

The
**Carl Beck
Papers**

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East European Studies

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Campaign Against
Collective Farm
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ABSTRACT

In February and June 1948, the Stalinist state issued two decrees aimed at a radical solution of the problem of labor discipline among Soviet collective farm peasants. Borne out of the initiative of the Ukrainian Communist Party Secretary N.S. Khrushchev, who found examples of community self-policing in tsarist legislation, the decrees granted collective farm general meetings the right to deport to distant parts of the Soviet Union peasants reluctant to fulfill the minimal labor requirements set by the state. Based on a wide array of formerly classified Russian archival documents, this study draws the complete story of this little known page in the history of Stalinist repression. It demonstrates that despite the harshness of the measures employed, the decree did little to force peasants back to work on collective farms given the seriousness of the postwar agrarian crisis.

Comrade Naidek, the Second Secretary of the Odessa Party Committee, attended one meeting where collective farmers sentenced two peasants to deportation. After the meeting, a female collective farmer came to Comrade Naidek and, smiling, said to him: “Oh my, you’re sly!” At first he did not understand her and asked: “Who is sly here? You know, many peasants spoke out and all of them voted to deport.”

“Not that,” replied the woman. “I am not [speaking] about them. I mean those are sly who granted us the right to deport ourselves!”

*From N. S. Khrushchev’s report to Stalin
on the implementation of the Supreme
Soviet’s decree in the Ukrainian SSR.¹*

Deportation, as a means of policing the countryside, reached its climax during the collectivization drive of Soviet agriculture. After the World War II, the method was simply repeated in newly acquired areas such as Western Ukraine, Western Belorussia, Moldavia, and the Baltic republics, sometimes with a more marked antinationalist color. In the areas that had been collectivized at the beginning of the 1930s, the collective farm system was fully consolidated by 1940, but the aftermath of the war brought new problems. There was a lack of labor, and massive encroachments were being made on collective farm land to the benefit of peasants' private plots. Rather than modifying the basic structure of socialized agriculture, the Stalinist leadership instead responded to these problems by issuing legislation that reinforced already existing regulations.

Knowledge of the economic, social, and political reactions of the collective farm peasantry after the war remains largely *terra incognita* and constitutes a major shortcoming in the current scholarship regarding the period. There are, however, signs that the general decline of the peasants' standard of living in the first years following the end of the war, as well as the 1946-47 famine, engendered massive flight from the kolkhozes. Evidence also suggests that peasants coped with postwar hardships by working outside the collective farms, but continued to remain full members of the farms in order to maintain their right to a private plot. This survival strategy was widespread enough to earn many peasants the label *okolokolkhoznyi* element (loosely collectivized elements), *lzhekolkhozniki* (false peasants), or *mnimye kolkhozniki* (sham peasants).² Alongside the open violators of labor discipline—those who simply refused to work in kolkhozes—the *lzhekolkhozniki* became a new concern for the state, which used harsh measures to eradicate the problem. In early 1948, the Ukrainian party secretary N. S. Khrushchev proposed granting peasant general meetings the right to exile to labor camps these violators of labor discipline themselves, a measure which was intended to increase the peasants' political consciousness and consequently their labor productivity. Two decrees of the Supreme Soviet followed: the first one enacted in February applied only to the Ukraine; the second extended this approach to the entire Soviet Union in early June.

The June 1948 decree and the subsequent campaign that led to the deportation of thousands of Soviet peasants has been one of those blank spots in Soviet history whose existence was only revealed by the opening of formerly classified archives. In the West the campaign was described only in the account of the expatriate Fedor Belov, who had been a collective farm chairman and an eyewitness to the campaign, but no further analysis followed his magisterial account.³ In Russia, as was often the case during perestroika, it was the Soviet press that first made public the existence of this legislation. Soon after, mention of the decree

began to appear in scholarly publications. In her 1992 book on the Russian *kolkhoz* peasantry in the 1940s and 1950s, Ol'ga Verbitskaia speaks of the decree as one of the government's most repressive policies, but gives no indication of the number of victims, of how the decree was implemented, and certainly not of its impact on collective farm labor.⁴ At the same time, Vasilii Popov published four important documents linked to the campaign, offering the first, though incomplete, view of this tragic page in the history of the Soviet peasantry. He stresses its vicious character and how Khrushchev's careerism—his desire to demonstrate his zeal to Stalin in order to be promoted back to Moscow—was at the root of the events.⁵ In his book on the Soviet famine of 1946–47, published a few years after Popov's work, V. F. Zima devotes part of a chapter to this campaign, which he considered to have been a sort of second “dekulakization” of the countryside. As a state response to peasant absenteeism from work in the aftermath of the famine, the June 1948 decree was disproportionately severe in comparison to measures already employed. In Zima's opinion, the campaign was a good example of the tightening of state-party rule over the countryside after the war: while it forced many of the remaining individual householders into collective farms, it was also a clear sign to the mass of *kolkhozniki* that a more humane management of agriculture could not be expected under Stalinist leadership, thus tending to increase the peasant flight from the collective farms.⁶

In the past few years, several Western and Russian works have used the June 1948 campaign as an example in making more general arguments about postwar popular opinion, labor shortages, or the central role of the war in the Soviet body politic.⁷ Pavel Polian's recent survey of forced deportations in twentieth-century Russia devotes only a paragraph to the June 1948 campaign against idlers, probably because the numbers and resources involved in this deportation seem minor in comparison to such major special resettlement activities as the dekulakization and wartime ethnic deportations.⁸ When seen as just one more episode in the history of Soviet special resettlement, it is not as important as these tragic events. The two edicts of June 1947 protecting state and individual property from theft with harsh prison and camp sentences, which were not aimed at the peasantry in particular, hit many times more rural dwellers than the antishirker campaign did.⁹ Yet the decree is significant for other reasons, mostly because it emerged as a drastic response to an increasingly important problem of the collective farm system: that of labor discipline. Seen in retrospect, this measure must be understood as being the high point of all state attempts to control the collective farm workers' labor. In its struggle against those peasants who were labeled as “almost-collectivized elements,” the Stalinist state-party leadership achieved no victory, and received no benefits. As always, peasants responded by continuing

to consider collective farm work as a corvée. The most reluctant elements simply refused to work the required minimum, while the majority took a work-to-rule approach. Because it showed that repression could not solve the complex problem of labor incentives, the June 1948 decree thus provides a significant insight into the state-peasant relationship.

In comparison to other attempts to increase peasant labor productivity in the collective farms, the 1948 campaign to deport shirkers appears as a short-lived but rather unusual handling of labor discipline. Measures earlier employed had included fines, expulsion from the kolkhoz, and deprivation of other rights, but not excision from the community. This campaign deserves a separate analysis not only because an in-depth, complete, and satisfying analysis is lacking in the existing scholarship, but also because, as a political campaign, the edicts revealed more than just their intended purpose.

First of all, they were the peak of the labor discipline process, since no method as draconian as deportation to labor camps had ever been used before to punish collective farmers who refused to work actively in the kolkhozes. Until 1948, peasants could be expelled from collective farms or deprived of their private plots, but deportation had not been included in the disciplinary arsenal at the disposal of the authorities, either central or local. The reasons behind the issuance of the 1948 decrees still need to be clearly assessed. Second, the deportation campaign was carried out according to some of the principles and practices enshrined in the 1935 *Model Statutes of Collective Farms*, as it was meant, among other things, to “increase collective farm democracy,” according to the Bolshevik jargon.¹⁰ An analysis of the implementation process can shed light on such unknown or insufficiently analyzed aspects of local rule and collective farm life as the concept of collective farm democracy, which is usually dismissed as insignificant. The campaign is therefore interesting not only because of the effects it might have had—or not had—on labor discipline, but also as an insight into the postwar functioning of the Stalinist state machine, and into peasant political behavior. Given the extraordinarily harsh early postwar economic situation, deportation of rural shirkers can hardly have been expected to be an effective means of raising peasants’ enthusiasm for labor. Nonetheless, this event fits perfectly into a deeper trend of attempting to tighten up state control over the rural population, as “discipline” became the catchword of the day after the victory over Nazi Germany.

Legislation on Labor Discipline Before 1948

The main document defining collective farmers' rights and duties appeared in 1935, but it was not until 1939 that the state-party leadership decided to introduce a compulsory minimum of labor-days (*trudodniia*) expected of full members of collective farms. Until then, party leaders had assumed that peasants would work on the kolkhoz because the prospect of receiving their due share of the farm's income would be a sufficient incentive. This assumption was wrong.¹¹ The May 1939 resolution of the Central Committee and the Council of People's Commissars, "On the Measures to Protect Collective Lands from Squandering," was meant to fight the illegal enlargement of the private plots at the expense of collective lands. This encroachment was considered to be a perversion of party and government policies in the countryside. At the same time, the resolution sought to fight another type of perversion: the practice of living on the collective farms and enjoying guaranteed rights like possession of a private plot while not taking part in collective farm work. The reasons for this decision were explained as follows: "Honest peasants earning from 200 to 600 and more labor-days work in the collective farms side by side with a part of the population which earns only from 20 to 30 labor-days. The latter continue to be considered full members and live on the collective farm's back." The resolution thus sought to eradicate this intolerably idle way of life.¹²

Therefore, a compulsory minimum of labor-days (the arbitrary unit defining the amount of work done on the collective farms)¹³ was introduced for able-bodied peasants all over the country, according to a classification of three groups of regions. For the first group, including the cotton-producing regions, the minimum was established at 100 labor-days per annum; for the second group, composed of some of the central regions and a few regions of the Urals and the Far East, the number was 60, and for all remaining regions it was 80.¹⁴ In order to enforce the minimum of labor-days, the resolution recommended simply that those peasants who had failed to fulfill the compulsory minimum should lose all rights defined by the *Model Statutes*, including the right to a private plot. From 1942 to 1953 the number of peasants expelled from their collective farms remained rather low and represented from 70,000 to 260,000 per year, as shown in table 1.

Table 1
Peasants Expelled from the Collective Farms, U.S.S.R., 1942–53

Year	No. Expelled	No. Departed^a	Total
1942	70,615	67,882	138,497
1943	104,044	72,726	176,770
1944	121,986	85,928	207,914
1945	122,209	79,601	201,810
1946	259,075	161,371	420,046
1947	219,908	115,936	335,844
1948	241,169	115,158	356,327
1949	239,049	121,293	360,342
1950	154,517	96,530	251,047
1951	166,000	130,200	296,200
1952	161,700	134,200	295,900
1953	178,900	353,200 ^b	532,100

Sources: RGAE, f. 1562, op. 324, d. 406, l. 1; d. 632, l. 1; d. 884, l. 1; d. 1369, l. 1; d. 1774, l. 1; d. 2170, l. 1; d. 2568, l. 1; d. 3068, l. 3; d. 3594, l. 4; d. 4048, l. 1; d. 4630, l. 1; d. 5078, ll. 1–2.

Notes: a. Departing without fulfilling the labor-day minimum.

b. Starting from 1953, the column where statisticians formerly indicated “departed” (*vybyli*) was changed to “released for work by Orgnabor’s dispatch.”

As collective farm chairmen could suggest expulsion for various reasons, not only labor discipline, and expulsions still had to be confirmed by peasant general assemblies, leniency clearly predominated in this period. It must also be noted that more peasants left their villages in these years than the numbers in the second column show. Statisticians have been careful to add that those peasants who left were also not fulfilling the labor-day minimum. Even adding the numbers in both columns does not show a strong will to implement the resolution

to the letter. Keeping in mind that there were at least 220,000 collective farms in the Soviet Union during this period, leniency was obviously the rule rather than the exception. In comparison to the number of violators *recorded* by the Central Statistical Administration, punishment touched only a small portion of peasants (see table 2).

Table 2
Able-Bodied Peasants Not Fulfilling Labor-Days
and Peasants Expelled from Collective Farms, 1942–53

Year	1. Not Fulfilling the Minimum	2. Not Working a Single Day	3. Col. 1+ Col. 2)^a	4. Total Expelled	5. Percentage of Col. 3 Expelled
1942	1,635,600	no data	no data	70,615	----
1943	2,623,853	281,421	2,905,274	104,044	3.6
1944	3,212,401	288,852	3,501,253	121,986	3.5
1945	3,087,800	260,600	3,348,400	122,209	3.6
1946	3,964,700	366,000	4,330,700	259,075	6.0
1947	3,572,600	308,800	3,881,400	219,908	5.7
1948	3,323,400	286,600	3,610,000	241,169	6.7
1949	4,073,400	419,200	4,492,600	239,049	5.3
1950	4,292,600	536,900	4,829,500	154,517	3.2
1951	3,589,000	480,580	4,069,580	166,000	4.1
1952	3,206,070	435,160	3,641,230	161,700	4.4
1953	1,627,260	332,631	1,959,891 ^b	178,900	9.1

Sources: Calculated from RGAE, f. 1562, op. 324, d. 883, ll. 7–10; d. 632, ll. 5–7; d. 884, ll. 5–7; d. 1369, ll. 5–7; d. 1774, ll. 5–7; d. 2170, ll. 14–16; d. 2568, ll. 22–24; d. 3068, ll. 21–23; d. 3594, ll. 28–30; d. 4048, ll. 25–26; d. 4630, ll. 20–24; d. 5078, l. 5–6.

Notes: a. In accordance with the common practice among Soviet statisticians, the number of peasants not working a single day (*vyrabotyvaiushchikh ne odnogo trudodniia*) were counted separately from those not fulfilling the minimum (*vyrabotyvaiushchikh menee ob'iazatel'nogo minimuma*) and were finally put together into a single column (*itogo nevyrabotyvaiushchikh minimuma trudodnei*). For an example of this practice, see Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Ekonomiki (hereafter RGAE), f. 1562, op. 324, d. 1774, l. 5, 7; d. 2170, l. 14, 16.

b. Not including Belorussia, Ukraine, the Baltic Republics, and the Caucasus.

It is quite clear that only a small portion of peasants violating the regulations were actually punished, but the state of the statistics on this issue should prevent anybody from coming too quickly to definite conclusions. However, the legislative will to tighten control over peasant labor that the resolution demonstrates must be seen within the wider context of state attempts to criminalize the labor infractions of the working class as well as the peasantry. These efforts can be understood first as a form of industrial preparation for the advent of conflict; second, as a delayed response to the demands of industrial managers for improved labor productivity; and finally, as further intensification of the struggle between the regime and its reluctant industrial workforce.¹⁵ The same kind of tension also existed between the regime and its collective farm peasantry, but the immediate objective of the resolutions on labor discipline was to force *kolkhozniki* away from their private plots.¹⁶ Workers started to be punished in 1940 for leaving their jobs without permission, but the effectiveness of the law can be questioned since workers continued to leave their jobs, and absenteeism marred industrial labor discipline even during the war; in factories, managers often protected their workers in order to maintain production unless leniency threatened to become dangerous for the bosses themselves.¹⁷ Regarding agriculture, a similar argument that chairmen could protect their peasants from labor discipline prosecution appears sound, although there is little evidence to support it, except accusations from central authorities. To be sure, the state would go on raising the norms; the German scholar Stefan Merl has even argued that action was definitely taken to reduce the size of the private plot, and the struggle to raise the minimum of labor-days would have probably been continued had the 1941 German invasion not occurred.¹⁸

The next step toward the tightening of labor discipline in the collective farms was dictated by wartime circumstances, when the structure was more disorganized and the need to supply the front called for an upsurge in production. The state-party leadership sought to increase peasant productivity by raising the labor-day minimum. Hence, the joint resolution of the Central Committee and Council of People's Commissars of April 13, 1942, "On the Increase of the Compulsory Minimum of Labor-Days," raised the minimum to 150 labor-days

in the cotton-producing farms, 100 in the farms in the second zone, and 120 for most of the Soviet agricultural regions.¹⁹ Also, for the first time, village teenagers aged twelve to sixteen were forced to fulfill a minimum of 50 labor-days and faced prosecution in cases of nonfulfillment. Teenage labor was not new in the prewar collective farms, as was revealed by reports sent to the Politburo in 1939.²⁰ What was new was this criminalization of teenagers who refused to work a minimum.

The 1942 resolution was accompanied by a decree of the Supreme Soviet that defined the judicial procedures to be followed when prosecuting peasants who had not fulfilled the compulsory minimum. Members of collective farms charged with “violation of labor discipline” could be forced to do six months of corrective work in their collective farms, with a 25 percent deduction of all their labor-days’ earnings to be directed to the kolkhoz.²¹ Similarly, peasants refusing forestry corvées could be punished with pay retention.²² According to the data provided by the all-union prosecutor, from 1942 to 1945 a yearly average of 157,742 peasants were prosecuted under these charges. A partial amnesty was decreed by the Supreme Soviet in July 1945,²³ but the law remained in force until Stalin’s death in 1953, although data are not available after 1948 (see table 3).

Table 3
Trials Under the Decree of the Supreme Soviet of April 13, 1942

Year	No. Convicted	No. Discharged	Dropped Cases
1942	204,314	41,825	17,798
1943	148,206	31,663	17,668
1944	144,848	43,153	12,448
1945	133,599	27,764	50,219
1946	190,784	43,411	15,452
1947	136,982	31,148	12,526
1948	117,458	31,159	10,884
Total	1,076,191	250,123	136,995

Sources: GARF, f. 8131, op. 24, d. 358, l. 38; *Krest’ianstvo i gosudarstvo*, 253.

As will be shown later, the number of peasants not fulfilling the minimum numbered a few million each year. It can be argued that neither the local powers nor the prosecutor's subordinates enforced the existing laws with zeal, as the impact of this legislation on peasant labor enthusiasm was not tremendous. For example, the Ukrainian Ministry of Agriculture had no written evidence to present that could explain the "massive refusal to work" among Ukrainian peasants.²⁴ To account for the general slackness surrounding the implementation of the decree, the chief of the inspectorate, in his report to General Prosecutor N. P. Gorshenin, pointed out the absence of any reliable local data on labor-day fulfillment. More importantly, he emphasized the general laissez-faire attitude of the local executives, as well as the collective farm chairmen who "do not want to spoil their relationships with peasants and do not submit to court any material necessary to condemn the evil violators of labor discipline."²⁵ Many of them did not even know what was needed or how it should be submitted as evidence. Even the republican prosecutors followed the implementation of the decree sporadically. Most reports, whether from the Ministry of Agriculture, the Central Committee Section for Agriculture, or the newly formed Council for Collective Farm Affairs, pointed out that most shirkers belonged to families that included nonfarming members (especially in villages reasonably close to urban centers), to the chairmen's or farm administrators' families, or were women with young children.²⁶ Usually, officials from the Council for Collective Farm Affairs would target the collective farm management as being primarily responsible for poor labor discipline, arguing that they did not use the full arsenal of disciplinary measures at their disposal. First, the management tended to prosecute only a small number of the violators, and the decree then lost most of its impact. Second, when peasants were charged, the sentences of corrective labor on the collective farm by the people's courts were often described as toothless since they were neither enforced by chairmen nor checked by the local directorates of Internal Affairs, and the peasants could easily get by without serving them. In 1947, 60 percent of all sentences of corrective labor were not enforced.²⁷ Finally and most importantly, the threat of the loss of the right to a private plot for a peasant who was expelled from the collective farm was strongly lessened by the fact that plots were granted to households (*dvory*). Any attempt to deprive a peasant of his private plot was thereby made void because only households—not individuals—enjoyed rights, and no provision was made to deprive entire households.

This is not to understate the extent of the labor shortage in the Soviet countryside after the war. The able-bodied population reached 25.08 million in 1946 as compared to 35.42 in 1940.²⁸ The return of demobilized soldiers did not mean an automatic input of new workers into the rural labor force; demobilization

occurred in waves, and not all veterans were willing to accept low-paid jobs in agriculture.²⁹ Moreover, the needs of industry generally prevailed over those of agriculture, and there were three different channels through which rural labor was redirected to forced labor or industry. The first was linked to repressive measures such as the 1947 edicts on the protection of socialist and private property. These greatly affected the peasantry.³⁰ The second was the “official” recruitment of rural workers for industry through *Orgnabor* (Organized Recruitment). Its statistics indicate that 773,000 rural workers were recruited in 1946 and 667,000 in 1948. Together with recruitment by enterprises and FZO/RU (Factory and Craft Schools) and Railway Schools, a total of 2.1 million workers was reached in 1946 and 1.5 million in 1948.³¹ Finally, an “unofficial” channel, that of “spontaneous” rural migration, accounted for most of the losses the countryside suffered. It remained largely beyond state control since it was an informal type of labor migration, a phenomenon never really extinguished after the 1917 revolution. Rural workers leaving their villages for an undetermined period of time to work in industry were recorded nowhere because seasonal migration was illegal if undertaken outside the regulating power of *Orgnabor*.³²

Kolkhoz population statistics also show that most of the collective farm labor force was not fully employed on farms except during peak periods in August and September. In 1947, for example, 50.1 percent of all able-bodied *kolkhozniki* did at least some work on the farms in January, a low-activity winter month, but all were employed during the summer rush in August.³³ In rough terms this means that in 1950 between 7.8 and 16.6 million peasants were presented with an opportunity to work outside the farm at some point in the year when they were not actively employed in the kolkhoz. This does not, of course, prove that all peasants who did not work on the farms were employed elsewhere; rather, it suggests that the potential resource pool of kolkhoz labor was substantial and important. In sum, official and unofficial labor drafts created dire conditions for the kolkhoz, especially in the first postwar years when collective farm work was still severely affected by a wartime legacy of demechanization³⁴ and industrial priorities. This ultimately meant that the agricultural sector was the neglected stepchild of Soviet economic planning.

Even when collective farms did employ their workers they had little to offer in exchange. Remuneration was calculated according to a system of allocation of labor-days, usually nicknamed by peasants “checkmarks” (*palochki*), an expression suggesting a rather formal attribution to anyone showing up for work, notwithstanding the quality of the work accomplished. On the one hand, the exact amount of work required in order to be paid a single labor-day could vary dramatically from farm to farm, and it was not defined “from above” until 1948.

Even then, the new norms imposed on collective farms were rarely applied.³⁵ On the other hand, there was no control mechanism to enforce differential pay since management or the kolkhoz general assembly could still grant equal pay to all members who did some work by the end of the agricultural season. This practice was denounced by the central authorities as “leveling down” (*uravnilovka*). Also, there were important differences in payments between regions, not to mention between farms. These payments amounted to a share in the collective farm revenue once obligatory state deliveries had been met and sowing funds gathered. Chairmen who gave cash or grain advances exposed themselves to harsh penalties. Overall, 30 percent of all farms paid no cash at all for labor-days in 1946, 10.6 percent paid no grain at all, and 73.2 percent paid 500 grams of grain or less per day.³⁶ The early postwar years certainly represent a historical nadir for kolkhoz income, but even in 1951, 22.6 percent of all farms still paid no cash.³⁷ On the poorer farms that could pay neither cash nor grain only potatoes or vegetables were made available to peasants. In sum, the labor-day was an inadequate incentive for *kolkhozniki* to work on collective farms, but it was also an inaccurate and unfair estimate of the work they accomplished since its value varied so much.

While many chairmen asked for an increase in the labor-day minimum—some of them even suggested tripling it³⁸—no measure of this kind was ever taken after the Second World War. After examining the reasons why measures to raise labor discipline had failed, inspectors Chuvikov and Ivanitskii from the Council for Collective Farm Affairs suggested a series of disciplinary measures to A. A. Andreev, including the removal of labor-days, barring violators from using collective farm equipment and pastures, and raising agricultural taxes to the level paid by individual householders.³⁹ However, no action was taken in this direction. Instead, the leadership chose to use bureaucratic measures to regulate the value of labor-days to make sure that they would retain their significance and to foster them as a means of socialist competition.

After the war, nothing was done to change the labor-day minimum per se. Rather, the top state-party leadership chose to fight the phenomenon of peasant absenteeism indirectly, issuing a resolution to fight encroachment of private plots on collective lands. According to the logic of the resolution, which attempted to reduce the “uncontrolled size of peasant private plots,” peasants should be forced to spend less time on their own plots and more time on collective farm work in order to meet their needs. Many local officials complained about the “slack in labor-day requirements,” but no action was taken until 1948. The chairman of the collective farm Zdobutok Zhovtnia in the Kiev Region, F. U. Dubkovetskii, put it bluntly in his letter to Khrushchev, who was the Ukrainian secretary in

1946: “The labor-day minimum was introduced to force idlers to work, but the resolution has grown old and has lost any effect. It appears that collective farmers earn now on average 250 labor-days and the compulsory minimum is only 120. [The low labor-day minimum] is convenient for idlers but the kolkhoz cannot get its work done on time.”⁴⁰ The chairman’s concerns were to be granted a response in February 1948.

Creating the Campaign: Khrushchev and the Tsarist Legal Heritage

There is little doubt that there was a tightening of labor discipline beginning in 1939 and continuing on through the war. There is also little doubt that the immediate postwar situation in 1945–47 did not encourage peasants to work harder for the collective farms, and infractions to labor discipline rose after the war’s end. The famine was one cause, and the small amount paid for labor-days was another.⁴¹ Clearly, the level of peasant labor was rather low, so the official explanation stressed that agricultural output was well below the planned targets. A scapegoat could be found easily, and one potential target was the so-called *lzhekolkhozniki* (false peasants), who were enjoying the advantages of the collective farm system without strong involvement in collective work. Although some local representatives demanded that the central powers take measures to stop the migration out of the countryside, no action was taken, nor was the compulsory minimum of labor-days raised.⁴² But at the uppermost level of state authority, plans were being made to find a miracle solution to this complex problem.

In his report of January 20, 1948, addressed to Stalin, Khrushchev, then secretary of the Ukrainian Committee, referred to “some problems” in Ukrainian agriculture in general, and in collective farm labor in particular.⁴³ The report was presented with a request to enact a resolution that would grant collective farm general meetings the right to vote to deport some elements “whose further presence in the village threatens the social order.” Khrushchev reminded Stalin that they had discussed the project during their last interview at the end of 1947.⁴⁴ He found legal precedent for this type of extraordinary measure in tsarist legislation, which he cited as an example of what could be done in order to exert pressure on rural communities. In the 1910 edition of the *Svod zakonov Rossiiskoi Imperii*, Article 683 granted “peasant communities the right to send away individuals whose further presence in their midst threatens the community’s well-being and security.”⁴⁵ It was clear, as Khrushchev himself acknowledged, that under the tsarist regime both the rationale for and the targets of such a law were quite different. While seeking to use these means to different ends, Khrushchev none-

theless found inspiration here for the 1948 campaign. He believed society should be given the means to eradicate social parasites.

It appears that the practice of administrative deportations actually goes as far back as 1663, but the specific decree that influenced Khrushchev was first issued on May 15, 1808. A special order of the Appanage Department granted peasant communes the right to exile their members for immoral and insolent behavior as decided by a community verdict (*obshchestvennyi prigovor*).⁴⁶ The law was reinforced in subsequent drafts by orders from the Senate and State Council and survived through the postemancipation period, where verdicts kept their force but had to be confirmed by land captains (*zemskie nachal'niki*). Some sources talk of a rather lenient application, in the range of five thousand convictions per year, in the years following the emancipation of 1861.⁴⁷ A few aspects of the law seemed to have been particularly inspiring to Khrushchev. First, it required a quorum of two-thirds of the community to be considered valid. Second, it was intended to target only the able-bodied population. Third, spouses and children of deportees were free to follow them to the resettlement area. Finally, as the tsarist decree's rationale associated social outcasts with a threat to community well-being and safety, Khrushchev justified the need to deport violators of labor discipline in the same terms. Disregarding the odd marriage of *ancien régime* laws with socialist agriculture, Khrushchev argued that the situation in the region formerly occupied by Germany was not compatible with the smooth functioning of the collective farms; thus harsh but carefully chosen methods had to be employed. The party leader wanted to show that he was willing to keep the Ukrainian countryside under control by displaying considerable zeal in dealing with the source of its problems.

The report gives examples of so-called lazy bums profiting from the collective farm system—using private plots, engaging in black market activities, and speculating on kolkhoz property. It is interesting to note that Khrushchev put his project into the wider legal context of postwar laws protecting socialist property, like the June 4, 1947, decree of the Supreme Soviet “On the Criminal Prosecution for Slandering State and Socialized Property,” even though he risked conflating the rationales of these different decrees. Examples were specifically chosen and provided to show that honest peasants were begging for the harshest measures that would get rid of those “parasites and bloodsuckers living off the work of true and honest peasants.” In his description of the hatred that hard-working peasants felt for these vermin (*gady*), Khrushchev went so far as to say: “Expressions from the Zaporozhian Cossacks’ letter to the Turkish Sultan are pale in comparison to the language used by peasants when it comes to judging the violators of labor discipline.” Moreover, in order to convince his high-rank-

ing superiors in Moscow, he described some of these rural elements as former collaborators with the German occupiers. “Idlers” as an economic category was now transformed by Khrushchev’s rhetoric into a political problem. Clearly, the difficulties experienced in re-Sovietizing Ukraine dictated the creation of a new and disposable enemy: the speculator living on the back of the collective farm.

Khrushchev’s proposals expressed a special wish to use deportation as an “educational experiment” and an “exemplary means” to convince the mass of the kolkhoz peasantry of the need for stiff discipline. These measures were also aimed at raising the level of party work in the Ukrainian villages, especially in the aftermath of the German occupation. In this vein, the secretary suggested that the decree should be implemented only in collective farms where problems of peasant labor productivity were especially acute, and only in a few farms per district and in a few districts per region. Khrushchev also thought that some shirkers “expressing a real desire to repent their crimes before their fellow villagers” should first be warned and given a deadline to show willingness to work actively in the collective farms. If they failed to show any improvement, those peasants should be simply deported.⁴⁸ The proposals were followed by a draft resolution, quickly confirmed, on the “Procedures of Implementation of the Supreme Soviet Decree of February 21, 1948.” The main guidelines were:

- the sentences of deportation cannot be passed without the participation of two-thirds of all full members of the collective farm;
- the question of deportation must be settled by a two-thirds majority of all attending members;⁴⁹
- the vote must be open;
- the gathering must be presided over either by the collective farm chairman or the chairman of the rural council;
- individuals older than sixty years, the disabled, and teenagers cannot be sentenced in accordance with the decree;
- the sentence must be confirmed by the District Soviet Executive Committee within seven days;
- the members of the deportee’s family are granted the right to follow the deportee to the area of relocation on a voluntary basis after five years spent in the area of relocation;
- deportees are granted the right to petition the Party Regional Committee (of their former collective farm) to return to their former place of residence.⁵⁰

The proposals sent to Stalin in late January 1948 were quickly accepted by the Council of Ministers. On February 21, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR issued

a decree entitled “On the Deportation Out of the Ukrainian SSR of Individuals Consciously Avoiding Labor in Agriculture and Leading an Anti-Social and Parasitic Way of Life.” It was completed by a joint resolution from the Ukrainian Party Central Committee and the Council of Ministers on the measures to be taken by state and party local organs for the implementation of the decree. In the early stages of the campaign, these measures touched only Ukraine, with the exception of the Western Ukrainian *oblasti*, but it took only a request from Khrushchev in November to extend the edict to the region of Izmailovo, which had quite recently been collectivized.⁵¹

The documents that gave birth to the decree show that Khrushchev’s staff put tremendous energy into presenting a nicely wrapped package of the measures and their implementation. They also show that the Ukrainian secretary succeeded in convincing Stalin of the need for measures that would set an example for others. In the report following the issue of the decree in Ukraine, Khrushchev argues for the effectiveness of the deportation campaign in raising labor discipline by providing many examples showing that peasants had now started displaying more enthusiasm for collective farm work and for political activity during meetings. For example, he estimated that between 85 and 90 percent of the eligible peasants were at the meetings and a dozen spoke out at each one.⁵² He went so far as to say that these meetings had a tremendous impact not only in the kolkhozes but also on industry, since many peasants from villages where the decree had been implemented worked in plants and factories. “Desertion” from the plants had decreased considerably. The rhetoric that associated most of the violators of labor discipline with former collaborators was further reinforced, and colorful examples were given to hatred of “loafers” and “speculators”:

The rank-and-file collective farmer Movchun, from the Victory collective farm in the Kievo-Sviatoshinskii district of the Kiev region, recalled: “Under the Germans, I asked Bushelenko [who was accused of parasitism in 1948 and acted as an elder during the occupation], ‘Give me a small plot of land to save me and my children from hunger,’ and he, the cursed scoundrel, replied to me, ‘Go and ask Stalin for some land for you and your bastards [*baistriuki*]. Let him feed you.’ Then I went on cursing him and said, ‘Well, just wait, scoundrel. When little-father [*bat’ko*] Stalin gets us out of the Germans’ hands, you will see what you get when you scoff at us.’ Now he [Bushelenko] has to feed some bastards, not mine, but those his daughter got from the Germans. We need to exile him, so he won’t stink in our farm any more.’”⁵³

Besides Khrushchev’s obvious fascination with coarse language, these examples tended to show that grassroots antipathy for “false peasants” not only

existed but represented a guarantee of success, since it was very easy for resentful villagers to unmask those who silently continued to exploit them. The only negative aspects mentioned by Khrushchev were that local party members were sometimes too passive and MVD (Ministry of Internal Affairs)-MGB staff too lenient in their attempts to discover the criminal elements that had been hidden in the countryside since the war.⁵⁴

After supplementary reports on the positive aspects of the campaign were forwarded by Khrushchev, a Politburo commission was formed to examine the possibilities of issuing the same type of legislation for the entire country. Led by G. M. Malenkov, M. A. Suslov, A. A. Zhdanov, and S. N. Kruglov, the commission addressed a short note to Stalin on May 26, 1948, expressing its agreement for such measures and recommending a potential structure.⁵⁵ This led to the issue on June 2 of the Supreme Soviet decree “On the Deportation to Distant Parts of the Country of Individuals Consciously Avoiding Labor in Agriculture and Leading an Anti-Social and Parasitic Way of Life,” to be applied to the entire country with the exception of Western Ukraine, Western Belorussia, the Baltic Republics, and Moldavia.

Notwithstanding the inspiration Khrushchev found in tsarist legislation, the guidelines for the organization of the expulsion meetings were in some way reminiscent of the party’s efforts to turn poor peasants against the so-called kulaks during collectivization in 1929–30, although there were also striking differences. During the dekulakization, most authority was given to the famous *troiki*, including the first secretary of the party committee, the chairman of the executive committee, and the head of the local political police, while the militia—often military detachments—were there to provide armed support. Lists of kulaks were to be approved by poor and landless peasants, where *skhod* (village meetings) had little role to play.⁵⁶ This time, however, the definition of the enemy had changed from being a loosely defined economic class to being moral and political “exploiters,” since the initial image of the “idlers-parasites” in Khrushchev’s rhetoric often carried an implication of collaboration with the former German occupiers, at least for Ukraine. The guidelines nonetheless closely followed the regulations provided by the 1935 *Model Statutes*. Based on the state-defined premises of collective farm democracy, the two decrees rather strictly applied the existing procedures for expelling peasants who violated one article or another of the *Model Statutes*. For example, they stated that definitive exclusion from a collective could be decided only by a general membership meeting in which a quorum of two-thirds of all members was present. Then a simple majority vote was enough to expel a collective farmer. In this case, as in the implementation of the June 1948 decree, the number of members attending the meeting and the

number of votes for, against, and abstaining, had to be indicated in the meeting records. Finally, the district executive committee (*raispolkom*) had to confirm the vote in order to make it legal. Its decision was, however, final.⁵⁷

It is legitimate to question the rationale behind the campaign. As will be shown later, Khrushchev's wishes to use deportation as an "educational and exemplary" measure were fulfilled, and only a small portion of Soviet collective farms were chosen for implementation of the decree. There were many more people warned than were actually deported, which suggests that Khrushchev's own recommendations were in effect until the end of the campaign. V. P. Popov has argued that the Ukrainian secretary's careerism—notably his strong desire to be repromoted to Moscow—and the peculiar problems of agriculture in Ukraine, especially the slow pace of collectivization in the western regions, pushed Khrushchev to propose extraordinary measures, such as deportation, to increase labor discipline. This view is influenced by readings favorable to Khrushchev, such as those of Roy Medvedev.⁵⁸ More recent analyses, however, suggest that in late 1947 the decision to repromote Khrushchev to party leadership in Ukraine had already been made, so the decision to implement his ideas may be more a symptom of his political ascendancy than a cause for it.⁵⁹ Things were bad in Ukraine on various fronts, and Khrushchev had to demonstrate a full command over Ukrainian affairs. It is true that in Ukraine, as in many other regions, violations of labor discipline were widespread. In 1946, the number of Ukrainian collective farmers who did not even spend a single day on collective lands totaled 86,676.⁶⁰ Consequently, an increase in labor discipline would be the guarantee of a quick fulfillment of grain collection campaigns, as Khrushchev himself expressed triumphantly in May 1948. But Popov's arguments, that Khrushchev would have covered up shortcomings in the western regions by displaying zeal in the areas already collectivized, fail to account for Khrushchev's next idea of extending the decree to the rest of the country. In other words, Khrushchev's ambitiousness cannot explain all aspects of the fate of the decree.⁶¹ If his initiatives were definitely at the core of the campaign, the decision to extend the application of the decree was also his own, as he seemed to have convinced Stalin of the need to create an example for all Soviet collective farm peasants.

Zima's interpretation of the decree as a "second dekulakization" of the remaining individual householders is interesting, for it underlines the similarities between this campaign and the state-party assault on the kulaks during collectivization.⁶² In a certain sense, the 1948 decree sought to eradicate a group perceived as a minority profiting from its position outside the collective farm community. However, the similarities stop here. The individual householders did not represent the same type of economic minority as the kulaks had, and because

they were already choked by taxes, they were too weak to present a threat to state interests after the Second World War. At the most, they represented a negative role model for the rest of the community. It is true that the campaign touched some individual householders and convinced some others to join the kolkhoz, but first and foremost the campaign was aimed at the collectivized peasantry, especially members of those communities who were part of the kolkhoz *de jure*, but not *de facto*. Another tempting possibility is to try to understand the campaign within the wider spectrum of Khrushchev's political ideas.

At first glance, there are striking resemblances between the procedures enacted for the February and June decrees and what the scholarship on Soviet legislation has labeled the antiparasite laws of May 1961.⁶³ Both campaigns targeted “social parasites refusing socially useful work,” although the 1948 decrees were more precise in identifying parasites on the basis of nonfulfillment of the labor-day minimum.⁶⁴ Secondly, the role of community verdicts—collective farm gatherings in 1948 and neighborhood and rural assemblies in the late 1950s—was considerably fostered since their decisions were considered final once district executive committees verified the validity of the accusation. Finally, in both cases, state prosecutors were almost completely disregarded. However, in spite of these procedural similarities, the political objectives were quite different. The 1961 edicts against social parasites were eventually used “as a blunt cudgel with which to repress dissidents thrown out of their jobs,”⁶⁵ but there was no such ideological dissent to fight in the postwar countryside. While the anti-parasite campaign slid into chaos,⁶⁶ the 1948 decrees were quickly implemented, and most of the victims were sentenced within a year after they were issued. At best, they suggest Khrushchev's predilection for a certain type of political campaign and, perhaps, a belief in “popular” justice.

The timing can probably explain best the rationale of the anti-idler campaign. As described above, Khrushchev's rhetoric easily conflated peasants who refused to work in the kolkhoz for too meager a pittance with exploiters engaged in speculation. The year 1948 saw the progressive recriminalization of private commercial activity, described as a struggle against “speculators,” after a few years of official leniency.⁶⁷ The unfolding of the *Zhdanovshchina* in the Ukrainian SSR also created an ideological climate that explains the state of mind of those party leaders engaged in strengthening discipline and targeting internal enemies.⁶⁸ Agriculture was no exception, and the campaign against kolkhoz idlers can certainly be seen as a short-lived means of tightening party rule over a countryside still recovering from wartime exhaustion and suffering from the tragedy of the 1946–47 famine. In both cases, Ukraine played the role of a “testing ground.”⁶⁹ Without doubt, Khrushchev's zeal and imagination in policymaking found Stalin's

support. In order to increase the rural masses' political engagement, he argued, Khrushchev underlined, local party work had to be carefully organized and carried out. Along with punishing loafers in the collective farms, the decrees also functioned as a test of local party organs.

Carrying Out the Decree: The MVD and Party Work

Following the proclamation of the February decree in Ukraine, at the plenum of the Ukrainian Central Committee of May 25, 1948, Khrushchev defined the struggle for the improvement of agricultural productivity:

The successes achieved in the strengthening of labor discipline should not stop anybody. The struggle for labor discipline in the collective farms and for the exemplary organization of work should always remain the focus of party organizations. While fighting loafers, the bad-intentioned violators of discipline and the parasitic elements, rural and all honest Communists pave the way for a faster move ahead on the way to Communism.⁷⁰

Later in May 1948, a secret letter was sent to every regional committee containing precise directives regarding the implementation of this decree. Explaining the party's tasks in this new "educational measure," the circular letter stressed the need for peasants to fulfill their obligations to the state. Almost entirely repeating Khrushchev's arguments, the Central Committee declared that peasants who refused to fulfill the labor-day minimum were responsible for the failures in grain collections. The most severe measures of punishment were required in order to unmask the criminal elements hidden in the village. Moreover, the letter provided examples of honest peasants' desire to get rid of parasites who took advantage of collective farms. The Central Committee warned regional leaders against potential problems to be encountered during the implementation. Therefore, the campaign required careful preparation. First, the organizers of the meetings were to underscore the achievements of some of the best peasants, stressing that they were an example of good collective farm work. Second, an overview of the farm's failures in meeting planned targets and the problem of the "lazy bums" had to be pointed out. At the end of the meeting, local party activists were to speak about the existence of a decree that permitted the expulsion of "antisocial" elements and to propose using it against those already identified as belonging in that category. Deporting elderly, disabled, and injured people might lead to "dangerous political consequences," however, and a small rather than a large number of deportees could give better results in terms of political education. Party cell activists were to pay particular attention to deportees' relatives and

“accomplices” who could potentially foment trouble during the gatherings. As the Ukrainian campaign had showed, the letter continued, bad political preparation for such measures did not stimulate peasants’ political activity. Party cell members were encouraged not to consider this decree as a “short political campaign but they should rather have in mind the improvement of party work among the masses in the long run.” Therefore, most regional committees were ordered to provide a precise list of meetings with their district organizations before work with collective farms would actually begin. For example, most *raikom* secretary meetings in the central non-Black Earth zone, according to the directives of the Central Committee, had to be scheduled by the last week of May.⁷¹

The circular letter gave clear directions on the preparation for these meetings. Before peasants were called to gather in a general assembly, a party cell meeting had to be organized, and this, of course, was to remain secret. In fact, the members of the party cell organization, under the guidance of regional and district committee representatives, would ultimately decide where the meetings were to be organized, and the potential “candidates” for deportation were to be chosen by local party activists. The regional representatives would choose, in every district, two to five farms where the problems of labor discipline were especially acute. Security work was largely left to district police organizations.⁷²

The word of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD) during this campaign was mostly devoted to the general supervision of the gatherings and to the transportation of deportees from their collective farms to their new areas of settlement. Its regional administrations received a detailed operational plan that summarized clearly the role of the police. First of all, operational agents of the MVD city and district sections had to visit the farms where the gatherings were to be organized a few days before the assemblies occurred. With the assistance of local party members and informers, they would target potential troublemakers known for their provocative activities. Before the gathering could actually start, the chairman of the MVD district section had to personally visit the farm in order to evaluate the local mood and determine the action necessary to maintain public order. Following the party cell meeting, the potential candidates for deportation had to be placed under the agents’ close supervision. They had to be seated in the first ranks of the assembly during the collective farm gathering and be brought outside the building before the vote for deportation would begin. MVD agents had to display particular vigilance during this crucial phase of the meetings and make sure that cars or horses were at the ready to proceed with a quick expulsion of the deportees. In the same vein, the building where the gathering was organized had to be guarded by armed MVD agents. After the meeting, agents had to stay in the collective farms and continue their work with local informers

in order to prevent “terrorist” acts against party activists or individual peasants from relatives or accomplices.⁷³

Feedback from the Villages

The report sent to Party Secretary Malenkov by Kozlov, chief of the Agricultural Section of the Central Committee, dated July 22, 1948, presents the first overview of the implementation of the decree throughout the whole country. After presenting stereotypical comments of peasants enthusiastically greeting the edict, Kozlov stressed a few “perversions of party politics,” obviously considered to be intolerable. These were peculiarly acute in the regions of Sverdlovsk, Rostov, Kurgan, Omsk, Molotov, and the Bashkir Autonomous Republic, where the regional leaders did not implement the decree seriously enough; presumably they did not organize enough meetings. The first shortcoming to be thus underlined by the center was the “lack of seriousness” in implementing this new method of raising labor enthusiasm among collective farm peasants. These regions were given a reprimand, and a special resolution was issued giving them two months to report the measures taken to fulfill the Central Committee’s recommendations.⁷⁴ The effect of Moscow’s involvement in these regions is summed up in table 4:

Table 4
Effects of the Central Committee’s Reprimand

Region	Peasants Deported Before September 1948	Peasants Deported After September 1948
Rostov	16	13
Molotov	39	226
Kurgan	15	15
Sverdlovsk	0	78
Omsk	8	101
Bashkir ASSR	29	201

Sources: RGASPI, f. 17, op. 136, d. 39, ll. 156-165, 171-182; d. 40, ll. 77-79, 94-98, 138.

These regional leaders were accused of not fulfilling their party tasks and this, as Kozlov argued, explained why the areas especially lagged behind in fulfilling state plans that year. These facts show how, to use party rhetoric, the edict could better serve the cause of raising peasant labor productivity. Furthermore, Kozlov gave a few examples of what constituted in his eyes “bad preparation” for these meetings: prefabricating lists of people to be deported that forced peasants to vote for particular people, and, in a few cases, falsifying the results of the vote in order to get rid of people whose deportation peasants would not otherwise have approved. In some regions, Second World War veterans, seniors, invalid peasants, and women with many children—the very categories of people the central authorities wished to avoid targeting—were deported, as well as peasants who were fulfilling the norms of labor discipline and nonrural workers who could not be deported, at least in theory.⁷⁵ In some regions, 33 to 43 percent of the total number of deportees complained to the *raion* authorities about illegal deportations in the first months of the campaign.⁷⁶ There were even cases where collective farm chairmen presented the same names three times. Kozlov also complained that too much preparation went into some of the meetings, which meant that too many district and regional party workers attended the gatherings. Such overpreparation tended to frighten the peasants, who ended up voting for anybody’s deportation. The same could be said about the experiences of the Red Army collective farm in the province of Saratov and the Bagradze kolkhoz in the Tbilisi region in Georgia, where not less than twelve policemen in each case surrounded the kolkhoz meetings armed with machine guns. The most difficult task for the regional party organizations was to determine the appropriate number of meetings that would demonstrate commitment and satisfy the Section for Agriculture. Another shortcoming described in the reports sent to Malenkov by CC officials was the insufficient preparatory work done by local party members and rural *komsomoltsy* who, instead of explaining the political aspects of the decree to the members of their respective collective farms, fueled the rumor mill and created in the villages an atmosphere of panic. Some of the rural young Communists also openly defended real “lazy bums” and therefore protected them from the “rightful wrath of honest *kolkhozniki*.” This, together with bad preparation, fomented antikolkhoz propaganda and diverted the decree’s educational strengths away from the real troublemakers in the agricultural communities.

Although the campaign was strictly an intraparty affair and therefore had to be kept secret, the educational aspect was advertised in some district party newspapers. For example, the *Shock-Worker of the Fields*, the publication of the Smolenskii district of the Altai region, printed an article entitled “A New Law Is in Action” on June 26, 1948. The content of the decree, its implementation,

a list of deportees, and the confirmation of deportation sentences by the district executive committee were all included. Moreover, the warnings addressed to some peasants now facing the threat of deportation were publicized as eloquent “preventive measures” for the rural population. The case was forwarded to the Central Committee by an inspector of the Council for Collective Farm Affairs, A. N. Larionov, who later became famous for his disastrous management of agriculture in Riazan. The reaction was rather quick once Malenkov received the report, and he dispatched to the Altai not only an inspector from the Central Committee, but also a high-ranking official from *Pravda* “to carry on the proper agit-prop work.”⁷⁷ On the one hand, the existence of the edict was not to leak out to the general public. On the other, however, the center behaved as if every party member in the most remote corner of the country had to be acquainted with it.

Local officials from the Ministry of Internal Affairs also sent detailed reports to their superiors in Moscow meant to provide both a clear description of the quality of the campaign’s political work and a sense of the political mood of the masses. In their conclusions, they could not help giving their opinion on the reasons behind certain “excesses” or shortcomings. In July 1948, General-Lieutenant Zhukov, deputy director of the Novosibirsk Regional Directorate of Internal Affairs, argued in a letter to Shiiian, director of the special settlement section, that many district party organizations were not aware of the state of affairs in a given collective and therefore tended to botch the meetings. This led to mistakes and allowed real troublemakers to avoid punishment. Moreover, family and personal networks were not examined by party staff, which could explain the low participation in the vote since relatives and friends of potential deportees could carry on agitation not to vote for deportation. Certain district organizations held too many meetings, as in the Tatarskii *raion* where forty-five gatherings were scheduled for July 1948: an “unneeded sweep,” stated Zhukov. The Novosibirsk police director added to his laundry list the fact that meetings in that same district were too late to have the proper effect, and peasants saw them as a “simple measure to frighten them.”⁷⁸ A similar example is provided by the Ulianovsk Directorate of Internal Affairs. Director Colonel Grakov complained to the Central Committee that local party officials organized the deportation of war invalids, teenagers, and elderly peasants, while in some farms labor-day earnings were not recorded at all and thus could not be used as evidence to deport anybody. He went further, telling the story of the collective farmer Anna Filipova from the Beshkaimskii district of Ulianovsk, against whom a sentence had been issued by the district executive committee. At the meeting, fellow peasants shouted to the militia agents, “We won’t give her to you! She is poor and her husband and sons died at the front.” Grakov concluded that the directives from the ministry sent

to the regional police did not indicate ways to respond to cases involving “gross violation of legality.”⁷⁹ There is no wonder that intraparty and police reports tended to explain shortcomings by emphasizing organizational problems engendered by the campaign, since local party members had to carry out an unpopular and repressive measure that would hardly raise the mood of the Soviet countryside in the aftermath of the extremely difficult postwar years.

During the implementation of the decrees there were many ways in which peasants expressed discontent. Among the forms of open resistance the most widespread was surely the refusal of some peasants to participate in meetings, a number representing from 10 to 20 percent of the rural population of the collective farms where the gatherings were organized. Some even demanded to be paid in labor-days for their attendance, which they regarded as compulsory collective farm work. In this campaign designed to let peasants decide on the deportation of some of their fellow members, very few actually spoke out (*vystupali*) against “idlers.” Even Khrushchev himself, when writing to Stalin to praise the effectiveness of the campaign in Ukraine, reported that although the general attendance usually reached 85–90 percent of the collective farm population, only 10 to 16 percent of the peasants actually accused violators of labor discipline.⁸⁰ Similar levels of passive resistance were reported all over the country by regional committees, and it did not come as a surprise that only a minority of peasants participated in the unmasking of “parasites.” This was perhaps lower than was desired by policymakers who thought highly of the edict as a means of raising the political awareness of the peasantry. *Kolkhozniki* had rarely been politically involved in such meetings. Studies of collective farm democracy have shown that in general only a minority, often consisting of local cadres, spoke out, and the rank and file tended to remain silent unless the issue was central to their primary interests.⁸¹ What seems to have bothered the top state-party leadership was rather the leniency of some regional leaders in scheduling and organizing the meetings in which the decree would be enforced. Since local officials were left with considerable autonomy in the targeting of “lazy bums” and making up lists of candidates, collective farm gatherings were asked to ratify, not to stimulate, repression. In fact, the local representatives of power could bypass the popular will expressed at the meetings in a number of different ways.

In theory, local party cell representatives had to find candidates for deportation, but the case in the countryside before the 1950s was that often there was no cell at all in a given kolkhoz, and so this duty fell upon the chairman’s shoulders. The tactics used to get scapegoats deported were varied. The most frequently used means was to falsify the meeting’s minutes by writing false protocols or by creating false quorums, a direct violation of the party resolution stipulating

that only a majority of a collective farm's lawful members could vote to deport one of their fellow villagers. Prepared lists containing names of candidates to be deported "as a group" (*po spisku*), and not individually, were reported by regional police administrations, as well as votes to deport couples together and votes in the name of members not attending the meetings (*zaochnoe golosovanie*).⁸² Protocols were often falsified at the local level to justify the deportation of many members of one family on the grounds that one member did not fulfill the labor-day minimum. Other protocols confirmed by the *raiispolkom* said only that a peasant was to be deported for "having gotten into a dispute with the chairman and the brigadier."⁸³ Another problem emanating from the ambiguous definition of the procedure was that potential candidates for deportation had to be targeted in advance by local party activists and then suggested to assemblies. However, for those who wanted to advance organizational work to the next level by preparing actual listings simply to be approved by assemblies, a motion of censure—or worse, an inspector from Moscow—awaited them, since this was considered a "violation of collective farm democracy." In fact, only the Central Committee knew exactly what the proper dose of collective farm democracy was.⁸⁴

On March 30, 1948, peasants of the collective farm VIIIth Congress of the Soviets in the Sumy region in Ukraine discussed the deportation of two peasants, Belash and Gusenitsa. After discovering that only a minority of the peasants actually endorsed the vote, the presiding officials suggested that those who opposed the sentence should stand up and raise their voices. As nobody dared to do so, the meeting protocols were filled with the verdict: "unanimous vote."⁸⁵ Such procedures were also reported to the Central Committee in the regions of Tambov, Voronezh, Tula, Osmk, and Chkalov, where the meeting organizers—in the cases reported they were *obkom* and *raikom* secretaries—would call for a vote up to three times in order to get someone deported. After an initial minority vote, the chairman of the meeting would order another vote for all those who had not voted, and then a secret one. The authorities often ended up falsifying records of votes that had not even received 30 percent support.⁸⁶ In the Borisopol'skii district of Kiev *oblast*,⁷ peasants opposed the deportation of the collective farmer Rozhi, whose relatives gathered signatures on a petition sent to the regional committee.⁸⁷ The only solution for the victims of these groundless sentences was to hope that a complaint would arrive at the regional prosecutor's office.

Settling old disputes or getting rid of troublemakers by deportation were other colors that the fight against idlers took. In the spring of 1948, a collective farmer named Fedorova from the Novogorod region initiated a collective complaint sent to Central Committee Secretary A. A. Zhdanov on the gross violations of the *Model Statutes of Collective Farms* in the kolkhoz Kollektivist of

the Opechenskii *raion*. After verification by the party regional committee, the chairman was demoted and excluded from the party, and the district secretary received warnings about abuse of power. Once the June 1948 decree was enforced, some district officials proposed the deportation of the plaintiff Fedorova, and since most of the attending collective farmers did not cast a vote (out of seventy-five people, eight voted for and one against), the results were officially recorded as seventy-five for, one against.⁸⁸ It is not surprising, then, that acts of desperate resistance would be directed not against the fellow peasants present at the meeting but rather against the local representatives of power.

Peasants tended to point to chairmen as the main agents responsible for this unjustified repression. Not surprisingly, regional police reports are the richest source for documenting examples of violence directed at collective farm chairmen and rural Communists. Relying on the information provided to him by the local informer C, the director of internal affairs of the Mordvin ASSR wrote to Deputy Minister Shiiian in Moscow, describing an organized attempt by a small group of young *kolkhozniki* to kill the chairman of the rural soviet Zashchev on June 27, 1948, because he had voted for the deportation of the mother of one of the young offenders.⁸⁹ Similar cases of assaults on chairmen were observed in the regions of Chkalov, Kiev, Vologda, and Kaluga.⁹⁰ By way of contrast Androsov, the chairman of the collective farm Chapaev in the Valuiskii district in Kursk, committed suicide the night before the farm's meeting and left a note in his pocket in which he simply wrote "I did not want to deport people." A similar case was reported in the Leningrad region.⁹¹ Obviously chairmen were put in a difficult position. Once the regional and district representatives left villages they had to continue working with relatives and friends of those deported and attempt to reestablish some kind of social peace.

Descriptions of the reactions of the collective farm population can be found in various sources. First, the party regional committees had to send regular reports on a three-month basis during the first year of the campaign, describing the measures they had taken to implement the decree. The Central Committee Section for Agriculture would then summarize the reports for the party secretariat. The depiction of the local mood is, in these reports and surveys, strongly stereotyped with an emphasis on the positive reactions of some individual peasants. A widespread, clichéd image was of enthusiastic elderly peasants condemning "lazy bums" with the harshest comments. For example, in his first report to Malenkov, Kozlov, the head of the Agricultural Section, mentions the collective farmer Pavlov, seventy-five years of age, who by June had already fulfilled the yearly labor-day minimum and applauded the deportation campaign with the following words: "Right! We are going to burn with an iron rod the

lazy bums and bloodsuckers from our farms as we did in 1930 when the kulak commune-eaters annoyed those of us building kolkhozes.”⁹² In the same document we find the women of the kolkhoz Ailibaramov, in the Divinskii district of Azerbaidzhan, who, after the official reading of the decree, lowered their veils and exclaimed, “May God bless the one who signed this decree!” The language used in these documents to describe the violators of labor discipline is usually colorful. They are labeled as “lazy bums (*lodyri*) who are riveted heart and soul to their private plots,” “spongers” (*tunediatsy*), “parasites using kolkhozes as a screen,” “speculators,” “lazybones,” “sluggards” (*lenticai*), “vermin” (*gady*), “weeds,” and “typhoid-mongering lice on healthy bodies.”⁹³ It is difficult to prove whether peasants really held such extreme attitudes about rural idlers. However, these expressions can be found consistently throughout reports written by different officials from different state agencies, thus revealing a great deal about the mental world of party officials preparing the campaign. They fulfilled a clear political purpose: convincing implementers of the need for such measures by displaying local support for them.

Conceived as involving all layers of party and state organization, the implementation of the decree required continued correspondence between regional party organs and the Central Committee, local soviet executive committees and the Council of Ministers, and regional and central administrations of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The same representations of peasant “positive” reactions can be found filling the pages of these reports. In other words, when it comes to the depiction of local mood, there are no major differences between the reports of the police and those of party regional committees. Regarding the “negative mood,” police reports are of particular use since they are the only source where “anti-Soviet utterances” can be found. However, not every regional MVD chairman reported the so-called anti-Soviet and anti-kolkhoz comments or expressions of “provocative behavior” to the minister, S. N. Kruglov. Only a few regional police officials, especially from the regions of Novosibirsk, Moscow, and the Mordvin Autonomous Republic, depicted in great detail what can be considered negative feedback from the “educational” campaign and forwarded these cases to local representatives of state security. Yet as they moved up through the bureaucracy, the police reports were heavily redacted. A simple comparison between the regional reports sent to Moscow and the summaries presented to Stalin clearly shows the practice of omitting all suggestion of peasant resistance from the final reports, as well as anti-Soviet and anti-kolkhoz statements. The summaries were short and contained only a few examples of peasants’ positive appreciation of the removal of parasites from the collective farms; they also listed the number of meetings and the number of peasants deported. Thus traces of open criticism

almost never reached Stalin's office from the Ministry of Internal Affairs, although they were sent to Kruglov by regional police officials.⁹⁴ There is no reason to believe that peasants in Novosibirsk, the Mordvin Republic, or Moscow were different from their counterparts elsewhere in the Soviet countryside. Yet only traces of their discontent have been left to researchers, thanks to the zeal of those who had to report to Stalin. It may very well be that the process of sanitizing the reports as they moved up the hierarchical ladder left only the tip of the iceberg, ignoring the mass of negative comments. This has been observed as a practice common to both the Soviet political police and the security services of other authoritarian regimes.⁹⁵

Peasants reacted by comparing the 1948 decree to the most tragic pages of their recent history. Some of them recalled the collectivization drive of 1929–30. A seventy-eight-year-old collective farmer from the Novosibirsk region even said: "From such a judgement, there is no way out. Thank God I lived through my time and now I can face Doomsday." Another collective farmer, M. I. Strakhov from the Moscow region, understood the decree this way: "During the war, they deported the Germans and the Chechens, and now they get to the Russians. They want to make the kolkhozes rich out of people's tears." A similar comment was heard from the peasant Mitskevich in the kolkhoz named March 8: "They will clean up kolkhozes like they carried out the purges in 1937 and they will send peasants to the North because those who were charged in 1937 came back and there are no people to work there."⁹⁶ In all these examples repression is seen as an inherent aspect of the Stalinist state machine that struck at the most unexpected moments.

As Khrushchev pointed out in his reports on the program's achievements in Ukraine, rumors concerning the existence of the decree and the pending threat of deportation tended to spread beyond the farms where the gatherings were organized.⁹⁷ He was probably bragging when he affirmed that the effects of the labor discipline decree could be felt on every farm, suggesting that fears of deportation spread quickly all over Ukraine. Rumors did play a large role in popular awareness of the existence of the decree. In the Novosibirsk markets, for example, police informers reported that individuals not only spoke openly of the decree, but created panic by suggesting that the achievement of complete Communism, with its total collectivization of personal goods, would soon follow. "In 1949 Communism would be built in the region of Novosibirsk, and in 1950 it will be completed all over the country. This is why those who still have livestock have to sell it or to give it."⁹⁸ In the same vein, in Andreevka, the German special settler Maers predicted the advent of more compulsory work: "Soon there will be communes, then people will work day and night like slaves and

will have nobody to complain to. For now, those who have livestock, must sell. Otherwise everything will be collectivized into the commune.”⁹⁹ Such comments show a tendency to put the decree into the wider context of Stalinist repression in the countryside and reveal that some peasants saw its further development in the postwar era as a sign of the intensifying rigidity with which the state treated its rural population. Some linked the measure to the overall exploitation of the peasantry by the Stalinist regime, as in the following example from an urban sympathizer in Novosibirsk: “Peasants give their grain to the state for six roubles a quintal (a tenth of a metric ton or 100 kilos) and the state sells bread for three roubles a kilo. And why are peasants paid once a year and not once a month? As you see, I am with peasants, not against them.” Others, like Genchenko, a collective farmer from Novosibirsk, directly attacked the Soviet state: “Don’t you see the life we got under Soviet power. We have no right to live and work the way we want. This decree is issued in order to frighten peasants.” Another witness to the deportation meetings said: “The Soviet government will soon figure out something new for the people, to force peasants by any means to work in collective farms.” Finally, some considered that the “lazy bums” did less harm to agriculture than those who came up with the “educational” campaign: “Those who participated spoke of Communism. Communism brought us down to poverty, and not these people that they want to deport.”¹⁰⁰

These cases must be interpreted with caution since they contain the harshest critiques of the campaign found in the police reports. It appears that the most widespread “anti-Soviet, anti-government, and anti-kolkhoz provocative utterances,” as police officers labeled them, were suggestions that peasants were the innocent victims of some kind of misunderstanding between them and the agrarian policymakers. A rank-and-file peasant from the Moscow region expressed his malice by saying:

At the meeting we were cursed a lot because we went to the *sovkhos* to mow hay for which the *sovkhos* paid us in kind. Because our *kolkhoz* does not provide us with hay, we are forced to go to work elsewhere in order to get fodder for our cows. We have also been cursed for this because it is easy profit. But is getting a tenth part of hay for mowing an easy profit? If it is forbidden to work in *sovkhozy* then they should be liquidated.¹⁰¹

This postwar version of “naive monarchism”¹⁰² was also expressed by Platonova, a thirty-five-year party member from the Moscow region: “The government’s decree is good but it’s carried out incorrectly. Before deporting, the decree had to be explained and those who do not work well had to be warned. Then, if they do not work better after, it’s not a pity to deport them.”¹⁰³

A fellow villager argued: “The decree will teach lazy bums to work. But here in the kolkhoz, they did not begin with the right people. We have quite a few who do not work and they deported Strakhov’s son who had worked for a year in a plant.” It is worth noting that the villager’s remark was depicted as “coming from the enemy camp” and an example of “counterrevolutionary propaganda.” After the Second World War, the room for expressing diverging opinions was definitely not very wide.

Some peasants proposed blaming someone else, usually the work brigade leaders or the collective farm management’s for “not taking care of its peasants before punishing them.”¹⁰⁴ It was also reported that the deported kulaks were now back to deport poor peasants (*bedniaki*).¹⁰⁵ Even after deportation, some peasants continued to undermine these state policies. Police intercepted letters coming from deportees in the regions of Chita and in the Yakut ASSR urging their relatives not to fear the decree because they now lived better and earned more money than in their former collective farms.¹⁰⁶ During the meetings, some expressed total disregard for the decree since their condition did not allow them to work more, especially elders: “At the meeting my case was examined for I supposedly work poorly. If it’s the case then I won’t work at all in the collective farm and they can deport me. There they will feed me ’cause I am an invalid and I can’t work.”¹⁰⁷ At other times, the image of deporting those who could not and did not fulfill the norms was rejected as another kind of scarecrow created by the Kremlin.¹⁰⁸

Overall, the analysis of anti-Soviet remarks shows that the harshness of the June 1948 decree provoked a great deal of anger. The fact that these comments appeared in only a few reports reveals a great deal about the inner workings of the state machine, which allowed some officials to omit evidence of popular resistance while others considered it their duty to report even negative reactions. This fits a pattern of behavior that has been already explained, a pattern marked by the cautiousness with which peasants participated in the campaign. But this does not prove that they supported the measures so praised by Khrushchev. Given the narrow boundaries defining acceptable postwar political behavior, peasants had no choice but to give the state what it was so eager to get: numbers. And it appears that peasants were not the only ones to respond to the campaign in the way that they did.

The Results of the Campaign

The implementation of the decree was meant in the long run to be a form of party work but turned into a short campaign. The regional committees that

were found guilty of not displaying enough dedication to this party task were quickly asked to show more conclusive results. Police data, however, show a sharp decline in the number of deportees after 1949 (see table 5). Without sustained pressure from above, local powers stopped encouraging collective farm chairmen to organize meetings. What was defined at the top state-party leadership level as a long-term educational campaign turned into a short-term drive to display conclusive results from regional leaders.

Table 5
Peasants Deported in Accordance with the 1948 Decrees

Year	No. Deported	No. Released from Camps Before the End of their Sentences
1948	27,335	596
1949	4,756	---
1950	675	816
1951	240	1,327
1952	260	974
1953 (until March)	--	202
Total	33, 266	3,915

Source: “Neizvestnaia initsiativa Khrushcheva,” 38.

All regional and republican party committees were obliged to send to the central authorities a detailed report of the action taken to implement the decree. Although there is some discrepancy in the quality of the information, and the rate at which some regional committees reacted to the orders emanating from above and the number of groundless cases submitted for deportation need also be questioned, the reports sent in the first three months of the campaign allow us to draw a picture, though only a partial one, of the deportation meetings and the social characteristics of deportees.

According to the reports sent to the Central Committee of the Communist Party, it seems that most regional committees implemented the decree in a slightly

different way from what the original orders suggested. Instead of five farms per district and five districts per region as was specifically mentioned in the circular letter of May 1948, the regions included in my sample organized meetings in an overwhelming majority of districts (thirty-three out of forty-seven) and in roughly three farms per district.¹⁰⁹ In other words, almost every district was touched but only a few farms were actually given orders to organize meetings. Statistically, it means that 7.6 percent of all Soviet farms organized meetings. The regional discrepancy is worthy of attention. In a region like Astrakhan with a very small number of kolkhozes, the regional party committee supervised meetings in 27 percent of them, while in the summer of 1948, 38.5 percent of all Ukrainian farms had already implemented the decree.¹¹⁰ This suggests a very zealous attitude in Khrushchev's own power base, although he himself suggested only three to six farms per region, being confident that the "educational character" of the campaign would largely spread the desired effects. Later in the campaign, the secret letter of the Central Committee sent to all *obkomy* spoke arbitrarily of five farms per district and five districts per region.

In comparison to collective farm meetings (*kolkhoznoe sobranie*), an average of twenty-four village gatherings (*sel'skoe sobranie*) per administrative region were organized for those villages located far away from the collective farm centers or for villages not included in a collective farm. For every gathering organized, almost three candidates for deportation were discussed and half of them were actually sentenced to deportation, while for every peasant deported, three more were warned that if they did not start working more actively, they would suffer the same fate. Statistically, every gathering led to the deportation of an average of 1.5 peasants. In the first months of the campaign, out of three deportees, two were male and one was female. Finally, a few regions reported that (as an average) a thousand individual householders per region joined the collective farms after the implementation of the decree. There were roughly two hundred thousand individual households (*edinolichniki*) in the Soviet Union at the end of the Second World War.

Kazakhstan's reports help to draw a more concrete picture of the implementation of the campaign. Kazakh officials sent Moscow relatively detailed summaries, and this thorough information coming from a single republic provides more solid tools for analysis. First, 463 meetings were organized out of a total number of 6,729 collective farms in this republic (6.9 percent). Peasants attended these meetings en masse: 95,048 out of 110,277 collective farmers, or 86.2 percent. However, only a small percentage (4.4 percent) actually spoke out, a phenomenon observed elsewhere. At village gatherings in Kazakhstan only 1.7 percent participated actively. Of 738 the deportation sentences, 614, or 83.1

percent, were collective farmers while individual householders and the “almost collectivized elements” (*okolokolkhoznye elementy*) furnished 16.9 percent. This confirms another trend, that of deporting a significant number of people who were not members of collective farms. This can be considered a very loose application of the decree’s rules. The majority of the deportees were male (61.7 percent), and largely older than 25 (82.2 percent). As in the rest of the country, at least twice as many peasants were simply warned rather than sentenced to deportation (1564 were warned for 738 deported) which underlines the “preventive and educational” character of the measure as understood by many local representatives.

No data was furnished on the ethnic composition of the deportees as was done by some other committees in the Central Asian republics.¹¹¹ Also, village gatherings voted to deport a substantial number of non-collective-farm members and individual householders. Although no specific orders were given to target *them specifically*, it is a tendency that overtook the campaign once implemented since it was easy for local powers to use outsiders as scapegoats. The definition of “outsider” remained loose, as the example of rural teachers deported from Tadzhikistan suggests.¹¹² Individual householders and “almost collectivized elements” usually played the role of scapegoat. In early 1935, there were a few more than four million households in the Soviet Union.¹¹³ In 1938, according to Ministry of Finance data, their number fell to 1,346,700.¹¹⁴ Zima estimates that 242,800 independent farms still existed in 1948 in the Russian Republic alone, 34,900 in Eastern Ukraine, and roughly 30,000 in the Caucasus and Central Asia, for a total of 307,700. But these farms were quite small and strangled by taxes. The overall number of independent households represented not more than 2.5 percent of the number of collectivized households in the Soviet Union.¹¹⁵ Although no complete data is available, a few tens of thousands joined the collective farms in the wake of the decree. Thereafter the number of individual peasants decreased and quickly lost any significance. The campaign clearly showed that no alternative to the kolkhozes was ever imaginable.

Once deported, peasants had little chance of seeing their cases reexamined. The deputy minister of internal affairs, Serov, complained to Malenkov that the Kaluga and Tula *obkom* and *oblispolkom* refused to examine the cases of a few peasants from the region who had been groundlessly deported, some of them war invalids.¹¹⁶ In his report to the deputy minister, Shiian, the director of the Kursk Directorate of Internal Affairs reported that 2,153 sentences were passed from June 1948 to September 1949, of which 1684 were confirmed by the district executive committees and 469 overturned (supposedly the directorate petitioned to make 318 of these 469 void, on the grounds that the cases were illegally raised). This is a surprising example of a local police administration trying to play the

role of a liberal in a region where the decree had struck hard.¹¹⁷ Even officials from the general prosecutor's office, relating similar situations in Krasnodar and Ukraine, went as far as to say that the refusal of many district executive committees to reexamine sentences undermined their work and tarnished their names.¹¹⁸ It could be a very long time before a deportation sentence was voided. An interesting example can be found in the personal story of I. F. Trofimov of the Ruzhinskii district of Zhitomir, Ukraine. On April 25, 1948, Trofimov was deported for refusal to work in accordance with a collective sentence of the kolkhoz Shchors, in the village of Molchanovka. Nine months later Trofimov escaped from the special relocation area of Bodaibinskii, in the region of Irkutsk to which he had been deported. On February 25, 1949, Trofimov was arrested, and criminal proceedings were instituted against him. During the investigation, he explained his escape was because he could not be sentenced by a collective farm of which he was not a member. Investigations proved that Trofimov was not a member of the Shchors collective farm but actually worked at the Toporkovskii sugar beet sovkhoz. Hence, the protest raised by the Zhitomir prosecutors made the sentence void.¹¹⁹ But this was the fate of an important minority, since only 11.8 percent of all deportees were released before the end of their sentences for similar reasons (see table 5).

From June 1948 until March 1953, collective farm gatherings deported a total of 33,266 peasants who were followed voluntarily by 13,598 members of their families. Discrepancies in the number of deportees per region can be easily observed. For example, in the Russian Republic the Kursk organizations deported 1,491 peasants, while in Pskov less than 100 were sent to "distant relocation."¹²⁰ The Kursk case can perhaps be explained by regional politics: in May 1947 the *obkom* had been put under fire by the Central Committee, which led to a change in the leadership of the Kursk party organization, including the removal of its first secretary, P. I. Doronin.¹²¹ Ukraine was hardest hit by both the decrees of February 21 and of June 2, 1948, which led to the "special resettlement" of 12,367 peasants.¹²² Its role as a "testing ground" can largely explain this fact. Deportees were mostly able-bodied men and women in the prime of life. In the region of Velikie Luki, out of 51 deportees, 17 (33 percent) were under twenty-nine years of age, and 57 percent were between thirty and fifty. Zima also notices that in the Moscow region, 65 percent of the deportees were aged between thirty and fifty.¹²³ According to the intraministerial correspondence of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, there were two main directions of deportation. The Ukrainian deportees, deported according to the February decree, were sent mostly to the Karelian Republic and to the regions of Arkhangelsk, Tiumen, Kirov, and the Komi Republic in Russia for work in the timber industry.¹²⁴ The second wave of

deportees, from all over the country, were sent to Norilsk, the Ob-Enisei-Lena basin, and the Yakut Autonomous Republic for employment in gold and coal mines, forestry, and the fisheries of the Ministry of River Transportation.¹²⁵ On the way to their new locations, they met victims of other postwar campaigns such as Lithuanian and Western Ukrainian “bandits-nationalists,” with whom they were employed in the camps.¹²⁶

Although, as quoted in the letter above, some peasants preferred special relocation to their former collective farm life, their new conditions were on the whole very difficult. In a letter to Beria sent in September 1948, Kruglov, minister of internal affairs, described the conditions as “very difficult for what concerned lodgings” in Karelia and in Norilsk.¹²⁷ Police reports indicate that 980 out of a total number of 46,864 deportees (21 per thousand) died during their stay in the camps. The decree sentenced “violators” of labor discipline to eight years of special relocation, and in January 1959, 459 of them were still waiting to be released.¹²⁸

An examination of the campaign shows that most of the deportees were judged and condemned not merely in the first year of implementation but in the first month. Indeed, the first official report providing some general results was forwarded to Malenkov by Kozlov of the Agricultural Section on July 22, 1948, and was based on the situation in the country up to July 15—that is, only six weeks after the first directives calling for the implementation of the edict. It indicated that 20,788 sentences of deportation and 46,130 “warning sentences” had already been passed. This represents almost two-thirds of all sentences and half of all warnings.¹²⁹ Given the relatively small number of peasants deported, its major impact should not have been on Soviet forced labor, but on those left behind on collective farms, who were supposedly taught that shirking was a serious offence that could provoke dire consequences. Using the same indicator as Soviet policymakers to gauge labor activity, a simple look at the levels of nonfulfillment of the labor-day minimum (table 2) makes one wonder if the edict had any impact at all. There were more *kolkhozniki* not fulfilling the minimum in 1949 than the year before, and more again in 1950. The number of those not working a single day on the farm grew between 1947 and 1948 and then declined significantly in 1950 only to grow again the next year. It is fair to note that the year 1948 saw the unfolding of another measure that could have had some impact on rural work, namely the wage reform that redefined the norms used for granting labor-days that was passed in April and implemented thereafter. In theory, more input was required to be paid a single-day, but there is no strong evidence that the measure was ever seriously applied at the local level.¹³⁰ It is also fair to stress that the number of “preventive” warnings was three times higher than the

number of actual deportations, which can make the 1948 campaign an exemplary display of harshness exerted on a small number of shirkers in order to force the mass of their fellow villagers to work. This would make the edict even more of a failure because the desired effect of mobilizing the kolkhoz peasantry through fear found no response other than indifference.

Yet, the fulfillment of the minimum is only one measure of the edict's success. One cannot judge the relationship between the collectivized peasantry and the Stalinist state on the sole basis of an arbitrary rule that took into account no assessment of quality and was subjected to various and competing doses of window dressing.¹³¹ It is important to note also that statistics on labor-day earnings were usually inflated, indicating a more widespread resistance to state policies and a more direct failure to force peasants to work through repressive measures. Because collective farm authorities could hide an important part of their able-bodied population, they could also do a lot to mask the real state of affairs in labor activity and productivity, and the actual level of labor might have been worse than what is indicated in the statistical evidence.¹³² Economic indicators can be used to assess a slow recovery from the early postwar crisis that was already noticeable in 1949, but other sources such as letters from collective farm chairmen and internal ministerial correspondence tend to portray a fairly desperate situation. A 1949 survey conducted by the Council for Collective Farm Affairs among a select group of chairmen highlighted the near impossibility of forcing peasants to work in the kolkhoz with the usual repressive arsenal consisting of fines, threats of expulsion, and the right to exile as granted by the edict. These measures could not even be effectively used to keep *kolkhozniki* in the vicinity of the farms for a significant part of the year.¹³³ Peasants did not work in the kolkhoz in 1946–47 because the low wages paid for labor-days would have condemned them to famine, and they instead stuck to their private plots. In the following years, a combination of some collective labor, private plot earnings, and activities outside the village was the norm. But seasonal migrations turned into permanent exodus after 1949, and repression could do little to stop the flood.

Conclusion

After 1949, the central leadership removed the pressure on regional organizations, and only a few hundred more peasants were deported in accordance with the decree. Since no accounts and no activity reports were required by the Kremlin, regional leaders simply stopped encouraging local party cells to organize peasant gatherings, although the decree remained in effect until March 1953. It was the ultimate weapon to be used to enforce labor discipline. In fact, it is

difficult to see a direct relationship between the refusal to work and the severe punishment imposed by the edict since economic incentives and the peasants' material situation did not encourage them to spend more of their time on collective farm work. Yet, the top state-party leadership restricted the campaign to a small proportion of all Soviet collective farms, and it is easy to imagine the agricultural problems that would have been engendered by a widespread implementation of the June campaign, since evidence showing that a few million Soviet peasants did not fulfill the minimum was lying on the tables of agrarian policymakers in Moscow. Therefore, it is easy to understand the reasons for the rapid decline in the number of deportees after 1949, at least from the perspective of labor productivity.¹³⁴

Seen from a different angle, the local implementation of the decree, it is clear that local party workers and collective farm chairmen used the opportunity to deport some local troublemakers or peasants who simply happened to be on bad terms with the local management. Evidence also suggests that marginalized elements of rural communities could easily fall victim to a campaign that demanded results from every farm chosen for the experiment. Numerous examples of kolkhoz management twisting their peasants' arms to vote a few scapegoats away to labor camps exemplify what Nicolas Werth calls "grassroots authoritarianism" when referring to local party life in the 1930s.¹³⁵ The campaign was carried out in a heavy-handed bureaucratic manner with little regard for what was defined as "socialist legality"—however loose the concept may have been. Chairmen found scapegoats, whatever their logic may have been, and quickly turned the page. This analysis of the campaign, while not raising any doubts about the authoritarian character of rural politics, also reveals that without any further incentive from above, local officeholders stopped using repression to foster labor discipline because it was totally ineffective. Using the evidence provided by the Smolensk archives, Merle Fainsod effectively described more than forty years ago the prewar problem of managing kolkhozes effectively: "It was too complex to be resolved either by exhortation or repression. The members of the kolkhoz were, in a sense, reluctant prisoners who contributed their labor unwillingly and had little incentive to do more."¹³⁶ As this study shows, this situation was exacerbated by wartime and postwar hardship, defeating any attempt to solve economic difficulties with repression.

Finally, peasants showed signs of resistance but were cautious in their behavior. Those who spoke at farm meetings associated the decree with the tragic and still recent incidents under the Soviet regime, while others tried to use this opportunity to put the blame on their managers, although the high number of groundless deportations suggests that this was a dangerous game. The most

common reaction during the campaign was for peasants to make an appearance but let others speak. “The others” could mean the minority of those who did not fear to speak out, those who had scores to settle with specific members of their farms, or the active supporters of the regime. By not opposing the campaign, peasants avoided provoking harsher reactions from the state-party machine, but neither did they challenge the decree’s original effort. The very fact that threats of deportation had little effect on the peasants’ labor activity says a great deal about their relationship to the late Stalinist state and about the conditions of the postwar Soviet countryside. In the wake of the victory over Nazi Germany, and almost twenty years after the collectivization drive, opposition to the collective farm system was still marring the relations between the Soviet state and what still constituted the majority of its population.

Notes

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1. Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Sotsial'no-politicheskoi Istorii (RGASPI), f. 17, op. 121, d. 673, l. 30. My translation. The woman quoted by Khrushchev speaks in *surzhik*, a dialect halfway between Ukrainian and Russian and spoken in the southeastern regions of Ukraine and Crimea.

2. M. N. Denisevich, *Individual'noe khoziaistvo na Urale, 1930–1985 gg.* (Ekaterinburg: AN SSSR-Ural'skoe otdelenie, 1991), 66.

3. Fedor Belov, *The History of a Soviet Collective Farm*, trans. Anna Vakar (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1956), 111–12. Belov's description of the campaign is confirmed by archival research. He points out the especially arbitrary and authoritarian handling of the issue by the local chairmen, staff, and district party officials who, when local peasants refused to vote for the deportation of a few of their fellow villagers, concluded the meeting with a "unanimous vote." More recently, the campaign has been mentioned in reviews of new Russian archival research. See, for example John Keep, "Stalinism in Post-Soviet Historical Writing," in *Politics and Society Under the Bolsheviks: Selected Papers from the Fifth World Congress of Central and East European Studies*, Warsaw, 1995, ed. Kevin McDermott and John Morison (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999), 118; Nicolas Werth, "Un État contre son peuple: Violences, répressions, terreurs en Union soviétique," in *Le livre noir du communisme: Crimes, terreur, répression*, ed. Stéphane Courtois et al. (Paris: Robert Laffont, 1997), 261.

4. See *Argumenty i fakty*, no. 39 (1989), quoted by O. M. Verbitskaia, *Rossiiskoe kret'ianstvo: ot Stalina k Khrushchevu, Seredina 40-x-nachalo 60-x godov* (Moscow: Nauka, 1992), 210, 38-39.

5. These documents include Khrushchev's report and proposal for taking measures to improve labor discipline in the Ukrainian collective farms; the Commission's report on the extension of the decree to the entire country; the text of the decree and the last note from S. N. Kruglov, minister of internal affairs of the Soviet Union, dated March 23, 1953, on the number of deportees in accordance with the June 2, 1948 decree. In 1993, the text of the decree was first published in a document collection issued under the auspices of the Supreme Soviet, ironically the same body that actually gave it birth. See "Neizvestnaia initsiativa Khrushcheva (o podgotovke ukaza 1948 g. o vyselenii krest'ian)," ed. V. P. Popov, *Otechestvennyye arkhivy*, no. 2 (1993), 31–38.

For the text of the decree, see *Sbornik zakonodatel'nykh i normativnykh aktov o repressiakh i rehabilitatsii zherty politicheskikh repressii*, ed. E. A. Zaitsev (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Verkhovnogo Soveta Rossiiskoi Federatsii, 1993), 123.

6. V. F. Zima, *Golod v SSSR, 1946–1947 godov: proiskhozhdenie i posledstviia* (Moscow: Institut Istorii RAN, 1996), 180–93. Another mention of the decree is made by N. S. Ivanov in “Raskrestianivanie derevni, seredina 40-x godov-50-e gody” in *Sudby rossiiskogo krest'ianstva*, ed. Iu. N. Afanas'ev (Moscow: RGGU, 1996), 417–18.

7. Elena Zubkova offers some “anti-Soviet utterances” made by peasants during the collective farm meetings as a sign of the general disavowal of the regime’s attempts to raise labor activity by using openly repressive methods. She concedes that the edict may have had some effect on labor discipline, but this is not really proved. The picture of the countryside she wants to emphasize is definitely marked by despair and the peasants’ indifference to most state policies. “Mir mnenii sovetского cheloveka, 1945–1948 gg. po materialam TsK VKP(b),” *Otechestvennaia istoriia*, no. 3 (1998), 33. Kees Boterbloem argues that labor shortage in the countryside dictated the lenient implementation of the decree but he does not provide solid evidence to support his view. *Life and Death Under Stalin: Kalinin Province, 1945–1953* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1999), 140, 215. In the same vein, Amir Weiner looks at the campaign through the lenses of wartime experience and the example provided by the region of Vinnytsia in Ukraine. *Making Sense of War: The Second World War and the Fate of the Bolshevik Revolution* (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 2001), 319–23.

8. Pavel Polian, *Ne po svoei vole: Istorii i geografiia prinuditel'nykh migratsii v SSSR* (Moscow: OGI-Memorial, 2001), 138.

9. Donald Filtzer, *Soviet Workers and Late Stalinism: Labor and the Restoration of the Stalinist System After World War II* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 28–29.

10. The *Model Statutes* were issued by the Second Congress of Agricultural Shock-Workers in 1935. For the earlier draft projects discussed during the collectivization drive, see N. A. Ivnit'skii, *Kollektivizatsiia i raskulachivanie, nachalo 30-x godov* (Moscow: Magistr, 1996), 78–82.

11. On the problems of income distribution and the frequent use of coercive measures to force peasants to work for the kolkhoz before 1939, see *Tragediia sovetskoi derevni: Kollektivizatsiia i raskulachivanie. Dokumenty i materialy v 5 tomakh*, ed. V. P. Danilov et al. vol. 4, 1934–1936 (Moscow: Rosspen, 2002), 77–88, 111–16.

12. *Istoriiia kolkhoznogo prava: Sbornik zakonodatel'nykh materialov SSSR i RSFSR, 1917-1958 gg.* (Moscow: 1959), 2: 107, 109.

13. The actual value of a single labor-day (*trudoben'*) is difficult to assess, not only for the researcher but also for the authorities at that time. After the *Model Statutes* were issued, the government provided all collective farms with the “Primernye normy vyrabotki i edinye rastsenki v trudodniiakh” which was strongly modified in 1948. For example, earthing up a hectare of potatoes with a horse-driven harrow would give 1.5–2 *trudodniia*, quarrying a quintal of corn (about 220 lbs.) would give 6–10 labor-days, and sowing a hectare of sugar beets with a seed drill would pay 5.5–7 labor-days. More concretely, a ten-person brigade responsible for eighty-nine hectares of grain would receive 4,486 labor-days at the end of the year, which brought them nine

tons of grain irrespective of the grain productivity per hectare. Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii (GARF), f. 5446, op. 50, d. 2125, ll. 136–46. It is clear that the fulfillment of the labor-day minimum did not imply full-time work on the collective farms throughout the year.

14. The second group included the regions of Moscow, Leningrad, Ivanovo, Iaroslavl', Gor'kii, Vologda, Tula, Riazan', Kirov, Perm, Sverdlovsk, Chitina, Khabovorvsk, the Primorskii region, and the Autonomous Republics of Komi, Kareliia, Mari, and Iakutsk.

15. Peter H. Solomon, Jr., *Soviet Criminal Justice Under Stalin* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 302.

16. Denisevich, *Individual'noe khoziaistvo na Urale*, 65–66.

17. Donald Filtzer, "Labour Discipline, the Use of Work Time, and the Decline of the Soviet System, 1928–1991," *International Labour and Working-Class History*, no. 50 (Fall 1996), 11.

18. Stefan Merl, *Bauern unter Stalin: Die Formierung des sowjetischen Kolchossystems, 1930–1941* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1990), 475.

19. *Istoriia kolkhoznogo prava*, 2: 219.

20. See on this issue, V. P. Popov, ed., "Melochi kolkhoznnoi zhizni," *Otechestvennye arkhivy*, no. 4 (1995), 81–85.

21. *Istoriia kolkhoznogo prava*, 2: 219–220.

22. V. A. Somov, *Po zakonam voennogo vremeni: Ocherki istorii trudovoi politiki SSSR v gody Velikoi Otechestvennoi voiny, 1941–1945 gg.* (Nizhnyi Novgorod: Izdatel'stvo Nizhegorodskogo universiteta, 2001), 57.

23. *Krest'ianstvo i gosudarstvo v SSSR, 1945–1953*, ed. V. P. Popov (Paris: YMCA Press, 1992), 253.

24. GARF, f. r-8131, op. 24, d. 358, l. 112.

25. *Ibid.*, l. 115.

26. Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Ekonomiki (RGAE), f. 9476, op. 2, d. 18. The same point is made about the 1930s by Sheila Fitzpatrick. See *Stalin's Peasants: Resistance and Survival in the Russian Village After Collectivization*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 146.

27. RGAE, f. 9476, op. 2, d. 18, l. 17.

28. RGAE, f. 1562, op. 324, d. 1774, l. 1; Moshe Lewin, "Small Facts from Big Files About the Kolkhozy in 1940," in *Soviet History, 1917-1953: Essays in Honour of R. W. Davies*, ed. Julian Cooper, Maureen Perrie, and E. A. Rees (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), 185–86.

29. Mark Edele, "A 'Generation of Victors?': Soviet Second World War Veterans from Demobilization to Organization, 1941-1956" (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 2004), 39-107.
30. Filtzer, *Soviet Workers and Late Stalinism*, 31.
31. GARF, f. r-5446, op. 53, d. 4415, ll. 51-52.
32. *Ibid.*
33. RGAE, f. 1562, op. 324, d. 406, ll. 1-14; d. 632, ll. 7-14; d. 884, ll. 1-14; d. 1369, ll. 1-13; d. 1774, ll. 1-14; d. 2179, ll. 1-20; d. 2568, ll. 1-34; d. 3068, ll. 1-27.
34. For the northern, northwestern, and central non-Black Earth regions of the RSFSR, Ol'ga Verbitskaia has estimated that in 1946 sowing was mechanized on no more than 16 percent of all farms while harvesting was mechanized on only 6 percent of them. See *Rossiiskoe krest'ianstvo*, 37.
35. On the definition of labor-days and the problems of their regulation, see Jean Lévesque, "'Part-Time Peasants,' Labour Discipline, Collective Farm Life and the Fate of Soviet Socialized Agriculture After the Second World War, 1945-1953" (PhD diss., University of Toronto, 2003), 86-98.
36. M. S. Zinich, *Budni voennogo likholet'ia, 1941-1945* (Moscow: RAN, 1994), 64; RGAE, f. 9476, op. 2, d. 18, l. 29; "Vtoroi i vazhneishii etap (ob ukрупnenii kolkhozov v 50-e nachale 60-e godov), ed. V. P. Popov, *Otechestvennye arkhivy*, no. 1 (1994), 43.
37. RGAE, f. 9476, op. 2, d. 18, l. 29.
38. See for example, RGAE, f. 9476, op. 1, d. 866, ll. 5-368.
39. *Ibid.*, op. 2, d. 18, ll. 21-22.
40. *Ibid.*, d. 9, l. 4. This letter might have provided Khrushchev with the inspiration for handling the "idlers" case in an expeditious way, although Dubkovetskii never spoke of deportation but only of raising the labor-day minimum and introducing rewards for over-fulfillment. Nevertheless, the letter was circulated by Khrushchev throughout the Council for Collective Farm Affairs and the Council of Ministers in December 1946. *Ibid.*, l. 7-13.
41. *Krest'ianstvo i gosudarstv*, 57-67, 187-89, 194-98, 212-17.
42. Zima, *Golod v SSSR*, 213.
43. Khrushchev had been the Ukrainian first secretary since 1938. Between 1944 and 1947 he also filled the role of chairman of the Ukrainian Council of Ministers. In 1949, he was promoted to the Central Committee of the VKP (b) and became first secretary of the Moscow *obkom*. Quotations from this report come from: RGASPI, f. 17, op. 121, d. 673, ll. 2-9. His reports, as well as other documents that led to the June decree, can be found in this file. I wish to thank

Peter H. Solomon, Jr. for providing me a copy of them and therefore stimulating my interest in the history of the campaign.

44. According to Stalin's guest records, Khrushchev met Stalin at the Kremlin six times in 1947, with the last two interviews being held on December 12 and 17, and three times in 1948: January 21, February 10, and July 6. See "Posetiteli kremlevskogo kabineta I. V. Stalina. Zhurnaly (tetrady) zapisi lits, priniatykh pervym gensekom. 1924–1953 gg. Alfavitnyi ukazatel'," ed. A.V. Korotkov, A. D. Chernev, A. A. Chernobaev, *Istoricheskii arkhiv*, no. 4 (1998), 185.

45. RGASPI, f. 17, op. 121, d. 673, l. 77.

46. Friedrich-Christian Schroeder, "Gesellschaftsgerichte und Administrativjustiz im vorrevolutionären Russland," *Osteuropa-Recht* 1, no. 4 (March 1962): 212–19. I am grateful to Jonathan Daly for this reference.

47. Anatole Leroy-Beaulieu, *The Empire of the Tsars and the Russians*, pt. 2: *Institutions*, trans. Zénaïde A. Ragozin (New York: AMS Press, 1969), 27–28. Leroy-Beaulieu links the persistence of this law to the introduction of universal military service in the wake of the Miliutin reforms of 1874 that abolished the practice of sending off social misfits to the army, depriving the communes of a means of self-regulation. At the turn of the twentieth century, the jurist August Lowenstimm estimated that a yearly average of 8,500 people were deported on the basis of community verdicts. Schroeder, "Gesellschaftsgerichte," 212–19. Cf. R. Beermann, "Soviet and Russian Anti-Parasite Laws," *Soviet Studies*, 15, no. 4 (1964): 422.

48. *Ibid.*, l. 9. V. P. Popov uses these examples to argue that Khrushchev was rather cautious in his project and could not expect it to be implemented throughout the Soviet Union, suggesting therefore that the idea of extending the decree was not Khrushchev's. Popov forgot to look at Khrushchev's requests to Stalin to spread the decree to the newly collectivized region of Izmailovo or at his letter to Stalin of April 17, 1948, where he writes that "it would be expedient [*tselesoobrazno*] to apply these measures to the RSFSR and to other Republics." For Popov's view, see "Neizvestnaia initsiativa Khrushcheva," 32.

49. As is the case when the gathering of collective farm members would vote to expel a member. See the *Model Statutes* in *Istoriia kolkhoznogo prava*, 2: 427-33.

50. RGASPI, f. 17, op. 121, d. 673, ll. 11–16.

51. *Ibid.*, ll. 57–59.

52. *Ibid.*, ll. 22–23.

53. *Ibid.*, ll. 28–29.

54. *Ibid.*, ll. 33–34.

55. Popov, "Neizvestnaia initsiativa Khrushcheva," 36. Zhdanov was the party secretary, Malenkov was deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers, Suslov was party secretary and chief of the Ideological Section of the Central Committee, and Kruglov was minister of internal

affairs. All were, of course, Politburo members.

56. R. W. Davies, *The Industrialisation of Soviet Russia*, vol. 1, *The Socialist Offensive: The Collectivization of Soviet Agriculture, 1929–1930* (London: Macmillan, 1980), 243–44; Ivnitskii, *Kollektivizatsiia i raskulachivanie*, 105, more generally, 102–30, 180–202.

57. *Istoriia kolkhoznogo prava*, 1: 430.

58. Subsequent to the failure in grain collections in Ukraine in 1946, Kaganovich replaced Khrushchev as the secretary of the Ukrainian Central Committee in March 1947, although the latter remained president of the Ukrainian Council of Ministers. In December of 1947, close to the two interviews Khrushchev had with Stalin, Kaganovich was appointed back to Moscow. Cf. Roy Medvedev, *Khrushchev: politicheskaia biografii* (Benson, Vt.: Chalidze Publishers, 1986), 48–51. Sergei N. Khrushchev suggested that this episode soured the relationships between the two Politburo members forever. See *Nikita Khrushchev and the Creation of a Superpower*, trans. Shirley Benson (University Park, Pa.: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000), 26.

59. William Taubman, *Khrushchev: The Man and His Era* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2003), 179–207, esp. 203–06. For a slightly different view, see Iurii Shapoval, “The Ukrainian Years,” in *Nikita Khrushchev*, ed. William Taubman, Sergei Khrushchev, and Abbott Gleason (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2000), 30–36.

60. RGASPI, f. 17, op. 121, d. 673, l. 3. In comparison with the data provided in table 2, the Ukrainian share seems disproportionately large. Yet data from the kolkhoz yearly reports compiled by the staff of the Central Statistical Administration (TsSU) show that the Ukrainian case was comparable to other regions where labor discipline was particularly poor. In the Ukrainian SSR, the number of those not fulfilling the labor-day minimum in 1946 represented 23.3 percent of all able-bodied farmers, and those who did not work a single day in the kolkhoz amounted to 1.7 percent. In the regions of Tambov and Penza the situation was considerably worse with respectively 43.5 and 45.7 percent of *kolkhozniki* violating the minimum, and 6.2 and 4.5 percent not working at all. RGAE, f. 1562, op. 324, d. 17774, ll. 5–8.

61. The first decree, issued on February 21, 1948, concerned only Ukraine, but was not applied to the western regions. A second decree of the Supreme Soviet followed in June 1948, and though it affected the whole country, it did not touch Western Ukraine either.

62. Zima, *Golod v SSSR*, 180–93.

63. On the issue of the antiparasite laws, see Marianne Armstrong, “The Campaign Against Parasites,” in *Soviet Policy-Making: Studies of Communism in Transition*, ed. Peter H. Juviler and Henry W. Morton (New York: Praeger, 1967), 163–82; Andreas Bilinsky, “Parasitengesetze in der Sowjetunion,” *Jahrbuch für Ostrecht*, no. 2 (Dec. 1961), 111–46; but mostly R. Beerman, “The Parasites Law,” *Soviet Studies*, 13, no. 2 (October 1961): 191–203; and “Soviet and Russian Anti-Parasite Laws,” *Soviet Studies*, 15, no. 4 (April 1964): 420–29. All these scholars link the antiparasite laws to their tsarist antecedents without finding the 1948 missing link.

64. The antiparasite laws were progressively passed in all Soviet Republics. The 1961 decree for the RSFSR was phrased as “On the Intensification of the Struggle Against Persons Avoiding Socially Useful Work and Leading an Anti-Social Parasitic Way of Life.”

65. Donald Filtzer, *Soviet Workers and De-Stalinisation: The Consolidation of the Modern System of Soviet Production Relations, 1953–1964* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 40.
66. Armstrong, “The Campaign Against Parasites,” 167.
67. Julie Hessler, “A Post-War Perestroika? Towards a History of Private Enterprise in the USSR,” *Slavic Review*, 57, no. 3 (Autumn 1980): 530–40.
68. Serhy Yekelchuk, *Stalin’s Empire of Memory: Russian-Ukrainian Relations in the Soviet Historical Imagination* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 62–71.
69. *Ibid.*, 62.
70. Quoted in Zima, *Golod v SSSR*, 186.
71. RGASPI, f. 17, op. 88, d. 91, ll. 2–12, 20–25.
72. *Ibid.*
73. GARF, f. r-9479 c), op. 1 c), d. 382, ll. 33–36.
74. RGASPI, f. 17, op. 138, d. 39, ll. 1–13.
75. RGASPI, f. 17, op. 138, d. 39, l. 10.
76. *Ibid.*, d. 39, 40, 41, 42.
77. *Ibid.*, d. 40, ll. 9–12.
78. GARF, f. r-9479 c), op. 1 c), d. 382, ll. 157.
79. RGASPI, f. 17, op. 138, d. 40, ll. 144–54. It is interesting to note that the story ended with a resolution from the Ulianovsk regional party committee condemning the activities described by Grakov in May 1949. However, Grakov’s account was only partly confirmed by inspectors from the Agricultural Section.
80. RGASPI, f. 17, op. 121, d. 673, ll. 22–23.
81. V. V. Filatov, “Pravovye osnovy kolkhoznoi demokratii 30-kh gg i realnost’,” in *Istoriia krest’inastva Rossii: Materialy shestnadsatoi vsrossiiskoi zaochnoi nauchnoi konferentsii* (St. Petersburg: Nestor, 2000), 142–43.
82. GARF, f. r-9479 c), op. 1 c), d. 382, ll. 157, 181–84.
83. RGASPI, f. 17, op. 121, d. 673, l. 19.
84. GARF, f. r-9479 c), op. 1 c), d. 458, l. 209.

85. RGASPI, f. 17, op. 121, d. 673, l. 19.
86. *Ibid.*, op. 138, d. 39, l. 7.
87. *Ibid.*, l. 8.
88. *Krest'ianstvo i gosudarstvo*, 247.
89. GARF, f. r-9479 c), op. 1 c), d. 458, ll. 72–73.
90. Zima, *Golod v SSSR*, 192.
91. *Ibid.*, 190.
92. RGASPI, f. 17, op. 138, d. 39, l. 2.
93. *Ibid.*, op. 121, d. 673, l. 3.

94. The reports compiled in Moscow and sent to Stalin can be found in Stalin's "special files" located at GARF. See GARF, f. 9401, op. 2, d. 200, ll. 282–89; d. 201, ll. 34–38, 41–50; d. 202, ll. 8–11; d. 269, ll. 155–62. Regional police reports on the campaign are contained in the "Special settlement" collection, GARF, f. r-9479 c), op. 1 c), d. 373, 382, 458. Complaints from Safonov, the general prosecutor of the Soviet Union, also contained rich information about illegal deportations and negative reactions from *kolkhozniki* to various arbitrary acts committed by local officials. His letters would, however, receive a response before they could get to Stalin, and most of them remained confined to the offices of Central Committee Secretaries Zhdanov and Malenkov. For examples of these complaints, see RGASPI, f. 17, op. 121, d. 673, ll. 17-20; op. 138, d. 42, ll. 42-45, 57-59, 63-64, 66-67, 68, 79-80.

95. This use of "tip of the iceberg" is from Ian Kershaw, *Popular Opinion and Political Dissent in the Third Reich: Bavaria, 1933-1945* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), 6. It was applied to the Soviet context by Sarah Davies, *Popular Opinion in Stalin's Russia: Terror, Propaganda, and Dissent, 1934-1941* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997). Critics of Davies's approach (and her use of the concept) include Stephen Kotkin, in his review of the book, *Europe-Asia Studies* 50, no. 4 (June 1998): 739-42, and Jochen Hellbeck, "Speaking Out: Languages of Affirmation and Dissent in Stalinist Russia," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 1, no. 1 (Winter 2000): 71-96, esp. 76-79.

96. GARF, f. r-9479, op. 1 c), d. 382, ll. 148, 84, 387.
97. RGASPI, f. 17, op. 121, d. 673, ll. 30–31.
98. GARF, f. r-9479 c), op. 1 c), d. 382, l. 193.

99. Novosibirsk had been the second region, after Kazakhstan, to receive German special settlers deported in the wake of the German attack on the Soviet Union in June 1941. More than one hundred thousand ethnic Germans were sent to Novosibirsk where they were distributed more or less evenly among the region's forty-four districts. See O. L. Milova, ed., *Deportatsii narodov*

SSSR (1930-e-1950-e gody), vol. 2, *Deportatsiia nemtsev, sentiabr' 1941-fevral' 1942* (Moscow: Institut ethnologii i antropologii RAN im. N. N. Mikliuo-Maklaia, 1995), 17, 149–50; GARF, f. r-9479 c), op. 1 c), d. 382, l. 193.

100. GARF, f. r-9479 c), op. 1 c), d. 382, ll. 148, 153, 185.

101. *Ibid.*, l. 84.

102. The concept was popularized mostly by historians such as Daniel Field, *Rebels in the Name of the Tsar* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1976), 1-29, and applied later to the Soviet case by Lynne Viola, *Peasant Rebels Under Stalin: Collectivization and the Culture of Peasant Resistance* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 64, 181-204. It suggests a strategy deliberately used by peasants to manipulate images and stereotypes about themselves.

103. GARF, f. r-9479 c), op. 1 c), d. 382, l. 84.

104. *Ibid.*, l. 29.

105. *Ibid.*

106. Zima, *Golod v SSSR*, 192–93.

107. GARF, f. r-9479, op. 1 c), d. 382, l. 84.

108. *Ibid.*

109. Calculations are from a database of information contained in fifty-nine Russian regional reports found in RGASPI, f. 17, op. 138, d. 39, 40, 41, 42.

110. RGASPI, f. 17, op. 138, d. 39, ll. 1–13.

111. For example, the Kirghiz leaders indicated that a majority of deportees were non-Kirghiz. Cf. RGASPI, f. 17, op. 138, d. 42, ll. 175–77.

112. *Ibid.*, ll. 145–51.

113. I. E. Zelenin, “Kollektivizatsiia i edinolichnik,” *Otechestvennaia istoriia*, no. 6 (1992), 53.

114. M. A. Vyltsan, “Poslednye edinolichniki: Istochnikovaia baza, istoriografii,” in *Sud'by rossiiskogo krest'ianstva*, ed. Iu. N. Afanas'ev (Moscow: RGGU, 1996), 376.

115. Zima, *Golod v SSSR*, 182–83.

116. *Ibid.*, 188; GARF, f. r-9479 c), op. 1 c), d. 373, l. 55.

117. GARF, f. r-9479, op. 1 c), d. 458, ll. 171–72.

118. RGASPI, f. 17, op. 138, d. 129, ll. 190–92.
119. Zima, *Golod v SSSR*, 187.
120. GARF, f. 9401, op. 2, d. 269, ll. 155–62.
121. RGASPI, f. 17, op. 122, d. 313, ll. 91–95, 134–35.
122. GARF, f. r-9479 c), op. 1 c), d. 458, ll. 34–35.
123. Zima, *Golod v SSSR*, 189.
124. GARF f. r-9479 c), op. 1 c), d. 373, l. 28. The GULLP (Glavnoe Upravlenie Lagerei Lesnoi Promyshlennosti) had camps in all the above-mentioned regions, and its population strongly increased after 1947. It is therefore quite possible that the deportees were sent to this Camp Administration. *Sistema ispravitel'no-trudovykh lagerei v SSSR, 1923–1960*, ed. M. B. Smirnov (Moscow: Zven'ia, 1998), 111-12.
125. Although this is not expressly stated in the MVD correspondence, some deportees were probably sent to the Noril'skii ITL, given the type of work fulfilled there. *Ibid.*, 338–39. Zima claims that Norilsk received 1,800 deportees while 17,500 were sent to the Yakut Republic and the regions of Krasnoairsk, Primorie, and Khabarovsk. *Golod v SSSR*, 188. In the Yakut Republic, it is possible that they were sent to the following camps: Yanskii ITL Dal'stroia, Nemnyrslii ITL, ITL Iannstroia, ITL Lolymo-Indigirskogo rechnogo parokhodstva, Dzhugdzhurskii ITL, and Aldanskii ITL. On these camps, see Smirnov, *Sistema ispravitel'no-trudovykh lagerei*, 475–76, 329, 277, 263, 213, 140.
126. GARF, f. r-9479 c), op. 1 c), d. 373, ll. 69–71.
127. *Ibid.*
128. Zima, *Golod v SSSR*, 193.
129. RGASPI, f. 17, op. 138, d. 39, ll. 14-16.
130. Lévesque, “Part-Time Peasants,” 86-98.
131. For instance, see RGAE, f. 7486, op. 7, d. 336, ll. 180-82.
132. In a secret report sent in late August 1949 by the chairman of the Central Statistical Administration, V. Starovskii, to the deputy chairman of the All-Union Council of Ministers, G. M. Malenkov, Starovskii pointed out the results of a checking operation conducted in nine regions of Ukraine and the RSFSR which showed the way yearly population reports sent by collective farms to the Central Statistical Administration contained gaps regarding the actual able-bodied population. Collective farms, in the yearly reports, tended to hide between 15.3 and 19.4 percent of their labor force, a fact simply revealed by a comparison of the content of yearly reports with village Soviets' records. Cf. GARF, f. r-5446, op. 53, d. 4415.

133. RGAE, f. 9476, op. 1, d. 864, ll. 1-197; d. 865, ll. 1-110; d. 866, ll. 5-369. For an analysis, see Lévesque, “Part-Time Peasants,” 288-308.

134. In this respect, it is easy to draw a parallel with a measure such as the April 1948 joint resolution of the Council of Ministers and Central Committee of the VKP (b) attempting to reform the attribution and economic value of a labor-day. It was a clear attempt to increase state control over matters like earnings, which formerly could be settled at the local level, but also failed to exert any pressure on kolkhozes. For these issues, the concept of “collective farm democracy” was more and more engineered from above to the point where it became a meaningless catchword for the masses. See L. N. Mazur, “Nekotorye problemy sostoiianiia kolkhoznoi demokratii v pervye poslevoennye gody (na materialakh Sverdlovskoi oblasti),” in *Sotsial’naia aktivnost’ truzhennikov Ural’skoi sovteskoi derevni: Sbornik nauchnykh trudov* (Sverdlovsk: AN USSR-Ural’skoe otdelenie, 1990), 76–77.

135. *Être communiste sous Stalin*, ed. Nicolas Werth (Paris: Julliard/Gallimard, 1981), 272.

136. Merle Fainsod, *Smolensk Under Soviet Rule* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1958), 269.

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