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SUBJECT Automobile Works in Minsk

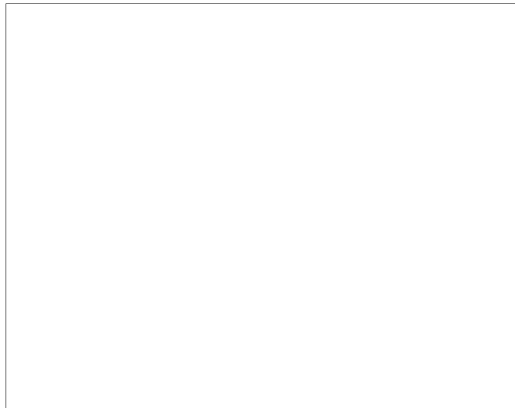
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COUNTRY	USSR	REPORT	
TOPIC	Automobile Works in Minsk		
EVALUATION		PLACE OBTAINED	25X1
DATE OF CONTENT			25X1
DATE OBTAINED		DATE PREPARED	17 December 1954
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1. The Minsky Automobilny Zavod (Minsk Automobile Works) (MAZ) was located about 7 km southeast of Minsk, 300 - 400 meters south of the Minsk - Bobruisk highway on a secondary road branching off from this highway. The automobiles manufactured by the plant were marked by a leaping buffalo. The automobile works was connected to the Minsk - Bobruisk railroad line.¹ A ball-bearing plant, an engine plant, a gun factory, an electric power station, and an oxygen plant were located in the vicinity of the automobile works.
2. During World War II, a large tank repair shop was located on the premises of the installation. In 1945, work on the construction of an automobile factory was started on the site. Storage facilities for construction materials were set up in the area adjacent to the site of the automobile works. Prior to 1946, Studebaker trucks, the component parts of which arrived from the USA, were assembled at the plant. The production of motor vehicles was started in 1948 or 1949. Most of the machinery used at the factory was dismantled German equipment or machinery delivered on reparations account. Some of the machinery was of American origin.
3. The factory area measured about 4.5 x 4 km. The plant consisted of the main workshop, housing all the departments required for the manufacture of motor vehicles and of the so-called "construction yard" in which all the materials required for the construction of the automobile works were stored and prepared. 2
4. Two-axle 5-ton dump cars equipped with 6-cylinder Diesel engines and dual wheels on the rear axle were manufactured at the Minsk automobile works. The Diesel engines were delivered by plants at Yaroslavl, Leningrad, Gorki, and Stalino. In 1949, 3-ton 3-axle trucks equipped with gasoline engines were assembled on the assembly line. The 1949 output was estimated at 30-40x5-ton trucks and 100 trailers per month. A total of 1,500 trucks of

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various types was scheduled to be manufactured in 1950. A considerable number of component parts of trucks was copied from American models, such as brake units, rear axles which were similar to those of American 10-ton Mack trucks, and various other accessories. Sheet metal mats to be used for the crossing of boggy terrain were also manufactured at the plant. 5

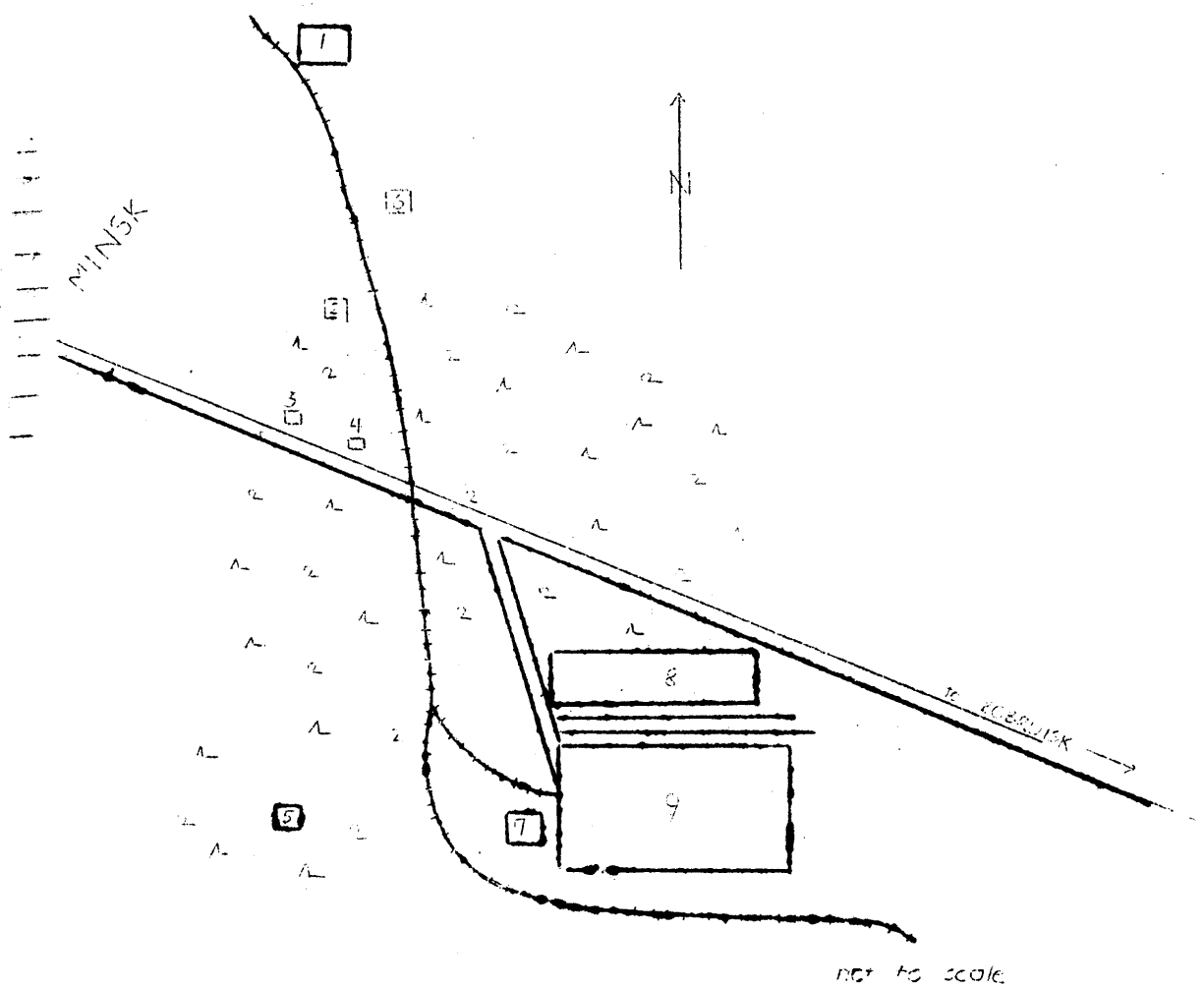
5. The 1949 work force of the installation was estimated to be between 2,000 and 5,000 civilian workers, half of them women. From 300 to 400 Soviet forced laborers and 400 to 1,000 PWs also worked at the plant. The Soviet personnel included few skilled workers and specialists, but many of the workers had been specially trained for the job. Prior to 1948, about 100 PWs were employed as construction and transport workers. Work was done in three 8-hour shifts. PWs, apprentices and office workers in addition to some production departments worked only one shift from 0800 to 1700. The installation owned a home for apprentices and a special apprentice workshop with 100 - 150 apprentices who were trained for two years. Most of the apprentices were 14 - 15 years old. They were given free board and lodging and received some pocket money.
 6. The entire factory area was surrounded by a 3-meter board fence topped by several strands of barbed wire. Watch towers which were occupied day and night were also seen. In 1949, the automobile works was guarded by about 30 factory police including 20 women. All workers employed at the installation had special passes with photographs. The forced laborers employed at the works were kept separate from the civilian workers. The new workshop for the production of tanks which was erected in the southern portion of the factory area was strictly guarded.
1. Comment. For location of the Minsk Automobile Works, see Annex 1. 25X1
 2. Comment. For layout of the Automobile works, see Annex 2.
 3. Comment. For sketch of the sheet metal mats manufactured in Minsk, see Annex 3. 25X1

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Annex 1

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Legend

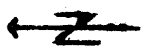
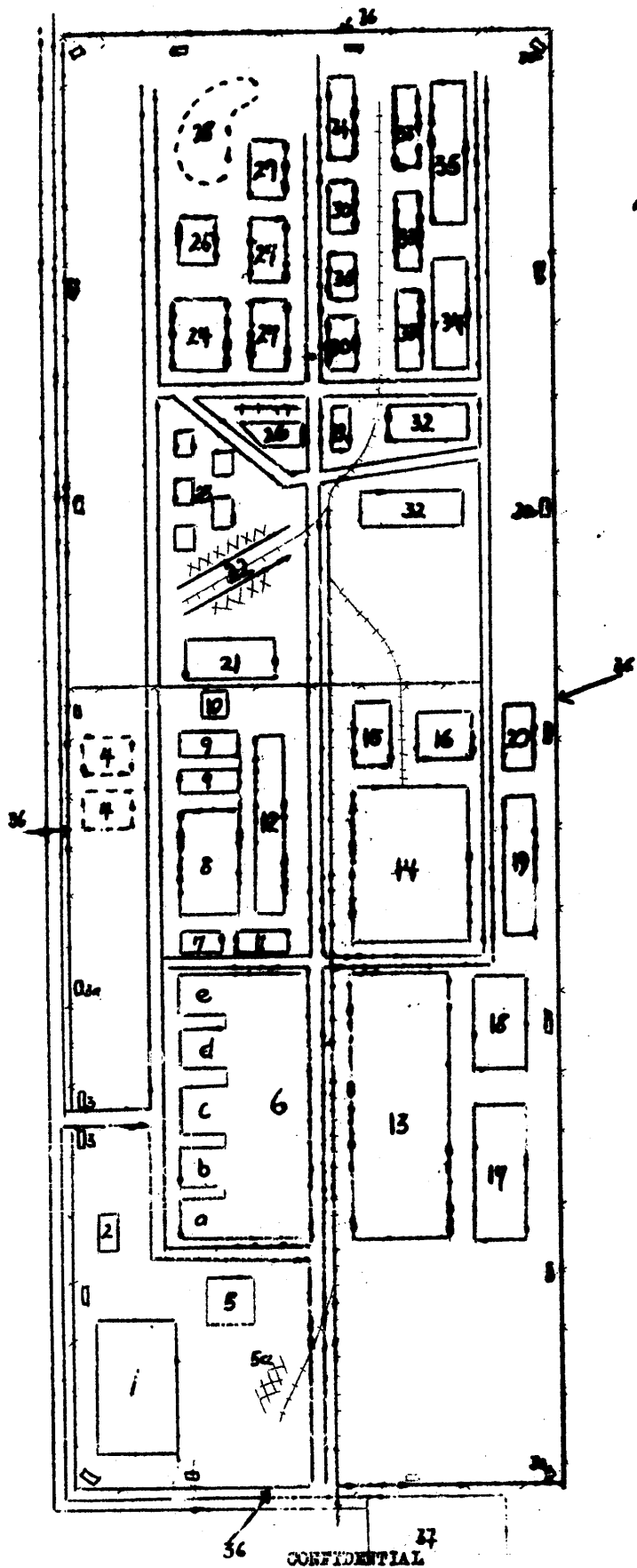
- 1 Tractor plant
- 2 Power station
- 3 Ball bearing plant
- 4 Oxygen plant
- 5 Gun factory
- 6 Engine works
- 7 PW camp
- 8 Settlement
- 9 MAZ automobile works

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Annex 2

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not to scale

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Layout Sketch of the MAZ Automobile Works in MinskLegend.

- 1 - Bicycle shop
- 2 - Quarters facilities for guard personnel
- 3 - Guardhouses at gates
- 3a - Watch towers
- 4 - Temporary storage sheds for machinery to be installed at the plant

- 5 - Power station, destroyed during the war, reconstructed in 1948 and 1949; a single-story building 60 x 80 meters. A new annex had two stories. A low and a high smokestack were available.

- 5a - Coal dump

- 6 - Assembly hall, about 400 x 50 meters. The shop had five bays each measuring about 80x30 meters. An assembly line was available in the shop which also included an inspection station, a paint shop, and a drying plant. The individual parts required for the assembly of trucks were manufactured in the individual bays of the workshop. The following bays were available:
 - a. Pressing shop equipped with six or seven hydraulic presses about 10 meters high and capable of pressures of 30-40 tons and 80 tons. The presses had been dismantled at the Wanderer-Audi Works at Siegmars in Saxony. Several traveling cranes with a lifting capacity of 20 tons were also available. The sheet metal beds of dump trucks were pressed at this department. Fenders, engine hoods and roofs for driver's cabs were manufactured at another department of the shop. Wheel nuts and bolts were manufactured at a third department. Sheet metal mats to be used for the crossing of boggy terrain were manufactured at the punching department. These mats were made rustproof by a special process.
 - b. Assembly of trailers. The department was equipped with numerous lathes, most of them of German origin.
 - c. Department for component parts. The department was subdivided into four sections in which differential gears were manufactured, assembled and checked. Component parts of compressors for Diesel engines were also built there. The underframes for trailers were welded, wheels were mounted on axles and wheel hubs were manufactured. The department was equipped with a large number of milling and grinding machines, shapers, bench planing machines, boring machines, and lathes, most of them of German origin. Machinery of the Wanderer, Brennabor and Horch Works were observed. Ten annealing furnaces delivered by the Opel Works were available in the annealing department.

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- d. Manufacture of chassis. Rivets and screws were manufactured and chassis assembled.
 - e. Experimental department. Special screws were manufactured and American automobiles copied. The department was to be provided with an assembly line.
7. Locksmith shop, a stone building with a vaulted roof, about 20 x 50 meters, built during the German occupation. The shop was equipped with lathes and various other machines used in locksmith shops.
 8. Foundry, a newly erected single-story building about 50 x 60 meters. The shop was equipped with several founding furnaces. Parts of brake units, brake shoes, wheel hubs, light-metal bearings, component parts of lifting and dumping devices were manufactured.
 9. Motor vehicle repair shop, two brick buildings with wooden roofs, built during the German occupation. Studebaker, Ford, and ZIS cars were repaired there.
 10. Boiler house and drying plant, newly erected, single-story brick building about 20 x 30 meters, serving as carpenter shop.
 11. Locksmith shop, brick building with a vault roof, 20 x 50 meters, built by the Germans.
 12. Carpenter shop and drying plant, a wooden building about 100 x 30 meters, built by the Germans. Drivers cabins and accessories for trailers were manufactured there.
 13. Large locksmith shop, single-story steel skeleton building about 350x100 meters. The building was declared Off Limits to German PWs in July 1948, allegedly, because presses for the manufacture of tanks were set up there. Several travelling cranes having a lifting capacity of 40 to 50 tons were observed. Designs bureaus and office rooms were also available at the shop.
 14. Large workshop under construction. The steel framework of the shop was completed in November 1949. The building was said to be connected with the large locksmith shop (Item 13).
 15. and 16. Workshops under construction.
 17. to 20. Workshops under construction. Work on the erection of these shops was started in late 1949.
 21. to 35. Building yard.
 21. Repair shop for US vehicles, a wooden building about 100x40 meters built by the Germans.
 22. Dump of Iron parts.
 23. Temporary wooden buildings built by the Germans housing punching machines, automatic plate cutting machines of German origin.
 24. Sawmill, a steel skeleton building erected in 1948 and 1949, equipped with 8-10 frame saws of various types. A small workshop was attached to the sawmill.

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25. Boiler house and drying plant, equipped with drying chambers, wood working machines, and various benches.
26. Welding shop equipped with traveling crane.
27. Carpenter shops, temporary wooden buildings erected during the German occupation.
28. Lumber yard.
29. Camp for about 500 Soviet young people.
30. Storage facilities for construction materials.
31. Temporary wooden building, a mechanical workshop serving the construction yard.
32. Manufacture of ventilation plants, heating installations, and hot air plants for the automobile factory.
33. Storage facilities for construction material and iron.
34. Slag brick works, about 50x30 meters, built in 1947 and 1948. The installation was equipped with two large brick-forming machines, drying chambers, and two or three shaking tables. Reinforced concrete slabs used for roofing purposes and for the construction of ceilings were also manufactured. Slabs used for roofing purposes were 8 cm thick and measured 160x50 or 240x50 cms. They had type designation R 6 - R 24. The second type of concrete slab was designated PR, was 10-12 cm thick and 200 - 400 x 30 - 40 cm. On the average, 300 - 500 R slabs and 50 - 60 PR slabs were manufactured per day. The slabs were used for the construction of workshops at the MAZ plant.
35. New workshop
36. Fence
37. PW camp

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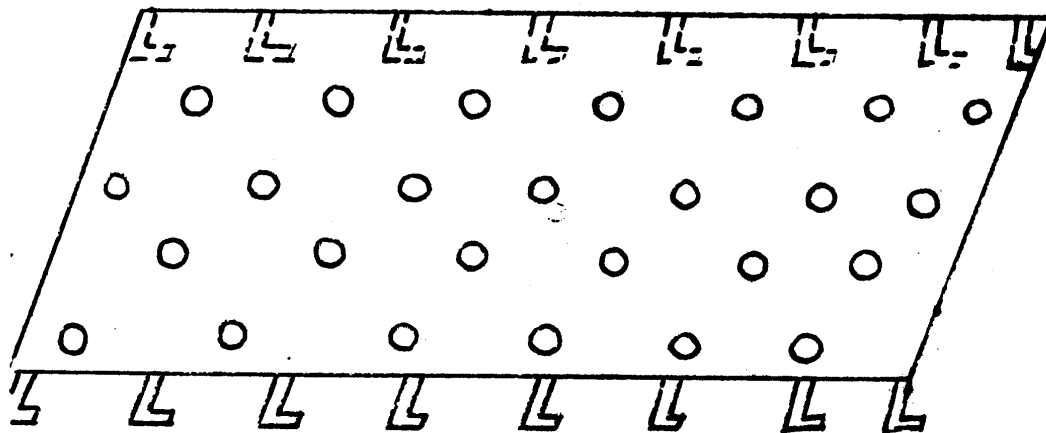
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Annex 3



Sketch of sheet metal mats manufactured at the MAZ
plant in Minsk



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