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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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1. The city of Stara Zagora is situated on the Derwent Pass on the southern slopes of the Stara Planina Mountains. The two nearest towns are Chirpan and Nova Zagora. Half of the city is built on level country and half on a southward slope of the Minor Balkan Mountain range. The city is relatively new, having been rebuilt about 70 years ago when a fire destroyed the old city. After 1945, the following construction took place in the city:
 - a. A textile factory, a three-storied building about 120 meters by 20 meters, was built in the East of the city along the bank of the Bidechka Stream. It has been in operation since autumn 1948 and manufactures cotton underwear.
 - b. The Lycee for Boys, a four story building with 100 rooms, in the center of the city near the Municipality, which was started in 1941, has been completed. Its dimensions are 200 meters by 20 meters.
 - c. Ten buildings to be occupied by railroad employees were built East of the railroad station. They are of three stories and each building will accomodate five families.

The city was built according to a plan with streets running in straight lines. The central boulevard and streets are 12 meters wide and paved with square stones. The main boulevard, named Czar Simeon, is 16 meters wide. Outlying streets still have an earth surface. The streets are lighted by electricity transmitted from Rakovski. Stara Zagora is the only city in the country where doors of buildings carry plates with the street names and house numbers.

2. The main buildings of the city are the Court of Justice, the Lycee, the textile factory and the State Hospital. Most houses are three-storied and painted white or sky blue. The city is important as a commercial center and for its grain warehouses. The population figure is approximately 40,000. Minority groups include Armenians. There are eight churches in the city, four Orthodox, one Roman Catholic, two mosques and one synagogue.

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This document is hereby regraded to CONFIDENTIAL in accordance with the letter of 16 October 1978 from the Director of Central Intelligence to the Archivist of the United States.

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3. The railroad station, located in the south of the city, is on the Sofia-Burgas, Gorna Orehovitsa-Svilengrad lines. The railroad station building is 60 meters long and 12 meters wide, is painted yellow, and has a covered platform. Each day two passenger trains arrive from the cities of Sofia, Burgas, Gorna Orehovitsa, and Haskovo. There is no civilian airport in the city, but a military airfield is located south of the city. Government owned buses operate between Stara Zagora and the cities of Kazanlik, Haskovo, Harmanli, Chirpan, Nova Zagora and Topolovgrad.
4. Stara Zagora was formerly the capital of the province, but is today a town administrative district. The administrative District Council, the People's Town Council and the committee which purchases the town's products are located in the old provincial governowship building, in the municipal building, and in the old provincial Chamber of Commerce, respectively. The President of the Administrative District Council is a Communist named Georgi Vasilev.
5. There is a Bulgarian-Soviet Friendship League, which is located opposite the city park. Visitors and various groups who come from the Soviet Union are met and welcomed by this league.
6. There are no MVD headquarters or barracks in town. The Militia headquarters is located in a building opposite the newly built Lycee for Boys. The town Militia head is Marin Cherkovski. In the city there are five Militia stations, and there is one Militia station in each big village and train station within the town administrative district. In each of the Militia stations in Stara Zagora are 150 uniformed Militiamen. About five kilometers southeast of the city a large prison has been built. The walls are five meters high with patrol towers. The State Security Militia, headed by the Communist Sechenko, is located on Czar Simeon Street in the center of town. It consists of 50 members who go about in plain clothes in order to check the political currents among the people. There is no night curfew, but Militia patrols operate at night and may ask identification papers from anyone whom they might suspect.
7. There are three cigarette factories employing from 200 to 300 workers, one canned fruit and vegetable factory with 300 workers, and a cotton textile factory employing an equal number of workers. There is no separate industrial section in the city, these factories being scattered throughout. The most modern slaughter-house in Bulgaria, employing some 300 people and equipped with machines, is some two kilometers south of the city.
8. The local Communist Party is established in a former private house in the central section of the city; it is a four-story building, brown in color and with balconies facing the street. Tacho Paskalov, who is also a deputy to the National Assembly, is the Secretary of the local Party.
9. The only local newspaper, the daily Septemvri, is the organ of the Party. The editor is a Communist named Sivriev.
10. A radio station is located in the village of Mogila 6 kilometers south of the city. It generally repeats the broadcasts of the Sofia radio. People listen to the broadcasts by means of loudspeakers installed at various places in the city.

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11. There are four hotels, the Imperial, the Bulgaria, the Moskva, and the Batenberg, all situated in the center of town where Czar Simeon and Metodi Streets cross. The city has no institution of higher learning



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