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## **STALIN'S RESTORATION OF THE "SOCIALIST LEGALITY" IN CHECHEN-INGUSHETIA (1938-1940)**

*Abstract.* The article explores a poorly-studied aspect of repressive politics – the so-called restoration of revolutionary law and order in the USSR in the late 1930s – on the example of law enforcement agencies of Chechen-Ingushetia. The study aims to reconstruct the implementation of the Stalinist correction in repressive practice in the region on the basis of materials from central and regional archives, previously published documents, and to identify the role of party and law enforcement agencies in it. The object of the study is the repressive policy of the Soviet state in the 1930s in the Chechen-Ingush Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (hereinafter as CHIASSR). The subject of the study is the implementation of the changes made by the center in the repressive policy in the late 1938 – early 1940s in the republic. The study applies general scientific methods of analysis and synthesis, classification, comparison and analogy, historicism, objectivity and consistency. The source base of the work is archival and published documents, in particular, records of bureau sessions, plenums of the Chechen-Ingush Regional Committee of the CPSU from the Archival Department of the Government of the Chechen Republic, State Archive of the Russian Federation (hereinafter as SARF) and other archives of the country. The scientific novelty of the study lies in the fact that a study of the period of political repression was conducted on the example of the Chechen-Ingush ASSR in late 1938 – early 1940, when the restoration of the rule of law was officially proclaimed. In reality, the repressions continued, although they peaked in 1937-1938; the role of the party and state bodies in the implementation of the directives of the center is analyzed. The theoretical and practical significance of the work is determined by the fact that the research materials allow to expand the scientific understanding of political repressions in Chechen-Ingushetia. The provisions and conclusions of the work can be used in the activities of educational organizations for the study of the Soviet history. The study conducted reveals a certain algorithm of Stalin's actions to "restore" revolutionary legality.

*Keywords:* Chechen-Ingush Regional Committee of the CPSU; repressions; correction; NKVD; Stalin; N. Ivanov; enemies of the people; public prosecutor.

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## **ВОССТАНОВЛЕНИЕ «СОЦИАЛИСТИЧЕСКОЙ ЗАКОННОСТИ» ПО-СТАЛИНСКИ НА ПРИМЕРЕ ЧЕЧЕНО-ИНГУШЕТИИ (конец 1938 г. – начало 1940 г.)**

*Аннотация.* В статье исследуется малоизученный аспект репрессивной политики – так называемое восстановление революционной законности и порядка в СССР в конце 1930-х гг. – на примере правоохранительных органов Чечено-Ингушетии. Цель – на основе материалов центральных и региональных архивов, ранее опубликованных документов реконструировать претворение в жизнь сталинской корректировки в репрессивной практике в регионе и выявить роль в ней партийных и правоохранительных органов. Объектом исследования является репрессивная политика Советского государства в 1930-е гг. в ЧИАССР. Предмет исследования – реализация внесенных центром изменений в репрессивную политику в конце 1938 – начале 1940-х гг. в республике. В исследовании использованы общенаучные методы анализа и синтеза, классификации, сравнения и аналогии, историзма, объективности и системности. Источниковой базой работы являются архивные и опубликованные документы, в частности, протоколы заседаний бюро, пленумов Чечено-Ингушского обкома ВКП(б) из Архивного управления Правительства Чеченской Республики, ГАРФ и других архивов РФ. Научная новизна исследования заключается в том, что проведено исследование периода политических репрессий на примере Чечено-Ингушской АССР конца 1938 – начала 1940 гг., когда официально было провозглашено восстановление законности порядка, на практике же репрессии продолжались, хотя пик их пришелся на 1937–1938 гг.; проанализирована роль партийных и государственных органов в реализации директив центра. Теоретическая и практическая значимость работы определяется тем, что материалы исследования позволяют расширить научное представление о политических репрессиях в Чечено-Ингушетии. Положения и выводы работы могут быть использованы в деятельности образовательных организаций по изучению советского периода истории. Проведенное исследование, основу которого составили документы ВКП(б), показывает определенный алгоритм действий Сталина по «восстановлению» революционной законности.

*Ключевые слова:* Чечено-Ингушский обком ВКП(б); репрессии; корректировка; НКВД; Сталин; Н. Иванов; «враги народа»; прокуратура.

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The political repressions of the 30s became an unprecedented phenomenon in Russian practice. Millions of socially active people fell victims of lawlessness on the part of state bodies. Only during the fourteen months of the Great Terror (1937-1938), according to departmental statistics of the NKVD of the USSR, 1,575,259 people were arrested (87.1% under political articles), of which 681,692 were sentenced to death, or 50.69% in percentage terms<sup>1</sup>. For comparison: in 1930-1936, the death penalty was imposed on 40,137 people<sup>2</sup>.

It was only at the turn of the 1980s and 1990s that a legal assessment of Stalin's anti-people policy was officially given in the USSR.

The promotion of a new democratic Russia into the European legal space with a developed civil society makes the appeal to the history of violations of constitutional human and civil rights extremely important and relevant. Hence, one of the most discussed problems over the past two decades in modern historical science has been the study of the mechanism of operation management by order of the NKVD № 0447 by the Politburo and law enforcement agencies.

In the collective monograph of M. Junge, G. Bordyugov, R. Binner "The vertical of the Great Terror", the authors examine the "Kulak" operation of the NKVD № 00447, analyze the main stages, directions, the role of the party and repressive bodies in the implementation of the operational order of the NKVD. Each set of documents is supplemented by the author's explanations. The section, dedicated to the issue of restoring "socialist legality" increases the value of the work. Contextually, among other republics, Chechen-Ingushetia is also mentioned [1].

Within the framework of the research project, a joint Russian-Ukrainian-German study also occupies a special place, revealing the specifics of the implementation of repressions against target groups of the population classified by Stalin as "anti-Soviet elements". Mark Junge's monograph "Stalinism in the Soviet province, 1937-1938. Operation № 00447" is based on research conducted in five regions of the Soviet Union, which differed from each other not only economically, geographically, but also in socio-demographic terms. According to the authors, this should have contributed to the disclosure of regional features [2].

A number of Ukrainian-German researchers (M. Junge, R. Binner, S.A. Kokin, S.N. Bogunov, G.V. Smirnov, B. Bonvech, O.A. Dovbnya, I.E. Smirnova, G.A. Bordyugov) reflected their study of state terror in documentary work "Over the corpses of the enemy for the benefit of the people", which is the most complete publication of archival materials and statistical data that reveals the realization of the Great Terror in Ukraine. The second volume examines the completion of the operation and the restoration of "socialist legality" [3].

The fundamental work of the American historian Wendy Goldman is devoted to the study of the social mechanism of Stalinist terror. Based on an extensive range

1 A record on the number of convicts according to cases of NKVD bodies for the period of 1937-1938// SARF. Collection 9401. Inv. 1. File 4157. P. 202.

2 Information on the number of arrested and convicted people according to cases of the OGPU-NKVD bodies for the period of 1930-1936 // SARF. Collection 9401. Inv. 1. File 4157. P. 203.

of documents, the researcher traces the transformation of the role of trade union bodies, through which the country's leadership implemented party directives. In her opinion, the terror was calculated and directed by the higher-ups [4].

As an independent study of the issue under consideration, we can highlight the book by Mark Junge, Lynn Viola, and Jeffrey Rossman "Stalinist Perpetrators on Trial". The scientific work is devoted to the study of the life and activities of employees of repressive bodies, who later themselves turned into "victims" for violations of "socialist legality". The authors conclude that the historiography of terror is often based on the testimony of a limited number of security officers who admit the use of torture, fabrication of investigative cases and manipulation of witness testimonies [5].

The problems of repressive politics formed the basis for research of Khaustov V.V., Samuelson L., who made a sensational conclusion that on the eve of the Great Terror "there was no immediate threat of an attack on the Soviet Union, only potential military and political risks" [6].

Research by Applebaum E. "The Web of the Great Terror" is a unique testimony of the way of life and morals of prisoners of Soviet camps from the time of their establishment to their termination in 1986. To date, this is the most documented work on the studied problem [7].

Regional features of Stalin's repressive policy based on concrete historical materials of the republics are considered in the studies of Stepanov A.F. (Tatarstan), Maksimov K.N. (Kalmykia), Kakagasanova G.I. (Dagestan), Elbuzdukayeva T.U. (Chechen-Ingushetia), et al. [8; 9; 10; 11].

In our opinion, not all aspects of the phenomenon of political repression have been sufficiently studied. The conducted historiographical analysis of the literature indicates that the problem under study in the regions has not yet become the subject of a special study.

In August of 1938, L.P. Beria became the first Deputy People's Commissar of Internal Affairs of the USSR of N. Yezhov. In fact, the beginning of the process of curtailing the campaign of mass operations can be attributed to his name. However, according to the compilers of the collection of documents on the history of the Great Terror, "the weakening of this policy" was dictated by "a number of foreign and domestic political factors" that forced J. Stalin to adjust his policy [12, p. 7].

In November of 1938 the Central Committee of the CPSU made several important for the country decisions. On November 14, 1938, secret resolution № 4384 of the Central Committee of the CPSU "On registration and verification in the party bodies of responsible employees of the NKVD of the USSR" creates a list of responsible employees subject to registration, verification and approval. The head of the ORPO (Department of the Governing Party Bodies) and one of the secretaries were obliged to personally investigate the cases of each of the approved employees. When approving the heads of the city and district departments of the NKVD, it was necessary to have from the corresponding city committee, the district committee of the CPSU for each approved employee a review of the first secretary, coordinated with the members of

the bureau of the city committee, the district committee of the CPSU. All work on registration, verification and approval of NKVD employees had to be completed no later than January 1, 1939 and a full report to be sent on the results of this work to the Central Committee of the CPSU [12, pp. 604-606].

On November 15, 1938, the Politburo of the Central Committee of the CPSU approved the draft resolution “The Issue of the Prosecutor’s Office of the USSR”, which “strictly states”: “1. To suspend from November 16 of this year, until further notice, the consideration of all cases in troika, in military tribunals and in the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court of the USSR, directed to their consideration by special orders or in another, simplified manner” [12, p. 606]. On November 17, 1938, the resolution of the SNK and the Central Committee of the CPSU “On arrests, prosecutor’s supervision and investigation” was issued. On the one hand, the document outlines the positive work done under the leadership of the party in “1937-1938 by the NKVD to defeat the enemies of the people...”, but on the other, it contains criticism of a “simplified investigation and trial.” Under the simplified procedure of investigation, the procedure for considering the “case” was carried out without the participation of the prosecution and defense parties, followed by the immediate execution of the sentence. The established order was a violation of Article 111 of the Constitution of the USSR on the transparency of judicial proceedings and the rights of the accused to defend and appeal the verdict.

The directive ordered: 1. Prohibit the NKVD and Prosecutor’s offices from carrying out any mass arrest and eviction operations. 2. Dissolve judicial troikas. 3. Arrests should be conducted only by court order or with the sanction of a prosecutor and in strict accordance with Article 127 of the Constitution of the USSR [12, p. 609].

The resolution established “that the prosecutor who authorized the arrest, along with the NKVD employees, is also responsible for each illegitimate arrest.” Instead of the abolished extrajudicial “troikas”, the CPSU allowed the NKVD to organize special investigative units in operational departments from “the most politically reliable and qualified party members” [12, pp. 607-611].

The adoption of fateful decisions at the highest level for the country presented the appearance of legal protection in society, the revival of the lost constitutional norms of judicial proceedings and the real provision of human and civil rights and freedoms.

However, in reality, there was still an attitude to continue the merciless fight against the enemies of the USSR, with the help of “more advanced and reliable methods”, a Special Session at the NKVD of the USSR was maintained. Responsibility for the “perversion” of the party’s policy, human rights violations, the use of illegal investigative methods J. Stalin placed on the “enemies of the people and spies who sneaked into the NKVD bodies.” The resolution notes the investigative methods and techniques practiced: distortion of Soviet laws, forgery, falsification of investigative documents, criminal prosecution and arrest on trivial grounds, building “cases” against innocent people for provocative purposes. Highlighting the negative aspects of investigative practice, the resolution concludes that the enemies of the people “took all measures to hide and save from the defeat of their accomplices in criminal anti-Soviet activities.”



And such facts, according to the documents, “took place in the central office of the NKVD, and on the ground” [12, p. 609]. Thus, the regime established obedient agents and executors of the will of the Stalinist Central Committee – Chekist personnel – as a new object of terror.

In late November of 1938, N.I. Yezhov was removed from the post of People’s Commissar of Internal Affairs, and in 1939 he was brought to trial and executed [13, p. 158]. In the new conditions, the established practice of judicial and investigative work of law enforcement agencies clearly did not fit into the realities of the time, the need to return to the norms of the Criminal Procedure Code of the RSFSR and the Constitution of the USSR became obvious.

Let us consider how in reality the regional party organization of CHIASSR implemented the directive of the Central Committee of the CPSU and the SNK of the USSR from November 17, 1938.

The most important resolution “On arrests, prosecutorial supervision and investigation” of the Regional Committee of the CPSU was submitted for discussion by the bureau only on November 29, 1938. What is remarkable is not the late entry of the document into the agenda of the bureau’s work, but the order of its consideration. The directive, according to the list order, was to be considered twenty-second<sup>3</sup>.

The analysis of the sources demonstrates that at the end of the 1930s, similar phenomena and even cases of extrajudicial executions of prisoners were recorded in a number of regions. Thus, “the secretary of the Crimean regional Committee of the CPSU A. Seit-Yagyaev, a member of the troika, signed several protocols on the execution of a large number of people on November 25 and 26, 1938, having issued them retroactively” [14].

It seems that the Regional Committee of Chechen-Ingushetia approached the late discussion of the significant resolution of November 17, 1938 pragmatically. The need to clean up the traces of “perversions” of judicial and investigative practice, including unloading the overcrowded republican prison of the NKVD, was obvious. It should be noted that on January 1, 1939, there were 2,860 prisoners in the CHIASSR, of which: Chechens – 1,313; Ingush – 240<sup>4</sup>.

At the same time, there is another interesting point: in the apparatus of the NKVD bodies of Chechen-Ingushetia, nothing on the surface indicated future changes. The local authorities of the People’s Commissariat continued their normal activity. In December of 1938, in accordance with Resolution № P 4384 of November 14, 1939, the Regional Party Committee approved the People’s Commissar of Internal Affairs N.I. Ivanov and 18 heads of district offices (N.H. Isakov, G.I. Sazonov, G.Yu. Porvanetsky et al.), as well as characteristics on the individuals of the commanding staff: Danilov N.I., member of the CPSU since May 1920, assistant of the head of the 4th

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3 Record № 46 of the session of the Bureau of the Chechen-Ingush Regional Committee of the CPSU dated November 29, 1938 // Archival Department of the Government of the Chechen Republic (hereinafter – ADG CR). Collection R-1212, Inv. 1. File 513. P. 133-134.

4 Information on the movement and composition of detainees in places of detention of the NKVD of Chechen-Ingush ASSR for the IV quarter of 1938 (as of January 1, 1939) // SARF. Collection 9414. Inv. 1a. File 352. P. 103.

department of the UGB, a participant in the exposure of a subversive organization in the People's Commissariat of the Republic and the Dashnak spy terrorist organization in Grozny; Kovyakov I.P., Head of the Special Department of the UGB of the NKVD of the CHIASSR, an active participant in the fight against enemies of the people, etc.<sup>5</sup>

The characteristic of Nikita Ivanovich Ivanov, a member of the party since 1919 is also indicative, "... as an irreconcilable fighter for the cause of the Lenin-Stalin party, against the sworn enemies of the people – Trotskyist-Bukharin and bourgeois-nationalist bandits. During the elections to the Supreme Soviets of the USSR and the Chechen-Ingush ASSR, Comrade Ivanov was elected a deputy of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and the Chechen-Ingush ASSR."<sup>6</sup> The People's Commissar, who was awarded by the government "for outstanding service" to the Lenin-Stalin party with the Order of the Red Star in December 1937, the jubilee medal "XX years of the Red Army" and the "Badge of the Honorary Chekist", especially appreciated in Chekist circles, was declared an enemy of the people for reasons of conjuncture. January 2, 1939 F.P. Bykov informed the members of the bureau of the regional committee of the CPSU about the arrest of N.I. Ivanov<sup>7</sup>. And a few weeks later, on January 28, 1939, at the IV party conference, the "chief Chekist" of the republic was removed in absentia "from the membership of the Plenum of the Chechen-Ing. Regional Committee of the CPSU"<sup>8</sup>.

With the appointment of the People's Commissar of Internal Affairs of the CHIASSR P.N. Ryazanov, assigned by the NKVD of the USSR, another rotation took place with the subsequent destruction of the "Yezhov" cadres in the system. The regional party organization approved new candidates for the post of head of the personnel Department of the NKVD V.G. Golovin, Head of the 4th department of the UGB NKVD N.N. Danilov, Assistant to the People's Commissar M.A. Efimov and others<sup>9</sup>.

Personnel changes also took place in the CHIASSR Prosecutor's Office: the head of the investigative department of the prosecutor's office of the regional party committee approved Koida V.T., a member of the party since 1931, assistant prosecutors for special cases Leonid Ivanovich Zuev, a member of the party since 1931, and Nikolai Vasilyevich Khrarov, a member of the party since 1920<sup>10</sup>.

Meanwhile, N. Ivanov gave "confession" to the investigation. Having no access to departmental archives, it is difficult to confirm the number of convicted former

5 Record № 50 of the session of the Bureau of the Chechen-Ingush Regional Committee of the CPSU of December 15, 1938 // ADG CR. Collection R-1212, Inv. 1. File 514. P. 11-14, 70-74, 69-70; Record No. 53 of the Session of the Bureau of the Chechen-Ingush Regional Committee of the CPSU dated December 29-30, 1938 // ADG CR. Collection R-1212, Inv. 1. File 514. P. 143-145.

6 Record № 50 of the session of the Bureau of the Chechen-Ingush Regional Committee of the CPSU of December 15, 1938 // ADG CR. Collection R-1212, Inv. 1. File 514. P. 69-70.

7 Record № 50 of the session of the Bureau of the Chechen-Ingush Regional Committee of the CPSU of December 15, 1938 // ADG CR. Collection R-1212, Inv. 1. File 514. P. 69-70.

8 Record № 50 of the session of the Bureau of the Chechen-Ingush Regional Committee of the CPSU of January 11, 1939 // ADG CR. Collection R-1212, Inv. 1. File 515. P. 77-79.

9 Record of the IVth Plenum of the Chechen-Ingush Regional Committee of the CPSU of January 28, 1939 // The Russian State Archive of Socio-Political History (hereinafter as RSASPH). Collection 17. Inv. 21. File 5736. P. 3.

10 Record № 61 of the session of the Bureau of the Chechen-Ingush Regional Committee of the CPSU dated January 29, 1939. ADG CR. Collection 1212. Inv. 1. File 516. P. 33-34.

security officers. One of those who was “handed over” by the People’s Commissar under torture was the head of the 3rd department of the UGB A.P. Porubai, born in 1900, a former member of the CPSU, arrested under Article 58, paragraphs 7 and 11 of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR 3/II-1939. Let us turn to the document. A.P. Porubai was “a member of the anti-Soviet right-Trotskyist conspiratorial organization. At the end of 1937, he established an anti-Soviet connection with the head of the organization, N.I. Ivanov, on whose instructions and cooperation carried out subversive work in the NKVD. Falsified investigative cases against Khamzatkhonov, Aliev, Khasiev, Kadilov, Ukhuev, Mutushev (all sentenced to capital punishment). Conducted illegal arrests. Used twisted methods of investigation and forced the arrestees to give deliberately false testimony. In his anti-Soviet activity, he was also associated with convicted enemies of the people: Rayev, Dementiev” [15]. Incriminated charges of anti-Soviet activity were typical in the investigative practices of those years. The statement of compromising relations with convicted enemies of the people in the eyes of the investigation gave the resonant case a certain peculiarity, increasing its significance. Similar “deeds” under the Criminal Code of the RSFSR provided for “execution with confiscation of all property.”

Obviously, there was no counter-revolutionary conspiratorial organization in the NKVD CHIASSR system, as well as anti-Soviet “subversion, espionage, bourgeois-nationalist organizations and groups” previously “identified” by the Chekists. All of them were the creation of local special services, for the justification of which inhuman methods of physical and psychological influence on the accused were used.

This, in fact, is confirmed by A. Avtorkhanov, a witness at the court session of the Military Tribunal: “In the courtroom, in the dock, I saw the entire apparatus of the Yezhovskiy NKVD headed by Ivanov, Alekseenko, Levak and Kuraksin. Their pale, exhausted faces testified that they, too, had gone through the tortures to which they themselves had subjected their victims. They were in Chekist uniforms, but without orders and insignia (the trial has not yet taken place, and they have already been stripped of titles and orders)” [16, p. 517].

We should highlight that interesting legal innovation: the court has not yet issued a guilty verdict, and the defendants “have already been stripped of their titles and orders.” This was not considered something exceptional in legal practice. This aspect points to the political Article 58 of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR, examined by the Military Tribunal of the NKVD forces on the basis of the law of December 1, 1934.

The practice of arbitrary deprivation of insignia and titles, the use of physical and psychological influence on those under investigation was a gross violation of constitutional human rights and the relevant norms of the Criminal Procedure Code of the RSFSR. The fact that the torture was sanctioned by the leadership of the ruling party confirms the explanation of J. Stalin (November 10, 1939): “The Central Committee of the CPSU believes that the method of physical influence must necessarily continue to be used, as an exception, against enemies of the people, as an absolutely correct and expedient method.” In conclusion, Stalin categorically prescribes to the secretaries of regional committees, district committees, and the



Central Committee of national parties, “that when checking NKVD personnel, they should be guided by this explanation” [17, p. 145]. Thus, an excerpt from Stalin’s telegram indicates that the coercion of people to testify, including self-incrimination, was politically motivated.

Another background event on a local scale was the case of a convicted state security sergeant of Chechen origin. It follows from the guilty verdict of the Military Tribunal that the defendant, having entered into the criminal association, submitted to the NKVD of Chechen-Ingushetia “a number of deliberately false provocative and slanderous materials” about the existence of a counterrevolutionary group that was preparing terrorist acts against the party and Soviet leaders of the republic. The judicial investigation of the closed meeting of the NKVD forces established “that the provocateur activity of the defendants was reduced to showing themselves in front of the public as enemy expositors under the guise of vigilance and exposing enemies and creating a career for themselves.” On the basis of his provocative materials, innocent Mustafinov Yusup and Matsiev Hamit were sentenced to death. The Visiting Session of the Military Tribunal of the North Caucasus Military District in August of 1940 decided on the conviction of the former state security sergeant for 15 years of correctional labor camps, followed by the restriction of civil rights for another 5 years<sup>11</sup>.

The victims of the process of the so-called restoration of socialist law and order were the security officers who headed the republican special services in different years – S.N. Mironov, V.F. Dementiev, M.G. Raev. Arrested as members of an anti-Soviet, right-Trotskyist espionage and conspiratorial organization, they were executed by the verdict of the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court of the USSR.

Stalin’s former political opponents serving sentences in places of imprisonment also did not manage to avoid repressions. Karl Radek was one of the few to whom Stalin “granted” life in January 1937. On May 19, 1939, in the Verkhneuralskaya prison, the “Trotskyist” Varezchnikov strangled a prominent party figure and publicist. Under the fictitious name of the murderer, the “encrypted Stepanov I.I.” was registered the former commandant of the NKVD prison of the Chechen-Ingush ASSR, convicted of official crimes. For performing an important “special task”, by order of Beria in November 1939, I.I. Stepanov was granted parole<sup>12</sup>.

On the way to unlimited power, Stalin did not disdain to use the services of specialists of a narrow profile, like the executioner I.I. Stepanov, who carried out death sentences. Even today it is not possible to establish the approximate number of people executed in Chechen-Ingushetia, as well as their places of burial: the system was able to keep its secrets.

We also believe that the political charges brought against former NKVD employees were identical to the “enemies of the people” incriminated in 1937-1938. For example, Vasily Grigoryevich Egorov, the First secretary of the Chechen-Ingush Regional

<sup>11</sup> Personal file № 6595 of a special settler N.M. Daldaev// ADG CR. Collection R-1094, Inv. 5. File 9031. P. 1-2.

<sup>12</sup> Stalin’s order. How Sokolnikov and Radek were killed // Novaya Gazeta. 2008. June 5.

Committee of the CPSU, was accused of being an agent of German intelligence since 1922. In 1936, he allegedly joined the North Caucasian faction of the right-Trotskyist organization. He also allegedly headed the right-Trotskyist underground organization in the republic. According to his supposed instructions, “oil production was disrupted, acts of sabotage with human victims were committed.” When conducting economic policy campaigns, party directives, etc., were grossly violated. He was arrested on April 30, 1938, and sentenced on July 13, 1941 to 20 years in prison [15].

It would be naive to think that the repressions ceased after the decree was issued on November 17, 1938. On the contrary, according to counter-revolutionary articles, they became even more active, which is evident from the “statistical data on the number of convicts by the courts of the RSFSR for the period of 1923-1955.” Thus, on average, in 1939, the number of convicted by the courts was recorded in 5,151 cases, while in 1940 their number almost doubled and amounted to 9,187<sup>13</sup>.

The analyzed data is supplemented by declassified information from another collection of documents. In January 1939, the total number of those convicted of counter-revolutionary crimes (reporting form № 5) was 22,296, and in the second quarter (as of June 1, 1939), analysts recorded a sharp increase – 29,625. In the third quarter (as of October 1, 1939), a decrease was recorded – 28,725<sup>14</sup>. Thus, based on the sources, we can state the ups and downs of terror against imaginary and real political opponents of Stalin.

In view of the importance for the study, we present a list of no longer valid orders, directives and decrees of the NKVD of the USSR (order № 00762 of November 26, 1938):

№ 00439 of July 25, 1937 – “On operation for repression of German citizens suspected of espionage against the Soviet Union”;

№ 00447 of July 30, 1937 – “On operation for repression of former kulaks, criminals and other anti-Soviet elements”;

№ 00485 of August 11, 1937 – “On operation for repression of members of the Polish military organization (POV) in the USSR”;

№ 00593 of September 20, 1937 – “On operation for repression of former employees of the Chinese Eastern railway and returnees of Manchukuo”;

№ 49990 of November 30, 1937 – Encrypted telegrams of the NKVD on the operation for repression of Latvians;

№ 50215 of December 11, 1937 – Directive of the NKVD of the “Greece operation”;

№ S-74 of January 13, 1938 – Order of the NKVD of the references sent to the Military Board of the Supreme court of the USSR;

№ 202 of January 29, 1938 – Directive of the NKVD of the USSR “On the arrests of Iranians and Iranian-Armenians” to the Commissar of internal Affairs of the

13 Table of the number of convicts by the courts of the RSFSR // SARF. Collection 353. Inv. 16. File 20. P. 6.

14 Information form № 5 on the composition of prisoners held in the Correctional labour camps of the UNKVD-NKVD for the first quarter of 1939 // SARF. Collection 9414. Inv. 1. File 353. P. 12; Information form № 5 on the composition of prisoners held in the Correctional labour camps of the UNKVD-NKVD for the II quarter of 1939 (on July 1, 1939) // SARF. Collection 9414. Inv. 1. File 353. P. 47; Information form No. 5 on the composition of prisoners held in the Correctional labour camps of the UNKVD-NKVD for the III quarter of 1939 (on October 1, 1939) // SARF. Collection 9414. Inv. 1. File 353. P. 76.

republics, heads of the NKVD, chiefs of DTO GUBG NKVD, chiefs of the 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, and 11th divisions of GUBG NKVD of the USSR;

№ 326 of February 16, 1938 – Memorandum to NKVD on the arrest of all suspected in espionage, sabotage, terrorist, insurgent and nationalist work of Afghanistan (Afghan and Soviet citizens);

№ 00606 of September 17, 1938 – order of the NKVD of the USSR “On establishments of special troikas to examine the cases of detainees in orders of the NKVD of the USSR № 00485, etc.;

№ 189 of September 21, 1938 – Directive of NKVD “Clarification on the application of the NKVD order № 00606, 1938”, etc., a total of 18 documents [12, p. 612-614].

Thus, the government approached the regulation of the legislative framework that determines the dynamics, ideological, quantitative and procedural foundations of terror from tactical considerations, while maintaining the strategic course of the party.

The attempted reconstruction of the Stalinist restoration of order and socialist legality on the example of a single region touched upon an important component of the entire study – the interaction of the party and law enforcement agencies implementing the political line of J. Stalin. We hope that further study will open up new horizons for research on other aspects of repressive politics that remain outside the scope of the present paper.

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