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**INFORMATION REPORT INFORMATION REPORT**

**CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY**

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COUNTRY	USSR	REPORT NO.	<input type="text"/>	50X1
SUBJECT	Soviet Border Guard Administrative and Personnel Matters	DATE DISTR.		
	50X1	NO. OF PAGES	5	
DATE OF INFO.	<input type="text"/>	REQUIREMENT NO.	<input type="text"/>	50X1
PLACE ACQUIRED		REFERENCES		
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(Note: Washington distribution indicated by "X"; Field distribution by "#")

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COUNTRY USSR

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DATE DISTR. 21 April 1955

SUBJECT Soviet Border Guard Administrative and Personnel Matters

NO. OF PAGES 4

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REFERENCES:

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Soviet Border Guard Officers' Tours of Duty

1. There was actually no standard-length tour-of-duty in given areas for border guard officers. In theory, there was a so-called Otdalenny Shtat (regulation covering assignments in remote areas under difficult geographic conditions) for such areas as the Kuriles, Kamchatka, Sakhalin, and the desert-mountain areas of the Central Asiatic Republics. In these localities, border guard officers were supposed to serve only for a three-year period. However, in practice, little attention was paid to the Otdalenny Shtat, and even when officers requested transfers after their three years were up, they were ignored. [redacted] officers [redacted] had served eight, ten, fifteen years, and even longer in one area under such conditions.

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2. [redacted] Capt ISAKOV (fnu) [redacted] had served eight years in Central Asia, and [redacted] a colonel, Deputy CO of the 68th Border Guard Otryad [redacted] had served in Central Asia and in the Turkmen and Tadzhik Republics for over 20 years. The latter even had a medical certificate from the border guard district medical officer advising against such service but still could not obtain a transfer.

Demobilization of Border Guard Officers

3. [redacted] the main causes for the demobilization of border guard were political unreliability and moral turpitude. Theoretically, captains over forty, majors over forty-five, lieutenant colonels over fifty, and colonels over sixty were considered eligible for demobilization. In practice, however, the border guard could and did keep

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50X1 officers past demobilization age [redacted] captains who were  
 50X1 well over the age of forty. Again, [redacted] the case of the Deputy  
 50X1 CO of the 68th Border Guard Otryad who had over 20 years of service  
 50X1 in Asia. This officer was past demobilization age but, despite this  
 50X1 and his physical condition, had not been able to obtain a recom-  
 50X1 mendation for discharge from the district medical commission. [redacted]  
 [redacted] this case was not an exception but rather the rule.

#### Border Guard Reenlistees

4. [redacted] details of the chevrons of the reenlistee  
 50X1 [redacted] was readily available in service  
 50X1 manuals such as the Ustav Vnutrenney Sluzhby (Internal Service Regula-  
 50X1 tions). The longest career for an EM [redacted]  
 50X1 [redacted] was that of a sergeant in an otryad who had ten years'  
 50X1 service. [redacted] no longer terms among enlisted personnel in the  
 50X1 border guard.

#### Border Guard Disciplinary System

5. The disciplinary system in the Soviet border guard had several aspects:
- a. Unit commanders had certain punitive and disciplinary prerogatives which they could invoke, e.g., restriction to an area, confinement to quarters, and short terms of confinement in the guardhouse, for both officers and EM.
  - b. There existed a system of officers' honor courts which were provided for by the Disciplinary Regulations of the Soviet Armed Forces. As in the Soviet Army, each border guard unit at the level of a separate battalion or a line regiment (chast) had a junior officers' honor court. In each unit the size of a separate regiment or at division level, there existed a senior officers' honor court. Junior officers' honor courts had jurisdiction over officers up to and including the rank of captain. Senior officers' courts had jurisdiction over officers from majors to colonels. The punishment recommended by either of the honor courts had to be kept within the limitations outlined in the Disciplinary Regulations of the Soviet Armed Forces. Punishment included any of the following:
    - (1) Delaying promotion one year
    - (2) Lowering from position of responsibility
    - (3) Reduction in rank by one grade

50X1 In the case of a delay of promotion, the court's recommendation had to be forwarded to the Defense Ministry in Moscow which reserved all officer promotions for itself. These recommendations were almost automatically approved by the ministry. If the court lowered an officer from a position of responsibility, the sentence carried an automatic reduction in pay because the border guard, like the Soviet Army, augmented officers' base pay with additional amounts of money which were dependent on the degree of responsibility held by the officers. As a hypothetical example, [redacted] an officer could be relieved of the higher responsibility of deputy otryad CO and assigned as chief of staff to the CO of a komendatura which was one unit-level lower.

Members of officers' honor courts were elected at a unit officers' meeting or conference. Ordinarily, the bulk of nominations was submitted by the unit political section. Tenure was for a specific period of time and membership of the court did not often change. These courts were usually made up of from five to six members.

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The honor courts were subordinate to the CO of the unit and ruled on questions of officer conduct and cases of moral turpitude as opposed to criminal or political offenses. Two of the offenses within the realm of honor courts were debauchery and immorality.

All members of an honor court had to be equal or senior in rank to the officer whom they were trying.

In addition to the two types of disciplinary action cited above, all border guard personnel, officers or EM, who were accused of felonies or serious political crimes were delivered to a military tribunal (voyenny sud) which was empowered to administer sentences up to the death penalty, including long sentences in corrective labor camps.

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A separate battalion or line regiment CO, or his equivalent, was the lowest-ranking officer who could recommend trial by military tribunal for border guard personnel. However, many unit COs were ordered by the military prosecutor's office to deliver personnel after the former had already sentenced them to 15 to 20 days' confinement in the unit guardhouse. In the case of all individuals being tried by a military tribunal, a pre-trial investigation (prokuratorskiy nadzor) was in order.

#### Percentage of Border Guard Personnel Involved in Disciplinary Actions

6. The average annual percentage of personnel in border guard units tried by honor courts or other tribunals fluctuated widely from year to year. During the early post-World War II years, it was not great even though the period was characterized by considerably more drunkenness, wild behavior, shooting-up of villages and installations, and the wanton wounding and killing of innocent bystanders.
7. [redacted] an average of 10 to 12 officers each year stood trial before an honor court in a unit which had a total of over 250 officers - the size of an otryad. In some years, no officers from such a unit were tried by military tribunals, while in other years, the rate per otryad was one or two. In the course of a year, probably 15-20 EM from an otryad were tried before a military tribunal.

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#### Border Guard Special Section

8. The Special Section (Spetsialnyy Otdel) at border guard district-level was also known as Spets-Chast (Special Unit) or kantselyariya (office). In June 1953, its chief in the Turkmen Border Guard District was Maj Stepan REPIN.
9. All classified and unclassified paper work of the district for distribution downward, upward, and laterally passed through the Special Section. The section also registered and distributed all incoming and outgoing official mail. [redacted] the Special Section should not be considered an archives or filing section because this function was handled by the Administrative Section (Admin-Chast). Also that it should not be misconstrued as having more connection with counterintelligence than any other section. 1
10. The Special Section distributed all incoming official mail to the proper section, where pertinent classified working material was held in a section safe. When classified material was no longer needed

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in a section, it was sent to the consolidated files (arkhivi) of the Administrative Section.

Soviet Border Guard Zastava Messing Facilities

11. Each border guard zastava had its own dining hall, bakery, and kitchen which baked its own bread. According to border guard T/O & E, there was one baker and one cook for each 30 men. When there were more than 30 men, there were two cooks.
12. One problem encountered in the messing of border guard troops was the length of the meals. Not less than one-third of the personnel of a zastava was on border guard duty in the daytime and about 70% on duty at night. Feeding the men as they came on or off duty necessitated breakfast lasting two, three, and even four hours. Under such a schedule, one cook was not enough for 30 men; therefore, one EM was usually detailed as KP.

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Comment: Border guard counterintelligence sections (Otdely KontraRazvedki-OKR) were occasionally referred to as "Special Sections" (Osobyie Otdely).

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