

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION REPORT

REPORT NO. [] 50X1
[] 50X1
DATE DISTR. 27 Sep 51
NO. OF PAGES 4
NO. OF ENCLS. 3
(LISTED BELOW) (A), (B) & (C)
SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO. 50X1

COUNTRY USSR/Germany (Soviet Zone)
SUBJECT 1. Training and Maneuvers of the 23rd Tank Regiment
9th Tank Division.
2. Preliminary Military Training in the USSR.

PLACE ACQUIRED []

DATE ACQUIRED BY SOURCE []

DATE OF INFORMATION []

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- The training of the 23rd Tank Regiment at its winter quarters, from December 1949 to April 1950, was divided into three stages. The first was devoted to individual training, i.e., radiomen were instructed in firing, assembly and disassembling of guns, nomenclature, etc.; drivers were instructed in the maintenance and operation of tanks; the motorized infantry units were given instructions in grenade throwing, target practice, observation and tactics. The second stage emphasized squad training of the motorized infantry troops. The third training stage was done on platoon and company levels.
- Prior to departure for summer camp, troops carried out simulated attacks, breakthroughs of enemy strong points, bivouacs and forced day and night movements. In the summer quarters, from April to September 1950, training progressed to regimental and division levels. Sample daily schedule of the company, platoon officers and enlisted men of the 23rd Tank Regiment at their summer training quarters as follows:

- 0600 - Reveille
- 0605-0625 - physical training
- 0625-0635 - preparing for inspection
- 0635-0700 - inspection
- 0700-0900 - training (classes)
- 0900-0930 - breakfast
- 0930-1530 - training (classes)
- 1530-1600 - rifle training
- 1600-1645 - dinner
- 1645-1845 - training (classes)
- 1845-2000 - free time
- 2000-2030 - supper
- 2030-2130 - political rallies
- 2130-2200 - roll call
- 2200 - taps

Sick call was at 1700. Guards were posted at 1800. The winter training schedule was approximately the same as the summer schedule except that reveille and taps were an hour later. Political information lectures were given daily. On Saturdays

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all troops reported for technical inspection; after 1600 on Saturdays and all day Sunday they were free. Ten hours of daily training were divided into technical specialty training, close order drill, lectures, stripping, assembly, nomenclature of weapons, etc. I have no information on the total number of hours devoted to each subject.

3. The platoon NCOs conducted the training under the supervision of the platoon and company commanders but the battalion commander frequently inspected the progress of training. The regimental commander, his chief of staff, the regimental political officer and various other staff officers inspected the training weekly or bi-weekly. All units and all types of training were inspected annually by the Ministry of Armed Forces in Moscow. In my opinion the two most outstanding training deficiencies were the poor methods of instruction, often by unqualified instructors, and the shortage of training equipment. Tank training was hindered by the fuel conservation program which precluded the use of more than six tanks to train the entire regiment. The firing training norms prescribed by the Ministry of Armed Forces were established at a level too low to permit proper instruction.
4. In 1950, the 23rd Tank Regiment conducted a course for NCOs which lasted six months. The students, (Kursanty), were picked from well-disciplined, educated and politically reliable NCOs. The instructors were company grade officers who taught close order drill, tactics, leadership, the use of weapons, etc. Upon graduation, the students were promoted to the rank of junior sergeant and assigned duties within the regiment. The only specialized school for new inductees was the six months chauffeur school of the 9th Tank Division. In order to acquaint the troops with night operations, the 9th Tank Division, interchanged its day and night schedules. All chemical training was defensive. There was no training for defense against atomic attack. I observed neither airborne nor air transport operations. Great stress is placed on artillery support and tank-infantry cooperation. I have no information on any special training for air-ground support, new antitank weapons, and the tactical use of new weapons.
5. The 23rd Tank Regiment moved from Oschatz to the summer training area near Schmorkau, a distance of approximately one hundred kms, in April. The movement was conducted as a large scale motor move, combining command post exercise and bridging operations. The command post exercises of the staff officers involved mapping, defining of missions, etc. Each officer at the command post had his organizational function, i.e., the Chief of POL determined the amount of fuel needed for an operation, how it was to be transported etc. The troop officers studied problems involving the combat mission, enemy positions, enemy power, casualties, weapons and replacement. I observed no particular officer or NCO leadership training programs nor training courses in passive defense, blackouts, radar nets, etc. Emergency alerts are used for training purposes. Actual wartime emergency alert plans existed. A wartime emergency can be declared only by a divisional commander or a higher ranking officer. Upon the declaration of such an emergency, prepared plans, one for the summer and one for the winter areas, becomes effective. These plans include arrangements for transportation of troops, tanks, guns, vehicles, supplies and equipment to a designated position in a forest approximately five or six kilometers from the regular training area. Drivers are assigned to the trucks by name and four or five men are designated to load the trucks. Antitank, chemical, air defense, security, reconnaissance, range finding measures and tank and gun movements are prescribed in detail. The 23rd Tank Regiment effected a simulated emergency in May 1951; the Regiment and all other units of the 9th Tank Division were alerted and moved to their designated areas.
6. The entire First Mecz Army was located in the area between Koenigsbrueck and Schwepnitz Enclosure (A). Five officers and 65 enlisted men were left behind in Oschatz. The regiment took only as much ammunition as would be needed for practices to their summer training quarters. The tanks (33 T-34/85s, 8 JS-3S and one tank wrecker), accompanied by their crews, were driven to the railroad station, put on platform cars, and shipped to Schmorkau. In Schmorkau the tanks were driven to the summer training area, lubricated, stored on planks and covered with canvas until the time of the return trip to Oschatz. Food supplies and clothing were also moved by rail. Personnel and equipment of the regiment were transported by trucks; each truck carried equipment and approximately 16 men. The convoy of the 23rd Tank Regiment consisted of approximately 85 trucks, six training tanks, (one JS-3, five T-34/85), and one tank wrecker. The rail movement entailed

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the use of 60 railroad cars; 24 for the 1st Tank Bn, 24 for the 2nd Tank Bn, and 12 for the 3rd (Hvy) Tank Bn. The 60 cars included platform cars for the tanks and passenger cars for the tank crews.

7. Since the move was treated as a tactical problem, the Regiment practiced day and night driving, bivouacs, attacks on enemy positions, breakthroughs and defensive combat. Three days were required for the truck column and for the railroad convoy to make the move. There were no major mechanical breakdowns or accidents enroute. German civilian guards, hired to guard the huts and houses in the summer area, were the only personnel present in the summer training area prior to the arrival of the 23rd Tank Regiment. The 8th Mecz Rifle Regiment was housed in tents; all other units were housed in huts or houses. Ordinarily, the 8th Mecz Rifle Regiment remained in Zeithain for the summer, but their quarters were converted into barracks for the Volkspolizei, and no permanent huts or houses had been erected for them. There were no bathing facilities in the area; every ten days the troops were marched to the lake to bathe.
8. Recreational facilities were open-air movies on Saturday and Sunday, and club rooms, (Leninskye Komnaty), in each battalion. Football matches were held on Saturday afternoon and athletic and gymnastic tournaments were held on Saturdays or Sundays. Training in the summer area consisted of regimental and divisional team work, and command exercises for the staffs. Enlisted men were not permitted to move from their unit area and were not allowed to visit friends in neighboring units. Officers were not permitted to leave the area except on business. The officers requested and usually received permission to go to Schmorkau to have their clothes laundered or shoes repaired; at such time they would also drink and fraternize. Fraternization, AWOL and drunkenness was usually punished by 10 days confinement in the guardhouse.
9. In June 1950, the 23rd Tank Regiment conducted a 15-day maneuver. All services, except paratroops and glider troops, were represented and I would estimate that approximately one-third of all the Soviet Troops in the Soviet Zone participated. I do not believe that the units pooled their weapons, equipment or manpower. JS-3 and T-34/85 tanks, JSU-122 and SU-100 SFs, AA artillery (Caliber Unknown), 120-mm and 160-mm mortars, 100-mm AT guns, bridging equipment and bomber and fighter planes were included in this maneuver. All the moves made by the Regiment were motorized. I believe that the maneuvers covered the entire Soviet Zone of Germany and were designed as a propaganda measure to counteract the effect of the combined US-UK-French maneuvers which were conducted at the same time in the Western Zones of Germany. 50X1
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The only air raid defense measures known to me were radar installations near the 12th Mechanized Division Headquarters in Brest, and the Air Warning Service (VOS), in the Soviet Zone of Germany and in Brest.
10. The chief sources of complaints in the summer training area were lack of freedom, the stringent restrictions and poor food. The enlisted men were dissatisfied with the leave system; leave was granted only in cases of emergency. The high desertion and AWOL rates reflected the low morale of the troops. There were usually about 10 to 12 men confined in the guardhouse of the 23rd Tank Regiment. The offenses were usually drunkenness or fraternization. In cases of chronic offenders, fraternizers were courtmartialled and returned to the USSR. Drunkenness was very prevalent despite efforts to curb it. General Chuikov, in a 1 May 51 order, prohibited the sale of beer, whiskey and all other alcoholic beverages to military personnel. Another corrective measure employed was an acceleration of the political indoctrination programs. I knew of three officers and two enlisted men who had venereal diseases; I have no information regarding the prevalence of venereal diseases since most officers treated themselves privately and many enlisted men did not report their infections. The disparity in the policies and practices applying to the enlisted men and officers were greatly resented among the enlisted personnel. These disparities occurred in matters of leave, living quarters, food allotments, disciplinary restrictions, medical care, etc.
11. The return to winter quarters in late September 1950, posed many problems. During the move, which took three days, the troops conducted field problems involving the attack of enemy strong points, breakthroughs, coordinated motorized and tank borne infantry operations, bivouacs, and night actions. All tanks, except six training tanks, were returned to the winter training areas by rail. When the

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Regiment returned to winter quarters, tanks and guns were lubricated, barracks were repaired and maintenance crews worked in the compound area preparing for the next training cycle. The training programs remain the same from year to year. The schedules do not call for advanced training.

12. No Soviet troops or equipment were left in the summer training area. German civilians guarded the permanent installations in the training area during the winter. Every 10 days or two weeks, officers of the 9th Tank Division inspected the summer training area.
13. A critique was held at the end of the maneuver at which only officers participated. The 23rd Tank Regiment held no final maneuvers in the fall of 1950.
14. I can furnish the following information covering preliminary military training in the USSR. A basic instruction program is administered to school age groups. A general compulsory military training school, conducted in organized training classes and under the auspices of the regional military commissariat, exists for underage persons. The purpose of the military school is to combine general education with military fundamentals. In these schools, students wear military uniforms and are subject to military regimentation. These 10-year courses serve as preparatory courses for students prior to their entry into a military academy of their choice. Those who have completed a course of education in the military schools are obligated to enter a military academy.
15. The Suvorov academies serve as preparation for entry into the officers corps. Children, 10 years or under, are enrolled in these academies. Boys, whose parents died during the German occupation form the bulk of the students. Upon completion of the courses at the Suvorov academies, students are sent to military academies, from which they graduate as officers. The military schools and the Suvorov academies differ in that the state supplies Suvorov students with a free education living quarters, food, uniforms and school supplies. Students of the military schools are supplied only with free tuition. Graduates of either institution are well educated and well trained officers. Predisposing factors which usually led to the young graduates' laxity (morally and culturally) were association with older officers, who had become hardened to their profession.
16. A final feature of preliminary military training in the USSR is the DOSARM or Voluntary Society for Cooperation with the Army, (Dobrobojnoye Obshchestvo Sodeistviya Armii), which both sexes are invited to join. Each registrant becomes a member, is issued a membership card and pays monthly dues. Societies of radio operators; communications specialists; medical instrument technicians; parachutists; expert riflemen; etc. are organized in each branch of the DOSARM. This purpose is to provide amateur military specialists who can be called upon in the even of war..

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- ENCLOSURE (A): Summer Training Area of the First Mecz Army, GOFG
 (B): Summer Training Area of the 23rd Tank Regt, 9th Tank Div.
 (C): Legend for Enclosure (B)

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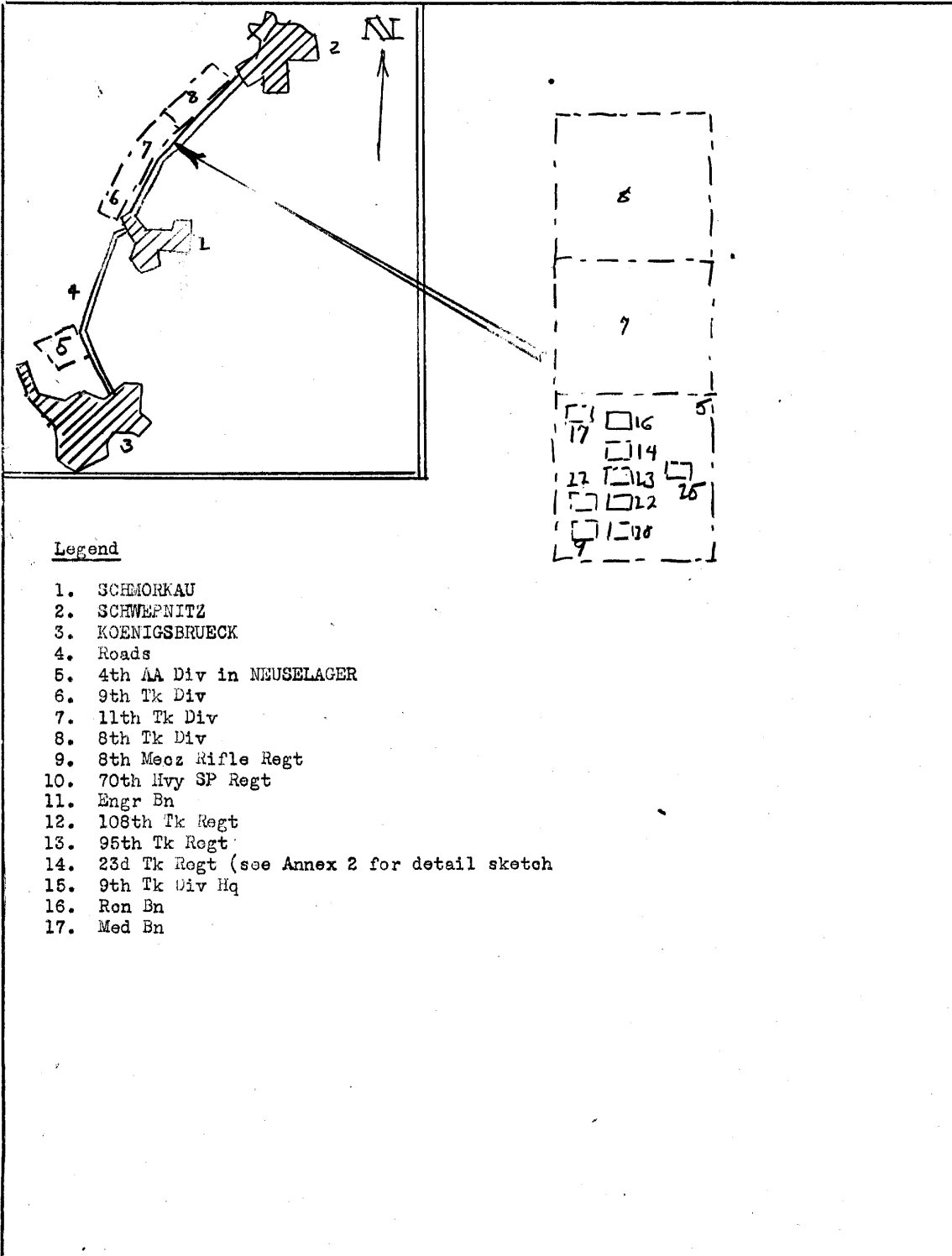
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ENCLOSURE (A)

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Summer Training Area of First Mecz Army, GDFG**SECRET**

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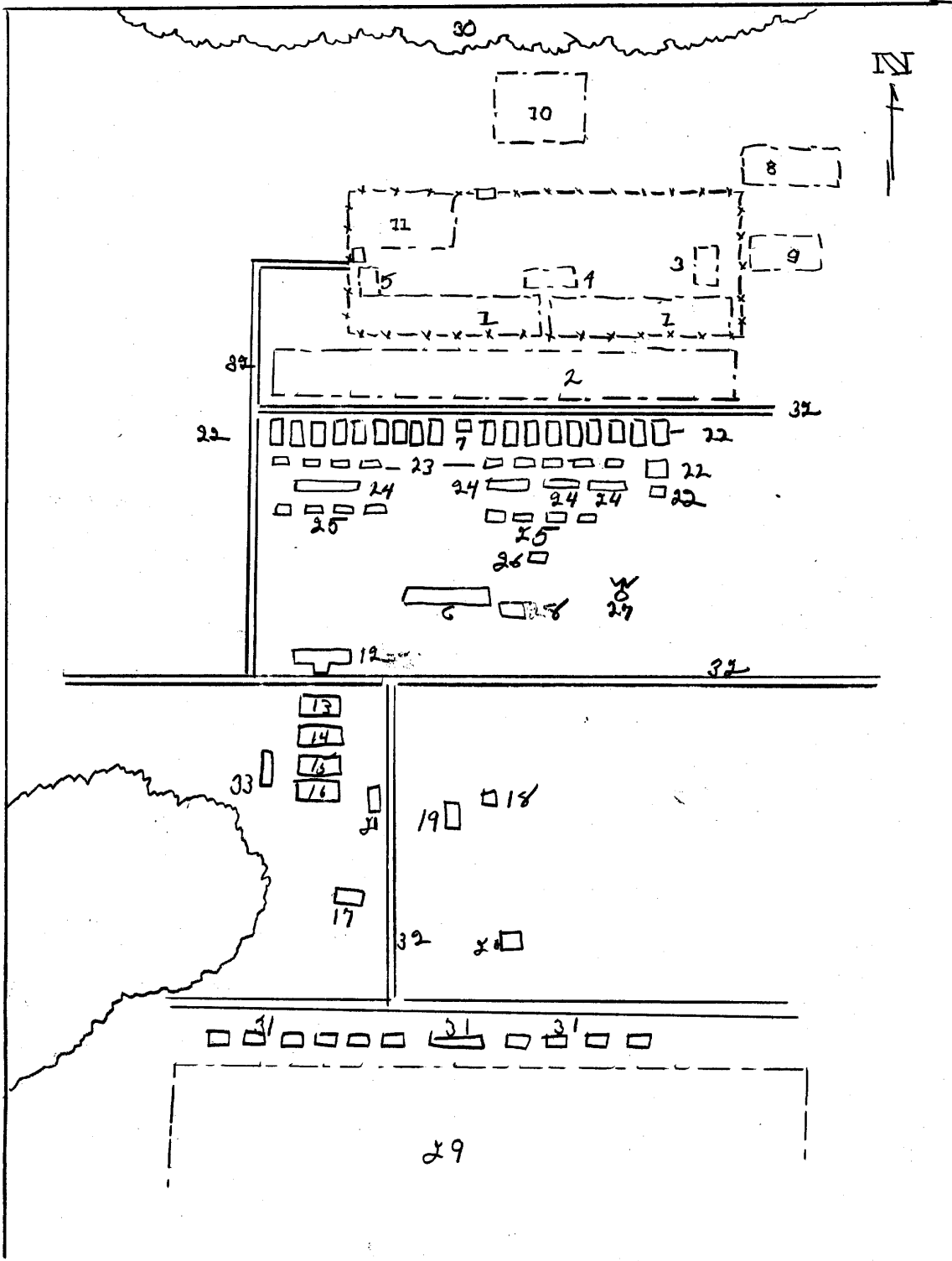
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ENCLOSURE (B)

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SUMMER TRAINING AREA OF 23d TK REGT, 9th TK DIV



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ENCLOSURE (C)

Summer Training Area of 23rd Tk Regt. 9th Tk DivLegend

1. Tank storage area
2. Exercise and drill area
3. Vehicle parking lot
4. Parking lot for training tanks
5. Storage area for 45-mm and 57-mm AT guns (covered with canvas)
6. Regimental headquarters - 20 x 8 m, one story, wood
7. 23d Tk Regt flagpole, and sentry
8. SMG, MG, and carbine firing range
9. Pistol range for officers
10. AA gun storage area, 50 x 50 m
11. POL storage area, 15 x 10 m, fenced in
12. Messhall, one story, wooden 30 x 12 m, partly for officers, partly for EM
13. Food storage building, one story, wooden, 10 x 6 m
14. Clothing storage building, one story, wooden, 10 x 6 m
15. Artillery repair shop, one story, wooden, 10 x 6 m
17. Club, open air with benches and tables
18. Residence of regimental commander, one story, wooden, 10 x 6m
19. Political lecture room, one story, wooden building, 10 x 6 m
20. Residence of OKR (Counter Intelligence) officer, wooden, one story, 10 x 6 m
21. Voyentorg (PX), one story, wooden, 10 x 6 m
22. Billets for enlisted men, one story, wooden, 10 x 6 m
23. Gun storage sheds, one story, wooden, 10 x 6 m
24. Lavatories for enlisted men
25. Classrooms for enlisted men, one story, wooden, 10 x 6 m
26. Motorized Rifle Battalion Headquarters, one story, wooden, 10 x 6 m
27. Radio station, one story, wooden, 10 x 6 m
28. Secret Documents Section building, one story, wooden, 10 x 6 m
29. Divisional stadium
30. Firing range for heavy guns
31. Officers' billets, one story, wooden, 10 x 6 m
32. Roads
33. Repair shop (tailor, shoemaker), one story, wooden, 10 x 6 m

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