

Abstract:
Exploration in the USSR,
by Earl Ingerson *

The gross national production of the United States is still more than twice that of the U.S.S.R. At their proposed rate of increase they would catch us in about 12 years; at the actual current rate it would take more nearly 25 years.

However, the U.S.S.R. is spending at least 1% of the GNP in exploration for raw materials. It is difficult to estimate just how much is spent for exploration in the U.S., but it is almost certainly less than a tenth of a per cent, so the Russians are spending perhaps five times as much as we are per square mile for mapping and exploration.

In the U.S.S.R. mapping and exploration for mineral deposits is done largely by the Ministry of Geology and Conservation of Mineral Resources. The total personnel of the Ministry is over 20,000, of which some 14,000 are geologists. Approximately 6000 field parties are sent out each year, ranging from a few geologists to self-sufficient communities of over a thousand people.

Such a hugh exploring expedition operating in Yakutia with both geological and geophysical parties discovered a major diamond field, a coal field estimated to contain 40 billion tons, a big gas field and important deposits of gold and tin.

A separate Ministry of Petroleum has an exploration and research program almost as large as that of Geology. Geochemical methods are used rather extensively along with geophysical and geological exploration. New fields are being found all the way from the (European) Russian Platform to Transbaikalia. Current production is about 100 million tons of oil per year and 20 billion cubic meters of gas; projected for 1957, 350 to 400 million tons of oil and 270 to 300 billion cubic meters of gas.

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