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USSR

16730

Reported Dissolution of Two Military Forced Labor Camps in the Chuvash ASSR



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January-April 1953

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1. "Two large military forced labor camps in the Chuvash ASSR, west of Kazan on the Volga River, were dissolved in the latter part of March 1953. Over 35,000 Soviet Army prisoners were transferred to a Military Reserve Center at Cheboksary, where they are being kept behind barbed wire. This report is dated April 1953.
2. "The two camps were set up in 1943 to handle deserters and soldiers who had committed ^{serious} offenses. However, the prisoners detained in the two camps since the end of World War II have been, almost exclusively, soldiers who served with the Soviet occupation forces in Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia. They were considered infected by capitalistic ideas and the Western way of life and detained as unreliable elements.
3. "The liquidation of the camps was ordered after an investigation disclosed appalling conditions. During January and February 1953 about 4,500 inmates died from frost and exposure. An additional 8,000 suffered from serious illness or were injured during work."

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