

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

WARNING: INFORMATION REPORT NOT FULLY EVALUATED INTELLIGENCE
REPORT CLASS [REDACTED]
DIST: 05 OCTOBER 1984
COUNTRY: USSR
SUBJ: CRIME AND PUNISHMENT IN THE USSR
DOI: 1955 - 1979
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TEXT: 1. WITHIN THE SOVIET PENAL SYSTEM, LABOR COLONIES WERE CLASSIFIED AS "REGULAR COLONIES", "STRICT REGIME (USILENNYY) COLONIES", "VERY STRICT REGIME (STOROGI) COLONIES", "SPECIAL REGIME (OSOBIY) COLONIES", AND THE TYPE OF COLONY TO WHICH AN INDIVIDUAL WAS ASSIGNED DEPENDED UPON THE SEVERITY OF THE OFFENSE AND THE SENTENCE IMPOSED. IF THE SENTENCE CALLED FOR IMPRISONMENT FOR A LESSER CRIME, THE TYPE OF IMPRISONMENT DECREED DEPENDED UPON THE NEEDS OF THE STATE FOR LABORERS ON CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS, AND THE LENGTH OF THE SENTENCES WAS REGULATED BY THE GOVERNMENT BASED ON THESE LABOR REQUIREMENTS, BUT ONLY WITHIN THE SENTENCE STRUCTURE DECREED BY LAW FOR A PARTICULAR CRIME (E.G.: TWO - FIVE YEARS FOR THEFT). THE WORK PROGRAMS WERE KNOWN AS "CONSTRUCTION OF PEOPLES ECONOMIC PROJECTS", AND WERE REFERRED TO AS "KHIMIYA", WHILE THE LABORERS WERE KNOWN AS "KHIMIKI". THESE TERMS DATE BACK TO THE TIME WHEN PRISON LABOR WAS USED TO CONSTRUCT LARGE CHEMICAL COMBINES IN VARIOUS PARTS OF THE USSR.

2. ARTICLE 183-3 TO THE RSFSR CRIMINAL CODE MADE INFRACTIONS OF CORRECTIVE LABOR COLONY OR PRISON REGULATIONS A CRIMINAL OFFENSE, AND IF A PRISONER WAS ACCUSED OF VIOLATING A REGULATION HE MUST BE GIVEN A NEW TRIAL WITHIN THE CORRECTIVE FACILITY AND ANY NEW SENTENCE WAS ADDED TO THE EXISTING SENTENCE. IF THE VIOLATION WAS CONSIDERED A SIMPLE ONE, HE WAS TRIED WITHIN THE CORRECTIVE FACILITY BY A PEOPLE'S COURT, BUT IF THE INFRACTION WAS CONSIDERED MAJOR, HE WAS TRIED WITHIN THE FACILITY BY A HIGHER COURT. IN NO CASE WAS THE PRISONER

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REMOVED FROM THE CORRECTIVE FACILITY FOR TRIAL.

3. SOVIET LAWS ON EXILE OR BANISHMENT HAD NOT CHANGED AND STILL CALLED FOR AN ADDITIONAL TWO - FIVE YEAR PERIOD OF EXILE AFTER THE ORIGINAL PRISON SENTENCE HAD BEEN SERVED. THE SEVERITY OF THE SENTENCE WITHIN THE TWO - FIVE YEAR RANGE DEPENDED UPON HOW LONG THE STATE WANTED THE INDIVIDUAL OUT OF CIRCULATION AFTER HE HAD COMPLETED HIS ORIGINAL SENTENCE.

4. INDIVIDUALS CONVICTED OF MINOR CRIMES SUCH AS HOOLIGANISM OR PETTY THEFT WERE OFTEN CONDITIONALLY SENTENCED TO LABOR, AND IN THESE CASES THE INDIVIDUAL WAS ALLOWED TO LIVE AT HIS HOME AND RETAIN HIS PREVIOUS EMPLOYMENT, BUT AT A 10 - 25 PERCENT REDUCTION IN PAY FOR A PERIOD OF ONE YEAR. IN ANOTHER TYPE OF CONDITIONAL PUNISHMENT SENTENCE, INDIVIDUALS WERE TRANSPORTED TO "KHIMIYA" FOR PERIODS OF ONE - TWO YEARS TO WORK OFF THEIR SENTENCES. THESE INDIVIDUALS RECEIVED A SMALL SALARY AND WERE ALLOWED MINOR PRIVILEGES SUCH AS ATTENDING MOVIE THEATERS. IN ORDER TO GET THE MOST PRODUCTIVE LABOR FROM EACH PRISONER, EFFORTS WERE MADE TO MATCH THE WORK SKILLS OF INDIVIDUALS TO SPECIFIC WORK PROJECTS. INDIVIDUALS CONDITIONALLY SENTENCED TO LABOR OR THOSE SENTENCED TO "KHIMIYA" WERE CONSIDERED TO HAVE A CRIMINAL RECORD FOR A PERIOD OF THREE YEARS, AND THEIR INTERNAL PASSPORTS WERE STAMPED "SUDIMOST" (CRIMINAL RECORD). INDIVIDUALS RETURNING FROM LABOR COLONIES WERE FORCED TO REGISTER WITH THE LOCAL MILITIA OFFICE AS PAROLEES FOR THREE YEARS. ANY OFFENSE COMMITTED DURING THE THREE YEAR PERIOD, NO MATTER HOW MINOR, WAS SUFFICIENT TO HAVE THE INDIVIDUAL SENTENCED FOR AN ADDITIONAL TERM OF IMPRISONMENT. THE BASIS FOR SENTENCING AN INDIVIDUAL TO A LABOR COLONY OR TO CONDITIONAL LABOR DEPENDED ON THE SEVERITY OF THE CRIME COMMITTED AND ON THE SENTENCE IMPOSED FOR THAT CRIME.

5. THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE ARRESTED AND CONVICTED OF SUCH CRIMES AS POLITICAL ACTIVISM OR HOOLIGANISM AT ANY ONE TIME WAS DIRECTLY RELATED TO THE ATTITUDE OF THE STATE TOWARD COMBATING A SPECIFIC OFFENSE AT THAT TIME, AND TO THE NEEDS OF THE STATE FOR LABORERS. AS AN EXAMPLE, THE STATE'S CAMPAIGN AGAINST HOOLIGANISM IN THE ESTONIAN SSR WAS MARKEDLY STEPPED UP IN THE LATE 1960'S BECAUSE ADDITIONAL WORKERS WERE NEEDED IN THE KOKHTLAYARVA OIL SHALE FIELDS. AS A RESULT, MANY MORE PEOPLE WERE ARRESTED AND SENT TO LABOR COLONIES IN THAT AREA. BY LAW, THE SENTENCE FOR HOOLIGANISM WAS ONE - FIVE YEARS, AND MOST OF THE INDIVIDUALS ARRESTED AT THAT TIME RECEIVED SENTENCES OF TWO TO FOUR YEARS.

6. ALCOHOLISM WAS ESTIMATED TO HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN 80 - 85 PERCENT OF ALL CRIMES COMMITTED IN THE USSR, AND UNDER SOVIET LAW, BEING IN A STATE OF INTOXICATION DURING THE COMMISSION OF A CRIME WAS CONSIDERED "AGGRAVATING CIRCUMSTANCES". THIS MEANT THAT THE INDIVIDUAL COULD BE SENTENCED TO LONGER TERMS WITHIN THE RANGE OF YEARS OF IMPRISONMENT PRESCRIBED BY LAW FOR A SPECIFIC OFFENSE.

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