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CZECHOSLOVAKIA

INDUSTRY

Glass and Ceramics  
Mismanagement  
War Industry  
Vehicles and Aircraft  
LABOR  
Recruiting of Manpower

THE CONVERSION OF JABLONEC METAL BIJOUTERIE TRUST TO AIRCRAFT  
ENGINE MANUFACTURE IS RUMORED

SOURCE FRANKFURT : A 30-year-old man who worked in the former CZERCH factory belonging to the JABLONEC metal bijouterie trust from 1945 till February 1952.

From March 1952 till September 1952 he continued working in JABLONEC at the Gramophone Works and remained in contact with the CZERCH factory through a friend still employed there.

Source escaped West in September 1952.

DATE OF OBSERVATION : September 1952.

EVAL. COMMENT : This report gives a good account of the decline of the JABLONEC artistic glass and artificial jewelry manufacture. According to our not up-to-date information, the following remaining enterprises in JABLONEC nad NISOU are still engaged in the once-famous glass and bijouterie production: "Kovová bižuterie n.p."; "Krystalerie n.p."; "Preciosa n.p."; "Sklárna Jana Haruse n.p."; "Sklářský pomocný průmysl"; "Skleněná bižuterie n.p."; "Sklo a porcelán n.p."; "Skloexport," concerned with the export of glassware; "Turnovské brusírný n.p." závod RYCHNOV and "Železobrodké sklo n.p." One of our background reports, originated by a different source also from JABLONEC, mentions the names of HAVRANEK Bohul, the leading official of the "Kovová bižuterie," and JUN F., the technical supervisor of the "Kovová bižuterie" enterprise. DRAHORAD /fmu/ was reported to be the manager of the "Kovová bižuterie" enterprise. The conversion of the JABLONEC glass industry to aircraft production is UNCONFIRMED here, but not completely rejected.

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Workers in JABLONEC's metal and bijouterie industry believe that two of their three groups of their factories will soon be making aircraft parts or engines.

This rumor was started by speeches held during a workers' council meeting at the CZERCH factory in January 1952 were speakers mentioned "new work" being allotted to the metal bijouterie industry and it was further backed up by the arrival of two representatives from the KOVOVA BIZUTERIE /metal bijouterie trust/ to list the names of all workers formerly employed in the aircraft industry.

The JABLONEC metal bijouterie industry was nationalized in 1948, when it comprised 47 small factories, and organized into one big trust. Changing conditions affected the metal bijouterie industry as much as the allied glass and artificial jewelry branch in the same town; workers were taken into heavy industry, ethnic German experts left the CSR and new and unexperienced workers took their places. The form and administration of the trust changed continually. The larger factories were consolidated into five groups while 15 small factories were liquidated. By January 1952, the five groups were again reduced to three.

Each group now had two big factories. Group one included the former BRDICKA and FELIX works, each employing about 200 workers. The former is located in JABLONEC, Nádražní ulice, the latter in JABLONEC, Třída Ing. Nečase.

The former GEMIS works in JABLONEC Vzdružná ulice with 300 employees and the SCHEIBER works in JABLONEC, Gottwaldova třída with 100 workers formed group two.

Two of the five factories formerly included in group three were liquidated and two of the remaining three were combined into one factory. This left two big factories in group three, the CZERCH factory in JABLONEC, Zlatá ulice 2, employing two hundred workers, and the SEIDEL works in V. LULICK with 200 employees. The chief director of this group, DRAHORAD /fnu/, his deputy BULDA /fnu/, and the directors JUH /fnu/, KULHAVÝ /fnu/ and three others whose names were unknown to source had their offices in the CZERCH factory where source was employed.

These officials terminated their own careers abruptly in January 1952. Having liquidated the two small companies they found themselves with a number of surplus but otherwise serviceable machines on their hands. They took the simplest way of disposing of them: they dumped them in the junk heap.

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All machines were listed by the Ministry of Heavy Industry, however, and shortly afterwards an official inquiry was made as to the whereabouts of the machines with the objects of installing them in another factory. By then, however, they already had been melted down as scrap iron. All the above-mentioned directors of group three thereupon were arrested and thrown into PRAHA's PANKRAC jail. Up to the time source left JABLONEC in September 1952 they had not been brought to trial and were still in jail.

The CZERCH factory was officially referred to as KOVOVÁ BIZUTERIE ZÁVOD 8. The factory's technical director was a Communist named MLEKNEK Alois, while a 100 per cent Red, PAVLIČEK Karel, was cadre director. The deputy technical director HAVRÁNEK /fnu/ left the CZERCH factory in March 1952 and went to the GEWIS works. Source did not know the name of his replacement.

The Czerch factory is the only one in the ČSR producing badges. The other metal bijouterie factories manufacture brooches, pins and other metal jewelry. Source mentions badges of every description: Party badges, ČSM badges, badges for 1 May 1952 which had to be finished already by January, about ten thousand badges to commemorate the change of name of the ŠKODA works to "LENIN WORKS" /Závod/ VLADIMÍRA ILJIČA LENINA/, etc. Altogether something like two million badges were made yearly for every possible occasion. Party badges for GOTTWALD and ZÁPOTOCKÝ were made of gold, as also those of other important Communist functionaries.

Despite this flood of badges, only 70 per cent of the planned yearly production was reached in 1951 because the market was saturated, so that a special meeting of the workers council was called at the CZERCH factory in January 1952 to consider the problem. TOMAŠ Jáchym was chairman of the council, with PAVLIČEK the cadre director, MLEKNEK the technical director, and the deputy director HAVRÁNEK as council members. Speeches given during the meeting by these functionaries expressed the hope that the CZERCH factory was going to have enough work in the future, but it was hinted that a new "type of production" would be started and that everyone would be screened regarding his suitability to take part in it.

These pronouncements started a chain of rumors which grew all the more insistent when two trust directors /NU/ came to the factories several times in March 1952 to compile a roster of those employees who had worked in the aircraft industry during the war. Although source left the CZERCH

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factory in February of that year, a friend who also had been questioned and when he admitted working as a lathe operator in a German aircraft engine factory, his name was immediately included in the list.

At a later meeting at which source's friend was present, the chairman of the workers' council, TOMES, told the workers they would be schooled in their "new work" at the aircraft factory in PRAHA-VOKOVICE. In summer 1952 the factories were again visited by trust representatives who asked the workers whether they would like to go to school at the ČAKOVICE AVIA aircraft factory which was part of the PRAHA-VOKOVICE enterprise.

These developments strengthened the workers' belief that two of the three groups of factories would soon be converted to war purposes since similar visits and inquiries took place in the other factories of the two groups. The third appeared to remain untouched. Rumor credited the future organization with the name MOTORLET, assuming that the JABLONEC KOVOVÁ BIŽUTERIE would be incorporated in the light industry trust MOTORLET. It was also rumored that the red cadre director PAVLIČEK who worked during the war in the LETOV aircraft engine factory would be placed at the head of the new organization.

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