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FLP 331

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

REPORT NO. [redacted]

CD NO.

COUNTRY Germany (Russian Zone)

DATE DISTR. 27 July 1950

SUBJECT Production of Refrigerator Cars at the Weimar Railroad Car Factory

NO. OF PAGES 4

25X1C

PLACE ACQUIRED [redacted]

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DATE OF INFO. [redacted]

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NO. OF ENCLS. (LISTED BELOW) 2 Annexes

SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO. [redacted]

[redacted]

1. Up to late January 1950 only narrow-gauge cars were built at the Weimar (J 51/J 57) Railroad Car Factory. They included motor rail cars, long timber cars, lorries and boxcars. This production was discontinued in favor of the manufacture of convertible refrigerator cars.

2. The following data were supplied on the individual types of cars produced in Weimar:

   a. Narrow-gauge motor rail cars: They are about 6½ meters long, 2½ meters wide and run on two bogies with two axles each. The body of the car is of wood. The power unit, whose output is estimated at 80 to 100 HP, is mounted on a base formed by 160-mm U-girders. Some of the individual parts of the power unit were delivered by unidentified delivery plants. In addition to the mentioned power unit these cars are equipped with a coal burning steam turbine. The scheduled monthly output of these motor rail cars is 200 units. The actual output, however, is only 150 to 180.

   b. Narrow-gauge long timber cars: These have two-axle bogies, two being used for the loading of timber. The scheduled monthly rate of production is 350 units; the actual output, 320.

   c. Convertible refrigerator cars: (1)

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(1) These have been in production since about the beginning of 1950. The hundredth car of this type is scheduled to leave the plant by late May. Since 1 March 1950 the rate of production has been one car daily, but this is soon to be raised to 2 cars. The car is 16 meters long and has a usable width of 2½ meters. Since the insulation is about 15 cm thick the over-all width of the car is about 2.5 meters. The outer side of the car has a 2½-mm iron sheet while the inner side is lined with zinc sheet. The insulating layer is of glass wool. Part of the sheets required for the body of the car are delivered by firms in the vicinity of Hannover (L 53/X 32) and Salzgitter (M 53/C 88). The interior of the cars, which have an estimated load capacity of 18 tons (not maximum capacity) is fitted with 136 meat hooks.

25X1X (2) The car runs on two four-wheel undercarriages, of which only the turning frames, the upper and lower flanges, the frames (springs) and the oil containers
25X1X are manufactured and assembled at the plant. [redacted] the wheel sets come from Czechoslovakia. The Czech delivery plants are unidentified.

(3) Devices converting these cars are not available. The wheels are pressed on cylindrical axles of equal diameter and adjusted by means of cramps (Annex) to either European or Soviet gauge. While this is
25X1X being done the car is lifted by a crane. The axles which are turned do not have wheel stops for the different gauges. (4). [redacted] the turned-off section is longer than the play between European and Soviet gauge (2).

(4) The conversion of the car is being done by the simultaneous shifting of the two wheels of an axle, two men having to hold the wheels on each side. The exact position of the wheels is determined by the tread measurements of the conversion clamps (see sketches B and C (3). In standard-gauge position

[redacted]

only half of the brake block is in contact with the wheel set, the full brake block being in operation only at Soviet-gauge position(5).

(5) Only the three mentioned types of cars are presently being manufactured in Weimar. The narrow-gauge cars are loaded on standard German cars and shipped to Brest Litovsk (S 53/D 87), while the convertible refrigerator cars are assembled in trains of 16 to 18 cars and transferred [redacted] to Brest Litovsk.

3. Luxury fast train coaches (Blue Express) with the same conversion mechanism are being built in Ammendorf (S 52/D 92) near Halle. The estimated rate of production is one coach daily. Convertible refrigerator cars are said to also be built in Dessau (S 52/E 17). (6).

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(1) [redacted] Comment: The interesting item of this report is the production of convertible refrigerator cars (para 2a). The report which supplies detailed technical data definitely confirms that convertible freight cars are being built on the modern method of shifting the wheels in the Soviet Zone of Germany also. Detailed information on this method, which had so far been practiced only in Czechoslovakia and Hungary, was given in two former reports. (7) (8). The required axles are apparently still delivered by Czechoslovakia which has developed the modern method of conversion and seems to have a patent for the manufacture of such axles.

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(2) [redacted] Comment: The method of shifting the wheels by means of clamps (para 2c (3)) is new but credible. This device which is based on operations by hand does not require stationary hydraulic plants as previously reported for Dahony. (8). This method offers great advantages in the event of war when the application of the most simple means is essential and the conversion of cars may be necessary at any transfer point. From this point of view the reported use of clamps may be considered as a distinct advantage over the previously reported procedure.

[redacted]

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(3) [redacted] Comment: For the conversion from European to Soviet gauge the clamps are applied to both arms (sketch C of Annex). A clamp holding the two wheels is used for the conversion to European gauge (sketch B of Annex). It is believed that two such clamps must be used to prevent a one-sided traction which might lead to a distorted position of the wheels.

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(4) [redacted] Comment:

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Contrary to the observation [redacted], according to which no stops, catches or similar devices are required to hold the wheels in their respective positions, it is believed that a wedging of the wheels is necessary to guarantee a fixed position (8). Without such wedging the wheels would be subject to dangerous vibrations.

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(5) [redacted] Comment: [redacted] special devices for the conversion to both gauges are probably also required for the brake rods. They would have to guarantee full contact of the brake blocks and thus their full effectiveness in every position of the wheels. Such a device was provided for in both the obsolete procedure of an exchange of wheels and the modern method which consists in a shifting of the wheels. There is no reason why this device should have been given up in this design and the brake effect should be reduced accordingly.

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(6) [redacted] Comment: Confirmatory information is required as to whether the convertible cars built in Ammendorf and Dessau (para 3) are built on the described method.

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[redacted]