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Russian oil problems revealed by CIA chief

WASHINGTON. (UPI) — What the CIA found out about Russian oil is what prompted Carter administration's gloomy view of the energy future.

Intelligence director, Stansfield Turner, testified yesterday before the House energy subcommittee, which is looking into energy supplies as well as the effect of auto fuel mileage on the energy picture.

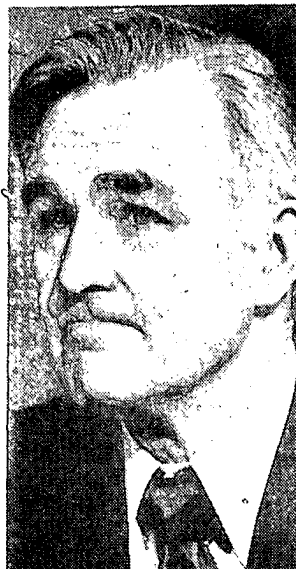
Turner did not talk cars, but he did talk supplies.

Russia, he said, the world's leading oil producer, will find its production leveling off in the next year or two and will have to look elsewhere for some of its supply.

The key point of the CIA report — that the rate at which oil is pumped from the ground will begin to fall behind the world's thirst for oil in the 1980s — was announced a week ago and mentioned by Carter as one reason he is pressing for conservation.

But Turner told the committee details not hitherto revealed.

One is that Russian oil



STANSFIELD TURNER

wells are increasingly having a water problem.

The CIA study, including data from "highly sensitive intelligence sources" not available to other federal statisticians, predicts Russia "will change from an exporter to a substantial importer of oil in the early 1980s."

"Soviet oil production will soon peak, possibly as early as next year," the study

said.

Turner said the Russians "have a problem of production in that those fields that account for the bulk of Soviet production are experiencing severe water encroachment. As a result, increasingly large quantities of water must be lifted for each barrel of oil produced."

Government figures show the United States led in oil production in 1973, for example, with the Soviets second and Saudi Arabia third. In 1976, the Russians had boosted their production to 10.4 million barrels per day, the figures showed, the Saudis were second with 8.6 million and the United States was third with 8.1 million.

The Soviets' 5-year plan for drilling has a goal of 75 million meters of oil wells and "even with maximum effort, the Soviets will not come close to the 1980 goal," Turner said.

He estimated that by 1985, Russia and Eastern Europe will need imports of 3.5 million to 4.5 million barrels a day.