

50X1

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

REPORT NO. [redacted]

50X1

COUNTRY Czechoslovakia

DATE DISTR. 13 Oct. 1955

SUBJECT The 9th Technical Battalion, 1st Air
Technical Division, in Karwinna II

NO. OF PAGES 10

DATE OF INFORMATION [redacted]

REFERENCES 50X1

PLACE ACQUIRED [redacted]

THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

50X1

SOURCE [redacted]

Organization of the Battalion¹

1. [redacted] 50X1

2. The 9th Technical Battalion was composed of five (possibly six) companies, numbered one through five or six. [redacted] 50X1
[redacted] The approximate strength of each company was about 100 to 120 airmen. Each company was subdivided into four platoons with each platoon having four seven to eight-man squads. 50X1
The battalion was organized sometime in the summer of 1953. Each company had four officers (Czechoslovak Air Force) assigned to it: a Company CO, an Adjutant, a Political Officer and an Assistant Political Officer. The Company first sergeant's position was filled by a career SFC, who was also the unit supply sergeant in conjunction with his other duties.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

358
356

INFORMATION REPORT INFORMATION REPORT

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

This material contains information affecting the National Defense of the United States within the meaning of the Espionage Laws, Title 18, U.S.C. Secs. 793 and 794, the transmission or revelation of which in any manner to an unauthorized person is prohibited by law.

C-O-N-F-I-D-E-N-T-I-A-L

50X1

COUNTRY	Czechoslovakia	REPORT NO.	
SUBJECT	The 9th Technical Battalion, 1st Air Technical Division , in Karvinna II.	DATE DISTR.	12 December 1955
DATE OF INFO.		NO. OF PAGES	11
PLACE ACQUIRED		REQUIREMENT NO.	RD
DATE ACQUIRED		REFERENCES	

50X1

SOURCE EVALUATIONS ARE DEFINITIVE. APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.

SOURCE: [] 50X1

50X1

[] as received in [] 50X1

3-20-0406	12/55
415	27M
438.1	27M
<u>4-12/735.1</u>	<u>27M</u>
761.702	27M
762.202	27M
173.722	27M

(+1)

C-O-N-F-I-D-E-N-T-I-A-L

STATE	#X	ARMY	#X	NAVY	#X	AIR	#X	FBI		AEC				
-------	----	------	----	------	----	-----	----	-----	--	-----	--	--	--	--

(Note: Washington distribution indicated by "X"; Field distribution by "#")

INFORMATION REPORT INFORMATION REPORT

CONFIDENTIAL

- 2 -

3. The 9th Technical Battalion was commanded by a Czech Air Force major, Rudolf Mencner, who had several officers on his staff. Source did not know their number and duties. At no time did source see any Soviet officers present in the 9th Technical Battalion area either as advisors or inspectors.

Unit Equipment

4. Members of the 9th Technical Battalion brought with them their field equipment from their former stations. The only items of issue at Karvinna were a gas mask (German, type unknown to source), and the SMG, Model 23. According to source, every man kept his assigned SMG on the clothes rack next to his bunk.
5. Source did not see any vehicles which may have been assigned to the 9th Technical Battalion. He also did not see any other type of weapons other than the SMG's which may have been assigned to the battalion.

Unit Training and Schedules

6. For approximately two hours daily, battalion members had to undergo military training. According to their platoon sergeants, this was "just a reminder that they were still in the service". During such training some of the following subjects were covered: close-order and extended-order drill with SMG's, political lectures, lectures on military discipline, first aid, mining procedure and donning and removing gas masks.
7. Source never participated in field training, practice alarms, or weapon firing while assigned to this battalion. However, sometime in October 1953, the entire battalion was subjected to a "drill alarm". Every airman had to fall out with his full field equipment, and the men were marched out into the country for about a mile and returned. This was a disciplinary action taken because of low morale which was noticeable from the many cases of getting caught sleeping on the job, disturbances in town while on pass, and disobedience to NCO's.

a. Daily Schedule

The following are approximate daily duty schedules of three shifts as established for the members of the 9th Technical Battalion (Air Force):

(1) Morning Shift

0400 Reveille and clean up

0500 Breakfast

0545 EM left for mines in a formation and descended into mines. (Thirty-five men could be lowered into pits at a time.)

0645 Work in mine shafts started.

1330 End of work; return above ground and return to barracks in formation.

1600-1630 Dinner

1630-1800 Military drills and lectures. Twice a week there was a lecture, lasting one to two hours and conducted by some experienced civilian miner, on the proper usage of mining tools and setting of fuses for explosion of coal beds. Sometimes there was a first aid class (care of general injuries contracted in mining).

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

- 3 -

1800-1900 Supper. Free time period.

1900 Evening formation. Announcement of various orders and details for the coming day. After this formation, the men assigned to the morning shift were permitted to retire.

(2) Afternoon Shift

1400 Men left for mines in formation; descended into mines.

1500 Work in mine shafts started.

2200 End of work; return above ground and return in formation to barracks.

2300 Supper

2330 Taps

0600 Reveille, clean up.

0700 Breakfast

0800-1200 Military drills and lectures. Free time period until dinner.

1330-1400 Dinner

(3) Night Shift

2015 EM left for mines in formation; descended into mines.

2145 Work in mine shafts started.

0500 End of work; return above ground and return in formation to barracks.

0700 Breakfast. Men assigned to night shift were permitted to retire after breakfast.

1230-1330 Dinner

1330-1700 Military drills and lectures

1700-1800 Free time

1800 Supper

1900 Evening formation. Announcement of various orders and details for the coming day. Free time until the work formation.

Shift changes occurred about once every month, but no definite date was set for such changes. Troops were notified about the shift changes at the daily evening formation, when various orders of the day, disciplinary action against individuals, or training for the coming day were announced.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

- 4 -



b. Supervision of EM

The airmen reporting for work had to march out in their uniforms to the mine shafts, where they changed into fatigues. The marching of troops and the inevitable roll calls were the responsibility of the conscripts' platoon sergeants. These platoon sergeants also met their respective groups which had just completed work and marched them to their caserne area. The platoon sergeants did not work in the mine but conducted military drills, conducted political lectures at times and normally worked as clerks at various departments. Technical supervision of the actual mining of coal was performed by Czech civilian personnel of the Ostrava-Karvinna mining area (Ostravo-Karvinsky revir).

50X1

Recruitment of Battalion Personnel

8.

[redacted] at one of the regular political lectures held sometime in June 1953, the political officer announced that airmen could volunteer for work in the Czechoslovak Army Mines located in Karvinna II. Volunteers were being recruited, according to the political officer, "to aid the national economy and to fulfill the prescribed plan".

9. The following special privileges for volunteers were enumerated:

- a. An opportunity to make extra money, as much as 1600-1800 crowns per month, which would be handy upon discharge.
- b. Free time every day, after the normal eight hours of work.
- c. Daily off duty passes and more furloughs than normally given to other Air Force units.

50X1

10.

[redacted] source discovered that they were not all volunteers. In the majority of cases they were simply selected and transferred there: some because of their poor soldierly behavior and the bad influence they had on other men, and others because they were habitual offenders against military discipline.

50X1

Working and Living Conditions

50X1

11.

50X1

[redacted] EM from the 22nd Airfield Battalion discovered that the special privileges they had been promised were not all fulfilled. The "opportunity to make extra money" was contingent on fulfilling 90% of the prescribed work norm, and the amount of extra money depended on the quantity of coal dug over and above this percentage. Such extra pay amounted to 350 to 400 crowns a month, but involved working six days a week plus one Sunday a month. However, this was considerably above the base pay of the average Czechoslovak Air Force private, which was 72 crowns per month.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

- 5 -

12. The monthly pay of the members of the 9th Technical Battalion was in regular currency. The individuals who fulfilled the prescribed work quota by 90% received one half of their pay in cash; the other half was automatically deposited into the State Bank. Each man being paid had to sign the pay voucher.
13. Every month, approximately 60% of source's company reached the 90% quota. However a deduction of 120 crowns for food and lodging was made from every airman-miner's monthly pay. In the event an individual failed to make extra money over and above his 72 crowns base pay, about two-thirds of his base pay was deducted for food and lodging, with the balance deducted from the following month's pay.
14. Those who desired had an opportunity to put in extra hours on Sundays, when the pay was doubled. To the best of source's recollection, however, no one chose to work on Sundays while he was stationed in Karvinna. However, one Sunday each month was just another compulsory working day.
15. In many instances it was impossible to reach the prescribed quota, due to change of locations in shafts, breakdown of machinery and poor accessibility to the coal beds. According to source, members of the 9th Technical Battalion also received worse job assignments than the PTP members with whom they worked. However, there were no military or civilian convicts working alongside the airmen-miners.
16. The only free time members of the 9th Technical Battalion had was on Saturdays after supper and Sunday afternoons. On Saturdays, passes were given at 1700 to 2400 hours and on Sundays from 1400 to 2400 hours. Sunday mornings were devoted to political lectures and organized sports. Even while going on passes, members of the 9th Technical Battalion had to leave and move about in groups of eight, with one man being responsible for the entire group.
17. The day was divided into three shifts: morning, afternoon and night shifts (see paragraph 7 a. above). Men working on the morning shift had to participate in military drills and lectures from 1630 to 1800 hours, the afternoon shift from 0800 to 1200 hours, and the night shift from 1330 to 1700 hours.
- 50X1 18. Once an individual volunteered for work in the 9th Technical Battalion he normally had to remain there until the expiration of his normal tour of compulsory military service. The only exceptions were sickness and disability.

50X1 Morale 50X1

- 50X1 19. Morale of the men in the 9th Technical Battalion, according to source, was much lower than at any other unit [redacted]. This was true particularly in the case of volunteers. About 40 to 45% [redacted] consisted of volunteers. Source had no knowledge on the proportions of volunteers in other units. The failure to fulfill the special privileges airmen-miners were promised was the principal cause of low morale. Another factor was the food, which was poorly prepared and in insufficient quantity. Source stated that every airman was permitted to see his respective company commander and state his grievances. Apparently there were enough complaints to warrant a number of general meetings on the subject.

CONFIDENTIAL

50X1

CONFIDENTIAL

- 6 -

20. About four times between July and August 1953 such meetings were held and all members of the battalion participated in them. After the end of August 1953 the food improved in quantity and quality. According to source, the "K" norm was fed to airmen-miners at Karvinna. This fact was indicated on the weekly menu posted in their mess hall.³
21. The hard work in the mines, together with the additional daily military training, also caused dissatisfaction among airmen-miners. Although the allegation that military training was to be dropped at Karvinna was not mentioned during the drive for volunteers, everyone expected to be exempt from that ordeal, since they had all completed their basic training.
22. There was always someone confined to the guardhouse for offenses such as sleeping in mines, instead of working, failing to attend political lectures and sleeping in barracks instead, and being late at the assembly formation before or after work. Source estimated that about 20% of the battalion's strength was always in confinement for two or three day's company punishment.
23. Off-duty passes were given only to individuals whose applications were first approved by the platoon sergeant. Furloughs home were practically non-existent, although the EM were promised that furloughs were to be more liberal and frequent than those granted in other armed forces' units. This promise proved to be just another example of empty talk.
24. In units in which source previously served, it was possible to obtain furloughs home approximately once every three months. Such furloughs were normally of five to six days duration, depending on the distance required for travel. This was not automatic, but requests were generally approved. Men on furloughs received a 20-crown per diem (reluta) and a 50% reduction on their railroad tickets.
25. Emergency furloughs were given in the 9th Technical Battalion, but only in cases of death or serious illness in the immediate family. Confirmation by telegram from the attending physician and the local national committee (MNV - Mistni narodni vybor) was mandatory. In small villages where the MNV was non-existent, such confirmation was required from the office of the local police station (SNB - Sbor narodni bezpecnosti).
26. Sometime in September 1953, six airmen-miners, members of the 5th Company, 9th Technical Battalion, went AWOL on a weekend, in a body. They were never heard from again.

Proposed Battalion Recruit Training

27. Toward the end of August 1953, about six to eight airmen in their second year of service were selected from every company of the 9th Technical Battalion. They were to conduct basic military training of the proposed Air Force recruits for the battalion, and they attended a special course of one month duration somewhere in Karvinna, in preparation for leading this training.
28. Source did not hear more details about this proposed recruit training, such as its duration, type, or number of recruits to be trained. However, he heard that upon completion of such basic training, the recruits would be assigned to various units of the 9th Technical Battalion and would carry on mining in the Czechoslovak Army Mines.

CONFIDENTIAL

50X1

CONFIDENTIAL

- 7 -

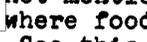


1.  **Comment:** This unit appeared to have been a counterpart of the Auxiliary Technical Battalion (PTP - Pomocni technicky prapor), an army organization performing various types of manual labor such as mining and construction of military installations. Although the ranks of the PTP units normally consisted (at one time at least) of political unreliaables, the members of source's 9th Technical Battalion were not in this category. Some of its members were volunteers for work in the mines.

50X1

2.  **Comment:**  for the respective Air Force and Army units known to source and order of battle information on them.

50X1

3. Source did not mention this particular norm in section B, 4 d. of  where food norms in the Czechoslovak Air Force are discussed. See this section for other food norms and the categories of personnel which received them.

50X1

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

- 8 -

Annex A

9th Technical Battalion Caserne, Karvinna II

Note: The buildings located in the 9th Technical Battalion Caserne appeared to be new and perhaps constructed one or two years ago. All of them were one-story buildings of red brick finish and with tarpapered roofs. Only the mess hall building and the headquarters building had stucco finish and Eternit covered roofs.

The entire area was in two different sections, located on both sides of a street (name of street unknown to source). Each camp had its separate entrance with gate guards. Both of the camps were surrounded by a two-meter-high woven fence topped with barbed wire.*

LEGEND

1. Volley-ball Court Covered an area approximately 12 x 6 m.
2. EM Billets Ten buildings, approximately 30 x 10 m. in size. About half of each company (60 EM) were billeted in each building. The company orderly room and political education room (PVS - Politicko vychovna svetnice) were also located in these buildings.
3. EM Billets A building approximately 15 x 10 m. in size. Half of one unidentified company was billeted here.
4. Mess Hall & PX A building approximately 40 x 15 m. in size. The seating capacity of the EM's section was about 200 men. Feeding was done by units, with each unit eating at a designated time. Beside the EM's mess, a PX was also located in this building.
5. Mess Hall Supply A building approximately 10 x 6 m. in size. Source believed that the mess hall refuse was stored there.
6. Infirmary A building approximately 40 x 10 m. in size. It contained a doctor's office, a waiting room and two wards with about 40 beds in all. The infirmary staff consisted of three medical officers (Czechoslovak Air Force), two medics (EM) and two female civilian nurses.
7. Infirmary Supply A building approximately 15 x 8 m. in size. Source believed infirmary supplies were kept here.
3. Electrical Power Control Station A building approximately 5 x 5 m. in size. Source believed that it was the camp electrical power control station.
1. Football Field A football field covering an area approximately 90 x 40 m.
1. Headquarters Building A T-shaped building, approximately 50 x 20 m. in size. In this building were located beside headquarters offices, an army post office, officer quarters, an officers' mess and a lecture hall with seating capacity of about 150 men. (Source attended lectures there).

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

11. **Vegetable Garden** Located at point approximately 50 x 30 m. in size.
12. **Guard Booths** Two small guard booths, located near the two camp entrances. Guard duty at the 9th Technical Battalion was carried out by a special group of airmen who, source believed, were billeted at the nearby new housing project (see point 13). There were always two guards on duty armed with SMG's.
13. **"New Barracks"** A short distance from source's camp (about a five-minute walk), there was an area approximately 400 x 400 m. in size where family type buildings were being built by a civilian firm (name unknown to source). About eight buildings were completed when source left the battalion. These were three-story buildings, about 35 x 12 m. in size and with light gray stucco finish. Source passed by this area about twice a week and noticed PTP men living there (number unknown to source). The 5th Company, 9th Technical Battalion, was also billeted there. There was no fence around the premises, since construction was still in progress. In general, this area was referred to as "novy kasarna" (new barracks).
- Source believed that there was a possibility that the proposed recruits, who were to be assigned and trained by the 9th Technical Battalion in the fall of 1953, would also be billeted in this area. This was, however, a pure assumption; no mention of such a fact was ever officially made. He had no further information on these buildings.
14. **Water Reservoir (?)** Within a short distance of source's billets, there was what appeared to be a water reservoir under construction. It was located on a hillside near a creek and was about 200 x 100 m. in size. Its cement walls on the southeastern portion were about 15 m. high and at about a 45-degree angle. The hillside itself formed a natural enclosure for the rest of the supposed reservoir.
15. **The Coal Mine of the Czechoslovak Army (Dul Ceskoslovenske Armady)** Airmen-miners working in the Coal Mine of the Czechoslovak Army marched daily to and from work, in a military formation, from their billets.
16. **The Coal Mine "Mir" (Peace)** Airmen-miners working in the "Mir" coal mine were always transported by busses to and from work, although this mine was much closer to their billets than the Coal Mine of the Czechoslovak Army. Source did not know the reason for such an arrangement.
17. **Auxiliary Technical Battalion (PTP - Pomocni technicky prapor) Installation** For further details on this installation, see Annex A of

50X1

*The 9th Technical Battalion barracks were commonly referred to as "u Votypku", i.e., "at Votypka". The former owner's name of the nearby restaurant (now nationalized) was Votypka.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

- 10 -

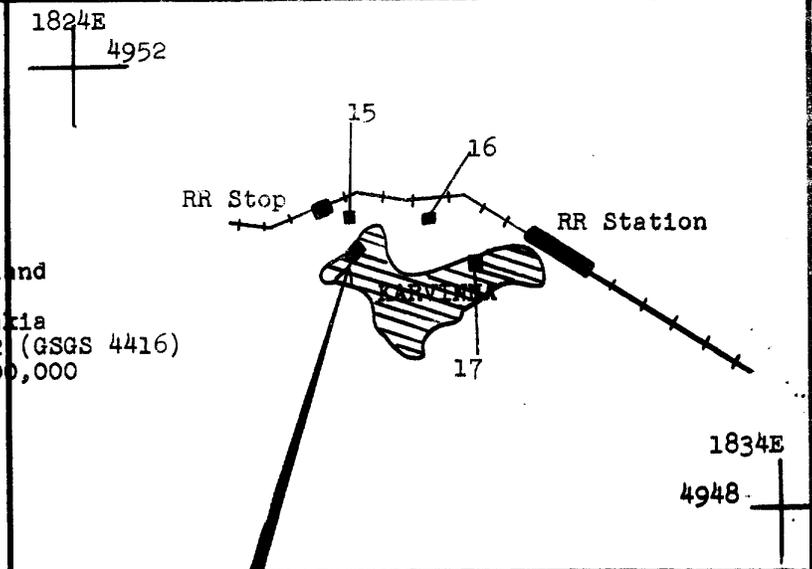
ANNEX A

The 9th Technical Battalion Caserne, KARVINNA II

(Memory sketch. Not to scale.)

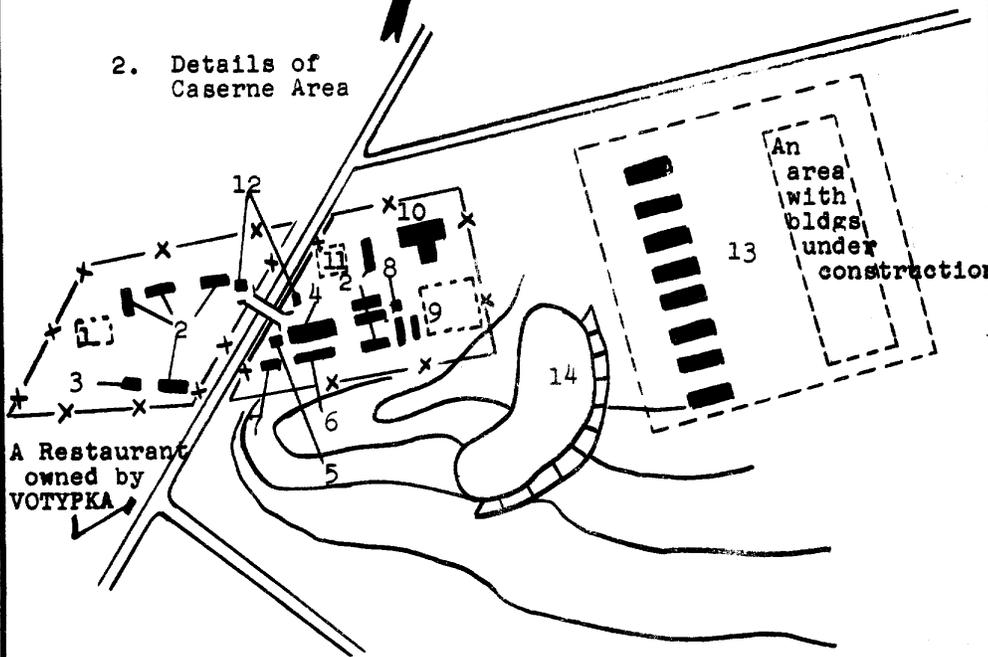
1. Pinpoint Location of Area

Map Ref:
RYBNIK, Poland
Germany, C
Czechoslovakia
Sheet: T-12 (GSGS 4416)
Scale: 1:100,000



9th Battalion Caserne Area

2. Details of Caserne Area



CONFIDENTIAL