

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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SUBJECT	Soviet Concentration Camps in the Vorkuta Area	DATE DISTR.	23 April 1954	
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- The commander of the concentration camp complex in the Vorkuta (N 66-22, E 70-08) area is an MVD officer, Major General **Derevyankin**. The political officer at Camp No. 14 is Senior Lieutenant Kech. The following are among the camp personnel at Camp No. 2:

Major Malikov, Camp Commander  
 Major Dikhtyaryov, Assistant Camp Commander  
 Captain Makhhalov, Supply Officer  
 Captain Pokhomov, MVD Representative (Upolnomochenny MVD)  
 Senior Lieutenant Prokhorov, MVD Representative  
 Senior Lieutenant Kalikin, Administrative Officer  
 Sergeant Major Mishinko, Assistant to the MVD Representatives  
 Sergeant Major Kirilova (female), Head of the Medical Unit.

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 Apparently, single guard units were responsible for guarding more than one camp, since many camps were located within a few kilometers of each other.

- The city of Vorkuta has a population of approximately 60,000 people. Vorkuta has numerous new cultural buildings. The city is ringed with concentration camps, the prisoners being employed principally in coal mines. There are, however, also other enterprises such as brickyards, sawmills, and a cement factory, which also employ prisoners of the area. The camp numbers  ranged from 1 to 60.  Camp Nos. 1, 2, 3, 5, 9, 14, 29, 30, 55, and 60;  possibly some of these camps are in an area other than the Vorkuta area. (See sketch of the Vorkuta camp area on page 3.) 25X1

- Camp No. 2 is located approximately 20 kilometers north of Vorkuta on a single-track railroad line. The camp is for political prisoners only. In December 1953 there were 2,700 prisoners at this camp. This camp operated one mine shaft, No. 7. The prisoners worked in the mine 12 hours a day, although the official work-day was nine hours. Crude mining methods were employed.

25 YEAR RE-REVIEW

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5. The following nationalities were represented among the prisoners at Camp No. 2: Western Ukrainians, Lithuanians, Latvians, Estonians, Russians, Germans (including Volga Germans), Moldavians, Chechens, Georgians, Armenians, Komi, Hungarians, Poles, Japanese, and Chinese. Of the Germans, 120 were from Germany as opposed to the Volga Germans. Ten of the 120 Germans were repatriated. There were approximately 100 Russians in the camp. The Western Ukrainians and the Lithuanians were by far the largest two national groups at this camp. There were no Koreans at this camp. 25X1
6. There were among the prisoners at Camp No. 2 many who had been sentenced for collaboration with or service in the German Army during World War II. There were, however, no Vlassovites at this camp. Except for the Western Ukrainians, who were called Zapadniki (Westerners) in camp, the various Soviet nationalities got along well together. There was, however, some discrimination against the Germans by the Soviet nationalities, particularly from former collaborators who claimed that the Germans had let them down. The Western Ukrainians were clannish and nasty to all other nationalities. There were a great number of informers among the Western Ukrainians.
7. From the beginning of 1952, the prisoners began to receive pay for their work and their rations were improved. Until August 1953, they received 100 rubles per month in cash and another 100 rubles were credited to their account. This money could be spent in the camp canteen. After August 1953, as the result of a strike (covered below) the prisoners' pay was raised to 150 rubles per month in cash and an equal amount was credited to their account.
8. The daily food ration at this camp for the prisoners was as follows:
- 200 grams of oat meal,
  - 650 grams of soup,
  - 23 grams of meat,
  - 27 grams of sugar,
  - 800 grams of bread,
  - 50 grams of white rolls, and
  - 20 to 25 grams of fat.
- The above ration was known as the "northern ration" (severnny payok) and was much larger than the rations in concentration camps farther to the south. It was also more substantial than the average daily food consumed on many kolkhozy. Persons who refused to work had their daily ration reduced to 350 grams of bread and soup.
9. Motion pictures were occasionally shown to the prisoners. The frequency with which movies were shown depended upon the prisoners' achievement of production norms. There were loudspeakers in all barracks buildings. Newspapers and books were also available to the prisoners.
10. The guard personnel wore red shoulder boards with blue piping. Some troops with dark blue shoulder boards occasionally appeared for special checks. The interior guard consisted of middle-aged guards who were friendly to the prisoners. The exterior guard personnel were much younger and unpleasant.
11. There were 5,000 prisoners at Camp No. 14. One of the prisoners was an old Trotskyite who had been a prisoner since 1932. This camp contained a power plant. All particulars on this camp such as food rations, pay, attitude of Western Ukrainians, recreational facilities, etc., are similar to those at Camp No. 2.
12. There was no sign of organized anti-Soviet activity in the prison camp. On the basis of observations made at Camp No. 2 it is clear that prisoners were afraid to discuss politics because of the existence of informers among the prisoners. There were probably groups of friends among the prisoners who trusted each other and perhaps discussed political subjects. There were two young Russian prisoners in Camp No. 2 who had been sentenced to 25 years' imprisonment for distributing anti-Soviet leaflets in Moscow. It is not known whether these men belonged to any organization and what sort of leaflets they had distributed.

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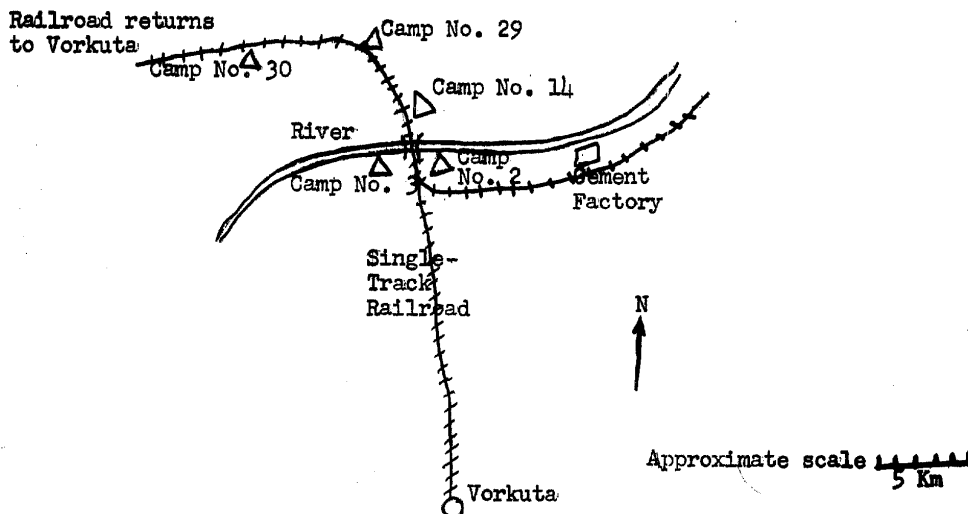
13. Stalin's death did not bring about any improvements in the prison camps, judging from observations in Camp No. 2. Actually, the guards became worse. Improvements had been introduced a year earlier. Judging from extremely limited political conversations, nothing good was expected from Malenkov by the prisoners. The post-Stalin amnesty affected prisoners with five-year terms only, but it did include political prisoners in this category. In general, prisoners who were released had to remain in the Vorkuta area, but some released prisoners with families were sent to free exile settlements in Siberia and Central Asia. The prisoners learned of the 17 June riots in East Germany through Soviet newspapers and loudspeakers in July. Some of the prisoners expected immediate war and thought that arms would be dropped to them by the Americans.
14. As a result of Beriya's arrest a general strike by the prisoners in the Vorkuta area took place, lasting from 22 July to 1 August 1953. Camps No. 2, 3, 14, 29, 30, and possibly others were involved in the strike. The strikers insisted that, since Beriya had been denounced as a traitor and a foreign agent, they were being held illegally, as they had been arrested by Beriya. Soviet citizens demanded immediate release or transfer to free exile areas. Foreigners demanded repatriation or transfer to PW camps. Major General Derevyankin as well as another high MVD official came to Camp No. 2 and probably other camps to talk to the prisoners. The result of the strike was a cutting down of the work-day to nine hours, the removal of numbers from uniforms, higher pay (see paragraph 7), and the removal of certain restrictions. In some camps there was violence on the part of the guards who tried to force the prisoners to go back to work, but this was not the case at Camp No. 2. The strike was viewed as a great success for the prisoners.

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16. [Redacted] 25X1

Germans were released before the completion of their sentences. They were repatriated to Germany by train traveling a somewhat circuitous route. Leaving Vorkuta, the train proceeded through Enta, Ukhta (N 63-34, E 53-42), Kotlas (N 61-16, E 46-35), Voroshilovgrad (N 48-34, E 39-20), and then west to Brest-Litovsk (N 52-07, E 23-42). In the early part of the journey they traveled on a separate prison train; later, through Brest-Litovsk and Poland, their car was hitched on to regular passenger trains.

Diagram of Camp Area

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