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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY Poland

SUBJECT Soviet Airfields in Lower Silesia/Legnica Airfield/
Zagan Airfield/Black Market Activities of Soviet Airmen

50X1-HUM

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Legnica Airfield

- 3. "The airfield at Legnica serves not only as a regular military airfield and as the headquarters of a pilot school but also as an important landing point for Soviet 'courier planes' flying between Moscow and Berlin or Vienna. These courier planes mainly transport military or diplomatic officials. From time to time, they carry Soviet or Satellite VIPs who are travelling on unofficial visits to Moscow or to various Satellite capitals. At such times the Legnica airfield has special guards, and the streets are blocked off to protect the time of take-off and the identity of the VIP.
- 4. "The airfield at Legnica was built 1935-36. It is located on the southern outskirts of the town between the Legnica-Jawor railway line and the road which connects Legnica with Nowa Wies - Legnicka (Neudorf). The field covers

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approximately four and a half sq km. It is linked to the main railway line by two spurs.

5. "The airfield was damaged only slightly in World War II. It was taken over by the Soviets at the beginning of 1945 and has been in their control ever since. The barracks north of the airfield, which prior to World War II were 'police signal barracks,' were transferred in 1950 to the Polish Army. One battalion of Polish infantry is quartered there. There is also a Polish KBW in the town of Legnica itself. All other local units are Soviet.
6. "In the northern part of the airfield are the headquarters building, barracks, workshops and magazines. The runways cover the southern part of the field. There is a gasoline depot at the extreme southern end.
7. "The motor pool attached to the airfield is stationed in the nearby village of Nowy Dwor (Neuhof). It is equipped with 60 to 70 ZIS-150 trucks.
8. [redacted] two Soviet air squadrons were stationed there and two battalions of technical and ground personnel. The total number of persons at that time was about 700-800 men.
9. "The majority of the airmen at this field are very young. They come to Legnica to continue their pilot training after completing theory courses elsewhere. A special pilot school has been established at Legnica, primarily for training on light fighter planes (aparaty szturmowe) of the IL-2 or JAK [YAK?] types. The number of planes stationed in Legnica is about 100. No jet-propelled planes are stationed at this field.
10. "About 80% of the young pilots at Legnica in 1952 seemed to be Russians from the Moscow and Leningrad districts. The others came from other parts of the USSR and remained rather isolated from the Russians. Although this non-fraternization was contrary to regulations, no social gatherings of mixed nationalities were observed.
11. "The commanding officer of the Legnica Airfield at the end of 1952 was a Russian named (fnu) Morozow. [redacted] His chief of staff Lt Col [redacted] Kaceczenko, was transferred to the USSR at the end of 1952. [redacted] The chief technical officer of the field was Major (fnu) Naziwenko. About 20 highly trained instructors, recruited from World War II pilots, served on the training staff. All were heavily decorated with medals. They included some 'Heroes of the USSR'.

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Zagan Airfield

12. "The Soviet airfield at Zagan is located about four and a half km east of the town, in the triangle between Bozanow (Eckersdorf), Nowa Kopernia (Kuepper) and Bukowina and Bobrzanska (Buchwald). During 1951 and 1952 the field was enlarged and completely reconstructed for the use of jet planes.
13. "All barracks, workshops and gasoline dumps for this airfield are located within a small nearby forest.

Black Market Activities of the Soviet Air Force

14. "Discipline on the Soviet airfields in Silesia is very strict. Nevertheless, the Soviet airmen, especially the instructors, always seem to find a way to get into contact with local civilians, primarily for black market deals. The Legnica airfield is a large black market center (similar to the Soviet airfield at Chojna).

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15. "There are two sources of supplies for this black market:

- a) Soviet Army military shops, where many goods which are scarce or unobtainable in Poland can be bought at low prices. The most important items here are woolen materials for men's clothing and raincoats. They are sold without limit in the military shops and priced in Polish currency. Other items in these shops, including food specialties from the USSR, are priced in rubles and sold on ration only. At the beginning of 1953 a raincoat selling in a military shop for 120 zlotys could be easily resold on the black market for 280 to 350 zlotys. One meter of the best 100% pure woolen material, selling for 450 z. at the most, could be resold on the black market for 800 z. The airman at Legnica have been especially privileged because they can buy goods at a special military shop right at the airfield as well as the main military shop located on the market place in Legnica itself. The latter shop was formerly a Woolworths.
- b) 'Unofficial' imports from the USSR. Here, there are two specialties:
- (1) Soviet nylon stockings, called Kaprone, which have quite a sheen. One pair of these stockings costs about 120 z. on the black market.
- (2) Radio receivers. The following types are obtainable to Polish civilians through black market Soviet channels:

Type	Price in Rubles	Black Market Price in Zlotys
MINSK - R 7, 8 tubes	900	3,500 - 4,000
RADIOTECH-RIGA 8 tubes	750	2,000 - 2,500
BALTYK 6 tubes	800	2,000
REKFORD 5 tubes	290	1,200
LENINGRAD	750	1,800
MOSKOWICZ 3 tubes	190	800 to 1,000
ALEKSANDROWICZ 4 tubes	240	900 to 1,000

The MOSKOWICZ and ALEKSANDROWICZ receivers have only medium and long wave bands. The others have short wave bands as well. The black market prices of these sets depend somewhat on the place they are put on sale. Legnica is not the most favorable location. Middlemen prefer to go to Wroclaw where they can get about 25% higher prices for the sets.

The black market in radio tubes is also flourishing. The average price for one tube is 75 to 100 zlotys.

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16. "This black market trade in Soviet hosiery, radio apparatus and clothing has replaced the former barter with gasoline and automobile tires. That barter flourished after World War II. However, the severe Soviet penalties of exorbitant fines or even recall to the USSR have killed the barter in those commodities. The Soviet military police do not punish those involved in the new trade. And the Polish customs officials do not dare to interfere with deals in which Soviet officers are involved.
17. "In order to collect funds with which to buy up radio sets and nylons in the USSR, the Soviet officers smuggle in goods from Poland, mainly all types of candies and sweets. These can be bought very cheaply in military shops in Poland and resold in the USSR for premium prices.
18. "Soviet officers and NCOs can easily get in on lucrative black market deals, because their wives act as middlemen in contacting interested parties. Such trade is barred to the common Soviet airman or soldier. Most of them live in barracks isolated from local civilians. They are poorly fed and clothed. Their food improved somewhat after 1949, but their uniforms are still drab and worn. The greatest shortage has been underwear. Since they get only six to nine rubles monthly [date not indicated], they really haven't got enough money legitimately to spend on tobacco. Therefore, they run the risk of occasionally selling gasoline or tires on the black market. On the airfield they also barter with plane parts. Quite often an airplane that has not been seriously damaged will be declared unusable and completely dismantled. The most valuable dismantled parts will be turned over to the airfield depots. The rest of the parts will find their way via Soviet soldiers to the black market. It is well known throughout Poland that large amounts of such metals as bronze and aluminum are supplied from Soviet airplane dumps.

Political Awareness of Soviet Officers

19. "While the Soviet soldier lives day in and day out nearly completely uninformed on current events, many Soviet officers are well informed on what goes on in the world. Their trade with radio receivers helps them gather information. With so many sets at their disposal they can listen fairly regularly to Western stations. A good number of the air force officers at Legnica were fluent in German, Polish or English. They customarily listened to VOA or BBC. [redacted] the day the Korean War broke out. Nothing was said about the war for four days in the Soviet press or over the Soviet radio. 50X1-HUM
20. "The officers must be careful about their radio listening. A special MVD detachment of eight men was attached to Legnica airfield. They were responsible for the security of the field installations and also for the political reliability of the Soviets stationed there. When the Soviet officers at Legnica grumbled about Stalin they used a code word: 'Sepp'l', which is the Bavarian abbreviation for 'Joseph'. One of the officers at Legnica was sentenced at an MVD trial because during the painting of his unit's barracks workers had trod all over old newspapers that carried pictures of Stalin."

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