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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY 50X1

INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY USSR (Latvia)

DATE DISTR. 17 Aug 1954

SUBJECT Dredging Operations at Liepaja Harbor

NO. OF PAGES 1

PLACE ACQUIRED 50X1

NO. OF ENCLS. (LISTED BELOW)

DATE ACQUIRED 50X1

SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO.

DATE (OF INFO)

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

1. During the USSR occupation of Latvia 1940-41, technically trained men were drafted by the authorities to serve in the Navigation Department of the Government as well as in other posts necessary for the war effort. Harbor maintenance and dredging was a primary duty of the Navigation Department.

2. At Liepaja it was necessary to dredge the harbor and basins once a year, an operation requiring about two months. Silting was a continuing process as sand shifted in from the sea. The outer harbor was artificial, being contained by concrete moles. The bottom inside the moles was dredged to a depth of eight meters, as was the Naval Harbor canal. Two graving docks capable of handling cruiser size vessels were entered from the canal.

3. The commerical harbor and canal immediately south of the Naval Harbor was a development of the sea outlet of Lake Liepajas. The depth of the canal was about four meters; the bottom was rock. This condition eliminated further deepening as blasting would have shattered canal banks and flooded the surrounding area. No plans had been made to substitute dikes for earth banks along the commerical harbor canal.

4. Silt dredged from Liepaja Harbor was carried by barge several kilometers north of Liepaja and jettisoned a short distance offshore. Prevailing currents carried dredged material in a northwest direction out to sea.

5. As of 1944, there were no facilities for permanent handling of submarines at Liepaja.

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