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surplus rural labor has already been siphoned off into industry.

Moreover, notes the CIA, it is "highly probable" that Soviet farm production will drop significantly during the next decade. Increased crop yields in most years since 1963 have been due to a "favorable climatic deviation," which may have ended with the crippling 1975 drought. Food shortages will "further complicate" the U.S.S.R.'s foreign trade picture by forcing the Russians to increase purchases of U.S. grain during a period of "hard-currency stringency." This in turn will "squeeze severely" Moscow's capacity to import industrial technology.

While Russian leaders are aware of the impending crisis, says the CIA, economic planning remains "unrealistic." Without immediate action on energy (no comprehensive energy plan seems to be forthcoming), annual Soviet GNP growth will decline from its present rate of 4 percent to between 2 and 2.5 percent.

Eastern Cowpokes

"Cattle-Raisers of the Old Southwest: A Reinterpretation" by John D. W. Guice, in *The Western Historical Quarterly* (April 1977), Utah State University, Logan, Utah 84322.

The origins of the giant Great Plains cattle industry after the Civil War preoccupies few modern scholars. Long ago, historians documented the pervasive influence of Spanish ranchers west of the Mississippi. But even the patron saint of Western historians, Frederick Jackson Turner, acknowledged that the ranchers of Texas were "guided" by the "experience of the Carolina cowpens."

Spanish influence came later, suggests Guice, a historian at the University of Southern Mississippi. He writes that the cattle industry "advanced from the East"—from the "old Southwest" states of Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, and the Carolinas—until it "established itself" under the perfect conditions found in the open West.

Guice criticizes Southern historians, "distracted" by the Civil War and slavery, for overlooking a fundamental aspect of ante-bellum farm life. One quarter of the slaves on large cotton plantations raised livestock; in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, cattle herds in the South increased rapidly in size and value. (When Alabama settlers sought federal reparations after devastating Indian raids in 1816, one-third of all claims were for lost cattle.) Large herds were reported on the eastern side of the Mississippi as early as 1724. Only the merger of Spanish herding techniques—and particularly longhorn geneology—with an *already developed* cattle industry, says Guice, can account for the "extravaganza" that later swept across the Great Plains.

In this light, Guice concludes, the surprise voiced in the late 1960s at the mention of black cowboys seems "ludicrous." Mounted slaves were common. Indeed one traveler in 1818 described Southern blacks as "among the best horsemen in the world."