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24 Jul
VIII-6905

POLAND

CAMPS

Location
Forced Labor

Conditions In The Labor Camp Of MODLIN

SOURCE SALZBURG: A young Pole, 28, who escaped to Austria.
DATE OF OBSERVATION: April 1946 to December 1948.

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The Labor Camp in MODLIN near WARSAW is in the vicinity of the old fortress. The camp consisted of four wooden barracks housing 50 persons each. Thus the capacity of the camp was 200 men. Each group of 50 persons was housed in one common room. There was one toilet and one wash-room in each barrack. The camp was surrounded with a barbed wire fence, three meters high and three meters broad. There was also one watch tower in the middle of the fence. There was a heavy machine gun and a reflector in the watch tower.

The inhabitants of the labor camp were clothed in ordinary prisoner garb made out of striped material and also fatigues left by the German Army. The underwear was changed every other week and washed by those camp inmates who were too sick to do any other work in the camp.

The food was sparse and very bad. For breakfast the men got black Ersatz coffee with 100 grams of bread. For lunch or supper they got either cabbage-soup or bean soup with one slice of bread each. The only specialty was one herring every Friday with two potatoes, one of which was barely edible. During the two and a half years they never saw meat or sausage.

There were 20 guards in the camp and two watch dogs. The prisoners could not get to know their names for two reasons: first the guards were exchanged every other week, and second they were called by the number of the watch-house where they were on duty. Some of the guards were very strict, others seemed not to care much for their jobs.

The camp inmates were taken to work in two groups of 100 men each. The group was taken by foot to the nearby fortress to do the reconstruction work after the German demolition.

The other group was taken to a nearby quarry. Most of the time they were taken there by trucks. In four trucks

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they had 25 laborers each and four guards with carbines in each corner of a truck. The truck drivers were civilians and it was strictly forbidden for the inmates to talk with them. Whenever an inmate was caught talking to the driver, the inmate was severely beaten by the guard. When there was no truck at their disposal, the inmates were taken by foot to the quarry, which was a half-hour's walking distance. In such cases, they had seven to eight guards escorting them. The quarry was safeguarded by the fact that three sides consisted of the steep walls of the quarry and the fourth was the barbed wire entrance. The blasting in the quarry was performed by the guards, but all the other work was done by camp inmates. Work hours were from 0600 to 1200 and from 1230 to 1800 hours. There was no pay for the work.

Whenever anyone refused to work, he was beaten up to the extent of needing hospitalization. When someone loafed on the job, he was also beaten up by the guards who used their carbines for that purpose.

At 2100 hours, everybody was supposed to be in "bed." When the control found one man outside of his bed or talking to somebody else, all the 50 men were ordered out of the barracks and forced to stand at attention all night long. The following day, then, they had to work without food.

There were no medical facilities in the camp. A physician came to the camp every Friday to look at the inmates who were seriously sick.

EVAL. COMMENT: Labor camp at MODLIN UNCONFIRMED. Labor camp living and working conditions as presented in the report agree with those known in other camps. For details concerning the escapee see items no. 9536/52 and 9531/52.