

G
30 January 1952
NL-109

POLAND

INDUSTRY

Mining

Uranium Mines Situated About 12 Km From The Town LADEK
ZDROJ In Lower Silesia.

The management of the mines is entirely in Russian hands. The uranium ore, pitchblend, is exploited together with flourite. The interviewed was employed as a truck driver and was engaged in transporting ore from the shaft to the sorting workshops.

The mine near LADEK ZDROJ employ about 3,000 people; about 500 of them are Polish army soldiers of a politically unreliable character.

A large number of workers originated from the ranks of the Home Army (AK) assigned to work in the mines after being granted amnesty.

The workers are transported to the pits from town or from special barracks, by about 30 specially adapted trucks, each carrying 30 to 40 men.

The work is done in three shifts a day. Transport of ore is done in about 50 trucks, all of Soviet make. The usual types are ZIS 5 and ZIS 50, one and a half tons each, ZIS 150 - four and a half tons, and ZIS 151 10 tons. There were about 20 trucks of the last type. The trucks used for the transport of workers were ZIS 150 and GAS 51.

The main motor-pool with repairshops and mechanical workshops for older trucks and cars of the mining district are situated in the small locality STRONIE SLASKIE, some six and a half km from the pit. The workshops are very efficient and well equipped with spare parts, and all repairs are done rather quickly. All deliveries for engines and trucks engaged in the uranium mining districts are given top priority.

The informant does not know any technical details about the machinery used in uranium mines, but to his knowledge it is all of Polish and Soviet make, in good working order, and all repairs are done efficiently. This makes a great difference from the conditions. e.g. in coalmines where spare parts are lacking and repairs are slowing down the output.

The daily production of uranium ore is 15 truckloads of one and a half tons capacity. The ore is transported to the sorting rooms where it is assorted according to the contents of radioactive elements, and stones and soil are rejected. From those workshops the ore is taken away by Soviet trucks

POLAND
(cont'd 1)

driven only by Russian personnel, to an unknown destination, which is kept secret from the entire Polish staff.

The miners work mostly in groups of three. The ore is put into carts containing each four crates carrying about 50 kgs. The carts are brought up to the surface and credited individually to each working group. The normal pay is 4.50 Zloty for one cart. The output depends on the soil where pitchblend deposits are found. The highest output is from the hard sandstone terrain, and the worst from marble. The average output is about 150 to 200 carts per day.

The average wages are from 2,000 to 4,000 Zloty a month, according to the kind of employment and the degree of skill. A good average achieved by a large majority is 3,000 Zloty. These wages are relatively high; our informant had previously worked in a paper-mill, where he had never earned more than 500 to 550 Zloty a month. The high wages afford the required quantity of miners and employees for the uranium mines, as many workers from the light industry are eager to take advantage of such an opportunity. The drivers (like our informant) earn about 800 Zloty. About 10 per cent is deducted from the wages for taxes and insurance fees.

In September 1951, all the personnel of the mines was obliged to subscribe to the Reconstruction Loan. Our informant subscribed two days' wages; but the management, without his consent, increased his subscription by another six days, making it eight days in all, approximately 160 Zloty, to be deducted within six months.

As concerns the deductions, our informant states, that if e.g. a shockworker succeeds in earning 10,000 Zloty in one month, he receives only 4,500 in cash; the rest is deducted under all sorts of headings.

The workers receive waterproof suits, but they are of very poor quality, and only rubber boots protect their feet, in places where the work is being done while water is constantly dripping from the ceiling and walls. The informant alleges that uranium mines are the only ones in which the workers are given protective clothes and boots, whereas in the other mines these things have to be provided by the workers themselves.

The working morale among the workers is quite good because of a constant fluctuation. For reasons of health, nobody stays in the mines longer than for two years. A new miner, during the first two months, works very hard to secure high wages; but as soon as he made all the necessary purchases for himself and his family, he will slow his output down to the norm.

ITEM No 1484

POLAND
(cont'd 2)

For each shift missed without a medical certificate, the miner loses the monthly bonus paid in accordance with the fulfilled plan. The miners lose their bonuses also in case of frequent illness. The number of accidents is not high, as only experienced miners are assigned to work in front of the galleries and of the pit workings.

In the pit described by our informant about 45 Russians are employed, holding in their hands all the management. The only Pole in a responsible post is Director KULA Jan, a Party member, but he does not have any power of decision.

Security officer SLO. ILSKI (fnu), is a most dangerous Communist informer, a functionary of the ROB organization. He has under his orders a network of denouncers who report to him on the political reliability of the workers. One of his agents is POCHMURSKI (fnu), about 43, married, who worked underground for some time, and then took up the easier job of a police informer.

The informant states that, in his estimation, there are not more than 15 per cent of Communists among the workers. It is most difficult to ascertain the exact number as the Party members are not obliged to wear Party badges; but they can be recognized through the kind of work to which they are assigned. They are directed to work on the richest seams of pitchblend ore, upon the decision of the Russian supervisors.

The miners are not satisfied with the wage system, as they never know how much they will receive; the deductions vary from month to month. The highest one up to now was for the State Reconstruction Loan.

No holidays were granted for two years, and the workers were told that there is no time to be spent on holidays. Those who take time off, will be handed over to police.

The miners are invited to take part in demonstrations and meetings, but in fact such events are only attended by militia and Party members, which means that the number of participants is usually low.

DATE OF OBSERVATION: recent

EVAL. COMMENT: Source : is a 19-year-old Pole from CZESTOCHOWA who escaped to Germany in the middle of December 1951 and who was working before in these uranium mines. Information: The Uranium mines near

LADEK ZDROJ (20 km SW of Kłodzko)

POLAND
(cont'd 3)

a new railway line leading to MORAWKA was allegedly constructed.

The region of KIODZKO was also previously mentioned by different sources as a rich terrain in uranium.

The miners' wages quoted in the above report are unusually high, but the wages, drawn by the informer as a chauffeur corresponds to the usual remuneration for such kind of work.

The care for the miners health is unusual too, but all other remarks about discipline of work conforms to the usual discipline.