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FOREIGN DOCUMENTS DIVISION

J-394/61

INTERROGATION REGARDING CONDITIONS IN THE SOVIET UNION AND LATVIA

1. Date of Interrogation: 20 March 1961
2. Information on the persons being interrogated: Mr. and Mrs. Janis RAKOVICS, 66 years old [Mr. Rakovics]. Lived in Latvia, Daugavpils aprinkis, Lauceses pagasts, until 25 March 1949. Then deported to Siberia, where he lived until 9 December 1960. Arrived in the US on 30 December 1960 and now living with his daughter and son-in law, Mr and Mrs Janis Grabeklis, 508 East 2nd Street, Rock Falls, Ill., Tel. Main 6-3578, Sterling, Ill.
3. Conditions in Latvia after World War II

J. Rakovics remained in Latvia at the end of the war. His eldest son was in the Latvian Legion, but his married daughter and her husband and son had escaped to Germany. Only the youngest son had remained with his parents. Later on, the oldest son also returned home; he had been taken prisoner by the Russians at the end of the war and sent to a prisoner camp in Tula from where he escaped, and he was able to live with his parents without being betrayed.

J. Rakovics worked during the Latvian independence period, as well as during the German occupation period and finally during the Russian occupation, as a clerk in Lauceses pagasts, and he cultivated his 18-hectare "new farm", located about 1.5 kilometers from the administration office of Lauceses pagasts. The farm included 12 hectares of farm land and 6 hectares of forest.

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After the occupation, the Russians took over the management in the "pagasts" with the help of local Communists or fellow-travelers. The latter treated J. R. fairly well, as he had lived in the area for a long time; he was very social-minded, he conducted the local choir and orchestra (he was a music lover), and while working as a pagast secretary he helped people and had few enemies. J. R., as well as his wife, are of Polish origin. During the independence period, there were many Polish residents in Lauceses pagasts, therefore it is possible that the knowledge of Polish and his relations with the Poles were the reason for a certain friendship with the local residents.

After the war Latvian partisans were very active for many years. There were large partisan forces in the forests of Akniste. Later on these forests were combed by Russian military units and therefore partisan activities gradually became more restricted. There was enough food in the country, and the partisans too were helped out with food supplies.

4. Collectivization in Latvia

Immediately after the Russian occupation forces returned to Latvia, there was talk about individual farms being combined into kolkhozes. The peasants did not pay any attention to this and did not respond to the Communist Party's request to unite into collective farms. At the end of 1948 and early in 1949 the local leaders of the Communist Party went from farm to farm and agitated in favor of joining together into kolkhozes. However, that too met with no response and

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the peasants found all kinds of excuses. Early in February, the local Communist leaders (together with party leaders from Daugavpils, and possibly even from Riga) conducted long discussions with J. R. They asked his opinions on kolkhoz problems; he told them that the peasants would be unwilling to do it and advised them that it would be better to talk about collectivization matters in the fall when the fields were ready for harvesting, possibly by that time the farmers would have thought it over, etc. Then the Communist Party men asked him to help persuade the farmers of the necessity of collectivization, since he, J. R., had so much influence among the local farmers. J. R. declined this request.

Shortly after this conversation, the local Communist Party leader began to prepare lists of "kulaks" (owners of larger farms) at the pagast administration office. As he was working at this office, J. R. was able to get a look at the lists. His name was not included in them. Naturally, the information about the compilation of such lists was also made known to the persons concerned, and there was some alarm in the pagasts, since it was suspected that there might be deportations, similar to those in 1941.

5. Deportations

J. R. believes that the 1949 deportations took place mainly for the purpose of carrying through the collectivization in Latvia, for the great majority of deportees were farm owners and those people who did not want to support the organization of kolkhozes and sovkhoses in Latvia.

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On 24 March 1949, in the evening, about 40 chekists appeared in the Lauceses pagasts building. This fully convinced the local residents what within the next few days, possibly even the following day, some people would be taken away. Many people, especially younger men, ran away into the forest. Among them were the two sons of J. R.

During the night of 24 March, J. R. believes, none of the Latvian farmers slept, as they waited for the Chekists. J. R. and his wife spent all night without sleep, even though he had some hope of being left alone, since he had not seen his name in the lists of "kulaks." At 6 a.m. his oldest son returned home from the forest. He reported that the Chekists had already been to some of the other, larger farms and had ordered the people to pack their things and leave home. After they had talked for a while, the son went to bed, but J. R. himself harnessed his horse and asked his wife to drive him to the pagast office, as he felt it his duty to go to work. As they were driving out of the road from the farm, they were met by four Chekists, who asked their names and where they were going. Then the Chekists told them they had better return home, since they had to have a "little talk" with them. On their return home, one of the Chekists immediately read a "decision of the Council of Ministers of the Latvian SSR", which stated that J. R. together with his family were being "transferred to more distant regions." In reply to his question, why this was being done, the Chekist (a Russian) replied that he did not know any more, but was only following orders. He said that they

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had to get ready to leave home in 15 minutes, that they were not allowed to touch their things, or give them to any other persons, everything in the house had to remain as it was, and he would not allow any protests. Otherwise their behavior was "friendly", without any shouting and the usual Russian swearing or violence. J. R. protested that he could not even get ready in such a short time, besides his wife became hysterical and was quite incapable of understanding what was going on around her. Then the Chekists said they would give them a little more time, as they still had to go to some other farms, but they should be ready to join them upon their return, without stating when that would be. One of the Chekists was left behind as a guard. The others returned in one and a half hours, together with some other farmers to be deported, and they were all taken to the Griva station, where the deportation railroad cars were already waiting.

A total of 14 farmers' families were taken away from Lauceses pagasts at that time. Those who had escaped to the forests were not followed. In this way the youngest son of J. R. remained in Latvia. Several years later he went to Siberia voluntarily to join his parents, and he died there after a short period (he probably had TB).

6. Travel to Siberia

The railroad cars for the deportees were the large Stolypin type cars, with 60 persons in each. There were planks for sleeping in the cars (In 1941 people were deported in ordinary freight cars, without any comforts whatsoever). Two Chekist guards accompanied the deportees

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in each car. The railroad cars with the deportees from Lauceses pagasts and other places stood at the Griva station for 2 days. When they asked the guards what their destination was, the latter said they didn't know; however, some railroad official with whom J. R. was talking through the car window at Griva, told him what the final destination was. They traveled, without stopping, from the Griva station to the Kraslava station (on the Latvian border), where the deportees received food for the first time. The food was good and sufficient. It was the same at other eating places (along the way). The treatment given the deportees at the stations and by the accompanying guards was fairly good, and sometimes even sympathetic.

7. The Modern Slave Market

The end station was LYUBINSKAYA, the last railroad station before reaching Omsk (coming from the direction of Europe). At the Lyubinskaya station the train was met by some local kolkhoz and sovkhos managers. They had come to meet the new serfs with sleighs, as it was still cold winter weather in April in Siberia. Among the persons who had come to the station there were also leaders of the local Communist party, who addressed the new arrivals and told them that they would now have to live and work according to the way they were distributed, and that

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each kolkhoz and sovkhos manager already knew how many persons had been assigned to him. The people were distributed simply by railroad cars: two cars for one farm, three or even six cars for another one.

J. R., together with about 100 Latvian families, was assigned to the Nizhniy Irtyshskiy Sovkhos No 46.

J. R. states that each train consisted of 60 cars, i.e., 3,600 persons, and he believes that at that time (end of March 1949) a total of about 150,000 persons were deported from Latvia (personally I do not believe there were so many, but that could probably be determined only from the MVD archives).

The people in the Soviet Union are resettled and distributed, assigned to jobs and exploited according to CP plans just as it was done earlier in history -- in the times of slave markets.

8. Nizhniy Irtyshskiy Sovkhos No 46

This sovkhos was located to the northwest of Omsk, on the bank of the Irtysh River (the west bank). The size of the kolkhoz [sic] was undetermined, as there were probably no boundary lines. However, there were about 2,500 people in it. The sovkhos included five large livestock raising farms (brown beef cattle). The nearest village was Selo Sargatskoye, at a distance of 27 kilometers, and the nearest city was Omsk, 90 kilometers away. There were no railroad connections; in the summer the nearest centers could be reached by car or by way of the Irtysh River; in the winter by sleighs.

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The Latvian group placed in this sovkhos was lucky, as it was one of the richest sovkhoses in Siberia. They were well received, as all the residents of the sovkhos were deportees from former years. It was a real mixture of nationalities: Germans, Rumanians, Moldavians, as well as some previously deported Latvians. The sovkhos manager had warned the local people that a group of cultured people was arriving from the West and that they should be attentive in their behavior toward them and not "disgrace themselves". The arrivals were placed in large, newly whitewashed barracks, approximately 6 families in one building [room?]. The manager explained that these were temporary accommodations and that they would later be able to build their own houses. All the new arrivals were given a month's rest so they could get to know their new surroundings, and their future work, and become acclimated. The food was good.

All the new deportees were under the jurisdiction of the local commandant -- the Cheka. They were not allowed to tell anyone about the location of the sovkhos. At first they had to register personally once a week, later once a month, at the commandant's office. All their documents were taken away upon their arrival.

After a month's "rest period", J. R.'s son was transferred to another sovkhos as a bookkeeper, but J. R. himself was put to work in the forest. In addition, since he was a music lover, he started organizing a string orchestra group in the sovkhos. The sovkhos management liked this and after he had worked about 1.5 months in the forest, he was given the job of accountant in the sovkhos office.

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There is a great deal of military and police personnel in Moscow, Omsk, and other places in Russia.

14. Information on Life in the West

There is no lack of information in Russia about conditions in the West. It is obtained from letters and also from listening to Voice of America broadcasts, which could be heard in Siberia too by those who had private radio sets.

15. Youth and Schools

J. R. believes that all roads are open to the young people in Russia, if only they go along with the Komsomol and the CP. The young people are very fond of studying, for in that way they get better jobs and can leave the farms.

Children of other nationalities in Siberia are gradually assimilated, as the common language is Russian. In schools the English language is being taught intensively.

16. Surveillance and Warnings

Surveillance of people is organized in such a way that one person is forced to betray the other. People may not talk freely with one another. His son too was betrayed in this way, after which he was transferred to another kolkhoz, and even though the new work was in a way more responsible it was more apt to "break his neck," since it

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was more difficult and harder to fulfill. However, the deportees still hold together more closely than the local residents.

Upon his departure from the sovkhos, J. R. was told by the first secretary of the party in no uncertain terms that he should not talk much about conditions in Russia. He even mentioned the fact that he still had a son in Siberia.

Bribery and similar practices are quite common, also stealing.

17. Religious Matters and Holidays

In J. R.'s opinion, there is no religious life at all in the rural areas. During all his years in Siberia he was unable to meet a single priest. There is supposed to be one Orthodox Church in Omsk. Children are not taught any religion in the schools or at home.

In the sovkhos they did celebrate all religious holidays, such as Easter, Christmas, and others. The old Latvian national holidays were not celebrated for reasons of discretion.

18. Other Remarks

The slogan of the Soviet Union is to equal and overtake America. J. R. believes that this is only a dream, as according to his observations after a short time in this country, it is easy to judge about the tasks placed on the Russians by Khrushchev and their obligations to fulfill such tasks.

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It was not particularly difficult to talk to J. R., but he was very cautious. Probably he is still somewhat suspicious. When I talked to his wife in Russian (she speaks Latvian only with difficulty), she asked me suspiciously how it happened that I spoke Russian so well. It seems to me that he may have made many other observations, but for that one would need more time and maybe a different approach. However, in general, it would be mostly hearsay information, and not things he has seen himself; with the exception of Omsk, he has not seen much of Siberia.

He is satisfied to be in the US, and his only worry is whether he may be forced to return to Russia. However, such thoughts are gradually being dispelled by his daughter and son-in-law and by the new living conditions in a free country.

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He continued in this job for the remainder of his stay there. His wife did not work, since at that time family members were not forced to do so; she did the housekeeping and took care of some livestock which they were allowed to keep -- a cow, a couple of pigs, and chickens.

Wages and Prices

An office accountant and superintendent of a lumber warehouse (which position was held later by J. R.) earned 450 rubles per month (now, after the currency reform, 45 rubles). Wages were paid twice a month, on the 15th and the last day of the month.

His son, who was later transferred to some poultry farm as superintendent, is supposed to earn 700-800 rubles a month (i.e. now 70-80 rubles).

J. R., was retired when he reached the age of 60 (in the Soviet Union men can retire at the age of 60 and women at the age of 55), and his pension was calculated at 540 rubles a month. It amounted to more than his salary. This was due to the fact that, according to Soviet law, the retirement pay is based on the amount of salary received during the last 10 years. Therefore he took the 5 years during which he was secretary of the "pagasts" in Latvia, at which time his salary was 700 rubles a month. On the basis of his last salary (i. e. the highest) the amount of retirement pay was calculated at 75 percent of the salary.

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If a person continues to work after retirement, he may receive 150 rubles pension, plus his salary. In addition, J. R. also received 200 rubles a month from the sovkhos for conducting the orchestra. J. R. states that he and his wife were able to live on this income. Larger families were not able to do so without arranging for some extra income.

Prices in the sovkhos were as follows:

Bread, 1 kilogram -- 1.45 rubles

Butter, 1 kilogram -- 26.50 rubles

Sugar, 1 kilogram -- 10.20 rubles (lump sugar)

Sugar, 1 kilogram -- 9.20 rubles (granulated)

One "fufayka" (sweater) -- 90 to 105 rubles (the most common article of clothing).

There was no shortage of food items in the sovkhos, but sometimes there were supply difficulties. TV sets, radio sets, and cars, were practically impossible to obtain by awaiting one's turn on the list; the waiting period took years, and sometimes the persons whose name were on the list never got anything at all.

Description of the Sovkhos

The sovkhos was like a small agricultural city, with schools, shops, and social buildings. These (the latter) were built only during recent years, since the arrival of the last deportees.

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The hospital had beds for 40 patients. The sovkhos had two doctors, four nurses, and one children's nurse. Medical treatment and the hospital was free of charge, and the patients had to pay only for their medicine.

Climate

The scenery is lovely. There are only deciduous forests in the vicinity (aspens, birches). Coniferous forests begin about 100 kilometers farther north. Spring begins in May and fall as early as September. Frequently even in July the roads are impassable because of mud. The soil is very fertile and does not require artificial fertilizers.

The climate is dry and continental. The period of vegetation is short, but during the summer a very good type of summer wheat is able to ripen and produce a good crop. The winters are very cold, the temperature goes down to minus 50 degrees centigrade. The winds are strong and cold. At first those who were not used to it got frozen limbs and faces. The summers, on the other hand, are very hot - up to 40° centigrade, in the shade. The hottest time is between 2 and 5 in the afternoon, when it is hard to stand the sun even for a short time. After 8 p.m. it turns suddenly cool, so one has to wear a sweater. The nights in the summer are cool.

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At first a number of people contracted malaria, as there were many mosquitoes in the area at that time. During recent years, the mosquitoes were exterminated by disinfection methods, large areas being sprayed from low-flying airplanes. Lately there were no more mosquitoes.

Development of the Sovkhoz

The sovkhoz had its own brick factory, electric power station (Skoda equipment!) and saw-mill. The use of electric power was of great help. The sovkhoz was constantly expanding; during the last 15 years 16 cattle sheds were built. When they [the deportees] arrived, there was only one cattle shed. Food stores and kindergartens were also built during recent years.

Work Schedule

The sovkhoz employees worked 8 hours a day, and 4 hours on Saturdays; Sundays were free. Beginning with 1 January, the work hours were reduced to 7 hours a day. The farm workers, however, had to work from sunrise to sunset. They had to perform their work according to certain norms, and they were paid on the basis of norm fulfillment. The situation of sovkhoz workers was better since they were paid wages, whereas in the kolkhozes the workers' earnings depended on the harvest in the fall.

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Bureaucracy of the Administration

Much harm is done to the Soviet economy by the large cadres. For example, the sovkhos administration includes, in addition to the director, the senior agronomist, senior engineer, veterinarian, zoo-technicians, and a whole "squadron" of various warehouse superintendents, bookkeepers, etc. On the farms subordinated to the sovkhos there is also a whole number of positions such as (in addition to the manager) an agronomist, senior mechanic, bookkeeper, and brigade leaders.

There is a central bookkeeping office in every sovkhos; this office settles its accounts with the rayon administration in Omsk, and the latter, in turn, with Moscow. All these higher administrative posts require much personnel, which is better paid, and positions are thus provided, mainly, for Communist Party members.

There were about 200 party members in Sovkhos No 46, ^{h.e.} not quite 10 percent. The "aktiv" of Communist Party members was well disciplined and blindly followed the instructions of the Party management (in Moscow or in Omsk). The lower positions and the ordinary [farm]work and its norms were left to non-party members; there were many cases of people getting fired [?], because the established norms were usually difficult to fulfill.

Sovkhozes in Comparison with Kolkhozes

Gradually the Soviet Union is changing over to the establishment of large-scale farms, i.e. by combining kolkhozes into sovkhozes. Moreover, according to past experience, the sovkhos farming system

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has been more successful, as the sovkhoses have all the necessary equipment. On the other hand, the kolkhozes were only recently cultivating their land with MTS machines. The MTS had to be paid for the use of the machines, there was often not enough money and even in Siberia the kolkhoz people formerly devoted more attention to the cultivation of their own private plots than to the kolkhoz fields. The kolkhoz workers' earnings were computed only in the fall after the crops had been gathered, and very often in Siberian kolkhozes the pay was only about half a kilogram of grain per day and a few rubles per workday. Even now it has not become any easier for the kolkhozes to manage, after they were sold the MTS inventory, since the machines were bought on credit and they are simply not able to pay the money due. Therefore, the farmers have not shown much resistance to the consolidation of kolkhozes into sovkhoses; their only worry is that they may lose a certain independence which they had in cultivating and using their own little plots, as this was their only means of subsistence until now.

Beginning with 1 January 1961, more and more emphasis is to be placed on specific types of farming in sovkhoses (and kolkhozes), i.e. each one has its own production task, such as purely cultivation of grain, livestock raising, or poultry farming. The only difficulties in Soviet farm management are seen in connection with the high production demands, without creating the conditions necessary to fulfill these requirements. The production goals are set too high.

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For example, J. R.'s son, who is now the manager of some poultry sovkhos (J. R. did not tell me its location), about 100 kilometers from Sovkhos No 46, is said to be greatly concerned about being able to meet the plans, as there were simply not enough hen-houses. The sovkhos is being newly organized and has [to meet] very high demands.

There is great dissatisfaction in the country ^[rural areas] with the "lagging" of supply, since it is still necessary to stand in line for goods in the stores; the goods are supplied irregularly and in insufficient quantities. The prices are higher than in the cities, and in the latter the supply is more regular. If anyone complains to the party organs, the managers of cooperatives are made to answer for it.

However, there have been signs recently that the situation concerning supplies and requirements is improving, especially if the achievements can serve the needs of propaganda.

The national economic plan has met with great difficulties because of the two poor harvest years -- 1959 and 1960 -- in Siberia. While 1959 was a year of crop failure, the year 1960 had a very small harvest. In addition, because of a manpower shortage and little interest on the part of kolkhoz workers, a large part of the crop remained on the fields unharvested.

In order to conceal [facts about] the plan fulfillment, the Soviet farm managements still deceive the Party with incorrect data. Plans are usually fulfilled "on paper", but not in reality. This is a whole system of cheating the Party and the government.

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Khrushchev has assumed a great and difficult responsibility with his Seven-Year Plan, since the plans are said to be less practicable than he had hoped; so that now, to prove that he was right (Khrushchev is said to have had many opponents in the Central Committee of the CP in the matter of the Seven-Year Plan), he is looking for the persons who may be blamed for the agricultural failure and he is very active, in general, trying to justify his own promises. The greatest worry among the peasants is caused by Khrushchev's desire to transform the entire agriculture into a communal establishment. Since 1 January 1961, it is said to be prohibited for sovkhoz and kolkhoz workers in Siberia to have privately-owned livestock (also poultry); they have also organized public dining establishments in the country, so that everyone, including women and children, may participate in the "work of the state."

In addition, many people are leaving rural areas for the cities, where they earn more and the work is easier. Many of the former deportees have left Siberia. J. R. believes that almost all of the Latvians who were deported in 1949 have returned to Latvia. Only four Latvian families remained in Sovkhoz No 46. Because of the people leaving Siberia, that region is gradually losing its manpower.

9. Conditions after Stalin's Death

According to J. R.'s observations, conditions after Stalin's death have greatly changed. As a matter of fact, all political prisoners were granted amnesty; the punitive labor camps were abolished, they

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are being transformed into labor camps where even now one is trying to keep the workers behind barbed wire fences, but under a less rigid regime. After 1956, permission was given for those deported in 1949 to return to their original places of residence. The regime for those deported in 1941 has also been relaxed; during the first few years, the latter were not even allowed to exchange letters with other areas, later on they were allowed to write once and then twice a year, and finally (after Stalin's death) as often as they liked. J. R. believes that most of the 1941 deportees perished in Siberia, as they had to live under extremely hard conditions. They also suffered more with regard to morale, since even before the deportation (i.e. distribution of people) families were divided; wives were separated from their husbands, and children from their parents. Very few of them returned home, and those who did, are all physically and spiritually wrecked.

In general, people feel freer after Stalin's death. In the Communist Party itself, one is less afraid to speak about mistakes, one uses more criticism, etc.

10. Conditions in Latvia

J. R.'s wife, Anna, went to Latvia "to look around" in 1958. She also visited her former farmstead and her "pagasts." There she was told that she would not be able to get her house [farm] back, and would not be allowed to register for residence in that area. J. R. had established contacts with Latvia not long after he had been deported. At first he was afraid to write so as not to cause any trouble for his relative in Latvia. (He still has two sisters and

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three brothers with their families living in Latvia). Later on he was no longer afraid to establish contacts. As he was more or less aware of conditions in Latvia, his only chance would have been (on his return) to settle down in a city, but even in that case there could be unforeseen difficulties in getting in [getting permission to live there]. His wife returned to Siberia, where she decided to stay, since one of her sons (married, with two children) also lived there, and there was the grave of her second son.

J. R. got some information about Siberia and conditions of deportation even in 1944/1946, when he met the wives of several former Latvian officers in Daugavpils -- i.e. the wives of Capt Lielais, Lt Col Abeltins, and Capt Strauts, who had returned on their own from Siberia (they had been deported in 1941) and knew nothing of the fate of their husbands.

Latvia is overcrowded with Russian workers and employees. The Russians go to Latvia willingly, as living conditions are better there and it is easier to find work in the newly built factories. A large chemical factory is being built in Stropi near Daugavpils, which is to employ 10,000 workers.

11. General Information about Omsk and Siberia

J. R. was in Omsk several times. It is a large city with a population of about 600,000. There are many buildings in the center. It has its own TV station (where J. R. performed with his sovkhos orchestra). The Omsk center is well laid out, with many parks and

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flowers. Flower show "contests" are held with Leningrad and the one in Omsk is probably better.

Omsk is still a growing city, with industrial enterprises which are being expanded. Omsk has a very large airfield and also an aircraft plant.

In general, the Communists are said to have transferred all of their heavy industry to Siberia in recent years (since the war), and much attention is being given to the development of agriculture.

The principal agricultural crops are summer wheat and corn. There are said to be many new electric power stations in Siberia. J. R. believes that the shift of heavy industry, as well as agriculture, from European Russia to Siberia may also have military reasons, since in the event the European part should be lost, Siberia would still be able to survive.

12. Reasons for deportation

Shortly after his arrival in Siberia, J. R. wrote a petition to the Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet USSR, requesting that his case be examined and he be allowed to return to Latvia, since he was not a "kulak" and had been improperly included in the group of deportees. To this petition he received a reply, which was read to him by the chief of the sovkhos security police (Cheka). The reply stated that he had been deported because his daughter had escaped to Germany and his son had served in the German Army.

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13. Contacts with Foreign Countries and Trip to the US

In 1946 he received the first news from his daughter Lida (Mrs Grabeklis) in Germany. He later corresponded with his daughter even after she had arrived in the US. He had decided to apply for emigration to the US at the suggestion of his daughter. His first application, in 1958, for permission to leave the country was turned down. His daughter continued to work with great perseverance on his emigration matter, until finally the permission was granted early in 1960. He could not get to Omsk from his sovkhos during the summer of 1960, as the roads were impassable (too wet). He arrived in Omsk in December, and on 9 December traveled from Omsk to Moscow where he was forced to stay for 20 days. He left Moscow on 29 December. The trip from Omsk to Moscow was made by a TU-104; the 2,700-kilometer flight took 3 hours. The plane flew at an altitude of 9 kilometers. From Moscow they also flew on a TU-104 as far as Amsterdam, and then to Montreal, New York, and Chicago. His wife was obliged to remain in New York for a few days for a medical examination. About 30 persons left Moscow at the same time as they did, and they all traveled to the West.

He paid the travel expenses himself, as his pension had been paid to him for 6 months in advance. The whole trip was pleasant, and the Russian officials were courteous. For the first time after his deportation he received a passport (internal) in Omsk, and then he was issued a Soviet "passport for foreign travel" in Moscow. The travel

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fare for one person was: Omsk to Moscow, 460 rubles; Moscow to Chicago, 2,050 rubles. In Omsk he received permission to remain in the US for one year, but the US Consulate in Moscow gave him permission for permanent residence in the US.

He stayed at some tourist lodgings in Moscow, where he had to pay 13 rubles per person for a 24-period.

The plane landed in Moscow at the Vnukovo airfield, but departed from the Sheremet'yevo airfield.

Some Prices in Moscow

Men's shoes, 400-450 rubles; Vodka, 28.20 rubles; good brand of cognac (brandy), 78 rubles (according to the old currency). Beginning with 1 January, automobiles are no longer sold to private individuals; however, cars may now be rented.

On the way to Omsk he also stopped at Sargatka [probably Sargatskoye], a town along the way.

There is a great deal of construction in Moscow. The city center has a good appearance, but the outskirts look rather sad. The traffic in Moscow is very lively. The new buildings under construction have 6-8 stories.

In Moscow, the Russians among themselves complain loudly (swear) just as in Siberia. It was a complete surprise to get to Amsterdam, with its quietness, friendliness, and no swearing. In Moscow there are still lines in front of the stores; this is said to be due to the insufficient number of stores, as people supposedly can buy anything they want.