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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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C O N F I D E N T I A L

COUNTRY	USSR (Gorkiy Oblast)	REPORT	[Redacted]
SUBJECT	Description of the Dzerzhinsk City Area	DATE DISTR.	8 March 1954
DATE OF INFO.	[Redacted]	NO. OF PAGES	10
PLACE ACQUIRED	[Redacted]	REQUIREMENT	[Redacted] 50X1
		REFERENCES	50X1-HUM

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THE APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.
(FOR KEY SEE REVERSE)

[Large Redacted Area]

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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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NO. OF ENCLS (LISTED BELOW)

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DATE ACQUIRED : [redacted]

SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO.

DATE OF INFORMATION : [redacted]

THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

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INTRODUCTION

1. Upon our arrival in the Soviet Union, I and many of my deported compatriots attempted to acquire an ordinary street or city map of the Dzerzhinsk area. We very soon learned that such printed road and city maps, commonly obtainable in Western countries, are not available for general use in the USSR. The non-existence of such a practical public facility can presumably be attributed to the Soviet system of state security which attempts to withhold from the general public the location of such security sensitive objects as governmental, industrial, and military installations situated in and around major urban areas throughout the USSR. It is an established fact that the Dzerzhinsk industrial area is considered as Voyeniy Rayon—a military district, and therefore all plants, installations, and the population fall under the jurisdiction of the local MVD and MGB security organs.

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[redacted] I have therefore prepared a [redacted] sketch of the Dzerzhinsk city plan on which I have described and pinpointed as many specific installations, parts of the city, and other points of interest as I am able to recollect [see page 9].

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GENERAL CONDITIONS OF AREA

Topographic Features

2. The soil in and around Dzerzhinsk consists of light brown-yellowish sand. The city itself is built on comparatively even grounds. Steep slopes, falling down in places 20 to 25 meters, run along both banks of the Oka River. The lower stretches of land along the river, east and west of the city, are regularly flooded every spring. These areas remain submerged until the early part of the summer. A few small forests and single trees in the fields and along roads still remain as a

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remainder of the former vegetation which existed in this area prior to its industrialization. [redacted] These open areas, cleared of trees, as well as the streets within the city, are frequently subjected to sand storms, at which time roads and streets are made impassable by enormous collections of sand and dirt.

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Climatic Conditions

3. The winter in this area lasts approximately from six to seven months. During this period, the city's Gorkom was not very concerned about the road and street conditions, inasmuch as the snow and ice remained on the ground for as long as the cold weather lasted. During the thawing period, roads are frequently impassable. Often, the temperature falls down to about 40 - 50 degrees Celsius below zero. Frequent snow storms, in addition to the low freezing temperature, often paralyze rail and streetcar transportation to the plants. This results in work stoppages at some of the neighboring plants, since there is not enough motor transportation to go around for transporting all the workers to their places of employment. However, during the winter months the deeply frozen river greatly facilitates the traffic between both banks of the Oka River. During summer months climatic conditions are generally hot and dry.

Housing Conditions

4. The main period of the city's growth and development can be defined as the years between 1936 - 1939. However, in 1951, prior to my departure from the USSR, many buildings and housing developments were still in process of construction. It can be said that the city is still in process of expansion. During the years following World War II, many housing projects and worker's settlements were developed. However, the postwar housing shortage still continues to present a serious problem even for Soviet standards of living. The city's population (including the entire industrial area under the municipal jurisdiction of the Dzerzhinsk Gorkom) was estimated in 1951 to have reached the 150,000 mark. I believe that this figure is still increasing in conjunction with the growing industries in this area. I believe it is a well-established fact that the Soviet population, especially in urban areas, lives under very crowded conditions. I observed many families living in extreme poverty, particularly in localities on the outskirts of the city. During the frequent visits of my many Soviet acquaintances I observed the crowdedness and inconveniences resulting from the Soviet standards of life (conditions largely unknown in Western countries). However, I observed that Soviet families maintain their households spotlessly clean, neat, and orderly. There were naturally differences between the living conditions of the general Soviet population and the technical intelligentsia and Soviet governmental, political, and municipal functionaries. This apparently can be attributed to their class status and the higher income brackets or earning possibilities.

General Condition of the City

5. The condition of the streets can be termed generally poor. Only a few of the city's main thoroughfares (points 32 - 35 described below) are partly paved with asphalt. All other streets are either paved with cobblestones or present a hard-dirt country-road appearance.

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The street sewer and drainage system is poor. The houses present a pitiful appearance; neglect in their upkeep can be observed almost everywhere. The owners of the smaller, one-family dwellings do not attempt to beautify their properties for fear of being suspected of displaying capitalistic tendencies. Wooden and wire fences along streets and gardens are also neglected and simply deteriorate. However, the Red Square and the Park Kultury are kept comparatively clean and well tended. The newly constructed housing projects and apartment developments are also in neglected and shabby conditions. In the USSR almost everything is done in accordance with a previously planned program. The upkeep and maintenance of the city's properties follows the same pattern. To my knowledge, there was frequently a shortage of funds, allocated by the Gorkom or other respective agency, required for the maintenance and repair of the city's properties. On the other hand, governmental and public buildings were periodically repainted and retouched (especially before the Soviet national holidays) with standard Soviet accepted colors, red, blue, and yellow. Of poor quality, and with the help of climatic conditions, the paint would not last for longer than three to four weeks, after which time the buildings would return to their former deteriorated state. However, it appeared, though it may have been only on the surface, that the general Soviet citizenry is well satisfied and always cherishes hopes for improvements and betterment of living conditions. Of course, the government propaganda, with its constant blaring of Soviet standardized ideas and slogans, greatly influences the minds and thinking of the general population.

Vicinity

6. The roads, landscape, and localities southwest of the city proper (many scattered hamlets and single wooden village type dwellings can be seen in the fields and along the roads) present a poor and deteriorated picture. The poverty in those localities is appalling. The majority of the able-bodied adult population work in the neighboring kolkhozy. It was unbelievable to realize that kolkhoz workers, the farmers, were forced to buy bread and other commodities on the city's free markets. During the periods of fodder scarcity, the farmers bought bread in the city with which to feed their animals because they considered this less expensive than buying fodder on the black market. Large deposits of peat are located in the vicinity of Dzerzhinsk and Gorkiy. These deposits are considered of immense importance by the population and serve as a major supply of fuel for the entire district, at least of the Dzerzhinsk part of the Gorkovskaya Oblast.

Recreational Facilities

7. The city's cultural and recreational life revolved around the few local theaters, the city park (Kultury), and the sport stadium. The following breakdown illustrates the few recreational facilities available in Dzerzhinsk:
- 1 theater, approximately 250 seats, complemented with a third-class cast.
 - 1 movie theater, "Udarnik", approximately 400 seats.
 - 1 sport stadium, medium size, 20,000 capacity (seating and standing room).

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1 city park, with open-air theater and dancing floor. (Because of climatic conditions it can be used only three to four months during the year.)

1 hotel, fourth class, 60 bed capacity.

2 public restaurants

2 cultural clubs, "Dom Kultury," each located near the zavods Kalinina and Sverdlova.

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A variety of street corner stands known as "Zakusochnaya" (a Soviet version of snack-bars, with soft and hard drinks) can be found throughout the city. The local sport stadium is always well attended. Even those persons who do not have a liking for, or a particular interest in, any type of sport consider it "bon ton" to be seen at the stadium during sporting events. This is called expressing good sociability and "kultura." (The Soviet man-on-the-street has a particular liking for "kultura.")

This word is often mentioned in public statements, private conversations, etc. The Soviets in general consider this word an expression of highest culture and spiritual achievement. Though a very much misused expression, it is nevertheless the pride and obsession of every Soviet citizen.) Another type of a typical Soviet recreation could be observed on Sundays, holidays, and on summer evenings, when the city's population was seen promenading in the Red Square and/or in the park, continually circling "en masse," always in the same direction. This type of promenading is called in Russian "Massovoye Gulyaniye," or mass promenading. I am convinced that this expression of the population's sociability is very much to the liking and delight of the local MGB. After all, it is always good to keep the herd together. Considering the size of the city and its fast growing population, the available recreational facilities can be regarded as insufficient. Prior to my departure in 1951, plans were under consideration to construct a large new theater at a site somewhere in the proximity of the Gorkom (point 2 below).

DESCRIPTION OF THE CITY PLAN

Point 1 Red Square

Center of the city. Promenade lanes with benches, flower-beds, lawns, etc. A statue of Felix DZERZHINSKIY stands in the southern end of this square.

Point 2 Gorkom (Town Hall)

Seat of the municipal executive committee; a three-story, brick construction, 20 meters high, 120 x 20 meters. A large balcony over the main portal, located near the southern corner of the building, serves as parade reception stand during the usual celebration of Soviet national holidays.

Point 3 Main Post Office

This building is a three-story, brick construction, 15 meters high, 80 x 15 meters. It contains administration offices for the usual communication facilities, as well as for the wired loud-speaker outlet system (90 per cent of the housing apartments in the Dzerzhinsk area are equipped with wired loud-speaker outlets).

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Point 4 Hotel Building

A three-story building. In addition to the hotel facilities, it contains a restaurant, gastronom store, bookshop, shoe store, barber shop, and an apothecary.

Point 5 City and Savings Banks (Sparkasse)

A three-story building, 16 meters high, 50 x 20 meters. It also contains central pay offices for the industrial plants of the Dzerzhinsk area.

Point 6 Fire Department BuildingPoint 7 Power and Transformer Stations

Both (points 6 and 7) service the most essential buildings and installations within the city.

Point 8 Univermag Building

A two-story building. Ground floor: food, fruit, and vegetable stores, and the "Dynamo" sport magazin; first floor: clothing department.

Point 9 Apartment House

A four-story building. Belongs to the chemical plant "Rulon." The city's printing office is located on the ground floor. "Dzerzhinets," the city's daily newspaper is printed in this printing shop.

Point 10 Meat Factory

Meat and sausage factory and butcher store.

Point 11 KindergartenPoint 12 MVD and MGB Building

This building is known as the "Voyeniy Dom" (Military House) and is the seat of the district's MVD and MGB headquarters. A four-story building, with windows barred with iron frames. It also contains the court rooms and the city prosecutor's offices.

Point 13 City's Public Bath

This building is known as the "Kultura" house (Soviet version of a Turkish bath).

Point 14 Police Station

A two-story structure; contains a number of prison cells.

Point 15 Dispensary (Polyklinika)

A two-story building. General medical treatment, dental care, maternity clinic, etc.

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Point 16 Military Barracks

To my knowledge, two or three batteries of field artillery and anti-tank units were stationed there. Fenced-in area; wooden and stone buildings.

Point 16a Artillery Training Area

Restricted area with off-limits signs, surrounded by woods. Size of area unknown to me. Artillery firing could be often heard in the northwestern direction. Military guards were observed.

Point 17 City HospitalPoint 18 Housing Blocks (Apartment Development)

These buildings belong to Zavod 96.

Point 19 Housing Blocks (Apartment Development)

Same as (18) above.

Point 20 City Park

Known as "Park Kultury I Otdykha" (recreation park).

Point 21 Open-Air Movie TheaterPoint 22 Theater (Former children's theater)Point 23 SchoolPoint 24 Movie Theater "Udarnik"Point 25 Sport StadiumPoint 26 Amateurs' Radio Club and Micro-Wave Station (State-operated)Point 27 Market Place (Bazaar)Point 28 Railroad Station

Connects Dzershinsk with the plant Imeni Sverdlova, located approximately two to three kilometers from the city limits. The latter plant can be also reached by streetcar. This station contains many freight loading platforms, switching lines, and warehouses.

Point 29 Main Railroad Station

Located on the main rail trunk, Moscow - Gorkiy, and points further east.

Point 29a Freight Station

Many warehouses, switch lines, workshops, switch and signaling installations.

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- Point 30 River Harbor
Used by river boats cruising between Moscow-Dzerzhinsk and Dzerzhinsk-Gerkiy. Serves as connecting link with areas located on the right bank of the Oka River.
- Point 31 Warehouses and Sheds
Freight traffic transfer center from river to rail transport and vice versa.
- Point 32 Prospect Koltsevo
Main thoroughfare between Dzerzhinsk-Sverdlova. Small houses flank this avenue on both sides. Partly paved.
- Point 33 Prospect Dzerzhinskovo
One of the city's main traffic arteries, paved, flanked with apartment houses, stores, and office buildings. Shopping street.
- Point 34 Ulitsa Kaganovicha
One of the city's principal streets. Lined with apartment houses, stores, office buildings, etc. In 1951 this street was still in process of construction.
- Point 35 Prospect Lenina
Principal thoroughfare; paved with asphalt. Housing and shopping center.
- Point 36 Sparsely Inhabited Area
- Point 37 New Housing Projects
Modern type apartment developments, interspersed with small wooden dwellings.
- Point 38 Suburban Settlement
Consists of many scattered stone and wooden houses. Close to the market place (point 27), it contains many food and utilities shops. The shoemakers' and barbers' artels, or State Associations, are located in this area.
- Point 39 Housing Area in the Vicinity of the Oka River
Old wooden dwellings built on the slope declining towards the river.
- Point 40 Old Village
Dilapidated wooden houses with tin roofs; neglected unpaved streets. It presents a typical old Russian village of the 19th century.

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