

Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release 2013/11/12 : CIA-RDP91B01306R000500020003-2 **EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT**

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Remarks

D/OCA states no response necessary.

ER 89-4482

Executive Secretary

Date

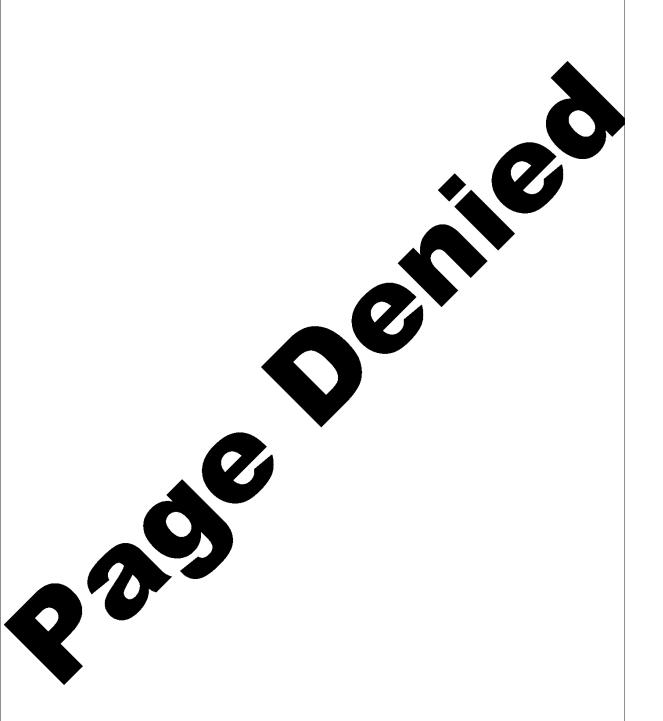
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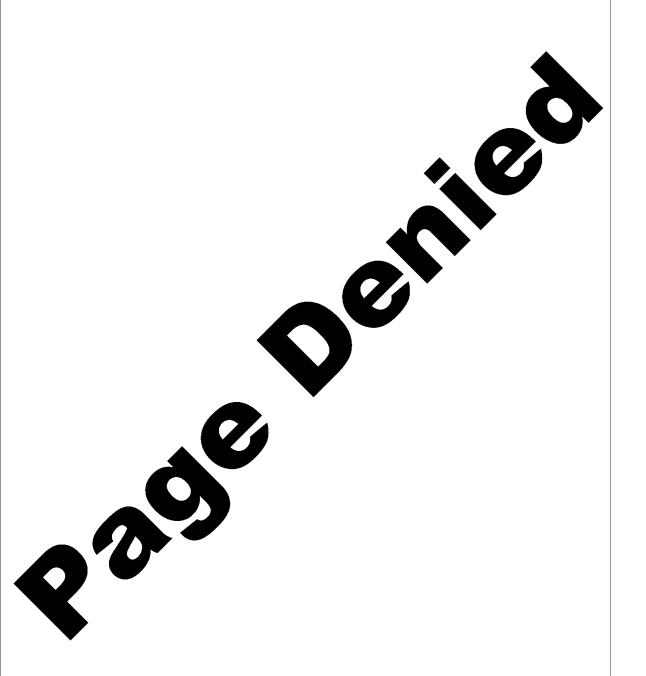
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Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Ap CIA-RDP91B01306R000500020003-2	oproved for Release 2013/11/12
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will res	pond.
No response is necessary	
CONCUR	
I prefer	
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FRANK R. WOLF 10TH DISTRICT, VIRGINIA

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Congress of the United States House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515 October 26, 1989

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

SUBCOMMITTEES: TRANSPORTATION

TREASURY-POSTAL SERVICE-GENERAL GOVERNMENT

> **SELECT COMMITTEE** ON CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILIES

COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

The Honorable William H. Webster Director Central Intelligence Agency 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20505

Dear Judge Webster:

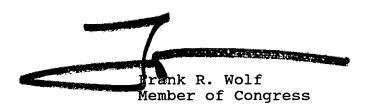
I want to share with you the enclosed report of my recent trip to the Soviet Union. As members of the Helsinki Commission, Rep. Chris Smith of New Jersey and I travelled in August to Perm Labor Camp 35.

Perm 35 is regarded as one of the most notorious "political" camps in the Soviet Union. We found conditions in this "strict regime" camp deplorable and our report identifies several steps and recommendations we believe may help to advance glasnost to the gulag in the Soviet Union.

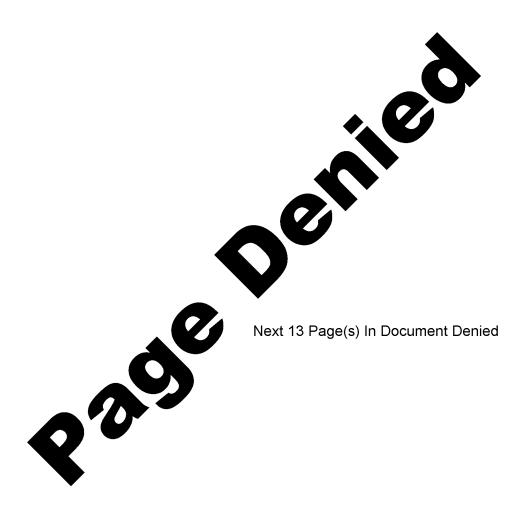
A former Perm 35 inmate, Lithuanian Catholic priest Alfonsas Svarinskas, has called Soviet prisons the "barometer of Soviet reality." It is important that Members of Congress, human rights groups, and those in the Administration closely follow promised Soviet reforms like the "laws on conscience" in the months ahead.

I hope this information is helpful.

Sincerely,



withes. **MPNECIME** INDIOIDUAL





REP. CHRISTOPHER SMITH ... beard prisoners' complaints



REP. FRANK WOLF
... singled out "political" cases

Congressmen Interview Inmates at Soviet Camp

'We Believe We Saw Political Prisoners'

By Michael Dobbs Washington Post Foreign Service

Aug 11,89

MOSCOW, Aug. 10—After becoming the first U.S. officials to visit a Soviet labor camp, two members of the congressional Helsinki Commission took issue with President Mikhail Gorbachev's claims that there are no political prisoners in the Soviet Union.

"We believe we saw political prisoners," said Rep. Christopher H. Smith (R-N.J.), who was permitted to visit a Siberian prison known as Perm-35 with Rep. Frank R. Wolf (R-Va.).

The decision to allow Westerners to tour the prison reflects Gorbachev's desire to show that the Kremlin has nothing to hide prior to a major human rights conference in Moscow in 1991. The congressmen appeared impressed with glasnost, or openness, but convinced that the Soviet Union still has a long way to go in improving its human rights record.

At a news conference in Moscow, the congressmen said they had been able to talk to 23 of the 38 prisoners remaining in the Perm camp. They said most of those interviewed described themselves as political prisoners.

Addressing the United Nations last November, Gorbachev insisted that "in places of confinement [in the Soviet Union], there are no persons convicted for their political or religious beliefs." He appeared to be referring to prisoners convicted un-

der Articles 70 and 190 of the Penal Code covering "anti-Soviet agitation" and "slander."

The American legislators refused to say how many of the convicts interviewed at Perm could be described as "prisoners of conscience," but Wolf singled out Leonid Lubman and Valery Smirnov as "political" cases.

Lubman, a 53-year-old electronics engineer, was sentenced in 1978 to 13 years in a labor camp after he smuggled out a manuscript that included the profiles of 30 allegedly corrupt officials. Smirnov, a 44-year-old computer specialist, was convicted of treason after returning to the Soviet Union voluntarily after he had received political asylum in the United States.

The congressmen also interviewed Mikhail Kazachkov, 55, a physicist from Leningrad now in the Perm prison. Kazachkov, whom Western human rights organizations regard as a political prisoner, was convicted of treason after meeting with U.S. consular officials and asking for help in emigrating to the United States.

The Soviet authorities appear to have taken some trouble in making the Perm camp presentable prior to the congressmen's visit. Walls had been recently painted, and freshly potted flowers adorned the camp.

The congressmen said many inmates complained about the lack of adequate heat in winter, infrequent visits by families and a ban on receiving letters from abroad. The partners ence ago sities, ha seismic 1 Soviet U the first gence-gat try formal ernments.

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