

G
19 January 1952
NL-56POLANDPRISONS

Location

Atrocities

A recent refugee from Poland, former member of the Polish Parachute Brigade in the West, was caught by a WOP patrol at his first unsuccessful attempt of crossing the frontier in 1949. Arrested near DOLUJE, he was brought to the WOP barracks in SZCZECIN, Mickiewicz street, then to another WOP station at JASNE BLCNIE, and ultimately to the investigation prison in STARGARD, Red Army street (Ulice Czernowej Armii.) He thus describes the conditions in that prison where he spent over five months:

The prison is destined exclusively for people caught at illegal border crossing, and is now under the direction of one DANIELEWICZ (fnu), Russian-born. In 1948, the prison was rebuilt and prepared to accomodate about 500 inmates. It is divided into three sections: Section 1, for women, on the ground floor; section 2, for men under investigation, first floor; section 3, for men after investigation. In our informant's time, there were in the building over 800 prisoners, including about 100 wmen (mostly young girls) about 200 men under investigation, and abou 500 men after investigation waiting for trial. In the women's section there were also about 10 little children, taken with their mothers at the frontier.

The men's sections are especially overcrowded. E.g. in the cell No. 21, about 10 by 6 yards in size, 62 prisoners were located. All day the prisoners were just sitting on the floor, talking in a very low voice, loud speaking was forbidden. They were not allowed any mail, parcels, books or newspapers; they were not taken out for walks. There was only one small window in the cell; the air was stuff and stale, and nearly all the inmates were ill with fever. Only very serious cases were taken to the prison dispensary, which was in charge of a former German army doctor, also a prisoner, unable to help people much. In the dispensary, prisoners received a pint of milk each per day.

On arrival, the prisoners' clothes were taken away, their head shaved, and they were issued shirts and underwear which were to be their only clothes in prison. The things were changed only once a month. Once a week the prisoners were taken for obligatory shaving; it was called a "bloody day," as the barber - also a prisoner, shaved them with a laundry soap and a dull razor, and after such a treatment everybody had their faces bleeding. No baths or showers were given.

ITEM No 836

POLAND
(cont'd)

People had many difficulties with eating, as they had only four old cans and four spoons for 62 in the cell. Coffee or soup - their only food - was received in large buckets, and the prisoners had to take turns in eating with the cans and spoons which, of course, were never cleaned.

In such conditions, many people were sick, and the death rate was high. In a three months' stay in the 2nd section, the informant saw two men dying in his cell: a German called RUHLHOF (fnu), 67, and MALIKOWSKI (fnu), 19, both of TB. They were buried in the prison cemetery beyond the courtyard, which had the popular name "Pod Wiatrakiem" (Under the Windmill,) as a windmill is situated behind the prison wall. When our informant was in prison, already one hundred of unnamed graves were in that cemetery, the earliest one dating of 1947.

The last two months the informant spent in the 3rd section where conditions were better: prisoners were allowed to work, to receive mail twice a month and also food parcels. He himself was working on the enlargement of the prison: a special new part was built with underground cells for investigation.

DATE OF OBSERVATION: from 1949 till unknown date

EVAL. COMMENT: Source : fairly reliable
Information: in line with conditions in other Polish prisons described by other sources.