

CLASSIFICATION SECRET/SECURITY INFORMATION

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT

# INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY USSR

## SECRET

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SUBJECT Concealed Gun Positions  
Near Leningrad

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SOURCE

The Leningrad fortifications include gun positions concealed underground. I saw these positions in 1939 and during the early years of World War II. At Byelooostrov the guns are beneath a wooded area. The positions are covered with earth and even have trees growing on top. For use of the guns, an entire section of earth-covered roof is rolled to one side on rails, thereby exposing the guns. Similar positions are located south of Leningrad along the Finnish Gulf.

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- (m) On Trinity (religious holiday) in the villages a small birch tree is stuck into the ground before the house. This is done so that in case God comes there will be a place for him to sit in the shade.
- (n) In a house where there is a corpse, the mirrors are covered.
- (o) A watch is kept at the coffin of a dead person at night. Allegedly they are protecting the spirit, which on the 40th day will rise to heaven.
- (p) A coffin containing a corpse is always carried feet first.
- (q) An illness in the family or some misfortune means that it is the wrath of God on account of sins which have been committed.
- (r) A cow begins to give less milk. A child grows sickly. Means that it is the work of the evil eye.
- (s) The palm of your hand itches. Means you will receive money.
- (t) Your eyelid itches during the daytime. The left eyelid - means good luck. Right eyelid - means bad luck. When the eyelid itches at night, the left eyelid means bad luck, the right eyelid means good luck.
- (u) When you find a needle, if the sharp end lies away from you, that is good. If the sharp end is toward you, that is bad.
- (v) When you find a horse shoe, if the open end lies toward you, that is good. If the open end lies away from you, that is bad. In general, horseshoes are considered lucky or conducive to good. So people put them in their houses. Are happy to find them.
- (w) When a wood fire is burning in a fireplace, if sparks fly off, it means that a guest will arrive.
- (x) If the cat washes his face with his paw while lying with his back to the door, it means that a stranger will visit the house. Today this could mean that the MVD is about to pay a visit.
- (y) If a mirror is dropped from the hand and is broken, it means some kind of misfortune.
- (z) A broken dish is a sign of good luck. An example of this can be seen in the practice of actually breaking a plate or dish for good luck when a member of the family is going away, as for example a husband or son off to the front. The dish is broken just at the moment of departure.
- (aa) Before a departure of an individual or a group on a long trip, all members of the family and friends present should sit down quietly for a few minutes. Then the traveler leaves immediately. This is for good luck on the trip.
- (bb) A horse is ill-at-ease (disturbed in his stall or in the barn). Means it is the work of the hobgoblins (or house spirits).
- (cc) The end of your nose itches. You must take a look into a glass (take a drink of vodka).
- (dd) A woman crosses the road with empty buckets - this is not good. If with full buckets, that is good. When a woman carrying empty buckets suspended to a shoulder yoke is walking in a direction across yours, she will stop and allow you to proceed first. You will nod to her or say something in thanks for her courtesy. Only a bad-mannered woman would cross your path in front of you while carrying empty buckets. Another superstition is that it is not good for a woman carrying two buckets of water with shoulder yoke to allow two people to drink from the buckets at the same time. This might cause her to have twins.
- (ee) If you sit at the corner of a table, you won't marry for a long time or not at all.
- (ff) It is bad to whistle in the house (a custom).
- (gg) When a spider comes down his web from the ceiling, that is a sign that you will receive some kind of news or a letter.

2. This list contains only a small portion of the superstitions and prophecies. Among the people very many old ceremonies and customs (religious and wedding) have been preserved. To a certain extent the belief in miracles, visions and all kinds of signs still exists. I am not able to describe them since, as a result of my own convictions, during my life in the USSR I was very far removed from the possibility of understanding such nonsense.

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