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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY 25X1 REPORT

INFORMATION REPORT

CD NO.

COUNTRY Czechoslovakia

DATE DISTR. 2 MAY 1951

SUBJECT Lack of US Dollars on Purchases at Prague Fair
25X1

NO. OF PAGES 2

PLACE ACQUIRED

NO. OF ENCLS. (LISTED BELOW)

DATE ACQUIRED

SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO.

25X1

DATE OF INFORMATION

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

25X1 1. The 1950 Prague Fair was not as successful as similar exhibits in the past, primarily because of reduced participation on the part of Western European and US manufacturers of industrial equipment.

25X1 2. Next to the Czechoslovak exhibits, the greatest space was taken by the USSR. The Soviets had several large machine tools on exhibit in addition to earth moving equipment, such as bulldozers, tractors and trucks.

25X1 3. Usually at an exhibition of this sort the manufacturers participating give demonstrations of their equipment and carry on actual operations. The Soviets did not have any of their equipment in operation, with the exception of some of the earth moving equipment. All of the Soviet equipment looked strong and massive, but did not have the finish or the apparent modernity of Western European products.

25X1 4. Western European exhibitors included [redacted] high speed threading machine which aroused great interest on the part of Czechoslovakian visitors to the Fair. One of the officials of Artisiel, a new Czechoslovak national corporation, in charge of all drilling operations in the country, wanted to buy 10 [redacted] for threading pipes for drilling oil well casing. However, the order was never consummated as [redacted] the firm was not able to arrange such payment.

25X1 5. [redacted]

25X1 6. [redacted]

25X1 The workers [redacted] stated that they were having a most difficult time economically but, of course, there was no such thing as a strike. They were entitled to purchase certain rationed articles at state stores

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25X1

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25X1 at comparatively reasonable prices, but consumer goods were in extremely short
supply unless they patronized the legalized black market stores and paid prices
25X1 generally four times higher than those in effect at the legitimate state stores.
[redacted] they were working harder than they ever had, but there were
no strong complaints [redacted]

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