region has its own seven-year plan, typical of the average farms of the Republic.

In the last two years this farm, whose output is about average, purchased fourteen tractors and twenty-seven cultivators, and many other

farm machines. Stress is laid in the seven-year plan of this farm on the complete mechanisation of cotton growing, and the electrification and mechanisation of livestock farming and other branches.

What does it expect to accomplish in the seven-year period?

By boosting yields, the farm expects to pick in 1965 and sell to the state 50 per cent more cotton than in 1958. Production of vegetables will be increased by more than 100 per cent, milk by 200 per cent, meat by 100 per cent, wool by 70 per cent, and the production of karakul will be raised to fifteen times the 1958 amount.

In 1965, with a 70 per cent increase in its income against that of 1958, the farm will be in a position to increase its investments in the common enterprise and to raise the share paid to its members.

In the last year of the seven-year period it expects to distribute about six million roubles among its farmers, an increase of more than two million roubles over the amount paid out to them in 1958.

Big Reconstruction

In view of this considerable increase in its income, the collective farm is planning large-scale construction.

Its capital investments will approximate 23 million roubles during the seven years. Of these, 4.5 million roubles will be used for the construction and equipment of cultural and utility service establishments.

The plan calls for the construction of a boarding school with room for 450 pupils, an open-air club with 500 seats, and a winter club with 450 seats, a maternity home, a kindergarten, nurseries for 100 youngsters, and so on.

Allocations for housing construction will amount to 3,200,000 roubles, which means that hundreds of families will move into new homes.

So much for the seven-year plan of this collective farm. There is no doubt whatever that this plan, the basic aim of which is the improvement of the peasants' living standards, will be carried out.

The seven-year plan provides for a steep rise in all branches of agriculture in the Republic, but chief stress will be laid as before on the production of cotton, fine-fibre cotton especially.

By expanding the cotton plantations and using the latest achievements of agrotechnique, cotton production will be raised by 40 per cent during the seven-year period. According to estimates, the cotton farmers are expected to produce about 540,000 tons of cotton in 1965.

All collective farms in Turkmenia will receive electricity during the seven-year period. Thousands of new machines will be used in the fields.

This will lighten the peasant's labour and raise productivity. And that in its turn will raise the incomes of every family on the collective farms.

Construction of dwelling units and cultural establishments in the villages will proceed on a much greater scale.

Water Comes to the Desert

"Water is life"—this is the meaning of many Turkmen proverbs. Water is a dream cherished by Turkmen tribes for many ages.

Its scarcity caused much suffering to the people in the old days when water was in the hands of the rich, while the land of the ordinary peasants was parched. Water was a source of conflict, and people even lost their lives in the battle for water.

Only under Soviet Government was the construction of irrigation systems undertaken in Turkmenia on a vast scale. The whole irrigation network of the Republic was completely rebuilt in ten years (1925-35).

Small systems were joined into big irrigation systems, the waste of water was completely eliminated and locks were built to control the flow of water from the head reservoirs.

Gravity-flow canals obviated the need for the heavy primitive wheels which pulled up buckets of water. The Bosago-Kerk and Karabekaul trunk canals, the Tashkepri and Kolkhoz bent reservoirs were built at that time.

This raised the efficiency of the irrigation network almost by 100 per cent and brought about a considerable expansion of the crop area.

Cleaning the canals of slime was a hard job in the past. Thousands of peasants worked on it in the autumn and winter. Today it is done with the aid of modern equipment. As much as 18-19 million cubic yards are cleaned annually by means of various machines today.

The first section of the Karakum Canal was completed in January 1959. Cutting across the desert over a distance of 256 miles, it carries water from the Amu-Darya River to the Murgab Oasis.

The amount of water from the Amu-Darya exceeded the estimated figure for 1959, reaching 200 cubic yards a second. About 75,000 acres of cotton plantations received water from the Amu-Darya. The canal has thus been of immediate importance to the Republic.

The Karakum Canal, one of the biggest irrigation projects in the world, was built under difficult conditions, but the builders, equipped with powerful Soviet machines, subdued the desert.

State farms for the cultivation of cotton are being organised on land which has lain barren for centuries. The first section of the Karakum Canal will provide water for irrigating 250,000 acres of virgin land which will soon blossom out with cotton plantations and fruit orchards; fine villages will be built up in the reclaimed desert.

As Amu-Darya water penetrates farther west, still greater changes will take place in the economy of the Republic. The canal will be extended to the Tedzhen River, towards Ashkhabad and beyond it to Station Archman.

With a length of 560 miles, this canal, which has no equal in the world, will irrigate more than a million acres of land and will lead to the development of another big cotton growing region in Turkmenia.

As much as 400,000 acres of desert will be reclaimed during the seven-year plan for cotton, orchards and vineyards.

The Capital

Ashkhabad, the capital of the Turkmen S.S.R., lies in the Kopet-Dag foothills. Although the Karakum sands come right up to the city in

the north, Ashkhabad resembles a big park, its beautiful buildings nestling among greenery, their airy architecture and light colours pleasing to the eye.

The biggest city of the Republic, Ashkhabad, is connected by rail, airlines and highways with all parts of Turkmenia, with Moscow and other cities of the U.S.S.R.

It is a pleasure to walk through the city streets in the early morning of a sunny day, to delight in the beauty of the blue spurs of the Kopet-Dag and to listen to the rustle of the leaves in the Keshi Park.

And the most pleasing impression is produced by the clean streets lined by new beautiful houses which are bathed in sunshine.

One of the monumental buildings with columns is occupied by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Turkmen S.S.R. and the Council of Ministers of the Republic. It is there that the parliament of Soviet Turkmenia assembles for its sessions.

Ashkhabad is an important industrial and cultural centre. Big spinning and weaving as well as silk mills, a shoe factory, two glass factories and other modern enterprises have been built in the city in Soviet times.

Ashkhabad is famous also as a centre of Turkmenian rug weaving. Turkmen rugs have been exhibited in the Soviet pavilions at many world fairs and exhibitions.

Ashkhabad is the seat of the Academy of Sciences of the Turkmen S.S.R.; it has a university, two institutes, thirty research institutes, three theatres, four museums, botanical gardens and a zoo. The rich cultural and scientific life of Ashkhabad is connected by numerous channels with the corresponding activities in the whole of the Soviet Union.

Earthquake

Eleven years ago, on the night of October 5th, 1948, Ashkhabad was badly ruined by an earthquake which left the city and neighbouring villages lying in ruins.

The damage was so great that in other circumstances it would have taken the city and the Republic as a whole a long time to recover from this blow.

But Turkmenia is a member of the great, strong and friendly family of Soviet peoples. In response to the appeal of the Communist Party and of the Soviet Government, aid was rushed to Turkmenia at once from all parts of the country.

More than 100 powerful planes flew every day, transporting the injured people, delivering medical supplies, food and water. More than 1,000 doctors and other medical workers from Moscow, Baku, Tashkent and Alma-Ata came to Ashkhabad to give urgent assistance.

The entire country helped to restore Ashkhabad. Trains laden with building materials came one after another. They brought timber from Siberia, cement from the Volga area, metal and various equipment from the Urals and the Ukraine, hundreds of prefabricated houses from the Northern regions.

Turkmenians worked on the construction jobs side by side with

Russians, Ukrainians, Uzbeks, Tajiks, Azerbaijanians and Armenians, who came there obedient to the dictates of their hearts.

The layout of the city and its architecture were changed during its restoration. Ashkhabad today is a more beautiful and more comfortable place to live in than before.

Public Health Services

Ask an aged Turkmenian about life in the old days, and you will certainly hear about the *tabib*, the medicine man to whom most of the peasants applied for relief in the case of sickness.

Boils, for example, were treated by applying the warm flesh of freshly-killed lizards or puppies. The *tabib* would mix red pepper with camel's milk, rubbing this poisonous liquid into the eyelids of persons suffering from trachoma.

There were few doctors and skilled medical assistance was not available to the Turkmens before the Revolution. Hence the very high mortality rate. The tsarist government spent approximately 14 kopeks per head of the population on health protection.

One of the first undertakings of the Soviet Government was the planned organisation of health services in the Republic. Hospitals, polyclinics and other medical centres appeared in the cities and villages.

The amount spent on health services grew from 3 million to 56 million roubles in ten years (1928-38). By 1937, Turkmenia already had more than 1,800 doctors and surgeon's assistants.

The State Medical Institute, opened in Ashkhabad in 1932, became a centre for the training of medical specialists. Its graduates may be met in all parts of Turkmenia. This institute has trained more than 2,500 doctors.

It may be said without fear of exaggeration that Soviet power has saved the Turkmenians from extinction. Thanks to the heroic efforts of the medical workers, the Turkmenian people have been freed forever from the hotbeds of dangerous hereditary diseases which in some cases affected entire regions; they were caused by the inhuman conditions in which most of the people lived in the old days.

The Republic has fifty-nine health and anti-epidemic stations, five air ambulance stations and several medical research institutes.

State allocations for health protection purposes in 1957 reached 196 roubles per head of the population.

Turkmenia now has sixteen doctors for every 10,000 people, compared with neighbouring Iran, which has less than one per 10,000. Turkmenia's mortality rate in 1913 was 260 per cent higher than it is today.

The Ministry of Health maintains a large network of kindergartens and nurseries where the children are well cared for and provided with wholesome meals. They grow up to be healthy and cheerful. School-children can go during school holidays to summer camps situated in the most healthy places of Turkmenia.

Many sanatoria and holiday homes have been built in the Republic. Among the most popular Turkmen resorts are Archman (in the Kopet-

Dag foothills) which is known for its healthy climate and medicinal springs, Mollakara, near Krasnovodsk, known for its curative muds, and Bairam-Ali, in the Murgab Oasis, which is most suitable for persons suffering from kidney disorders.

Every year, trade unions provide accommodation for thousands of working people at sanatoria and holiday homes at a reduced price or free of charge.

Allocations for the construction and equipment of medical and prophylactic establishments, children's institutions, medical research institutes, sanatoria and holiday homes in the Republic in 1959-65 amount to 191 million roubles. The number of hospital beds is to be increased by 34 per cent.

Rising Cultural Standards

A cultural revolution has taken place in Turkmenia

Mr. Gunnar Myrdal, former Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission, who visited the Soviet Republics of Central Asia, described his impressions at a press conference as follows: You have taken a great leap forward; perhaps that may have entailed great sacrifices and it may have cause great difficulties to people. But I note that living and cultural standards are growing in this part of the U.S.S.R. where some forty to fifty years ago very few could read and write. I am satisfied that today almost everyone is literate, especially the young generation. That is simply splendid . . . I am astonished at this development, and feel that nothing can stop it. . ." (Retranslated from the Russian.)

Education

Only seven out of 1,000 in Turkmenia could read and write before the Revolution, whereas today illiteracy is unknown here. There is not a village in the Republic without a seven-year or ten-year school.

There are 1,348 schools in Turkmenia with an attendance of about 250,000. The children are taught in the native language, and there is no charge for tuition.

Twenty-five specialised secondary schools are training oil workers, railwaymen and other specialists for the national economy.

People have every opportunity for a college education. The Republic has a university and medical, agricultural and teachers' training institutes. It is noteworthy that there are 172 college students for every 10,000 inhabitants in the Turkmen S.S.R. (the corresponding figure in Iran, for example, is four, and in Pakistan eight students).

About 18,000 specialists graduated from the higher learning and specialised secondary schools of the Republic in the last seven years (before 1958). They include many women who are employed with success in various fields of economic and cultural endeavour on an equal footing with men. It is worth noting that in 1957 the number of Turkmen intellectuals was 230 per cent greater than in 1940.

Schools of higher learning will graduate 10,000 between 1959 and 1965 as against 7,084 in the previous seven years.

Turkmen girls and youths are attending college not only in their

own Republics, but also in the other fraternal Republics of the Soviet Union. Education has become universal in the full sense of the word.

Science

Turkmenia's young science has its source in the higher educational establishments and scientific institutions of Moscow and Leningrad. That is just one of the manifestations of the Leninist principles of the national policy in the realm of culture.

With the aid of Russian scientists Turkmenia undertook the systematic study of her natural wealth, founded her first research institutions, and trained her own scientists. The need for extensive scientific research was dictated by the sweeping development of Turkmenia's national economy.

The Academy of Sciences of the Turkmen S.S.R., founded in 1951, has become the headquarters of advanced scientific thought and a centre for training Turkmen scientists. It has departments of social, biological, geological, physico-technical and chemical sciences with nine research institutions, a museum and botanical gardens.

The work of its scientists is known outside the Republic. Sixty-five young scientists are doing post-graduate research in the Academy.

The staff of the Institute of Physics and Geophysics of the Turkmenian Academy of Sciences successfully fulfilled its assignments under the International Geophysical Year programme, and it has been conducting observations of the sputniks.

Its Geology Institute is working on problems connected with the survey of local oil and gas deposits, with prospecting and estimating mineral deposits.

The Institute of History, Language and Literature is studying the literary heritage of the Turkmen people as well as modern literature. The scientists of this institute have prepared for the press the *History of Turkmenia*, a fundamental work covering a period from ancient times to the present day.

An extensive programme of research will be carried out under the seven-year plan.

The Arts and Literature

There was not an opera house or drama theatre in Turkmenia before the October Revolution.

Even in the late twenties, when the first theatre was founded, public opinion still forbade women to appear on the stage.

. . . That time is now long since past.

The Turkmen Drama Theatre has been functioning in Ashkhabad for more than thirty years now. Its repertoire includes plays by Shakespeare and Gogol, Ostrovsky and Molière, as well as productions by the Turkmenian playwrights Gussein Mukhtarov, Berdy Kerbabayev, Kara Seitliev and others.

The Makhtum Kuli Opera and Ballet Theatre founded eighteen years ago has produced many operas in the Turkmen and Russian languages. Great favour has been won by the national operas *Shasenem and Garib*, *Leyli and Mejnun* and *Aina*, and by the Turkmen ballet *Aldar Kosse*.

Great popularity is enjoyed by the drama theatres of Mari, Chardzhou and Tashauze. There are theatres in the district centres too. The Republic has its own Philharmonic Society, its Dance Ensemble, the State Chorus and an orchestra of folk instruments.

People's Artists of the U.S.S.R. Mayya Kulieva, Alta Karliev and Sona Muradova, as well as the composers Dangatar Ovezov and Veli Mukhatov have gained countrywide renown.

There are about 1,000 clubs and Palaces of Culture in the Republic. Amateur art activities afford the opportunity for self-expression to people of different ages and occupations; among the members of the amateur dramatic companies, music and choreographic groups one finds workers and college students, collective farmers and professionals.

The road to professional art is open to young talent, and many professional actors come from amateur art groups.

Seventeen Houses of Culture are to be built in the workers' communities and district centres in the seven-year period; many libraries will also be added.

The number of film projecting units will be increased by more than 50 per cent. A conservatoire of music will be opened at Ashkhabad.

Turkmenian cinematography is still very young, but the Ashkhabad studio is already known by its interesting productions, such as *Faraway Bride*, *Family Honour* and *Special Assignment* which have been highly praised by critics and the public. Many documentary films have also been produced by this studio.

Books, newspapers and radio have become part and parcel of people's lives. There was not a newspaper in the national language in the old days. Sixty-four newspapers and fourteen magazines are published in the Republic today, mainly in the Turkmen language.

The State Publishing House of Turkmenia puts out about 400 books annually in editions totalling 2.5-3 million. The publication of the thirty-five-volume edition of Lenin's *Works* in the Turkmen language has already been completed.

Five thousand books, double the number published in the previous seven years, are included in the programme for the current seven-year period.

Practically in every Turkmen home one finds the works of Pushkin and Balzac, Leo Tolstoy and Emile Zola, Maxim Gorky and Mark Twain, books by Indian, Arab and by many other Soviet and foreign authors in Turkmenian translation.

Pre-revolutionary Turkmen literature was limited to poetry and folk epics handed down by word of mouth, whereas today the rapidly developing Turkmen literature is represented in all the genres.

It rests upon the sound foundation of socialist realism. Turkmenia's writers are striving to give a truthful picture of the rich life of their people. Among the most successful writers one may mention Berdy Kerbabayev, Beki Seitakov and Kara Seitliev. In their new works Turkmenia's writers reproduce the character of the Soviet man who is carrying through the seven-year plan, the builder of the new world.

Road to a Radiant Future

The seven-year plan holds out a magnificent promise to the Turkmen S.S.R., and to the Soviet Union as a whole. The scope of construction under way is without precedent even in the Land of Soviets.

Turkmenia's working people treat the seven-year plan as something of vital concern to themselves, for they know that it will make their lives still richer and happier.

One of the main tasks of the seven year plan is a much higher living standard for the Soviet people. **Workers' real incomes will go up by an average of 40 per cent** as a result of wage increases, increases in pensions and benefits, and as the result of further cuts in food prices in public catering establishments.

The growth of agricultural production and higher productivity will **raise real incomes of the collective farmers also by at least 40 per cent.**

More than 100,000 new flats will be built in Turkmenia during the seven years. There will be new cultural, educational and medical services, new state boarding schools, kindergartens and nurseries.

The seven-year plan provides for a 71 per cent increase in the volume of the Republic's trade. Substantial additions will be made to the number of stores and dining halls. Better quality goods will be available for sale in growing quantities. Production of footwear, for example, will be increased by almost 300 per cent, of furniture by 600 per cent, and the production of garments and knitted goods will be doubled.

All this cannot but please the Soviet citizen and inspire him to greater efforts. On the whole, the industry of the Republic overfulfilled the quota for nine months in the first year of the seven-year plan; output is much greater than in the corresponding period of 1958.

The results of the first year of the plan are already evident. New oil deposits have been discovered in the Okarem and Kamyshilj districts. The rich deposit at Kotur-Tepe is yielding oil in steadily growing amounts.

Although the working day in many industrial enterprises has been reduced to seven hours, output is growing steadily.

Turkmenia's working people are determined to fulfil the provisions of the seven-year plan for agricultural production in six years, and some of the provisions in five years. There is no doubt that they will accomplish this.

In conclusion I would like to quote the words of the well-known Turkmen composer, Veli Mukhatov, who is a Deputy to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R.:

"What is happiness?" he asked; and replied:

"Different answers have been given to this question at different times. An apt and striking answer, in my opinion, was given by an Eastern philosopher who said: 'When you can see your future in front of you, then you have real happiness.' This profound definition of happiness is applicable not only to man. Happy is a people which has such a splendid present. Happy are you, my Turkmenia, in your absorbing advance into the future, into communism . . ."

The life of the industrious Turkmenian people, just as the life of all the fraternal peoples of the Soviet Union, is becoming better and more radiant from year to year. The seven-year plan is the direct road to a radiant future.

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