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DDI-8270-82/1

Central Intelligence Agency
Office of the Deputy Director for Intelligence

Executive Registry
82-11041/3

3 NOV 1982

NOTE FOR: The Director
The Deputy Director

The attached letter of transmittal for your signature responds to Senator Percy's request for an unclassified evaluation of forced labor in the USSR in his letter to you dated 1 October 1982 (also attached).

The evaluation was prepared by SOVA and OGI and coordinated with the NIO/USSR-EE. The evaluation has been briefed orally to Hans Binnedijk of Senator Percy's Staff.

Robert M. Gates
Director

Attachments:
As stated.

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Central Intelligence Agency

Washington, D.C. 20505

Executive Registry
82-11041/4

5 NOV 1982

Honorable Charles H. Percy, Chairman
Committee on Foreign Relations
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

In reference to your letter of 1 October, attached is a short unclassified evaluation of forced labor in the USSR to bring you up to date. We are preparing a more detailed paper on the subject which will be ready soon.

Sincerely,

/s/ William J. Casey

William J. Casey
Director of Central Intelligence

Attachment:
As Stated

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Central Intelligence Agency

Washington, D.C. 20505

2 November 1982

Forced Labor in the USSR: Preliminary Evaluation

1. Information obtained over the past two months reconfirms that the Soviets have routinely employed common prisoners, probationers, and parolees as unskilled labor on pipelines and other major construction projects through the late 1970s. We also know that forced labor is being used on other pipelines currently under construction, and therefore it seems likely that such labor might also be used on the Siberian gas export pipeline. Since that line has only been under construction since March, and given the nature of the Soviet system, it will probably be some time before we can positively confirm such use.

2. The forced labor population consists of people convicted of both serious crimes and petty crimes such as drunkenness and hooliganism. The two categories of forced labor are those confined in guarded facilities such as forced labor colonies and those who are not confined, primarily probationers and parolees. Based on incomplete information, we estimate that more than 4 million Soviet citizens -- about 1.5 percent of the general population -- are now serving sentences at forced labor.

- -- About 2 million of these are confined: 85 percent in forced labor camps and the remainder in prisons.
- -- Approximately 1.5 million, convicted of crimes for which they could have received sentences of confinement, have instead been given probation with "compulsory involvement in labor." Most of them are working at construction jobs far from their homes.
- -- Roughly 500,000 have been paroled from confinement but remain obligated to perform forced labor for the remainder of their terms. Many of these also are working at construction sites.
- -- Perhaps 100,000 or so are sentenced at any one time to "correctional tasks" without confinement; they are working for low pay while continuing to live at home.

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3. Those prisoners confined in forced labor colonies near the pipeline route conceivably could be tapped for unskilled work on the pipeline and its compressor stations. If forced laborers were used, it is more likely that they would be drawn from among those who are not confined. According to the First Deputy Minister for the Construction of Oil and Gas Industry Enterprises, 120,000 to 130,000 people would be employed on the export pipeline at peak construction periods. Most of this work force would be skilled workers, minimizing the need for unskilled forced laborers. Nonetheless, the general shortage of labor in the USSR, particularly in the area west of the Ural Mountains, could argue for the use of forced labor on the export pipeline.

4. In the past, unconfined forced laborers numbering in the thousands have been used on such major construction projects as the huge Kama River truck plant (the world's largest) and the Baykal-Amur Magistral (BAM) railroad. Parolees and probationers are also employed in industrial production and other economic activities. There seems little doubt that they are employed wherever labor shortages exist -- i.e., where the location is remote, amenities lacking, the environment hostile, or the work hazardous or unhealthful.

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SOVA/D/SE/[redacted] (1 Nov 82) STAT

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