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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY Rumania

SUBJECT Conditions in Brasov (Orasul Stalin)

[Redacted]

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1. Current political heads in Brasov are Col [fnu] Galusek, commander of the local Securitate and Major [fnu] Condurache, commandant of the local militia. Galusek lives at Dealul Spirei Street 266. Neither one of the men is a Rumanian, and Condurache has adopted an old Rumanian name to hide his real nationality.
2. Troops in the city include two infantry regiments, in barracks near the Partizanul Rosu factory, on the Boulevard Lenin, on Strada Lunga and on Strada Mihai Viteazul; two mountain regiments, outside the city; a mountain artillery regiment at Rasnov, and the 17th Bomber Regiment at the airfield.
3. Although Brasov was renamed Orasul Stalin on Stalin's birthday in 1949, no one in the town uses anything but the old name. The place now has a population of 170,000. Under the Communist regime it has lost its former gaiety and food is short. There is a general fear of deportation. By the beginning of 1953, about 20,000 persons had been deported as "socially undesirable elements", and only those rated as harmless were removed to Miercurea Ciuc.
4. The first thing one sees in Brasov is the Cetatzuia prison for political prisoners, a four-story building on Cetatzuia hill. The neighborhood is guarded by the Securitate, and traffic around the building is forbidden. The place probably has underground torture chambers; details about this are not to be had from the few people who have been released from the place, they say nothing after their release and avoid contacts with their friends.

SEE LAST PAGE FOR PRIORITY & AREA CODES

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- 2 -



5. The old railroad station was bombed out during World War II and the new one is decidedly shabby. From it the lines run out to the factories of Braşov and its neighborhood. Near the station are the modern railroad shops. Before the station stand only a few taxis and horse-drawn droshkys. Because of the high fares, they are used almost exclusively by Communist functionaries.
6. In the town there are six bus lines, with 15 buses altogether, 10 of which are Czech Skodas, bought in 1952. The remainder, of various makes, are over age. They are always overcrowded, with 100 passengers instead of the 40 they are supposed to take. A ticket costs 0.50 leu.
7. The main street of the city, formerly called Regele Carol Street is now Lenin Street. It runs through the town to the edge, where a huge monument to Stalin has been erected. Midway along it there is a big unfinished building, intended for propaganda meetings. When it was three-quarters complete, it was found that the calculations on it were wrong, and it has never been finished. Lenin Street is crossed by Karl Marx, formerly Strada Vamii. Here, in the building formerly occupied by the German National Union are the offices of the regional organization of the Communist Party.
8. Near the ARO Palace Hotel, the streets sometimes change their name, becoming Strada 7 November. Here in the building of the former savings bank, are the offices of the ARLUS (Association for Soviet-Rumanian Friendship) and the offices of the labor unions. Farther along are the offices of the state bank, the investment bank and the Sovrom bank. At the corner of Strada 7 November and Sfantul Ion Street are militia headquarters. The Securitatea offices are near the city baths, Strada Prundului and on the market place.
9. In Braşov there are five hotels, only three of which are open to the public--Hotel ARO Palace, Hotel Coroana and Hotel ARO Sport. The other two are the Cerul Militar, which is an officers' casino, and the Hotel Boulevard, which houses 120 Greek children. The ARO Palace, at the corner of Stalin Street and Strada 7 November, is a quite new nine-story building, reserved for Party functionaries and foreign visitors. The best rooms are cleared for foreign visitors, and those who live in them are moved to others, or to other hotels, no matter what Party rank they have. The hotels are managed by the state. In a first-class hotel the prices are 2⁰⁰ leu for a single room and 42 leu for a double; in second-class hotels 20 and 30 leu. A luxury hotel was built in 1951 at the Poiana Stalin for the Ski Olympics. Shortly afterward it burned. There were stories that it had been set afire by some of those concerned in the construction to hide the evidence of embezzlement during the building; and many arrests were made.
10. There are only a few restaurants open, since the state managements cannot keep their prices down to the level of the falling standard of living. The restaurants fall in three categories: the luxury class with a price of 50-100 leu a meal, visited only by the new Communist aristocracy; Class A, where 25 to 35 leu is the price of a very ordinary meal and Class B, where the food is almost inedible and the prices 10 to 20 leu. Most of the factories maintain canteens for their workers.
11. The famous pastry shops are now state undertakings, but have a very limited patronage, since only a few even of the Communist aristocracy are willing to pay 1.50 to 2.50 leu for a tiny cake.

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- 12. Braşov has a state theater, directed by the famous actor of the old regime, Misu Potino. Pieces by Caragiale are played frequently.
- 13. The movies show mostly stereotyped Soviet propaganda films, which leave the houses almost empty. Those who attend these films are workers who have been forced to buy tickets by their unions or other organizations. When a Czech, Polish or German film with less propaganda comes along, the places are jammed.
- 14. Consumption of alcohol in Braşov has grown markedly.
- 15. The churches are filled on Sundays, in spite of Communist propaganda, and in spite of the fact that many priests have vanished.
- 16. Braşov has an engineering school and an agricultural institute. Courses last three years.
- 17. The shortage of hospitals is marked. Of the four hospitals, the two best, in addition to two clinics, are reserved for Party functionaries and the army.



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17. Braşov