

SECRET

Report of Interrogation : No. 5857 of

9 November 1945

I/O : Capt. HALLE

P/W : HILGER, Gustav
Rank : Counsellor of Embassy
Unit : Foreign Office
Captd : 19 May 1945, Salzburg.

Veracity : Believed reliable.

Report : Answer to Periodic Intelligence Questionnaire, MIS Sep-Oct 1945.

Question U.S.S.R. # 5 : What has been the economic effect of the recent amnesty for lesser offenses ?

Answer # 5 : All persons in the USSR who have been given prison sentences and who are able to work are placed in labor camps by the NKVD (People's Commissariat for Interior Affairs). These camps are under the control of the Section for National Security (formerly the OGPU) and the inmates are under strict supervision, being forced to work to the limit of their ability. The NKVD had great successes in that respect. Most of the famous railroads and canals (the white sea canal, the Moscow-Volgacanal, the Baikal-Amur Railroad) as well as most of the gigantic industries in the Ural and in Siberia have been erected with forced labor. Imprisoned engineers and other experts did very valuable research and special work in offices and laboratories which were erected for that particular purpose. Discharged convicts are included immediately in the production process. They do not have a free choice of their place of work, but are used where their qualifications show that they are needed the most. They have neither the possibility of free choice of their place of work nor can they change their job later according to their own desires. A cleverly figured out system of piece-wages and special premiums and other measures of the Soviet government designed to increase production account for the fact that the released convicts continue to produce to the limit of their capability.

It is therefore hardly possible to find any economic repercussions of the amnesty either favorable or otherwise.

The propagandistic and psychological effect of these measures, on the other hand is very important. This is true for those directly affected by them, as well as for the entire population, which applauds the amnesty as evidence of the moderation of the course of the government.

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