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POLAND

ARMED FORCES

Army  
Airforce  
Training

Military Units And Installations At And Around BYDGOSZCZ

SOURCE BERLIN: A 22-year-old Polish escapee recently arrived at BERLIN

DATE OF OBSERVATION: Until July 1952

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Summer maneuvers held in the district of Ilawa (former DEUTSCH EYLAU) in East Prussia, emptied the town of BYDGOSZCZ almost completely of military units - says a recently arrived refugee who had many acquaintances in military circles.

Yet, at normal times, the BYDGOSZCZ garrison is quite strong, and barracks are located in different points of the city.

1. Largest military barracks are situated on the northern outskirts of the town around 1st May (former Gdanska) Street. In those barracks, near Polnogna street, which before the war accommodated the 61st Infantry Regiment, there is now a unit of about 3,500 soldiers, which bears the code number 2062. The barracks are composed of six blocks, four storey buildings and about 12 smaller buildings, and in the yards some 57-mm AT guns can be seen.

2. A small detachment of Soviet MVD soldiers is quartered in the same barracks. This detachment is frequently exchanged. There are times when as many as about 500 Soviet soldiers, under Soviet command, are billeted in their wing of the barracks.

3. The HQ of the BYDGOSZCZ military area (DOW II) have their offices at the 1st May Street, in the building of the pre-war officers' school. Also some officers of the garrison have their residential quarters there.

4. Opposite the HQ at the 1st May Street, there are the barracks, which before the war belonged to the 15 PAL and 11 DAK - artillery units. Now the KBW (Corps of Internal Security,) of a strength of about 3,000 men, is stationed there.

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5. Close to the KBW barracks, near Artilleryjska Street, there is the garrison motor-pool, having about 100 trucks - mostly ZIS 150 - 4 tons and GAZ 67 - a kind of Soviet jeep.

6. The KBW has its own motor park on the southern outskirts near Stalin (former Jagiellonska) Street, with many GAZ-67 carrying radio sets.

7. Near Hanki Sawickiej (former Mazowiecka) street there is another KBW unit (one battalion) stationing, having the character of an alert unit.

8. At Warszawska Street, in former barracks of the 62nd Inf. Regt. another infantry unit, using the code No. 5065 is quartered.

9. On south-western outskirts, by the road leading to the military airport, there are barracks, which before the war belonged to the 16th Cavalry Regiment. Now an Air Force unit is billeted there.

All BYDGOSZCZ is surrounded by military installations. In the north, near FORDON, there is the "FO" Air Force training strip, which is now used by the Air "League" ("Liga Lotnicza") for glider exercises. The strip is located between the railway line and a high slope, and is especially suited for glider training, as the difference in altitude between the airfield and the slope is 50 meters. On the hill, there is a former private estate, which also has been joined to the airfield, the estate buildings being used as boarding and schoolrooms for glider pilots.

Farther to the West between OSIELSKO and JASINIEC, the village of GROCHOL and a few small settlements were completely evacuated. The area is out of bounds for civilian population, and is used as training grounds for infantry units of the BYDGOSZCZ garrison.

Still farther to the West there are the pre-war exercise ground of JACHCICE which still belong to the army. Near the shooting-ranges new stores for rifles and machine guns were built.

The last military installation to the north of the town is in the hills near OSOWIEC, on a former private estate, where a pioneer unit is stationed. Quite recently some ammunition stores were established there.

The pre-war military airfield at BYDGOSZCZ has been greatly extended and rebuilt. It is situated in the southern part, between the BYDGOSZCZ-INOWROCLAW railway line and SZUBINSKA Alley.

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Our informant observed the following types of planes on the airfield:

Soviet-type YAK fighters;  
Soviet-type TU-2 light bombers;  
Soviet-type I-2 divers.

Until now no jet planes have been seen there; but in the last months three concrete runways, two kilometers long and 30 meters wide, were completed. Ordinarily this type of runways is meant for the jets.

A railway side-line was constructed on the airfield, leading to the large buildings which serve as repair workshops.

Close to these workshops, there are Air Force offices and barracks.

Not many hangars exist on the airfield; but most of the planes are camouflaged in a strip of the forest, which is all that was left from the former completely forested area.

The south-eastern corner of the airfield is now serving the civilian airline LOT. BYDGOSZCZ is connected by regular flights with WARSAW, SZCZECIN and GDANSK.

South-East of BYDGOSZCZ, near LEGNOWO, there is a very mysterious military installation.

It is located on a large area deep in the forest, between the railway line connecting BYDGOSZCZ with TORUN, and another railway line from FORDON to INOWROCLAW. The area is surrounded by three rows of barbed wire fence, the middle one of which - it is said - is electrified.

The entire area is heavily guarded by a special unit of the Industrial Police, and is also under the supervision of the KBW stationed in BYDGOSZCZ.

Under the German occupation, ammunition stores had been built in that area by the Nazis, and in the last year before the end of the war some buildings for ammunition-production had also been erected.

During the last two years, this complex of buildings was greatly enlarged, and barbed-wire boundaries were pushed

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as far as the western side of the FORDON-INOWROCLAW railway line. Here, a 104-m high hill completely covered with a thick forest, is isolated, and two roads crossing the forest are closed for the civilians.

It is said in BYDGOSZCZ, that between 3 and 4,000 workers are now employed with that military enterprise; that in some new plants which are situated deep in the forested hills, ammunition, gunpowder and poisonous gas are being produced; People also say that many army laborer units and compulsory laborers are working there. On the northern outskirts of the forest, near ZIMNA WODA, the construction of special housing settlements has been starting this year.

In view of the isolation of the whole area, it is difficult to learn for certain what kind and quality of production is really going on in that enterprise. But it is a matter of common knowledge that many workers employed with it fall ill of TB or of pernicious anemia. In order to suppress rumors, these people are not hospitalized in BYDGOSZCZ but transferred for treatment to far-distant health-resorts.

The top man in the garrison command of BYDGOSZCZ, to which all surround military installations and enterprises are subordinate, is now one Major LINDNER (fnu).

He is presumably a politically reliable man, as his position was not affected by the purge carried out in the BYDGOSZCZ garrison in the spring of 1951, in connection with General TATAR's trial. Several of his colleagues from the "DOW-II" were arrested at that time.

EVAL. COMMENT: DOW (Area Military Command) at BYDGOSZCZ confirmed. Its number was given by another source as IV (compare Item 1292/52,) whereas POZNAN was referred to as being the seat of DOW II. The address of the BYDGOSZCZ DOW (ul. 1 Maja) UNCONFIRMED. Various reports confirm, however, the presence of different military offices at ul. 1 Maja. This address is also referred to as Aleja 3 Maja (compare Item 3039/51.) For lack of respective reference books it is difficult to establish what is correct: "Aleja" or "ulica," and it is impossible to confirm all other BYDGOSZCZ addresses. The dislocation of military units at BYDGOSZCZ UNCONFIRMED. For further information concerning troops at BYDGOSZCZ, OSIELSKO and GROCHOL NE of BYDGOSZCZ, railway lines as quoted ans "Szubinska szosa" (SZUBIN road) - all confirmed. JASINIEC and OSOWIEC cannot be traced on the available maps, (there is OSOWA GORA WN

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of BYDGOSZCZ.) "FO" airstrip and BYDGOSZCZ airfield confirmed. The extension of some runways at the latter airfield for jet planes UNCONFIRMED. The area of a secret military installation S and SW of LEGNOWO is described exactly from a geographical point of view. This installation, however, is UNCONFIRMED. UNCONFIRMED is also the name and position of Major LINDNER (fau.)