



Washington, D.C. 20505

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19 MAY 1983

The Honorable William L. Armstrong
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Armstrong:

As you suggested, we have put together a list of Soviet industries which utilize forced labor and produce goods for export. A copy of that list is enclosed. While we have done extensive research on this question for many years, we cannot determine the exact magnitude of the contribution forced labor makes to the total output in each industry, nor can we give you a list of brand names or products.

I thought you might find the enclosed article from the Fall 1982 issue of Workers Under Communism, an AFL-CIO journal, interesting. It is a generally accurate summary, consistent with our own sources of information, and includes the names of some specific products produced with the help of forced labor.

Sincerely,

/s/ William J. Casey

William J. Casey
Director of Central Intelligence

Enclosures

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ENCLOSURE 1

Based on a variety of intelligence sources and open publications [redacted] CIA has compiled the following list of industries and products in which forced labor is used extensively.

STAT

I. Wood Products

- lumber
- furniture
- casings for clocks
- cabinets for radio and TV sets
- wooden chess pieces
- wooden souvenirs
- wooden crates for fruit and vegetables
- cardboard containers

II. Electronic

- cathode ray tube components
- resistors

III. Glass

- camera lenses
- glassware
- chandeliers

IV. Automotive

- auto parts
- wheel rims
- parts for agricultural machinery

V. Mining/Ore Processing

- gold
- iron
- aluminum
- coal and peat
- uranium
- asbestos
- limestone
- construction stone and gravel

VI. Clothing

- coat, gloves, boots
- buttons and zippers

VII. Petroleum Products and Chemicals

VIII. Food

- Tea

IX. Miscellaneous

- brick and tile
- watch parts
- wire fences, mattresses, screens
- steel drums and barrels
- lids for glass jars
- plumbing equipment
- storage battery cases
- concrete products
- electric plugs/cords
- electric heaters
- electric motors
- pumps
- woven bags

ENCLOSURE 2

Made in the Gulag

Exports are vital to the Soviet economy, and an enormous number of these products are made in forced labor camps. Russian emigrants, exiled dissidents, Jewish pressure groups, and organizations such as Amnesty International affirm that every item exported by the U.S.S.R. from a heavy truck to an ornamental glass, has at least one component which is produced by slave labor.

Dissidents feel it is time that hidden secrets of Soviet industry be revealed to the naïve West, which is at present taking advantage of its lukewarm relationship with the U.S.S.R. Therefore an intensive inquiry has been undertaken on the basis of the complaints of twenty former prisoners, and the extent to which the British market has been contaminated by slave labor products has been investigated.

At the Soviet Trade Delegation in London, Vladimir Cheklin refused to discuss the allegations regarding Soviet products marketed in Great Britain, asserting, "Those who make these accusations do not even know whether they are correct." That is why he sees no reason to get into the subject. He has suggested that his questioners visit Siberia themselves to pursue their inquiry "on site," maintaining that what they would see would prove the dissidents wrong. When asked whether it would be possible to visit Mordovia, a region of concentration camps more important than Siberia, he replied, "Do you allow Russians to visit prison camps in Northern Ireland?"

Thousands of cheap televisions, radios, refrigerators and tape recorders have inundated the British market in recent years, and have been snapped up by bargain hunters. Practically all these products are marketed under the name "Vega," "The reliable choice," and all are sold by Technical and Optical Equipment, a London company.

Vega radios are manufactured in four factories in the U.S.S.R. One of them, situated in Riga, receives components from four prison camps located in the region. Components for the Moscow factory are

provided by the prison at Vladimir. The casings for the radios and televisions are made in camp OU 85/8 in the Crimea and in a camp in Mordovia. Camp 36 in Perm manufactures spare parts as well as electronic elements for cathode ray tubes and heating elements for irons, which are then sent to the turbo generator factory in Lysva.

Dr. Cronid Lubarsky, who spent five years in prison, has given a remarkable picture of how Vladimir prison, situated 120 miles from Moscow, is able to sustain its pace in the production of Vega radio resistors.

The working conditions are unbelievable and everything is made in cells which, although only ten square yards in size, contain three men, beds, and a toilet as well as all the equipment and machinery necessary for the work. In the cells the lights are switched on at 5 o'clock in the morning and are not put out until 10 o'clock at night. Only an hour's break is provided for exercise. In order to attain the target of three thousand resistors a day, it is necessary to work more than eight hours a day. The lighting and ventilation are dreadful and consequently the prisoners' sight and health deteriorate rapidly. The first signs of headaches appear after three months and there is total physical deterioration after six months. The daily ration of food is measured according to the volume of production.

Stuart Robinson, Sales Director for the Technical and Optical Equipment Company, refuses to discuss the origin of certain of his products: "We are a commercial company, and we have nothing to do with human rights. Go to Russia if you want to write an article on that subject. Why don't you go to the Soviet ambassador in order to meet the person responsible?"

At the Russian shop in Holborn, London, the shelves are laden with wooden ornaments, painted toys, jewelry boxes, glassware, wall clocks, stone sculptures and especially the well-known little dolls of the old woman who lived in a shoe, "Matrioshka." These are some examples drawn from the considerable volume of consumer products imported into Britain from the U.S.S.R. Moscow can cover itself when accusations arise concerning the use of forced labor, as most of these articles are sent to workers or skilled craftsmen to be finished.

Knowing the situation, three dissidents have

This report first appeared in L'Eventail Special, a Belgian publication edited by Charles Verpoorten. It has been distributed in Great Britain by the Wilberforce Council for Human Rights.

spoken out—Joseph Lederman, Michael Vais and Abraham Sin. They declared that these dolls are made in camps in the Surgut region, in the Tuymenskaya district, and in the Alma Atinstaya region. Three other dissidents who have been interviewed (Lubarsky, Yuri Belov and Nikolai Scharegin) reported that they had made cuckoo clocks and wooden chess pieces during their internment in the camps in Mordovia, while the KGB arranged for these objects to be labelled with the name of a "free" factory in a village or town. The cuckoos made in camp 19 in Mordovia, where the "workers" often lose a finger or a hand on the outdated machinery, are sent to Serdobsck in the Penza region for final assembly and painting, before being exported. Each year Britain imports two to three thousand of these clocks. The casings for the clocks are also made in Mordovia under the brand name Vega, in addition to the other wooden articles, such as chess games or sculptured figures. Camps 5, 7 and 19 are assigned political prisoners sentenced to hard labor, who work under appalling conditions. As for the souvenir Olympic badges and the mascot bears "Misha" which are sold at the Russian shop in London, they come from camp ON-55 in the Kalinin region.

The Potma camp produces glassware and chandeliers which are exported to the West. In these camps the prisoners work the glass in an atmosphere full of dust and do not wear a protective mask. There are also glassworks in the women's camp on Lake Baikal as well as at Roslavl, near Smolensk, where bottles destined to contain Moskovskaya vodka are made. In a camp near Grozny horn souvenirs are made, but are finished in "free" factories. Painted wooden cigarette boxes are made in the Suzdal camp in the Vladimir region.

The firm Cowan, de Groot distributes Russian-made articles to about 1,800 shops in the United Kingdom. These firms buy their merchandise indirectly through official Soviet commercial channels. One of the main imports has been the famous cuckoo—the type which Lubarsky made in camp 19 in Mordovia. The commercial director of the firm, Nigel Hails, says he has never questioned Russian officials about the products he buys and sells in the U.K. "It is not done to question their system. We have ours, they have theirs."

Another British firm which has distributed Russian-made products is the Razno company, whose marketing director, David Parker, states, "I have visited most of the factories which supply us, and I do not believe the story about the prisoners. The Russians export only their best quality goods, and the prisoners could not make these types of articles. They are not able to do so. It requires work done by full-time specialists in free conditions."

But the wooden souvenirs are only the tip of the

iceberg of goods originating in the gulags. Cameras, binoculars and precision instruments are marketed under the brand names Zenith, Zorki, and Lubitel for cameras; Helios for binoculars and lenses; Sekonda for watches and microscopes, measuring instruments and scientific engineering apparatuses (all distributed by the firm Technical and Optical Equipment).

The internal parts of watches and clocks are made in the camps in the Chistopol region, which supplies the free company Kazan. Camps 35 and 37 (political internees) make precision equipment which is sent to a factory in Sverdlovsk, which stamps its own brand name on the goods. This fact is confirmed by Cronid Lubarsky. The camps around Rybinsk on the Volga manufacture precision glass and polished lenses for cameras, telescopes, microscopes and binoculars. At Krasnogorsk components are made for Zenith and Zorki cameras.

In the field of office equipment, Rank Xerox provides a classic example of the way in which an international company can make a purchase without knowing that the goods are produced by forced labor. At the beginning of the Seventies, Rank Xerox signed an agreement that it would sell copiers and duplicators to the Soviet Committee for Science and Technology and would obtain in exchange Russian electric motors destined for its factory in Gloucestershire. These motors were to be made by both ordinary and political prisoners in the Vladimir prison. This fact was discovered by Nikolai Scharegin, who had translated a letter giving details regarding modifications of the Rank Xerox motors, which was addressed to the Russian officials supervising the work in the prison.

Ralph Land, responsible for the Eastern Bloc Export Division of Rank Xerox, has confirmed these statements, adding that his company had not known about the work of prisoners. "If we had known, we should never have sanctioned such an operation." The export of these well-known motors was stopped four years ago.

Among automobiles, Lada cars now monopolize all Russian export to the U.K., while the UMO Ltd. factory, established in Letchworth, handles the import of Belarus tractors, Belaz lorries, and two models of the Land Rover. The Ladas are imported by an intermediary of Lada Cars (GB) Ltd.

According to Lada Cars, the three thousand models now waiting to be delivered, as well as the 12,084 models which have already been sold this year, are produced in a factory in Togliatti on the banks of the Volga, and are manufactured by ten thousand free workers. Metal work is done by Fiat, which is also responsible for the necessary technology.

The British spokesman of Lada knows nothing about the Chukhobezvodnoye region, near Gorky, where camps supplying the factory with wheel rims

and fly-wheels are situated. According to Yuri Belov, some of these prisoners are "political," but the majority are Baptists. Also in the vicinity of Togliatti is complex UR-65, which also manufactures parts for cars.

Four of the main informants have confirmed that Lada cars (which are known in Russia under the name of Zhigulis) and other Soviet cars—Moskvich, Chaika, Volga—are made of parts manufactured by the victims of the gulags in Mordovia, in Vladimir prison, in the Perm and Tula regions, and in the surroundings of Krasnoyarsk and Novorossiysk.

Yuri Belov himself made wheel cylinders in camp 10, a hard labor camp in Mordovia, where the temperature fell below minus 20°, and where those who did manage to survive slept forty men to one tiny dormitory room. His output was eight hundred cylinders per day and his food, by any standard, was insufficient.

Nikolai Scharegin and another exile, former engineer Lev Kvachevsky, have confirmed that wheel rims for the Lada factory at Togliatti were made in camp 3 at Barashevo. Parts for lorries, agricultural machinery and tractors were supplied from the same source.

The public relations director of Lada Cars, Roger Mercer, states, "I do not believe that any parts of our cars are manufactured in camps or prisons. I have heard this mentioned in the past in connection with wheel rims and I can't understand why the dissidents should bring this up again. I admit that part of the final assembly at Togliatti is made outside the firm, but I think it's too great a risk for the Russians to entrust products destined for export to prisoners."

As for agricultural equipment, that is made in a very large factory in Dnepropetrovsk which is supplied by camp YaE-308/26, according to Lubarsky.

Woodwork, one of the major Soviet exports to the West, represents the United Kingdom's third largest import from the U.S.S.R. Ninety percent of the wooden articles exported by the Soviet Union are made by prisoners in northern Russia, from Murmansk to Archangel in the west, and in Siberia in the east. This work is considered the most destructive in the gulag, and is often assigned to the "politicals" sentenced to

hard labor. In the Perm region, one of the hard labor camps is allotted to women who have to work with saws. At Murmansk there are at least seven hard labor camps equipped by a special firm making souvenirs. Other camps of this type are situated around Archangel and in the lost forests of the Kara Sea.

The British Woodworking Federation maintains that the timber used in England does not come from Siberia but is produced under normal working conditions. "It is supplied to us from the west of Russia, from the regions of Murmansk, Archangel, and the Kara Sea."

Gold and diamonds are certainly the most lucrative of all the Soviet exports to Great Britain. The Russian gold fields (the largest in the world) supplied the West with 229 tons of gold in 1979, by arrangement with Switzerland. These fields are situated in Armenia, in the Carpathians and the Urals, around Chelyabinsk, Sverdlovsk, and the vast polar regions of Kolyma, reputedly the coldest places in the northern hemisphere. There some thousands of miserable prisoners mine gold for export. And in this particular area of commerce, specialists admit that the mining is accomplished by forced labor.

Two hard labor camps are situated at Korkyno in the Chelyabinsk region and near the River Lena. This has been confirmed by Scharegin. Other work on diamonds is done in camps near Salekard and Mirniy.

The packaging of caviar is reserved for women prisoners. Seven thousand are to be found in camps in Sakhalin and on the island of Chikotan in the Kuriles Islands in the Pacific. Red caviar, after extraction from the fish, is cleaned and salted by the women, then sent to a free company in Astrakhan to be packed into glass jars for export. The jars are made in another camp, at Guriev, on the Caspian Sea.

Through finance houses in the City of London right up to the shops in the High Street, and even in the little shops in the villages, the British buy the products of the gulag in enormous quantities each year. Hardly encouraging for the poor devils who make them for their masters in the KGB, in the lost archipelago of the prison camps.