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no mention of Edgars LAIPENIEKS

The Latvian newspaper in Germany "Latvija" in # 11, March 19, 1955 published an article on the World Championship of ice-hockey which took part in Krefeld, Germany from Febr. 25, 1955 to March 5, 1955. This article shows the attempts to contact Soviet Union team members by the Russian emigrant organizations, and also the measures taken by Soviets to protect the players from political influence while in a Western country. Since this may give some material for study in connection with the Olympic Games in Melbourne, Australia in 1956, here is the translation of the respective part of the article written by Mara LINDE (unknown female journalist):

"The World Championship in ice hockey completely changed the ways of the industrial town Krefeld in Rheinland. The streets are full of guests and curious spectators who follow the stream of foreign cars to the Stadium. The teams, engaged every day in plays and trainings, are already accustomed to the current of these big events. The Swedes and Swiss have it easy - they have been there before, know the town, receive and visit acquaintances and feel themselves almost at home. However, still full of riddles is the Soviet team, despite the fact that they had been in Krefeld once before (see for reference cards ## 582, 583 - KONECKIS and VEIDE). Then, it seems, they had enough money to spend, because when they departed, there was a trailer attached to the bus full almost popping up with goods purchased in Germany. The leader of their expedition was then KOROTKOV, however he was with the team also now, but the leadership belonged this time to a NIKOLAJEV (the first time it was a team of a single Moscow ice-hockey club, now it was an All-Union team, and therefore probably the leadership was given to a higher sports official).

The number of the Soviet group was bigger than the regulations for a team allowed: instead of 17 players and 3 officials one realized with astonishment that there

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were 37 persons in the group. During the tournament 2 more arrived from the Soviet Embassy in Berlin. Thus each one of the players had one companion, the latter claiming to be either journalists or persons to wait on the players ("kopeji"), or doctors or masseurs. But these persons were present everywhere as soon as there were some talks or interviews, though if addressed themselves gave very unclear and evasive answers, and when cornered by questions often claimed not to know German or English languages. Even to people who spoke Russian these men several times declared that the person questioning #had expressed himself wrong or incomplete" and he (the Soviet man) cannot understand it. A very unmistakable gesture by a Russian player showed however clearly not only his own but also the opinion of other players about these "companions" (the gesture is not described).

The men of the Soviet team told, that before leaving for the World Championship in Germany they had a test match against the team "Daugava" in Riga, the latter placed 6th in Soviet Union championship and supposed to be a strong team. In this team still play among others the well known ice-hockey players VITOLINS, SULMANIS and BAURS. The All-Union team won the competition against "Daugaviesi" with the score 6:1.

In the lobby of the Hotel Hof there moves around a very active though small group of Russian emigrants seeking for contact with the players and their companions. The latter try to avoid these unwanted and unexpected partners of discussions, but the emigrants find the way to reach the guarded players with the most refined methods. So the star of the Russian team B. BOBROV finds surprisingly a letter in his hands. He opens it and finds an anticommunistic propaganda article. Another player finds among the magazines and newspapers a booklet with Carnival songs (in Germany it was the "Fashing" season then). Turning the pages of it he notices a similar article.

Nobody was able however to solve the riddle about the disappearance of the

prominent Russian ice-hockey player VINOGRADOV who visited this very hotel with this very team couple of weeks ago (the visit of the a/m Moscow team). According to statements by his mates, he is not ill.... Therefore the Russian team has a doubled guardianship this time." (B)