

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY INFORMATION REPORT

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SUBJECT	Czechoslovak Elbe-Oder River Navigation Company in Kozle	DATE DISTR.	17 March 1955	
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1. The management of the Czechoslovak Elbe-Oder Navigation Company (CSPLO), Oder Branch, which is in charge of all Czechoslovak shipping on the Oder River and on the canals in Eastern Germany which run into the Oder, is at Kozle Port, near Kozle, on Stalinowa Street. It comes under the general management of the CSPLO in Smetanovo nabrezi, Prague, which directs all Czechoslovak Elbe and Oder shipping. The management of the CSPLO works closely with the Ministry of Transport and with the state shipping company Metrans, whose Oder Branch is situated at Szczecin (Stettin) on the Ewa Peninsula.
2. The river Oder is navigable from Kozle Port for a distance of 738 km. The voyage from Kozle Port to Szczecin(Stattin) usually lasts 10-12 days. Ordinary navigation with a full load is possible if water in the shipping canal is at least 1.80 m. deep. In shallower water, smaller loads must be carried. Shipping stops on the Oder only in winter when it freezes up or when it is flooded. Ships usually winter in Szczecin and Kozle.
3. Trips to Eastern Germany from the Oder are very rare and ships only go to Oderberg (N53/V29) for repairs. The CSPLO does not have repairs made by Polish shipyard workers, because their repairs are very expensive and of poor quality. When the water is very low, and sailings from Kozle Port are not possible, Czechoslovak craft sometimes sail along the western Oder, usually with cargoes of apatite for Hoher Saaten, and sometimes for Magdeburg and East Berlin. The Czechoslovak barges, however, cannot usually navigate the canals which were built for 300-ton barges, and the cargoes have to be transferred to smaller barges in Hohensaaten. On the voyage to Magdeburg or Berlin, the boats never go through West Germany.
4. The Czechoslovak Government has been negotiating with the Hungarian and Polish Governments for the construction of a Danube-Oder Canal. The Polish and Hungarian Governments have refused to participate and have stated that they would rather

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pay duty when the canal is built. A new dam on the Oder is under construction near Ostrava; it is to be the first stop to render the Oder navigable beyond Ostrava.

5. From Kozle Port to Szczecin cargoes usually consist of coal for Sweden, Finland, West Germany, Denmark, Holland, France and Norway. The coal mostly comes from Poland, and is brought there by rail. From Szczecin to Kozle Port cargoes are generally iron ore, pyrites, apatite concentrates, and small quantities of certain foodstuffs. It is not possible to ship foodstuffs or more valuable goods by the Oder, because Polish personnel steal most of it.
6. Cargoes are usually loaded or unloaded on the Ewa peninsula in Szczecin. Half the peninsula has been bought by Czechoslovakia, which has two cranes and some buildings there. River shipping may not remain in this harbor overnight and is anchored at night, or while waiting, in a river harbor before Szczecin called Regalica.
7. The Oder Branch of CSPLO has about 50 barges; half of these are of new Czechoslovak and Dutch production. Only two of the barges are of 300 tons, the others of 500-600 tons. The company has the following steamers:
 - PREROV, a screw steamer, new, 500 hp
 - OSTRAVA
 - PRADED (former ODESKY RESSL), paddle steamer
 - MOSKVA, RIP and SNEZKA, screw steamers, 500-750 tons
 - LOBEN and TROJA, older steamers
 - OPAVA and VITKOVICE, steamships, 250 hp.
8. In 1949 a new screw steamer, the BOHUMIN, 250 hp, was launched. The steamship KARVINA, 100 hp, only sails from Kozle Port to Wroclaw (Breslau).
9. The branch has the following tugs: HANA, BECVA and OSLAVA.¹ As a rule three barges are towed by tow rope behind the tugs. The crews on the barges are not permanent and change frequently. Even when the tugs are new, they look old and battered and so do the barges, for Polish crews often demolish the ships' equipment. There are bugs and cockroaches in most of the boats.
10. The Oder Branch of the CSPLO has about 250 men. Only about 50 of these are Czechs of whom 30 are employed in the offices. The remainder of the crew, about 200, are mostly Poles, or so-called Slonzaks (Polish Silesians from the Czech border region). In spring 1953, about 20 new barge workers, members of the Czechoslovak Youth League, came to Kozle Port to replace old men who were not politically reliable.
11. The workers' basic pay is 617 crowns a month. With overtime for night work the men could sometimes increase their pay to 1,000 crowns. The allowance for each day in Poland is 35 zlotys, and in Eastern Germany 10 DME. Where the allowances were exceeded, the exchange rate was 1.80 crowns for the zloty and 3.24 crowns for the DME.
12. The pay of Polish bargemen is about 500 zloty; Polish crews, 600 zloty; and Polish mates, 750 zloty. Unlike the Czechs, the Polish sailors were paid by the kilometer and on long voyages could earn up to 1,800 zlotys; 35 zlotys per diem was sufficient to cover the minimum food requirements of Czech crews in Poland.
13. Prices in Poland were as follows:

1 kg. pork	36 zl.
1 kg. butter	40 50 zl.
1 kg. sugar	15 zl.

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1 kg. bread	8 zl.
1 kg. potatoes	5 zl.
1 kg. salami	28-50 zl. according to quality
1 kg. lard	40 zl.
1 kg. flour	608 zl.
1 liter pure alcohol	30 zl.
1 egg	1.40-1.80 zl.
Average meal in restaurant	7-9 zl.
Boots	400 zl.
Better quality ready-made suit	1,500 zl.
Men's underwear	20 zl.
Shirt	from 100-200 zl.

14. At present, Czech sailors do not buy anything in Poland, since things are much cheaper in Czechoslovakia. On the contrary they often sell their boots in Poland when they run out of money. Czech crews are allowed to buy things in Szczecin, in the purchasing center for Soviet sailors. The merchandise is 50% cheaper here than in other Polish stores. The currency used in this shop is the rouble, but the Czechs could pay in zloty.
15. In Poland, the Czech crews must wear the CSPLO uniform. A special permit is required to go into Szczecin, issued by the so-called CSPLO-Szczecin Agency, on Sacztoua Street in the former customs house. This agency supervises the loading and unloading of cargoes. There is another Czechoslovak agency on the Ewa peninsula, the Metran International Shipping Company, whose manager in Szczecin is Ing. Oprchalsky, age 35, tall. Czech crews have leave only in the winter season, when there is no sailing.
16. The following personnel compose the management staff of the Oder Branch in Kozle:
- Manger of the Oder Branch in Kozle is Josef Arabas, 35, small, stout; he comes from Bohumin, and his wife, daughter of a wholesale merchant, lives there. In spite of his non-working-class origin, Arabas is a works' manager, an able administrative worker, but does not understand shipping. There is a rumor that he will be transferred to the Ministry of Transport like his predecessor Sodek (fnu), who was transferred in 1953.
 - The cadre official of the Oder Branch in Kozle is Leonard Ryska, 40, former employee of a Moravian power station. He is tall and has blond hair.
 - Another official is Frantisek Tobicek, 35, from Ostrava. He is of medium build and is rather thin. He is not a Party member. He was originally head of the wages department.
 - Julie Krskova, 30, stout, large bust. A Communist, transferred from Prague.
 - Inspector of Oder shipping: Kremen(fnu), 60, an old river hand and formerly captain on the ODER RESSL. He is not a Communist.
 - Lubomir Sykora, 24, works manzger and president of the works council; an industrial worker, he was first on ships and then went into the office; very able and popular with the men; Communist on paper only.
 - Jan Janirek, 33, ships' logbooks keeper; tall, black hair; from Katerinice. industrial worker, originally apprenticed as a locksmith; able; Communist on paper only.
 - Maros, (fnu), 30; wages and work official; Communist, did not take part in politics.

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- i. Names of some of the crew members:
 Nyc, Josef, 28; Czech, Communist, a lieutenant in the army. Mate.
 Krivy, Stefan, 32; Slovak, Communist on paper only. Mate.
 Zitny, Karol, 18; Slovak; non-Communist.
 Karola, Josef, 33; from the Valasko area; not a Communist.
 Nemecek (fnu), 18; Moravian, non-Communist. Mechanic.
 Pazdiera, Hugo, 18; Polish-Silesian; not a Communist.
 Blazek, fnu, 33; Communist on paper only. Mechanic.
17. The management of the CSPLO has agencies along the Oder to look after ships. The following is a list of these agencies:
- Wroclaw Agency, 250 river km. from Kozle Port. Head of the agency: Olek Harna, 35, Czech, tall; stout; second ship's officer, originally employed by some American firm; Communist. It has been said that he is to go into ocean shipping.
 - Krosno Agency (river kn. 535). Head of the agency: Josef Cempl; small; from Ostrava; not a Communist.
 - Widuchowo Agency (702 river km). Head of the agency: Josef Cizmar, Slovak, 28; a Communist on paper only. Married to a Polish German.
 - Main Agency in Szczecin: Head of the agency: Miroslav Cihlar, 28; medium build, Communist on paper only. Speaks perfect German and Polish.
 - Office worker: Klocek, (fnu), 23. He will probably go into the army. Tall, slight build, from Bohumin.
18. Czech employees of the CSPLO, Oder Branch, have a seamen's book which is valid as a passport. It is issued by the Ministry of Transport and the Ministry of Interior. Visas for Poland and East Germany are not required with the book. Each man has to hand in his identity card to the SNB at his place of residence. When his wife goes with him, the pass is good for both. A special pass is required to travel through Poland outside the Oder route, and a special permit is also needed for Szczecin. This latter is issued by the WOP (Military Border Guard). Every man received this permit. There is a forbidden zone at the point where the Oder forms the common frontier between Poland and East Germany and from Krosno (Crossen-N52-03, E 15-05) to beyond Widuchowo (Fiddichow - N53-07, E14-23). Men are not allowed to go ashore.
19. The management at Kozle Port has given instructions that there should be as little contact as possible with the Poles. Up to 1953, conditions were very bad in Szczecin. Thefts and murders of sailors were usual occurrences. When, however, several Swedish sailors disappeared, the Swedish authorities announced that the Swedish ships would not come to Szczecin until order was restored.
20. The Polish inhabitants of Szczecin and people in Poland generally are very poorly dressed and they ask foreigners to sell them clothes and boots. There is a beggar on almost every corner in Szczecin. Prostitution has reached such proportions in Szczecin that the police is practically powerless. Sailors are forbidden to associate with Polish girls. During the winter season 1953-54, most of the sailors in Szczecin were infected with venereal disease. In 1953, some sailors and officers were murdered in Szczecin and their flesh made into salami. In summer 1953, the gang responsible for this was discovered and all were hanged.

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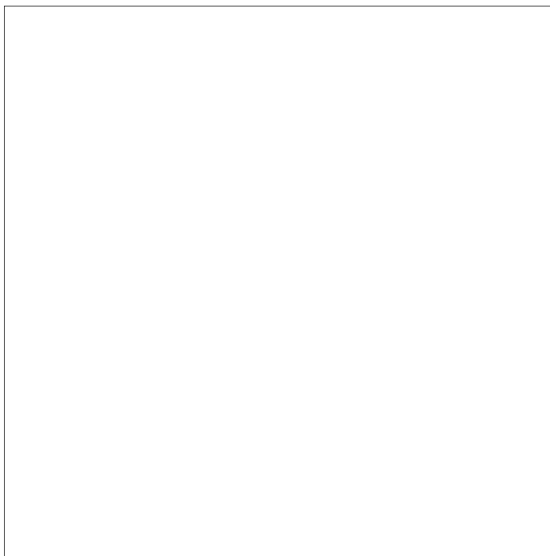
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21. Ships from all countries are usually at anchor in Szczecin and foreigners with permits move freely about the town. Soviet sailors, however, are seen very rarely.
22. Czechoslovak bargemen live in their boats in the river harbor Regalica, and go into town for amusement, since they mess for themselves. In Szczecin they usually visit the Marysenka Inn, on Wojska Polskego Street, not far from the station, and also the dance hall Orbis, the ^Maly Teatr (Little Theater), the Dom Towarowy (the former trading house, in which there is now a cafe) and the Liga Morska (Maritime League).



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