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LOWER SILESIA FACTORY OF NICOTINE PREPARATIONS

Abstract: The state-owned enterprise under the name of Lower Silesian Factory of Nicotine Preparations (Dolnośląska Wytwórnia Preparatów Nikotynowych; DWPN) with its registered office first in Szalejów Dolny and then in Góra Śląska existed in the years 1952–1958. It produced, above all, nicotine sulphate used by farmers for plant protection (primarily to combat extremely widespread aphids). The plant was managed by the Polish tobacco industry, which supplied the raw material in the form of tobacco waste and waste from tobacco plants. The article first presents the post-war demand of Polish agriculture for nicotine preparations and the plans of the tobacco industry to concentrate their production in one place. Initially, nicotine preparations were manufactured in plants in Szalejów Dolny, Góra Śląska and Kraków-Czyżyny. Finally, under the auspices of the tobacco industry, the DWPN company was established, which produced nicotine preparations for the entire Polish agriculture. DWPN produced approximately 40 tons of nicotine sulphate annually. The plant employed an average of 60–70 employees. Economic reasons and a reduction in the demand for nicotine sulphate resulting from the appearance of cheaper and equally effective insecticides on the market made it necessary to liquidate the plant. The company's facilities were taken over by the Provincial Union of Enterprises of State Industry in Wrocław.

Keywords: tobacco industry, Lower Silesian Nicotine Preparations Factory, Szalejów Dolny, Góra Śląska, nicotine sulphate, plant protection

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INTRODUCTION

A state-owned enterprise under the name of Lower Silesian Factory of Nicotine Preparations (Dolnośląska Wytwórnia Preparatów Nikotynowych; DWPN), first based in Szalejów Dolny and then in Góra Śląska, operated in the years 1952–1958. It mainly produced nicotine sulphate used by farmers to protect plants. The plant was managed by the Polish tobacco industry, which supplied the raw material in the form of tobacco waste and waste from tobacco plants.

After World War II, nicotine continued to play a large role in plant protection around the world. Its great advantage was relatively easy decomposition under the influence of sunlight and weather conditions. As a result of the decomposition, no poisonous compounds remained, and the nicotine practically disappeared from the sprayed object. The latter feature was not present in many insecticidal preparations, especially those containing heavy metals (AAN, CZPT, WP 1/35, ref. WP 1/35: 47). Basically, until World War II, the range of plant protection products was relatively limited. It was only in the post-war period that there was a rapid increase in the production of chemical plant protection products, which was related to the development of modern chemistry. As a result, a separate branch of the chemical industry was created, the so-called phytopharmaceutical industry (Kozak, 1968: 45). In Poland, in the last years before the war, the consumption of chemical plant protection products did not exceed about 400 tons per year. In 1938, 770 tons of such agents were delivered to the domestic market (including 530 tons from domestic production and 240 tons from import). In the post-war period, supplies of chemical plant protection products to the Polish market steadily increased. In 1955, almost 20,000 tons of pesticides were produced in Poland (Kozak 1968: 73–74). Chemical agents have become the most effective and modern method of preventing crop yield hazards and an essential element of agricultural technology (Banaszkiewicz, 2003: 7, 89).

Nicotine preparations were used primarily to combat aphids – troublesome pests of plants and crops, widespread throughout Europe (Gromadska, 1952: 18–20). Treatments with various types of nicotine extracts against aphids were already known in the 18th century, and the first nicotine preparation (extract) for dusting plants was used at the beginning of the 20th century (1917; Goos, Goos and Szumilak, 1974: 17–18). Nicotine preparations were effective against such insects as arachnids, spider mites, thrips and some larvae and caterpillars. Particularly good re-

sults were obtained when using nicotine for spraying half of sugar beets, hops, fruit nurseries, beetroots, cabbage, onions, greenhouse plants and orchards (AAN, CZPT, ref. WP 1/35: 50; Wiliński, 1954: 25, 28, 34). Nicotine preparations were generally safe for humans, although in the 1920s and 1930s there were isolated cases of fatal poisoning while spraying plants (Szymańska, Frydrych and Bruchajzer, 2007: 121).

In the literature, there are no studies relating to this issue and the history of a unique enterprise of the tobacco industry, which was DWPN. Like many other business entities related to this industry (e.g. the Central Laboratory of the Tobacco Industry, the Department of Construction and Construction of Tobacco Industry Devices, experimental centers in Skroniów, Surhów and Kazimierza Wielka, and many others), DWPN has not been even fragmentarily studied. This publication, at least in part, tries to fill the gap concerning the history of enterprises and research institutions of the Polish tobacco industry, which for decades played an important role from the point of view of millions of consumers of tobacco products in Poland. The aim of this work is also an attempt to answer the question whether the tobacco industry in Poland has managed to use the significant part of tobacco waste from the current production of tobacco products. In addition, the history of DWPN goes beyond the tobacco industry, because the nicotine sulfate it produces went to farmers growing various crops. They can also be considered as an example of economic activation of small towns, although as we know, the entire state policy was conducive to the destruction of small industry and crafts, which largely determined the level of existence of towns (Kaliński and Landau, 2003: 247).

The text is based on archival materials collected in the Archives of Modern Records in Warsaw in the files of the Central Board of the Tobacco Industry and the Union of Tobacco Industry and in the National Archives in Krakow in the branch in Spytkowice. They have been supplemented with specialist literature concerning mainly the tobacco industry and plant protection products.

PRODUCTION OF NICOTINE PREPARATIONS IN POLAND

The demand for nicotine preparations in Poland has been gradually increasing. It should be noted that before World War II, Poland did not produce them at all. Some nicotine preparations were imported from Austria and Hungary. Pure nicotine (95–98%) and nicotine sulphate (40%), im-

ported from the latter country, were the basis for the production of concentrated nicotine preparations (with the best-known 20% Nitox) mainly by the company "Azot" from Jaworzno, which annually consumed about 300 kg of nicotine and other smaller companies (AAN, CZPT, ref. WP 1/35: 50).

At the conference "Rural industry" in 1946, the demand for nicotine preparations in Poland was set at 2 tons of pure nicotine per year. The Plant Protection Delegation of the Ministry of Agriculture estimated the demand for this product in 1947 at 10 tons of nicotine per year. For the following years, the Ministry's estimates increased from 8 to 16 tons of nicotine consumption in 1955. According to the data of the Ministry of Health, the consumption of nicotinic acid in pharmaceutical factories was about 1.5–2 tons per year. It has been calculated that the demand will be about 11 tons of pure nicotine per year or even more (AAN, CZPT, ref. WP 1/35: 47).

According to the Ministry of Agricultural and Food Industry, the demand for nicotine preparations in Poland for insecticidal purposes in agriculture was even greater during the Six-Year Plan (1950–1955). In terms of pure nicotine, it amounted to 25 tons per year, without taking into account the needs of the pharmaceutical industry. In any case, the production of nicotine preparations in Poland at the beginning of the years. The 1950s did not satisfy the market demand (AAN, CZPT, ref. WP 1/35: 18).

The manufacture of nicotine preparations initially took place almost entirely outside the tobacco industry. The Ministry of Agricultural and Food Industry wanted this entire production department to become part of the tobacco industry, because the main raw material, tobacco waste (including tobacco dust), came entirely from factories in this branch of economy (AAN, CZPT, ref. WP 1/35: 148). Tobacco dust in production halls was a big problem for all tobacco industry plants in Poland (ANKES, WWTP, ref. 25: 15). It also took up a lot of space in warehouses, and as an export product it did not work (Myśliński, 1950: 53). It was therefore urgent for the tobacco industry to quickly find ways to rationally use tobacco waste.

Tobacco dust (with different nicotine content) without any processing could be used as an insecticide, e.g. to control ground fleas. However, when mixed with lime fine, it was effective in destroying cabbage whites, a pest of vegetable gardens. In addition, farmers prepared various types of tobacco extracts from tobacco dust, but these were not always effective

enough, as it was difficult to determine the concentration of nicotine in the obtained preparation (Ginter, 1960: 40–41).

In addition, it was planned to use different varieties of strong tobacco, bred specifically for this purpose, for the production of nicotine and nicotine preparations. Appropriate research on various types of strong tobacco was conducted in Poland in the first post-war years. In this case, less importance was attached to the yield of leaves, and more to the nicotine content, because its low content in the raw material would result in too high extraction costs (Dragon, 1950: 6–7). The best results were obtained in the case of the variety Pomeranian strong tobacco, which was cultivated in the Polish lands in the Grudziądz district since the times of the Prussian partition (Bogusławski, 1966: 33). It was assumed that the average nicotine content in dried leaves of this variety should be about 3% (tobacco waste had an average nicotine content of about 1%; AAN, CZPT, ref. WP 1/35: 19). The Pomeranian strong tobacco variety was selected in 1931 by the Experimental Plant in Piadyki from the population cultivated in Pomerania before World War I (*Tytoń. Uprawa...*, 1969: 122). The previous cultivation of Pomeranian strong tobacco showed that on utility plantations in good weather conditions up to 4% nicotine could be obtained (AAN, CZPT, ref. WP 1/35: 53–54). In the USSR, citric acid was also produced from strong tobacco on an industrial scale, but it had to have appropriate parameters including a high content of citric acid itself (Skiendzielewski, 1958: 15).

The Central Board of the Tobacco Industry (CZPT) pointed out that the production of nicotine preparations was carried out very chaotically, without a prior analysis of the demand for insecticides. Hence, large stocks of individual assortments of nicotine preparations were created. One of the main reasons for low sales was the high prices of these preparations and the lack of a sufficient number of atomizers on the market. On the other hand, there was a strong demand for tobacco dust, despite the fact that its value as an insecticide was not very high compared to nicotine preparations. In addition, this dust required many treatments before it was used to spray plants. Therefore, it seemed a logical solution to reduce the number of produced assortment and focus on the production of one universal preparation, which was, for example, raw nicotine sulphate with a concentration of the latter from 20–40% (AAN, CZPT, ref. WO 1/20: 153–154; ref. WP 1/35: 117). The world markets were dominated by 40% nicotine sulphate, produced mainly in the USA (AAN, CZPT, ref. WP 1/35: 50).

The Polish tobacco industry initially intended to create a single enterprise that would produce nicotine preparations to meet the needs of agriculture throughout the country. For a long time, the tobacco industry could not decide on the choice of an appropriate place that would become the main production base for this type of activity. In connection with the above-mentioned plan to use the leaves of Pomeranian strong tobacco, it was planned to establish a plant near its cultivation areas, in particular in the regions of Kwidzyn, Malbork and Grudziądz (AAN, CZPT, ref. WP 1/35: 20). Cultivation of Pomeranian strong tobacco gained more and more supporters in these areas, which was facilitated by the possibility of achieving high yields and the resulting increase in the profitability of its cultivation (Szeles, 1957: 67). Over time, the cultivation of strong tobacco in Poland was concentrated only in the north of the country, in the Grudziądz and Mazury districts, as the crops there gave the best results (Bujanowski, 1962: 37). It should also be emphasized that good cultivation results were also the result of long-standing plantation traditions in the cultivation of a given variety (Bujanowski K. 1970: 52).

Finally, the Polish Tobacco Monopoly (PMT) proposed to locate the nicotine factory in the Tobacco Cultivation Plant in Grudziądz, which was located on an area of about 10 hectares, which allowed for a convenient location of the production building; it was also possible to use the entire infrastructure of the existing enterprise (boiler room, workshops, devices, sewage system, gas, etc.). It was also pointed out that it was easier than elsewhere to find engineering, technical and blue-collar workers who were to be attracted to a large city (AAN, CZPT, ref. WP 1/35: 20). It was planned that a plant producing about 25 tons of nicotine preparations per year, converted into pure nicotine, would be built by 1952 at the latest (AAN, CZPT, ref. WP 1/35: 45).

The plans to build a large nicotine factory in Grudziądz could not be finally implemented. Most of the capital expenditures in the Polish tobacco industry came from state funds, and the tobacco industry had other priorities than the new factory of nicotine preparations (Kaliński, 1996: 63). In the first place, the focus was on increasing the production capacity and improving the quality of the produced assortment, which involved, among others, with large financial outlays on modern machinery and equipment (Wróbel, 1950: 41–42; 'Udział PMT...', 1950: 27). The largest and most important investment project of the tobacco industry in the 1950s was the Cigarette Factory "Czyżyny" in Kraków-Czyżyny, which later became

part of a large tobacco conglomerate under the name Tobacco Industry Plants in Kraków – a leader among cigarette manufacturers in Poland (Synowiec, 2015).

LOWER SILESIAN FACTORY OF NICOTINE PREPARATIONS IN SZALEJÓW DOLNY

In 1951, the production of nicotine preparations in Poland took place in a former sugar factory in Szalejów Dolny (tobacco extract with a nicotine content of 1.7%) and in a factory in Góra Śląska (nicotine sulphate, nicotian and extra nicotine were produced there). Trace amounts of tobacco extract (0.4 tons per month) were also produced (until the end of 1951) at the Krakow Industrial Tobacco Factory (KWTP) in Krakow-Czyżyny (AAN, ZPT, WO 1/20: 148–149). Only the latter production center was subject to the tobacco industry at that time.

Initially, high hopes were placed on the production of tobacco extract launched at the end of 1950 (first in a trial form) in Szalejów Dolny, for which the equipment of the former sugar factory was used. Better results (qualitative and quantitative) were quickly obtained than in the KWTP, which significantly reduced production costs and allowed the country's needs for insecticides to be met quickly. Starting production on a larger scale would also make it possible to empty warehouses overloaded with tobacco waste in tobacco industry plants (AAN, CZPT, ref. WP 1/35: 56, 113–115). Therefore in accordance with the order of the Minister of Agricultural and Food Industry of February 23, 1951, the Central Board of the Sugar Industry was to organize production, with the technical management of the undertaking remaining in the hands of the tobacco authorities (AAN, CZPT, ref. WP 1/35: 60–62).

At the end of 1951, the best solution was to maintain the production of tobacco extract in Szalejów Dolny, in order to meet the needs of the market for this product. It was also considered to concentrate the entire production in the sugar factory in Szalejów Dolny after appropriate modifications of the equipment and possible use of parts of machines from Góra Śląska. The good condition of technical equipment, the ability to quickly intensify production without large investment outlays and quite spacious production rooms were indicated as a major advantage of Szalejów Dolny. On the other hand, the big disadvantages of the plant in Szalejów Dolny

were its location at a great distance from tobacco companies and the lack of a railway siding (AAN, CZPT, WO 1/20: 147).

On November 12, 1951, by order of the Minister of Agricultural and Food Industry, a state-owned enterprise was established under the name of Lower Silesian Factory of Nicotine Preparations with its seat in Szalejów Dolny. The object of its operation was to be the production of nicotine preparations. The oversight over the plant was to be exercised by the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy and the Central Board of the Tobacco Industry. The production activity was to be carried out in the sugar factory in Szalejów Dolny, which had previously been part of the Sugar Factory "Łagiewniki" in Łagiewniki, and in the plant in Góra Śląska at 74 Żymierska street (later - 47 Marchlewskiego street), which was part of the enterprise Kutno Pharmaceutical Works (KZF) in Kutno (AAN, CZPT, ref. WO 1/20: 151-152).

According to the guidelines of the Ministry of Agricultural and Food Industry, the company was to start operating on January 1, 1952 (AAN, CZPT, ref. WO 1/20: Letter of W. Klimaszewski, acting Deputy Director of the Department of Organization, Employment and Wages of the Ministry of Agricultural and Food Industry, to CZPT in Warsaw, OIBO7-16960, January 2, 1952, no card number). The case of the takeover of plants by the tobacco industry was the subject of a special stakeholder conference, during which many practical issues were clarified (AAN, CZPT, WO 1/20: 159-160). The duties of the director of DWPN in Szalejów Dolny were entrusted by the CZPT to Piotr Witkowski - director of the former Sugar Plant in Szalejów, which at that time was subordinated to the Opolskie Union of the Sugar Industry in Opole (AAN, CZPT, ref. WO 1/20: 167). He began his new duties on January 19, 1952, when the company "Sugar Plant Szalejów Dolny" CZPT was officially transferred. The tobacco industry took over the facility free of charge (AAN, CZPT, ref. WO 1/20: 172-174). On February 19, 1952, the Central Board of the Sugar Industry officially handed over supervision over the CZPT unit (AAN, CZPT, ref. WP 1/35: 124).

The second component of DWPN was to be a company in Góra Śląska. The official takeover of the building by the CZPT, which was then a local branch of the KZF, took place on January 24, 1952 (AAN, CZPT, ref. WO 1/20: 190-193). However, the tobacco industry authorities were not satisfied with the way the unit was handed over to them. The representative of CZPT, who acted as an intermediary in both transfers, Władysław Strenger, emphasized the failure of the parties to prepare appropriate

statements of assets, lack of a plan, difficulties in financing during the transformation period, lack of a transparent organizational structure, personnel difficulties and others (AAN, CZPT, ref. WO 1/20: 169, 194). The tobacco industry was aware of the difficulties associated with the efficient operation of the new facility. It was decided to immediately regulate the most important issues relating to the daily proper functioning of the plant (AAN, CZPT, ref. WO 1/20: 195).

From the beginning of its operation, the plant had to face numerous difficulties. First of all, the quality of the final product obtained in the Szalejów branch raised objections. Already at the beginning of 1952, the cessation of production there was real. The tobacco extract produced by the local plant from tobacco waste contained from 1.7 to 1.8% of the active ingredient nicotine, the rest, i.e. over 98%, was water and water-soluble tobacco components. The extract was a thick liquid that had to be dissolved, which was a considerable hassle for buyers and required some skill. Before using the preparation, an ingredient reducing surface tension, i.e. soap, had to be added. All this meant that farmers were reluctant to buy the extract produced in Szalejów, the more so that they could buy high-percentage (20%) nicotine sulphate produced in Góra Śląska. About 800 tons of extract were produced in Szalejów in 1951 (AAN, CZPT, WO 1/20: 198). Tobacco extract was also not considered as an export material, as preparations with a high concentration of nicotine, such as nicotine sulphate (AAN, CZPT, WP 1/35: 122). Serious difficulties were also encountered in finding appropriate cans on the market in which the obtained product was placed (AAN, CZPT, WP 1/35: 128).

After strenuous efforts, only about 400 tons of the extract were distributed in the field. Distribution facilities in the field had significant stocks of nicotine preparations for which they could not find buyers. The tobacco authorities came to the conclusion that further production of nicotine extract in Szalejów was not advisable, especially since the market demand for nicotine insecticidal preparations could be successfully covered by the plant in Góra Śląska. Therefore, an application was submitted to the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy for the liquidation of the plant in Szalejów and the transfer of the seat and management board of DWPN to Góra Śląska (AAN, CZPT, WO 1/20: 198).

The transfer of the management board of the plant was subject to consultations between the management of CZPT and the management of DWPN. In the last quarter of 1952, the latter was to organize a successive transfer of the board from Szalejów to Góra Śląska. For this purpose,

it was necessary to recruit competent financial and accounting employees to the plant in Góra Śląska as soon as possible, who were to create the nucleus of the future financial and accounting unit of the reorganized enterprise. Immediately after that, appropriate accounting employees from Szalejów had to be delegated from Szalejów to Góra Śląska, so that by the end of 1952 they would familiarize the newcomers with the functioning of the plant (AAN, CZPT, WO 1/20: 204–205). Director of DWPN Piotr Witkowski immediately appointed appropriate accounting staff and sent them to Góra Śląska (AAN, CZPT, WO 1/20: 206). Also in connection with the liquidation of the enterprise in Szalejów, the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy obliged CZPT to start giving notice to all employees of this plant (AAN, CZPT, WO 1/20: 201).

The Department of Organization, Employment and Wages of the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy submitted an appropriate application to the State Economic Planning Commission (PKPG) for permission to carry out the reorganization (AAN, CZPT, WO 1/20: 200). The Ministry, sharing the arguments of the tobacco industry regarding the need to liquidate the plant in Szalejów Dolny, emphasized that this matter must be agreed in advance with the local authorities (AAN, CZPT, WO 1/20: 199).

CZPT representatives – Eng. Jan Zagitz and Władysław Strenger, MA, went on a business trip to Wrocław to personally discuss the issue of liquidation of the plant with the Provincial Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party and the Provincial Commission for Economic Planning (WKPG) of the Presidium of the WRN. The Economic Committee of the Provincial Committee of the Polish United Worker's Party from Wrocław did not raise any objections to the liquidation of the plant in Szalejów Dolny, but emphasized the need to agree with the Provincial Committee of the Party on the staffing of the new management board of DWPN in Góra Śląska (AAN, CZPT, WO 1/20: 207). Also the Wrocław WKPG saw no objections to the liquidation of the plant (AAN, CZPT, WO 1/20: 210).

When the matter of ending the industrial activity of the tobacco industry in Szalejów Dolny began to take more and more real shapes, various proposals appeared regarding the further use of the buildings and equipment of the liquidated plant. Continuing to run a business in Szalejów Dolny was in the interest of employees and local authorities. WKPG from Wrocław has been probing the possibility of taking over the facility by another key industry unit from the very beginning. The willingness to take over the site of the plant was reported, for example, by Chemical Labor Cooperative "Syntetyka" from Kłodzko (AAN, CZPT, WO 1/20: 210).

Pursuant to the ordinance No. 44 of the Minister of Agricultural and Food Industry of January 29, 1953, the buildings of the former sugar factory in Szalejów Dolny (later DWPN) were to be transferred on February 1, 1953 to the above-mentioned "Syntetyka" Cooperative. The costs of this operation were to be borne by the acquiring party (AAN, ZPT, WO 1/5: 226, 266). It was also supposed to employ employees of the liquidated DWTP in Szalejów Dolny, which at that time had 16 employees (AAN, ZPT, WO 1/5: 258). In addition, it was necessary to agree with the cooperative which devices, movables and tools could be transported to Góra Śląska and used in the tobacco industry (AAN, ZPT, WO 1/5: 229–230). Appropriate powers of attorney to transfer the facility along with the devices were obtained from the management of CZPT acting director of DWPN in Góra Śląska Waclaw Borzym and chief accountant Franciszek Mikula (AAN, ZPT, WO 1/5: 251). The handover of the plant to the manager of the "Syntetyka" cooperative in Kłodzko, Bronisław Czajkowski, and the chief accountant of the company, Mieczysław Prottung, took place on February 27, 1953 (AAN, CZPT, WO 1/20: 235–238, 263, 265).

The new entity was also provided with tobacco extract, previously produced in Szalejów Dolny, in the amount of approximately 350 tones (AAN, CZPT, WO 1/20: 246). It was to be sent gradually to recipients, in accordance with the orders received from the Fertilizer Sales Office in Gliwice or the Tobacco Products Headquarters in Warsaw. The costs of preparation for shipment, loading and transport were covered by DWPT z Góra Śląska (AAN, CZPT, no. WO 1/20, sheet 245). The plant in Szalejów Dolny had already experienced great transport difficulties. It had his own Ford Canada car, but its technical condition was highly unsatisfactory despite the constant repairs made to it; then it was transferred to Góra Śląska (AAN, CZPT, WO 1/20: 224). Any remaining production, in the absence of orders, was to be packed and left on the premises of the liquidated plant in Szalejów Dolny at the disposal of CZPT until the end of 1953 (AAN, CZPT, WO 1/20: 247).

LOWER SILESIA FACTORY OF NICOTINE PREPARATIONS IN GÓRA ŚLĄSKA

By the decision of the Minister of Agricultural and Food Industry of October 2, 1952, the seat of the state-owned enterprise DWPN was moved on January 1, 1953 from Szalejów Dolny to Góra Śląska at 47 Żymierskiego

street (AAN, CZPT, WO 1/20: 211). The new director of the plant was Waław Borzym, nominated for this position by a decree of CZPT of December 10, 1952. He took over the plant in Góra Śląska on December 31, 1952 (AAN, CZPT, WO 1/20: 218–219).

At the beginning of the 1950s, Góra Śląska was a small town with numerous offices and institutions. During the war, many houses were destroyed there, the survivors lived in very difficult conditions. The town was relatively well industrialized; there were: a mill, a sugar factory, a sawmill and an insecticide factory, i.e. the future headquarters of DWPN. The latter was located in a swampy area, about 1.5 ha, located near the city center between the municipal gasworks and the grain mill; it also had its own railway siding. On the third side there were meadows and a nearby railway track, and the fourth part was adjacent to Żymierskiego street.

A 100-metre long narrow-gauge railway track connecting the boiler house, diffusion plant and the factory building with the warehouse was laid on the premises of the plant. The buildings of the factory were a series of objects built randomly. The newest was a reinforced concrete warehouse with a capacity of 1012 m³, built in 1948–1950. The main brick building housed production departments, a boiler room, offices and flats, where 6 people were registered in 1950 (AAN, CZPT, WP 1/35: 79–80).

Before World War II, there was a dairy in the plant in Góra Śląska (for more on the history of the Góra dairy, see Rasper, 2018). During World War II, the facility in Góra Śląska was a German chemical and pharmaceutical company “Chemische Fabrik Tempelhof Preuss u. Temler”, which produced the expectorant “Castanit”. The plant was not damaged during the war. After the unit was taken over by the Polish authorities after the war, the Union of Organic and Pharmaceutical Industry launched production based on the raw material left by the occupiers. In the years 1947–1948 the plant was closed (AAN, CZPT, WT 1/55, Paszport: 61). Officially, the factory was taken over by the Polish state on the basis of the decision of the Minister of Industry and Trade of February 10, 1949 (M.P. 1949, No. 15, item 208).

The plant was reopened in 1948, but the production of nicotine preparations in Góra Śląska started in 1949. However, the tobacco industry initially believed that there were no suitable conditions for the expansion and for Góra Śląska to play the role of the main producer of such substances. In 1951, the management of CZPT raised serious reservations about the local production quality, the level of technological advancement of the equipment, as well as occupational health and safety. According to the direc-

tor of CZPT, Leon Kozak, the takeover of the plant in Góra Śląska by the tobacco industry did not solve the problem of the production of nicotine preparations (AAN, CZPT, WO 1/20: 147). Particular attention was paid to the intricate and irrational production scheme without constant and systematic chemical control. Transport devices were also mostly manual, and in many cases mechanization was considered impossible. According to tobacco industry specialists, the plant should have been treated more as an experimental workshop than as the main factory of nicotine preparations in Poland, which would fulfill its task if thorough technical control was introduced at all stages of production. It was supposed to provide data needed to rationally design and launch a new factory (AAN, CZPT, WP 1/35: 80–81).

Ultimately, as already mentioned, a new factory was not built, and the production of nicotine preparations was concentrated in Góra Śląska, where a number of steps were also taken to improve production. Among others a factory laboratory with the head of technical control began to operate there (AAN, CZPT, WT 1/55, Passport...: 59). The plant produced about 40 tons of nicotine sulphate annually (AAN, CZPT, WT 1/55, Passport: 6; Aktualizacja: 4). Unfortunately, many production machines and workshop equipment, such as a grinder, lathe or drill were already heavily worn (often over 50 or 60%) and this certainly did not facilitate production work or carrying out the necessary conservation work (AAN, CZPT, WT 1/55, Passport: 41–56). Investment outlays were small, in 1953 they amounted to PLN 10,542, and in the following year PLN 14,300 (for the modernization of the plant's buildings) (AAN, CZPT, WT 1/55, Aktualizacja: 13).

Throughout the entire period of operation, the number of employees at DWPN in Góra Śląska remained at a relatively constant level. Employees of DWPN in Góra Śląska are presented in Table 1.

In 1953, the number of administrative and technical employees increased significantly, which was related to the transfer of the seat of the plant and the liquidation of the facility in Szalejów Dolny. Running the excessively extensive office administration in the Polish People's Republic plants required the recruitment of new forces, which is why there are so many employees in this group.

Women constituted a small part of all employees in the factory in Góra. This phenomenon is shown in Table 2.

The number of women admitted to the plant in 1953 increased significantly, but the number of female workers increased by only 1 person,

Table 1. Employees of the industrial group employed at DWPN in Góra Śląska in the years 1952–1955

Employees	Year			
	1952	1953	1954	1955
workers	40	43	40	39
engineering and technical	4	4	5	5
administration and office staff	6	14	16	14
service staff	2	3	3	3
industrial guard	4	8	7	4
total	56	72	71	65

Source: AAN, CZPT, WT 1/55, Aktualizacja: 10.

Table 2. Women employed at DWPN in Góra Śląska in 1952–1955

Specification	Year			
	1952	1953	1954	1955
number of employed women	7	15	13	10
including – workers	4	5	5	4

Source: AAN, CZPT, WT 1/55, Aktualizacja: 10.

which means that women increased the number of administrative and office employees of the plant. Women constituted from 12.5% of all plant employees in 1952 to almost 21% (in 1953); in subsequent years, these values were 18% and 15%, respectively. On the other hand, female workers accounted for 10.0% (1952), 11.6% (1953), 12.5% (1954) and 10.3% (1955) in the following years, so their representation was not large.

The average wages in DWPN in Góra Śląska were lower than the average monthly wages of employees of the industrial group in the socialized industry in Poland, which, for example, in 1955 amounted to PLN 1,186 gross per month. In the same year, in Góra Śląska, the average monthly salary was PLN 993. In the case of the largest group of workers, those employed at DWPN also earned less (PLN 942) than the national

average – PLN 1,155 (in 1955) (*Rocznik...*, 1962: 122). The average monthly wages of employees of the industrial group employed at DWPN in Góra Śląska in the years 1952–1955 are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Average monthly wages of employees of the industrial group employed at DWPN in Góra Śląska in the years 1952–1955

Employees	Average wages in years			
	1952	1953	1954	1955
workers	967	832	832	942
engineering and technical	1681	1585	1288	1441
administration and office staff	1472	1138	1119	1133
service staff	841	666	633	588
industrial guard	762	687	820	735
total	1124	905	919	993

Source: AAN, CZPT, WT 1/55, Aktualizacja: 10.

The wages of the employees of the industrial group employed in DWPN were similar to the wages of the entire tobacco industry in Poland, which in 1956 amounted to PLN 1,006 per employee per month, with an industrial group worker earning an average of PLN 948, and an engineering and technical worker – PLN 1,677. Thus, the latter earn in Góra Śląska clearly below the latter average (for more see: Synowiec, 2014).

THE METHOD OF OBTAINING 20% NICOTINE SULPHATE AT DWPN IN GÓRA ŚLĄSKA

The main factory preparation produced in DWPN in Góra Śląska was 20% nicotine sulphate. The raw material for processing, i.e. tobacco waste (seeds, tails, tobacco veins) was delivered to DWPN in Góra Śląska from tobacco companies, i.e. plants producing tobacco products (cigarettes, cigars, etc.) and industrial tobacco in bags or bales. This raw material was stored in a local warehouse. Then it was transported from the warehouse to the production hall by a narrow-gauge railway. From the wagons of the

railway, the raw material was transported by means of a crane and poured directly into the upper manholes of the diffusion battery. In Góra Śląska, a sugar-type diffusion battery with heaters operated. It was an obsolete model from 1908 with a side discharge, 60% worn out (AAN, CZPT, WT 1/55, Passport: 45). The raw material was not additionally crushed, only the appropriate waste assortments were mixed in order to more freely circulate the diffusion juice. In order to avoid clogging of the thin tubes of the heaters with tobacco waste, the bottoms of the diffuser sieves were lined with a few-centimeter layer of straw, on which thicker assortments were placed, and on top of them small seedlings.

Water or, if the battery was already in operation, the extract from the previous diffuser was pumped into the stock-filled diffuser until the extract appeared in the vent cock. The diffusion battery, in which the tobacco waste was extracted, consisted of 14 sugar-type diffusers with a capacity of 4500 l each. Extraction took place in 12 of them with progressively weaker extract, and finally supplemented with fresh water. The thirteenth diffuser was being unloaded and the fourteenth was loaded with new raw material. Juice filling after filling the diffuser with raw material was done from the bottom to the top of the diffuser in order to displace the air and evenly moisten the raw material. In the remaining diffusers and during extraction of the extract for further processing, it flowed from the top to the bottom of the diffuser. The extract was a cloudy brown liquid. The time of the extraction itself was 36 hours. Its efficiency converted into nicotine contained in the raw material ranged from 65 to 75%. The extraction waste used as agricultural fertilizer contained 25–35% of the original nicotine content. These wastes were discharged from the diffusers through the lower manholes after the weak extract contained in the diffuser was discharged into the tank. The waste was transported by cart and stored on heaps.

After two hours, the extract was pumped slowly from the freshly loaded diffuser to the alkalizer equipped with a stirrer. After measuring 1000 l of the extract, 20 l of milk of lime was pumped to the alkalizer and after 30 minutes the hydrated juice was pumped to a special filtration device called mud press. In Góra Śląska, sugar type "Kroger" pressure filters were installed, but they were already used in 55% (AAN, CZPT, WT 1/55, Passport: 45). Its task was to strain the precipitate in the form of a thick slurry. The extract strained in this way was pumped to a settling tank, from where it was taken to the so-called evaporator. The copper evaporator was lined with lead and served to evaporate the

water and to concentrate the nicotine (AAN, CZPT, WT 1/55, Passport: 44). The extract obtained from the clarifier was brown in color with a nicotine content of 0.6%. Nicotine was distilled with steam and ammonia, displaced by calcium hydroxide. The aqueous nicotine solution obtained from the distillation was pumped into a wooden vat, where it was acidified with technical sulfuric acid to an acidity corresponding to a solution of 0.005 sodium hydroxide in the presence of methyl red (azo dye). The solution was then concentrated in a vacuum evaporator to give an aqueous solution of approximately 20% nicotine sulfate as a dark cherry brown liquid. The ammonium sulphate crystals released during the process were separated in a special centrifuge (AAN, CZPT, WT 1/55, Passport: 63-64; Kutno: 13). Description of the method of obtaining nicotan and nicotan extra is also available (AAN, CZPT, WT 1/55, Kutno: 6, 9).

As a finished product, nicotine sulphate could be used to control plant pests with the addition of gray soap. It was also a semi-finished product for further processing into nicotine and nicotine preparations (nicotane, extra nicotane). The latter were eventually discontinued in the plant in Góra Śląska, although market stocks made it possible to purchase them long later (Kochman and Węgorek, 1955: 25).

LIQUIDATION OF THE LOWER SILESIA NICOTINE PREPARATIONS FACTORY IN GÓRA ŚLĄSKA

The sale of nicotine sulfate was becoming more and more difficult. Its relatively high price and the appearance of many cheaper preparations on the market were pointed out, not inferior to nicotine sulphate in combating aphids and other pests. Therefore, buyers chose cheaper insecticides. In addition, consultations were carried out among the scientific community, which showed that the demand for nicotine sulphate will be less and less (AAN, ZPT, WO 1/5: Lebkichler b; Ginter, 1960: 123-136). The increasingly better use of raw tobacco for the production of tobacco products was also unfavorable for DWPN; there was a shortage of raw material for the production of nicotine preparations on the market. There were also economic reasons for the liquidation of the plant. The plant was a loss-making enterprise, in 1958 the losses reached PLN 249,000. zloty. In the same year, the plant employed only 45 employees, including 10 white-collar

workers. The production of sulphate also decreased and in the same year amounted to 29.5 tons (production plans for the first half of 1959 amounted to 12.9 tons; AAN, ZPT, WO 1/5: Róžański d).

In December 1958, the main recipient of the product, i.e. Fertilizer Sales Office from Gliwice (subordinate to the Union of Chemical Synthesis Industry), informed the plant to stop production, as it would only accept about 5–7 tons more, which was to be produced in the first quarter of 1959 (AAN, ZPT, WO 1/5: Chamski; Lebkichler a). Therefore, the management of the Lower Silesian Factory of Nicotine Preparations in Góra Śląska appealed to the central tobacco authorities to stop production on April 1, 1959, to which CZPT agreed (AAN, ZPT, WO 1/5: Lebkichler b).

The party authorities in Góra Śląska shared the arguments regarding the liquidation of the plant and were in favor of transferring the plant's facilities to another organizational unit, but with the employment of employees, because they did not see the possibility of finding additional jobs in the city (AAN, ZPT, WO 1/5: Latacz a). The chairman of the Presidium of the Poviát National Council in Góra Śląska, Bronisław Szczygieł, directly spoke about the great problems with the employment of employees (mainly women) in the city and powiat of Góra Śląska, and therefore recommended great caution in closing the plant quickly. Finally, the Presidium of PRN in Góra Śląska appealed to the tobacco authorities to continue the production of sulphate in the second quarter of 1959. It was emphasized that before liquidation of the unit, the concept of changing the production profile and maintaining the continuity of employment should be prepared in advance. The district committee of the Polish United Workers' Party in Góra Śląska also intervened to ensure uninterrupted employment for the employees (AAN, ZPT, WO 1/5: Latacz b; Róžański a), suggesting that during the transformation of the plant, some employees could be temporarily delegated to other local plants (AAN, ZPT, WO 1/5: Domagała).

However, local difficulties in terms of employment and the inability to solve the problem, i.e. finding new jobs for employees of the liquidated facility, caused Feliks Pisula, the Minister of Food Industry and Purchasing, to agree to the gradual redundancies of DWPN employees at the end of 1959. At the same time, he obliged the director of the Union of Tobacco Industry (ZPT) Marian Dębogórski for any assistance to employees in looking for a new job (AAN, ZPT, WO 1/5: Pisula b).

On the other hand, the issue of continuing production in the second quarter of 1959 was made conditional by the tobacco authorities on the possibility of its sale (AAN, ZPT, WO 1/5: Róžański a). Gliwice's Fertilizer

Sales Office agreed to continue production at the plant and accept an additional 5 tons of nicotine sulphate, which was to be temporarily stored in the mountain plant and gradually shipped to customers (AAN, ZPT, WO 1/5: Chamski; Lebkichler c). On the other hand, the liquidation of DWPN was to take place on July 1, 1959, about which the tobacco authorities informed the Presidium of the Provincial National Council in Wrocław, presenting all the related difficulties. According to ZPT, the entire plant should be taken over by the National Council in Góra Śląska (AAN, ZPT, WO 1/5: Róžański b).

Also, the Ministry of Food Industry and Purchase made efforts to transfer the facility to a new entity. However, the ministry did not see the possibility of establishing a different production profile on its own in the premises of the plant. As no one willing to take over the facility of the plant came forward, the above ministry also sent a letter to the Presidium of the Provincial National Council in Wrocław asking for interest in the case and possibly indicating to whom the facility should be transferred so that the local industry could continue to use it (AAN, ZPT, WO 1/5: Klimaszewski).

ZPT also made efforts to find an organizational unit willing to take over the liquidated plant. At the same time, DWPN in Góra Śląska proposed Wrocław Cigarette Factory (WWP) in Wrocław as the liquidator (AAN, ZPT, WO 1/5: Róžański d). Therefore, the director of the facility in Góra Śląska, Waclaw Borzym, asked ZPT in Warsaw to speed up the collection of the plant's assets by the liquidator in Wrocław, who explained that he did not have any order in this matter yet (AAN, ZPT, WO 1/5: Borzym). The central tobacco authorities sent the interested parties the relevant "Instruction on the takeover of the property of Lower Silesian Factory of Nicotine Preparations", which precisely specified all stages of this process (AAN, ZPT, WO 1/5, Instrukcja: 1-4).

Pursuant to Order No. 399 of the Minister of Food Industry and Purchase of June 6, 1959, DWPN in Góra Śląska was incorporated into WWP in Wrocław on June 30, 1959, which also took over the assets of the former (according to the balance sheet as of June 30, 1959; AAN, ZPT, WO 1/5, Zarządzenie). At the same time, Minister F. Pisula agreed to the liquidation of the DWPN, which is now part of the WWP (AAN, ZPT, WO 1/5: Pisula a).

The Wrocław plant also took over the unresolved problem of new jobs for employees of the liquidated plant. The management of the ZPT proposed to systematically extend the period of notice for them, but it could

not be longer than the end of 1959. ZPT even organized a special fund for the WWP to cover the financial consequences of extended periods of notice. At the same time, the tobacco authorities pointed out to the Wrocław factory that the rule should be adopted that an employee who received a job offer on terms similar to those previously rejected and rejected it, after a period of statutory notice, should stop paying wages and not extend employment (AAN, ZPT, WO 1/5: Zabielska). It is worth emphasizing the full employment policy implemented in Poland since the end of the war. Unemployment officially did not exist, in the communist state everyone was supposed to work (Jarosz-Nojszewska, 2018: 108). Hidden unemployment, however, existed throughout the period of the People's Republic of Poland. Although official statistics of the unemployed were not kept, according to Dariusz Jarosz's estimates, in 1956 women accounted for 70 to 80% of job seekers (Jarosz, 2000: 122).

The question of what to do with the assets of the liquidated plant and the issue of further business activity in the former DWPN area remained topical. The only bidder who showed interest in taking over part of DWPN's real estate with a 1,000-ton warehouse was Regional Grain Plants in Góra Śląska, which wanted to store grain there. Grain plants did not agree to take over other buildings in the area of DWPN (AAN, ZPT, WO 1/5: Jurkiewicz; Leidl). This solution did not satisfy the tobacco authorities, which refused to hand over the warehouse being part of the DWPN facility. This answer is not surprising given the plan to use the entire facility for production purposes (AAN, ZPT, WO 1/5: Rózański c).

The next entity that showed interest this time in the entire facility after the former nicotine sulphur plant in Góra Śląska and the continuation of business activity in its area was the Provincial Association of State Enterprises of Local Industry (WZPPPT) in Wrocław. It applied to the Presidium of the PRN in Góra Śląska through the WRN in Wrocław with a request to launch a tannery for fur skins from Mongolia. It was the first to consent to such activity. A positive opinion was also issued by the Voivodeship Sanitary and Epidemiological Station (AAN, ZPT, WO 1/5: Pismo PRN).

Wrocław's WZPPPT wanted to implement the contract signed with Mongolia by the Small Manufacturing Committee. The Small Manufacturing Committee was established in 1958 and operated by the Council of Ministers. Its task was to ensure the proper development of various departments of small production and services, with particular emphasis on state-owned field industry, cooperatives, crafts, private, folk and

household industry and cottage industry (Dz.U. 1958, No. 45, item 225). For this purpose, it needed its own leather tannery, as state and cooperative tanneries could not provide sufficient assistance. That is why the project of launching an own clothing, glove and fur leather tannery and a furrier's factory in Góra Śląska was created. It was also planned to launch a warehouse for raw hides imported from Mongolia, which until now had been stored for a fee in the warehouse of the Raw Leather Headquarters. It was planned to employ about 100 people from the county area, including 80% women (AAN, ZPT, WO 1/5: Pismo WZPPPT).

ZPT in Warsaw responded favorably to the request of WZPPPT and forwarded the matter to the Ministry of Food Industry and Purchase for approval, while WWP appointed the transferor of the facility of the former plant (AAN, ZPT, WO 1/5: Dębogórski). Pursuant to the Regulation of the Council of Ministers of October 4, 1958 on the rules and procedure for transferring enterprises, institutions and plants, real estate and other assets within the state administration, the ministry agreed to transfer to the WZPPPT the facility after the former DWPN in Góra Śląska (AAN, ZPT, WO 1/5: Oschab; Dz.U. 1958, No. 67, item 332). The following were to be transferred: a fenced property in Góra Śląska together with buildings, production equipment of the former factory and other fixed assets and non-durable items (car, tools, office equipment, etc.; AAN, ZPT, WO 1/5: Oschab).

The financial side of the transfer of assets became a contentious issue (AAN, ZPT, WO 1/5: Róžański e). According to the ZPT, this should be a paid transfer. On the other hand, WZPPPT agreed to take over the former label, but without any payments on their part, otherwise they were determined to resign from the takeover, justifying it with the financial problems of the union. WWP supported free transfer. In its opinion, the machines and devices located in the area of the former DWPN could not be used in the tobacco industry, besides, they were unusual and very worn, so they should have been transferred together with the buildings without charging any fees (AAN, ZPT, WO 1/5: Pisula c; Barczyk). ZPT finally agreed to this argument (AAN, ZPT, WO 1/5: Róžański f).

SUMMARY

The Lower Silesian Factory of Nicotine Preparations, based first in Szalejów Dolny and then in Góra Śląska, functioned in the years 1952–1958, i.e. for about 7 years (the production of nicotine preparations itself began in Szalejów Dolny in 1950). It was subject to the authorities of the tobacco industry. It was a small state-owned enterprise, employing an average of 60–70 employees (45 in the last period of its existence). DWPN annually produced about 40 tons of nicotine sulphate (29.5 tons in 1958), which was used as a plant protection product. Economic reasons and a reduction in the demand for nicotine sulphate resulting from the appearance of cheaper and equally effective insecticides on the market made it necessary to close down the plant. Therefore, in the long run, the recycling of tobacco waste, which was often the real bane of tobacco plants in Poland, failed.

Finally, an industrial facility after the former state-owned enterprise under the name of the Lower Silesian Factory of Nicotine Preparations in Góra Śląska at 47 Marchlewskiego street was transferred at the end of 1959 by the liquidator, i.e. Wrocław Cigarette Factory to the Provincial Association of State Enterprises of Local Industry in Wrocław. It is also worth mentioning that in the area of the transferred facility, in the main administrative building, there were two families of employees of the former factory. Therefore, the acquiring party declared that it would not incur any material costs related to their possible relocation in the event of a change in the production profile of the unit (AAN, ZPT, WO 1/5: Protokół).

In this way, the tobacco industry got rid of an undesirable object that was generating more and more losses. In addition to the aforementioned tannery project, there are also many other plans for the use of the former DWPN (e.g. production of washing agents and synthetic separation of fatty acids, production of carotene, wafers, carbonated waters, etc.). For many years to come, however, it was not possible to launch production that would bring measurable economic effects (Żłobiński, 2018: 7–9).

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