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THE ROLE OF THE NKVD IN THE MANAGEMENT OF AGRICULTURE IN THE USSR IN THE 1930-S-1940-S

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Abstract

The article deals with collectivization in the field of agriculture, the purpose of which was to form collective farms throughout the country, which were to include individual private landowners. The implementation of collectivization plans was entrusted to the activists of the revolutionary movement, as well as to the so-called twenty-five thousand farmers. All this led to a strengthening of the role of the state in the agrarian and labor sphere of the Soviet Union. The country managed to overcome the "ruin" and carry out industrialization of industry. On the other hand, it led to mass repressions and famine of 1932-1933.

Keywords: industry, agriculture, NKVD, party, people, land.

I. INTRODUCTION

In the history of the Russian village of the XX century there are no stages, periods that would be irrelevant or irrelevant. Socio-political "revolutions" and constant experiments in the village undermined and destroyed the productive forces of the country's agrarian sector.

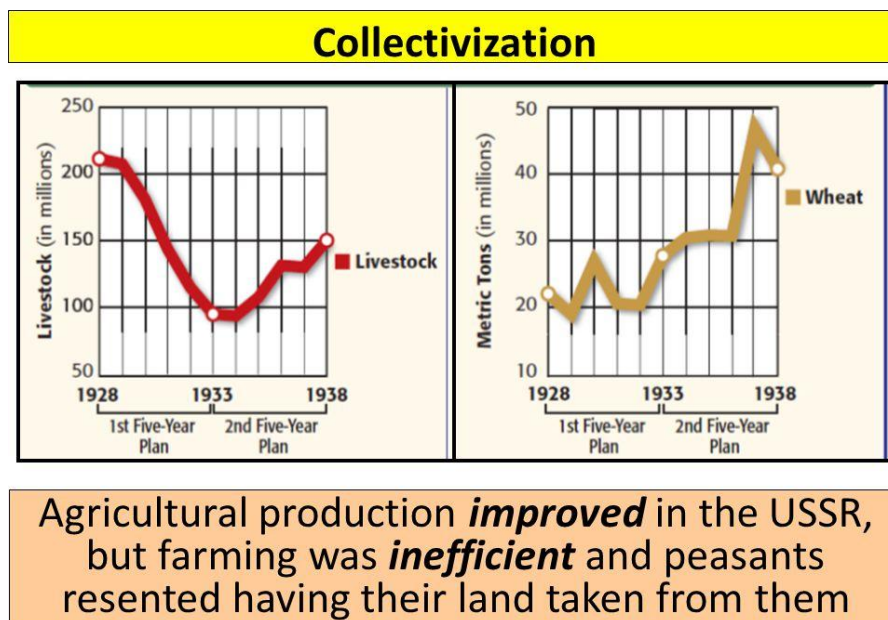
For a clearer understanding of the processes that took place in the Soviet village during the 40s, it is advisable to return to the basic essence of the political and socio-economic changes that took place in the country after October 1917. The fate of the Russian village from that time on depended on the course of the Bolshevik Party's agrarian policy and on what role the peasantry was assigned in it.

The root cause of the protracted crisis of agriculture goes back to the 1930s, when the collective farm system was forcibly established, the age-old way of life of the Russian peasantry was destroyed, and the social composition of the entire rural population was fundamentally changed. The peasantry was the earliest to experience large-scale repression, as the raskulachivanie was the first mass terror in the country. The processes of peasantization and destruction of the village continued with particular force in the conditions of the Great Patriotic War and in the post-war period of Stalin's leadership. The relevance of the study is determined not only by the need to critically rethink the history of agrarian relations of the Stalin era and the search for new approaches to its study, but is also strengthened at present by the need to overcome the agrarian crisis in the country and to overcome the impasse in which the agrarian sector of the country was led by the reforms of the post-Soviet period.



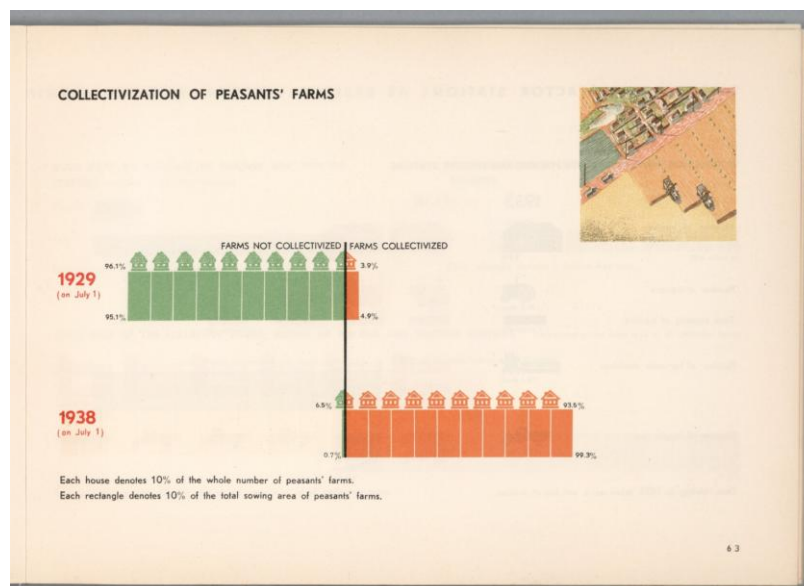
II. METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS

Traditional methods of research for historical science were used in the work. The problem-chronological method allowed us to structure the article: to identify the most important problems in the activities of regional agricultural authorities and to consider them in chronological sequence. The comparative-historical method was used in the course of historiographical analysis, contributed to a more qualitative and objective processing of numerous documents of archives in their verification with other historical sources. The method of system analysis allowed us to consider the work of the Ministry of Agriculture in the context of strengthening the country's defense capability and taking into account the many factors that influenced the adoption of certain decisions by the USSR leadership. In the 20s and 30s, the question arose about the sources of industrialization and collectivization of the peasantry, and the leadership of the country had a ready answer: the instrument of industrialization and collectivization was the repressive apparatus, the correctional labor camps of the Gulag of the NKVD of the USSR. From now on, all those sentenced earlier for a period of 3 years or more were transferred from the places of detention directly there. By 1930 there were formed departments of correctional labor camps (ITL) of the OGPU: North Caucasus, White Sea region and Karelia, Vyshny Volochk, Siberia, Far East and Kazakhstan. Camps and labor colonies began to play an important role in the economy of the country: economic bodies planned their activities on the basis of the labor of prisoners. In 1934, with the creation of the All-Union NKVD, all Soviet camps were united into a single system of the Main Administration of Camps (Gulag). It should be noted that while in the organization and implementation of mass expulsions (deportations) of the peasantry, regional and local, grassroots links of the party-state machine were assigned an executive role, the motivation for local ("intra-regional", intra-regional) expulsions came, as a rule, from the regional elite, which sought authorization for their implementation from the directive party-state bodies. In turn, it is necessary to take into account the existence of complex bureaucratic interdepartmental interests and attitudes that required clarity and coordination in the implementation of repressive anti-peasant campaigns on the scale of the country and individual regions. For this purpose, various kinds of temporary or permanent commissions were created in the Center (such as the commissions of V.M. Molotov, V.V. Schmidt, A.A. Shmidt, and A.A. Shmidt). Schmidt, A.A. Andreev, Y.E. Rudzutak, who considered various aspects of "raskulachivaniya") and their regional analogs on the ground in 1930-1932.





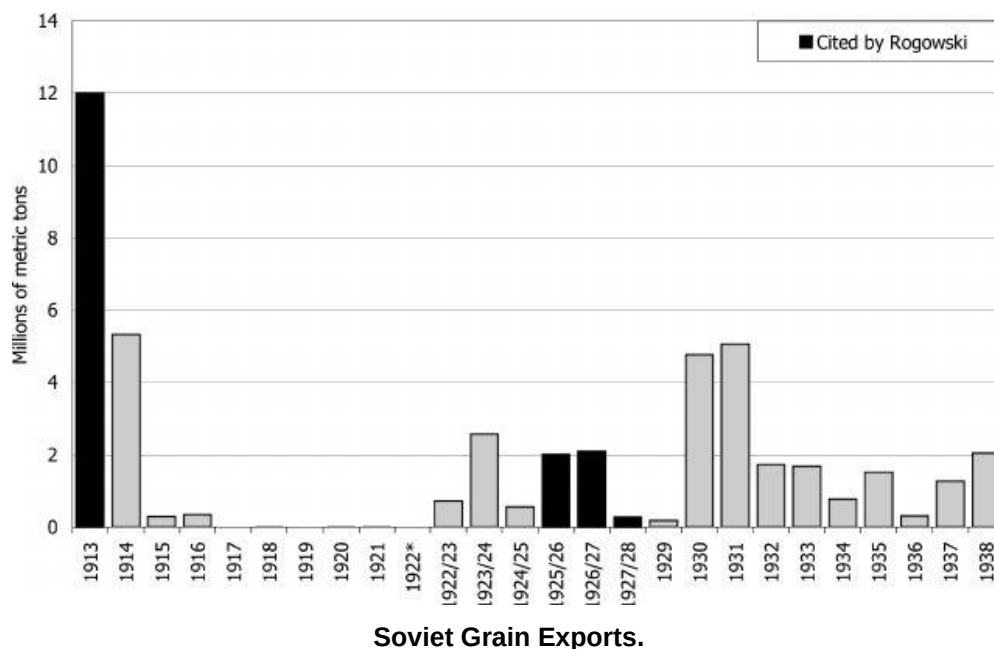
When preparing and carrying out mass expulsions of the peasantry in the early 1930s, the issue of the direction, not only the scale and timing of forced migrations of the rural population, was of significant importance for the regional political elites, which included the heads of the OGPU in the field. Thus, in February-March 1930 there was a very obvious (albeit temporary) mismatch of interests of regional elites: the leadership of the main grain-producing regions of the country sought to ensure the expulsion of expropriated peasant families as soon as possible, deliberately shifting organizational, economic and personnel problems to the authorities of those regions where the flow of deported population was directed - mainly from west to east and from south to north. In their turn, the regional authorities of Siberia aimed to carry out their own intra-regional resettlement of the expelled "kulaks of the second category" with their families from the southern regions of the region to the northern and eastern ones in a short period of time, before the spring thaw. Usually, the reports of the Gulag leadership on the arrival of batches of evicted kulaks for special settlement were laconic. For example, the report of M. Berman dated April 26, 1935 addressed to the USSR Commissar of Internal Affairs G.G. Yagoda stated: "I inform you that the reception of kulak households evicted from the national districts of the North Caucasus Territory into labor settlements has been completed. In total 4711 families 22496 people were accepted, including 3215 families of 14661 people in labor settlements of the North Caucasian Kray, 655 families of 3275 people in labor settlements of South Kazakhstan and 841 families of 4560 people in labor settlements of Uzbekistan. There were no accidents during the reception. At the moment of arrival at the special settlement, the OGPU-NKVD officers often sorted the evicted kulaks. Some of them were released, others were sent to Gulag camps, but the majority remained in the special settlement. In a report dated May 20, 1933, M. Berman reported to OGPU deputy chairmen Agranov and Prokofiev: "According to the report of the SIBLAG of the OGPU, of the contingents from the North Caucasus who arrived in Tomsk, as of May 20 of this year, 9868 people were checked according to your instructions. Out of this number 85 people were released at all, 2422 were released with restrictions, 64 were sentenced to camps, and the remaining 7297 people were sent to labor settlements by the decision of the OGPU Troika of the ZSK (West Siberian Territory. - V.P.)". In the report of M. Berman dated June 8, 1933, addressed to G.G. Yagoda. Yagoda noted the following unfortunate, in his opinion, moments in the staffing and organization of echelons with evicted kulaks: high mortality and morbidity of typhus, acute gastric diseases and even smallpox; a lot of emaciated, old people who could not be completely used; lice; total disregard for accounting (lack of personal files, eviction orders, distortion of names, incomplete accounting data, etc.); even sending people to the camps. etc.); even sending people who did not fall within the scope of the USSR SNK decree No. 775/146c of April 20, 1933; after the echelons arrived at their destination, it sometimes turned out, as M. Berman noted, that there were workers, Komsomol members, and foreigners among the evictees.



Collectivization of peasants' farms.



There was an extremely pragmatic view of the evicted kulaks as the future labor force in the areas of new economic development. Hence the complete intransigence in considering the requests of able-bodied kulaks not to evict them to remote areas and the obvious liberality if these requests came from incapable persons. Thus, in the "memorandum" of G.G. Yagoda, addressed on May 20, 1931 to the chairman of the GPU of the Byelorussian SSR Redens, it was stated: "Children of evicted kulaks under 10 years of age and old people over 65 years of age are allowed to be left to relatives and acquaintances who have expressed a desire to support them Kulak families without able-bodied men are not subject to eviction ...". In practice, however, such instructions were not followed. In the report of the deputy chief of the GULAG Pliner dated July 26, 1933 addressed to G.G. Yagoda it was noted: "Contrary to your categorical instructions not to send families without able-bodied men to labor settlements, according to the report of the chief of the SIBLAG, in the echelons with expelled kulaks who arrived in Tomsk from the North Caucasus, there are 930 people completely unable to work ...". Special colonization was carried out in an inhuman manner. People were usually brought to some deserted place, right in an open field, and abandoned there. In winter, those who had not thought to take axes, saws and shovels with them had a very slim chance of survival. The owners of these tools immediately dug dugouts, cut firewood, sawed logs, i.e. "actively settled down" and very often thanks to this they were saved from imminent death. This is how special settlements (labor settlements) were born. The number of houses built in them gradually increased, but the number of graves in the nearby cemeteries grew even faster. Until July 1931, regional and oblast executive committees were in charge of resettlement, employment and other issues related to special settlers. By the Decree of the USSR Council of People's Commissars of July 1, 1931 "On the arrangement of special settlers" their administrative management, economic arrangement and use were entrusted to the OGPU. Special (labor) settlements of the Gulag (the latter until 1934 was part of the OGPU system, since 1934 - in the NKVD system) for the expelled kulaks were organized in accordance with the Decrees of the USSR SNK of August 16, 1931 Ы174с, April 20, 1933 Ы775/146с and August 21, 1933 Ы1796/393с. According to these decrees, the Gulag was charged with responsibility for the supervision, arrangement, economic and domestic services, and labor use of the evicted kulaks. On March 2, 1930, in order to extinguish peasant discontent, Stalin's article "Vertigo from Success" was published in Pravda. It condemned the practice of coercion to join collective farms and the total generalization of peasant property. All the blame for the "excesses" was laid on the local party and Soviet apparatus. The temporary softening of state policy led to a mass withdrawal of peasants from collective farms; in August 1930, 21.4% of peasant households remained in them (in February 1930 - 56%).





In September 1930 the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks sent a letter to the district committees, regional committees and the Central Committees of the Communist Parties of the Union Republics demanding that they again "achieve a powerful upsurge of the collective farm movement". Agitbrigades of party, labor and collective farm activists were again sent to the countryside to agitate. In December 1930. The Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) approved an annual program for the creation of 1,400 machine and tractor stations (MTS). Collective farms were given lower rates of livestock products compared to single-owner peasants, credits and tax benefits (in 1931 a collective farmer paid 3 rubles of agricultural tax, a single-owner - over 30 rubles, a "kulak" - 314 rubles). The authorities also promised collective farmers the right to run their own private subsidiary farms and pay for labor in collective farms. In 1932, trade in products left over after handing over the obligatory norms to the state was allowed. All taxes and levies on collective farmers' trade were abolished. As a result, by June 1931, 52.7% of farms in the country had been united into collective farms.

However, all these measures did not improve the food situation in the country. The agricultural crisis caused by collectivization led to another decline in the harvest in 1932, which threatened the grain exports of the USSR. In 1932, the volume of agricultural production decreased by more than 1.5 times compared to 1928, livestock production - by 53%.

The material damage caused to the USSR agriculture during the Great Patriotic War was more severe than the damage caused by the First World War and the Civil War. In 1945, the gross output of agriculture was 60% compared to 1940, and the area under crops 75%. This was due to the fact that 1,876 state farms in the occupied territories (45% of their total number on the eve of the war) were completely ruined.⁴⁶⁵ In general, there was a sharp decline in the yields of all crops in the Soviet Union (for example, potato yields more than halved).

The main tasks in the field of agriculture were defined in the Fourth Five-Year Plan for the Restoration of the National Economy (1946-1950), adopted by the Supreme Soviet of the USSR in March 1946. By the end of the Five-Year Plan it was planned not only to reach the pre-war level of agricultural production, but also to surpass it by 27%. To achieve this result, the resolutions and decrees of the Central Committee and the SNK, as well as the directives of the Gulag defined a further program of action for the camp farms. As early as November 1943, by a special decree of the SNK of the USSR No. 19370-r and Gulag directive №. 528 of November 12, 1943, camp farms were exempted from mandatory grain deliveries to the state. In 1945, when the process of intensive restoration of the national economy began, the SNK, by special directive №. 42/274154, obliged camp farms to deliver grain products to general supply warehouses. Thus, this measure was equated with grain supplies to the state from collective and state farms, since all grain products coming from the Gulag's own farms were accounted for by the USSR Gosplan. However, the supply plans of the camp agricultural enterprises were poorly fulfilled: in 1946, the farms of the NKVD of the Kazakh SSR delivered only 17% of the grain from the plan, 26% in the Ukrainian SSR, and 22% in the Stalingrad region. The Komi ASSR was not among the Gulag farms that delivered.

In the resolution of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks (b) "On Measures to Boost Agriculture in the Postwar Period" (1947), the task in the field of crop production was to expand the area sown with vegetable crops by 138,000 hectares and bring the sown area to 1 million 800,000 hectares, as well as to expand potato crops by 647,000 hectares and bring them to 8 million 318,000 hectares. In addition, the camps' subsidiary farms were tasked with "...fully providing the contingents of prisoners and freelancers with potatoes and vegetables at the expense of their own production, and providing all livestock with succulent, rough and concentrated fodder based on the maximum use of available land areas". Therefore, an important area of activity of the Komi ASSR camp farms in the first post-war years was crop production.



III. CONCLUSION

In the course of collectivization and kulaks in 1930-1937, the number of peasant farms decreased from 25.6 million to 19.9 million, of which 18.5 million were united into 243,700 collective farms. Over 18.5 million peasants migrated to the cities. Later, one of the consequences of collectivization was depopulation of the Russian countryside.

During the "Great Terror" of 1937-1938, by decision of the Politburo, a special operation was carried out "to repress former kulaks and other anti-Soviet elements". During this period 787 thousand 397 people were re-arrested, 386 thousand 798 of them were shot, 380 thousand 559 were sent to camps.

As a result of collectivization, the state was able to freely redistribute collective farm income in its favor by means of annually established plans for the supply of agricultural products. At the same time, the system of party-state management of the agro-industrial complex approved in the countryside showed its ineffectiveness. Until the end of the existence of the USSR, the task of providing the country with food was not solved.

The collectivization of agriculture was a milestone event in the history of the USSR. On the part of the Communist Party, it was the first attempt at large-scale social engineering, and it was the beginning of Stalin's mass terror. Collectivization destroyed the traditional peasant community and other institutions of peasant autonomy and put in their place a coercive structure of agrarian production, socialist only in form. The new collective farm system allowed the state to impose tribute on the peasantry in the form of compulsory deliveries of agricultural products and conditioned bureaucratic domination in the countryside. Respected and authoritative people in the village were silenced, priests were arrested, and those rural intellectuals who did not wish to become agents of the state were harassed in every possible way. The label "kulak" was applied to the more or less well-to-do peasants, those who were not so fortunate, and this meant deprivation of property, arrest and expulsion. Such was one of the most horrifying waves of mass repression of the twentieth century.

The history of collectivization in the former USSR has long been characterized by official taboos related to the obligatory interpretation of the historical process and limited access to archival materials. Until recently, the most important documents on this problem were completely closed even to Russian scholars. In recent years, party and state archives have opened their doors, and a huge array of materials is becoming available to scholars, and in quantities that far exceed the capabilities of an individual researcher.

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РОЛЬ НКВД В УПРАВЛЕНИИ СЕЛЬСКИМ ХОЗЯЙСТВОМ СССР В 1930-1940-Е ГОДЫ

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Аннотация

В статье рассматривается коллективизация в области сельского хозяйства, целью которой было формирование по всей стране коллективных хозяйств, в которые должны были войти отдельные частные землевладельцы. Реализация планов коллективизации была возложена на активистов революционного движения, а также на так называемые двадцатипятидесятники. Все это привело к усилению роли государства в аграрно-трудовой сфере Советского Союза. Стране удалось преодолеть "разруху" и провести индустриализацию промышленности. С другой стороны, это привело к массовым репрессиям и голоду 1932-1933 годов.

Ключевые слова: промышленность, сельское хозяйство, НКВД, партия, народ, земля.

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