

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY	USSR (Latvian SSR)	REPORT NO.	[redacted]	25X1
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THE APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.  
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1. Although the Latvian people were dissatisfied with the occupation of their country, with the Communist government, and with the policy of Russification, [redacted] do not believe that there was any organized and effective resistance movement in Latvia. [redacted] never saw any illegal newspapers or handbills, and [redacted] do not know of the existence of any illegal press or distribution system for handbills. In 1950, the partisans killed the chairman of the executive committee and a finance official in the community of Sviluciems, and some partisans were arrested for the assassinations. In 1951, a Soviet security policeman was killed and robbed of his clothes on the streets of Lepaya, and [redacted] assume that the murder was committed by partisans. [redacted] there was less partisan activity in the Lepaya area than in the Dundaga forests, and [redacted] have not heard of any organized partisan movement in the Latvian forests in the last year or two.

2. The police headquarters in Lepaya was located in the office of the former police prefecture on Kursu iela. The MVD or MGB office was located in the White House, Balta maja, on Ulicha iela, between Pelau iela and Jurmallas iela. An MVD or MGB headquarters was located on the eastern side of Padomju prospekts, not far from Grandu iela, and next to the local office of the Ministry of Defense. [redacted] do not know which of the offices was used by the MVD and which was used by the MGB. [redacted] policemen were well-dressed, and had better-looking uniforms than those worn by soldiers. The streets of Lepaya were patrolled by traffic police who were not armed, and by patrols which were armed with Nagants, a type of Soviet pistol. Police rarely checked documents of persons on the streets, and would stop an individual only if he was conspicuous in some manner. A twenty-four-hour police post was located at the north end of the bridge between Old Lepaya and New Lepaya. Documents of all persons who

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RETURN TO ARCHIVES & RECORDS CENTER IMMEDIATELY AFTER USE BOX

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25X1 [REDACTED] crossed the bridge at night were supposed to be checked, but [REDACTED]  
 25X1 [REDACTED] the police rarely stopped passersby for this check. There was  
 no check of documents in railroad cars or in the railroad station, and there  
 had been no mass check of documents in entire sections of the city of  
 Lepaya for a whole year. Automobile traffic was checked by the MVD at  
 a permanent post which was located on the highway to Grobina and Perkone.

3. In May 1945, the Soviet authorities arrested and deported all police  
 officials, home guardsmen, and people who were suspected of having  
 cooperated with the German troops or occupation forces. Many of these  
 deportees were put to work on the Stalin Canal, and, although some of  
 them later returned to Latvia, they were deported again in later deporta-  
 tions. The second mass deportation took place in the summer of 1948, and  
 was part of the first intensive collectivization of Latvian farmland. The  
 number of persons who were arrested and deported was apparently larger  
 25X1 in Lithuania than in Latvia. [REDACTED] at least nine families  
 were deported from the village of Butini, but only one family was deported  
 from the Sventoji area during this 1948 deportation. Deported families  
 were sent to the Irkutsk area, where they were put to work in forests.  
 The first letters from the deportees began to arrive in Latvia about four  
 months after they were deported, and then there was regular exchange of  
 mail with these persons. The third great deportation took place in April  
 and May 1949, and was considerably more widespread than the two previous  
 deportations. This deportation was directed primarily against the agrarian  
 population, although many urban dwellers also were deported. Persons who  
 were deported were transported from the railroad stations at Kara Osta  
 and Grobina in Lepaya, and eventually reached the Omsk region, where they  
 25X1 were put to work in the coal mines and on sovkhozy. These deportees ap-  
 parently had better living conditions than the Latvians who were sent to  
 25X1 Irkutsk; they were not confined in camps and, though they could not leave  
 25X1 their camps or the area, they were permitted to correspond with friends  
 in Latvia. The fourth large deportation, which was smaller than previous  
 25X1 deportations, took place in the fall of 1951. [REDACTED] only  
 about thirty persons were arrested in Lepaya at this time, although [REDACTED]  
 25X1 [REDACTED] there were many arrests in Lithuania in the same deportation.  
 25X1 [REDACTED] individual deportations still continue; arrests are made at  
 25X1 night, and persons who are to be moved from Latvia are kept in prisons and  
 moved from the area about once a month. [REDACTED]  
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4. [REDACTED] a new sheet iron mill at the Sarkanais Metallurgs has  
 produced only inferior goods since it began production in 1951; [REDACTED]  
 25X1 [REDACTED] only one out of every 100 matches produced by the Lepaya match  
 25X1 factory would strike. As an example of the rise in production requirements,  
 25X1 [REDACTED] in 1950 the normal catch for a fishing trawler was 120 tons.  
 The norm was raised to 150 tons in 1951, and in 1952 trawlers had to catch  
 200 tons of fish to meet the new norm standard. Wages of Latvian workers have  
 been cut. A skilled worker in the Sarkanais Metallurgs, a metal plant, was  
 paid 1,000 to 1,200 rubles a month in 1949 or 1950, but in 1951 the same worker  
 received no more than 800 or 900 rubles a month. The average pay of an  
 unskilled worker in the Tosmare Shipyard in Lepaya was between 600 and

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700 rubles a month. A night watchman in a factory was paid 300 rubles. A typesetter in a printing office received about 700 rubles, and an average office worker probably was paid no more than 350 rubles a month. A lower school teacher received about 600 rubles. A chauffeur was paid about 420 rubles a month. Salaries of officers were thought to be considerably higher than those of workers, and naval officers apparently were better paid than army officers. [REDACTED] a lieutenant in the army had a take-home salary of between 700 and 1,500 rubles a month, with correspondingly higher salaries for the higher ranks. [REDACTED] widow of an army major who received a monthly pension of 2,500 rubles. Actually, however, salaries were lower than the above figures indicate, since there were various automatic deductions for such things as trade-union dues or health insurance. The largest single deduction was made for purchase of state bonds. Purchase of bonds was not officially obligatory, but [REDACTED] in actual fact all workers had to agree to purchase bonds in amounts which corresponded to their incomes. One [REDACTED] who purchased bonds for 1,000 rubles in 1950, says that in 1951 he had to purchase 1,500 rubles' worth of bonds, and that in 1952 he was to have spent 2,000 rubles on government securities. The total purchase price of the bonds was deducted from the salaries of the workers in the course of a year.

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Living conditions were somewhat more difficult in 1952 than they were in 1946 and 1947, and [REDACTED] it was more difficult to purchase clothing, materials, and all foodstuffs, except bread, than it was in the first years after the war. [REDACTED] after the war it was possible to purchase goods from reserve stocks which were released, or from the surplus products of the independent farmers. In 1952, tobacco was available in unlimited quantities, and 25 cigarettes of the Belomar type cost 2.30 rubles. Potatoes cost 1.20 to 2.50 rubles a kilo, and tea cost about 3 rubles for 50 grams. Clothing and shoes were scarce, and [REDACTED] employees of stores apparently bought up most of the available goods for their friends and relatives, though, if the buyer was willing to pay more than the stated sale price, clerks would sell these items. To illustrate the limited quantity of goods in stores, [REDACTED] the Lepaya textile administration, which supplied textiles to Lepaya stores, received only nine meters of lining material in 1951. [REDACTED] Woolen material of the cheapest quality cost about 140 rubles a meter. A finished suit cost about 350 rubles, but [REDACTED] a cheap suit of this type was made of the poorest material and workmanship, and probably would wear for only a few months. Wool which was used in workshirts of a type worn by fishermen was a standard type of dark blue material which cost about 350 rubles a meter when it was available. [REDACTED] it had not been possible to purchase better quality woolen goods for the last two years, but they estimate that such woolen material would cost between 500 and 1,000 rubles a meter. It was impossible to purchase a good, ready-made suit in Lepaya, but [REDACTED] in Riga a good suit could be purchased for about 5,000 rubles. Shoes were not readily available; a pair of composition-type shoes cost about 85 rubles, and a cheaper pair of shoes with a kind of rubber sole cost about 53 rubles. Shoes of this quality lasted about three months. A pair of simple, leather shoes with leather soles would cost at least 350 rubles. During the winter of 1951/52 it was possible to purchase Czechoslovakian leather shoes with raw rubber soles for 500 rubles a pair. High boots and rubber boots were rarely available, and fishermen needed a special certificate from the fishing kolkhoz in order to be able to purchase rubber boots.

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After the spring of 1952 it was more difficult to purchase foodstuffs, and meat and lard were not available on the market. The sudden disappearance of meat aroused widespread rumors that meat supplies were being stored up as part of Soviet preparations for war. [REDACTED] the large meat combine in Lepaya, formerly known as Bekona Exports, delivered its entire production to the military authorities. [REDACTED] a great deal of live-stock died during the winter 1951/52 as a result of the lack of fodder, and [REDACTED]

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25X1 [REDACTED] this may have been one reason for the meat shortage. When meat was available, beef cost between seventeen and twenty-five rubles a kilo, mutton cost between fourteen and twenty rubles a kilo, and lard cost between thirty-eight and forty rubles a kilo. Butter was occasionally available, and cost between forty and forty-five rubles a kilo, though it usually was sold only in 200-gram quantities. Bread could be purchased without difficulty; most stores sold the so-called "Stalin loaf," which was made of a rather tasteless rye flour and cost 1.80 rubles a kilo. A better grade of rye bread, which resembled the bread which formerly was eaten in rural areas of Latvia, could be purchased on kolkhoz markets for six or seven rubles a kilo. White bread was rarely available, and always was inferior in quality when it could be purchased. Flour was sold only on the market, on important holidays such as New Year's, the First of May, or the October Festival. Brandy cost 22.50 rubles a half-liter, and it could be purchased in unlimited quantities from the so-called "Amerikanskiy kiosks". These kiosks were open day and night, and closed only three hours out of twenty-four. Sugar cost eleven rubles a kilo, and was somewhat easier to purchase than it had been in the past. Coffee cost about sixty-four rubles a kilo, and rarely was available. Chocolate cost about 450 rubles a kilo. Sausage rarely was available.

7. Rubber items were scarce, but after the winter of 1951/52 it was somewhat easier to purchase synthetic rubber bicycle tires. A complete tire with inner tube cost sixty rubles, but because of the inferior quality of the rubber, a tire usually did not last more than four months when it was used regularly. Automobile tires were rarely available, and informants say that a fairly large number of automobiles belonging to factories or officials could not be used because they had no tires. Automobiles occasionally were on sale in Lepaya, and better-paid workers sometimes would own an automobile; several of the fishermen in the Bolshevik kolkhoz owned automobiles, while several other fishermen owned motorcycles. Motorcycles cost between 6,000 and 9,000 rubles. A bicycle produced by the Riga bicycle factory, Sarkana Zvaigzne, formerly known as the Ehrenpreis Factory, cost as much as 3,600 rubles.
8. Wrist watches were very popular, and cost at least 450 rubles. Waterproof watches were not available. A woman's good, gold watch cost between 1,500 and 2,000 rubles, but a simple pocket watch could be purchased for as little as 250 rubles.
9. Even goods which normally were available would occasionally be in short supply. Such simple items as lined paper and envelopes hardly ever could be purchased. Informants say military personnel purchased their supplies from the Voyentorg stores. The Lepaya garrison and troops in the area of Lepaya were served by 26 Voyentorg stores which always were plentifully stocked. In April of every year there were widely-publicized sales, but [REDACTED] these sales as fraudulent, and [REDACTED] there was very little, if any, cut in normal prices. [REDACTED] in the months preceding the sales, prices of items were raised so that after being marked down items would cost what they normally had cost in the past. The kolkhoz markets were not affected by the April price cuts.
10. All churches in Lepaya were still intact and were used regularly. There were very few ministers or priests, and services often were conducted by organists or bell ringers. The Pavilosta church had been converted into a club.
11. Since the end of the war a number of Jews had settled in Lepaya, usually having come to Latvia from the interior of the Soviet Union. [REDACTED] Jews were given choice positions in the government, and that the average Soviet was anti-semitic for this reason.

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