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25X1 1. Prior to World War II, the predominant religious denomination in Latvia was Lutheran, comprising 57 percent of the population. It is estimated that, as of October 1950, the population of Latvia could be classified by religious denomination as follows:

- Lutheran 47 percent
- Roman Catholic 42 percent
- Orthodox 8 percent
- Other denominations (Baptists, Adventists, etc.) 3 percent

The decrease in the percentage of Lutherans can be explained by the repatriation of Latvian-Germans, i.e., the so-called "Balts", who were mostly Lutherans. These repatriations amounted to approximately five percent of the total population of Latvia. Another factor contributing to the decrease is the fact that the Latvians from the wealthier districts and those of the urban middle classes who were most affected by the deportations from Latvia to other parts of the USSR belonged to the Lutheran denomination.

2. All churches in Latvia are in general use. One exception, however, is the Lutheran church in Ilukste (55-57N, 26-17E), which has been converted into a dance hall because of the very small number of Lutherans in the district. On Sundays an adult usually has to participate in some public work, such as clearing rubble from factory yards or bomb sites, or working in public parks. School children are kept away from church on Sundays by compulsory attendance at special theatre or cinema performances, rehearsals at school for some singing or theatrical production, sport functions, and similar events. Such activities always take place during the hours of church services, from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm and never in the afternoons. Pupils who do not participate in these activities are looked upon by the school authorities with disfavor, and their future education is handicapped. Only old people can go to church without fear of reprisals. Women may go to church since the Communists seem to show tolerance toward women churchgoers, but church attendance for young people or men is regarded as evidence of anti-Communist feelings.

3. Riga is the center of the Roman Catholic Church in Latvia. Regarding the rest of the country [Redacted] predominant

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in the southeastern province of Latgale, with centers in Daugavpils (55-52N, 26-32E), Rezekne (56-30N, 27-20E), Kraslava (55-53N, 27-08E), Ilukste (55-52N, 26-17E), and Jekabpils (56-30N, 25-50E). The Catholic priests in these areas are experienced and careful in their relations with State officials, not giving the latter a chance to find a pretext or justification for turning against the church or any of its members.

4. There seems to be no marked difference in the treatment by the Soviet authorities of the Roman Catholic Church in Latvia as distinct from any other denomination; the Soviet administration is equally severe toward each and all of them. Neither the Lutheran, the Orthodox, nor the church of any other denomination in Latvia has ever shown any willingness to cooperate with the Soviet regime. When the Metropolitan of Moscow arrived in Riga in the summer of 1949 and also visited other Orthodox churches in Latvia, he was strongly guarded by the MVD to prevent his being attacked, because it was an open secret that members of the Orthodox Church in Latvia regarded him as a Soviet "stooge". The Orthodox churches on that occasion were filled to capacity, as many people of that faith took the opportunity of going openly to church. [redacted] every religious service, of whatever congregation, is attended by observers from the M.G.B..
5. Roman Catholic monasteries are known to be still in existence in Riga, Aglona, and Ilukste, where new priests are still being trained.
6. The financial situation of the Roman Catholic Church in the province of Latgale is very weak, since the parishes consist mostly of very poor kolkhoz farmers who can hardly support themselves, let alone the church. The church has to pay heavy taxes to the State, a burden which makes its existence more and more difficult. In addition to financial difficulties, there is strict State control and censorship of correspondence between the churches and the Curia.
7. The following are some leading personalities of the churches in Latvia:

a. Roman Catholic Church

Bishop Anton Springovics Appointed by Rome before the war and still in office.

b. Lutheran Church

Bishop Gustav Turs Appointed by Moscow
Pastor Saukums At the Domkirche, Riga.

Note: Dean Irbe was deported.

c. Orthodox Church

Metropolitan Benjamin A Ukrainian, ~~surname Farchenko~~ appointed by Moscow in 1943, was previously representative of the Patriarch of Moscow in the USA.

Exarch Sergei Voskresenski Appointed to Latvia by the Patriarch of Moscow in 1940, was put to death by the Germans in 1944 as a "Moscow agent."

Father Jan Garklav Appointed Bishop of Latvia in 1943 by the Patriarch of Moscow [redacted]

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