

Stenogram

Report of People's Commissar of the Food Industry of the USSR Comrade A.I. Mikoyan on his trip to America

November 14, 1936

(Mikoyan's appearance in the hall is met with thunderous applause, turning into an ovation. The hall applauds standing.)

Comrade Mikoyan Comrades! We have gathered here to make a certain presentation about the trip to America. This will be a presentation because I was not prepared to make a [formal] report for you. The report cannot consist only of sharing impressions; there must be both an agenda and conclusions. But I think that we must not be limited to a presentation only. I prepared (although it is not quite ready yet) a whole group of measures for each industry and we will convene a special industry meeting where we will consider all the proposals, where we will report in detail about everything, and where we will adopt an action program for each industry. Such measures are almost finalized for meat (there was already a small meeting), they are almost completed for the baking industry (proposals have also been drawn up) and gradually we will do the rest. As a result, we have some serious material, in fact we have directives to develop a third five-year plan, since the instructions specify technical capacities that provide the basis for the development of industry, types of enterprises, what kind of equipment, what kind of bulk products to develop, and what organizational proposals. What we have worked out will be the basis of a five-year plan; we will only have to provide figures for individual years. This work must be conducted properly, the materials from the comrades who were with me in America must be viewed from the perspective of restructuring all branches of industry on the basis of this experience.

While in America, I tried not to do what my comrades were already doing: I was not involved in perfumery and soap – Comrade Zhemchuzhina was there; she looked this business over well and gave us the material. (Yes, and I would not have had enough time to look at everything.) I did not look at confectionary shops (I looked at biscuits, but I did not deal with this matter in detail), I did not really do margarine, I looked at only one plant for sugar – there was not enough time. I did not deal with salt in detail, although there was a rather interesting

evaporated salt, a vacuum system, and ours [...] the system is bad, the equipment catches fire. This will be useful for the saltworks and for the Far East. There are things we could learn from the Americans. They have two interesting factories: one produces salt from brine using vacuum devices, the other method is to obtain sea salt from sea water, and then, salt iodization.

Before I start telling you about what needs to be learned, and especially to be adopted for the USSR, I must say the following: when we started our trip, very soon, within a week, it became clear that we were going about it slightly incorrectly. We looked at the enterprises and saw that this was good, that was good, and the other was good. I must say that I tried to look for the good things, I did not go there to see for myself that capitalism is rotten. I have been convinced of this for a long time and did not look for any new proof of this. I wanted to seek out everything that is good, even on a tiny scale, in order to adopt this good for us. Therefore, I will mainly speak about those good things here: what we can learn from the bourgeoisie, what is best to take for ourselves and adopt. But for the bad things, I don't want to waste time on them.

We looked: this is good, that is good, and then impression after impression comes together. But what and to what degree can be transferred to the USSR? There is no time to think about this. I had a real fear that we would travel as tourists, we'll report that there are good things in America, but it will be difficult to say what needs to be done in the USSR. I said to my comrades: let's not only write the reports about what we have seen, we don't even need to write that. Let's say what to take from each factory for transfer to the USSR. My comrades protested a little that it wouldn't work and didn't do it for a week; it seemed to them that it was difficult to do it. To do this, you need to know your Soviet industry well, its capabilities, in order to say: this is it, this needs to be changed; for this you need to have large calculations.

You also need to be able to observe. It is one thing to find out what is good and another to say how this good is transferred to the USSR. This is much more difficult. I told each comrade to write proposals and read them several times. They say there is no time, we are going somewhere. I said, don't go, draft it. Finally, they wrote to me. And now, when the comrades have arrived in Moscow, there is not enough time, we cannot find the time to edit the finished proposal. This means that there is no time, they might forget everything, and we will not have what we need.

I mean to complete all the work in the coming months, so that for each industry there is written, on the order of a decree, a draft proposal, a resolution that we are introducing into the

USSR on the basis of American expertise. It must be said that the expertise of America shows us, for example, something in the meat industry – we need to raise our meat industry to the level of American technology, we need to do something. At the same time, it is necessary to give the figures for 1937 in the project draft (everything is accurate and specific), and the rest without specifying the exact year. This is the kind of work we have to do.

All the time we had the fear that we would return as tourists, I was even afraid myself: the tour was over, we saw a lot, you come, you relate many things, but everything will remain as before. This is a big and dangerous task. Our task was not just to see everything interesting, but to see everything that is necessary to transfer to the Soviet Union.

What in general catches your eye in America (not just in the food industry)? Firstly, the Americans have built many factories, houses, bridges, paved areas, and stations. The crisis slows them down, but their great national wealth has not been destroyed. But it's not even that bad. We also build, we build a lot, but they build little. In general, in America now, except for highways, bridges, tunnels, we did not see anything under construction. In the food industry, I saw only two production facilities that are being expanded, although overall I saw about a hundred companies. Major factories are not being built at all.

But on the other hand, this year, for the first time since the depression, facilities are being updated. Comrades, they correctly told me that they are doing a lot of work in construction bureaus and laboratories. This is correct. They have many inventions, they have a lot of improvements. Now they are not building new factories, but they are intensively updating the equipment of old factories. Some factories work in one shift, others in one-and-a-half or two shifts. Those who caught up with the level of American technology in the past year may already be behind if they did not go forward together with America.

But it was not American technology that struck me the most, it is the American workers of the capitalists. Capitalists, of course, don't work, they often don't even know where the financier is. It is very rare for a firm to have an owner; most of the capital is impersonal because there are shareholders. For example, the firm does not say that this is Rockefeller's firm. They even conceal them. Capitalists do not work themselves, they only distribute shares, play, and sell. Directors, engineers, and hired hands work, and, it's true, they are well paid; sometimes they are the most important shareholders.

Directors, engineers and foremen organize all this well. Americans are amazing organizers. We need to learn from them. We still build the economy like schoolchildren who need to learn – and all of us are learning but we have not finished our studies yet.

I must say frankly that you can learn a lot from them, because despite the fact that they have companies on such a large scale, each company is larger than our central administration. True, you cannot transfer all the methods, and you do not need to transfer everything, but I repeat, there's a lot to learn from the Americans.

The main thing that is good. You go to a factory, and there are almost no people visible there. There is no crowd, as if no one is working. And on our end, they run here and there and it seems as if we have a lot of animation at the factory. Maybe we don't have more workers at a machine, but we have a huge number of service personnel. Here, we have the devil-knows-how-many people sitting as security; they don't have this, but they steal more here. Then we have a director and a deputy director and a deputy head, well, you cannot list them all. But you won't see that there. They have much less security than us. We certainly have two or three people on guard. However, of course, our situation is somewhat different. They have no sabotage, since the socialists do not engage in sabotage. The overthrown bourgeoisie are engaged in sabotage, so we must be vigilant. So, we must have a little more security, but I'm afraid that the way we conduct business, our security services will not be reduced. What we've been doing, we plant the security, give them a uniform, give them a rifle and plant them, so not one thief will be caught, because he knows all the security and bypasses them. They have security in uniform – the police are provided only at the entrance, and they hide the rest of the security. I've been to an aircraft factory, which is very well guarded. There it appears that the security consists of 200 people, but the guards of the plant itself only consist of 50 people, and the rest of the security staff were added by the ministry of the armed forces itself, to better protect their secrets. And when you approach the plant, you see no more than 10 policemen. You don't see anyone. True, they mixed the security with spies, etc., but this is not bad for them. This means you need to pay attention. Our security is often pointless. Or a fire department, for example. Here, comrades Zhemchuzhina and Ratner said that they saw in France how fire safety was combined with other functions. There, better qualified workers are trained in fire safety and are paid extra for this. That is appropriate. A fire has started, and everyone leaves, since during a fire no one sits still. If there is a fire, then everyone cannot stand idly by, and rightly so, and all those who are trained firemen

and are firefighters begin to put out the fire. After their work is done, they check whether there is anything else that could cause a fire. And for outside security they hire a watchman. Here it is monstrous. As soon as you start talking about this, immediately everything is thrust on the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs. Some of us think that if everything is built of metal, then there can be no fire and you can sleep peacefully. You must not listen to this. I think that we need to brutally curtail this auxiliary stuff. Let's do as the Americans do. This is particularly striking.

Then, regarding every auxiliary, well, every building in the yard. A small factory is under construction, and there are 15 facilities at the factory. The main building, and then a container warehouse, then a material warehouse, then an entrance checkpoint, then a separate garage, then a separate workshop for a garage, a garage for security, then a distinct one for fuel, then you need to carry out paving the roads with asphalt, and so on. Then you need to run wires everywhere in order to connect all this; you need to run a lot of pipes, but we do not have enough pipes and there is mud everywhere. If only one watchman is guarding, then he will not have time. We have an expression that if it is less than a hectare, then the factory cannot be built. I did not see this there, because everything is concentrated there in one building. The machinery room is downstairs, the capacitor is downstairs and upstairs there are two or three common rooms and offices in the same place. Well, in a word, everything is there and you can't say that all of America is on fire; but we are not on fire. And it's easy to guard such a building. There is no mud and there is no need to maintain special security. They have developed this compactness. They say this is because their land is precious. The road is also not expensive by accident, but we have essentially free land; but in the city it should be more expensive than outside the city. If the land is near a road then it is already expensive, but we do not consider this. Here there should be a minimum of auxiliary workers.

If we make comparisons about productivity, then we are significantly below America. There are giants there. If you put a Russian worker in the same place, he would make only 40%. If the huge apparatus of maintenance workers, which we have, is divided as in America, then we would have a decrease in labor by 3-4 times.

We cannot catch up with American earning power and American living standards if we don't readjust. We must learn to organize enterprises. I have to say that they are ideal organizers. We have a gigantic apparatus, very wasteful, and all the same we have income. The Soviet

system compared to the American one is a gift from God. So much has been given to us that one's head spins. There is much that we don't notice about ourselves. We have some bosses who have more rights than the Minister of Agriculture in America. The president there does not have even half of the rights of a People's Commissar. He has certain rights only in several areas.

What's the issue? They save a lot in production management and we need to learn from their cost-effectiveness. Capitalism generates enormous costs. We do not have these costs. Our income covers our expenses. For example, some kinds of skyscraper costs tens of millions of rubles. True, there are not very many such skyscrapers, there are a few of them in especially large cities. In small towns, however, there are no skyscrapers. Who sits in them? They are all institutions. What institutions? Concession companies. They play on the stock exchange, advertise, trade, buy, keep in touch with police ministers, etc. A huge apparatus. I am sure that our People's Commissariats would fit in one such skyscraper with 102 floors as we saw there. We will not need such an apparatus.

There are huge organizational successes relating to staging production operations in American companies. They have huge costs and redistribution of assets.

What a giant machine an exchange is; for example, the egg exchange. It occupies a huge building almost the same size as our People's Commissariat. And now they are selling eggs. We saw this in Chicago. We need 20-30 people if we divide the roles. I'm not talking about financial market value. There are thousands of agents, telephone and telegraph communications with all parts of the world. The telegraph tape there does not stop. These are huge costs. We are spared all these expenses.

If we could learn how to manage production so that there are no unnecessary elements in production, so that production is raised to the level of the Americans, then we would double the acceleration of forward movement because we do not have such large expenses. I think we could address this according to individual sectors.

How is the institutional apparatus built in our country? We have a person for every function. Functionality is in our heads and life. Specialization in our country amounts to an absurdity. How do the Americans do it? I will give you an example: we went into a refrigerator. It was a large refrigerator, with a volume of 18 thousand tons. A simple venture. In America, when you go into any business, you first of all come across a young lady. Usually it is a young lady sitting. They are fully equipped with perfumery products. There is no security, you won't

see anything until the young lady. You might see some policemen. She sits so that only one person will pass by her. She has a sign: "Information". She provides all information. She has headphones and telephone wires, so that when you come she asks you where you are going, then connects to where you are going and asks: "May I let such and such a person through?" When she is answered "you may," she gives you a pass. Thus, she is the secretary for many bosses, she is a telephone operator, and she is an information desk.

At the same time, she records the earnings for all products for the refrigerator and storage; she can fill out a dozen or two dozen digits. A young lady, she does not have any particular specialty. She has a typewriter and types. But in our country, if a person is a stenographer she doesn't have to be able to type, and if she's a typist, then she doesn't have to know shorthand, she doesn't have to know anything, she cannot give any information.

I wanted to know how much such a young lady makes, but she was afraid to say. She makes about 50-60 dollars. Women are paid less there. For example, where breakfast cereals are prepared, a man gets 60 cents for one hour, and a woman 35. True, the men there are more qualified workers, and the women are less qualified. The Americans regulate the labor supply at the factory with the dollar.

The factory operates for a day and rests for two days – this is an accomplishment. [illegible] hours are a working day, more than 8 hours is prohibited and it has been achieved without strikes, without a class struggle. They have daily pay by the hour. If, for example, it is a dollar per hour and you work 8 hours, then you will get 8 dollars, if 6 hours, then 6 dollars. There, the directors make it so that instead of 7 hours, they work 8 hours a week and then rest for [illegible] days.

The slogans of the working class call for shortening the workday, but this is completely on the workers' shoulders.

A couple of words about directors. In our country, every director, as soon as he becomes a director or a shop master, immediately tries to be not like the workers; he puts on a "scary" look. When he walks by others, he does not talk to them, so that everybody knows he is the boss. Sometimes he starts acting rudely intentionally so that everybody can see he is the boss, because the boss is allowed to be rude, and a subordinate is not. In other words, he tries to show by all means that he is higher than others. We have a system in which everybody belongs to the same class, so he tries to stand out with his appearance at least. There the bourgeois are so smart

that when directors walk by workers, they go like this (pats himself on the shoulder), and a worker does the same to the director. In other words, they act out a familiar, friendly, family-like relationship – just like actors. If you look at them, it is as if there is more democracy there than at our plants. They want to let you know that they are equal people, they just have different functions. And it is as if they forget that the director gets 20 thousand dollars a year. And I have to say that this kind of treatment of workers is much stronger in America than in other countries. They fool the workers ingeniously, the bastards. They don't give them time to think: radio, movies, sports. They publish events, news in the chronicles, the worker does not have time to think. It is superficial democracy. Also, public services are organized quite well. In their pursuit of profit they have achieved a cultured level of services for the masses. Half of the population there enjoys comfort. In our country, comfort was for the tsar. They promote comfort to the masses because it is from the masses that they get profits. It turns out that comfort is available to everybody and the profits from it are enormous.

What does this comfort consist of? For example, gasoline stations. There are so many [gas] stations that if it were the Soviet regime, they would not need so many stations. Sometimes, at one location they have four stations, and three of them are empty. It would be quite sufficient to have just one-third of them. What do these stations provide? When you drive up to one, they start wiping your windshield—free of charge—they check if your oil level is good (there are no chauffeurs, people usually drive themselves), then they give you water, free of charge. Only gasoline costs money; the price is 15 cents, and 5 cents is tax, as if to say that they are selling gasoline cheaply, but give 5 cents to the state. As soon as a person comes, they take care of him. This is what comrade Stalin said—caring for a person. We say it but do not always practice it. They, however, build it on profit only; seeking to gain profit, they take care of people. They will give you any information on how to get places and will give you a highway map paid for by the oil companies. And moreover, at the gasoline station you will get not only gasoline but everything that you need for your car. There you can also buy cigars, cigarettes, and you don't need to have a cashier because there are vending machines from which you can get a cigar. Also from those [vending machines] you can get water in standard bottles, purchase juices, candy—two or three kinds, not more—chocolate, canned tomato and orange juices. Then you can also eat there, and in some places you can even have some hot food, though not everywhere; but dry food you can have everywhere. You will also find all kinds of goods there:

pipes, even cuff links and ties. Also, all the gasoline stations have bathrooms with hot and cold water. This is a very big convenience. In general, there are very many public bathrooms there and they are very clean, because there are many of them. If it is done right, you can keep it clean. Why is our metro cleaner than the American metro? There, it is dirty and the air is no good. Why is it—the same people, residents of Moscow—they keep ideal cleanliness in the metro, but in other places—dirt. Our people are more malleable than others, we have more patriotism than anywhere else. Americans are dirty. They discard paper and leftovers right after they have finished eating—in theaters, in the cinema, and in any place whatsoever. But they know how to pick out two or three elements in the area of cleanliness and promote them on a mass scale.

In our country, the People's Commissariat of Health is thinking about how to have more hospitals to treat people. In America, if a worker gets sick, he is done for, he will go bankrupt. There, they only pull teeth for free, but to get dentures—they will take your head off. It turns out that the company that makes artificial teeth pays doctors so that they will pull teeth out for free (laughter in the hall).

Overall, health care there is lagging behind. They most of all take care that a person does not get sick. Here, in the USSR, we should first of all direct our attention not to treat a sick person but to take measures to prevent a person from getting sick. The People's Commissariat of Public Health does not think about it. What do we need for that? First of all, we need good healthy food. Secondly, we should focus on places where people get infected, where they pass the disease to one another. Bathrooms, that is the filthiest of what a person expels. Here it is accepted that one should wash in the morning and in the evening, and then the person is considered clean.

One should wash after leaving the bathroom, obviously, because you are exiting the filthiest place. A bathroom could be a breeding ground of all kinds of infection; we should remember it and not be lazy—wash hands every time. Over there a number of bathrooms are designed in such a way that as soon as a person gets up from the toilet, water starts flowing [automatically]. Why can't we do that? Is that out of reach for us? No, not at all. We just don't pay attention to it. There, each bathroom has green soap or soap powder. However, the Americans are stingy, and I had to press the button several times to get a sufficient amount of soap—because the portions are so small—but soap is available everywhere. Do we have soap in

our bathrooms? No. Or, in the best case, there is a big chunk of soap, which is inconvenient [to use] and it gets stolen.

Comrade Zhemchuzhina will cannot introduce that.

Comrade Mikoyan just don't care about it. Our bathrooms often do not have towels.

In America, they have paper towels, and we often don't even have regular towels.

I was in the bathroom at the Commissariat: there is a towel hanging there, a very, very long one, a whole conveyor, not a towel, and it is all wet, so wet that you cannot wipe your hands on it. In America, if there are no paper towels, then they have these napkins, small like a handkerchief, with a tiny whole in the corner, by which it hangs, so that you cannot steal it. And who would even do something like this, who would take the risk? If you steal, you get arrested, if you get arrested, you cannot get work. Is it worth it to take a risk for such a small thing?

Did our women directors take care to provide a minimum of conveniences in the bathrooms for our women? In the best case they try to make bathrooms clean, but nobody takes care about convenience. We believe that a healthy woman is a woman who has a normal menstruation [cycle]. A woman should be proud of it. But our women directors forgot about it, and did not create any conveniences for women in the bathrooms. In America, they even thought about this. In Europe they do not have this—I asked comrade Uborevich. In America, they have special tin boxes, which contain special pads. Why can't we do that? In America, they charge money for it, each pad costs 10 cents.

Comrade Zhemchuzhina do not have pads, the Commissariat of Public Health has not taken care of it.

Comrade Mikoyan will find them for our women workers. We find it embarrassing to talk about it, but there is nothing embarrassing here. We must try to keep everything clean and to have conveniences everywhere. We talk always and everywhere about how we care about people, but in reality, we provide very little care, even in these, at first glance, very small things. In America, this care is primarily based on obtaining dollars, but we must do it out of care for people. There they get profit from it, and therefore, they take care of people. For us it is better not to have a shower, but such small conveniences we must have, we must create. This kind of convenience, this kind of people's convenience we absolutely must have.

Modes of communication in America are extremely well-developed. You can make a phone call from any place, and you don't have hang by the phone and wait to be connected: a telephone operator takes care of that; you put money into the telephone, she gets informed about it and she connects you with anybody you need to talk to. Here, however, several kilometers from Moscow, in Monino, I tried to make a phone call, and I was not able to do it.

Or if you need to send a telegram, you can also do it easily and conveniently. You know the train number on which your friend is traveling, you know when he departed, and you know that he would arrive at a certain station at 11. You can send a telegram to that station, and they will dutifully hand it to him; if they cannot hand it to him in person, they will deliver it to the dining car, but it will definitely be delivered to the addressee.

If you want to send a telegram from a train, it is also very easy to do: you do not need to step out of the train to do it. A 15-year-old boy will come and do everything you need.

[Voices from the audience:] You can do the same here. No, not true. Here you cannot send a telegram even from big stations.

Comrade Mikoyan When you are ready to depart, the conductor does all the formalities before you get on the train: he checks your ticket, he registers everything he needs to do, and in the railcar nobody bothers you any longer.

These are all minor things, but minor things that are very important, that create great convenience.

We should learn how to take care of people—they do it to get profits in America, for gains, but we should do it not for profit, we need to take care [of people] to make life better and easier.

I got a little distracted from my main topic, but these little things are very interesting, and we should learn from them. At our enterprises, we can and we must create many more conveniences than we currently have. We can do it and we will do it no matter what.

We still have a lot of [old] noble intelligentsia left.

In general, when a person wants to rise up from a lower class, he also wants to acquire the class prejudices and the manners of that higher class. Americans are not stupid people: when one dines, he dines luxuriously, he is served, he eats [his dinner] slowly. Breakfast during a break is different. In our country, a worker sits down, a waiter comes up to him and asks, “what would you like, comrade?” He orders, she must take the order, take it to the kitchen, bring

first the tableware and then the food. There are many people, she does not have time, she delays, she makes mistakes, you are unhappy, you are in a hurry, and in the meantime you sit like a mannequin. And there, everything is already ready for breakfast on the counter; everything that should be is there, all in front of your eyes, and the prices are written down. You come up [to the counter], take a tray, and ask—give me soup, or whatever else you want—they serve it immediately. If you wish, you eat your breakfast right there; if you wish, you can go to a table: there are many tables, many chairs. Another worker picks up dirty dishes, you don't waste time waiting for a waiter to take your order, everything is laid out ready to eat. What would it be like for our worker to come and take a plate, take a tray, make his choices and take them to a table. If the break is 30 minutes, he could eat in 15 minutes and take a 15-minute walk. Some plants object to it – not the workers but the bureaucrats, or those who style themselves after them. Why don't you do it this way: with service it is 10 kopeks more expensive, and without service it's cheaper. I am sure everybody will switch to serving themselves. Dinner is mainly served, but there is no reason to hurry during dinner. They dine for an hour, hour-and-a-half, two, mainly at home. Why can't we shift our dining halls to this order? They would incur no losses, and there would be no complaints about long waits. Forks, knives, plates would be laid out in advance, and below—a shelf for dirty dishes. Everything would be ready for two hours, as long as breakfast lasts, everything is prepared and dirty dishes go on the bottom shelf. How does a French person eat breakfast? He eats breakfast for two hours; he is served, he sits there and catches flies. Should we learn from the French? No, we should learn from the Americans. They rest after they have finished work, they eat slowly, they take walks. Even directors, important people, do not spend much time on breakfast—longer than workers but still not more than an hour. A director eats at a club. One director told me that he spends 450 dollars for a club annually, but in that club, except for food, all the services are free, including games. That is something like our good vacation establishments—he comes to [the club], he can rest there, he can even spend the night; he goes there to have breakfast, dinner, to play.

What strikes one in America when one wants to see the food industry? I started with a store, not a plant, because a store is for the people. I went to a store, not to a plant. How do you see the food industry in a store? What strikes you, just immediately, is that it is 100 times easier to sell food in America than in our country. I must tell the People's Commissariat of Internal Trade that it is our fault that they have to work harder than in America. And why is it easier for

them to sell than here? A great number of products are pre-cut, weighed, packaged already. A salesperson takes the pre-cut, packaged product and just hands it to the customer. He does not have to know how to cut, lay out, or count—the price is already marked, the name of the product is written, the variety, and it is already packaged. Therefore, the salesclerks do not have to be especially qualified. When we were organizing the Gastronom we had trouble finding salespersons who knew how to cut butter. A customer asks for 100 grams, the salesperson cannot cut exactly 100, he cuts 110 grams, he has to take 10 grams back, he cuts not 10 but 15, he has to add 5 grams, he makes it not 5 but 7. He cuts 3 or 4 times, the customer gets irritated, gets small pieces. It could lead to deception, it could lead to losses and nervousness. I saw there that only two people are working at a butter plant; they put a huge block of butter on a machine and the machine cuts the butter—like soap in comrade Zhemchuzhina's case—by steel threads—into pieces of various sizes and shapes. Butter is moving and being cut into pieces by exact size. The machine also wraps [the butter] in parchment paper, cardboard and cellophane—the cellophane is from the riches, we can do without it. With this process, anybody can sell butter. Today, to be able to sell butter in the Gastronom a person has to have 5 to 10 years of work experience, and even then, not everybody can do it. Even such products as meat are pre-cut in big stores. However, in some firms, since salespeople often have nothing to do, they cut meat downstairs in their free time, but only in their free time. Cutlets and steaks are pre-cut and then they are weighed, and you pay for how much it weighs, nobody cuts pieces of or adds pieces. And what about bread? Bread is almost never cut, it is sold by unit. I am not even talking about breakfasts to go, they are all pre-packaged. Only fresh fruit and vegetables are not pre-packaged, like in our country. Cereals, pasta—it is all pre-packaged, laid out prepared in boxes, and so selling is easier. Therefore, any gasoline station can sell food products. They don't cut sausages much either, they make small sausages so that they don't need to be cut.

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Translated by Svetlana Savranskaya and Sarah Dunn for the National Security Archive]



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