

INFORMATION REPORT INFORMATION REPORT

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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Wages and Cost of Living in Riga

1. The average salary of a worker in Riga was 550 rubles per month. The combined salaries of a husband and wife provided bare necessities, and they could seldom afford new clothing. A technical supervisor (sic) in a factory with eight men under him earned 600 rubles per month. The men earned more than he did, because they were not under contract. He paid 175 rubles per month for childless tax and 60 rubles for the State Loan. His rent was 45 rubles per month for one small room and kitchen. The house had electricity and one water faucet but no gas.
2. A driver-mechanic first-class received 700 rubles per month and three weeks' vacation per year. He left at 6:00 am to drive a director to work and took him home in the evening. During the day, he drove a truck. He was responsible for all necessary repairs. He often had to make trips to Moscow and Leningrad, for which he received no extra compensation.
3. An Army captain received 1,050 rubles per month, including quarters and subsistence. A major earned 1,100 rubles, including quarters and subsistence. He had only one stove, which used six cu m of wood per heating season.
4. A man with a motor saw, who went to individual homes to saw wood, received 30 rubles per cu m of wood. He was not in the service of the State and had to pay 4,500 rubles tax per year in order to carry on his work.
5. The head nurse in a hospital earned 800 rubles per month.
6. Consumer goods were exempt from rationing but were scarce or not available in State stores, expensive, and of poor quality. People relied chiefly on the free market where the goods were twice as expensive as in State stores. The goods at the market were supplied by kolkhozniki. The proceeds from the goods were put into the kolkhoz fund, from which purchases for new machines were made. Annual price reductions were of little value. Once, when the price of

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STATE	X	ARMY	X	NAVY	X	AIR	X	FBI		AEC				
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(Note: Washington distribution indicated by "X"; Field distribution by "#")

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bread was reduced, a new kind of bread was put out, which was as expensive as the old bread before reductions, and the old type was no longer available. During the Malenkov regime, living conditions improved; more goods were available in State stores, which meant a saving because of the lower prices in State stores than in the free market.

7. Following are some prices of food in Riga up to spring 1955:

<u>Item</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Cost (in rubles)</u>		<u>Remarks</u>
		(State store)	(free market)	
Butter	kg		50-55	
Milk	ltr	1.8-2	3.5-4	Usually not available in State store.
Meat	kg		20-25	Seldom available in stores.
Potatoes	kg	.6	3.5-4	Available in stores only in spring and of poor quality.
Bread	kg	1.5-2.6		Three grades; sufficient supply.
Margarine	kg	14.		Poor quality.
Cheese	kg			35-36 rubles; source of supply not stated

Sugar was seldom available, and, when it was, one had to stand in line for hours. Thus, only those families in which the wife did not work during the day were able to get sugar.

8. Following are some prices of clothing and miscellaneous consumer goods in Riga up to 1955:

<u>Item</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Cost (in rubles)</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
Shoes (poor quality)	pr	180	
Leather shoes	pr	400-500	
Woman's dress	1	1,000-1,400	Few persons can afford new clothing.
Man's suit	1	1,000-1,400	
White cotton	m	18	
Yellow cotton	m	10-20	90 cm wide.
House slippers (poor quality)	pr	350 (sic)	
Boots	pr	750	
Razor blades	5	35	Available only when brought in by sailors.
Wood	cu. m	110	
Linen cupboard (three drawers)	1	2,000	

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Furniture was generally very expensive, but there was no great demand for it. People were satisfied with a table, chair, and bed, particularly since there was room for little else in their living quarters.

9. There were no separate stores in Riga for Party members.

Construction Activity

10. No factories or dwellings were being built, and existing homes were not being kept up. A critical housing shortage existed in Riga, and people were offering 900 rubles to occupants of dwellings which rented for 45-50 rubles per month, if they would give them up. Four or five families sometimes occupied a residence originally intended for one family. One family of three adults and three children occupied a room 15 m square. Ten families living on one floor had only one water tap and two toilets.

Agricultural Labor Conditions

11. People had no desire to work on kolkhozy, preferring to work in the city, and there was insufficient manpower to harvest the crops. Factory workers were compelled to work for ten days on kolkhozy during the harvest season. The worker received only half his salary during the ten days and was under strict control, as his labor book had to be stamped by the chairman of the kolkhoz. Workers who did not put in ten days on a kolkhoz lost their factory jobs and were put to work elsewhere. Formerly, kolkhoz workers who married city dwellers were permitted to move to the city, but this practice was stopped. The Soviets collected all passports from kolkhoz workers, and persons desiring to go to the city had to obtain a permit. Without a passport, it was not possible to be married.

Health Conditions

12. Venereal diseases were widespread; there were two hospital buildings in Riga filled with persons with such diseases. Although prostitution was illegal, it existed on a large scale, particularly in labor camps. Abortions were practiced openly. There was a special apothecary and a clinic for Party members.
13. The Rodenberg Hospital was located on Dunties iela 12-22. At the beginning of 1947, the hospital was divided into a tuberculosis unit and an orthopedic unit. A Russian named Kroesin (fnu) (sic) was the head of the orthopedic unit. At first, only war invalids were admitted, but later other patients were taken. A total of 400 to 500 patients were cared for. (See layout sketch on page 5.)
- #### Public Opinion and Morale
14. Approximately 90 percent of the population could speak German but were afraid to do so. The population was very anti-Russian and was waiting for war. It was said that everyone had three spies watching him, who in turn had two spies watching them. Because of this, everyone reported even slightly suspicious activities of others, out of fear that his failure to do so would be discovered by the authorities. There were rumors that there were partisans in the woods outside Riga.
15. Private radios were registered with the post office, at a cost of three rubles a month. It was not forbidden to listen to foreign broadcasts, but this listening was generally fruitless because most broadcasting was heavily jammed. One could get only the Netherlands broadcasts well, since they were jammed very little or not at all. Recently, a new jamming apparatus was put into operation on Lenina iela (see note on the map of Riga).
- #### Bridges in Riga
16. The Soviets built a new bridge across the Dvina River, at the top of the Lenina iela. The bridge was arched and built completely of wood. It was guarded by soldiers. There was only a single track for the streetcar, since the bridge was too narrow for a double track. The Russian engineer under whose supervision the bridge was built was blamed for this and sent to Siberia. In the winter when the pontoon bridge was out of use because of the heavy ice drift, all traffic was sent via the new bridge.

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17. The foot bridge beside the rail bridge was broken. The rail bridge, which was also greatly damaged in the war, was completely repaired.

Industry

18. The Taube Driving Belt Factory was located on Dantes iela in Riga. Factory equipment included three cutting machines, six presses, and a few stretching machines to check the durability of the material. Approximately 35 men worked there in one shift, from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. The factory was combined with the Soomdar Factory (sic), with offices on Lenina iela, sometime prior to 1955. The equipment was moved from the old factory, and the factory made into residences.
19. The Riga DOK Factory was located on Dantes iela and manufactured Finnish barracks for kolkhozy and sovkhoby and some furniture. The factory was not producing at full speed because of lack of wood. The barracks were mostly shipped by rail to the place of destination. The head of the factory was a Russian named Teplov (fnu), who had first worked there as the chief engineer. Approximately 800 to 900 persons were employed at the factory in three shifts. Until 1948, German PWs and political prisoners worked there and were quartered in a camp near the factory. The camp was later converted into living quarters for free workers. (See layout sketch on page 6.)
20. A cattle fodder factory was located on Gaujas iela. About 900 tons of fodder were produced per day. Originally, the fodder was supplied only to sovkhoby, but later kolkhozy also received a certain amount. Approximately 150 persons were employed at the factory, mostly women. Two shifts were worked, 9:00 am to 6:00 pm and 12:00 midnight to 8:00 am. There was no third shift because of lack of current. Equipment included 12 mills of German manufacture. (See sketch on page 6.)
21. A large number of Swiss watches were returned (sic), because they were not labeled "made in the USSR". Tools of Soviet origin were of very bad quality.

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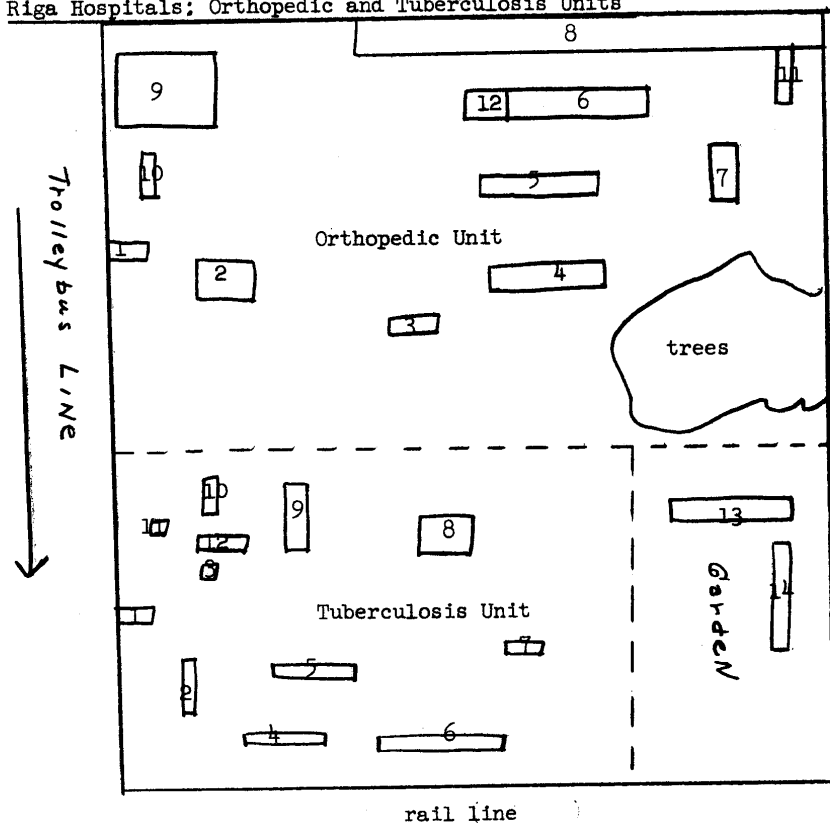
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Sketch No. 1

Riga Hospitals; Orthopedic and Tuberculosis Units

Dunzas iela



Key to Orthopedic Unit

- 1. Porter
- 2. Kitchen and office
- 3. Reception desk
- 4. First pavilion
- 5. Second pavilion
- 6. Boiler house
- 7. Third pavilion
- 8. Sheds
- 9. Residence for personnel
- 10. Residence for personnel
- 11. Workshop institute
- 12. Workshop for technical personnel

Key to Tuberculosis Unit

- 1. Porter
- 2. Not in use
- 3. House of director
- 4. Kitchen and shop
- 5. Office
- 6. Garage
- 7. Apothecary
- 8. Red Pavilion:(Rode paviljoen): 50 beds
- 9. Nunnery
- 10. Throat TB pavilion: 45 beds
- 11. Pumping station for removal of dirty water
- 12. Shed and mortuary
- 13. Hothouse
- 14. Shed for garden tools

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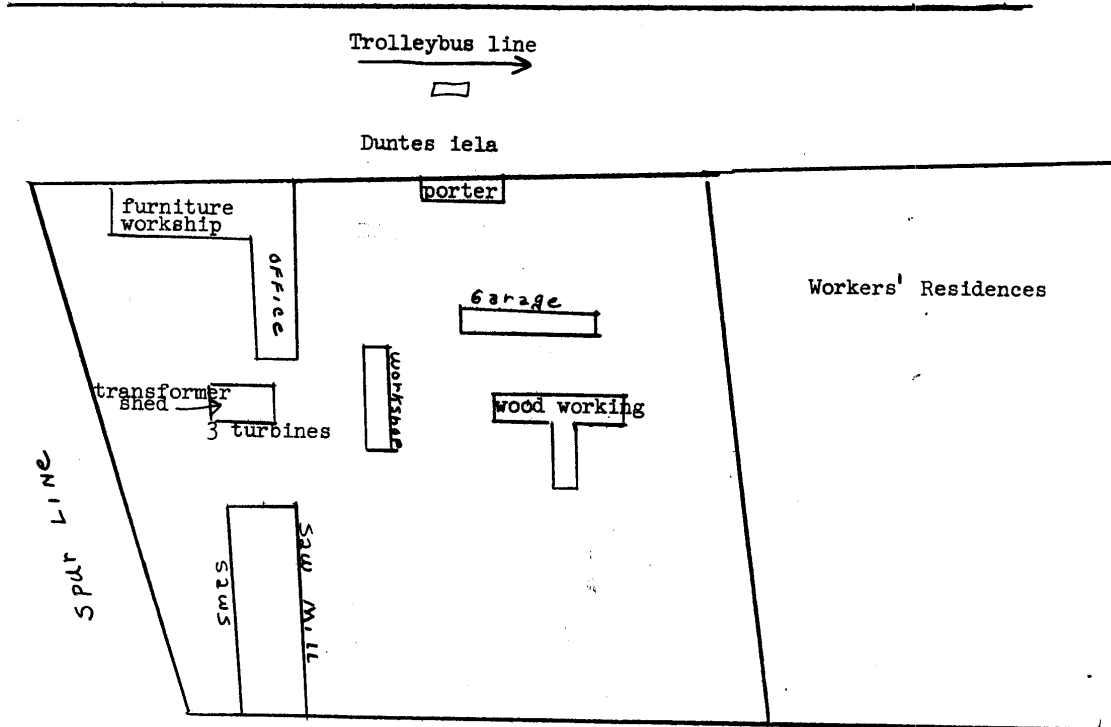
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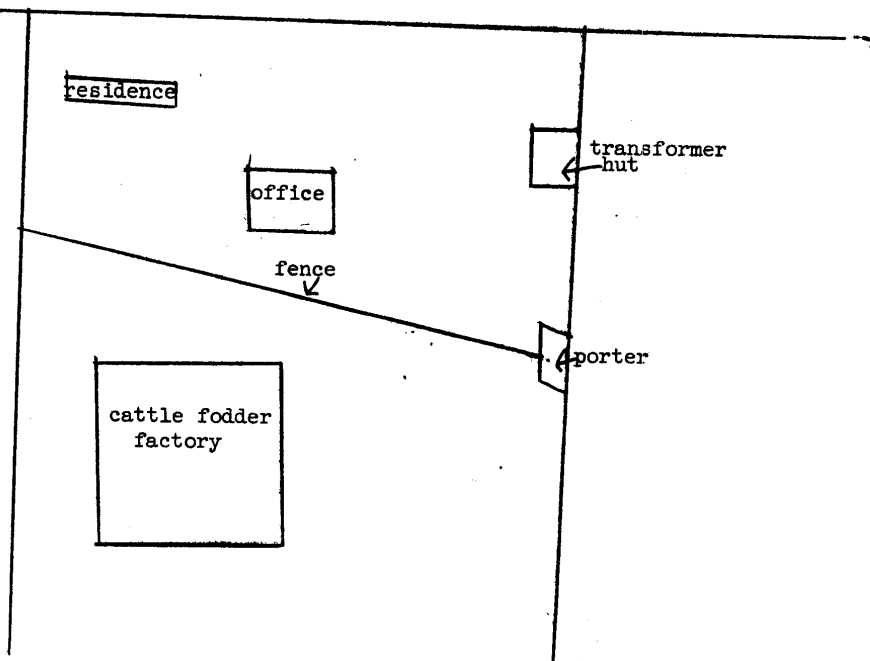
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Sketch No. 2
Riga DOK Factory



Sketch No. 3
Cattle Fodder Factory



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