

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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Construction of Railway Lines in USSR

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1. The railway construction program of the present Five Year Plan is being carried out chiefly on the railway lines of the Urals, Siberia, and the Donetz Basin, where industry is rapidly developing and railway traffic is growing heavier.
2. During the last two and a half years, a considerable amount of construction work has been done on Soviet railways, e.g., a second track has been laid on the Moscow-Northern Caucasus line (more than 1,300 kms), thereby ensuring the transport of Donetz fuel and increasing the transport capacity of the line.
3. The beginning of 1948 was marked by the opening of a new mountain railway from Bystrovka to Rybache in Kirgiziya, which is the prolongation of the Kant-Bystrovka line. This new railway has linked the center of Kirgiziya with the rich and fertile areas on the shores of Lake Issyk-Kul.
4. Work is in progress on the two most important sections of the future South Siberian main line, viz., Stalinsk-Barnaul and Almolinsk-Pavlodar. At present, tracks are being laid through the Salair Range, where a large tunnel is under construction. Houses for the first railway workers of the future main line have been built at the stations Sorokino, Smaznevo, and others. These workers are at present servicing the traffic on those parts of this line which have already been completed.
5. Restoration work on a large scale is being carried out in 1948 on the railway lines of the Donetz Basin, seriously damaged by the Germans. The development of the railway network inside the Donetz has made it possible to increase coal transports. The builders have undertaken to bring the Donetz railways to the pre-war level of technical development in 1948.

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6. A line is under construction between Ishimbayovo (53°27'N, 56°02'E) and Termolayevka (52°42'N, 55°48'E).
7. Construction of the Chardzhou (39°05'N, 63°35'E) - Kungrad (42°45'N, 58°20'E) line in Central Asia was begun this year. Forty-six kms of track have already been laid. In the near future the laying of the track of the new main line will begin in the sands of Kara-Kuma. The builders have undertaken to open traffic on the section between the 212th kilometer halt and the Darganata station for the 31st October Anniversary. The new Chardzhou-Kungrad line will establish railway communication with Tashauz Oblast (Turkmen SSR), Khorezm Oblast (Uzbek SSR), and Kara-Kalpak ASSR.

East-West Rail Communications

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8. Since the summer of 1946, the railway line Grodno-Leningrad has been under construction. There is one Russian gauge track and one normal gauge.
9. The line Vilna-Minsk was remade in 1945, also with one track for each gauge.
10. Similarly there are tracks for two gauges on the Przemysl-Lvov line, but it is not known how much further east this continues.
11. Chorzow-Przemysl was at one time constructed for both gauges, but now is only standard gauge.
12. A provisional solution to the difficulty presented by bridges is that trains do not pass on bridges, and there are only three rails for both gauges, not four as on the rest of the line.

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Murmansk to Brest-Litovsk Line

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13. There is no European gauge track on the line between Murmansk and Brest-Litovsk.
14. The German electric locomotives which have been concentrated near Brest-Litovsk for some considerable time are destined for the electrified railways in the Magnitogorsk area. The tracks in this area have not been converted to European gauge, but are all Russian gauge.
15. The German locomotives are mostly either "Stangenantriebs-Lokomotiven" or "Linzelschleppantriebslokomotiven" (single-axle drive locomotive). In consultation with German locomotive firms and after through investigation, the Soviets established the possibility of converting the locomotives to Russian gauge. A number have already been converted successfully and have been driven off to the Magnitogorsk area. Work on the rest is in progress; the locomotives are then sent to the USSR when the conversion has taken place.

Railway Junctions

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16. The current Five Year Plan has already converted some of the formerly obscure sidings and halts into large freight stations and railway junctions serving important industrial enterprises:
 - a. Formerly only one train stopped at the Rustavi siding on the Trans-Caucasian railway, but since the erection of the Trans-Caucasian Metallurgical Works this siding has been enlarged and equipped with additional tracks, an automatic blocking system, and powerful electric locomotives.

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- b. The small railway station Stepyanka (sic) of the Western Railway in Belorussia is being transformed into a large railway junction. New industrial enterprises (motor car, bicycle, and metal construction works) are now being built round this station.

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- c. Work continues on the restoration of the following railway junctions:

Knyanok
Krasnyliman
Debaltsevo
Yasinovataya (Yasinovovtoroye?)
Likhaya

Repair Shops

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17. The following railway car and locomotive repair works have been restored:

Poltava
Izyum
Stanislavov
Rostov
Kharkov
Otrozhsk
Roslavl

Electrification

18. a. Electrification has been completed on the line Rioni-Tkvibuli in Transcaucasia.
- b. Work continues on the electrification of the following sectors:

Nadzhdinak - Bogoslovsk (Sverdlovsk Railway)
Nikopol - Dolgintsevo (Krivoi-Rog District)

Labor Conditions on Railway Construction in Siberia

19. The electrification of the Tomsk railway is proceeding very slowly because of the extreme severity of the working conditions. There is no proper housing or feeding for the workers, and equipment is inadequate. Bricks and lime, for instance, are unloaded without gloves.

Desertions among laborers is considerable. It is officially admitted that 750 persons "voluntarily left" the Sibstroiput Trust in the five months preceding August 1948.

Railway Line in Riga Suburbs

20. On the coastal railway, which connects Malori, Dzintari and Bulduri stations with Riga, the second track has been opened to traffic. As yet, the maximum speed of trains running on this track is 17 km. per hour. Traffic is very irregular and does not conform to the time-table. Comment: This report probably refers to the local train or tram, that part of the Riga-Venspils (Windau) line which serves the Riga summer bathing resorts.

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Radio-Telegraph Communications

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21. Considerable attention is being devoted by the authorities to the installation of radio-telegraph communications on the railways. Until quite recently, the radio-transmission network was comprised of only 1,160 points. At present, there are 2,700 points in operation. The installation of radio equipment in the Donetz district is more complete than that of the Stalingrad, Moscow - Ryazan, Moscow - Donbas, and Perm railways.

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