

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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SECURITY INFORMATION

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COUNTRY	USSR	REPORT	
SUBJECT	Soviet Installations for Changing the Gauge of Railroad Cars	DATE DISTR.	22 May, 1953
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This is UNEVALUATED Information

THE SOURCE EVALUATIONS IN THIS REPORT ARE DEFINITIVE.
THE APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.
(FOR KEY SEE REVERSE)

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1. There are installations at three points on the Soviet side of the Soviet-Polish border where the wheelspan of railroad cars can be changed easily and rapidly. These points are Chernyakhovsk (N54-38, E21-49), Brest (N52-07, E23-42), and Medyka (N49-49, E22-57); the latter, located east of Przemysl, on the Krakow-Przemysl-Lvov magistral line, is the largest of these points. Wheels can be changed only on those cars which have been built in Breslau since 1949. The majority of these cars, which are mostly between 20- and 30-ton capacity, have four axles, placed in pairs near the front and back of the car

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2. At these three frontier points are numerous branch lines, under which have been built tunnels about 2.2 meters deep and 250-300 meters long. The tunnels are connected so that workers can pass from one tunnel to another; it is not certain that there are walls between the tunnels; but, if there are, they do not extend the length of the tunnels. Concrete pillars similar in construction to steel railroad bridges support the surface railroad tracks; the tracks on the surface correspond to those on the floors of the tunnels, in that the gauges are identical and both have three rails, arranged as shown in the attached diagram.

3. The equipment at these points is complicated but the work proceeds somewhat as follows: The railroad cars are stopped with the wheels resting on a section of track which can be lowered by an elevator to the tunnel below the tracks; a hydraulic hoist is raised into position to support the cars while the wheels are changed; the wheels are unfastened and lowered to the tunnel floor on the rail elevator, wheels and axles of the desired width being returned to the surface on the elevators and attached to the chassis. The hydraulic hoist is then lowered and the car is ready. The entire process requires five to seven minutes per car and 10 to 15 minutes for an entire train, no more time being consumed than would be needed for uncoupling or switching a locomotive. The crew is divided into groups of five, one group usually handling two cars.

Comment. The Chernyakhovsk installation is known. Performance data in the last paragraph are comparatively much too high.

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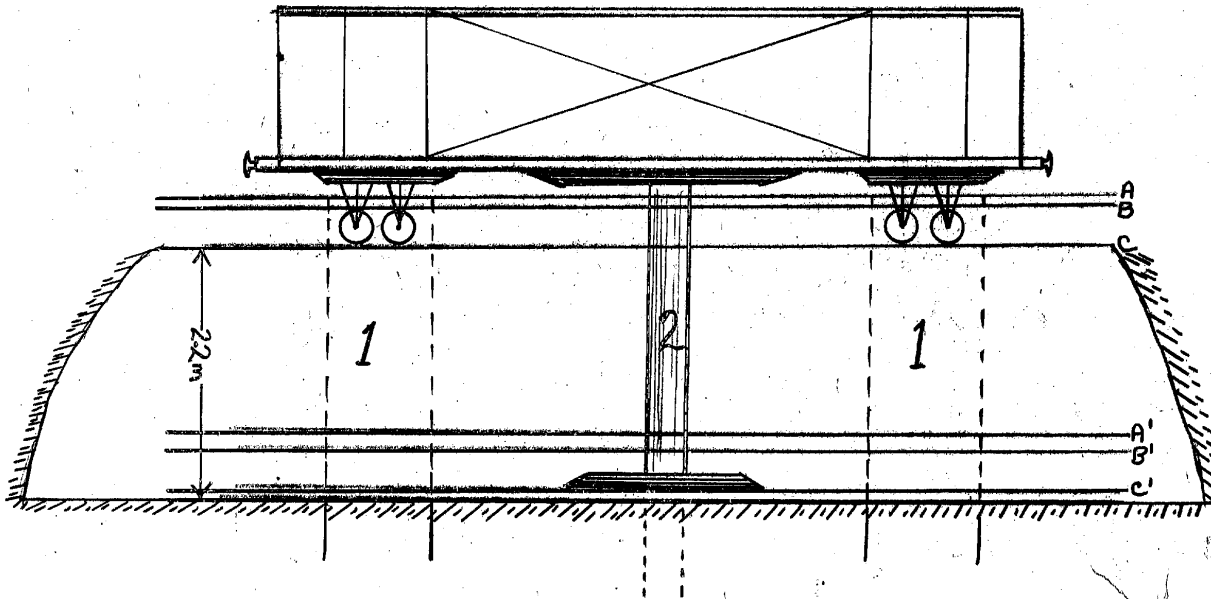
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Illustration of Installation for Changing the Gauge of Railroad CarsExplanation:

1. Elevators for raising and lowering the wheels
2. Hydraulic hoist which supports the car during the operation .

A, B, and C are the surface rails. A-C represent Soviet gauge, B-C standard gauge. A', B', and C' are the corresponding rails on the floor of the tunnel.

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