

LIBERTY Ostrava a.s.

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75 years have passed this year since Kunčice plants liberation

It was 1942 and the then Vítkovice ironworks needed to expand its production premises and so the South plant project began. At that time the facility belonged to a German Reich industrial group that decided on a plan change and instead of steel operations an ammunition plant was built. A year after it started to operate, though with a minimum production volume. Constant flyovers by allied planes had an impact on the working regime and with the front line getting nearer high absenteeism was an issue. Only about 55% of employees went to work by late April 1945.

To maintain industrial potential of the Ostrava region, the so-called Ostrava operation was developed which lasted from March 10 till May 4, 1945. Thanks to the good knowledge of Ostrava the allied forces along with the Czechoslovak ones had an advantage so they managed to catch the Germans off-guard. That was also the reason why Germans could not materialize the planned destruction of industrial objects and left Kunčice on 30 April.

On May 4, 1945 the South plant was taken over by the Soviet military guard as a war booty. It was due to the fact that the plant was built to produce ammunition. However, it never became an independent company, it was still part of the Vítkovice ironworks. And so, unfortunately, it came to happen that on August 27 a disassembly of the engineering machinery and transfer to the Soviet Union was started. About 13% of the original equipment remained in Kunčice eventually. The negotiations on the South plant to be released from the confiscation was still ongoing and was successfully completed in October 1945. The last Red army units left the plant on December 19, 1945. The South plant workshops turned into engineering plant (today's Liberty Engineering Products Ostrava) that started production immediately after it was released from the confiscation. At the time of liberation only less than a half of the tubular plant was completed.