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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
DOMESTIC COLLECTION DIVISION

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REPORT CLASS [REDACTED]
COUNTRY: USSR
SUBJECT: USE OF PRISON LABOR IN INSTALLATION OF PIPELINES IN
THE UKRAINE (OOI: 1973-1977)

REF : [REDACTED]
SOURCE : [REDACTED]

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1. COMMON PRISONERS WERE ROUTINELY USED ON OIL PIPELINE INSTALLATION PROJECTS IN THE EASTERN UKRAINE IN THE 1970S. PRISONERS WERE USED BY UKRGAZSTROY, THE PRODUCTION ASSOCIATION FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS ENTERPRISES IN THE UKRAINE, WHENEVER LABOR SHORTAGES MADE IT IMPOSSIBLE TO FULFILL THE ORGANIZATION'S ASSIGNED PLAN. PRISON LABOR WAS MOST COMMONLY USED DURING THE SUMMER MONTHS AND IN NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER, AS THE TARGET DATE APPROACHED FOR COMPLETING THE PLAN WITHIN THE FISCAL YEAR. NO POLITICAL PRISONERS WERE USED, ONLY COMMON PRISONERS HANDLED BY THE MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR (MINISTERSTVO VNUTRENNYKH DEL, OR MVD).

2. THE PRISONERS WERE THOSE SERVING SHORT SENTENCES, USUALLY OF THREE TO SEVEN YEARS. THEY WERE USED AS UNSKILLED LABOR IN LAYING PIPELINES AND RELATED ACTIVITIES. THE UKRGAZSTROY DIVISION WHICH REGULARLY USED PRISONERS WAS HEADQUARTERED AT POLTAVA IN THE EASTERN UKRAINE. [REDACTED] COMMENT: THE EXACT SITES WHERE PRISONERS WERE USED ARE NOT RECALLED. NOR ARE DETAILS KNOWN OF PRECISELY WHAT SERVICES THEY PROVIDED.)

3. THE USE OF PRISONERS WAS ARRANGED THROUGH THE UKRGAZSTROY BUREAUCRACY IN COOPERATION WITH THE MVD. THE PROCEDURE WAS FOR THE CHIEF OF THE UKRGAZSTROY SUBORDINATE ENTERPRISE WHICH NEEDED THE WORKERS TO REQUEST A "SPECIAL CONTINGENT" OF 100 MEN FOR A FIXED PERIOD OF TIME, USUALLY 10 DAYS. THE REQUEST WAS MADE BY TELEGRAM FROM POLTAVA TO THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT IN KIEV. THE TELEGRAM, NORMALLY DELIVERED BY TELEPHONE, WAS PASSED TO ((ROMANOV)), CHIEF OF THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT, FOR APPROVAL. ROMANOV THEN PASSED ON THE REQUEST TO PAVEL YAKOVLEVICH ((GUDZENKO)), DIRECTOR OF UKRGAZSTROY. GUDZENKO WOULD APPROVE THE REQUEST AND ASK HIS SPECIAL DEPARTMENT ((SPETSCHAST)) TO HANDLE IT. A SPETSCHAST STAFF MEMBER WOULD THEN TELEGRAPH THE REQUEST TO THE MVD HEADQUARTERS IN POLTAVA. (SOURCE COMMENT: IT IS NOT RECALLED WHETHER REQUESTS FOR SPECIAL CONTINGENTS WERE EVER DISAPPROVED, OR WHETHER THE MVD EVER FAILED TO COOPERATE BY PROVIDING PRISONERS. THE PROCESS WAS A ROUTINE, WELL ESTABLISHED ONE WHICH WORKED QUITE WELL FROM UKRGAZSTROY'S POINT OF VIEW.)

4. THE PRISONERS WERE PROVIDED BY MVD AND WERE TRANSPORTED AND GUARDED BY MVD MILITIA WITH GUNS WHILE THEY WORKED ON THE PIPELINE PROJECT. BY REGULATION, MEMBERS OF THESE SPECIAL CONTINGENTS WERE REQUIRED TO WORK AT A DISTANCE OF AT LEAST 15 METERS FROM FREE WORKERS. THE PRISONERS WERE TRANSPORTED FROM THEIR PRISONS TO AND FROM THE SITES IN LONG VANS. IF THE WORK THEY WERE TO DO WAS NOT COMPLETED BY THE END OF THE NORMAL WORKING DAY, THEY SOMETIMES WORKED UNTIL DARK. PRISONERS NEVER SLEPT AT THE WORK SITE. THEY WERE PAID, BUT NOT FROM UKRGAZSTROY FUNDS. (SOURCE COMMENT: IT IS NOT KNOWN HOW MUCH THE PRISONERS WERE PAID, BUT IT IS BELIEVED THAT THEY RECEIVED ONLY ONE TENTH TO ONE FIFTH OF THE WAGES OF FREE WORKERS.)

5. PRISON LABOR WAS NOT COUNTED IN THE OFFICIAL MAN-HOURS REPORTED BY UKRGAZSTROY TO THE ALL-UNION MINISTRY FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF PETROLEUM AND GAS INDUSTRY ENTERPRISES, TO WHICH IT WAS SUBORDINATE. BECAUSE THE PRISONERS' LABOR WAS NOT REPORTED, UKRGAZSTROY WAS CREDITED WITH HIGHER PRODUCTIVITY FIGURES AND

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SOMETIMES ITS LEADERSHIP RECEIVED AWARDS (PREMII) FOR HIGH PRODUCTION LEVELS.

6. THE PRISONERS WERE CONSIDERED GOOD WORKERS AND FILLED A SERIOUS NEED FOR UKRGAZSTROY, AS IT WAS EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO RECRUIT AND RETAIN FREE WORKERS FOR WORK AT REMOTE SITES IN THE EASTERN UKRAINE. HOUSING AND LIVING CONDITIONS FOR THE FREE WORKERS WERE SO POOR THAT ABLE WORKERS COULD NOT BE FOUND IN SUFFICIENT NUMBERS. THE PRISONERS WERE GENERALLY YOUNG AND QUITE STRONG. A NUMBER OF THEM WERE SERVING SENTENCES FOR "HOOLIGANISM." THEY HAD SOME INCENTIVE FOR WORKING WELL, AS A GOOD WORK RECORD PLUS POLITICAL CONFORMITY MIGHT REDUCE THE LENGTH OF THEIR SENTENCES

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