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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT NO. [REDACTED] 25X1A

INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY USSR (Amur Oblast)

DATE DISTR. 26 MAY 50

SUBJECT The Town of Raichikhinsk

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SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO. 25X1X



Population

1. Raichikhinsk (49-48 N, 129-25 E) in Amur Oblast of the Soviet Far East is a very rapidly growing mining town. [REDACTED] in 1945, the population was about 8,000 and, in 1949, it became very close to 20,000. The population is about 50 per cent Great Russian, about 20 per cent Ukrainian, and the rest Georgian, Tartar, Armenian, Turko-Mongolian, with a very small number of Jews, Chinese, and Koreans. The rapid increase in population is mainly the result of the return of repatriates from Germany and of the forced reallocation of Tartars and Georgians. These people are mainly employed as laborers in the two main industries: coal mining and housing construction. In addition, large groups of technical trainees of FZO (Fabrichno-Zavodskoye Obucheniye, factory-plant training), young men around 15 to 18, come to the mines to work their apprenticeship and, after a year's training, become technicians in construction and mining.

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Security

- The control over the workers is quite severe. They are not allowed to retain their own passports but must turn them in to the organization for which they work and receive a certificate of identity from that organization. The only travel allowed is that for official business, and a worker has to receive an official permission from the MVD in addition to travel orders. Only when he has these documents can he get his passport back from the organization by which he is employed.
- The town is well patrolled by the militia and documents are often checked on the streets. The first question usually is: "Where do you work? For which organization?" Only after this are the documents checked. There are no border guards in town. However, [REDACTED] a large number of them located on the nearby Manchurian border along the Amur River. A number of PWs have tried to escape from the camp, but all of the attempts were unsuccessful, mainly because of the lack of food which made them turn in to the civilian population for help at which time they were turned over to the border guards. At no time though did the border guards themselves catch an escaped prisoner.
- There are a few Railroad Police in town and also a detachment of MGB composed of a number of officers with their chief, Major Avrora (presumably a false name taken after the cruiser AVRORA that participated in the revolution in the Crimea). [REDACTED] The Major was usually observed from a distance riding in a jeep around town. (See attachment B for a sketch of the MGB buildings.)

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25X1A 5. [redacted] some of the construction workers who were formerly German PWs and were liberated by the Americans. They spoke very highly of the Americans, the treatment and the food that was given them, and at times 25X1A [redacted] understand that they should have remained there. One of such men was a foreman of a group of construction workers, a civilian who was a platoon commander in the Soviet Army and was captured by the Germans. He liked the Americans very much and regretted many times that he had returned to the Soviet Union. There were several other foremen who shared his feelings.

25X1A 6. [redacted] there is a forced labor camp site about 15 km from town. 25X1A [redacted] most of the workers come to Raichikhinsk because of forced government reallocations and very few come of their own free will.

Living Conditions

25X1A 7. [redacted] the conditions of the workers were extremely bad and many of them complained [redacted] that they were barely making enough money to keep themselves fed at very meager rations. Towards 1949, the conditions had somewhat improved, but even then many of the workers were just barely existing. 25X1A The workers at the present time [redacted] are housed in barracks maintained by the coal trust. There are as many as several families to one room, but new construction is alleviating this situation.

8. [redacted] there were about 15 stores in town. Only one of them was selling clothing at very high prices. The situation was somewhat improved by the fact that captured Japanese army clothing was available for sale and sometimes issued by the coal trust. Very brisk trading in it was conducted at the bazaar. In fact, during the first three years (1945-1948), the only goods that were available were the captured Japanese property: clothing, shoes, medicines, etc. A number of trucks and cars in town were Japanese brought in from Manchuria. The bazaar was a very popular place for trading and the main items were food and vegetables of all kinds. Some trading was going on in old clothing and tobacco, but these items were scarce. The most desirable items were watches; a 17-jewel watch would sell as high as 1,500 rubles. Some radio sets were available, at first captured equipment and later sets of Soviet manufacture. Radio parts and tubes were extremely hard to get. There was no restriction against listening to foreign broadcasts.

MVD and MGB Buildings

9. The MVD police building is a two-story structure, 40 m long by 14 m wide by 7 m high. It is built of wood; stucco outside, covered with wood shingles, painted with whitewash. The roof is gray unpainted wood. It is surrounded by a wooden plank fence. Half of the building is occupied by the Civil Courts. (See Attachment A.)
10. The MGB building is a two-story brick house, 24 m long by 14 m wide by 7 m high. The front of it is stucco and the outside walls are painted white. The roof is made of a corrugated cement composition, gray in color. (See Attachment B.)

Personnel in the Town

11. The personnel of the coal trust included the following men:
- Assistant Chief of City of Raichikhinsk Coal Trust - Leonti Yakovlevich Koyev (Kopf)
 - Chief of Communal Housing sub-section - Nikolai Yakovlevich Kishurikov
 - Chief of the Construction Area - Chivnov, formerly a CPO in the Soviet Navy
 - Chief of the Motor Pool - Begunov

25X1X 12. [redacted] Personnel in charge of this PW camp included the following: 25X1X

- C.O. of PW Camp - Sr. Lt. Boyarkin
- Chief of Production - Jr. Lt. Alexander Gudkovski
- Chief of Supply - Kotrei, a civilian
- Assistant to Supply - Zhinsenkov, a civilian
- Political assistant - Capt. Leiba
- Assistant - Jr. Lt. Shirokov
- Chief of the 1st Section - Major Sidorenko or Sodorenko
- Chief of the 2nd Section - Capt. Kosenkov
- Chief of the Medical Section - Lt. Radionov
- Supply and Maintenance - Capt. Verov

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13. The first section of the PW camp was employed in the construction of housing for the workers of the coal mine. The second section of the camp was working in the coal mines, mainly removing the surface turf from the coal veins because the coal was located practically on the surface.
14. The fact that a senior lieutenant was the C.O. of Major Sidorenko, Capt. Kosenkov and Capt. Moroz was explained [redacted] by the fact that the latter were German PWs during World War II and had been repatriated only in 1945. [redacted] in 1945, they were not wearing the shoulder boards of officers and at first [redacted] mistook them for civilians, but later on they began to wear the full uniform.
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