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File Folder USSR: PIPELINE - FORCED LABOR 2/7

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ID	Doc Type	Document Description	No of Pages	Doc Date	Restrictions
10775	PAPER	USSR: CONVICT LABOR ON PIPELINES	1	9/1/1982	B1
10779	CABLE	011514Z SEP 82 D 9/25/2012 F2006-114/9	1	9/1/1982	B1 B3
10776	CABLE	011656Z SEP 82 R 3/24/2011 F2006-114/9	1	9/1/1982	B1
10780	CABLE	152220Z SEP 82 PAR 9/25/2012 F2006-114/9	1	9/15/1982	B1 B3
10777	PAPER	USSR: FORCE LABOR ON PIPELINE PAR 9/25/2012 F2006-114/9	1	9/18/1982	B1 B3
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VIETNAMESE LABORERS IN THE USSR & EASTERN EUROPE

An agreement now exists between Vietnam and the USSR, dating from March 1981, for the export of Vietnamese labor to the Soviet Union. Similar agreements exist between Vietnam and several East European countries. Existence of the agreement has been confirmed in recent Soviet press reports.

Our information on the nature of the program is still very incomplete and is not internally consistent. Thusfar all is second-hand. What we do know, however, provides ample ground for concern. The Vietnamese and Soviet press have described the program as "work-study" or as "technical training" for Vietnamese workers. It has been claimed that Vietnamese will be sent to areas of the USSR with favorable climates and that Vietnamese will enjoy the same rights and privileges as their Soviet counterparts. Some reports suggest that participation in the overseas labor program is viewed as a desirable option by many in northern Vietnam.

Other reports exist, however, which paint a less benign picture. In particular, there are many refugee reports (admittedly second-hand) suggesting that involuntary labor will be drawn from Vietnam's "re-education camps". Other reports state that "unemployed" southerners will be sent. One report has said that people in Saigon are being given the choice of being sent to the USSR, or being sent out of Saigon to a New Economic Zone, in which they would not be permitted to practice their profession (one can assume that this would mean an indefinite period of manual labor under the most primitive conditions).

We do not know enough at present to level hard charges. At the minimum, however, the circumstances of this program readily lend themselves to abuse by Soviet authorities, and call for close scrutiny. Some critical questions are:

- Is there perhaps a two-track program here, with reliable cadre being sent voluntarily from North Vietnam to desirable factory locations in Eastern Europe, and southerners being sent involuntarily to locations in Siberia? (In the North, it does appear more or less voluntary)
- If, as is likely, many or most of the persons concerned will be sent to construction or other projects in Siberia, would tropical Vietnamese voluntarily undertake to leave both family and country for a country with such temperature extremes?
- If "unemployed" southerners are to be sent, are they unemployed because they have been released from reeducation camps and denied employment?
- Will involuntary Vietnamese labor be used to build the gas pipelines linking Soviet Siberia with Western Europe?

At the least, some degree of coercion in this program is very likely. A number of aspects of the program merit our concern: 1) human and labor rights (what are the conditions under which these Vietnamese will work? Do they conform to acceptable international standards? To what extent is Vietnamese participation coerced?); 2) the pipeline connection

Are the Soviets exporting cheap or involuntary labor?
Are the Vietnamese exporting their own people to pay

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PIPELINE

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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
MESSAGE CENTER

10776

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TAGS: PINT, UR

SUBJECT: SOVIET USE OF FORCED LABOR ON PIPELINE
CONSTRUCTION

REF: (A) PARIS 26757, (B) PARIS 26931, (C) PARIS 27333-C
(NOTAL), (D) PARIS 28254, (E) USIA 44653-C

1. POST HAS BEEN REPORTING SIGNIFICANT MEDIA REACTION TO THIS SUBJECT SINCE THE STORY FIRST BROKE HERE IN FRANCE IN A FRONTPAGE ARTICLE IN POPULAR, CONSERVATIVE FRANCE-SOIR ON AUGUST 6, 1982 (REFTEL A). REFTELS B AND D ALSO REPORTED ON EDITORIALS IN THE FRENCH PRESS ADDRESSING THIS ISSUE. ON AUGUST 11, 1982, EMBASSY REPORTED (REFTEL C) ON GOF ACTIONS IN LIGHT OF REVELATIONS MADE BY INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND SUBSEQUENT PRESS COVERAGE.

2. RECENT COVERAGE OF THE PIPELINE HAS BEEN DEVOTED TO THE ISSUE OF SANCTIONS AND VERY LITTLE ATTENTION HAS BEEN GIVEN TO THE USE OF PRISONERS, POLITICAL OR OTHERWISE, IN ITS CONSTRUCTION. THE COMMUNIST DAILY, HUMANITE, OF FRIDAY, AUGUST 27, 1982, THE DAY FOLLOWING THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF USG SANCTIONS OF TWO FRENCH FIRMS, FRONTPAGED A REPORT FROM ITS SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT TITLED: "OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT TO THE PIPELINE." GERARD STREIFF, MOSCOW-BASED CORRESPONDENT, REPORTED THAT THE RUSSIANS ARE WORKING AT A FASTER RATE TO COMPLETE "THEIR" PIPELINE THAN THE AMERICANS DID IN ALASKA, AND THAT THEY WISH TO SHOW THE WORLD HOW THEY WILL MEET "MR. REAGAN'S CHALLENGE." IN A PARAGRAPH SUBTITLED "REAGAN'S RUMORS" STREIFF MAINTAINS THAT (1) THERE ARE ONLY 20,000 MEN WORKING ON THE PIPELINE, (2) THEY ARE ALL YOUNG, (3) THEY ARE ALL HIGHLY QUALIFIED SPECIALISTS AND ANY UNSKILLED

LABOR NEEDED IS RECRUITED FROM NEIGHBORING VILLAGES, AND (4) THEY ARE VERY HIGHLY PAID. TO QUOTE: "I TOLD THEM THAT SOME OF THE MEDIA WERE CALLING THEM PRISONERS. MOST OF THEM LAUGHED, SOME OF THEM WERE ANNOYED: 'WE COULD CARE LESS ABOUT REAGAN'S RUMORS.' A YOUNG ENGINE DRIVER SIMPLY RESPONDED THAT HE LOVED HIS WORK, AND WAS PROUD." THE FOLLOWING MONDAY, HUMANITE CARRIED A PIECE ON PAGE 6, TITLED: "AN AMERICAN VISITS THE GAS PIPELINE," WHICH ATTEMPTS TO CONFIRM THE ARTICLE BY STREIFF, WITHOUT GIVING THE NAME OF THE AMERICAN JOURNALIST--SIMPLY IDENTIFYING HIM AS BEING FROM ASSOCIATED PRESS, AND SAYING THAT HE HAD NOT MET ANY PRISONERS.

3. TO DATE, THIS HAS BEEN THE EXTENT OF PRESS COVERAGE. AS PREVIOUSLY STATED, THE FOCUS HAS BEEN ON THE USG SANCTIONS OF FRENCH FIRMS AND POSSIBLE FUTURE MEASURES AGAINST OTHER EUROPEAN COMPANIES INVOLVED IN PIPELINE CONTRACTS. IF THESE CHARGES ARE VERIFIABLE, IT IS OUR IMPRESSION THAT THEY WOULD SPARK A LIVELY DEBATE IN THE FRENCH PRESS ON THE MORALITY OF SUPPORTING SUCH PRACTICES. HEDGES
BT

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NLRR E06-114/9 #10776

BY KML NARA DATE 4/7/2011

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(is coerced labor going to be used to build the Soviet gas pipelines?), 3) refugee implications (Will the expectation or the reality of coerced exile to Siberia lead to a new wave of Vietnamese refugees to Southeast Asia and ultimately the US?)

*Early reports indicated that 60% of the workers' wages would be deducted to pay Vietnam's Soviet debt. One recent, but unverified, report has indicated that one-third of their wages would be retained by Vietnamese workers, one-third deducted by the Soviet government, and one-third by the Vietnamese government. The number of workers who will participate in the program is uncertain, but could total between 100,000 and 500,000 between now and 1985. Approximately 20-50,000 Vietnamese are reportedly in the USSR and Eastern Europe at this time. As the program is still relatively new, the ultimate numbers involved and distribution of personnel geographically will not be known for some time. The fact that the program is still in its early stages also accounts in part for the lack of more concrete evidence (as there has not yet been sufficient time for Vietnamese to go to the USSR, return, and leave Vietnam for the West).

(some of)

newest reporting indicates that ^{some of} those who have gone - perhaps voluntarily - to the USSR are in fact being used on heavy construction projects, and are both disillusioned with their working conditions and are not allowed to write home freely about their experiences.



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(U) VIETNAM: LABOR "EXPORT" TO THE
USSR AND EASTERN EUROPE^{1/}

φ
Vietnam
laborer

Summary

Although differing considerably in details, available reports make it clear that Vietnam is sending laborers to the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe for periods of three to six years under the guise of "labor cooperation" or technical training. The importation of "guest workers" into the labor-short USSR and Eastern Europe is not new. But the Vietnamese, who have received training in Soviet bloc countries for many years, had not been involved so strictly as laborers before 1981.

Estimates of the numbers involved in the new Vietnamese program vary: some communist sources privately project that between 100,000 and 500,000 will be sent abroad by 1985. Many reports say that a portion of the worker's salary is being withheld to cover Vietnam's debts, and another part sent home to increase foreign currency holdings.

Participants apparently consist of "reliable" northerners and unemployed southerners. Indirect forms of coercion may have been involved in recruiting some candidates, but there are also reports that the program has been popular--a means to escape depressed conditions in Vietnam. There is as yet no firsthand evidence to confirm earlier rumors, reported by refugees, that active dissidents or former reeducation camp inmates are prime targets for export.

At the end of March, Moscow and Hanoi finally reacted publicly to Western press reports that the Vietnamese were essentially "slave" laborers being

1/ Information in this report may be used for unclassified briefings on an unattributed basis.

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sent mainly to Siberia. Both have continued to claim that the Vietnamese receive wages and benefits comparable to those in the host country and work in areas where the weather is suitable.

* * * * *

GAS 7/2/02

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"Labor Cooperation" Agreements

Vietnam signed its first public bilateral agreement on "labor cooperation" in April 1981 with the USSR. A Vietnamese-Czechoslovak agreement signed in September followed a proposal made in the summer to Vietnamese Foreign Minister Nguyen Co Thach which was reported in the Prague press. No details of the agreement were published at the time, however, and subsequent accords were likewise uninformative. For example, another agreement with the USSR (November 1981) was described only as being on "labor cooperation and intensified training of technical workers." Agreements with Bulgaria and the German Democratic Republic (GDR) were signed in Hanoi in November 1981 and January 1982, respectively. A Soviet-Vietnamese accord "on the movement of citizens" between the two countries, signed last July, may have been intended to handle substantially increased movements of Vietnamese.

An indication that the current program is qualitatively different from past vocational training abroad is the fact that these are independent "labor cooperation" agreements. Previous training was subsumed under traditional technical, scientific, and educational exchange accords, even though some of those vocational trainees may have been little more than common laborers.

Varying Estimates of Numbers Involved

The number of people involved in the export program appears significantly greater than that of any previous known arrangement between Vietnam and Soviet bloc states. Communist sources privately have estimated that between 100,000 and 500,000 Vietnamese workers could be sent to Eastern Europe and the USSR by 1985. Others have claimed that 20,000 to 50,000 already are in place. A Prague press report said that 14,000 Vietnamese workers were laboring in Czechoslovakia in addition to 3,000 trainees. TASS reported that 7,200 Vietnamese workers were in the USSR. A November 1981 British press report quoted a Vietnamese Embassy spokesman who said that the number of workers to be sent to the Soviet bloc under the 1981 agreements might reach 100,000 over the course of the current five-year (1981-85) plan. This figure is the same one used privately by some Vietnamese sources as well as by a pro-Hanoi Vietnamese publication in Paris. The latter, however, treated the program as simply an expansion of past vocational training arrangements.

Purpose: Debt Repayment and Training

"Guest workers" in the USSR and Eastern Europe are not a new phenomenon. In 1972, for example, Bulgaria signed an agreement-- though never implemented--with Egypt to import Egyptian labor. An agreement with Yugoslavia in 1973 brought Yugoslav construction workers to Bulgaria. Bulgaria, among the least developed of the European members of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CEMA), for years has exported labor to the USSR (thousands of Bulgarians still cut timber in the Komi ASSR), Czechoslovakia, and East Germany. And in the mid-to-late 1970s, the USSR contracted for workers from Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, and Poland to help build the Orenburg natural gas pipeline (a CEMA-wide investment project on Soviet territory).

Although the Vietnamese stress the benefits of such "labor cooperation" in training underskilled workers, an important motivation for the program probably is repayment of the substantial debts Hanoi has incurred for imports and developmental assistance. The vehicle for repayment reportedly is the partial withholding of the laborers' wages, which, according to many reports, are comparable to local salaries. Some reports mention a Vietnamese "tax" which, in fact, may be credited against Hanoi's debt. Estimates of the ratio vary. Forty percent for the worker to 60 percent for debt repayment has been mentioned, but other sources list a third for debt repayment, a third for local use, and a third to be remitted home. The latter would increase foreign currency holdings. Consumer goods also may be sent to the workers' families.

Participation Mixed; Coercion Difficult To Document

Available information on participation in the program comes almost exclusively from refugee sources, which are often conflicting. According to this information, workers for the program are drawn mainly from two categories: northern Vietnamese considered "reliable," and unemployed southerners. None can take their families. For northern Vietnamese, the program is evidently an expansion of previous training arrangements and, according to some reports, it is popular. Some say that young Vietnamese choose to go to work in the USSR or Eastern Europe rather than face unemployment at home, transfer to a new economic zone, or military conscription, possibly for the Vietnamese occupation army in Kampuchea. Potential participants prefer assignment in Eastern Europe rather than the USSR but have no choice.

For participants from the south, the program is more aptly described as the export of labor. These individuals are drawn from the large pool of skilled and unskilled unemployed workers

for use in a purely labor capacity which, nevertheless, may provide some training benefits. Several reports say that southerners with ties to the old regime have been excluded; but standards may have been relaxed.

Although the possibility exists that the program includes political dissidents and individuals drawn from reeducation camps, there is no firm evidence of this. Nor is there information to substantiate refugee rumors earlier this year that the program is designed as a punitive measure targeted against such groups. Because it is highly doubtful that the Soviet Union or any other bloc country would be willing to accept large numbers of "unreliable" workers within its borders, it seems improbable that dissidents or reeducatees would form a significant portion of the "guest workers."

Nonetheless, some degree of coercion may be involved in "recruitment" of southern participants for the program. The extent is difficult to determine, however, because of the scarcity of good information. The degree of future coercion probably will be directly related to the strictness of quotas for the program and the ease with which they can be filled. Vietnamese cadre in both parts of the country are faced with competing demands for labor--for the draft as well as for the "New Economic Zones" being revived. Neither program is popular and may have even less appeal to segments of the populace than labor abroad.

Vietnamese and Soviet Sensitivity

Both the Vietnamese and the Soviets clearly are sensitive to press reports that Vietnamese indentured or "slave" laborers are being sent to the USSR, mainly Siberia. In the past two months Hanoi and Moscow have publicly--if belatedly--rebutted these allegations, which have been published occasionally since last fall. Hanoi first used the anniversary of the April 1981 labor cooperation agreement with Moscow to claim that the basic aim was training, in areas where weather conditions were "suitable," and that the wages and benefits for the Vietnamese were comparable to those of their Soviet counterparts. At the same time, several broadcasts admitted that the program benefited the host country as well. Hanoi has avoided specific figures for the numbers involved. Thus, Hanoi's Labor Minister spoke only of "thousands" going to the USSR under the 1981 agreement, with an expansion envisaged for 1982.

During his recent European tour, Foreign Minister Thach derided (but did not directly deny) Western reports that the program was designed to repay Vietnam's debts. Hanoi's propagandists have not revealed how the worker may dispose of his

wages. Sensitivity on this issue is suggested by Hanoi's failure to report a Soviet statement that remittances could be sent home.

Soviet propagandists treat the program exclusively (and somewhat patronizingly) as another example of "selfless" aid to Vietnam, ignoring the benefit of some four to five years' work that the Vietnamese will provide to a labor-short economy. In his April 30 TASS interview, Soviet Labor Minister Leonid Kostin claimed that the 7,200 Vietnamese who had arrived in the USSR over the past year for "training and work" enjoyed more privileges than their Soviet counterparts and were assigned to southern districts compatible with the Vietnamese climate. An Izvestia article called Western reports on the program fabrications and contrasted the Vietnamese situation to the "oppressed position of foreign workers in capitalist countries." Subsequent Soviet propaganda has sounded similar themes, particularly emphasizing that favorable working conditions allegedly are enjoyed by the trainees. But, as with Soviet personnel in Vietnam, they are kept relatively isolated.

Prepared by Dorothy Avery, x22277
Marc Berkowitz

Approved by Weaver Gim, x21338

Bankrolling the Slave Trade?

WSJ
May 3, 82
6

The Soviet gas pipeline deal with Western Europe is often portrayed by its proponents as nothing more than a marriage of convenience, matching Soviet energy with European cash. But now Sen. William Armstrong is calling for hearings on whether it may also marry Western capital to Soviet slave labor.

The possibility is by no means far-fetched. The Soviet Union already suffers from a severe labor shortage, which has hampered its construction plans, and the development of its Siberian gas fields will further tax its available labor pool. For instance, the pipeline planned for Western Europe is only one of six which will tap the Urengoi field in the harsh terrain of Northwest Siberia; the total length of the pipelines will be 20,000 kilometers, or about four times the width of the U.S. Where will the Soviet Union get the labor to complete such a mammoth project?

The Soviets, of course, have a long history of doing massive construction with concentration camp labor. The writings of Solzhenitsyn describe the barbarity involved. During the Stalin era, imprisoned intellectuals and other inmates were forced to build a wide variety of major construction projects from the Moscow-Volga Canal to the famed Moscow subway. One dissident now in the West has films of concentration camp laborers working on the Belomor Canal in the 1930s, and he also found bones buried along the waterway indicating where prisoners died on the spot.

These practices were no mere aberration confined to the Stalin years. The Brezhnev regime, too, employed concentration camp labor as recently as the late 1970s in building an extension of the Baikal Amur (BAM) Railway near the Chinese border. A defector from the MVD—the paramilitary police of the Soviet Ministry of Interior in charge of running Soviet concentration camps—has said that his regiment guarded about 200,000 inmates working on the railway; his regiment, moreover, was only one of six guarding laborers along the route, which gives some idea of the magnitude of prison labor used.

The suspicion is growing that the Soviets, finding their own Gulags insufficient to the present task, are going into the slave trade. The best-stocked Gulags in the world are currently those in Vietnam. And in recent months there have been repeated reports—by UPI, the Economist Foreign Report, L'Express and even China's People's Daily—of a deal to export

Vietnamese owe the Soviets some \$1.6 billion in war loans, and exporting labor is one way to repay them.

One of the most extensive reports on the worker-export program is an article written for these pages last March by Doan van Toal, now associated with the Fletcher School. He cited reports of plans to export some 500,000 Vietnamese to Siberia by 1985, and that most of them were being chosen from among those suspected of political disloyalty. Hanoi saves itself the cost of feeding half a million mouths and rids itself of dissidents, while the Soviets get cheap labor.

We cannot absolutely confirm that these Vietnamese are going to work on the Siberian gas pipeline, but Sen. Armstrong does have two letters from Vietnamese in "re-education camps" in the South telling of plans to send the inmates to Siberia on construction projects. Could that be the pipeline? The letters don't say. But given the Soviet Union's current labor shortage and its long history of using concentration camp labor, it is an obvious supposition.

Will there be moral protests in Europe's streets, we wonder, if it is learned that slaves are building the pipeline? How much will cheap Gulag-produced energy add to the cash flow of European businesses? Will the Europeans sleep better knowing their homes are heated by gas arriving thanks to Vietnamese chain gangs? Will the lenders take the attitude expressed during the Polish crisis by Thomas Theobald? "Who knows which political system works?" the Citibank international head said. "The only test we care about is: Can they pay their bills?"

These questions are certainly worth asking in Senate hearings, especially since American cooperation is still needed to expedite the pipeline project. Four European concerns are making compressor turbines for the project under licenses from General Electric, and at least three of them will need explicit export approvals from the U.S. Department of Commerce. Sen. Armstrong and Sen. Jake Garn plan to introduce a sense of the Senate resolution urging President Reagan to do all in his power to stop the deal.

So far the administration has been reluctant to do anything serious to impede the European plans. But surely there is some limit to cynicism. Is Europe, with tacit approval from the Reagan White House, now about to

Money Rates

Friday, August 6, 1982

The key U.S. and foreign annual interest rates below are a guide to general levels but don't always represent actual transactions.

PRIME RATE: 15%. The base rate on corporate loans at large U.S. money center commercial banks.

FEDERAL FUNDS: 10 1/4% high, 10% low, 10 1/2% near closing bid, 10 1/2% offered. Reserves traded among commercial banks for overnight use in amounts of \$1 million or more. Source: Mabon, Nugent & Co., N.Y.

DISCOUNT RATE: 11%. The charge on loans to member commercial banks by the New York Federal Reserve Bank.

CALL MONEY: 12 1/2%. The charge on loans to brokers on stock exchange collateral.

COMMERCIAL PAPER: placed directly by General Motors Acceptance Corp.: 10 1/4% 30 to 149 days; 10 1/2% 150 to 270 days.

COMMERCIAL PAPER: High-grade unsecured notes sold through dealers by major corporations in multiples of \$1,000: 11 1/4% 30 days; 11 1/2% 60 days; 11 3/4% 90 days.

CERTIFICATES OF DEPOSIT: 10 1/4% one month; 11% two months; 11.40% three months; 12 1/4% six months; 12 1/2% one year. Typical rates paid by major banks on new issues of negotiable C.D.'s, usually on amounts of \$1 million and more. The minimum unit is \$100,000.

BANKERS ACCEPTANCES: 10.90% 30 days; 11.10% 60 days; 11.20% 90 days; 11.75% 120 days; 11.95% 150 days; 11.95% 180 days. Negotiable, bank-backed business credit instruments typically financing an import order.

EURODOLLARS: 11 1/4% to 11 1/2% one month; 12 5/16% to 12 3/16% two months; 12 11/16% to 12 9/16% three months; 13 3/16% to 13 1/16% four months; 13 9/16% to 13 7/16% five months; 13 15/16% to 13 13/16% six months. The rates paid on U.S. dollar deposits in banks in London. The higher rate for each maturity is LIBOR, the London interbank offered rate.

FOREIGN PRIME RATES: Canada 17%; Germany 11 1/2%; Japan 6.35%; Switzerland 7%; Britain 11 1/2%. These rate indications aren't directly comparable; lending practices vary widely by location. Source: Morgan Guaranty Trust Co.

TREASURY BILLS: Results of the Monday, August 2, 1982, auction of short-term U.S. government bills, sold at a discount from face value in units of \$10,000 to \$1 million: 9.433% 13 weeks; 10.671% 26 weeks.

MERRILL LYNCH READY ASSETS TRUST: 15.48%. Annualized average rate of return after expenses for the past 30 days; not a forecast of future returns.

Moody's Cuts Ratings For Zenith Radio Corp., Rexnord and GTE Unit

By a WALL STREET JOURNAL Staff Reporter

NEW YORK—Moody's Investors Service Inc. lowered ratings on securities of three concerns, Zenith Radio Corp., Rexnord Inc. and General Telephone Co. of California, a unit of GTE Corp.

Moody's, a subsidiary of Dun & Bradstreet Corp., cut Zenith's commercial paper rating to Prime 3 from Prime 2, and the rating on its convertible debentures to Ba-2 from Ba-1. The credit rating agency attributed the move to "a deteriorating financial condition, as evidenced by increased debt levels and recent operating losses."

The Glenview, Ill., maker of television sets, radios and other electronic products had a loss of \$4.1 million in the second quarter, compared with earnings of \$2.1 million, or 11 cents a share, a year earlier. Short-term debt rose to \$138 million as of June 30 from \$75 million March 31.

A Zenith spokesman said that adequate short-term credit still is available.

France Probes Reports Involving Slave Labor On Siberian Pipeline

Special to THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

PARIS—France said it has instructed its Moscow embassy to investigate reports that the Soviet natural gas pipeline to Western Europe is being built with slave labor.

The International Association for Human Rights, based in West Germany, previously had warned European countries involved in the controversial project that tens of thousands of Soviet political prisoners had been

pressed into slave gangs to work on the mammoth project.

The humanitarian organization has issued a list of political prisoners who, it asserted, were forced to work on the pipeline. They included dissident psychiatrist Semyon Gluzman and Ukrainian writer Zinovi Krasinski.

Canadian Housing Starts

OTTAWA—Canadian housing starts declined to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 111,000 in July, off 2.6% from 114,000 in June, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp., a government agency, said.

The July figure was the lowest level of housing starts since last October when the annual rate slumped to 105,000.

Venezuela Gets \$

A WALL STREET JOURNAL Staff Reporter
Venezuela government

million, one-third international proceeds that CVF obtains above the offered rate 13 11/16.

Rosenthal is the lead financial analyst

This announcement is neither an offer

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Foreign Report

Published by The Economist Newspaper Limited
25 Abchurch Lane, London EC4N 3DF
15 September 17, 1981

Contents

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- Effect of a nuclear holocaust
- Strengthening the "Portuguese triangle"
- Quiet hand to Somoza's men
- Kenya runs short of cash
- Growing crisis for Marcos
- Centers

"Guest workers" in the Soviet Union

The secretary-general of Vietnam's Communist party, **Le Duan**, and the deputy prime minister, **To Huu**, visited Moscow last week. They met **President Brezhnev** and other Soviet leaders and discussed their growing economic difficulties, including the high cost of supporting an army of over 1m men, one fifth of them based in Cambodia. Vietnam is increasingly dependent on the Soviet Union.

Le Duan informed the Russians that the monthly food ration has dropped from 13 kilos of rice to eight kilos of rice, sweet potatoes or maize. For meat, 100 grams is the monthly norm. One kilo of meat of the black market costs about two weeks' wages. Brezhnev promised Le Duan to increase Soviet economic support as well as military aid to Vietnam. Within the next five years the Russians will support 40 more industrial projects and will intensify oil exploration. The leaders may also have talked out a new means by which the Vietnamese government is planning to offset its massive debts to the Soviet block: the provision of large numbers of Vietnamese "guest workers".

Estimates of numbers vary, but authoritative east European sources say that up to 400,000 Vietnamese may work in eastern Europe between 1981 and 1985. Most are destined for the Soviet Union, where they will live in segregated communities with little contact with the local population. This scheme, quite separate from the training of Communist party cadres, was hatched at the 34th session of the Communist world's trading bloc, Comecon, in Prague last year. The Vietnamese workers are due to receive 40% of their wages in local currency and the remaining 60% would be credited against Vietnam's trading debts with the Comecon countries.

Since the Vietnamese cannot afford to send skilled labour or technicians, the "guest workers" are unskilled labourers who are expected to work in remote development projects in Siberia and elsewhere. According to official Soviet statements, there were over 2m unfilled job vacancies in the Soviet Union last November and Brezhnev said that up to 400,000 additional workers will be needed in the next few years to

develop new oil and gas fields in western Siberia.]

This is the background for the Soviet and Vietnamese decision in July to sign an agreement "on the movement of citizens of Vietnam and the Soviet Union between the two countries". Scheduled air services from Hanoi to Prague began in June. A regular service from Hanoi to Sofia will start in October. Since some 15,000 Vietnamese are expected to travel to Bulgaria for periods of between three and five years from 1981 to 1985, the new air service can expect to be busy. There are already regular flights between Hanoi and Moscow.

The Comecon countries have struck a hard bargain but the Vietnamese had little choice. Indentured labour will help to offset the country's debts and reduce unemployment, which the chairman of the state planning commission, Nguyen Lam, admitted in February was around 1m. The total external debt, according to previously unpublished Vietnamese government figures, is now \$3 billion of which some \$1.4 billion is in convertible currencies and \$1.6 billion is in non-convertible currencies like roubles. Debt servicing cost \$25m in 1976 and has grown to about \$240m this year. In 1980, debt servicing amounted to 57% of Vietnamese exports.

The Soviet Union pumps the equivalent of \$6m a day into Vietnam's economy but it is tied to the provision of Soviet goods and services. Soviet wool arrives in Hanoi for the manufacture of carpets which are exported back to the Soviet Union. Russian influence over the Vietnamese economy is growing steadily.

JT

Soviets defend 'new form of cooperation' — Vietnamese workers in USSR

By Ned Temko
Staff correspondent of
The Christian Science Monitor

Moscow

The Soviet Union, a year after the fact, has announced a "governmental agreement" bringing thousands of Vietnamese civilians to this country for "training and work."

The Vietnamese, according to the Soviet report, are to stay for periods of "up to five years" — the first year for language and labor training, and the remainder on the job.

The Soviets' April 30 disclosure of the accord followed foreign reports that Vietnam, in economic crisis, was exporting labor to help dent its enormous state debt to the Soviet Union. The reports suggested that Vietnamese workers could also help the Soviet Union ease a shortage of domestic labor in some sectors of the economy.

Moscow's version does not explicitly refute any of this, but portrays the Soviets in the role of selfless benefactors, helping train Vietnamese, and taking scrupulously good care of them while they are here.

(A second Soviet mention of the agreement, on the evening of May 3 in the government newspaper Izvestia, went further, branding as "slander" Western reports that the accord was part of Vietnamese debt payment. Izvestia did not address suggestions that the Vietnamese workers might be meant to help alleviate shortages of Soviet labor.)

The initial Soviet statement came in the form of a lengthy dispatch from the official news agency Tass, marking the first "anniversary" of an agreement not previously publicized. The accord is termed a "new form of cooperation in the sphere of training skilled cadres for the Socialist Republic of Vietnam." In the past year, 7,000 Vietnamese are said to have arrived here under the terms of the agreement.

"In accordance with the wishes" of the Vietnamese government, the Soviet account says, most of the Vietnamese are sent to "machine building enterprises, the chemical and textile industries, [and] projects of irrigation and land reclamation."

The Soviet report seems aimed partly at dispelling the image created by some foreign reports of difficult working conditions for the Vietnamese.

Countering suggestions that many of the Vietnamese are doing battle with the wilds of Siberia, Tass says: "Taking into consideration the Vietnamese climate, young people from Vietnam are sent mainly to southern districts of the European part of the USSR."

The Tass dispatch quotes a Soviet official as saying the Vietnamese get the same pay and benefits as Soviet workers, and even "vouchers for rest homes, . . . free medical care, and state social insurance benefits."

According to the foreign news reports, part of the Vietnamese workers' earnings is

being credited against Vietnam's debt to Moscow. The Tass report does not tackle this issue directly. It says that the "Vietnamese citizens, at their discretion, can remit part of their earnings for their families at home."

Estimates of the Vietnamese debt to Moscow vary. But official figures for what amounts to one form of Soviet subsidy for Vietnam's troubled economy — the states' trade relationship — show a Vietnamese deficit for 1981 of some 560 million rubles. At official hard-currency exchange rates, this would equal about \$800 million.

A US congressional report estimates that 1981 Soviet hard-currency subsidies to Vietnam totaled slightly more than \$1 billion.

Given the scale of subsidy involved, the presence of 7,000 Vietnamese workers here could involve, at most, a token repayment, in the view of diplomats.

The Soviets tend to avoid any public suggestion of displeasure at the size of transfers made to states like Vietnam, Laos, or Cuba. Yet one hint of possible Soviet uneasiness came when President Brezhnev coupled a recent pledge of further aid to Laos with a call for more timely and extensive implementation of existing aid projects.

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VIETNAM

Now, the 'flot' people

Vietnam feels obliged to reply to allegations that it is exporting 'slave labour' to the Soviet Union, but doubts remain

By Nayan Chanda

Stung by Western allegations of Vietnamese "slave labour" being sent to the Soviet Union to repay debts, the Vietnamese and Soviet media have produced some details of a hitherto unpublicised labour cooperation agreement. But these defensive accounts do not tell the full story behind Vietnam's new policy of manpower export.

A recent stream of probably well-coordinated articles from Vietnamese and Soviet newsagencies and newspapers admit that thousands of young Vietnamese men and women have gone to the Soviet Union to be trained, but they deny there is any exploitation involved. These denials come after a spate of stories originating from refugees that unwanted Vietnamese have been sent to Siberia and other places in the labour-short Soviet Union to help repay Hanoi's massive debt to Moscow. Vietnam's total outstanding debt in non-convertible currencies such as roubles was US\$1.6 billion in 1981 — a major part of it owed to the Soviet Union.

Observers think that the sudden attention shown by the Vietnamese media to what some Vietnamese émigrés call "flot people" (because they are sent to the Soviet Union aboard the Soviet airline Aero-flot) is designed not only to respond to critical foreign press reports but also to reassure people in Vietnam about the nature of the relationship with Moscow. Vietnam's Minister of Labour, Dao Thien Thi, thought it necessary to write a piece in the party daily *Nhan Dan* on April 5 stressing that the labour cooperation developed with the Soviet Union since early 1981 is actually in Vietnam's own interests. Such cooperation, he said, "will ensure the basic and advanced training of many skilled workers for Vietnam, enhance the quality of such training, prolong the time for learning skills through actual labour and broaden the range of trades and professions as required by Vietnam's socialist construction."

In an obvious allusion to reports about Vietnamese being sent to the frozen wilderness of Siberia, Thi said the Vietnamese were working in localities with "suitable weather conditions" and named cities in the south-central region of the Soviet Union such as Astrakhan, Volgograd, Rostov and Zhdanov. He also stressed that "the Soviet Union gives equal treatment to Vietnamese and Soviet workers. Vietnamese workers enjoy the same rights and interests as their Soviet colleagues in the same job with regard to wages, social welfare and insurance." A Hanoi Radio broadcast on the same subject a week later also claimed that the labour cooperation agreement involved the Soviet Union

training Vietnamese workers "in such branches and jobs as decided by the Vietnamese side." In other words, Vietnam was not simply providing labour for factories where it was needed.

Vietnamese reports were followed by an article in the Soviet daily *Izvestia* and a Tass newsagency interview on the subject of Vietnamese labour in the Soviet Union. The *Izvestia* article said that 7,000 Vietnamese students were being trained in factories in the Soviet Union for a year and they were earning normal Soviet wages. The article stressed that the Vietnamese enjoyed "all rights and freedoms provided by Soviet law" and received housing and other facilities similar to those granted to Soviet workers. The Tass article, how-



Vietnamese electrician with Soviet colleague: guest worker or wage slave?

ever, said that the Vietnamese spent one year in training and four at work — a point not mentioned by *Izvestia*. More curiously, Thi said in his article that the Vietnamese workers will receive vocational training and improve their skills "over a period of five to six years."

While *Izvestia* said the Vietnamese were working in areas with a suitable climate, the Tass article left open the possibility that a small proportion of the Vietnamese workers was stationed in regions with a harsh climate. It said that the "great part of them [Vietnamese workers] have been sent to the south European part of the Soviet Union where the food and climate better suit them." The article also mentioned that some Vietnamese were involved in irrigation and land-reclamation.

The Tass article also claimed that the Vietnamese "at their discretion can remit part of their earnings to their families at home." This cryptic reference to limited remittance has been interpreted by some observers as indication that workers do

not have the right to dispose of their entire salaries — part of which may be retained by the Soviet Union as repayment of Vietnamese debt. Interestingly, the Vietnam News Agency, which published excerpts from the Tass article, omitted the reference to remittances.

Hanoi sources, who declined to be identified, told the *REVIEW* that the export of labour to the Soviet Union was aimed principally at solving the unemployment problem, earning foreign exchange for the country and at the same time enhancing the technical skills of Vietnam's workforce. The sources said that, despite the *Izvestia* claim of regular wages, Vietnamese trainees received only board, lodging, clothing and a small amount of pocket money for the first three years. Then the workers are allowed a home leave before returning to work for three more years on full wages. The sources said that part of the wages would be taken by the Vietnamese Government, but they claimed not to know the exact percentage, or to what use the rouble earnings would be put by the government. Sources, however, pointed out that the Philippine Government retains 40% of the earnings of Filipino workers abroad. It was clearly implied that it would be natural for the Vietnamese Government to retain part of the wages that its citizens earned abroad for the construction of socialism.

Sources laughed at the suggestion in some foreign press stories that the Vietnamese workers may be sent to the Soviet Union against their wishes. "Everybody wants to go abroad, get a job, buy something and send money home," said one. While admitting that the pocket money received by workers in their first three years was small, the sources said that thrifty Vietnamese can still save and send small gifts to their needy families. In fact, a recent article in a Hanoi daily, *Hanoi Moi*, claimed that there are more applicants for work in socialist countries than there are vacancies. The newspaper indicated that being sent to work in the socialist countries — Vietnam reportedly has labour-supply agreements with the Soviet Union, East Germany, Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia — is clearly a privilege.

According to Hanoi sources, the total number of Vietnamese workers now in the Soviet bloc countries is 50,000 and in the next four years the number is expected to double. While the number is significantly higher and the arrangement is little more honestly called labour cooperation, despatching Vietnamese trainee workers to the Soviet bloc countries for long stints is nothing new. As early as 1967 there were 6,000 Vietnamese workers in the Soviet Union supposedly for vocational training but in fact providing cheap labour for Soviet factories. Very often the skills they

However, with the signing of labour co-operation agreements with the Soviet bloc countries last year, Hanoi is clearly trying to regularise and expand the existing arrangement that went under the heading of vocational training. In early 1977 Vietnam promulgated a foreign investment code which, Hanoi planners hoped, would lure Western investors into Vietnam to make use of the country's abundant labour and natural resources. Developments in Vietnam's foreign relations and economic factors have since dashed those hopes. Insufficient Soviet assistance in developing industry has also made it impossible rapidly to absorb Vietnam's growing army of over a million unemployed.

As Hanoi officials point out, many Third World countries — South Korea, the Philippines, Thailand and even China — are trying to solve their unemployment problems by exporting labour. China is currently estimated to have 13,000 workers abroad, mainly in the Middle East. The main difference, of course, is that Chinese workers receive full wages, part of which is then taken by the government, while the Vietnamese provide free labour for three years before earning wages.

► **Ton Long writes from Washington:** A labour cooperation agreement similar to the one with the Soviet Union exists with Czechoslovakia, which reportedly employs about 14,000 Vietnamese.

Several anti-communist Vietnamese groups abroad have rushed to condemn the sending of Vietnamese to work in Soviet-bloc countries. They maintain that the Vietnamese Government is trying by this method to get rid of dissidents.

But as some analysts point out, the charge blithely ignores a crucial factor: the Soviet Union and its allies would never accept troublesome elements from Vietnam, much less allow them to live in their society and work in their factories. □

The masquerade is over

Mahathir makes it clear that if the Cambodian resistance groups wish to meet in Malaysia, they must agree to agree

By John McBeth

Bangkok: The formation of a coalition of anti-Vietnamese Cambodian resistance groups still hangs in the balance, but one thing is clear: if the three sides do decide to attend an expected tripartite conference in Kuala Lumpur, they will have to produce a concrete outcome.

In making the Malaysian capital available as a venue for such a conference, Prime Minister Dáruk Seri Mahathir Mohamad will have it no other way. "If they want to go to Kuala Lumpur, it must be actually to sign an agreement," an Asean diplomatic source told the REVIEW. "Malaysia won't be placed in the position of acting as a forum for another round of bickering and I don't think anyone wants a repeat of that kind of masquerade. An understanding has to be reached before they go to the conference table."

Mahathir's no-nonsense attitude is obviously born of Thailand's bitter experience last year when the Khmer Rouge, former premier Son Sann's Khmer People's National Liberation Front (KPNLF) and the Moulinaka faction led by former head of state Prince Norodom Sihanouk failed to reach an accord after a series of nine often-vitriolic ad hoc committee sessions.

The date for a Kuala Lumpur resistance summit has been variously given as late this month or early June, in itself a reflection of the renewed optimism within Asean that an agreement is in sight. If there is a deadline, it is June 14, the opening day of the annual Asean foreign ministers' conference.

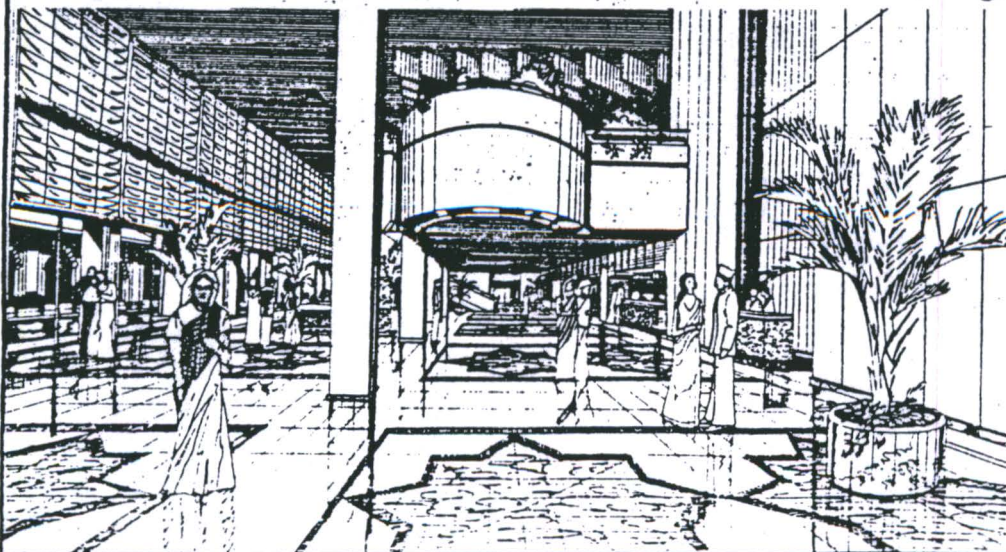
Sources close to the KPNLF say Sann has softened his position significantly over the past two months and now seems committed to the inevitability of a coalition, despite the distaste he and most of his followers feel for a working relationship with the Khmer Rouge. Sann and Khmer Rouge leader Khieu Samphan have met at least once on the Thai-Cambodian border since the KPNLF president returned from talks in Singapore and Kuala Lumpur, where he pronounced himself ready to make a further attempt to form a joint political force.

Thai Foreign Ministry sources say there have been subsequent contacts between the two sides at lower levels. "We've all been optimistic because the three factions see the importance of getting the Vietnamese out of Cambodia," said one official. "I think the optimism comes from the fact that Son Sann has been more forthcoming."

What may be agreed is still unclear, though current signs point to a vague compromise between the loose coalition formula proposed by Singapore and the Khmer Rouge's insistence on equal power-sharing and decision-making through consensus on important issues — presumably those to do with military and foreign-policy matters.

The most common prediction appears to be a coalition led by a titular president or head of state (Sihanouk), a prime minister (Sann) and a deputy prime minister (Samphan) and comprising a nine-man

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SOVIET PIPELINE

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PIPELINE

In his Christmas message in support of the Polish people on December 23, 1981, President Reagan announced, under the authority of the Export Administration Act of 1979, that he was applying limited economic sanctions against the Polish military government and that these sanctions would be gradually increased unless substantive progress was made in restoring the internationally guaranteed rights of the Polish people. The President specifically called for three reforms: freedom for "those in arbitrary detention (the lifting of) martial law, and (the restoration of) the internationally recognized rights of the Polish people to free speech and association."

The President also announced that "we're proposing to our allies the further restriction of high technology exports to Poland." At the same time, President Reagan informed President Brezhnev that unless the Soviet Union permitted the restoration of basic human rights in Poland guaranteed by the Helsinki Accords, "the United States will have no choice but to take further concrete political and economic measures affecting our relationship."

On December 29, 1981, President Reagan further declared that he had not received a satisfactory reply from the Soviets and therefore was implementing his pledge to take additional measures. Limited U.S. economic sanctions were imposed upon the Soviet Union, including a suspension of export licenses for high technology and oil and gas equipment. Noting that he will be watching events

in Poland closely, President Reagan added: "Further steps may be necessary, and I will be prepared to take them. American decisions will be determined by Soviet actions."

After repeated warnings to the Soviet Union and after extensive consultations with our European and Japanese allies, President Reagan on June 18, 1982, again reviewed the sanctions on the export of oil and gas equipment to the Soviet Union which were originally imposed on December 29, 1981 and announced his decision "to extend these sanctions through adoption of new regulations to include equipment produced by subsidiaries of US companies abroad, as well as equipment produced abroad under licenses issued by US companies." The President has made it clear that he regards this issue as "a matter of principle."

The foreign companies involved all knew in advance that this kind of action might be taken at some point in the future. All of them had voluntarily signed contracts placing themselves under US export controls insofar as they received US licenses to produce certain technological products.

At a subsequent press conference, President Reagan explained:

We tried to persuade our allies not to go forward with the pipeline for two reasons. One, we think there is a risk that if they become industrially dependent on the Soviet Union for energy -- and all the valves are on the Soviet side of the border -- that the Soviet Union can engage in a kind of blackmail when that happens.

(Secondly) the Soviet Union is very hard pressed financially and economically today... They (have) poured all of their resources into the most massive military build-up the world has ever seen. And ... the Soviet Union, now hard pressed for cash because of its own actions, can perceive anywhere from 10 to 12 billion dollars a year in hard cash payments in return for the energy when the pipeline is completed -- which I assume, if they continue the present policies, would be used to arm further against the rest of us ... and thus force more cost for armaments for the rest of the world.

The Issue: Should the West subsidize the Siberian Pipeline?

The underlying issue is whether the West should subsidize the building of a Siberian pipeline which will enable the Soviet Union, in effect, to transform natural gas into tanks and guns, thus increasing the risk of war and the costs of Western defense.

The US Government believes that, generally speaking, trade with the Soviet bloc should be governed by market principles. Since technology determines what can be done and interest rates determine what will be done, it is important that such transactions be made at market rates of interest, without subsidies from taxpayers either here or abroad. Otherwise there is no way of knowing whether or not any particular transaction ought to be concluded. Subsidies (including government guaranteed loans at below-market rates of interest) divert scarce resources from more worthwhile activities which would better serve the needs of more people.

The Siberian Pipeline: Origins and Financing

In the last decade Soviet energy exports have become more and more important to the economies of both the Soviet Union and Western Europe.

West European imports of Soviet oil increased more than 50 percent in the 1970s -- from 680,000 barrels a day in 1971 to just over a million barrels a day in 1979. Imports of Soviet natural gas increased ten-fold, from 200 million cubic feet a day in 1972 to 2.2 billion cubic feet a day in 1980.

Soviet energy exports have therefore become critical to their sagging economy. In 1980, oil sales accounted for two-thirds of all foreign exchange dollars earned by the Soviets. Oil sales now account for 70 percent of all Soviet trade outside of their own bloc.

Western countries, especially European but also the United States and Japan, have been very helpful to the Soviet economy. They have enabled the Soviets to earn badly needed hard currency by assisting in the financing and in supplying equipment needed to exploit Soviet energy, making up for Soviet weaknesses in energy technology. The proposed Siberian Pipeline is the latest and largest example of this recent historical trend.

Soviet officials, possibly over-enthusiastically, have described the pipeline as the "largest project in recorded history." It is certainly their largest East-West trade agreement in history

The line was planned to originate in the undeveloped Yamburg fields, in the Yamal region of Western Siberia. If the pipeline is eventually built, the route is likely to be to the Czechoslovak border where it will continue through an existing trunkline to Bavaria, fanning out to the Western European customers. The proposed 3600 mile pipeline would send an estimated 40 billion cubic meters of natural gas worth between \$10 and \$12 billion each year; if other lines are built supplies could later rise to 70 billion cubic meters or higher.

The Soviets originally planned to start the flow of gas in 1984 and to finish the project in 1986, but it is now unlikely that this will happen on schedule, despite Soviet claims to the contrary.

The financing of the pipeline is being arranged by a consortium of European firms who will provide the Soviet Union with low interest loans (hovering around 7.8 percent -- about half the market rate); without this below-market financing it is unlikely the pipeline will ever be built. The Soviets will purchase from the West approximately \$10 to \$15 billion worth of equipment, materials and technology. Defenders of the pipeline argue that the Soviets will provide the gas at below market prices and will pay higher prices for the equipment and thus, in reality, will pay market interest rates. The truth, however, is that the project consists of such an intricate maze of open subsidies and hidden subsidies that no one can say with any certainty what the real prices of the Soviet purchases are or will be.

The pipeline project was first conceived after the OPEC price jump at a time when most observers believed that it was essential for Western Europe to diversify its sources of energy. At that period, the energy reserves in the North Sea were thought to be much less than present estimates. With recent changes in the international energy markets, it is now likely that the West Europeans could secure cheaper and more reliable energy supplies elsewhere. Basically, it is very difficult to forecast what prices or economic (and political) are likely to be even a few years into the future.

What is certain at present is that the project is being financed with heavy assistance from Western European taxpayers through government subsidies and government guarantees of loans.

Because of the great uncertainties involved (and because of the Soviet bloc's towering unpaid debt, now held by worried Western banks) the fact that the West German government, through its insurance agency, Hermes Credit Insurance Company, is guaranteeing 85 percent of the \$1.6 billion in commercial credits pledged by the West German banking consortium is significant. Would the Western banks have made this loan at such a low interest rate without the government guarantee?

The French government is underwriting its share of the package in a more straightforward manner -- government loans at 7.8 percent. West European taxpayers are more and more having second thoughts on the effects on their own long-range economic and political futures of their "investment" in the planned pipeline. The results

As Scott Thompson, Associate Director for Programs of the International Communication Agency, has recently pointed out: "In purely economic terms, does it make sense for Western governments to borrow in the capital markets at 15 percent and re-lend to the Soviet Union at half that price? Much has been made in Europe of the effect of U.S. budget deficits in contributing to high world interest rates. But, does not massive lending to the Soviet Union at subsidized rates also reduce the supply of available capital and help drive up interest rates? ...

Enlightened leadership must look at the long-term economic costs to the West of subsidizing the Soviet economy, not just the immediate benefits of such actions Reviewing the results of the past decade, can it not be argued that expanded East-West economic relations have done more to induce Western restraint in the face of Soviet misconduct than to discourage Soviet misbehavior?"

It is becoming increasingly clear tht such arguments are beginning to have an effect on West European public opinion. Despite the views of the governments and of those powerful interests who will benefit directly if the pipeline is built it is fair to say that European taxpayers are divided in their opinions on the pipeline.

According to recent polls, in 1981, 18 percent of the British and 20 percent of the West Germans believed that increasing energy dependence on the Soviet Union would make their nations vulnerable to political pressures from the USSR. By April of

1982, 32 percent of the British and 32 percent of the West Germans shared this concern.

When asked if they believe their own country should make special concessions, such as low interest loans and credits, in order to promote trade with the Soviet Union, only 10 percent of Britons and 17 percent of West Germans approved of such a policy.

In addition, 60 percent of Britons and 37 percent of West Germans think that their own countries would be better off if they coordinated trade policy more closely with the United States, even if it means trading less with the Soviet Union.

Judging by these surveys, there is at least a substantial amount of support among West European taxpayers for United States policy toward the Soviet Union on this issue.

What Will Happen IF The Pipeline Is Built?

The US Government anticipated three major negative effects if the Pipeline is built. As President Reagan has pointed out, building the Pipeline with Western subsidies will:

- o Send the wrong signal to the Soviets, the Poles and the whole world. People will think that the West is not being serious about human rights.

- o Result in the transfer from West to East of large sums of badly needed hard currency to the Soviets, with which they can buy high technology from the West, thus driving up the cost of allied defense.

- o Ensure that Soviet energy will become more important to the West European economy, leaving our allies more dependent on the Soviet Union and creating opportunities for the Soviets to exercise increased political pressure.

Despite repeated expressions of concern by all the NATO nations (including the United States) and indeed, most of the world, the violations of internationally guaranteed human rights in Poland have been diminished only slightly.

Specifically, on January 11, 1982, the NATO allies agreed to impose economic sanctions against the Polish military regime and the USSR as each government saw fit; all agreed that no government would interfere with the effectiveness of any other government's sanctions until three conditions in Poland were fulfilled: (1) the end of martial law; (2) the release of political prisoners; and (3) the resumption of a genuine dialogue between the State, the church, and eventually Solidarity.

Before sanctions were expanded on June 18, 1982, President Reagan and other senior administration officials held extensive consultations with the allies. He stressed that all Western governments were united in their opposition to events in Poland. At some point it would become necessary to match words with deeds. Unless we did so, the Soviets would rightly view the West as hypocritical and more concerned with business-as-usual than with the moral principle of internationally - guaranteed human rights and the freedom of an oppressed European people.

Those who argued for the policy of detente in the 1970's stressed that increased trade and interdependence with the Soviet Union would further the cause of human rights in Eastern Europe-- including the USSR itself. As events have amply demonstrated, however, the opposite result has taken place. Despite the crowning achievement of the detente policy-- the Helsinki Accords signed by all the nations of Europe-- the Soviet Union is as oppressive now as it has ever been.

As Richard Perle, Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Policy, has recently noted:

The notion that an increased volume of trade would lead to a lessening of political conflict and diminished Soviet emphasis on military power has been disproved. Political conflict has continued, largely unabated. The growth of Soviet military power has been relentless. Afghanistan has been invaded and continues to be occupied by Russian troops. Poland struggles to find a workable internal political order in the shadow of Soviet, Czech, Hungarian and East German divisions. A Yellow rain of toxic agents has descended on hapless tribesmen in South-east Asia.... It is simply no longer convincing to suggest that trade will moderate Soviet behavior or deflect it from its build-up of military power. If anything, the reverse has proven true: increased trade has enabled the Soviet Union to accomplish its military expansion faster and at a lower cost as Western technology and industrial assistance has become increasingly available.

Taking into account all these considerations, the President decided that moral leadership was required. The Russians respect consistency and firmness; on the issue of commerce versus liberty they know where the United States stands and so does the rest of the world.

Looking beyond the mutually agreed-upon sanctions, however, there is an underlying reason why the West should be gravely concerned about the pipeline -- a reason which would remain valid even if Poland should become a model of democracy tomorrow.

As we have seen, the pipeline will enable the Soviets to convert natural gas into tanks and guns -- with the help of the West.

Both the below-market-cost finance packaging and the expected hard currency income from the sale of gas will free scarce Soviet capital for more military spending. The Soviets will also be able to use this Western money to buy critically needed high technology for their military-industrial complex which, in turn, will save them billions in research and development costs.

As Lawrence Brady, Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Trade Administration, has pointed out: "One of the first actions taken by President Reagan when he assumed office was to request the Central Intelligence Agency to assess ways in which the USSR was legally and illegally acquiring sophisticated Western technology and applying it to its military industrial base. The results of this study ... provide a shocking picture of the degree to which the West's security has been eroded by technology transfers to the Warsaw Pact countries. In industry after industry in the USSR -- computers, microprocessors, and semi-conductors -- Western equipment, design and manufacturing processes have enabled Soviet planners to save billions and billions of dollars on research and development. Substantial Soviet progress, especially in the area of advanced electronics, now requires the allies to increase sharply their own defense budgets."

There can be no doubt that the transfer of hard currency from West to East in return for Soviet energy has helped the USSR to continue to increase its military expenditures at annual growth rates of 4 to 5 percent. At the same time, Soviet economic growth has declined from an average increase of 5 percent a year in

in the 1960s to 4 percent a year in the first half of the 1970s and 3 percent a year in the second half of the 1970s. By 1980 the economic growth rate had fallen to .07 percent with prospects for continuing decline throughout the present decade.

Despite the fact that Soviet capital investment, per capita consumption growth and GNP growth rates all declined substantially from 1960 to 1980, military spending sharply increased, reaching an estimated annual rate of \$223 billion in the 1970s. Many experts believe that Soviet military spending now absorbs at least 15 percent of their GNP -- more than half the share devoted to defense in this country.

Our chief advantage over the Soviet Union lies in our advanced technology which allows us to spend less on defense and keep fewer soldiers under arms. The Soviet government expects to earn \$150 billion to \$200 billion in hard currency over a 20 ^{year} ~~long~~ period from the sale of natural gas. Every dollar the Soviets can spend on advanced equipment from the West, however, weakens that advantage and forces us -- and our allies -- to spend more to keep the military balance of power from turning decisively against us.

Western banks and governments, in fact, are now deeply involved in the Eastern European economy as a whole. In fact, the West is increasingly being held hostage to mounting debts which Soviet

bloc governments are finding more and more difficult to repay. Credit transfers from West to East are being made partly at the expense of friendly nations in the Third World who desperately need scarce capital for their own development.

The West has entered upon a massive foreign aid program of government credits and guarantees which far exceeds U.S. credits to Western Europe through the Marshall Plan -- allowing for inflation. Approximately \$80 billion is now owed to Western banks by Eastern bloc nations. This debt vastly exceeds the annual amount of foreign currency being generated to service it.

Moreover, if the pipeline should prove to be economically unsuccessful, West European taxpayers will be forced to pay the bills when loans supported by government guarantees fall due. Fundamentally, we have to ask ourselves whether or not this increasing economic interdependence of Western and Eastern nations is desirable.

Although it is true that only about 5 to 6 percent of Western Europe's total energy consumption will come from the proposed Siberian pipeline, it is necessary to look beyond this particular pipeline -- which may be viewed as the camel's nose in the tent -- to the broader picture.

Assuming that the Siberian pipeline does go into operation in 1985 (as the Soviets claim it will) then it will carry \$10.7 billion worth of natural gas a year, raising the share of Western Europe's total energy needs met by the Soviet Union from 11 percent

Increasing East-West energy interdependence will offer fertile ground for Soviet diplomatic initiatives. Although each side will possess economic leverage over the other, it remains true that, taking into account the differences in the two political systems, democratic nations will be more sensitive to a threatened cut-off or slow-down in energy supplies than the Politburo would be to a loss of hard currency.

We know historically (from their reaction to the Arab oil boycott of 1973 and to subsequent Arab political pressure) that the consumer-oriented nations of Western Europe are likely future targets of similar energy pressures from a powerful state like the Soviet Union.

As must necessarily happen in democratic societies, a large and intricate network of interconnected constituency groups have developed in the West European nations as a result of rapidly increasing energy trade with the Soviets. Consumer demands on Western European governments would thus be added to pressures from banking, business and trade union groups who are naturally deeply concerned about the possible loss (or decline) in jobs and profits from the sale of steel pipe and other energy equipment to the Soviets. In addition, as we Americans know from our own experience, millions of other people -- friends and families of those directly concerned -- can be expected to make their views known at the ballot box and other places.

The political considerations will be heightened by the fact that many large industries in Western Europe are either government controlled or highly subsidized by the taxpayers. The high unemployment currently prevalent throughout the West is hardly a reassuring element in this politically sensitive environment.

Then too, a centrally controlled economy like the Soviet Union can place orders where it likes, and it can place them (or not place them) for political reasons as much as for economic ones.

The Soviet state could also decide to eliminate future competition (such as North Sea natural gas) by simply lowering the price of its own gas for a certain period.

In short, there is considerable reason to believe that the West Europeans may have mortgaged themselves to dependence on Soviet trade in the future. The real danger is that Soviet hints of a cut-off or slowdown in energy deliveries could bring about West European concessions on economic, political or even military issues a few years from now.

There is ample historical precedence to justify these fears.

It is a fact that the Soviets have turned off (or threatened to turn off) their energy supplies in order to influence political events on at least eight major occasions.

- o In 1948, when Yugoslavia left the Soviet bloc.
- o In 1961, when Albania moved into the Chinese orbit.
- o In 1956, against Hungary and Israel.
- o In 1962, against China.
- o In 1968, against Czechoslovakia.
- o In 1980, the USSR stated that Western Europe and Japan would risk losing Soviet fuel supplies if they joined the American-led sanctions imposed after the invasion of Afghanistan. This may well have been a factor in the eventual West European decision that total support for the sanctions would have unacceptable economic costs to themselves.
- o Only last year, the Kremlin threatened to disrupt Poland's oil supply unless the government repressed the trade union movement, which was threatening to turn Poland into a Workers' State.

There seems little doubt that the potential for blackmail on the part of the Soviet Union does exist. Many Europeans, both in government and out, are keenly aware of these dangers.

In addition to the multiple problems and dangers noted above, there is an overriding moral issue. There are, of course, no free trade unions in the USSR and the rights of Soviet working men and women have never been uppermost in the minds of the elderly men of the Politiburo.

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Recently, however, the French and German governments, and other private groups, have been investigating allegations that at least a substantial number of the workers who are building the pipeline are being coerced.

The President of France, Francois Mitterrand, has been quoted as saying that if these allegations are true then his government could not possibly participate in such a project.

The existence of slave labor camps -- the so-called Gulag Archipelago -- has been well known for years. The high hopes of the 1917 Revolution have been replaced by a growing institutionalized tyranny. An "ally" of the Soviet Union -- the Socialist Republic of Vietnam -- began a few years ago to develop a new export trade with the Soviets as a means of paying back its huge war debt. The new exports are human beings.

According to the best evidence available, the system works like this. Somewhere between 100,000 and 500,000 Vietnamese men and women are scheduled to be exported from Vietnam to the USSR and Eastern European countries over the next few years.

According to the respected British publication The Economist Foreign Report (September 17, 1981) "Estimates of numbers vary but authoritative east European sources say that up to 500,000 Vietnamese may work in eastern Europe between 1981 and 1985. Most are destined for the Soviet Union, where they will live in segregated communities with little contact with the local population.

The Vietnamese workers are due to receive 40% of their wages in local currency and the remaining 60% would be credited against Vietnam's trading debts with the Comecon countries.

Since the Vietnamese cannot afford to send skilled labor or technicians, the "guest workers" are unskilled laborers who are expected to work in remote development projects in Siberia and elsewhere. According to official Soviet statements, there were around 2 million unfilled job vacancies in the Soviet Union last November and Brezhnev has said that up to 400,000 additional workers will be needed in the next few years to develop new oil and gas fields in western Siberia."

The Soviet and Vietnamese governments claim that the workers are participating in this "labor cooperation" project voluntarily. High unemployment in South Vietnam is cited as a reason why many Vietnamese are eager to travel to Siberia for periods of 6 years without their families. Other sources maintain that there is some choice involved. The worker may choose to labor in Siberia or to fight in the army of occupation in Cambodia or to labor in one of the "New Economic Zones" in Vietnam. There is considerable evidence, however, that most of the workers being exported are former officers of the Army of South Vietnam, released from "re-education camps" so that their labor may pay back the Soviet war debt owed by the North Vietnamese.

Under this insidious system, the Vietnamese government achieves four objectives at once: (a) it removes dangerous dissidents from its territory; (b) it lessens unemployment at home; (c) it saves the cost of feeding the "re-educatees" (as they are called); and (d) it earns valuable foreign currency to assist Vietnam in paying its huge Soviet debt and in buying needed imports.

The Soviet Union, on the other hand, gets some of its debt repaid and receives badly needed workers to build project such as the Siberian pipeline -- so that the Soviets, in turn, can earn needed hard currency which can then be used to purchase advanced technology from the West.

Information on this new triangular slave trade is scattered and sometimes contradictory.

Some observers have argued, for instance, that the Soviet Union would be unlikely to import large numbers of troublesome dissidents into its territory. On the other hand, others have pointed out that while the Soviet government may have its weaknesses, lack of skill or experience in dealing with dissidents is not one of them.

Doubtless with unintended irony, the Vietnamese Minister of Labor, Mr. Dao Thien Thi, recently declared that "The Vietnamese workers are being employed in accordance with the communist system, and they enjoy the same rights as their Soviet colleagues who are doing the same type of work."

As the facts gradually emerge, however, it is very likely the West European governments will want to reconsider their position. Free Europeans are hardly likely to finance a pipeline built with slave labor.

On June 25, 1981 the International Association for Human Rights, based in West Germany, announced that "We have received reports from various locations in the Soviet Union that more and more prisoners sentenced to hard labor are being used to construct the Siberian natural gas pipeline. The number of prisoners actually working on the pipeline is estimated at 100,000 A number of well known political prisoners have likewise been forced into laboring on the Siberian pipeline. Among these are the Ukrainian writer Sinovi Krassivski and the Baptist Ministers Vladimir Marmus and Alexander Ussatjuk During the past two years, many more hard labor camps have been set up along the route of the Siberian pipeline. In Ustj-Ischim alone eight such camps exist. Other camps are located in Urengoi, Surgut, Tavda, Tjumen, Irbit and Lysva."

In summation, it is becoming increasingly clear that the Siberian pipeline with all its many ramifications is inimical to the spiritual ideas, the material prosperity and the national security of the peoples of Western Europe.

For all of the above reasons, the President concluded that it was against the best interests of the United States for our country to help the Soviets build the pipeline -- directly or indirectly.

Effects of the Sanctions on the Pipeline

On December 29, 1981, the President announced the original economic sanctions against the Soviet Union. The following restrictions were included:

- o "The issuance or renewal of licenses for the export to the USSR of electronic equipment, computers and other high technology materials is being suspended."

- o "Licenses will be required for export to the Soviet Union for an expanded list of oil and gas equipment. Issuance of such licenses will be suspended. This includes pipelayers."

On June 18, 1982, President Reagan extended these sanctions to include "equipment produced by subsidiaries of US companies abroad, as well as equipment produced under licenses issued by US companies."

The original controls prohibited US companies on our territory, such as General Electric and Caterpillar, from supplying gas turbines and pipelayers for the project. As a result of the sanctions, US firms have made sacrifices on behalf of the Polish people. Over \$850 million worth of contracts with the USSR were lost. The additional controls mean that certain European firms, such as France's Alsthom-Atlantique which manufactures GE-designed rotors (under license), will be legally

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forbidden to sell such products to the Soviet Union. The new controls also prohibit all US subsidiaries from shipping any parts for the pipeline, even though they are located outside of the United States.

Assessments of the effect of the sanctions on the pipeline vary. Most private and government experts expect the pipeline to be delayed about two years, perhaps longer.

Other turbine designs are available, but firms in Europe which could manufacture alternative motors are hindered by insufficient production facilities and current production backlogs. In addition, alternative motors are less powerful, would be more costly and are not readily available in sufficient quantities to meet the project's time schedule. They also raise major infrastructure problems; electrical facilities would have to be established, for instance.

While the Soviets possess the general technology to produce the necessary motors, it would require a major effort and the diversion of substantial resources from other uses (in large part military) for them to produce the turbines themselves. There is a serious question as to whether the West European banks would finance the pipeline on current terms if it were based upon Soviet turbines -- which are, to say the least, a less known factor compared to the American motors.

In short, without US cooperation, there is a good chance the generous subsidies now offered the USSR by West European banks and governments will be reduced, if not cancelled. If this were to happen we could look forward to the following results:

- o The cost and availability of new Western credit to the USSR would be reduced.

- o With less hard currency, the USSR would be able to buy less advanced technology; they would have to choose between devoting more of their scarce resources to building up their weakening economy or to building up their military machine.

- o A major step forward for the goal of arms control would result. The Russians would have to reduce their arms build-up, and we and our allies could afford to spend less on our own defenses.

- o The position of those in the Politburo who favor a less adventurous foreign policy and a more conciliatory attitude toward Poland would be strengthened since rational men will conclude that aggression does not pay.

- o People all over the world will see that the US means what it says: that we do not value commerce over human liberty. They will know our word can be relied on in the future.

o Future Soviet economic and diplomatic leverage over the Atlantic alliance will be reduced.

o World stability and the prospects for a lasting peace will be strengthened.

Foreign Policy Issues Between the US and Our Allies

Despite extensive consultations with our allies, in which all of the above points (and more) have been fully explored by the President and his senior officials, there remains a disagreement between the US and its major allies on this issue.

Some observers have argued that the President proposes economic warfare on the Soviet Union. This is not the case. Economic warfare has been defined as the use of economic instruments, primarily during a military conflict, to supplement other forms of warfare. Such measures are aimed at disrupting the enemies' internal financial and economic system and causing the disintegration of commercial ties among members of the enemy alliance.

The limited sanctions imposed by the President hardly constitute economic warfare. We are simply declining to help the completion of a project we deem not to be in our own interest -- or in the long-range interest of our allies and of world peace. The Soviet Union, as we have seen, has employed economic sanctions on numerous occasions in the past. It can hardly complain now if the situation is reversed.

Our European allies argue that the US is selling grain to the Soviets; that being the case, they say, how can we object to their buying gas from the Soviets?

In the first place, President Reagan decided not to negotiate a long-term grain agreement with the Soviets which would have greatly increased our grain sales to them. We supplied 70 percent of Soviet grain import needs in 1979, for instance, but only filled about a third of the USSR's grain needs in 1982. This loss of potential sales has meant a substantial sacrifice for American farmers.

Secondly (and more importantly) there is a crucial difference between selling grain and buying natural gas.

In the one case, the Soviets are using up large quantities of scarce foreign exchange in order to buy grain from us at market rates. In the second case, the Western Europeans are subsidizing the building of the Siberian Pipeline (at below-market rate loans often guaranteed by government agencies) in order to enable the Soviets to buy critically important advanced Western technology. This transaction will enable the Russians to save billions more rubles and dollars since they will be spared expensive research and development costs. As we have seen, this high technology will enable them to compete with us militarily in one of the major areas in which we have an advantage. This, in turn, will force us and the allies to spend more on our own defense. In addition,

the Soviets can and will obtain the grain elsewhere; they can only obtain advanced technology and the credits needed to buy it from the industrialized West.

Even some Europeans who understand the President's position on grain sales and support his sanctions against the Soviet Union, have argued, however, that the US has (a) infringed their sovereignty by forbidding European firms under US licenses to sell to the Soviets and (b) broken commercial contracts.

Both are false issues, however, the result of misunderstanding?

When the US firms licensed some European firms to produce certain equipment to which the US firms held the patent rights both the American and the Europeans forms expressly and voluntarily agreed that the contracts would be subject to US export control laws. This is standard procedure for most business contracts; when one of the parties is resident in a different state or nation, the contract specifies in advance the laws under which the contract is to be construed. As the British columnist, John O'Sullivan, has pointed out in the London Daily Telegraph.

"... the European companies licensing American technology for the pipeline from General Electric signed contracts which explicitly bound them to observe American export control legislation."

In short, the European firms and their governments knew that in return for the licenses, the companies were voluntarily accepting US export controls in this case. They knew in advance what

This is not a sovereignty issue, it is simply a matter of legally enforcing contracts voluntarily entered into on both sides.

A look at the record will see considerable disregard for contracts and solemn international agreements over this issue -- but any breaking of contracts has been done by others, not by President Reagan.

o Most important of all, the Soviet Union has not abided by the Helsinki Accords in which certain minimal civil liberties were guaranteed to all Europeans by international treaty. (In return, the present borders of the USSR, including the formerly free nations of the Baltic, were recognized.)

o The Soviet Union has encouraged (to say the least) the Polish military government to break its public pledges to have a serious and continuing dialogue with the Church and Solidarity in order to restore at least minimal liberties to the Polish people.

o The British, French and German governments have instructed several firms affected by the US sanctions to ignore their contracts with American firms and to ship to the Soviet government.

o On the other hand, President Reagan has kept his word to the Polish people and to the Soviet government. He has asked our European allies only to allow their own firms to observe the contracts they voluntarily signed with US firms.

In summation, as Under Secretary of State James L. Buckley has recently noted:

The policies enacted by the Administration follow common goals that have been proclaimed by our allies to bring about change in Poland. The alliance is involved in the complex process of shaping a common approach to managing our economic relations with the East. The debate over sanctions is only one element in this process, and while we share with our allies the view that Soviet pressures on Poland cannot be tolerated, there are differences over the most effective tactics. We are working with our allies to reconcile these differences and develop a unified approach. The strongest Western position vis-a-vis the Soviets will result when we and our allies can work out our current differences and agree on such a common approach.

Energy Source^o Alternative^s/to the Siberian Pipeline

Taking a more positive tack, there is a wide range of alternatives, and most of them more commercially attractive, to West European reliance on Soviet energy.

The Norwegian natural gas option would seem to be the most attractive alternative. There is no doubt that Norway has enormous reserves of both oil and natural gas. Total recoverable reserves are estimated to be 95 Trillion Cubic Feet of natural gas. Norway's gas reserves are thus 4.3 times the size of current estimates of the gas reserves on Alaska's North Slope.

Norway's production is growing rapidly. In 1974, the share of Norwegian exports accounted for by oil and gas was only 1 percent. In 1982 it was 27.5 percent. Experts believe that Norwegian natural gas could become a permanent and reliable substitute for the Soviet variety, probably at lower cost. Apart from anything else, the distances involved are considerably shorter.

Moreover, since all the construction of a Norwegian pipeline would be done within Western Europe there would be many economic advantages (including more jobs) for our friends on the continent. Finally, Norway is a member of NATO and is most unlikely to use natural gas for political leverage.

In addition to Norwegian gas, however, there are several other viable alternatives. A substantial amount of the North Sea oil and gas reserves are controlled by Britain, another faithful ally. There is also the possibility of developing a larger Algerian supply and the emergence of new sources in Holland, West Africa, Canada, Mexico, Alaska and elsewhere in the United States. American coal, in particular, exists in large enough reserves to supply at least a third of Western Europe's energy needs.

In view of declining demand for oil and natural gas, it now seems questionable whether Western Europe needs to import natural gas from the USSR on anything like the scale of the proposed Siberian pipeline.

It turns out that the number of jobs in Western Europe which will be created by the subsidized pipeline is not very large. In any case, as many Europeans have pointed out, if their taxpayers are going to subsidize jobs why should they not directly subsidize jobs for their own people or for their friends and allies in both the industrialized and developing worlds?

Summary

As President Reagan has pointed out, the question of whether or not the US should help the Soviets build their pipeline is a moral and human rights issue.

As the President has said, "The objective in imposing the sanctions has been and continues to be to advance reconciliation in Poland. Since December 30, 1981, little has changed concerning the situation in Poland; there has been no movement that would enable us to undertake positive, reciprocal measures."

The pipeline is also a security and arms control issue. If the US and its allies are serious about reducing the arms race, we should not assist the Soviet war machine in its quest for more hard currency which they will transform into technology, tanks and guns. We have now an opportunity to do something about the increasing levels of armaments in this world. We will be able to lower the level of our armaments as the Soviets are forced to lower the level of theirs.

If we believe in human rights, arms control and world peace, there is only one position we and the allies can take. We must not subsidize the pipeline and thereby Soviet oppression and their military build-up.

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September 22, 1982

PRESS STATEMENT

Forced Labor in the USSR

We've received a growing number of reports that the USSR has used a large number of prisoners -- including, thousands of political prisoners -- to work on massive labor projects. According to at least one such report, for example, at least 100,000 such forced laborers are being used on the heavy infrastructure work of clearing swamps, cutting timber and building access roads for the Yamal gas pipeline. These forced laborers reportedly include religious dissidents and other prisoners of conscience.

These reports have come from a wide variety of individuals and organizations, in Europe, Asia and the US. The sources include human rights organizations; labor organizations; laborers who have managed to emigrate from the Soviet Union after working under these conditions; and letters reaching Asia and the West from the USSR.

We are not claiming to have evidence resembling a "smoking gun." Given the closed nature of Soviet society and the official control of the Soviet media, moreover, there may never be a "smoking gun." But the information being released by this wide range of knowledgeable individuals and organizations spanning three continents, some with first hand experience of these labor conditions, goes into considerable detail and deserves serious examination.

Reliable estimates place the total number of forced laborers in the Soviet Union today at approximately 4 million. Further, it is well established that the Soviet Union has a history of using forced labor on a mass scale -- including political prisoners -- on major projects, particularly in Siberia -- where the official press has acknowledged that it is difficult to persuade Soviet workers to go there voluntarily. To cite only two examples, some 250,000 forced laborers are believed to have perished during the 1930's while working on the construction of the Bielomorsk Canal. And in the 1970's thousands of forced laborers were reported to be building the Baikal-Amur railway extension in Southeastern Siberia.

As regards foreign laborers, the official Soviet media itself has admitted that several thousand Vietnamese and other Southeast Asian laborers have been imported into the USSR and has intimated that many thousands more are likely to be imported in the near future. Information on the nature of this

program is fragmentary. We do not know whether or not the Vietnamese laborers are working on the Siberian pipeline. But we are very concerned about indications that Vietnamese may be coerced into working in the USSR and Eastern Europe and that a portion of the salary paid to them might be deducted to offset Vietnam's debts to the host country. In addition, we have received reports that the Soviet authorities are placing limitations on the ability of these workers to communicate with their families and friends outside the USSR. We believe it is important that international attention be given to this situation, given the obvious possibility of exploitation of these workers.

The Soviet Government could contribute to establishing the truth about these very serious charges by permitting an objective examination of labor conditions on its various Siberian projects, and the conditions in which Soviet political prisoners live and work. We would welcome such an independent international investigation, but the prospects for obtaining this are probably not bright. For example, charges of use of forced labor have been made in the past against the USSR in the International Labor Organization (ILO). However the Soviet authorities have consistently refused to allow an ILO mission to visit the USSR to investigate these charges.

Because of the seriousness of these charges, and the massive human rights violations which they imply, we believe the international community has a responsibility to investigate them. The USG, for its part, is thoroughly examining the information being brought to bear on this issue, and we understand that several other governments have indicated similar intentions. As our examination proceeds, we will -- wherever possible -- make our findings available to the public. We hope that other governments and private organizations will do the same.

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USSR: Forced Labor on Pipeline

Recent allegations in the Western press and by the International Society of Human Rights about large-scale Soviet use of forced labor in the construction of the Siberian gas export pipeline are not supported by reliable evidence. [Redacted]

Several emigre sources indicate that some of the estimated 2 million unconfined parolees and probationers have been forced to work on large construction projects in the past, including pipelines. [Redacted]

[Redacted] past use of parolees for compressor station construction on major pipelines. [Redacted]

[Redacted] and could not confirm recent allegations of use of prisoners from specific forced-labor camps on the export pipeline. [Redacted]

Nearly 2 million additional prisoners confined to 1,100 heavily secured forced-labor camps work at secured worksites near their camps. Preliminary analysis indicates that charges concerning new forced-labor camps at seven locations along the export pipeline route lack credibility:

-- [Redacted] none of the forced-labor camps alleged to be at Urengoy, Ust'-Ishim, or Irbit--the last two are not near any pipeline.

--Old forced-labor camps exist at Lys'va, near the proposed pipeline route, but prisoners are engaged in logging.

--Old forced-labor camps exist at Tyumen', Tavda, and Surgut, but these are far from the pipeline route. [Redacted]

Vietnamese laborers in the USSR number about 7,000 and will increase during the next five years. Evidence indicates that they are volunteers engaged in low-skill jobs or in training programs. [Redacted]

Comment: Some forced labor--parolees and probationers--will probably be used on selected tasks of the export pipeline construction, in view of their use in the past on similar pipelines and because of the current labor shortage in the USSR. They are likely to be used in isolated areas constructing compressor stations and associated housing and support structures. Heavily guarded prisoners and forced laborers from Vietnam are not likely to be employed on the pipeline. [Redacted]

~~Top Secret~~
[Redacted]

18 September 1982

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NLRR F06-114/9 #10777

BY KML NARA DATE 9/25/12

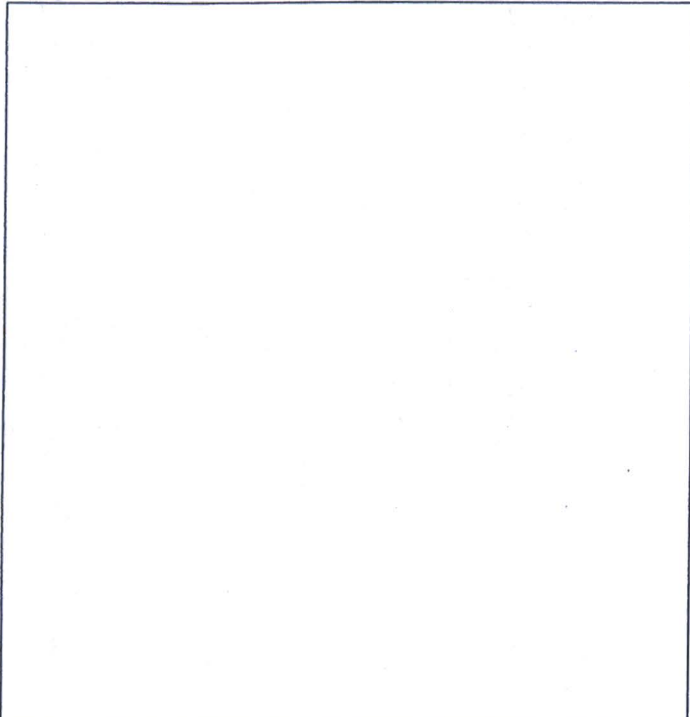
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PIPELINE - POLITICAL PRISONERS 51

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
MESSAGE CENTER

10780

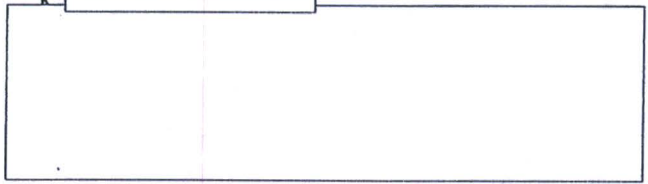


SUCH "DIRTY WORK" WAS RESERVED FOR THE CRIMINAL OVERSEER, EVEN THOUGH THAT WORK WAS INDIRECTLY SANCTIONED BY THE MVD. [REDACTED] COMMENT: ON ONE OCCASION AT THE GARELNIKI SITE OF FORCED LABOR CAMP 231-3 IN THE KI DISTRICT OF THE KIROV REGION, A YOUNG AND INEXPERIENCED MVD OFFICER IN THE PRESENCE OF TWO SENIOR MVD GUARDS, KICKED A POLITICAL PRISONER VICIOUSLY IN THE BACK. WITNESSED BY SEVERAL OTHER PRISONERS, THREE OF THE PRISONERS CHARGED THE MVD OFFICER AND BRUTALLY BEAT HIM WHILE THE OTHER TWO MVD SENIOR GUARDS WATCHED PASSIVELY WITH MACHINE GUNS IN HAND. IT WAS OBVIOUS THE SENIOR MVD OFFICERS WERE TEACHING THE MVD RECRUIT A LESSON AS FAR AS TREATMENT OF PRISONERS WAS CONCERNED.)

3. [REDACTED] COMMENT: MVD GUARDS POSTED ON TOWERS TO OBSERVE PRISONERS WERE CALLED "PARROTS" BY THE CRIMINALS BECAUSE THEY WOULD YELL AT EACH OTHER -- TOWER-TO-TOWER -- EVERY FEW MINUTES TO MAKE SURE THEY ALL REMAINED AWAKE. ALTHOUGH THE MVD USED THEIR "MIDDLEMEN" TO ACCOMPLISH THEIR GOALS, THERE WERE OTHER WAYS TO MAKE THEIR POINTS. ON ONE OCCASION, MVD OFFICERS WERE ADVISED BY A TEAM LEADER THAT THE TEMPERATURE ON A CONSTRUCTION SITE WAS MINUS 50 DEGREES FAHRENHEIT (F). UNDER MVD GUIDELINES, PRISONERS COULD NOT BE FORCED TO WORK WHEN THE TEMPERATURE FELL BELOW MINUS 40 DEGREES F. ON THIS OCCASION, HOWEVER, MVD OFFICERS COMPLACENCY DID NOT HAVE A THERMOMETER AND EVEN IF IT WERE MINUS 50 DEGREES F, IT WOULD "CERTAINLY WARM UP DURING THE DAY.")

4. AS FOR PROCUREMENT OF PRISONERS FOR SOVIET JAILS OR LABOR CAMPS, THE MVD WAS INSTRUCTED BY THE GULAG TO SUPPLY A DESIGNATED NUMBER TO A PARTICULAR CONSTRUCTION SITE. ALL PRISONS AND LABOR CAMPS HAD "QUOTAS" AS TO THE MINIMUM NUMBER OF PRISONERS ON HAND; THE MVD WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR KEEPING A LIST OF NAMES AND NUMBERS OF PRISONERS AVAILABLE.

5. [REDACTED]
6. [REDACTED]



DIST: 15 SEPT 82

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
DOMESTIC COLLECTION DIVISION

THIS IS AN INFORMATION REPORT, NOT FINALLY EVALUATED INTELLIGENCE
REPORT CLASS [REDACTED]

COUNTRY: USSR

SUBJECT: 1. INVOLVEMENT OF MVD IN THE USE OF FORCED LABOR
2. TREATMENT OF POLITICAL PRISONERS
(NOI: 1978'S-1981)

REF: [REDACTED]

SOURCE: [REDACTED]

1. DURING THE LATE 1978'S AND AS LATE AS 1981, GUARDS OF THE USSR'S MINISTRY OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS (MINISTERSTVO VNUTRENNYKH DEL OR MVD) CLOSELY GUARDED, BUT ONLY ON RARE OCCASIONS PHYSICALLY ABUSED POLITICAL PRISONERS ASSIGNED TO SOVIET FORCED LABOR CAMPS AND/OR CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS IN THE USSR. POLITICAL PRISONERS WERE AT TIMES TORTURED, BEATEN, STARVED, AND DENIED WARM CLOTHING FOR VARIOUS REASONS INCLUDING NOT WORKING UP TO "STANDARD" BUT GENERALLY SUFFERED SUCH FATE AT THE HANDS OF THE "COMMON CRIMINALS" WHO SERVED AS MIDDLE MEN FOR THE MVD. ORDERS TO PHYSICALLY ABUSE POLITICAL PRISONERS, WHO WERE "ALWAYS" ASSIGNED THE MOST MONOTONOUS, MENIAL, AND DEMANDING WORK AT CONSTRUCTION SITES, THUS MOSTLY ORIGINATED WITH THE MVD, BUT WERE ALMOST WITHOUT EXCEPTION CARRIED OUT BY THE "COMMON CRIMINALS" WHO SERVED AS "OVERSEERS" AND "CREW LEADERS" ON SUCH PROJECTS. [REDACTED]

2. MVD GUARDS WERE GENERALLY RESPECTED AND FEARED BY POLITICAL PRISONERS IN FORCED LABOR CAMPS. AT ANY ONE CONSTRUCTION SITE, THE MVD WOULD POST MACHINE GUN CARRYING GUARDS IN TOWERS TO WATCH PRISONERS' WORK. THESE GUARDS APPARENTLY HAD THE AUTHORITY AND DID SHOOT KILL ANY PRISONER WHO ATTEMPTED TO ESCAPE OR EVEN THOSE WHO INADVERTENTLY WANDERED BEYOND THE BOUNDARIES ESTABLISHED BY THE MVD AS THE WORKING AREA FOR THAT PARTICULAR DAY. MVD GUARDS WOULD NOT, HOWEVER, PERSONALLY MISTREAT ANY PRISONER WORKING ON THE PROJECT, BE THAT PRISONER A "COMMON" OR "POLITICAL" PRISONER.

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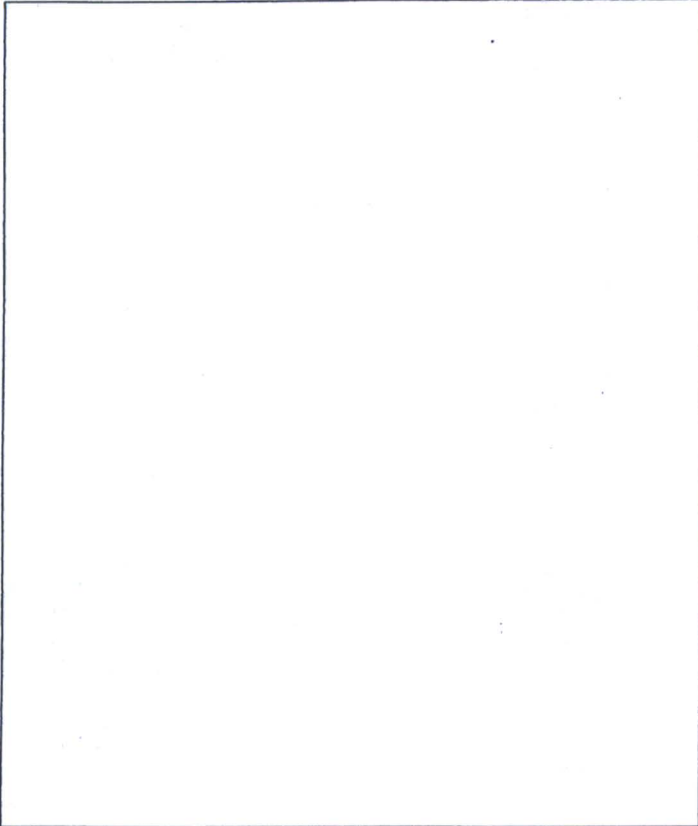
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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
MESSAGE CENTER

PIPELINE - 53
POL. PRISONERS

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THEM PERFORMED LABOR DETAILS WHICH REQUIRED RELATIVELY CLOSE SUPERVISION BOTH BY GUARDS AND BY FOREMEN, SUCH AS OPERATING SAWS AND OTHER MACHINERY IN SAWMILLS AND PLYWOOD PLANTS. THE PRISONERS IN THE SMALLER CAMPS, ON THE OTHER HAND, PERFORMED LABOR DETAILS WHICH ENABLED THEM TO MOVE ABOUT WITH A RELATIVELY GREATER DEGREE OF FREEDOM. THESE DETAILS, SUCH AS THE INITIAL CLEARING OF FORESTS AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF LOGGING ROADS, WERE EXTREMELY DEMANDING PHYSICALLY. [REDACTED] COMMENT: IT WOULD BE FAIR TO CHARACTERIZE ALL OF THE LABOR DETAILS AS "DIRTY WORK," IN THE SENSE THAT THEY CONSISTED OF THINGS WHICH FREE, HIRED LABORERS DID NOT LIKE TO DO. BUT THE "DIRTIEST" WORK BY FAR WAS THAT PERFORMED BY PRISONERS WITHOUT CLOSE SUPERVISION BY GUARDS OR FOREMEN.)

3. NONE OF THE PRISONERS IN THE CAMPS GUARDED BY THE MEN IN REGIMENT NUMBER 581 WORKED ON OIL, GAS OR OTHER PIPELINE DURING THE YEARS 1971-1973. SIMILARLY, THERE WERE NO RUMORS AMONG THE SOLDIERS OF THE 581ST REGIMENT ABOUT PIPELINE WORK PERFORMED BY PRISONERS, WHETHER IN THE KOHI ASSR OR ELSEWHERE. HOWEVER, SEVERAL UNIDENTIFIED OFFICERS OF THE REGIMENT TOLD THE MEN THAT DURING THE 1960'S THEY HAD GUARDED PRISONERS WHO HAD PERFORMED ALL OF THE INITIAL WORK ON THE ABAKAN-TAYSHET RAILROAD IN THE BURYAT ASSR. [REDACTED] COMMENT: THIS WAS TYPICAL OF THE "DIRTIEST" WORK THAT PRISONERS HAD TO PLRFORM.) (FIELD COMMENT: SOURCE COULD NOT SPECULATE ABOUT A CONNECTION, IF ANY, BETWEEN THIS RAILROAD AND ENERGY RESOURCES. HOWLVER, HE HAD FORNED THE BELIEF THAT ITS PRINCIPAL PURPOSE WAS TO FACILITATE THE MOVEMENT OF TROOPS TO THE CHINESE BORDER IN THE EVENT OF HOSTILITIES, A VIEW WHICH HE SAID HE HAD PROBABLY DEVELOPED AFTER LISTENING TO OFFICERS DISCUSS THE RAILROAD.)

- 4. [REDACTED]
- 5. [REDACTED]



DIST: 20 SEPT 82

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
DOMESTIC COLLECTION DIVISION

THIS IS AN INFORMATION REPORT, NOT FINALLY EVALUATED INTELLIGENCE REPORT CLASS [REDACTED]

COUNTY: USSR

SUBJECT: USE OF PRISON LABOR IN KOHI ASSR FOR FOREST CLEARING AND IN SAWMILLS (OO: 1971-1973)

REF: [REDACTED]

SOURCE: [REDACTED]

1. DURING THE PERIOD 1971-1973 THE KOHI ASSR WAS A MAJOR CENTER OF PRISON CAMPS. MOST OF THE TERRITORY OF THE ASSR WAS COVERED WITH TAIGA AND A LARGE NUMBER OF CAMPS, PROBABLY MORE THAN 100, WERE SITUATED DEEP IN THE TAIGA. CRIMINAL SENTRY GUARDS REGIMENT NUMBER 581, WHICH WAS HEADQUARTERED TO THE SOUTH OF THE KOHI ASSR IN THE CITY OF KIROV, CONSISTED OF CRIMINAL SENTRY GUARD COMPANIES WHOSE MEN SERVED AS GUARDS AT PERHAPS 10-20 PRISON CAMPS IN THE KOHI ASSR. [REDACTED] COMMENT: SOURCE COULD NOT RECALL THE PRECISE LOCATIONS OF ANY OF THE CAMPS BUT BELIEVED MOST OF THEM WERE IN THE SOUTHERN PART OF THE ASSR. HE BASED THIS BELIEF ON THE FACT THAT MANY OF THE OFFICERS MADE DAILY TRIPS FROM HEADQUARTERS IN KIROV TO THE CAMPS WHICH THE UNITS GUARDED.)

2. THE CAMPS RANGED IN SIZE FROM APPROXIMATELY 1,000 PRISONERS TO APPROXIMATELY 4,000 PRISONERS. ALL OF THE PRISONERS WERE COMMON CRIMINALS; THERE WERE NO POLITICAL PRISONERS AMONG THEM. THE PRISONERS IN ALL OF THE CAMPS WORKED IN ONE ASPECT OR ANOTHER OF THE FORESTRY AND WOODWORKING INDUSTRY. THE VARIATIONS IN THE SIZES OF THE CAMPS CORRESPONDED BOTH TO THE DEGREE OF SECURITY (REZHIM) IN FORCE AND TO THE NATURE OF THE LABOR WHICH THE PRISONERS PERFORMED. THE LARGER CAMPS WERE THE MORE SECURE, AND THE PRISONERS AT

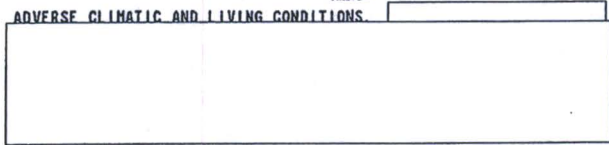
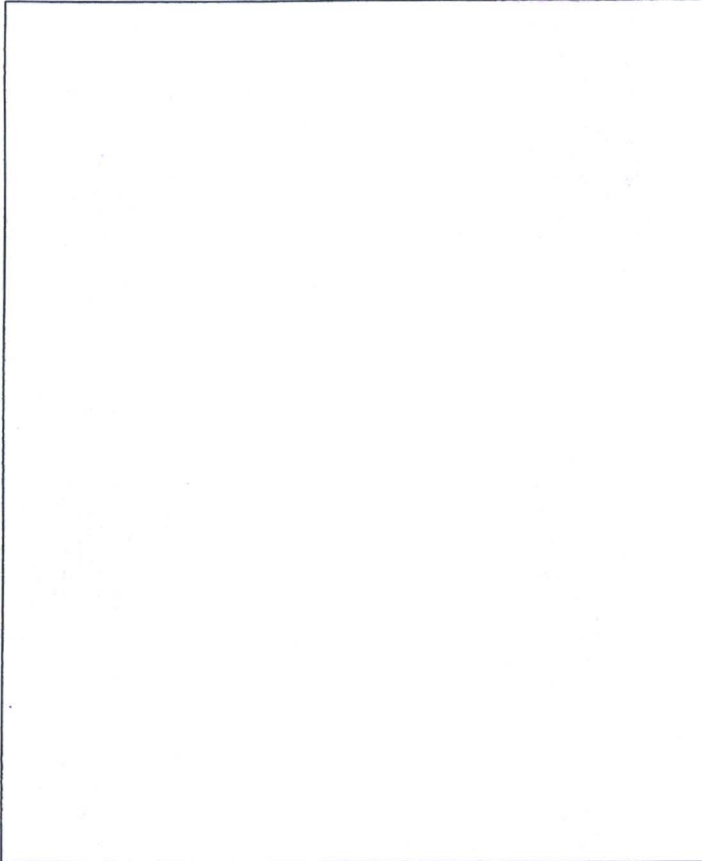
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ADVERSE CLIMATIC AND LIVING CONDITIONS. [REDACTED]

2. CRIMINAL PRISONERS OFTEN WERE USED AS UNSKILLED LABORERS IN THE 1970'S TO CLEAR AWAY FORESTS, DRAIN SWAMPS, AND TO FASHION ROADWAYS FOR LAYING PIPELINES. THAT WORK ALSO WAS DONE IN SOME AREAS BY MILITARY CONSTRUCTION BATTALIONS. PEOPLE FROM THE ASIAN REPUBLICS SUCH AS KAZAKHSTAN FREQUENTLY COMPRISED THE WORK FORCE. THE CRIMINAL FORCE CREWS WERE USED FOR LAND CLEARING WORK IN THE UKRAINE PRIOR TO THE WORK ON THE YAMAL GAS PIPELINE PROJECT. WHEN THE CLEARING WORK WAS COMPLETED, THE CRIMINAL WORK CREWS WERE REMOVED FROM THE WORK SITES BEFORE THE SKILLED LABORERS AND KOMSOMOL CONSTRUCTION GROUPS ARRIVED. EVERY EFFORT WAS MADE NOT TO INFORM THE LATTER GROUPS THAT CRIMINAL LABOR HAD BEEN USED ON THE PROJECT.

3. AS OF THE MID-1970'S BOTH POLITICAL AND CRIMINAL PRISONERS WERE TASKED WITH PRELIMINARY CLEARING WORK AT PIPELINE SITES. THOSE WORKERS EARNED NO WAGES. THE WORKERS DESIGNATED AS "KHIMIYA" DID, HOWEVER, EARN WAGES FOR UNSKILLED LABOR ON PIPELINE PROJECTS. [REDACTED] COMMENT: SOURCE INDICATED THAT THE TERM KHIMIYA REFERRED TO THOSE INDIVIDUAL WHO HAD SERVED PRISON TERMS BUT WHO WERE DENIED THEIR CHOICE OF RELOCATION SITE IN THE USSR. SUCH INDIVIDUALS WERE PLACED INSTEAD ON VARIOUS WORK PROJECTS.)

4. IN THE LATE 1970'S WORKERS WHO HELD UNSKILLED JOBS ON PIPELINE CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS EARNED ABOUT 300 RUBLES PER MONTH. THOSE WHO HELD SKILLED JOBS SUCH AS PIPE WELDING EARNED 600-700 RUBLES PER MONTH. THE ADDITIONAL PAY WAS REFERRED TO AS "CLIMATIC" OR HARDSHIP ALLOWANCES.

5. THERE WERE FOUR CATEGORIES OF CRIMINAL CAMPS IN THE USSR. THE CAMP OF GENERAL REGIME (LAGER' OBSHCHEGO REZHIMA) WAS FOR INDIVIDUALS SENTENCED FOR LIGHT OFFENSES WITH TERMS OF

DIST: 22 SEPTEMBER 1982

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
DOMESTIC COLLECTION DIVISION

THIS IS AN INFORMATION REPORT, NOT FINALLY EVALUATED INTELLIGENCE REPORT CLASS [REDACTED]

COUNTRY: USSR
SUBJECT: USE OF CRIMINAL LABOR ON SOVIET PIPELINE CONSTRUCTION (OO: 1930'S TO 1977)

REF: [REDACTED]
SOURCE: [REDACTED]

SUMMARY: AS OF THE MID-1970S WORKERS FROM PRISON CAMPS WERE SUPPLYING UNSKILLED LABOR ON GAS AND OIL PIPELINE PROJECTS IN THE USSR. SPECIFICALLY, PRISON CAMP LABOR WAS USED FOR PRELIMINARY WORK SUCH AS CLEARING FORESTS AND PREPARING ROADS AT THE GAS COMPRESSOR STATION AT BOGORODCHANI. SUCH WORKERS RECEIVED NO WAGES AND USUALLY WERE HOUSED IN TENT COMMUNITIES.
END SUMMARY

1. DURING THE PERIOD COVERING ROUGHLY 1960-1967 THE AVAILABILITY OF LABOR AND CAPITAL INVESTMENT WAS MORE THAN ADEQUATE TO COVER CONSTRUCTION ON OIL AND GAS PIPELINES IN THE USSR. AS OF THE LATE 1970'S, HOWEVER, FUNDING AND SKILLED LABOR BECAME INCREASINGLY SCARCE. PIPELINE CONSTRUCTION WORK IN PARTICULAR GREW MORE LABOR INTENSIVE. DATING BACK TO THE YEARS OF THE 1930'S THROUGH 1950'S YOUNG PEOPLE HAD A VERY ENTHUSIASTIC ATTITUDE ABOUT SIGNING UP FOR DUTY ON OIL AND GAS PIPELINE CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS; DURING THE 1970'S IT BECAME INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT TO RECRUIT INDIVIDUALS TO WORK UNDER

UP TO SEVEN YEARS. THE CAMP OF INTENSIFIED REGIME (LAGER' USILENNOGO REZHIMA) WAS FOR FIRST OFFENDERS OF SERIOUS CRIMES. THE CAMP OF STRICT OR SEVERE REGIME (LAGER' STROGOGO REZHIMA) WAS FOR CRIMINALS SENTENCED FOR MURDER, RAPE, AND OTHER SERIOUS CRIMES. THE CAMP OF SPECIAL REGIME (LAGER' OSOBOGO REZHIMA) WAS FOR REPEAT OFFENDERS, INDIVIDUALS WHO WERE CONSIDERED TO BE ESPECIALLY DANGEROUS TO SOCIETY. A CAMP DESIGNATED AS "USILENNOGO REZHIMA" WAS LOCATED NEAR KOLOMYYA AND PRISONERS AT THAT CAMP WERE USED AS UNSKILLED LABORERS ON THE UZHGOROD SECTION OF THE ORENBURG PIPELINE. A CAMP DESIGNATED AS "STROGOGO REZHIMA" AT SOKI RYANY NEAR CHERNOVTSY ALSO SUPPLIED UNSKILLED LABOR TO THE PIPELINE PROJECT. WORKERS AT THE LATTER CAMP NORMALLY DID MINING AND QUARRY WORK.

6. ONLY CRIMINAL CAMPS WERE LOCATED IN THE AREA OF IVANO-FRANKOVSK. CAMPS FOR POLITICAL PRISONERS USUALLY WERE LOCATED IN THE LESS POPULATED EASTERN REGIONS OF THE USSR IN ORDER TO DECREASE THE POSSIBILITY OF CONTACT WITH OTHER SOVIET CITIZENS. SUCH CAMPS WERE LOCATED IN CONSTRUCTION SITES ALONG THE URENGOY SECTION OF THE PIPELINE AND WERE BELIEVED TO HAVE SUPPLIED UNSKILLED LABOR FOR THE PROJECT.

7. IN 1975 OR 1976 THE IVANO-FRANKOVSK DEPARTMENT OF THE MOSCOW SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH INSTITUTE FOR DRILLING EQUIPMENT PROVIDED BORING EQUIPMENT AND ACCEPTED CONTRACT WORK ASSIGNMENTS FOR CONSTRUCTION OF THE GAS COMPRESSOR STATION AT BOGORODCHANI, OUTSIDE OF IVANO-FRANKOVSK. CRIMINAL CAMPS LOCATED IN THE AREA SUPPLIED THE UNSKILLED LABOR FOR THAT PROJECT. UNITS FROM THE MVD FORCES ATTACHED TO IVANO-FRANKOVSK GUARDED THE CRIMINAL LABORERS. [REDACTED]

8. THE SOVIETS GENERALLY WERE NOT INTERESTED IN INVESTING THE LABOR AND CAPITAL REQUIRED TO ERECT TEMPORARY HOUSING AT CONSTRUCTION SITES FOR COMPRESSOR STATIONS. IF THE CONSTRUCTION SITES WERE RELATIVELY CLOSE TO A CITY OR VILLAGE,

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SKILLED LABOR RECEIVED HOUSING WITHIN THE CITY. IF THE SITES WERE AT A GOOD DISTANCE FROM CONSTRUCTION SITES, THE WORKERS LIVED IN TENTS. THE CRIMINAL LABOR FORCE WAS PLACED IN TENT COMMUNITIES REGARDLESS OF THE LOCATION OF CONSTRUCTION SITES IN ORDER TO SEGREGATE THOSE WORKERS FROM THE LOCAL POPULACE.

9. [REDACTED] COMMENT: BASED ON HIS PERSONAL EXPERIENCE IN WORK AT VARIOUS OIL AND GAS DRILLING SITES, SOURCE IS OF THE OPINION THAT THE SOVIETS DEFINITELY ARE CAPABLE OF COMPLETING THE YAMAL PIPELINE WITH OR WITHOUT THE ASSISTANCE OF WESTERN TECHNOLOGY. THE ABSENCE OF THAT TECHNOLOGY, LIKELY WOULD DELAY COMPLETION OF THE PROJECT BY SEVERAL YEARS AND WOULD DRAW CAPITAL AND LABOR RESOURCES FROM OTHER SECTORS OF THE SOVIET ECONOMY.)

10. [REDACTED]

11. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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PIPELINE 58
(forced labor)
10778

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TO ALL DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR POSTS IMMEDIATE

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INFORM CONSULS: ALSO FOR PAOS
E.O. 12356: DECL: 9/20/92
;AGS: SHUM, PINS, UR
SUBJECT: ISSUE OF FORCED LABOR AND THE SOVIET GAS PIPELINE

1. (C) SINCE MID-SUMMER, THE ISSUE OF FORCED LABOR, INCLUDING POLITICAL PRISONERS, ON THE USSR-EUROPE GAS PIPELINE AND OTHER MAJOR PROJECTS IN THE USSR HAS APPEARED IN WEST EUROPEAN AND OTHER MEDIA. MOST REPORTS HAVE EMANATED FROM THE FRANKFURT-BASED INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS. NONE OF THESE REPORTS HAVE BEEN CONFIRMED. FRENCH AND FRG GOVERNMENTS HAVE PUBLICLY STATED THAT THEIR EMBASSIES IN MOSCOW HAVE BEEN ASKED TO INVESTIGATE THESE ALLEGATIONS. THE U.S. EMBASSY HAS BEEN INSTRUCTED TO DO THE SAME. THE LIKELIHOOD OF OUR DISCOVERING DIRECT EVIDENCE OF THE USE OF FORCED LABOR ON PIPELINE CONSTRUCTION IS REMOTE, CONSIDERING RESTRICTIONS PLACED ON EMBASSY TRAVEL AND SOVIET DESIRE TO COUNTER THESE CHARGES, BUT IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY ACTIVELY SEEK TO DISCOVER THE FACTS, AND THAT THE ISSUE REMAIN ALIVE.

2. (C) GIVEN THE TRADITIONAL SOVIET USE OF FORCED LABOR ON MAJOR PROJECTS IN REMOTE AREAS REQUIRING CONSIDERABLE MANUAL INPUT, IT IS POSSIBLE THAT PRISON LABOR IS BEING USED, OR THAT IT WAS USED IN THE PRELIMINARY STAGES. WE DO NOT KNOW WHETHER POLITICAL PRISONERS WERE USED. WHILE THIS ISSUE IS OF EQUAL CONCERN TO EUROPLANS AND AMERICANS, WE SHOULD AVOID GIVING IT A "MADE IN USA LABEL." U.S. OFFICIALS SHOULD ATTEMPT TO DEVELOP IT CAREFULLY, FOCUSING APPROPRIATE ATTENTION NOT ONLY ON THE QUESTION OF FORCED LABOR ON THE PIPELINE PROJECT, BUT ALSO ON THE BROADER HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE REPRESENTED BY THE APPROXIMATELY FOUR MILLION SOVIET PRISONERS UNDERGOING SOME FORM OF INVOLUNTARY LABOR.

3. (C) PARA 5 CONTAINS EXCERPTS FROM DOCUMENTATION RELEASED IN MID-AUGUST BY THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS. WHILE IT IS IMPRACTICABLE TO VERIFY THE DETAILED ASSERTIONS, SOME OF WHICH APPEAR TO BE EXAGGERATED, WE BELIEVE THAT THEY ARE WORTHY OF ATTENTION.

4. (C) ACTION REQUESTED.
ALL POSTS IN WESTERN EUROPE AND OTHER POSTS WHERE, IN YOUR JUDGMENT, YOU ARE LIKELY TO RECEIVE A FAIR HEARING, SHOULD EXPRESS IN APPROPRIATE CONVERSATIONS WITH HOST GOVERNMENT, PRIVATE SECTOR OR ORGANIZATIONS, INCLUDING UNIONS, AND MEDIA: A. OUR CONCERN OVER THIS HUMAN

RIGHTS ISSUE; B. OUR BELIEF THAT THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY HAS A RESPONSIBILITY TO INVESTIGATE THESE CHARGES. YOU MAY MAKE AVAILABLE TO THEM TESTIMONY IN PARA 5 BELOW, POINTING OUT ITS ORIGIN, AND EXPRESS OUR WILLINGNESS TO PROVIDE ANY FURTHER INFORMATION WE ARE ABLE TO UNCOVER ON THIS ISSUE. YOU SHOULD INDICATE THAT WE WOULD WELCOME ADDITIONAL INFORMATION THEY MAY HAVE.

5. (U) "SELECTED TESTIMONY FROM THE SOVIET UNION" WRITTEN ACCOUNT BY MRS. A;P. FROM MOSCOW, JULY 1982

MY UNCLE IS AN OFFICER IN THE SOVIET ARMY AND SERVES IN THE NORTH IN THE HANTY-MANSSIYSKIY AUTONOMOUS REGION.

AT THE END OF LAST YEAR, MY UNCLE ARRIVED UNEXPECTEDLY IN MOSCOW SAYING THAT HE HAD BEEN DISMISSED FROM THE ARMY FOR HEALTH REASONS. IN THE COURSE OF OUR CONVERSATIONS I LEARNED THE FOLLOWING:

IT WAS TRUE THAT MY UNCLE HAD PARTICIPATED AS A CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER IN VARIOUS PROJECTS FROM THE NEW PORT ON THE YAMAL PENINSULA TO PERM IN THE URALS. THE OFFICERS AND SOLDIERS HAD BEEN TOLD QUITE OPENLY THAT THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE GAS PIPELINE FROM SIBERIA TO WESTERN EUROPE WOULD GREATLY CONTRIBUTE TO STRENGTHENING THE DEFENSE OF THE NORTHERN U.S.S.R. FOR ONE THING, IT INCREASES THE INFLUX OF WORKERS TO THE NORTH AND SECONDLY, THE GAS PIPELINE WILL FACILITATE THE SUPPLY OF FUEL TO THE VARIOUS MILITARY INSTALLATIONS IN THE NORTH. IN THIS AREA WE NEED NOT BUILD ANYTHING OURSELVES ANYMORE -- ALL

PREPARATORY WORK IS COMPLETED BY PRISONERS, AND ONLY AFTER THAT, VOLUNTEER LABOR BRIGADES ARRIVE ON THE SCENE.

TELEPHONE REPORT BY MR. P.S. FROM MOSCOW, JULY 1982

"I WAS FIRED FROM THE MOSCOW MINING INSTITUTE BECAUSE I HAD CRITICIZED THE REGIME, AND NOW NO ONE IN TOWN WILL HIRE ME.

THE KGB TOLD ME: 'YOU CAN VOLUNTEER NOW TO WORK ON THE GAS PIPELINE, BEFORE WE SEND YOU THERE BY FORCE. AT THIS POINT, YOU STILL HAVE THE CHANCE TO WORK THERE AS A VOLUNTEER.'

SO I WENT TO TYUMEN, WHERE I WAS ORDERED BY CONSTRUCTION HEADQUARTERS TO REPORT TO THE URENGOY DISTRIBUTING STATION AS AN ELECTRICIAN. I WORKED IN URENGOY, A DIRTY SMALL TOWN OF HASTILY PUT UP PRIMITIVE SHACKS, FOR A YEAR, SHARING WITH THREE OTHER WORKERS A SMALL ROOM IN A DORMITORY.

ON THE VERY FIRST DAY I WAS TOLD THAT THERE WERE ALSO PRISONERS WORKING AT THIS SITE, AND THAT I WAS NOT TO SPEAK WITH THEM OR TELL ANYONE ABOUT THEM IF I DID NOT WANT TO BE LOCKED UP WITH THEM.

FOR ELEVEN MONTHS I WAS ABLE TO OBSERVE HOW BADLY AND UNFAIRLY THE PRISONERS AND DEPORTEES WERE BEING TREATED. THEY WERE SUPERVISED BY THE VOLUNTEERS WHO, OF COURSE, ONLY DID THE EASIER JOBS. THE DANGEROUS JOBS WERE DONE ONLY BY PRISONERS; SOMETIMES THEY WERE PROMISED THAT THEY WOULD BE RELEASED EARLY.

DURING THE ELEVEN MONTHS, I WITNESSED NUMEROUS FATAL ACCIDENTS CAUSED BY EXPLODING GAS AND GAS POISONING. DURING THE SUMMER, CONCRETE WAS DELIVERED BY OPEN TRUCKS; EN ROUTE IT HAD HARDENED TO THE POINT WHERE THE PRISONERS

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HAD TO HACK IT OUT BIT BY BIT SO THAT THEIR HANDS STARTED BLEEDING.

THE HEAVY EQUIPMENT ARRIVING FROM ABROAD ALSO HAD TO BE UNLOADED AND TRANSPORTED MANUALLY BY THE PRISONERS. AGAIN AND AGAIN, THERE WERE ACCIDENTS DURING THE TEST RUNS; BECAUSE OF MISTAKES IN THE OPERATION OF THE EQUIPMENT, IT KEPT BREAKING DOWN AND THE PRISONERS HAD TO MOVE THE HEAVY PIPES AGAIN AND AGAIN, WITHOUT PROPER MECHANICAL AIDS; OFTEN THE ROPES, WHICH WERE NOT STRONG ENOUGH, WOULD BREAK, CAUSING MORE LIVES TO BE LOST. I TRIED SEVERAL TIMES TO LODGE A COMPLAINT ABOUT THIS WITH THE TRADE

UNIONS, BUT I WAS TOLD: "YOU DON'T HAVE TO FEEL SORRY

FOR THESE PEOPLE, THEY SHOULD HAVE BEEN KILLED LONG AGO. THEY SHOULD BE GLAD TO BE GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO REFORM."

THE PRISON CAMP WAS NOT LOCATED IN URENGOY BUT TWO KILOMETERS AWAY, IN THE TAIGA, SO THAT THE PEOPLE IN THE CITY HAD NO IDEA THAT IT WAS THERE. BUT I HAD OCCASION TO TALK TO THE SOLDIERS ASSIGNED TO THE CAMP, AND THEY NOT ONLY TOLD ME OF THE HIGH MORTALITY RATE AMONG THE PRISONERS, BUT ALSO OF THE FREQUENT SUICIDES COMMITTED BY DESPAIRING YOUNG SOLDIERS WHO COULDN'T TAKE ALL THAT MISERY ANYMORE AND KILLED THEMSELVES WITH THEIR OWN WEAPONS IN THEIR WATCH TOWERS.

THE SADDEST SIGHT WERE THE MANY FEMALE PRISONERS WHO HAD TO DO THE SAME WORK AS THE MEN AT THE CONSTRUCTION SITES. COMPLETELY FILTHY OR SOAKING WET THEY RETURNED TO THEIR HUTS IN THE EVENING; THEY WEREN'T ABLE TO CHANGE OR WASH THEIR CLOTHES.

DURING THE WINTER, THE MVD GUARDS WOULD BE STANDING AROUND A FIRE IN HEAVY SHEEPSKIN COATS, WARMING THEIR HANDS, WHILE IN THE PRISONERS HAD TO WORK IN THE COLD, DRESSED IN THIN WORK PANTS AND SHORT COATS WITH HARDLY ANY LINING."

TELEPHONE REPORT BY MR. I. P. FROM TYUMEN, JUNE 1982

ON JUNE 15, 1982, MR. I. P. TELEPHONED AN ACQUAINTANCE IN THE WEST WITH THE FOLLOWING REPORT:

"WHILE I WAS STILL AT THE CAMP, I HEARD OF THE POSSIBILITY OF WORK ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE GAS PIPELINE FOR EUROPE.

BECAUSE OF THE DIFFICULT LIVING AND WORKING CONDITIONS IN THE CAMPS, MANY PRISONERS ARE WILLING TO EXCHANGE LIFE IN A CAMP FOR THE LIFE OF FORCED LABORERS, WHO WORK UNDER MINIMUM SECURITY CONDITIONS.

THUS I VOLUNTEERED AND, ALONG WITH APPROXIMATELY 50 MINIMUM-SECURITY PRISONERS FROM VARIOUS CAMPS, WAS TAKEN TO THE FACILITY FOR PRISONERS IN TRANSIT IN TYUMEN, WHERE WE REMAINED FOR TEN DAYS, UNTIL THE MILITIA AND THE MVD HAD DECIDED WHERE TO PUT US. WITH SEVERAL OTHERS I WAS ASSIGNED TO "SPECIAL WORKFORCE NO. 7" IN KIRPICHNY, A SMALL PLACE NEAR TYUMEN, WHERE I REPORTED TO THE COMMANDANT FOR MINIMUM-SECURITY PRISONERS AND DEPORTEES.

ALONG WITH FOUR OTHERS, I WAS HOUSED IN AN EMPTY FREIGHT CAR WHICH HAD BARELY ENOUGH ROOM FOR FOUR COTS. WE HAD

ELECTRICITY, BUT NO WATER. OTHERS LIVED IN HUTS WHICH DATED BACK TO THE CAMPS BUILT UNDER STALIN, OR IN HASTILY ERECTED DORMITORIES, TWO-STORY BUILDINGS WITHOUT ANY AMENITIES.

THESE SETTLEMENTS RARELY HAVE A NAME; IN MOST CASES THEY ARE REGISTERED UNDER "SPECIAL WORKFORCE NO..." ALONG WITH THE DESIGNATION OF THE CAMP ADMINISTRATION FOR THE REGION IN QUESTION.

ARRIVING MINIMUM-SECURITY PRISONERS MUST IMMEDIATELY BEGIN WORK ON THE TASKS ASSIGNED TO THEM BY THE COMMANDANT.

IN ADDITION TO THE MINIMUM-SECURITY PRISONERS, THE WORKFORCE INCLUDES DEPORTEES AND PEOPLE SENTENCED FOR "PARASITISM"; IN KIRPICHNY, THEIR NUMBERS TOTALED APPROXIMATELY 6,000.

FOR THE MOST PART, THE WORK INVOLVED PREPARATION OF GLASS WOOL, WRAPPING OF PIPES, EXCAVATION, MOUNTING OF INSTRUMENTS AND PIPE SUPPORTS, LAYING OF ELECTRIC AND TELEPHONE CABLES, AND VARIOUS CHORES IN THE PETROCHEMICAL FIELD.

SOME CONSTRUCTION AREAS, WHERE THE WORK INVOLVED PERMA-FROST, REMOVAL OF GROUND WATER AND BLASTING OF ROCKS ARE SURROUNDED BY WOODEN FENCES AND BARBED WIRE AND GUARDED BY ARMED SOLDIERS AND GUARD-DOGS. THIS IS WHERE THE PRISONERS FROM CAMP NO. 34/2 ARE TAKEN BY CLOSED CARS EACH DAY. THEY KEEP MOVING FROM ONE SITE TO THE NEXT ALONG THE ROUTE WHERE THE GAS PIPELINE IS TO BE LAID.

THE FOOD IS POOR, THERE IS NO MEDICAL CARE WHATSOEVER, THE HUTS AND FREIGHT CARS ARE COLD, DRUNKENNESS IS COMMON AMONG THE WORKERS. IT ALSO HAPPENS THAT MINIMUM-SECURITY PRISONERS ARE SENTENCED AGAIN, SENT BACK TO THE PRISON CAMPS, AND HAVE TO WORK BEHIND BARBED-WIRE FROM THEN ON.

AT THE PRESENT TIME, THE TYUMENLAG COMPLEX CONSISTS OF FOURTEEN CAMPS, LOCATED IN NIZHNAYA TAVDA, USSETSK, YALUTOROVSK, ZAVODOUKOVSK IMPIM, MALITSA, TOBOLSK (2) AND TYUMEN (2).

THE HARDEST JOBS SUCH AS EXCAVATION OF TRENCHES, LAYING OF RAILROAD TRACKS, MIXING OF CONCRETE, AND CONSTRUCTION OF RAILINGS FOR SCAFFOLDING ARE DONE NOT ONLY BY MEN, BUT ALSO BY DEPORTED WOMEN AND MINORS FROM REFORMATORIES.

AT THE PRESENT TIME, MORE THAN 100,000 FORCED LABORERS ARE ASSIGNED TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE GAS PIPELINE FOR

EUROPE IN VARIOUS CAPACITIES. THEIR WORK INCLUDES MANUFACTURE OF WORK CLOTHES--THIS IS ONE BY FEMALE PRISONERS OR INMATES OF PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITALS. NEVERTHELESS, THERE IS A SHORTAGE OF WORK CLOTHES; FOR INSTANCE, PROTECTIVE GLOVES ARE ISSUED ONLY EVERY SIX MONTHS. THE WORKERS WRAP RAGS AROUND THEIR HAND, BUT INJURIES AND ECZEMA ARE A FREQUENT OCCURRENCE AMONG THE WORKERS HANDLING BARBED WIRE, CONCRETE, GLASS WOOL, OR ASBESTOS. ACCIDENTS ARE THE ORDER OF THE DAY, BUT WHEN PEOPLE CALL THE EMERGENCY STATION THE MEDICS WANT TO KNOW FIRST WHETHER THE INJURED PERSON IS A VOLUNTEER OR A ZEK (THAT IS WHAT THEY CALL THE CAMP POPULATION, I.E., MINIMUM-SECURITY PRISONERS AND DEPORTEES). IF THE INJURED PERSON IS A ZEK, THE MEDICS USUALLY TAKE THEIR TIME ARRIVING."

C POSTS SHOULD ALSO DRAW UPON, AND MAKE AVAILABLE TO APPROPRIATE HOST GOVERNMENTS, DEPARTMENT'S STATEMENT OF 9/22/82 ON FORCED LABOR ISSUE. TEXT FOLLOWS:

7. U PRESS STATEMENT

FORCED LABOR IN USSR

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DTG: 232323Z SEP 82 PSN: 044879

U, WE HAVE RECEIVED A GROWING NUMBER OF REPORTS THAT THE USSR HAS USED A LARGE NUMBER OF PRISONERS -- INCLUDING THOUSANDS OF POLITICAL PRISONERS -- TO WORK ON MASSIVE LABOR PROJECTS. ACCORDING TO AT LEAST ONE SUCH REPORT, FOR EXAMPLE, AT LEAST 100,000 SUCH FORCED LABORERS ARE BEING USED ON THE HEAVY INFRASTRUCTURE WORK OF CLEARING SWAMPS, CUTTING TIMBER AND BUILDING ACCESS ROADS FOR THE YAMAL GAS PIPELINE. THESE FORCED LABORERS REPORTEDLY INCLUDE RELIGIOUS DISSIDENTS AND OTHER PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE.

. U THESE REPORTS HAVE COME FROM A WIDE VARIETY OF INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANIZATIONS, IN EUROPE, ASIA AND THE US. THE SOURCES INCLUDE HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS; LABOR ORGANIZATIONS; LABORERS WHO HAVE MANAGED TO EMIGRATE FROM THE SOVIET UNION AFTER WORKING UNDER THESE CONDITIONS; AND LETTERS REACHING ASIA AND THE WEST FROM THE USSR.

. U, WE ARE NOT CLAIMING TO HAVE EVIDENCE RESEMBLING A "SMOKING GUN." GIVEN THE CLOSED NATURE OF SOVIET SOCIETY AND THE OFFICIAL CONTROL OF THE SOVIET MEDIA, MOREOVER, THERE MAY NEVER BE A "SMOKING GUN." BUT THE INFORMATION BEING RELEASED BY THIS WIDE RANGE OF KNOWLEDGEABLE INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANIZATIONS SPANNING THREE CONTINENTS, SOME WITH FIRST HAND EXPERIENCE OF THESE LABOR CONDITIONS,

GOES INTO CONSIDERABLE DETAIL AND DESERVES SERIOUS EXAMINATION.

. U, RELIABLE ESTIMATES PLACE THE TOTAL NUMBER OF FORCED LABORERS IN THE SOVIET UNION TODAY AT APPROXIMATELY FOUR MILLION. FURTHER, IT IS WELL ESTABLISHED THAT THE SOVIET UNION HAS A HISTORY OF USING FORCED LABOR ON A MASS SCALE -- INCLUDING POLITICAL PRISONERS -- ON MAJOR PROJECTS, PARTICULARLY IN SIBERIA -- WHERE THE OFFICIAL PRESS HAS ACKNOWLEDGED THAT IT IS DIFFICULT TO PERSUADE SOVIET WORKERS TO GO THERE VOLUNTARILY. TO CITE ONLY TWO

EXAMPLES, SOME 250,000 FORCED LABORERS ARE BELIEVED TO HAVE PERISHED DURING THE 1930'S WHILE WORKING ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE BIELOMORSK CANAL. AND IN THE 1970'S THOUSANDS OF FORCED LABORERS WERE REPORTED TO BE BUILDING THE BAIKAL-AMUR RAILWAY EXTENSION IN SOUTHEASTERN SIBERIA.

U, AS REGARDS FOREIGN LABORERS, THE OFFICIAL SOVIET MEDIA ITSELF HAS ADMITTED THAT SEVERAL THOUSAND VIETNAMESE AND OTHER SOUTHEAST ASIAN LABORERS HAVE BEEN IMPORTED INTO THE USSR AND HAS INTIMATED THAT MANY THOUSANDS MORE ARE LIKELY TO BE IMPORTED IN THE NEAR FUTURE. INFORMATION ON THE NATURE OF THIS PROGRAM IS FRAGMENTARY. WE DO NOT KNOW WHETHER OR NOT THE VIETNAMESE LABORERS ARE WORKING ON THE SIBERIAN PIPELINE. BUT WE ARE VERY CONCERNED ABOUT INDICATIONS THAT VIETNAMESE MAY BE COERCED INTO WORKING IN THE USSR AND EASTERN EUROPE AND THAT A PORTION OF THE SALARY PAID TO THEM MIGHT BE DEDUCTED TO OFFSET VIETNAM'S DEBTS TO THE HOST COUNTRY. IN ADDITION, WE HAVE RECEIVED REPORTS THAT THE SOVIET AUTHORITIES ARE PLACING LIMITATIONS ON THE ABILITY OF THESE WORKERS TO COMMUNICATE WITH THEIR FAMILIES AND FRIENDS OUTSIDE THE USSR. WE BELIEVE IT IS IMPORTANT THAT INTERNATIONAL ATTENTION BE GIVEN TO THIS SITUATION, GIVEN THE OBVIOUS POSSIBILITY OF EXPLOITATION OF THESE WORKERS.

U, THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT COULD CONTRIBUTE TO ESTABLISHING THE TRUTH ABOUT THESE VERY SERIOUS CHARGES BY PERMITTING AN OBJECTIVE EXAMINATION OF LABOR CONDITIONS ON ITS VARIOUS SIBERIAN PROJECTS AND THE CONDITIONS IN WHICH SOVIET POLITICAL PRISONERS LIVE AND WORK. WE WOULD WELCOME SUCH AN INDEPENDENT INTERNATIONAL INVESTIGATION, BUT THE PROSPECTS FOR OBTAINING THIS ARE PROBABLY NOT

BRIGHT. FOR EXAMPLE, CHARGES OF USE OF FORCED LABOR HAVE BEEN MADE IN THE PAST AGAINST THE USSR IN THE INTERNATIONAL LABOR ORGANIZATION ILO. HOWEVER, THE SOVIET AUTHORITIES HAVE CONSISTENTLY REFUSED TO ALLOW AN ILO MISSION TO VISIT THE USSR TO INVESTIGATE THESE CHARGES.

U, BECAUSE OF THE SERIOUSNESS OF THESE CHARGES, AND THE MASSIVE HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS WHICH THEY IMPLY, WE BELIEVE THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY HAS A RESPONSIBILITY TO INVESTIGATE THEM. THE USG, FOR ITS PART, IS THOROUGHLY EXAMINING THE INFORMATION BEING BROUGHT TO BEAR ON THIS ISSUE, AND WE UNDERSTAND THAT SEVERAL OTHER GOVERNMENTS HAVE INDICATED SIMILAR INTENTIONS. AS OUR EXAMINATION PROCEEDS, WE WILL -- WHEREVER POSSIBLE -- MAKE OUR FINDINGS AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC. WE HOPE THAT OTHER GOVERNMENTS AND PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS WILL DO THE SAME. SHULTZ
BT

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~



Washington, D.C. 20520

9/29/82

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Conference Report No. 97-891 dated September 29 accompanying H.R. 6956 directed the Secretary to undertake an investigation into allegations that forced labor is being employed, and human rights violated, by the Soviet authorities in the construction of the Trans-Siberian gas pipeline.

There is clear evidence that the Soviet Union is using forced labor on a massive scale. This includes the use of political prisoners. We have information from a variety of sources which confirms that the Soviets routinely employ a portion of their 4 million forced laborers, the world's largest forced labor population, as unskilled workers on domestic pipeline construction. It cannot yet be conclusively established whether such labor is being used specifically on the export pipeline project, but a number of reports suggest that forced labor has been used in some of the site preparation and other preliminary work on the export pipeline including clearing the forests, leveling the right-of-way, building roads, and constructing living quarters.

There is, in fact, a long history to the use of forced labor in the Soviet Union. This has included the use of forced labor -- including thousands of political prisoners -- on numerous large-scale development projects. The Baikal-Amur rail line, the Bielomorsk and Volga-Don canals, the Moscow subway, and the Kama River truck plant are a few of the better known Soviet projects built with forced labor. Among the groups that Soviet authorities traditionally press into forced labor are political prisoners and prisoners of conscience convicted for "anti-Soviet agitation" or under broadly-worded "hooliganism" and "parasitism" laws. For nearly thirty years, complaints have been registered in the International Labor Organization, and in other international bodies, against the use of such laws to punish and exploit political and religious dissidents in the Soviet Union.

The Soviet authorities not only have failed to provide responses satisfactory to the ILO on any of these complaints, but also have attacked the ILO supervisory machinery itself. Their continuing refusal to cooperate with the ILO authorities puts the burden of proof on the Soviet Union with regard to the numerous and grave charges of forced labor lodged against them. We strongly believe that the Soviet authorities should open all of their labor camps and large-scale labor brigades to independent international investigation.

The Honorable
Jamie L. Whitten, Chairman,
Committee on Appropriations,
House of Representatives

We welcome Congressional interest in this question. Forced labor in the USSR is a human rights issue of deep concern to the Administration, as expressed most recently in our official statement of September 22. Decency compels us to express our distress at the Soviet Union's exploitation of forced labor. For those who believe in the promotion of world peace through law, it is crucial that the international community investigate and demand remedial action when confronted with serious charges of violations of international agreements. Obviously, the closed nature of Soviet society renders difficult the discovery of facts on this issue, as well as the production of convincing evidence. But be assured that we will continue diligently to conduct this investigation. We also are pursuing this issue vigorously through the ILO.

As our preliminary report, I am transmitting under this cover a copy of the Administration's statement of September 22 and a packet of reports and documents which will provide for you the status of our efforts up to now. This packet includes a historical summary of Soviet forced labor questions before the ILO; a study entitled "The Soviet Forced Labor System," which includes maps and graphics of the pipeline network and forced labor camps; documentation and testimony from hearings sponsored by the Frankfurt-based International Society for Human Rights; and a summary of actions by other governments and international labor bodies. Intelligence information pertinent to the issue will be made available through the House and Senate Intelligence Committees.

Sincerely

Powell A. Moore
Assistant Secretary for
Congressional Relations

Enclosure:

Preliminary report

PIPELINE 63
COPIES TO - PIPES
RAYMOND
ROBINSON
BLAIR
9/29/82

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There is clear evidence that the Soviet Union has used -- and continues to use -- forced labor on a massive scale. This includes the use of political prisoners. We have information from a variety of sources which confirms that the Soviets routinely employ a portion of their 4 million forced laborers, the world's largest forced labor population, as unskilled workers on domestic pipeline construction. It cannot yet be conclusively established whether such labor is being used specifically on the export pipeline project, but a number of reports suggest that forced labor has been used in some of the site preparation and other preliminary work on the export pipeline including clearing the forests, leveling right-of-way, building roads, and constructing living quarters.

There is, in fact, a long history to the use of forced labor in the Soviet Union. This has included the use of forced labor -- including thousands of political prisoners -- on numerous large-scale development projects. The Baikal-Amur rail line, the Bielomorsk and Volga-Don canals, the Moscow subway, and the Kama River truck plant are a few of the better known Soviet projects built with forced labor. Among the groups that Soviet authorities traditionally press into forced labor are political prisoners and prisoners of conscience convicted for "anti-Soviet agitation" or under broadly-worded "hooliganism" and "parasitism" laws. For nearly thirty years, complaints have been registered in the International Labor Organization, and in other international bodies, against the use of such laws to punish and exploit political and religious dissidents in the Soviet Union.

The Soviet authorities not only have failed to provide responses satisfactory to the ILO on any of these complaints, but also have attacked the ILO supervisory machinery itself. By its continuing refusal to cooperate with the ILO authorities, the USSR has, in effect, assumed the burden of proof with regard to the numerous and grave charges of forced labor lodged against it. We believe it is incumbent upon the Soviet authorities to open all of their labor camps and large-scale labor brigades to independent international investigation.

The Honorable
Jamie L. Whitten, Chairman,
Committee on Appropriations,
House of Representatives

We welcome Congressional interest in this question. Forced labor in the USSR is a broad human rights issue which has long been of deep concern to the Administration, as expressed most recently in our official statement of September 22. Decency compels us to express distress at the Soviet Union's exploitation of forced labor. For those who believe in the promotion of world peace through law, it is crucial that the international community investigate and seek remedial action when confronted with serious charges of violations of international agreements. Obviously, the closed nature of Soviet society renders difficult the discovery of hard facts and irrefutable evidence. But be assured that we will continue diligently to conduct this investigation. We also are pursuing this issue vigorously through the ILO.

As our preliminary report, I am transmitting under this cover a copy of the Administration's statement of September 22 and a packet of reports and documents which will provide for you the status of our efforts up to now. This packet includes a historical summary of Soviet forced labor questions before the ILO; a study entitled "The Soviet Forced Labor System," which includes maps and graphics of the pipeline network and forced labor camps; documentation and testimony from hearings sponsored by the Frankfurt-based International Society for Human Rights; and a summary of actions by other governments and international labor bodies. Intelligence information pertinent to the issue will be made available through the House and Senate Intelligence Committees.

Sincerely

Powell A. Moore
Assistant Secretary for
Congressional Relations

Enclosure:

Preliminary report

Letter to Whitten

Draft: EUR/P:TJClear

Approve: EUR:RBurt

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DOL/ILAB:GHolmes
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CIA:SMoscowitz
CIA:JBeckwith
CIA/SOVA/SE/M:AGoodman
CIA/OGI/GD/ERA:CMalanick
CIA/SOVA/SE:DWhitehouse
USIA/EU:APerlman
USIA/P:FKnecht
USIA/P/G:RMcLellan
DOS/EUR/SOV:LGoodrich
DOS/PA/OAP:SKane
DOS/INR/SEE:DGraves
DOS/S/IL:DTurnquist
DOS/HA/PP:HSimon
DOS/EUR/P:SSteiner
DOS/IO/LAB:PHilburn
DOS/EUR:MPalmer
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September 22, 1982

PRESS STATEMENT

Forced Labor in the USSR

We have received a growing number of reports that the USSR has used a large number of prisoners -- including, thousands of political prisoners -- to work on massive labor projects. According to at least one such report, for example, at least 100,000 such forced laborers are being used on the heavy infrastructure work of clearing swamps, cutting timber and building access roads for the Yamal gas pipeline. These forced laborers reportedly include religious dissidents and other prisoners of conscience.

These reports have come from a wide variety of individuals and organizations, in Europe, Asia and the US. The sources include human rights organizations; labor organizations; laborers who have managed to emigrate from the Soviet Union after working under these conditions; and letters reaching Asia and the West from the USSR.

We are not claiming to have evidence resembling a "smoking gun." Given the closed nature of Soviet society and the official control of the Soviet media, moreover, there may never be a "smoking gun." But the information being released by this wide range of knowledgeable individuals and organizations spanning three continents, some with first hand experience of these labor conditions, goes into considerable detail and deserves serious examination.

Reliable estimates place the total number of forced laborers in the Soviet Union today at approximately 4 million. Further, it is well established that the Soviet Union has a history of using forced labor on a mass scale -- including political prisoners -- on major projects, particularly in Siberia -- where the official press has acknowledged that it is difficult to persuade Soviet workers to go there voluntarily. To cite only two examples, some 250,000 forced laborers are believed to have perished during the 1930's while working on the construction of the Bielomorsk Canal. And in the 1970's thousands of forced laborers were reported to be building the Baikal-Amur railway extension in Southeastern Siberia.

As regards foreign laborers, the official Soviet media itself has admitted that several thousand Vietnamese and other Southeast Asian laborers have been imported into the USSR and has intimated that many thousands more are likely to be imported in the near future. Information on the nature of this

program is fragmentary. We do not know whether or not the Vietnamese laborers are working on the Siberian pipeline. But we are very concerned about indications that Vietnamese may be coerced into working in the USSR and Eastern Europe and that a portion of the salary paid to them might be deducted to offset Vietnam's debts to the host country. In addition, we have received reports that the Soviet authorities are placing limitations on the ability of these workers to communicate with their families and friends outside the USSR. We believe it is important that international attention be given to this situation, given the obvious possibility of exploitation of these workers.

The Soviet Government could contribute to establishing the truth about these very serious charges by permitting an objective examination of labor conditions on its various Siberian projects, and the conditions in which Soviet political prisoners live and work. We would welcome such an independent international investigation, but the prospects for obtaining this are probably not bright. For example, charges of use of forced labor have been made in the past against the USSR in the International Labor Organization (ILO). However the Soviet authorities have consistently refused to allow an ILO mission to visit the USSR to investigate these charges.

Because of the seriousness of these charges, and the massive human rights violations which they imply, we believe the international community has a responsibility to investigate them. The USG, for its part, is thoroughly examining the information being brought to bear on this issue, and we understand that several other governments have indicated similar intentions. As our examination proceeds, we will -- wherever possible -- make our findings available to the public. We hope that other governments and private organizations will do the same.

716A

October, 1982



· The International Labor Organization:
FORCED LABOR IN THE SOVIET UNION

For close to thirty years the Soviet Union has been under more or less constant pressure from the International Labor Organization (ILO) to bring its law and practice into line with international treaties on forced labor. (See attached chronology.) The ILO is the only UN agency with tripartite representation (i.e., governments, workers and employers). At times, ILO pressure has taken the form of outright censure of Soviet policies. Today, the primary points of contention in the ILO are Soviet laws concerning persons "leading a parasitic way of life" and those concerning membership on collective farms (kolkhoz). These laws are viewed by the ILO as legislative mechanisms for sustaining and legitimizing a system of forced or compulsory labor.

UN Ad Hoc Committee on Forced Labor

The first time forced labor in the Soviet Union was raised as a serious issue came in 1948 when the AF of L proposed that the ILO initiate a survey of forced labor in all member countries. However, since the USSR had been expelled from the ILO in December 1939 following its invasion of Finland, but was a member of the fledgling UN, responsibility for the survey was partly assumed by ECOSOC. The survey was finally conducted in 1952 by an independent Commission of Inquiry (appointed jointly by the ILO and ECOSOC), and completed in 1953.

Generally, the Commission found little evidence of forced labor in non-communist countries. But the Commission left no doubt that in both law and practice the Soviet Union employs forced labor for the interests of the national economy and as a means of political coercion:

"Given the general aims of Soviet penal legislation, its definitions of crime in general and of political offenses in particular, the restrictions it imposes on the rights of the defense in cases involving political offenses, the extensive powers of punishment it accords to purely administrative authorities in respect of persons considered to constitute a danger to society, and the purpose of political re-education it assigns to penalties of corrective labour served in camps, in colonies, in exile and even at the normal

place of work, this legislation constitutes the basis of a system of forced labor employed as a means of political coercion or punishment for holding or expressing political views and it is evident from the many testimonies examined by the Committee that this legislation is in fact employed in such a way."

"Soviet legislation makes provision for various measures which involve compulsion to work or place restrictions on the freedom of employment; these measures seem to be applied on a large scale in the interests of the national economy, and considered as a whole, they lead, in the Committee's view, to a system of forced or compulsory labour constituting an important element in the economy of the country."

(Italics added. Source: Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Forced Labour, Geneva (1953), p.98)

The report was adopted first by ECOSOC in 1954, and later by the ILO in 1956, two years after the USSR renewed ILO membership. Needless to say, the Soviet bloc vehemently opposed adoption of the Commission's conclusions. Perhaps in an effort to strengthen its denial of the Commission's conclusions, that same year (1956) the USSR ratified ILO Convention 29 concerning Abolition of Forced Labor. Convention 29 was formulated by the ILO in 1930, and is primarily aimed at the abolition of forced labor in colonial territories. (See attached summary of Convention 29 for definition of forced labor.)

ILO Regular Supervision

While ratification may have been important to improve its political image, this step brought the USSR under the purview of ILO regular supervisory machinery. As a signatory, the USSR became legally bound to report annually (now biennially) on its implementation of Convention 29.

The ILO's regular supervisory process is composed of two steps: the first is a legal review of government reports by a 19-member independent Committee of Experts (COE), the second a more political review by a Conference Committee on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (CACR). While the COE currently has two members from the Soviet bloc (USSR and Poland), it has gained a solid reputation of objectivity and impartiality which rests on the fact that its members are highly respected international lawyers and jurists who, in theory, act independently of their governments.

Every year, in March, the COE issues an analysis of how well member States are living up to their treaty obligations. This report is then passed to the CACR which meets during, and is part of, the annual ILO June Conference. Here, governments are called on -- mainly by the workers and employers groups -- to explain discrepancies between the Convention and their law and practice. Depending on whether or not the workers and employers groups are satisfied with government explanations, the case can be "adjourned" until the next review session or it can be highlighted in the CACR's report on a so-called "special list."

ILO Censure of Soviet Forced Labor

Fifteen years after ratification, in 1971, the Committee of Experts issued its first public report on the USSR's application of Convention 29. Its report explained the ILO's long silence: since 1962 the Experts had been sending direct requests to the Soviet government for information on compulsory labor of persons "evading socially useful work and leading an anti-social, parasitic way of life." Since the information received from the Soviet government had been unsatisfactory, repeated requests were made over a period of ten years.

Nevertheless, the 1971 report marked a renewed ILO interest in public examination of Soviet forced labor policies. While the Experts' report did not lead to a full-blown discussion at the 1971 ILO Conference, in subsequent years the ILO did highlight in the "special list" and "special paragraphs" of the CACR report the continuing Soviet failure to uphold Convention 29. Such censure of Soviet policies by the ILO Conference is the most forceful means available to the ILO to bring pressure to bear on the government.

In its 1971 report the Experts concluded that under a "Ukase" (decree) of 1961, as amended in 1965 and again in 1970, compulsory labor could be ordered by an administrative body (the Executive Committee of a Soviet of Working People's Deputies), non-compliance being punishable by imprisonment or corrective labor. Since labor is exacted under a menace of penalty, not performed voluntarily, the Experts view Soviet law as contravening Convention 29.

The next year, in 1972 the COE noted that the new Labor Code of the RSFSR adopted in 1971 no longer contained a provision permitting the call-up of labor for "carrying out important state work." However, the Experts reiterated their call for the abolition of compulsory labor involving so-called "parasites."

In 1974, for the first time, no report had been received from the Soviet government. Nevertheless, the COE issued a report that took public issue with (a) the obligations imposed on collective farms with regard to planning of agricultural production, (b) the restrictions preventing termination of membership on a collective farm, and (c) anti-parasite legislation.

What happened at the 1974 ILO Conference broke a long, tacit moratorium on public denunciation of the Soviet Union. The CACR, working from the Experts' report, formally took up the issue of forced labor in the Soviet Union, resulting in a protracted and heated debate. The Soviet government representative adamantly refused to admit any of the Experts' findings or to accept the need for any remedial action. In an historic decision, the CACR decided by vote to impose the most severe form of censure on the USSR for violating Convention 29: criterion 7 of the "special list." 1/

When the CACR report came up for adoption in the plenary Conference, quorum was not reached, due primarily to a configuration of political issues bringing together the Soviet and Arab blocs. This lack of formal endorsement, however, did not nullify or abort the supervisory process. The Soviet government was still required to report the next year on its progress toward upholding forced labor standards.

The ILO continued to apply pressure on the Soviet Union, particularly in 1976 and 1977 when the CACR criticized the USSR in a special paragraph of its report for not respecting Convention 29. In 1977 there was a repeat of the 1974 events, with the CACR report not being adopted due to the lack of a quorum.

Since 1977, the ILO has not formally censured the USSR on the forced labor issue. But almost every year at the June Conference the CACR continues to examine, question and probe the Soviet delegation for admissions, concessions, promises. Despite this pressure the Soviet response remains unsatisfactory.

1/ The "special list", developed in 1964, included seven criteria, arranged into two separate groups. The first six concerned the supply of reports and information to the Experts and ILO Conference, not matters of substance. The seventh criterion, listed under a separate heading "Application of Ratified Conventions", was applied to governments that had demonstrated a "continued failure to implement fully the Conventions concerned." The "special paragraph" was considered to be a somewhat less severe form of censure. The "special list" system was revised in 1980.

Current Issues: Persons "Leading a Parasitic Way of Life"

The history of this aspect of the Soviet forced labor issue has been marked by a total reluctance on the part of the Soviet government to concede that its legislation infringes Convention 29. When in 1975 earlier anti-parasite legislation was repealed, following pressure from the Experts and Conference Committee, it was immediately replaced by Section 209 of the Penal Code of the RSFSR to which the COE has taken exception ever since. Specifically, under current legislation a "parasite" is defined as someone living off unearned income, unemployed, earning money through illegal means, or evading socially useful labor.

In their current observations, the Experts cover familiar ground: the Soviet government persistently claims that Section 209, and Ordinances of 1973 and 1976 which also define vagrancy, can be applied only to gamblers and fortune-tellers. However, the Experts argue that these laws do not specify "only" gamblers and fortune-tellers, and can therefore be applied to any physically capable person who is unemployed.

The use of Section 209 (whether actual or potential) is viewed by the Experts as a means of directly or indirectly compelling all citizens to work. The Experts argue that if the Penal Code provision is indeed aimed at illegal income from fortune-telling or gambling, then it should be amended to reflect this fact.

The Conference Committee has often taken the issue one step further, discussing how legislation has been applied in practice. A frequent example submitted by the CACR is that of dissidents who are fired, unable to find employment within their allowed district of employment due to "troublemaker" status, then arrested several months later for leading a "parasitic way of life". The charge may involve imprisonment, exile, or detainment in a corrective labor camp. In other words, CACR discussions lead one to the conclusion that Soviet legislation on parasites plays a central role in administrative control of dissidents and of those refused Soviet exit permission.

Recently, in 1980 when the Soviet government was under extreme pressure from the CACR, the Soviet representative unexpectedly agreed that the legislation on parasitism should be clarified, and he stated that new formulations could be

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expected before the next Conference. Indeed, he claimed that discussions and consultations with the ILO Secretariat were already underway. However, subsequent Soviet positions at the 1981 and 1982 Conferences revealed that no new legislation would be forthcoming.

Termination of membership on collective farms

Although the Soviet position has appeared to be somewhat less rigid in regard to this issue, its implications in terms of Soviet agriculture are far-reaching.

As in the case of "parasites", the Soviet legal position is straightforward: members of a collective farm cannot presently leave it unless its management committee and general meeting consent. This inhibition of freedom of movement is tightened further by a requirement that collective farmers cannot take up other employment unless they produce their work books which must be maintained by the farm management. This too is a restriction on the choice of work.

The CACR has frequently pointed out the problems with this legislation. If management denies a request to leave the farm or refuses to hand over the workbook, the worker is either forced to stay on the farm or risk unemployment and subsequent arrest for leading a "parasitic" way of life. The ILO Experts have repeatedly asked the Soviet government to amend its legislation so that workers on farms may terminate their membership, or employment, by simply giving management sufficient notice of their intention to leave.

Five times in recent years the Soviet government has promised that the problem was being solved. In 1977 the government stated that "measures (to) put the legislation formally into line with (Convention 29)" would be taken "before the next session of the Committee of Experts and maybe even earlier." In 1978, the government indicated that "consultations which were under way...(with the ILO were) well advanced and that it could be hoped that they would lead to a solution in the near future." Again in 1979, its report referred to these consultations, prompting the COE to express hope that "the government will soon be able to indicate the solution adopted."

In 1980, the USSR representative claimed that his government understood the COE's point of view, adding that: "consultations were under way aiming not at the establishment

of the right to leave a collective farm but at clearly spelling it out. It was therefore not a question of substance but of formulation." In other words, the Soviet government appeared to be claiming that legislation already granted the right to leave a collective farm, but just needed to be further clarified.

Finally, in 1982 the Soviet government reiterated that consultations are being held with the Soviet employer and trade union organizations concerned. In addition, it pointed to a decree adopted on March 4, 1982 concerning timely consideration of a member's request to leave a farm as evidence of Soviet compliance with Convention 29. However, a question was raised by the US worker delegate about Order No. 597 adopted by the Central Committee of the Council of Ministers on July 10, 1980 and which amended the model rules for collective farms. This issue remains unresolved and further discussion can be expected at the 1984 Conference.

Limitations on ILO Supervision of Soviet Forced Labor

The means available to the ILO to exert pressure on the Soviet Union, despite the efforts noted above, is necessarily limited. Convention 29 is by no means the only, or most important treaty formulated by the ILO on forced labor. Indeed, in 1957 the ILO adopted a Convention (No. 105 concerning the abolition of forced labor) which is in many ways more applicable to the modern state, and certainly more relevant to the use of forced labor in the Soviet Union.

Convention 105 prohibits a government from employing forced labor for purposes of: political coercion or discipline; economic development; racial, social, national or religious discrimination; labor discipline; or punishment for having participated in strikes. This Convention, however, cannot be applied to the USSR because the USSR it is not a signatory state. Consequently, the ILO is only able to pursue the issue of Soviet forced labor under the provisions of Convention 29, which is not as relevant or powerful an instrument as would be Convention 105.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1940 USSR no longer an ILO member. Expelled from ILO in December 1939 following its invasion of Finland.
- 1948 AF of L proposes survey of forced labor.
- 1952 Joint ILO and ECOSOC Committee conducts survey on forced labor (UN Ad Hoc Committee on Forced Labor).
- 1953 ECOSOC approves forced labor survey.
- 1954 USSR rejoins ILO.
- 1956 ILO approves forced labor survey.
USSR ratifies ILO Convention 29 concerning abolition of forced labor.
- 1962-1970 ILO Committee of Experts (COE) requests information from Soviet government on its application of Convention 29.
- 1971 COE's first report on Soviet adherence to Convention 29.
- 1974 ILO Conference Committee on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (CACR) censures Soviet Union for non-compliance with Convention 29 under criterion 7 of the "special list"; report not adopted by the Conference.
- 1976 CACR highlights Soviet failure to adhere to Convention 29 in a special paragraph of its report; report is adopted by the Conference.
- 1977 CACR again highlights Soviet Union in a special paragraph of its report; report is not adopted by the Conference.

Convention Concerning Forced or
Compulsory Labor, 1930

Convention 29 defines "forced or compulsory labor" as "all work or service which is exacted from any person under the menace of penalty and for which the said person has not offered himself voluntarily." States which ratify Convention 29 undertake to suppress the use of forced or compulsory labor in all its forms, and within the shortest possible period.

The Convention specifically prohibits forced or compulsory labor imposed for the benefit of private individuals, companies or associations, exacted as a tax, or used to punish a community for crimes committed by any of its members. Convention 29 also requires the abolition of forced labor for the transport of persons or goods (e.g. porters and boatmen) and for work underground in mines. Compulsory cultivation may only be authorized as a precaution against famine or deficiency of food supplies, and only under the conditions that the produce remains the property of those producing it.

Five kinds of work or service are exempted from the Convention's definition of forced labor: compulsory military service, certain civic obligations, certain forms of prison labor, work exacted in emergencies and minor communal services. Prison labor is allowed provided that it is supervised by a public authority, and not used by private companies or individuals.

However, before resorting to forced or compulsory labor, the highest civil authority of the territory must have determined:

- (a) that the work is of important direct interest to the community called upon to do the work;
- (b) that the work is of present or imminent necessity;
- (c) that it has been impossible to obtain voluntary labor by offering wage rates and working conditions not less favorable than those prevailing for similar work;
- (d) that the work will not lay too heavy a burden on the present population, taking into consideration the labor available and its capacity to undertake the work.

Other selected provisions of the Convention include:

- (a) no person may be subject to forced or compulsory labor for more than sixty days per year, including the time spent traveling to place of employment.
- (b) such persons shall be paid prevailing wage rates, including overtime.
- (c) such persons shall work normal hours, including days of rest and holidays.

Other articles of the Convention set out standards governing workmen's compensation, safety and health, and age limits.



The Use of Forced Labor on the Siberian Gas-Pipeline

DOCUMENTATION

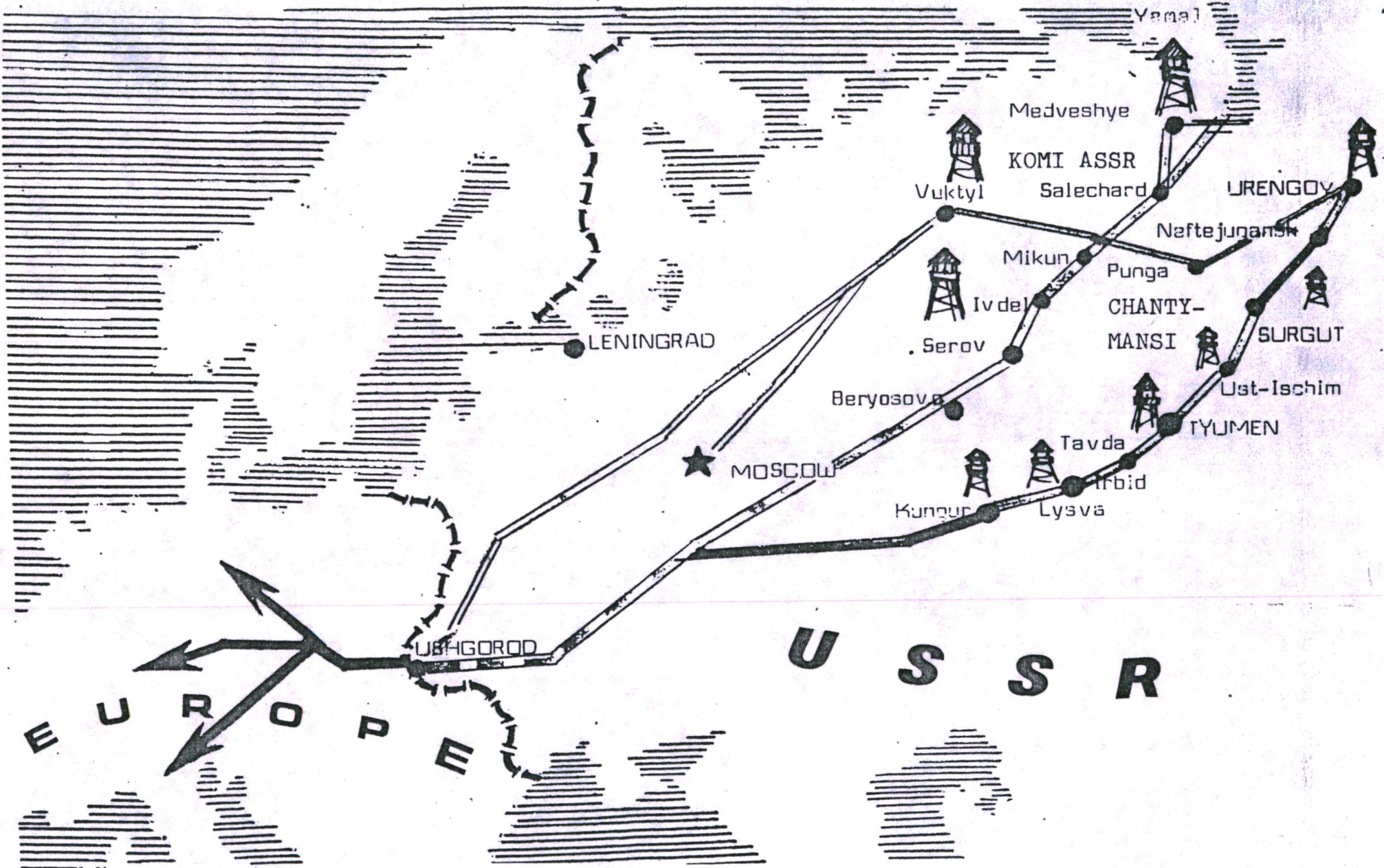
ISHR

INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR HUMAN RIGHTS


IGFM

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GAS-PIPELINE SIBERIA-EUROPE

 = forced labour camp

PREFACE

In recent months, reports gathered from telephone calls and letters arriving from the Soviet Union have confirmed that large numbers of prisoners are being employes as cheap labour on the construction of the Trans-Siberian Gas pipeline to Europe. There are civil rights campaigners, prisoners of conscience, victims of religious persecution and even women to be found amongst these prisoners.

As in the case of other large construction projects in the USSR the work is performed under inhuman conditions: with poor food, clothing and accommodation, and severe punishments for failure to achieve the desired output.

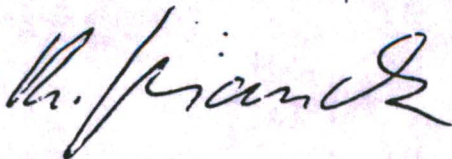
The reports on the human dimension of the pipeline are at first hand. They are a sign from the prisoners themselves, a call for help!

For this reason the ISHR (IGFM) released the information to the press and thereby to the public. The ISHR (IGFM) also appealed to the German Chancellor Schmidt to drop the projects on humanitarian grounds, in an open letter reproduced on page 32. The response surprised us all. From the public at large the reaction was one of overwhelming support. The proofs are increasing each day. However, whilst the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is still looking into the matter, Chancellor Schmidt has already informed concerned members of the public that these reports are "not true". The Soviet news agency, Tass, even speaks of "filthy lies".
(8th August 1982)

The ISHR (IGFM) therefore has provided a documentary file so that the reader may reach his own decision. We should like to suggest to the governments of Western Europe, that they have the working conditions on the pipeline investigated by an international committee of trades unionists. We feel that this is also in the best interest of the Soviet Union.

We hope that our efforts will lead to renewed reflection about this pipeline project.

Should we share the guilt of exploiting forced labourers? The Nuremberg processes condemned the use of concentration camp prisoners as forced labour. So too, does the United Nations regularly condemn the use of forced labour as slavery. We too can play our part. We as the ISHR (IGFM) should like to ask all concerned people to stand up and be counted - send a parcel to a prisoner or to his family. We can assist you to do so (see page 38).



Reinhard Gnauck, M.D.

Chairman
International Society for Human Rights
(Internationale Gesellschaft für Menschenrechte e.V.)

Frankfurt/M., in August 1982

CONSTITUTION
OF THE UNION
OF THE SOCIALIST
SOVIET REPUBLICS

adopted at the
7th Extraordinary Session of
the Prime Soviet of USSR
at the
9th Legislation Period
on 7th October 1977

Статья 60. Обязанность и дело чести каждого способного к труду гражданина СССР — добросовестный труд в избранной им области общественно полезной деятельности, соблюдение трудовой дисциплины. Уклонение от общественно полезного труда несовместимо с принципами социалистического общества.

Article 60.

It is the duty and the honour of every citizen of the USSR who is able to work to provide conscientious labour in his common and useful field of work chosen by him and the observation of discipline at work.

Any refusal to perform useful labour to the benefit of the society is not comparable with the principles of the socialist society.

The last category includes finally those who being either prisoners nor banished are sentenced to penal servitude by verdict of the court and carry on working in the same shop as before their judgment. However the greatest part of their salary is withheld by the state. It is maybe the most impudent form of slavery in the Soviet Union. A variant of this form is "the 15 days detention for hooliganism". The people concerned are to word as unskilled workers of burden carriers. This last group of servitude labourers constitutes the psychological and social bridge between the "free" salves of the Soviet society and the slaves of state.

The labour colonies are subdivided into four different regimes:

1. the general regime
2. the strengthened regime
3. the severe regime
4. the special regime.

There are furthermore five groups of colonies for the people who have committed a crime through want of care or imprudence, as well as six groups of colonies for people "being already on the mend" (these last groups are collecting camps where the conditions of detention are no more quite so hard). In the prisons there are two regimes: the general regime and the severe regime.

In the Soviet Union the penal execution is not limited to the detention. Its main principle is to exploit as much as possible the sentenced people. So it was in the GOULAG of Stalin and so it is nowadays. But the second principle of the Soviet execution of punishment was modified in the course of years. Under the commandment of Stalin (from 1939) these principles were exploitation and extermination. The aim was "expiation through privations and suffering". As the manual of the University Lomonossov in Moscow in the chapters treating: "The Soviet Legislation for Correction Labour" states it, a punishment is unconceivable without expiation, consequently without suffering and privations.

Nowadays the Soviet legislation allows no more to inflict "useless suffering, not indispensable for the aim of the punishment". It is of course an uncurrante notion which can be interpreted in different manners.

In short, if the camps of Stalin were camps of extermination, the present colonies are centers of torture, where the main method is the intensified exploitation of manpower.

For prisoners the scheduled time of work is 48 hours a week against 41 hours for the "free" wage labour in the Soviet Union. The prisoners have no vacation privilege even if they have been sentenced to 15 or 25 years. The only day off is Sunday but also this day can be declared working day by the administration of the colonies. The years detention do not count as years of service and are consequently not considered when the person retires. If a prisoner becomes disabled during the years of detention, he is not in title to receive disable pension until he is set free.

Disablement claims of a prisoneræ generally not accepted. Article 27 of the principles of the legislation for correction labour" stipulates: "work is compulsory for all prisoners". Consequently everybody is bound to work and fulfil the work norms even disabled of the first group who in civil are in bed-ridden state and dependent on assistance of others. They are also expected to work 48 hours and have no vacation privilege. And either the advanced age or the qualification of prisoners is taken into consideration by the administration.

Only the regime of the labour colony is of decisive importance. The principles stipulate expressively that people detained in colonies with severe regime are to be assigned to heavy work. But as the Soviet newspaper "Kasachstanskaja Prawda" mentioned, and this applies also to other colonies: "Prisoners are principally to perform the heaviest work and the work norms are critical values. We can change nothing about it. A labour colony is not a sanatorium but a penal establishment where one works in the sweat of thy brow".

What does labour cost to the state? Almost nothing. The greatest part of the wages of those hard workers is withdrawn:

1. To cover the maintenance charges of the administration - i.e. guards and supervisors costs.
 2. For the food and clothing of prisoners.
- As the state has no other expenses in connection with the existence of the prisoners, the Soviet forced labourers finance themselves their slavery. All deductions made it remains to the prisoner 10 % of his wages (25 % for disabled of the first and second groups). However even this ridiculous remaining amount is paid only if the prisoner has not offended the regime of the colony and fulfilled the work norms. In case the prisoner has not fulfil these conditions (what happens quite often) he receives no salary at all. Furthermore the administration is in title to assign the prisoner to underpaid jobs such as maintenance of the colony and adjoining estates.

In his writing "About the Dialectical and Historical Materialism" Stalin has characterised amongst other things the extent of exploitation in different social orders. The exploitation of soviet prisoners corresponds to the exploitation of slaves in slave-holding societies described by Stalin, and on the model of which he probably organized the Soviet labour camps.

In connection with correction labour the Soviet legislation states "a legal relationship between the Soviet state and

IT IS NOTHING NEW...

There has been forced labour in the Soviet Union since the very first day of its existence.

Lenin considered forced labour to be the best means of creating the "new man". It was supposed to stimulate the collective consciousness in people. The founders of the Soviet Union valued man only in terms of their use to society. They considered human beings only as a tool.

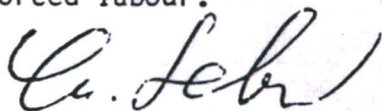
The first forced labourers in the Soviet Union were intellectuals and orthodox priests, imprisoned on the Solovetskii Islands in the White Sea in the year 1918.

Later, millions of people, accused of the most various crimes, were interned in prison camps. Most of the accusations were purely pretexts, used to generate cheap labour. In the 30 years since Stalin's death, such prisoners as these have built hundreds of factories, canals, roads and whole towns. All of these were so-called "Great achievements of Communism", including such projects as the White Sea - Baltic Canal, the Dnieper hydro-electric works, the BAM (Baikal-Amur-Magistrale railway), the Moscow Underground, the Volga-Don Canal and huge metal foundries in the Urals and Kazakhstan.

Millions of prisoners died before Khrushchev exposed Stalin's personality cult in 1956. However whilst only sentenced prisoners had been inducted into forced labour up till then, Khrushchev introduced a change: henceforth only an administrative order was necessary to force people to work.

The tragedy of all this is the way in which these prisoners are deprived of all their rights, are made to live in inhumane conditions separated from their families and suffer from malnutrition and insufficient medical care. Our attention should not be directed exclusively to the prisoners of conscience. All men have a right to decent treatment and so we should be concerned for all categories of forced labourers.

If we are not careful, we too shall suffer because of the existence of forced labour. No man is an island, and we run the risk of coarsening ourselves and our civilisation by allowing ourselves to become accustomed to the fact of forced labour.



Yuri Below

Frankfurt, in August 1982

Leader of the working group on the USSR
in the International Society for Human Rights

"Regarding crimes against humanity,
there is no doubt that political opponents
have been murdered in Germany before the war
and that many of them were detained in
concentration camps under disgracing and
horrible conditions. Such policy of horror
has certainly been pursued in a great style
and was in many cases pre-fixed and organized."

Extracted from a judgement of the
Nuremberg Processes - 1946

NATIONAL SLAVES IN THE SOVIET UNION A JURIDICAL HISTORIC COMMENTARY

by Prof. Michael Wossilensky, Munich

The usual Soviet formula proclaims vehemently:
The Soviet State was born with the word "Peace" on the lips.
Another expression followed soon afterwards: penal servitude
On 18th January 1918 only two months after the October Revolution
the Commissariat of Justice issued a decree concerning "penal
working groups".

The first concentration camps, houses of correction and penal
labour colonies were established during the Red Terror in
September 1918. In spring 1919 the 8th Congress of the Party
Assembly formulated the program of the Bolshevik Party
specifying amongst other things the principles of the
execution of punishment in the Soviet Union: in future
prisons were to be replaced by houses of correction "in order
to subjugate the condemned persons to a producing work useful
to the society".

In the year 1929 Trotzky justified the must of penal servitude
in socialism and advocated the "militarisation of labour" and
the creation of "labour armies".

After Stalin had come to power, instead of the labour armies
the concentration camps became the core of penal servitude.
On March 1928 a decree was issued concerning "penal policy
and the status of penal institutions" as an extension of
labour colonies.

The decree of 6th November 1929 of the Central Executive
Committee and the Council of the Commissaries of the Soviet
Union defined penal institutions as being houses of correction
in remote regions of the Soviet Unions as well as labour
colonies for those people whose punishment did not exceed
three years.

In the course of the liquidation of the Koulaks as a class,
the stalinien labour camps played a new role. A decree
issued on 7th April 1939 concerning the penal labour camps
asserted that contrarily to the concentration camps of the
bourgeois regimes, they were no institutions serving the
purpose to exterminate physically the enemies of the class.

As this was written three years before the Nazis came to
power and the first extermination camps appeared, the train
of thoughts of Stalin can be followed easily. Indeed from
1939 the camps in the Soviet Union became real extermination
camps. The evidence is given by the number of their victims.
Under the command of Kruschev five to six millions of
these victims of the GOULAG were posthumously rehabilitated.
But this was only a few of them. The Koulaks for instance
have never been rehabilitated, although Kruschev confided
to Churchill that the number of Koulaks exterminated in the
Stalinien camps amounted to more than 10 millions - that is
more than in the concentration camps of the Nazis.

However the method of extermination was different. In the
camps of Stalin the prisoners were rarely executed or murdered -
they died rather of exhaustion due to famine and cold as well
as to the hard work they performed.

After the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet
Union (February 1956) the execution of punishment in the Soviet
Union was a little humanized. The word "colony" replaced the
word "camp". GOULAG (Administration of the camps of the Home
Office in the Soviet Union) was changed into GOUITU (Adminis-
trative body for penitentiary matters) and the number of
prisoners decreased. It increased again in the course of the
last ten years.

But the principles of the Soviet execution of punishment
remained unchanged. The prisoners are exploited to slave
labour, and in the opinion of the Western countries they are
still very many. In the Soviet towns there are on an average
as many prisons as in the Occidental towns, but in 1971 only
0,3 % of condemned people were detained in prisons and it is
well known that the Soviet prisons are overcrowded.

As a result there are in the Soviet Union 330 times more
prisoners of other categories. They amount therefore to
several millions and form a special class of the Soviet
Society: the class of the national slaves.

In the paper I read at the 2nd World Congress for Soviet
and Eastern studies (Garmisch - Partenkirchen, 30.9.-4.10.1980)
I already mentioned the existence of this lowest class of the
Soviet society.

The constitution of the Soviet Union does not mention it -
with the exception possibly of a vague allusion in its
article 60: "The refusal to accomplish a labour useful to
the society is incompatible with the principles of the
socialist society".

Other official Soviet sources such as "The Principles of the
Legislation for Correction Labour in the Soviet Union and the
Republics of the Union or the Penal Codes of the Republics of
the Union and the Manual "The Soviet Legislation for Correction
Labour" give information about the status of these disfran-
chised people.

Most of them are detained in colonies for correction labour
and in case of juvenile delinquents in colonies for educational
labour.

Apart from the prisoners included in the categories mentioned
above, there are also the slave labourers who are not consi-
dered as prisoners: the banished who live in exile under the
supervision of the local authorities, are forced to slave
labour but allowed to move about freely within the limits
of the place where they are living in exile. As this category
of slave labourers was previously assigned to the construction
of important chemical plants, one calls them in slang "chemists"
As to the prisoners, in the slang of the camps one calls them
"Zek" (an abbreviation of the word "zakloutchony" - prisoner.

the sentenced people" and he insists on the fact that this relationship is not set forth in a contract but originates from a judgment execution and ends on the day the prisoner is legally discharged or dies.

In the definition of slave exploitation given by Stalin it is pointed out that slaves may be sold, tortured or even killed. This applies to Soviet prisoners. The German Democratic Republic is the only country of the East Block where it is usual practice to sell prisoners to other states. On the other hand in the Soviet Union prisoners may be "leased" to other institutions through the GOUITU. Some colonies serve as suppliers of labourers. The colony and the business in question conclude a contract according to which one party has to supply the labourers while the other binds itself to organize the labour of prisoners in production zones specially prepared and is willing to pay the salary corresponding to the services - this salary being paid of course to the colony administration and not to the prisoner.

Tortures and extermination of prisoners in practice under Stalin have been described above. Nowadays the Soviet penal execution represents a permanent torture of the prisoners and we are not speaking of abuses committed by some officials but of rules prescribed by the Soviet legislation.

The Soviet law points out that the principal element of the colony regime is "the compulsory isolation of the sentenced people and their permanent surveillance". The prisoners wear prison uniforms, their mail is submitted to censor, the parcels sent to them are controlled. They are not allowed to have money or valuables with them. Nonobservance is punished and the good seized for the benefit of the state..

... We have here deliberately not described infringements or official oppression from the authorities of the colonies. Our information based only on soviet sources and especially on the Soviet legislation. The Soviet slave labour is in the practice worse than the theory but the theory is sufficient to enable to take a grave view of the situation. It can also not hide the existence of the slaves of state in the Soviet Union.

One can not choose one's neighbours and the social structure in the pretended real socialism is as it is. But this does not mean that the West may confidently participate to the exploitation of the slave labourers of the East. This causes a big political et moral damage above all to the West itself.

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DEFINITIONS

The people sentenced to slave labour in the Soviet Union are subdivided in several categories:

1) Banished persons: Many prisoners having served a sentence in a penal camp are superimposed the punishment of banishment. Some are sent by the court directly into banishment without having been sentenced first to detention in a camp. Within the limits of the place where they have to stay as banished persons, the sentenced people may move freely. However they remain permanently under the control of the local police and must observe curfew. Without permission of the police they must not leave the place.

2) Prisoners forced to slave labour in camp-owned factories or, if the factory or building site is not too far from the camp, are taken to work in convoy under close guard.

3)a) Prisoners being granted conditional freedom sent generally only in spring and summer to work on so-called "Great Economic Projects" i.e. the gas pipeline. In the slang of the Soviet camps these sites are called "chemistries" and the prisoners under limited control are the "chemists". This category does not live in camps during its assignment there, is not under the control of the guards of the camp. It is the reason why these people are called "prisoners under limited supervision". They remain however under the permanent control of the local police and are not allowed to leave the place. In autumn they are generally taken back to their camp. The months spent at the site of forced labour are not considered as time of detention, i.e. not deducted from their sentence.

b) The people sent for "parasitism" either by sentence of the court or only by order of the administration directly and without passing through a camp or a prison to "Great Economic Projects". (The people who have worked on private basis for themselves instead of for the state also fall into this category).

- "Great Economic Projects" are projects of national importance, to the construction of which labourers from all parts of the Soviet Union are assigned.

- In statements made by witnesses one hears sometimes "prisoners" when they mean "prisoners under limited control". Some witnesses speak generally of sentenced people and make no difference between the categories.