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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY	USSR (Yakutsk ASSR)	REPORT NO.	<input type="text"/>	50X1
SUBJECT	General Description of the Aldan Area	DATE DISTR.	26 April 1955	50X1
DATE OF INFO.	<input type="text"/>	NO. OF PAGES	5	50X1
PLACE ACQUIRED	<input type="text"/>	REQUIREMENT NO.	RD	
		REFERENCES	<input type="text"/>	50X1

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COUNTRY	USSR (Yakutsk ASSR)	DATE DISTR.	28 Mar. 1955
SUBJECT	General Description of the Aldan Area	NO. OF PAGES	4 50X1
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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

SOURCE	<input type="text"/>	50X1
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General Description

1. According to source, the Aldan (N 58-37, E 125-34) region is a rather barren although comparatively not a very cold section of the East Siberian taiga. In winter, there are frequent fogs and much snow and the temperature rarely drops below minus 40 degrees Centigrade. To the north and east of Aldan the climate is quite severe; minus 46 degrees Centigrade is a frequent winter temperature in Yakutsk. In the vicinity of 57 to 58 degrees north latitude, 130 to 132 degrees east longitude, the ground rarely thaws below 20 centimeters from the surface, and in only a few places can potatoes grow.
2. In the town of Aldan, most of the ground is ice-free only from about the middle of June to the middle of September, and the only quantity crop grown is potatoes. The sovkhozy and kolkhozy are for the most part devoted to raising potatoes, cabbages, onions, and reindeer. Other vegetables, wheat, and all fruit must be imported.
3. Both the Udarnik sovkhozy are composed of Great Russians but the Kolkhoz i/n the Seventh of November near Seligdar and the Kolkhoz i/n Stalin, which are located a short distance north of Tobuk along the same side of the river, are composed of Yakuts who are engaged in potato growing and reindeer raising. There is a Kolkhoz i/n Voroshilov (not shown on map) about 60 kilometers to northeast of Aldan along the Aldan River.

Rivers

4. Rivers in the Aldan region are frozen over from the middle of September to early May. Those that are navigable are open only from 15 May to 15 September. Navigation is frequently difficult or impossible from late June to early August because of low water. The beginning of the rainy season in August again makes navigation possible. The Aldan River is the main supply artery for the entire Aldan area,

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with the Amuro-Yakutskaya Magistral playing a secondary role. It is the only river in the area capable of handling heavy traffic, i.e., steamships of 50 or more tons displacement pulling three barges, each of which when loaded displaces 250 tons. This river flows to the east. The Seligdar, Yakokut, Uchur, Timpton, and other rivers are its north-flowing tributaries. The Aldan River is 700 to 800 meters wide at Tommot. It is navigable for a considerable but unknown distance to the north and east of the confluence of the Aldan and Uchur Rivers (N 58-17, E 130-38) and for about 420 kilometers to the west of this confluence in the direction of Aldan (to Tommot). The traffic on the latter stretch consists of steamships displacing approximately 50 tons, cutters (kateri) of less displacement, which when loaded displace approximately 250 tons. The usual practice is for a steamer to pull about three barges. When it comes to shoals (perakata) it must detach the barges and pull one at a time around the shoal. Source knew of two shoal areas, one about 30 kilometers east of Tommot (N 58-52, E 126-33) and the other approximately 80 kilometers east of Tommot (N 58-45, E 127-03).

5. Source knew of no bridges over the Aldan River. From late October to middle April, it is ice covered and can be crossed even by trucks. The rest of the year it is crossed by ferries (parony) and rowboats. Some two-deck passenger boats also ply the Aldan River.
6. The Timpton River is too shallow, swift, and rocky for steamships or cutters. Only flat bottom, four-ton, karbasy which carry a six-man crew are used on it. The Uchur River is about 500 to 600 meters wide at its confluence with the Aldan, but it is so shallow that even in summers of heavy rainfall only fishing smacks can use it. The Seligdar, Kuranakh, and Yakokut Rivers are not used at all for commercial traffic.
7. Source gave the following approximate river distances:
  - (a) The Aldan River from Tommot to Chagda, (near the confluence of Aldan and the Uchur Rivers - 420 kilometers.
  - (b) The Aldan from Tommot to the Timpton River - 70 kilometers.
  - (c) The Uchur River from the Aldan Chulba (N 57-46, E 130-54) - 180 kilometers (sic).

#### Roads

8. The only major road for vehicular traffic in the Aldan area is the Amuro-Yakutskaya Magistral (AYAM) which runs from Bolshoy Never (N 53-59, E 124-10) through Aldan (N 58-37, E 125-24) to the Aldan River opposite Tommot. This is the only road in the area that is not strictly constructed of dirt; it has a sand and stone covering. It is a two-lane highway, approximately six meters wide, giving room for trucks to pass. There are maneuvering places along the road at intervals. The road is graded and dangerous spots are protected by wooden posts. These posts are about two feet in diameter, four or five feet high, and are placed at intervals of approximately one meter. To allow for drainage there are one-meter-deep ditches along both sides of the road. In many spots where the ground is particularly wet, planking (nastil) and gravel (peack) are laid over the road. The AYAM is generally serviceable the entire year but it is occasionally made temporarily impassable by heavy snowstorms. It is the only supply route from the Trans-Siberian Railroad at Bolshoy Never to Aldan in the winter months, i.e., (October to April, when the Aldan River is frozen. Most traffic on the AYAM consists of truck traffic but the road is also plied by buses. The fare from Bolshoy Never to Aldan is 242 rubles.
9. Source knew of the following bridges along the AYAM: At Chulman, about 250 kilometers south of Aldan, is a 100-meter-wooden bridge over a tributary of the Timpton. At Tinda, about 400 kilometers south of Aldan, is a 70-meter-wooden bridge. At Verkhniy Kuranakh, north of Aldan, is a 50 to 60-meter-wooden bridge over the Kuranakh. At Yakokut, north of Kuranakh, is a short wooden bridge over the Yakokut River. All bridges known to source were built of wood and at all of them passengers had to dismount from buses and walk across while the bus went across empty. The Churan road running through Nizhniy Kuranakh from AYAM to the Aldan River is about 34 kilometers long but only the four kilometer stretch from AYAM to N. Kuranakh is now used.

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Subordination

10. According to source, controls in this Aldan area became much stricter in 1949. Prior to this the Aldan area had been ruled as a political unit and was subordinate only to the Yakutsk ASSR. In 1949 it became directly subordinate to the MVD like Kolyma, Verkhoyansk, and the entire Dalstroy region, which had been controlled by the MVD long before.

11. On page 4 is a rough map of the Aldan area. The map is not to scale. However, the area within a three-inch radius of Aldan is drawn approximate nine kilometers to the inch. The scale for the rest of the map is approximately 18 kilometers to the inch. According to source, every place named on the map with the exception of Yakokut, Tommot, the sovkhozy, and kolkhozy and the region south of Pervyy Orbichen indicates the existence of one or more gold mines.

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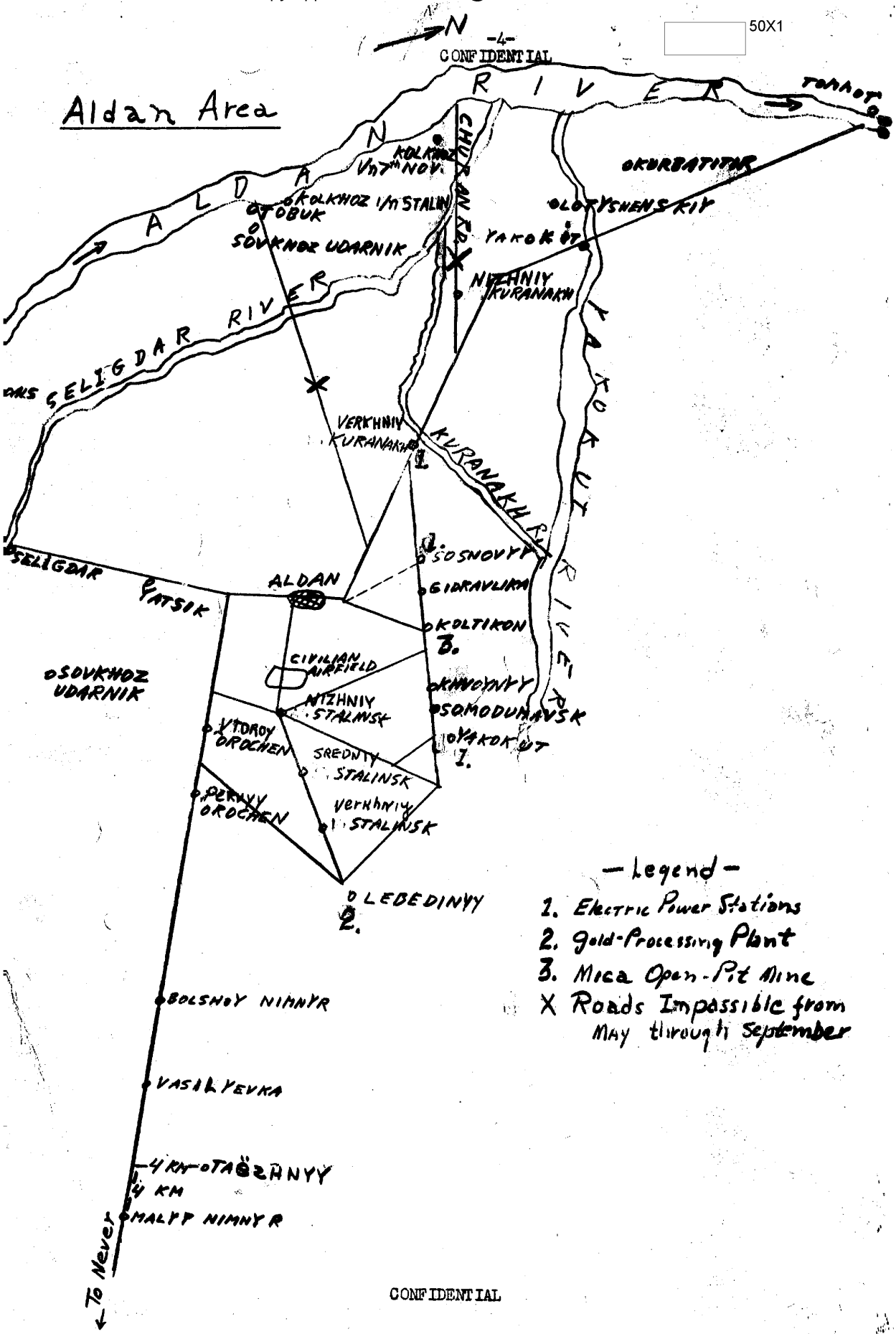
1.  Comment: Although this town is listed on some maps as Bolshoy Never, source insisted that the name is Never.

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# Aldan Area



### - Legend -

- 1. Electric Power Stations
- 2. Gold-Processing Plant
- 3. Mica Open-Pit Mine
- X Roads Impassible from May through September

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← To Nevel