

LL
22 December 1951
VI/R/2/1740

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

MINING

Coal: OSTRAVA

LABOR

Recruitment

Conditions

Working Morale

Situation in Mines of OSTRAVA And KARVINNA

SOURCE ROME: No information available.

DATE OF OBSERVATION: November 1951

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MARES Juraj, a worker living in VRBOVCE, whose parents have been lived in NEW YORK for many years, asked repeatedly to be permitted to join them there. MARES, a wellknown enemy of the regime, is under special supervision.

He informs us about the situation in the mines of OSTRAVA and in the region of KARVINNA. It is tragic. The authorities use the most cruel methods, but still cannot force the workers to achieve their production schedule.

A letter from MARES states as follows:

"There has been a great reorganization in the mining industry since the summer of 1951. Thousands of State and private employees were transferred to the mines of OSTRAVA and KARVINNA. Besides these a great many have volunteered to work in these mines. As these people were not accustomed to hard labor, the production was very slow. The supervisors were like devils, they came from the old guards of Hlinka and the SS Troops. Those people who were unable to reach their norms were maltreated and beaten."

"A tragedy occurred at the end of October 1951. NAPRAVIL Oldrich, a 50-year-old employee of PRAGUE arrived as a volunteer. He was very pale and could not take the heavy and disagreeable air of the coal mines. Suddenly he fainted and fell into my arms. At that moment I felt the tap of a pick-ax on my neck and the guard shouting 'leave him, that filthy bourgeois, he must learn what hard work is.' But the man lay still. When I flashed my miner's lamp in his face, I saw that he was all yellow. After three hours of suffering I was allowed to carry him out of the mine, but it was too late. NAPRAVIL was dead. I am certain that the life of this family-man could have been saved if the supervisor had been more understanding, showing more patience with a new worker."

"Under these conditions the production results are not up to par," writes MARES. "I ask you to remember my name. I am already known as a saboteur and traitor. I want to have information on the help of the IRO, and later I will escape."

EVAL. COMMENT: Authenticity unknown, names of MARES and NAPRAVIL unconfirmed.