Soviet Union Stretches Through 11 Time Zones

By ROBERT J. KORENGOLD
United Press International

Moscow —(UPI)— It covers one-sixth of the earth's inhabited land surface, sprawls across two continents roughly one-half of Europe and one-third of Asia, borders on 12 nations and 12 seas, and could easily hold within its borders two United States of Americas.

Its 8,602,700 square miles make it bigger than all of South America.

That is the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics – Soviet Union for short.

From its western frontiers with Romania, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Norway and Finland it stretches more than 6,000 miles and 11 time zones toward the east, where it touches North Korea and the Pacific ocean.

At one point, on the Bering Straits, its far eastern boundary is only 56 miles from U. S. territory in Alaska.

From the country's Arctic ocean frontiers in the north to its southern borders with Turkey and Iran and in the southeast with Afghanistan, Mongolia and Communist China is a journey of roughly 3,000 miles.

Huge Population

The Soviet Union with 220 million citizens, is the third largest country in the world in population behind China and India.

Its climate differences are so great that roses can be blooming in the south while temperatures colder than those at the North Pole prevail near Yakutia in northern Siberia.

The Soviet Union also is rich in virtually every mineral and other natural resource. It has nearly one-third of the forest land of the entire world, as well as 100,000 rivers and the world's largest hydropower resources.

It is the world's first ranking producer of iron ore, coal and woolen cloth, and Europe's largest producer of pig iron, steel, electricity, cement, machines and cotton fabrics.

Rivals U. S.

Along with its industrial growth the USSR also has emerged as the world's main political and military rival to the United States.

The launching of the first Soviet artificial earth satellite (Sputnik-1) Oct. 4, 1957, carried the world into the space age. Historically, the Soviet Union stems directly from czarist Russia, but it has grown into a union of 15 different republics welded into one nation.

Soviet citizens represent more than 100 different peoples speaking roughly as many languages. They range from slant-eyed Mongolian racial stock to blue-eyed Slavs and dark-haired Caucasian mountain peoples in the south.

Farming Is Vital

The Soviet Union's main economic accent is on industrializing what was once a predominantly agricultural country. But farming still plays a major role in Soviet life.

Since the 1917 revolution almost all private farms have been turned either into giant state run enterprises (sovkhozes) where workers are paid wages, or into collective farms (kolkhozes) where the peasants divide the profits of their joint operations.

Although the Soviet Union is no longer a "capitalist" country, it is not, by its own definition, a "Communist" one.

It is a "socialist" state which Soviet leaders view as sort of a stepping stone to a full Communist society in which all citizens theoretically would be provided abundantly with whatever they needed, without regard to their actual work contribution to the common good. Meanwhile, benefits are in proportion to work performed and it is illegal for one person to make a profit from labor of another.

SHOWS RUSSIA—This United Press International newsmap shows the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (horzontal lines), the Communist giant which covers one-sixth of the earth's inhabited land surface. (UPI)

Thus, only the state can run any enterprise in which people are employed to make a profit.

Can Own Home

A Soviet citizen is not barred from having private property, however. He can own his own home, buy a car and even hire someone to help him do a job, providing he pays his helper for work performed and doesn't make a profit directly from his work.

Soviet workers still are paid relatively modest cash wages. But they have numerous state-paid benefits such as completely free medical care and free education and low rents.

Pick a Russian off the street and you will probably find him an avid reader, theatergoer and sports fan.

The Soviet Union prints one-fifth of the world's books. It has more than 500 professional theater companies and nearly 30 million Soviet citizens belong to sports or physical culture clubs.

Russians also are education-minded with a vengeance. More than 2.6 million students are enrolled in higher educational establishments in the USSR, almost four times the amount enrolled in Great Britain, France, West Germany and Italy combined.

Many consumer goods are still in short supply because of the heavy industry emphasis but there have been government efforts in recent years to improve the quality and variety of what there is.

Retains Old Habit

Along with its efforts to raise living standards, the Soviet regime has retained old Russian habits of secrecy and suspicion of foreigners, who are barred from travel to many areas of the country.

It also has kept a tight control over what USSR citizens may see, hear and think.

The Soviet Union is officially an atheist state – nonbelief in God. Religion, but not religious instruction, is tolerated. It is attacked constantly, however, in the government press.

No foreign newspapers other than Communist are allowed on sale anywhere in the USSR, and many foreign radio broadcasts are drowned out by an elaborate network of Soviet radio transmitters.

Although the Soviet Union has a president (Leonid Brezhnev), a prime minister (Nikita Khrushchev), a parliament (the Supreme Soviet) and periodic nationwide elections in which only one candidate runs for each office, it is not this giant apparatus, but the Communist party, which really runs the nation.

Only one in 22 Soviet citizens is a party member (about 10 million in all) but their influence is enormous.

In very general terms, the party leadership decides what is to be done and then the government does it.

In many instances people who have responsible party posts also hold top government jobs as well.

Premier Khrushchev has just such a double responsibility. He is not only premier, but is first secretary of the party Central committee or, in effect, leader of the party.

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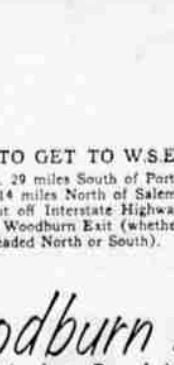

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400 Area Residents To Receive Checks From Government

Some 400 or more Jackson county residents will soon be getting windfalls in the form of Government pension checks.

These payments, unsought and unexpected, represent benefits due them under the Old-Age and Survivors Insurance system. They are entitled to them because of their contributions, over the years, to the OASI trust fund.

Then why are they not receiving them? Simply because they did not apply for them.

Why did they not apply for them? Because they did not realize they were entitled to them.

Startled To Discover

The OASI themselves were startled to discover recently that there are more than 1,000,000 people in the United States who are eligible for pensions but are not getting them.

When it became apparent that there were more of them than had been realized, they gave their giant computers the task of finding out just how many. An avalanche of names poured out of the machines.

For every 17 people or so who are receiving monthly pension checks, there is an additional one, it develops, who should be but is not.

In Jackson county, there are an estimated 417 of these non-collecting eligibles.

They could be receiving anywhere from $40 a month, which is the minimum amount paid, to the present maximum of $254 a month.

Average Benefit

The average old-age benefit, according to the latest OASI figures, is $76.18.

On the basis of this average, the 417 local beneficiaries who are on the missing list are passing up payments aggregating about $31,757 every month, or $381,140 a year.

Some spot-checking on the part of the Government reveals that there are many reasons to explain the failure of qualified people to apply for their pensions.

Most of them didn't think they were eligible. This was frequently so in the case of men and women who continued working beyond age 65.

Others thought they didn't have enough working quarters to qualify. They were unaware of changes in the rules that reduced the number of quarters needed.

A large number of others had the false notion that a person had to be needy to be entitled to Social Security pensions.

GROWING BIZ

New York – (UPI) – Caring for the health of farm animals is a business certain to grow, believes Whitmoyer laboratories, which makes 90 products for livestock and poultry growers. The company says millions of calves, sheep, swine and poultry die yearly that could be saved and brought to market.

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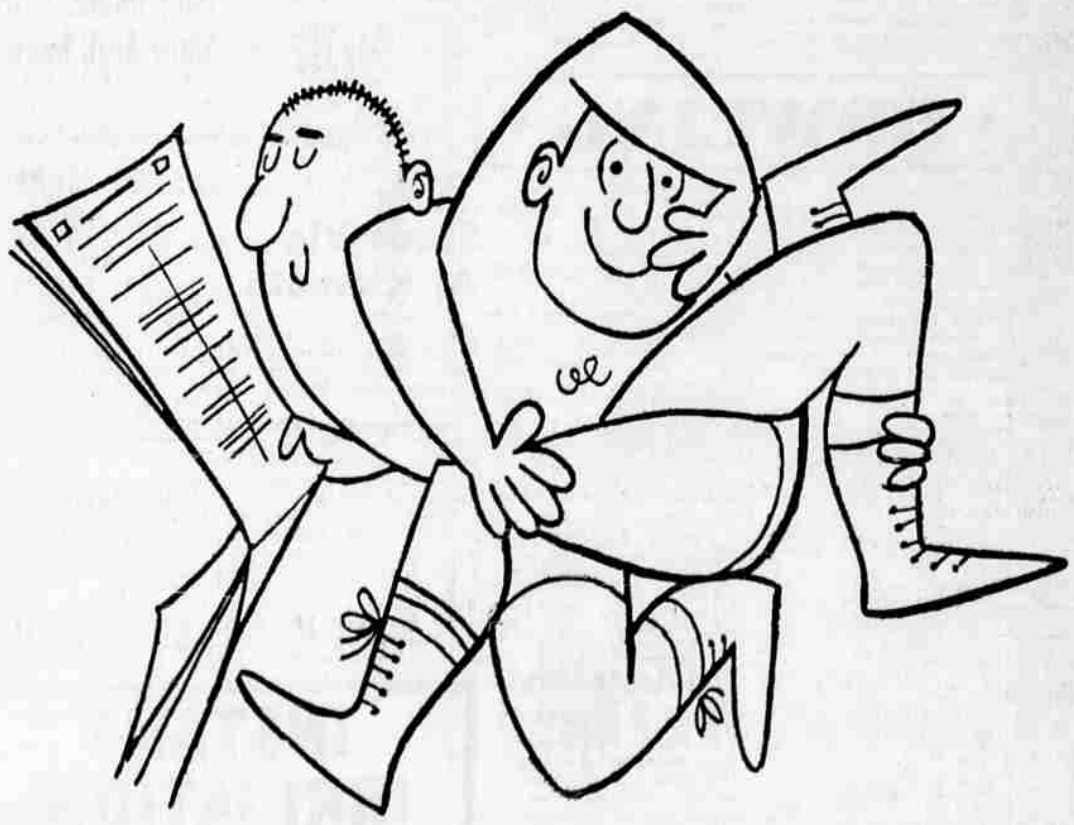

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