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The easing of restrictions in Russian archives and the declassification of key archival documents have facilitated the unraveling of the complex policies and practices of the “elimination of the kulak as a class” (*raskulachivanie*, or dekulakization, for short), including the mass deportations and “special resettlement” of peasants in the early 1930s (euphemistically titled *spetspereselentsy* or special settlers; from 1933, *trudposelentsy* or labor settlers; and in later years, again, *spetspereselentsy*).¹ Many of the most important directives, statistical data, and reports on dekulakization and the special settlers are now accessible and, in a few cases, published.² Yet, in some ways, the more we know, the less we know. As certain facets of this massive exercise in repression become clear, other issues and questions arise which only the initial stages of documentary illumination could have brought forth.

The inaugural year of the policy, 1930, is a more difficult year in which to access materials than 1931 and subsequent years. The Andreev Politburo commission and the OGPU (*Ob’edinennoe gosudarstvennoe politicheskoe upravlenie*, or internal security police) took full control of dekulakization operations only in March and July 1931 (respectively),³ succeeding somewhat in improving administration and rather more thoroughly in leaving a less complicated paper trail. In 1930, administrative chaos complemented organizational ineptitude: the OGPU interfered in all aspects of the operation, including those beyond its official mandate; the Shmidt USSR Council of People’s Commissars commission was ostensibly in charge of the entire resettlement operation—yet only from early April (three months into the operation!); and myriad agencies, organs, committees, and institutions on all regional levels were involved in one aspect of the campaign or another, often at odds with each other. The relative obscurity of 1930 is also a function of the very nature of the operation, an operation “planned” in emergency-military conditions, in secret, and featuring the repressive and economic goals of collectivization while leaving the fate of the repressed to a series of ad hoc central commissions and regional bodies that were forced to carry out their exhaustive (on paper) planning in the very midst of operations.

The role of the OGPU in dekulakization and special resettlement in 1930 constitutes the central focus of this essay.⁴ In 1930, the OGPU played a major role in operations pertaining to the first and second administratively defined categories of kulaks, although it had almost no part in the dekulakization of the third category, that operation supposedly belonging to the regional hierarchy of soviets and conducted “unsystematically” (*bezsystemno*) in practice throughout the year.⁵ The OGPU was exclusively in charge of the arrest and removal of category-one kulaks and the deportation of category-two kulaks, while the all-union and republic level Council of People’s Commissars commissions, through the commissariats and soviet regional

hierarchy, were to administer and build the “special settlements” (*spetsposelki*) where deported kulaks would live. And while the Molotov Politburo commission of mid to late January 1930 ostensibly was the architect of dekulakization, the OGPU had begun its own extensive involvement in dekulakization, including planning and communications with its regional PPs (*polnomochnye predstaviteli*, or plenipotentiary representatives), in the first half of January, suggesting a central role in policy formation for the OGPU.

This essay is a very preliminary attempt to sort out the policy and operational role of the OGPU in dekulakization in 1930. The picture presented can only be partial because virtually the entire governing apparatus was involved in the massive resettlement program, thus complicating our picture enormously and presenting the possibility of a multiplicity of detours, some no doubt extremely significant, from the main path of study. Furthermore, not all policies leave a paper trail, and the undocumented (or documentally inaccessible) role of Stalin—perhaps in combination with OGPU deputy director Iagoda and others—in the process, while undoubtedly central, cannot be satisfactorily factored into the equation of Politburo-OGPU-regional initiatives at present.

Background

The key signal for dekulakization appears to have been Stalin’s announcement on 27 December 1929 at the Conference of Marxist Agronomists that “we have passed [*pereshli*, the past perfect of *pereiti*] from the policy of the *limitation* of the exploiting tendencies of the kulaks to the policy of the *liquidation* of the kulak as a class.”⁶ In Chuchkovskii district (*raion*), Riazanskii County (*okrug*), Moscow Region (*oblast’*), for instance, the district party committee began what it called “dekulakization” in fall 1929, but entered into “liquidation” only after Stalin’s speech, according to the words of the district party committee secretary, Fomichev, at a 30 January 1930 conference of Riazanskii county district party committee secretaries on the subject of dekulakization.⁷ Rather more significantly, Stalin’s pronouncement on the kulak may also have been sufficient to launch the OGPU’s early January 1930 initiative on dekulakization. Yet to conclude that Stalin’s speech was the *cause* or even the main *trigger* of events would be to neglect an important and anticipatory overture to dekulakization suggested in Stalin’s very use of the past perfect of *pereiti*.

The prologue to dekulakization began with the grain procurement crisis of 1927–1928. Peasant marketing of grain had reached a plateau due to the growth

in the internal consumption of grain, based on increased peasant grain consumption and the growth of the urban population, a dearth of manufactured goods, and perhaps most of all, a faulty government pricing system that provided for relatively low prices for grain in comparison with industrial and other agricultural products, thus ensuring far higher prices for grain in the private market and encouraging some peasant producers to withhold grain or divert it for fodder for higher-priced livestock and dairy products.⁸ The outbreak of the war scare in 1927 transformed what had begun as an economic crisis into a political crisis of enormous proportions. The withholding of grain for better times became “hoarding,” while the sale of grain at higher prices on the private market was perceived as “speculation.” The shortfall in grain marketings appeared to jeopardize export plans and consequently industrialization. The government’s response was the application of “extraordinary measures” in grain procurements, a return to the civil-war policy of forcible grain requisitioning by plenipotentiaries and working-class brigades. Penal code articles 61 (failure to fulfill government obligations, including taxes and grain deliveries) and 107 (speculation) were widely invoked against peasants, leading to a wave of fines, arrests, and property confiscation. And on 4 January 1928, the OGPU issued a directive calling for the arrest of the most “malicious” (*zlostnye*) private traders, the result of which was the arrest of over six thousand private traders by early April 1928.⁹

At the same time, the government began an operation to siphon off all money “reserves” from the countryside, ostensibly as a negative incentive to force peasants to market grain. New tax laws were introduced in 1928 and 1929, resulting in the exclusion of over one-third of all peasant farms (the poorest) from taxation and the consequent steeply progressive taxation of stronger peasant households.¹⁰ As the tax vise tightened, the government also launched an aggressive campaign to increase village self-taxation (*samooblozenie*) and to collect all arrears owed by peasants.¹¹ Increasingly, wealthier peasants found themselves caught in a financial squeeze. Failure to fulfill tax or other obligations led once again to the imposition of the dreaded article 61.

The use of extraordinary measures in grain procurements gave way to the nationwide application of the Ural-Siberian method by early summer 1929. Based on practices developed in Siberia in 1928, this method depended upon the village council to apportion grain and other obligations on peasant households in an attempt to stimulate class rivalry in the village. An All-Russian Soviet Central Executive Committee and Council of People’s Commissars decree of 27 June 1929 essentially legalized the method by granting rural soviets the right to apply article 61 to peasants

who failed to fulfill their obligations to the government as determined by the village council. At the same time, the government revised article 61 to allow officials to assess a fine of five times the value of grain or other obligations due (the *piatokratnoe*) for first-time offenders, to imprison repeat offenders, and to imprison with property confiscation those whose actions were considered to be either premeditated or based on group resistance.¹²

As a result of the grain procurement campaigns of 1927/28 and 1928/29, as well as the tax squeeze on the countryside, a de facto dekulakization, in outcome if not necessarily intention, was becoming a reality in the second half of 1929. Facing the excessive demands of the government, some peasant families chose self-dekulakization (*samoraskulachivanie*) in an effort to pay off government obligations with the proceeds of the sale of property or to change their socioeconomic status (and consequently their tax and grain liability). The combined results of the government's repressive actions and self-dekulakization impacted heavily on the number of government-defined kulak households in the country. According to official statistics, in the Russian Republic, the number of kulak farms declined from 3.9 percent of the peasant population in 1927 to 2.2 percent in 1929; in Ukraine, the decline was from 3.8 percent to 1.4 percent. Kulaks reduced their sown acreage by at least 40 percent between 1927 and 1929. By late 1929 and early 1930, kulak farms had sold 60 to 70 percent of their livestock and up to 50 percent of their agricultural machinery in many parts of the countryside. The share of the gross output of kulak farms in grain producing regions declined from 10.2 percent in 1927 to 5.7 percent in 1929.¹³

Increasingly the government-defined kulak and his family found themselves classified as social pariahs in the Soviet countryside. In 1928, the government imposed new socially discriminatory laws on peasant access to credit and the purchase of agricultural machinery, while launching in late 1928 and early 1929 a disenfranchisement campaign that revoked the civil rights of many peasants. By far, the central question for the government, however, was whether kulaks would be allowed to participate in the new collective farms.

The debate began in the press in early 1929 and spilled over into discussion at the Sixteenth Party Conference in April. In his report on agriculture, Mikhail Kalinin indicated that it would be wrong "to close the door forever" on the kulak and that under certain conditions it might be possible to admit kulaks into collective farms. The speakers who followed Kalinin were evenly divided between supporters and opponents of admission. Great stress was placed on the collectivization of entire villages and land societies at the conference, and this necessarily increased the urgency of the issue. Nevertheless, the question was left unresolved.¹⁴

While voices in the center debated this issue, the major regional party organizations made their own decisions on whether to admit kulaks to collective farms. They had little choice but to take the initiative because for them the issue had ceased to be one of theory. In practice, entire villages were already converting to collective farm status, and decisions had to be made on what to do with the kulaks. The Lower Volga regional party committee decided in late January–early February 1929 to admit kulaks conditionally and only in areas of wholesale collectivization. In late February–early March, the Fourth Siberian regional party committee conference resolved not to admit kulaks. In the summer and early fall, the regional party committees of the North Caucasus (21 June) and the Central Black Earth region (14 August), and the Georgian Central Committee (18–20 October) also decided against kulak admission, while in midsummer the Middle Volga party organization was still allowing the conditional entry of kulaks into collective farms.¹⁵

The center failed to make a clear decision on this question during the summer of 1929; instead, it issued conflicting signals. In late June, disenfranchised people (*lishentsy*) were deprived of the right to vote in all cooperatives. Then, in early July, Kolkhozsentr¹⁶ endorsed the views of those who argued for conditional admission of kulaks, while the Central Committee's rural department did the same at a conference on 4 July, but against the opposition of a majority of the delegates (mainly regional and local party officials). Shortly after this, on 18 July, the Central Committee endorsed the North Caucasus regional party committee's report on rural work, including its decision not to admit kulaks into collective farms and to purge those collective farms which had already admitted kulaks. The center's wavering continued through the summer, although the press had become increasingly adamant in opposing any suggestion that kulaks be admitted to collective farms. The exposure in September of the so-called false collective farm, Krasnyi Meliorator, a show case manipulated by maximalists in the government, ended further discussion of the issue and led directly to the November Plenum decision not to admit kulaks to the collective farms.¹⁷ Yet, as we shall see, the Politburo subcommission on the kulak question in December 1929 still recommended making use of third-category kulaks as a disenfranchised labor force within the collective farms for a probationary period.

A 15 November 1929 Kolkhozsentr decree against kulak admission to the collective farms also called for a purge of kulaks from all collective farms. The decree essentially reiterated the 18 July Central Committee endorsement of the North Caucasus 21 June decree which had also called for purging. The purge of kulaks was anticipated by earlier decrees, in 1928 and 1929, depriving kulaks of voting rights in all cooperatives, and campaigns in 1928 and 1929 against so-called false collective

farms (*Izhekolkhozy*) in the Lower Volga, Middle Volga, and elsewhere. By the time wholesale collectivization officially began in early January 1930, many regions had subjected preexisting collective farms to purges and dissolved others.¹⁸

In the meantime, and as peasants of all social strata reacted against the new order with varying forms of resistance, the government began to step up its campaign against kulaks accused of committing “terrorist acts.” On 3 January 1929, the Politburo proposed to the People’s Commissariat of Justice that it guarantee maximal speed in the implementation of repression against kulak terrorists.¹⁹ On 23 September 1929, Sheboldaev (Lower Volga regional party committee secretary) and Trilektor (Lower Volga PP OGPU) enlisted the OGPU to liquidate an “SR [Socialist Revolutionary]-kulak insurrectionary group,” executing fifty of its leaders; and on 2 October, Sheboldaev telegraphed the Politburo with a request to allow the Lower Volga regional party committee to punish five cases of kulak terror in grain requisitioning.²⁰ On the day the Politburo examined Sheboldaev’s request (3 October), it issued a new directive authorizing the OGPU and the People’s Commissariat of Justice to deal “decisively and quickly” with kulaks who organized terrorist acts or counterrevolutionary incidents (*vystupleniia*), including the application of execution by shooting. In special circumstances, when speed was of the essence, the OGPU could deal directly with such cases. Otherwise, OGPU measures were to be agreed upon with regional party committees and in the most important cases with the Central Committee.²¹

By the end of 1929, a number of regional party committees had taken the initiative to expropriate and exile *groups* of kulaks. The earliest such action I have encountered was in late June 1929 when the Central Black Earth regional party committee made the decision to exile parties of kulaks. Similar actions were taken in Tataria in early October 1929. The Ukrainian Council of People’s Commissars passed a decree to exile “socially dangerous elements” from its border areas as early as 13 November 1929. Other decrees to expropriate or exile large numbers of kulaks were taken in December in Elizavetgradskii county, Ukraine, the North, Siberia, Transcaucasia, and North Caucasus.²² In the Middle Volga and the Central Black Earth region, kulaks were exiled to the worst lands at the end of the village.²³ Dekulakization, in one form or another had begun *before* Stalin’s 27 December speech and in the midst of a wave of antikulak legislation and extraordinary measures. By the end of 1929, articles 60, 61, 79, 107, and 169 of the RSFSR penal code, which allowed for the arrest, imprisonment, expropriation, or exile of individuals, were applied on an extensive scale in many areas to peasants for nonpayment of taxes and fines (60, 61); failure to fulfill government obligations, including grain deliveries

(60, 61); “willful” destruction of livestock or agricultural inventory (79); speculation (107); and fraud (169, covering illegal land sales and sales of property to avoid kulak classification).²⁴

Stalin’s use of the past perfect of *pereiti*, then, was no coincidence. The policy on the kulak had already changed by this time. The basic laws enabling dekulakization were in place. All that was missing was a central plan of coordination and concerted action.

Planning

An outline of the planning process behind dekulakization generally begins with the November 1929 Plenum, passes on to the December Politburo commission on collectivization and its resulting legislation of 5 January 1930, and concludes with the January Molotov Politburo commission on dekulakization and its consequent legislation of late January and early February.²⁵ In an earlier article, I suggested a revision of this orderly outline, concluding that the Molotov commission was in fact the final step in a series of central moves designed to regulate and control dekulakization. The legislation of the Molotov commission on dekulakization was, in a sense, redundant because dekulakization had already evolved—and accelerated—on the basis of a patchwork of regional and central initiatives and laws. I believe that my earlier view of the Molotov commission as a planning and organizational commission remains accurate.²⁶ The new element in the revised outline is the role of the OGPU in the dekulakization operation.

Planning has always been the quintessential misnomer for policy-making and implementation in Stalin’s First Five-Year Plan. Stalin said as much at the November 1929 Plenum when he interrupted Syrtsov’s reading of a letter from a Khoperskii county official, who warned of organizational chaos in collectivization, with the interjection: “Do you think that everything can be organized ahead of time?”²⁷ Stalin, along with Molotov, who dismissed talk of “difficulties” as “opportunism” and complained that the center was at the tail of the masses in collectivization,²⁸ apparently hoped to rely on some form of revolutionary initiative to move events along. Whether based on revolutionary delusion, a peculiar blend of populism and state control, or opportunism, Stalinist “planning” could be oxymoronic. It was only at Sheboldaev’s request that a special commission was established in December to discuss collectivization.²⁹

The December Politburo commission on collectivization was chaired by I. A.

Iakovlev and consisted of eight subcommittees (tempos, types of collective farms, organizational issues, distribution of material resources, cadres, mobilization of peasant means, kulaks, cultural and political servicing) with members drawn from relevant central agencies and the secretaries of the key agricultural regional party committees.³⁰ The commission called for the completion of collectivization in major grain regions in one to two years; in other grain regions, two to three years; and in the most important grain-deficit regions, three to four years. The commission also resolved that an intermediate form of collective farm, the *artel*—which featured the socialization of land, labor, draught animals, and basic inventory—would be the standard, and that private ownership of domestic livestock needed for consumption would be permitted. Any movement to extend the socialization of peasant properties beyond the *artel* would depend on the peasantry’s experience and the growth of its “confidence in the stability, benefits, and advantages of collective farming.” The commission also warned against any attempt either to restrain collectivization or to collectivize “by decree.”³¹

The subcommission on the kulak (in districts of wholesale collectivization) was chaired by K. Bauman with the participation of G. N. Kamenskii (Kolkhoztsestr), T. B. Ryskulov (Russian Republic Council of People’s Commissars), I. E. Klimenko (Russian Republic People’s Commissariat of Agriculture), and Z. M. Belen’kii (Khlebotsentr³²). In its final report, the commission concluded that “the power of the kulak has weakened, his economic and political authority has fallen. . . the kulak, as an economic category, is guaranteed destruction in the shortest historical period. And the sooner, the better.”³³ It called for the expropriation of the kulaks’ means of production (to be transferred to the collective farms) and resettlement or exile. The subcommission on the kulak noted that “it would be hopeless to try to decide the ‘kulak problem’ by exiling the *entire* mass of the kulak population [which it estimated at 5–6 million] to remote territories.” Instead it recommended a differentiated approach to the kulak—arrest or exile of those who render active resistance; exile of those who, though less active, still resisted and would not subordinate themselves to the new order; and use of the majority of the kulak population as a disenfranchised work force in the collective farms, eligible for full membership rights in three to five years with an honorable record.³⁴

The Politburo published the legislation on collectivization on 5 January 1930. The legislation stipulated that the Lower Volga, Middle Volga, and North Caucasus were to complete collectivization by fall 1930, spring 1931 at the latest; all remaining grain regions were to complete collectivization by fall 1931, spring 1932 at the latest, thus accelerating further the tempos of collectivization recommended by

the commission.³⁵ The legislation specified that the *artel* would be the main form of collective farm, leaving out any particulars from the commission's work. Stalin had personally intervened on this issue, ordering the editing out of "details" on the *artel* which should, he argued, more appropriately be left to the jurisdiction of the People's Commissariat of Agriculture. The *kulak* would be "eliminated as a class," as Stalin had already noted in his 27 December speech, with no further specifics included. Stalin and other maximalists in and out of the Politburo commission were responsible for radicalizing further an already radical set of guidelines by revising the work of the commission, keeping the legislation vague, and including only the weakest warnings about violations.³⁶

The Bauman subcommission on the *kulak* had failed to come to a final conclusion or plan on *dekulakization*, according to the report of the Middle Volga secretary, Khataevich, to his regional party committee.³⁷ Consequently, by early January 1930, Stalin's 27 December declamation and the 5 January legislation's curt recapitulation of the phrase remained the only and most compelling central indications of policy, while the policy itself had "taken off," in some cases radically, in the regions. On 15 January 1930, the Politburo confirmed the membership of a new commission on the *kulak*, chaired by Molotov and including Iakovlev, Iagoda, Evdokimov, Bergavinov, Goloshchekin, Eikhe, Vareikis, Muratov, Karlson, Demchenko, Sheboldaev, Andreev, Kabakov, Kalmonovich, Khataevich, Ianson, Leonov, Iurkin, Kosior, and Syrtsov (a heavy concentration of regional party committee secretaries and central and regional OGPU leaders).³⁸ The commission was divided into two subcommissions, the first on quotas, numbers, and categories and chaired by Kabakov, and the second on resettlement issues and chaired by Iakovlev.³⁹

The Molotov Politburo commission submitted its draft decree to the Politburo for approval on 30 January 1930. In districts of wholesale collectivization the decree revoked laws on renting land and hiring labor and ordered the confiscation from *kulaks* of the means of production, livestock, houses and other buildings, enterprises, and fodder and seed reserves. The decree maintained the Bauman subcommission's three categories of *kulaks*, but instead of allowing for a probationary period for third-category *kulaks* it ordered their resettlement outside the collective farms. The decree suggested that the quantity of liquidated households be differentiated according to local conditions but oriented at 3 to 5 percent of the peasant population. Warnings not to touch middle peasants, Red Army families, or families with members who were longtime industrial workers were included. The OGPU was instructed to carry out repressive measures against the first two categories of *kulaks* between February and May. Sixty thousand *kulaks* were to be sent to concentration camps or, in

certain cases, subject to execution, and one hundred fifty thousand sent to distant regions (see table 1).

Table 1. Numbers of Category-One and Category-Two Kulaks, January 1930 **30**

<u>Region of Origin</u>	<u>Concentration Camp</u>	<u>Exile (<i>Vysylka</i>)</u>
Middle Volga	3,000 to 4,000	8,000 to 10,000
North Caucasus, Dagestan	6,000 to 8,000	20,000
Ukraine	15,000	30,000 to 35,000
Central Black Earth	3,000 to 5,000	10,000 to 15,000
Lower Volga	4,000 to 6,000	10,000 to 12,000
Belorussia	4,000 to 5,000	6,000 to 7,000
Urals	4,000 to 5,000	10,000 to 15,000
Siberia	5,000 to 6,000	25,000
Kazakhstan	5,000 to 6,000	10,000 to 15,000

The families of exiles and internees were also to be exiled; exceptions were allowed only with the permission of the district soviet executive committee. The OGPU was enlisted, in agreement with the corresponding regional party committees and the Central Committee, to work out control figures for other areas. Second-category kulaks were to go to the North (70,000), Siberia (50,000), Urals (20,000 to 25,000), and Kazakhstan (20,000 to 25,000). The districts of settlement were to be uninhabited or thinly populated areas with the possibility for the exiles to work in agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, and so on. The exiles would live in “special settlements” under the direction of a commandant appointed by the district soviet and confirmed by the county soviet and OGPU.

Third-category kulaks were to be placed in small villages selected by county soviet executive committees and administered by special committees appointed by the district soviet executive committee and confirmed by the county soviet executive committee. This category could be used by county soviet executive committees as a work force in forestry, road construction, or other areas. Lists of second-category kulaks were to be established by the district soviet executive committee on the basis of meetings of collective farmers, agricultural laborers, and poor peasants and confirmed by the county soviet executive committee. Warnings to ensure maximal organization along with additional orders on purging industrial enterprises and higher educational institutions of kulaks and closing churches completed the legislation.⁴⁰ The USSR Central Executive Committee published a short decree to this effect on

2 February, with unpublished accompanying “secret instructions” on 4 February.⁴¹ The Politburo issued a special decree ordering that the 30 January directives not be published, after reprimanding the North Caucasus and Lower Volga regional party committees for practically publishing the secret directives.⁴²

The momentous nature of the Molotov commission was somewhat obscured by the earlier decisions taken by regional party committees on dekulakization (20 January: Transcaucasia, Middle Volga; 21 January: Urals; 24 January: Lower Volga; 20 January: Central Black Earth region; 28 January: Ukraine; 29 January: North Caucasus).⁴³ Moreover, dekulakization campaigns had already begun in many places in the second half of January (if not earlier). In the Urals, mass dekulakization began in the second half of January under the slogan “better to overcount kulaks than to undercount them” (*luchshe perekulachit’ chem nedokulachit’*) while awaiting central directives.⁴⁴ In Pronskii district, Riazanskii county, Moscow region, the district party committee held a conference on dekulakization on 14 January, followed (according to reports) by dekulakization led by poor peasants. In fact, only five of twenty-seven Riazanskii districts had not begun dekulakization by 30 January.⁴⁵ Elsewhere in Moscow region, rural soviets and general collective farm meetings were compiling lists of kulaks for dekulakization beginning from 19 January (most from 20 to 27 January).⁴⁶ According to a Central Committee progress report (*svodka*) on party work in dekulakization between 6 and 24 January, the slogan “to liquidate” had not reached all rural cells of district party committees or even county party committees. Yet the Rossoshanskii county party committee (in the Central Black Earth region) decreed on 21 January to exile not less than three thousand kulaks and another four thousand families; Kozlovskii county (Central Black Earth region) requested the removal of kulaks from the village due to resistance; and elsewhere, from as early as late December (Ukraine) decisions were taken to remove kulaks to the worst land (Siberia and North Caucasus: 8–9 January).⁴⁷ These areas were reacting not only to Stalin’s December speech and the 5 January decree,⁴⁸ but to the pressures that collectivization put on parts of the peasant population to sell or destroy livestock and inventory (*razbazarivanie*) and in some cases to self-dekulakize. Dekulakization became in those instances a preemptive strike by county and district officials to avert the economic destruction wrought by *razbazarivanie* and self-dekulakization. In addition, dekulakization was increasingly found to be a useful “stimulus” for collectivization, a tool of intimidation to pressure the peasant majority into joining collective farms.

The picture thus far depicted presents dekulakization “taking off” in the second half of 1929 on the basis of central laws, regional initiatives, and radical momentum.

In December and January, the center sought administrative control of the operation to avoid ending up either at the “tail of the masses” (Molotov) or in wholesale chaos. At the same time, regional dekulakization accelerated rapidly in response to Stalin’s speech and the 5 January legislation. The Molotov commission then entered the picture, but only in the second half of January (its legislation appeared at the end of the month), layering over the operation with a plan, target figures, and a legal framework. This scenario still leaves us pondering the same question that R. W. Davies raised in the early 1980s, when he wrote that “the expropriation of the kulaks which took place in January 1930 was at first supported by no [clear-cut] legislation.”⁴⁹ The OGPU may be the missing link in the picture.

The Cart Before the Horse

January and February 1930 were busy months for the OGPU, especially for Iagoda, Evdokimov, and Messing who penned—or at least signed—most of the incredibly detailed central directives, instructions, and memos on dekulakization. The most remarkable aspect of the OGPU’s participation in dekulakization was that it appears to have assumed an initiative or at least a central planning role *prior* to the convocation of the Molotov Politburo commission on dekulakization. What is unclear is the exact lever that set the OGPU in motion: we can assume that Stalin’s December speech and/or the 5 January legislation were sufficient impetus and certainly that Stalin, Molotov, and Iagoda were in private consultation. Moreover and perhaps most importantly, the “take-off” of the campaign regionally triggered OGPU concerns over security and stability.

The OGPU paper trail—or that part of it which has surfaced so far—begins on 10 January when the OGPU appears first to have requested its PPs in the North, Urals, Siberia, and the Far East to report on locations for resettlement and the numbers of kulaks their regions could accommodate.⁵⁰ On 11 January, Iagoda wrote to his colleagues in OGPU (Evdokimov, Messing, Prokof’ev, Blagonravov, and Bokii) that the kulaks as a class must be destroyed by March–April 1930. He argued that the rural class struggle was worsening and that if no decisive measures were taken before the spring sowing, there would be an insurrection. He called on the Secret Operation Administration of OGPU (*sekretno-operativnoe upravlenie*, Evdokimov’s preserve) to determine the regions where arrests and exiles must occur first and, by 14 January, to report on the numbers of arrests in the last six months, the numbers of organizations to be liquidated, the numbers to go to concentration camps, where

it would be necessary to open new camps, and whether it would be possible to organize kulak villages without guards. Iagoda called a meeting with his lieutenants for noon the next day (12 January) to discuss plans.⁵¹ On that same day, Messing and Evdokimov sent out a memo to all PPs OGPU asking for information by 14 January on the numbers of kulak bands, groups, and participants in their regions, clearly in preparation for the operation against category-one kulaks.⁵²

Iagoda had earlier (9 January) received a telegram from his PP in Rostov on Don, Piliar, reporting that on 8 January the North Caucasus regional party committee had decided, with the agreement of Moscow, to exile twenty thousand kulak families. According to Piliar, the operation would be carried out “on the basis of the experience in Belorussia.”⁵³ The committee’s decree included a detailed plan for exiles, established control figures per county and national region, detailed the organization of a regional soviet executive committee commission and county and district *troikas* (three-person committees) to lead dekulakization under the North Caucasus GPU (OGPU regional organ), and set a timetable for the operation (to begin on 10 February everywhere, with deportations scheduled to begin from 20 February to 1 March).⁵⁴ This directive (if not the Belorussian and others as well) may have directly anticipated the OGPU’s planning and prompted the OGPU to play a more active role. Yet, OGPU communications with its regional PPs appear already to have been a two-way affair, with the OGPU making direct inquiries about regional willingness to accept precise numbers of kulaks as well as regional PPs submitting their own plans. The Northern regional party committee secretary, Bergavinov, for example, noted in a 14 January telegram to Kaganovich that the OGPU had asked the Northern GPU about the possibility of receiving up to one hundred thousand kulak families (to which the Northern GPU countered with an offer to take fifty to seventy thousand by May).⁵⁵

On 18 January, the OGPU clearly moved into a more operational mode. A coded telegram directive (#776) from Iagoda and Evdokimov to their PPs in North Caucasus, Ukraine, Central Black Earth region, Lower Volga, Middle Volga, and Belorussia stated:

In connection with the impending decision on the mass exiles of kulak–white guard elements, first of all in districts of wholesale collectivization, [and] in addition to the general measures agreed to in our telegraphed directive [#775] of 18 January—I ORDER:

1. Create under PPs OGPU an operative group for unifying all work on the impending operation. Quickly work out and present to OGPU a detailed plan

of operations with an account of all operational, personnel, military [*voennyi*], and technical questions.

2. Quickly complete all active . . . investigations in order to free up the apparatus and prisons.

3. In [your] plan list exactly and submit by telegraph from which districts and what quantities of kulak–white guard elements are intended for exile.

4. Precisely account for the quantity of chekist reserves needed for the operation and which you can mobilize.

5. In districts in which exile will occur that are full of counterrevolutionary and antisoviet elements [and] where our work is now weak, transfer personnel from the PP.

6. Establish places—railroad points where the exiled will be concentrated before departure and establish the quantity of transport vehicles and railroad personnel needed.

7. Strictly assess the situation in the districts and the possibility of disturbances so that they can be halted without the least delay. Guarantee uninterrupted secret informant [*agentura*] work in the districts of operation.

8. Strictly assess the location and use of troop units of the OGPU and RKKA [Red Army]. Note the presence of reserves.⁵⁶

This directive, which appears to have launched the dekulakization operation centrally, preceded the Molotov Politburo commission’s work by almost two weeks.

In a 23 January follow-up to directive #776, Messing and Evdokimov instructed PPs in North Caucasus, Lower Volga, Middle Volga, Ukraine, Belorussia, and the Central Black Earth region to carefully formulate and immediately report information on the following questions as they compiled their plans:

1. In which districts, how many and what categories of kulak–white guard elements are intended for exile and the order of priority of the districts;

2. In what points are [you] planning to concentrate exiles for transport along the railroads. What quantity of transport vehicles are needed—[train] cars,

echelons;

3. What quantity of responsible and rank-and-file operative personnel are needed for supplementing the apparatus, especially district plenipotentiaries; how many reserve chekists can [you] mobilize locally;

4. In what districts [and] in what numbers are armed forces (RKKA [Red Army] and VOGPU [OGPU troops]) needed to guarantee the operation;

5. Places of concentration of reserves, especially in the most dangerous districts where one can expect disturbances;

6. Your measures [taken] to unload the prisons;

7. A budget for the operation.

They ended their instructions by noting that “the definitive directions, periods of operation, [and] quantity of exiles will be given to you in good time, after the decision of the question in the relevant institution.”⁵⁷ At about the same time, Karlson (deputy director of the Ukrainian GPU) and an associate suggested the necessity of a regulated succession of exiles, beginning with the removal of category one, then their families, then category two, and first of all in districts of wholesale collectivization and border zones.⁵⁸ This communiqué suggests again a measure of interaction in the planning process among OGPU and PPs.

OGPU interaction with other regional authorities—party and soviet organs—may have been more troubled. On 24 January, Iagoda condemned the Moscow regional party committee’s decree on dekulakization, noting that the dekulakization of 520 kulaks in Orekho-Zuevskii district took place without prior warning to OGPU. He concluded by defensively noting that “we lead *all* of the Union.”⁵⁹ On 25 January, Messing and Evdokimov issued a telegram on dekulakization to its PPs in Ukraine, North Caucasus, Central Black Earth region, Lower Volga, Middle Volga, Belorussia, Urals, and Siberia stating that information from a series of places told of the beginnings of a “spontaneous” exile and expropriation of kulaks. They instructed the PPs to ensure that measures were taken to raise the issue in party organizations to carry out the campaign in an organized way according to directives (of 18 January) #775 and #776. They further warned PPs to strictly ensure that Red Army families were not among the exiles and to hasten the submission of plans of exile with all calculations and maps to the OGPU.⁶⁰

On 26 the January the Northern regional PP, Austrin, submitted his “operational plan” to OGPU (twelve days later than the 14 January due date). The Northern region estimated that it could accept seventy thousand families (approximately three hundred fifty thousand people). It planned to transport only able-bodied adults to their final points of destination before June, leaving the rest (including mothers with children and the elderly) in the central transit points in the North. Plans for the construction of barracks to house eighty to one hundred thousand people in Arkhangel’sk and twenty thousand in Kotlas were underway. Austrin requested 100 revolvers, 100,000 cartridges, 100 rifles, and 200 hand grenades for the operation. He also indicated that each echelon of exiles would have from 2160 to 4200 adults with a guard of three GPU and fifteen Red army soldiers, to travel distances ranging from 180 to 1300 kilometers.⁶¹ On 29 January (fifteen days late), the Urals PP, Rapoport, submitted his report, “On measures for the mass exile and relocation of kulaks in the Urals.” His plan indicated a figure of five thousand Urals families to be exiled with a request to increase that number to fifteen thousand. He also indicated that the operation to remove category-one kulaks in the Urals had begun on 27 *January*—again, prior to the completion of the Molotov Politburo commission proceedings—with the arrest of 4685 people.⁶²

On 30 January, the Politburo issued its decree on dekulakization.⁶³ On 31 January at 5:00 P.M., the OGPU collegium held a meeting with its PPs and responsible workers involved in the kulak question, which Molotov addressed. The protocols to this meeting indicate the formation of three commissions to work out plans of arrest and exile (possibly leading to the 2 February OGPU decree discussed below). PP OGPU *troikas* with regional party committee and procurator representatives were to review, in extrajudicial order, all first-category cases, and decrees on the exile of families were to be formulated by county soviet executive committees taking into account the degree of social danger and the presence of able-bodied members in the families. Those sentenced to concentration camps and exile were not to be allowed to return home at the end of their sentences, but sent on to the North. The OGPU collegium also ordered a “100 percent review” of all letters going or coming from abroad and all letters going to or coming from the army.⁶⁴ At about this same time, PPs were instructed to create secret reserves of workers, komsomols, and communists locally for help in dekulakization and to supplement the OGPU reserve troops coming from Moscow and Leningrad to strengthen forces in the North and in the Urals.⁶⁵

The Politburo decree on dekulakization was grafted on to a preexisting, albeit hastily improvised, OGPU operative plan, which, in turn, very likely was shaped

by dekulakization practices in the regions. The OGPU's January planning work was no doubt preliminary to the Politburo decree as well as its own detailed directive (#44/21) of 2 February.⁶⁶ Control figures in the OGPU directive followed closely, in most cases exactly, the figures set out in the Politburo decree (see above). The numbers of second-category kulaks to be exiled to Siberia and Kazakhstan were reduced by six thousand and twenty thousand respectively in view of those region's admitted unpreparedness and unwillingness to accept exiles from outside their regions.⁶⁷ The OGPU's definition of first-category kulaks was broader than that of the Politburo, including active white guards; insurgents; former bandits; former white guard officers; repatriots; former active members of punitive expeditions (*karateli*); active members of church councils, sects, or religious associations or groups; the wealthiest peasants; moneylenders; speculators; former landlords; and so on. The OGPU planned for the operation against first-category kulaks to be complete before the beginning of the operation against second-category kulaks and emphasized that mass exiles would take place first in districts of wholesale collectivization and border zones. *Troikas* created under the PP OGPU (with representatives from the regional party committee and procurator's office) were to examine first-category cases, sending most off to concentration camps and reserving capital punishment for the most malicious and notorious. In fact, the operation against first-category kulaks had already begun by the time the decree appeared. By 26 January (and possibly a day or two earlier), Iagoda had reported to Messing and Evdokimov of the arrests of ninety-three thousand, and later statistical compilations on the total numbers of first-category kulaks arrested in the first phase of the operation date the beginning of the operation to 1 January.⁶⁸

The families of category-one kulaks were to be exiled along with category-two kulaks, taking into account how socially dangerous they were deemed and the presence of able-bodied laborers. The PPs OGPU were to be in charge of all operations and serve as an information conduit between center and periphery. The PP would organize operational *troikas* at the county level, led by the GPU chief, and similar operative *troikas* on the district level. A commandant would take charge of collection points at railroad stations for the gathering of kulaks for transport. OGPU troops were to be used in case of difficulties, with the Red Army to be used only in extreme cases and with the agreement of the regional organization (the exact nature of this organization was not specified) and the revolutionary-military soviet (*revvoensovet*). (The troops were to be filtered via the special [*osobyi*] organs of the OGPU.) The OGPU instructed its PPs in Ukraine, Belorussia, North Caucasus, Lower Volga, Middle Volga, and Central Black Earth region to submit final operative plans by 7

February (in five days!), allowing the remaining PPs until 20 February. The same PPs were instructed to provide a final accounting of collection points and the numbers to be exiled through these points by 10:00 A.M. on 4 February. The OGPU Transport Department (*transportnyi otdel*) was to work out transport plans and the organization of the echelons, assuring an uninterrupted supply of boiled water and medical services for exiles en route. Each family was allowed no more than twenty-five to thirty *puds* of property (a *pud* is about thirty-six pounds), including a two-month supply of food. A call for increased informant work (*agentura*) and “100 percent review” of letters coming and going abroad and to and from the army, along with a strengthening of the guard at borders, government enterprises, and arms depots, completed the plan.⁶⁹

A flurry of OGPU directives accompanied and followed directive #44/21. Seven additional directives were issued to PPs on 2 February. The first was the “Organizational Structure of the Operation,” signed by Evdokimov. It provided instructions on the work of the PP operative *troikas*, operative *troikas* on the county and district levels, and the organization of collection points and echelons.⁷⁰ Evdokimov’s “Work of the Collection Points of Exiled Kulaks” elaborated more specifically on the structure of collection points. The collection points, situated near railroads, were to be places of concentration of kulaks and their families destined for exile. Operational groups under the county department of the GPU were to create concentration points (*kontspunkt*), and in cases when concentration points served more than one county, the PP operational *troika* took charge. Military barracks and other buildings were to be used for housing. Each concentration point was to be led by a commandant (appointed from OGPU personnel and subordinated to the county operational group or PP operational *troika* depending upon the numbers of counties served) and his two assistants. The commandant was in charge of organizing the guard; food, medical, and sanitary services; reception and accounting of exiles; security issues; and uninterrupted communications with the operational group. In case of any incident, the commandant had full authority to take all necessary measures. The commandant prepared exiles for transport and transfer to the jurisdiction of the OGPU Transport Department and echelon commandant.⁷¹

Evdokimov also issued detailed instructions on the organization of registration and investigation (*uchetno-sledstvennye*) groups in the concentration points. An operative official of the OGPU not lower than a GPU county department plenipotentiary was to lead the group, which would include OGPU and People’s Commissariat of Justice officials and be subordinated to the concentration point commandant. The groups were to check exiles with an eye to anything of special interest to the organs

of the OGPU and select informers from the ranks of the exiles (one per thirty to fifty adults) for work in the concentration points, en route, and in the places of exile. Each exile would have two personal data cards (*lichnye kartochki*), one of which would be sent to the operational group if there was a problem.⁷² Evdokimov also issued a schedule of reporting. In areas of exile, PPs were to report by telegram every five days to the Secret Operation Administration, the Counterintelligence Department (*kontrrazvedyvatel'nyi otdel*, or KRO), and other OGPU departments precise statistical information on exiles (including age), liquidated counterrevolutionary groups and organizations, numbers arrested, and basic data on the operation (excesses, political situation, incidents, etc.). The same PPs would submit operational reports (*opersvodki*) by post every five days to the Secret Operation Administration, the Counterintelligence Department, and the Information Department (*informatsionnyi otdel*, or INFO) of OGPU on the political conditions of the districts, the general course of the operation, excesses and revolts, banditry, work of *troikas* and sentencing in the most serious cases, and so on. Three separate standardized forms for statistical data were also included. PPs in areas where mass exiles were not taking place were to submit telegrams to the Secret Operation Administration and the Counterintelligence Department every five days with information on liquidated counterrevolutionary organizations, the most important cases, political conditions, excesses, and incidents. The same PPs were to submit operational intelligence reports every five days to the same address (and to the Information Department, but with greater detail on the same questions and sentencing in the most important cases). The OGPU Transport Department was to report daily on the number of echelons, statistical data on their composition, the number of echelons en route, and the political situation of the echelons en route.⁷³

The three final directives of 2 February were issued by the head of the OGPU Transport Department, V. A. Kishkin. These were instructions to OGPU organs on mass transportation, to commandants on the formation of echelons, and to concentration point commandants on loading and unloading of exiles. The transport organs of OGPU were responsible for all railroad transport of exiles. In the OGPU Transport Department, a *troika* composed of representatives from the Transport Department of OGPU, the People's Commissariat of Transport, and other transportation agencies would establish leadership of the operation. Road (*dorozhnye*) *troikas*, made up of the heads of various road agencies (including the Road Transport Department, or *dorozhno-transportnyi otdel*, of OGPU) would establish observation and leadership of loading and unloading of trains. The Central *troika* under the OGPU Transport Department was to take charge of all personnel questions (railroad, chekist, and armed

forces), financing, selection of feeding points, and the compilation of a transport schedule. The road *troikas* subordinated to the Central *troika* were responsible for ensuring the fulfillment of the Central *troika*'s schedule and the formation of echelons. Each echelon was assigned a number (per region, by the hundreds) and consisted of forty-four train cars (supposedly *teplushki*, or heated cars), eight goods cars, and one fourth-class car for the command staff. Each car would carry forty people, with one stove, twenty-eight plank beds, one chimney flue, two window frames, one lantern, and three buckets (two for boiling water and one for human waste). The command car was assigned two buckets, three army lanterns, and one signal lamp. Each echelon was directed by an echelon commandant with an assistant (from OGPU) and a guard of thirteen riflemen (including a political instructor). Riflemen were issued sixty ammunition cartridges per rifle.⁷⁴

Separate instructions for commandants on the formation of echelons reiterated some of this information and provided more detail. Each commandant was to be provided—at least three hours prior to transport—with a list (containing family and age structure) of exiles. Commandants of echelons heading for Arkhangel'sk and Kotlas were to separate out (by secret list) all able-bodied persons for earlier unloading. Each car would have an “elder” (*starosta*) and assistant appointed by the commandant. The commandant was instructed to send the OGPU Transport Department a standardized telegram reporting the time of departure. The commandant was also responsible for unloading ill exiles (if under six, with the mother) and the dead. The guard was permitted to open fire in the case of escape attempts. At stops, the elder and his assistant could disembark for food purchases and boiling water for their train car's occupants. Car doors could be slightly ajar when the train was in motion. At and near stops, the car doors were to be closed, and “tightly” (*naglukho*) closed in the vicinity of Moscow. The commandant was to have all pertinent information about informers among exiles (including a small budget for payments), and was to keep a special log on the trip.⁷⁵ Finally, the road *troikas* also appointed two chiefs (one for loading and one for unloading) to take charge of the technical organization of echelons, embarkment, and disembarkment.⁷⁶

Sometime between 3 and 6 February, OGPU issued its railroad transport plan which reiterated earlier information in addition to presenting a concrete schedule for the transport of exiles (see table 2).

Table 2. Transport Schedule

<u>Region of Origin</u>	<u>Families</u>	<u>People</u>	<u>Echelons</u>	<u>Start Date</u>	<u>Destination</u>
North Caucasus	28,000	140,000	80	10 February	23,000 to Urals; 5,000 to Kazakhstan
Ukraine	50,000	250,000	142	20 February	North
Central Black Earth	20,000	100,000	57	20 February	North
Lower Volga	18,000	90,000	51	15 February	Siberia
Middle Volga	14,000	70,000	40	15 February	Siberia
Belorussia	12,000	60,000	34	5 March	Siberia

In all, 404 echelons (with 1760 people in each) comprising 142,000 families, or 710,000 people, were scheduled for deportation in the first round.⁷⁷

The operation against category-one kulaks was to be complete before the start of the transport operation of category-one families and all category-two kulaks. In fact, on 26 January, Iagoda had reported the arrest of some ninety thousand people in the countryside, though it is not absolutely clear whether these were all, officially, first-category kulaks.⁷⁸ That the operation against category-one kulaks was swift is indicated in an 8 February memo from Rostov reporting that 10,492 first-category kulaks had been removed from four counties and that operations against *both* first- and second-category kulaks were complete in Kubanskii, Maikopskii, Armavirskii, and Terskii counties.⁷⁹ An OGPU special report (*spetsvodka*) of 15 February provided somewhat different information, indicating that 5272 people had been arrested by this time in North Caucasus, 7183 in the Central Black Earth region, 855 in the Leningrad region, and 3397 in the Western region. Among the 5272 arrested in North Caucasus were 3604 kulaks, 113 strong peasants (*zazhitochnye*), 15 middle peasants, 6 poor peasants, 88 landlords, 714 former traders, 72 renters and owners of enterprises, 118 former gendarmes and tsarist policemen, 23 white officers, 11 white bandits, 315 clergy, 20 members of political parties, 15 monks, and 81 white guards. Iagoda scribbled in the margins of the document a furious note demanding to know why priests and the like were being arrested and ordering these actions to stop. He wrote, “I have always underlined [the need] to take [kulaks] according to the case [*delo*] and not [according to] social signs”—a stunning and perhaps inexplicable contradiction to the definition of first-category kulaks in OGPU’s own 2 February decree (see above).⁸⁰ A later OGPU document, from 17 November 1930, reported a total of 140,724 first-category kulaks arrested between 1 January and 15 April 1930 (including 79,330 kulaks, 5028 clergy, and 4405 landlords); and an additional 142,993 first-category kulaks (of which 45,559, or 31.9 percent, were

kulaks, the rest other rural “counterrevolutionaries”) between 15 April and 1 October 1930.⁸¹ These figures are startling: first of all as an indication of the rapidity of the OGPU action and second in the seemingly excessive overfulfillment (over fourfold {283,717} if we add the total figures and over twofold {124,889} if we count only “actual” kulaks) of the original Politburo plan of sixty thousand first-category kulaks. Bolshevik tempos, social purging, and a police head more concerned with cases than kulaks may have laid the groundwork for a snowballing of repression.⁸²

Already in January, jealous of its institutional prerogatives and alarmed over security issues, the OGPU had expressed concern that the operation was developing too “spontaneously” in the regions. In early February, the OGPU continued to condemn out-of-control regions. On 5 February, Messing ordered PPs to follow “strictly” the given control numbers, not exceeding them. He ordered them to halt “categorically” the races for naked quantities of arrests going on in a series of places.⁸³ At about the same time, the Central Committee sent out a telegram condemning a number of areas (North Caucasus, Lower Volga, Moscow, Ivanovo-Voznesensk, Central Black Earth region) for running ahead with dekulakization, ignoring central plans and the region’s level of collectivization.⁸⁴ Khataevich wrote to Stalin and Molotov on the same day denying haste in his region’s decision of 20 January on dekulakization and pointing out the contradictions between the OGPU directives (which supported him) and the Central Committee’s directive.⁸⁵ On the same day, the OGPU called a halt to the expropriation or exile of “foreign citizens” from countries with which the USSR had formal relations.⁸⁶

The inevitable confusion generated by the rapid regional momentum of the campaign and the relative tardiness of the center to formulate plans and issue instructions resulted in OGPU revisions of plans and in conflicts with regional organizations. Already on 4 February, Iagoda revised the control figures (see above) for second-category kulaks in view of the unpreparedness of several regions to accept out-of-region exiles. He sent telegrams to his PPs in the Central Black Earth region, Belorussia, North Caucasus, Lower Volga, Middle Volga, and Ukraine reducing the numbers of families scheduled for deportations in the first round, with a follow-up telegram of 7 February outlining the schedule of deportations (see table 3).⁸⁷

Table 3. Revised Transport Schedule, 4–7 February 1930

<u>Region of Origin</u>	<u>Families</u>	<u>Echelons</u>	<u>Schedule</u>
Central Black Earth	8,000	23	20 Feb.–15 April
Belorussia	8,000	23	5 March–15 April (5 every 10 days)
North Caucasus	10,000	n.d.	n.d.
Lower Volga	8,000	23	20 Feb.–15 April
Middle Volga	6,000	17	20 Feb.–15 April (3 every 10 days)
Ukraine	20,000	57	20 Feb.–15 April

On 10 February, Iagoda halted all deportations to Kazakhstan for the next three months.⁸⁸ Apparently both Kazakhstan and Siberia resisted “importing” kulaks from other regions. Siberia supposedly could have taken in seventy-five thousand families, but when its request for 41 to 60 million rubles for the operation was rejected, it refused to cooperate. Siberia was accused of only considering the “economic benefits” of dekulakization (i.e., kulak labor), as was Kazakhstan.⁸⁹ On 16 February, Stalin called the usually stalwart Bergavinov on the carpet, criticizing a recent Northern regional party committee decision to take only thirty thousand families by spring instead of the expected seventy thousand assigned by the Politburo commission. Stalin instructed Bergavinov to take all measures to prepare for the arrival of not less than fifty thousand families (a reduction of twenty thousand) by mid April.⁹⁰

Siberia and the Urals entered into conflict with the center over the financing of the operation. Both regions were negatively affected by the OGPU’s decision to require regional soviet executive committees to pay for the internal exile of first- and second-category kulak families because in both regions large numbers of “native” first- and second-category kulaks were shifted around *within* the region. Funding was provided from central resources only for “imported” kulaks. The OGPU was also engaged in a continuing dialogue with its Urals PP over what the OGPU considered the Urals’ “exaggerated” demands for funds to pay for transport, barracks, food, sanitary measures, and so on.⁹¹ In March, the OGPU refused its Northern region PP his demand for construction materials, considering that demand to be “extremely exaggerated.”⁹² A basic regional split developed between regions “exporting” kulaks, who wanted dekulakization everywhere, and regions “importing” kulaks (especially Siberia, Kazakhstan, and the Urals), who wanted the enforcement of policy differentials between districts of wholesale collectivization (where dekulakization was permitted) and districts without wholesale collectivization (where dekulakization was, theoretically, not permitted) in order either to slow down or at least to regulate

the campaign.⁹³

Improvisational planning led to chaos and a series of unsettled questions. Exercising some foresight, the Politburo had decided on 4 February to hold two Central Committee conferences, to be chaired by Molotov (with Stalin in attendance), on collectivization and dekulakization in national republics and regions (11 February) and in nongrain regions (21 February). At the first conference, Molotov stated that there was no definite decision yet on dekulakization in national areas, hence the conference. He went on to say that the 30 January decision on dekulakization remained secret because (to paraphrase Molotov) “we do not want our enemies to know because many things are complex and we do not need to inform them.”⁹⁴ Molotov then requested from the delegates concrete information on the numbers of kulaks, categories, schedules for application of measures, and so on. The representative from Armenia told the conference that they had already begun work on dekulakization and exile before the 30 January decree. Ikramov of Uzbekistan, on the other hand, indicated that they had convened a meeting of county secretaries as soon as they received the decree and forbade any county party committee to declare itself an area of wholesale collectivization without the Uzbek Central Committee’s permission, thus implicitly ruling out dekulakization. In the meantime, delegate Bel’skii frankly argued against the exile of kulak wives, reminding his comrades that most had been purchased by Central Asian kulaks who had two to three bought wives. He suggested that it would serve the class struggle not to exile such wives (often from poor families to begin with), but to give them to the *bedniak* (poor peasant) to win his support.⁹⁵ The conference resulted in a decree, “On Collectivization and the Struggle with Kulaks in National [and] Economically Backward Districts,” confirmed by the Politburo on 20 February. The decree was largely cautionary, with repeated injunctions against dekulakization without collectivization and on the need for preparation. The official policy for most of these areas remained the “limitation” of kulaks, continuing with the financial vise and a series of exclusionary laws. The decree was more harsh in regard to kulaks who sent their herds across the border or who themselves attempted to emigrate, calling for full property confiscation and a strengthening of border guards. In those regions which were actually undergoing wholesale collectivization, dekulakization was the order of the day. The OGPU was instructed to carry out the arrest of category-one kulaks in these areas by 15 March (350 in Dagestan, 1300 in Central Asia, 1200 in Transcaucasia, 100 in Buriatia).⁹⁶ At the second conference, Molotov also requested information from each region on the numbers of kulaks, categories, and so on. It was clear at this conference that many of the regions, most notably Moscow and Leningrad, had in fact gone ahead

with their own dekulakization campaigns. Leningrad's Kozlov requested permission to exile more kulaks, to which Stalin (in attendance with Iagoda) replied, "all you want immediately [*vse srazu khotite!*]"⁹⁷

Planning was grafted on to chaos. Reports of "naked dekulakization" (i.e., dekulakization separate from wholesale collectivization), night raids on villages, dekulakization of Red Army families, unauthorized (by OGPU) exiles, flight, and untold atrocities flooded into the OGPU. In addition to widespread violence and rioting, kulaks were destroying or selling their property and fleeing the countryside.⁹⁸ For the OGPU, whose concern had always been a well-ordered police operation, an overweening emphasis on security became paramount. The OGPU feared kulak penetration into towns, resort areas, and border zones, with its consequent socially destabilizing infection as much as, perhaps more than, it feared rural instability. The OGPU decree of 2 February had already ordered a strengthening of the guard at government installations, arsenals, and grain elevators as well as reinforced informant (*agentura*) work.⁹⁹ The OGPU ordered the arrest of all runaway kulaks, as first-category kulaks if they were counterrevolutionary elements and as second-category kulaks for the rest. The OGPU also ordered rural soviets not to give personal documents to kulaks and to report on cases of self-dekulakization.¹⁰⁰

In the towns, kulaks were reportedly registering at employment offices (*birzhy truda*) and, with the help of networks of *zemliaks* (peasants from the same districts) and fake papers from their rural soviets, finding employment in industry. The OGPU ordered its PPs to strengthen operative work to find these kulaks, increasing surveillance of night lodging, seasonal workers' dorms, tea houses, railroad stations, and especially Peasant Houses (the *domy krest'ian*, which provided social and legal services to peasants in many cities). They were also to strengthen their work with the trade unions which, following the Politburo decree of 30 January, were supposedly carrying out a purge of *individual* kulaks from industrial enterprises.¹⁰¹ An OGPU memo of 3 April to PPs would note an ongoing effort to purge towns of counterrevolutionary elements fleeing from the countryside, while it simultaneously decried arbitrary arrests of poor and middle peasants lacking correct documentation and demanded stepped-up surveillance and informant (*agentura*) work among *zemliak* networks and in the towns in general.¹⁰²

The OGPU was also worried about border zones. Illegal emigration, contraband activity (in kulak property), and security were behind its 2 February orders to strengthen border guards and, later, a 5 March Politburo decision to exile from the border zones of Belorussia and right-bank Ukraine the families of those arrested for banditry, espionage, counterrevolutionary work, and contraband, as well as all

kulaks irrespective of the level of collectivization, beginning with those of Polish nationality. Subject to exile were three thousand to thirty-five hundred families from Belorussia and ten to fifteen thousand families from Ukraine.¹⁰³

The army, by this time, figured no less importantly in OGPU's worries. The OGPU decree of 2 February had stipulated that Red Army troops were not to be drawn into operations "under any circumstances [*ni v koem sluchae*]." Their use was limited to extreme cases (insurrections) and then only with the agreement of regional organizations and the revolutionary-military soviets; even then PPs would use only soldiers carefully screened by the OGPU special organs.¹⁰⁴ Although this directive was violated at times,¹⁰⁵ its motivation was security, the fear of using peasant recruits to repress their own families. The 2 February decree had also ordered 100 percent review of letters to soldiers.¹⁰⁶ It soon became clear that peasants were sending letters in the tens of thousands to their sons, brothers, and husbands in the army about the atrocities in the countryside. On 17 March, Iagoda wrote to Ol'skii, Evdokimov, and Messing about an increased "kulak mood" among soldiers. He noted that relatives were not only sending letters but coming directly to the barracks to complain and solicit support. He ordered the arrest of kulaks who complained directly to the army, as well as strict enforcement of the confiscation of letters.¹⁰⁷ In the villages—despite central directives—the families of soldiers were frequently subjected to dekulakization. On 1 March, Iagoda sent an angry note to his PPs reminding them that the "directives of OGPU were clear" on this issue.¹⁰⁸

En Route

By 6 May 1930, 98,002 peasant families (501,290 people) designated as category-two kulaks had left their villages to journey under guard to their places of exile; of this number, 66,445 families (342,545 people) were exiled beyond their native regions, while 31,557 families (158,745 people) were resettled in distant and desolate, uninhabited areas in their own regions. By the end of 1930, from 112,000 to 113,000 families (550,558 to 551,330 people), depending on the source, had been subjected to category-two exile, most ending up in the North (46,623 families; 230,370 people), Urals (30,474 families; 145,205 people) Western Siberia (15,590 families; 76,130 people), or Eastern Siberia (12,047 families; 55,792 people).¹⁰⁹ Transport occurred in numbered echelons, by train, leaving from regional collection points and disembarking at transit points in the cities of exile regions to await further transport into the interior to the special settlements. The echelons began to

leave from mid February, with continuing departures into March and April. Some trains traveled as long as sixteen days between points of embarkment and disembarkment. According to incomplete data on 510,096 exiles (from 20 May), 194,230 were children, 162,889 were adult men, and 147,906 were adult women. Each family was permitted officially to bring up to thirty *puds* of supplies and up to 500 rubles in cash. The OGPU pledged an “uninterrupted supply” of boiled water en route.¹¹⁰

Conditions were terrible. The plunder that accompanied dekulakization frequently (if not generally) meant that families lacked the requisite food supplies and warm clothing for their journey. According to an OGPU report, there were cases of a “second dekulakization” of exiles en route in the Urals, suggesting that theft and continuing “expropriations” may not have stopped in the village.¹¹¹ The OGPU reported that many exiles, especially those from the south, lacked warm clothing; exiles from Maikop arrived in summer clothing, some barefooted. On 23 February, in view of the freezing weather and possibility of mass frostbite, especially among children, the OGPU instructed its PPs in the Urals to halt further transport into the interior and to house exiles in the nearest villages. Frostbite was already widespread.¹¹² On 5 March, the OGPU “categorically” ordered its PPs to ensure that kulak families had the requisite food supplies.¹¹³

The *proizvol* (or arbitrariness) of dekulakization also manifested itself in the irrational and slapdash makeup of the exile contingents. Children of all ages, the elderly, families without able-bodied workers, and families separated from mothers all appeared on the trains. Echelon #401 from the Lower Volga carried more than 190 people over seventy years of age alongside fathers and small children without mothers.¹¹⁴ A 3 March note from the OGPU to its PP in the Lower Volga stated, with reference to echelon #401: “It is hard to imagine that eighty- and ninety-year-olds represent a danger to the revolutionary order,” adding that it was “completely incomprehensible” that families should be exiled without the head of the family—an interesting contradiction to stated policy, at least in regard to the fate of category-one kulak families who explicitly were to be deported without their arrested heads of households.¹¹⁵

On 18 March, the OGPU again ordered its Lower Volga PP not to exile the families of first- and second-category kulaks if there were no able-bodied family members. The OGPU also ordered its PP to halt the exile of non-able-bodied elderly peasants.¹¹⁶ At the arrival points, the able-bodied were separated out so that they could be transferred to the local economic administrative agencies (*khozorgany*) for work, while their families were kept in place temporarily or sent on to the new special settlements.¹¹⁷ Initially at least, in the Urals, no temporary barracks existed,

so on detraining, kulaks left immediately for the interior. The local population was forced to provide some thirty thousand carts for transport. In the North, kulaks remained temporarily housed in barracks or churches until weather conditions permitted transport into the interior.¹¹⁸ By 19 March, 134,131 people had arrived in the North, with 29,042 still en route and 70,827 still to transport; in the Urals, 60,141 had arrived, 1838 were en route, and 29,021 still awaited transport.¹¹⁹

On 20 March, the OGPU wrote to all PPs in districts of wholesale collectivization that the time was fast approaching when the spring thaw would make the roads impassible (the *rasputitsa*) in Siberia and the Urals. Kulaks were to arrive with boots or else be detained in the collection points.¹²⁰ On 23 March, the OGPU again wrote its PPs that “despite our directives” echelons continued to arrive on which large numbers of families had neither food nor money. Arriving on 19 March, families in echelon #421 from the Lower Volga had food for no more than one week. The OGPU warned its PPs that if all food had been “expropriated” from a family, then it became the responsibility of local organizations to provide food *before* sending families off into exile.¹²¹

Data on 189 echelons indicated that 390 people (173 children, 168 women, and 49 men) were removed from trains due to illness, while 58 (47 children, 10 men, 1 woman) died en route.¹²² Doubtless these numbers say little about actual cases of illness, given the likelihood of families hiding illness to prevent separation. Conditions in the transit points were as bad if not worse than on the trains. On 15 February, the OGPU had warned its PPs in the Urals and the North to take all essential measures to prevent and localize infectious disease and called on the People’s Commissariat of Health to be prepared to struggle with epidemics.¹²³ On 20 March, a People’s Commissariat of Health inspector filed a report on conditions in transit points in Arkhangel’sk (where up to twenty-four thousand people were housed) and Vologda (with up to twenty thousand people). The inspector decried the unhygienic conditions of barracks, the lack of bathing facilities (especially for children), and the absence or distant placement of waste facilities. He wrote that all available buckets were used for waste products, thus making it impossible to boil water. He claimed a “colossal” mortality rate among the children and concluded that epidemic illnesses were also threatening the local population.¹²⁴

On 28 March, PP Austrin of the North also filed a report on the conditions of exiles. By 26 March, 95 of 130 echelons had arrived in the North, carrying 169,901 people (approximately 32 percent men, 31 percent women, and 38 percent children), of whom 45,613 were able-bodied workers and 124,288 not. The able-bodied were put to work immediately in the forestry industry or in the construction of the special

settlements, while, in the meantime, many of their families were housed temporarily in district towns. There was no clear decision about how to feed the families, although a “hunger” norm of 1300 calories was initially set. By the end of March, in Arkhangel’sk alone, 5293 people (including 2677 children) had fallen ill and 200 (including 189 children) had died.¹²⁵ Very few had continued their journey into the interior. Most remained in transit points, housed in barracks or churches. Living conditions were crowded, with about one square meter of space per person. Sanitary conditions were wretched, leading in consequence to high mortality rates among the children. The report concluded that the North was not prepared for the settlement of the exiles and lacked any clear plan for fulfilling their material needs.¹²⁶ Dysentery, scarlet fever, measles, and eventually typhus would spread widely in the North and elsewhere, especially among children, due to near starvation conditions, the intense cold, and the appalling lack of even the most primitive sanitary conditions.

Consequences

The OGPU’s chief concern was security, and it was this concern that underlay the OGPU’s and especially Iagoda’s criticism of its PPs and other organs involved in dekulakization rather than any concern for exiles per se. The removal of category-one kulaks, supposedly the most troublesome of the lot, was part of a strategy designed to minimize instability in the villages.¹²⁷ The OGPU had also taken measures to create reserve forces in the towns to help in dekulakization. The OGPU instructed all PPs to create secret operative reserves of workers, communists, and komsomols to assist the OGPU reserve troops from Moscow and Leningrad if the need arose.¹²⁸ In the Urals, working class militias (*druzhiny*) were created (including soldiers, militia, workers, and communists).¹²⁹ In all, 7257 OGPU troops were employed in operations with an additional 4200 soldiers on loan from the Red Army. The troops were involved in deportations, removal of first-category kulaks, the liquidation of revolts, and the struggle with “bandits.”¹³⁰

Active resistance among the special settlers appears to have been relatively rare, but not nonexistent.¹³¹ On 18 March, special settlers from echelon #139 in Vologodskii county, Northern region, refused to move into their barracks and headed back to the railroad station demanding to go home. Shots fired into the air by the commandant and two soldiers sufficed to turn the rebels back, still angry and threatening to leave all the same in two hours.¹³² On 19 March at 8:00 A.M., five kilometers outside Kotlas, a party of fifteen hundred exiles refused to move on (from their camp) to the settle-

ment to which they were assigned. Someone sounded the tocsin (*nabat*) and, in no time, seven thousand peasants gathered for a “meeting.” The crowd attempted to disarm the OGPU workers. At 9:00 A.M. a special OGPU operational detachment of two thousand troops, on skis, was called out. In the meantime, the OGPU workers went into hiding to cries of “down with Soviet power.” The crowd dispersed when the troops arrived. The troops surrounded the barracks, arrested the ringleaders, and posted sentries, thus putting an end to the revolt but not preventing the burning of the troops’ barracks at midnight.¹³³

Echelon #416 heading to Kotlas was made up of Khoperskii and Stalingradskii county Cossacks said to be in an “insurrectionary mood” according to a 30 March report from Saratov. A riot broke out at the time of departure. On 5 April, with the echelon already in Severo-Dvinskii county, the authorities began to prepare to separate out the able-bodied for transport to employment sites further north, thus splitting up families. The Cossacks demanded that the commandant reconsider. Failing that, they surrounded the commandant’s offices, cut the telephone lines, and began hurling rocks and bricks. The Severo-Dvinskii county department of the OGPU sent in thirty five soldiers to put down the rebellion of 250 people, of whom twenty five would be sent on to the PP *troika*.¹³⁴ On 6 April in the Urals, a group of sixty people from Crimea attempted to organize a demonstration to stop the movement of people further into the interior for forestry work. In all 950 men refused to go on. On 14 April, one thousand people demonstrated in front of the rural soviet, demanding to be sent to a warmer climate and given land and food. The people continued to demonstrate for the next two days.¹³⁵ In the towns of Vologda and Arkhangel’sk, there were reports of kulaks “dekulakizing the dekulakizers.”¹³⁶

A mid-April report on exiles in Tiumenskii county noted that the special settlers were sometimes met en route with bread and salt or surrounded by peasants plying them with supplies as they passed through villages on their way to the interior. This report claimed “mass dissatisfaction” among exiles, particularly the Kuban Cossacks, who supposedly agitated among exiles to resist.¹³⁷ Exiles often were moved to rebellion when families were split, if even temporarily, to send able-bodied workers into the interior for labor or to build the nonexistent special settlements. Splitting of families was also an important factor in escapes.

Escapes from transit points and special settlements were a major problem from the outset. In the North, as of April, there was only one commandant for every five thousand exiles, making escapes almost inevitable.¹³⁸ An OGPU directive of 7 April to PPs noted that GPU Belorussia and GPU Ukraine had reported cases of exiled kulaks returning to their native villages. PPs were told to take decisive measures

to prevent escapes, including the organization of checkpoints at railway stations. Escaped kulaks were to be sent back to their place of exile, and especially counter-revolutionary elements were to be sent to the *troikas* for the application of brutal (*zhestkaia*) measures of punishment (including execution).¹³⁹ By 30 May, reports from the Belorussian and Ukrainian GPUs claimed that flight from the North was widespread. The OGPU ordered PPs to strengthen informant work among exiles. It also instituted a system of collective responsibility (*krugovaia poruka*) among exiles, first apparently used in the Urals and then applied elsewhere from July.¹⁴⁰ An elder was selected for every ten exiles to watch for runaways, and all exiles had to sign for collective responsibility. PPs were instructed to get the local population involved (through rewards) in the capture of runaways and to find out how and where kulaks were getting fictitious documents.¹⁴¹ By the summer, the problem of escapes had become massive: 2500 to 3000 people had run from Siberia; 30 to 40 per day fled from the Urals in the first months; 14,123 had escaped in the North by 1 June, in some cases simply running away from work detachments in the interior and back to their families. The OGPU held a conference on the issue on 5 July 1930. It recommended again the strengthening of informant (*agentura*) work, collective responsibility, and inspections of trains and ships. Most of all, the OGPU recognized that bad living conditions were sending kulaks into flight and recommended improvements.¹⁴²

Kulaks were obtaining false documents in order to escape. In Vologda, there was widespread speculation in fake documents, and the OGPU discovered two illegal organizations involved in their preparation.¹⁴³ In Tagil'skii county, kulaks were given work books that identified them simply as seasonal workers rather than "special settlers," thereby facilitating flight.¹⁴⁴ Friends and relatives of special settlers also played a role in escapes. They were deluged by letters from their relatives in exile. An exile in Vologda wrote, "The bread we brought with us has been taken and now they give us nothing. We are hungry and tortured. Up to thirty-five souls die a day. Share our letter with all the villagers and write to the newspapers about how we live."¹⁴⁵ The July conference reported that in the North, the OGPU had turned back 2225 relatives coming to visit exiles, from whom it confiscated 376 false documents and 152 blank documents. Relatives were no longer allowed to visit.¹⁴⁶ Furthermore, kulaks could only receive postcards, telegrams, money, and packages to ease the censors' work.¹⁴⁷ In Ukraine, a "movement" developed for the return of kulaks in thirty-two counties, spearheaded by relatives receiving alarming letters from exiles. Relatives sent petitions, delegations, and even involved their rural soviets in providing documentation to try to overturn cases.¹⁴⁸

Contradictory rulings on kulak children complicated escape issues. Following relatives' desperate requests to take children home, on 20 April OGPU instructed PPs to allow children under fourteen to return to their villages if parents agreed and relatives were willing to assume responsibility. On 21 April, the age was lowered to under ten.¹⁴⁹ There was apparently some debate, perhaps only in the North, about whether to cease returning children. At the July conference, the Northern representatives asked for the cessation of the return program, but this request was crossed out at the end of the protocols of the meeting.¹⁵⁰ By December, the Northern PP reported that 35,400 children had been sent home.¹⁵¹ Apparently, many initial escapes were of children with parents or alone, given the horrible conditions of life.¹⁵²

By late October 1930, the statistics on escapes were alarming (see table 4).¹⁵³

Table 4. Escapes Up to October 1930

<u>Region</u>	<u>Escapes</u>	<u>Recaptured</u>
North	29,035	16,368
Urals	6,000	1,365
Siberia	12,000	3,807
Kazakhstan	1,400	8
Far East	50	12

In future years, flight would continue to be a major problem, reaching a high point in the famine years of 1932–1933 (see table 5).¹⁵⁴

Table 5. Escapes, 1932–1935

<u>Year</u>	<u>1932</u>	<u>1933</u>	<u>1934</u>	<u>1935</u>
Escapes	207,010	215,856	87,617	43,070
Recaptured	37,978	54,211	45,443	33,238

Palliative Measures

The chaos and catastrophe of the first phase of deportations led to a series of ameliorative policies, some but not all coinciding with Stalin's article of 2 March, "Dizziness with Success." The latter had a less direct impact on second-category kulak exiles, given the government's concern to continue with the deportations to

remove what it saw as potential sources of village instability. The enactment of some palliative measures, the creation of the Bergavinov commission, and a series of institutional reforms were the government's answer to the catastrophe. The government was not aiming at reform but at preserving social stability and a work force.

The special settlers' experience continually outdistanced planning. Cold, hunger, inadequate housing, and outbreaks of infectious disease were leading to increasing incidences of illness and death, with the mortality rates among children described as "colossal" (see above). As early as 15 February (but still not early enough), the OGPU had instructed its PPs in the North and the Urals to take measures for the timely localization of epidemics, enlisting them to see that local organizations of the People's Commissariat of Health were prepared.¹⁵⁵ On 16 February, the OGPU told its Urals PP that 75,000 rubles had been allotted to provide for sanitary measures and bathhouses.¹⁵⁶ On 7 March, the OGPU informed its Northern PP that 50,000 rubles had been allotted to the regional Commissariat of Health agency for medical services and that medical personnel were on their way.¹⁵⁷ Inspectors from the People's Commissariat of Health reported on the conditions among northern special settlers in mid March, calling for a mobilization of doctors and medicine.¹⁵⁸ By 10 April, 1.5 million rubles had been allotted for epidemic prevention, as disease spread among local populations as well as among special settlers.¹⁵⁹ On 27 March, Bergavinov sent an urgent telegram to the Politburo pleading for medical aid for the North. The Politburo's response was to forbid any mention of typhus in the press.¹⁶⁰ The Russian Republic Council of People's Commissars set up a commission to fight epidemics under Tolmachev. Throughout the months of spring and early summer, central directives urged the People's Commissariat of Health to mobilize medical personnel, disinfection units, and medicine for settler regions.¹⁶¹ Although there is some evidence to suggest that the raging epidemics abated somewhat in 1931, epidemics remained common into 1931 and included measles, scarlet fever, scurvy, dysentery, typhus, smallpox, and tuberculosis.¹⁶²

Some palliative measures were taken to provide special settlers with food. The OGPU repeatedly reminded its PPs in districts of wholesale collectivization to allow kulaks to take food and money with them according to the standard norm and to be allowed to receive food packages and money transfers while in exile.¹⁶³ On 7 March, the People's Commissariat of Trade was instructed to guarantee provisions for special settlers in the North for six months (until self-sufficiency could be achieved) according to the following norms: 300 grams of bread, 20 grams of groats, 2 grams of mixed flour, 75 grams of lard in exchange for herring, and 6 grams of sugar. Local resources were to provide potatoes and USLON (*upravlenie*

solovetskikh lagerei osobogo naznacheniia, or the Administration of Solovetskii Special Designation Camps) was to provide 80 tons of cabbage and 25 tons of onions from its reserves.¹⁶⁴ As of 28 March, according to a report from the North, there was still no decision taken as to how to provision families without laborers.¹⁶⁵ On 7 April, the OGPU instructed its Urals PP to provide the following food norms for its special settlers: 200 grams of flour, 2 grams of mixed flour, 20 grams of groats, 6 grams of sugar, 6 grams of *detpitaniie* (a special children's nutritional supplement), 75 grams of fish, 3 grams of tea, 7 grams of salt, 7 grams of margarine for children, 100 grams of cabbage, and 195 grams of potatoes.¹⁶⁶ Although on 27 June, the Politburo instructed the People's Commissariat of Trade to supply special settlers in the North and in the Urals from the emergency reserve fund (*neprikosnovennyi fond*), the rule seems to have been chaos in supply, with some instructions indicating that economic administrative agencies that employed special settlers were responsible for food supply and others pointing to the People's Commissariat of Trade and/or local organizations.¹⁶⁷

Decisions were also taken in 1930 to provide credit for food and other supplies (including agricultural inventory), draught horses, and lumber for construction.¹⁶⁸ On 11 April, the newly created Schmidt commission assigned 5 million rubles credit (from the USSR Council of People's Commissars) to exiles for resettlement, and on 9 July the Council of People's Commissars added another 1 million rubles for purchasing horses for the North.¹⁶⁹ Continued (and slow) work on housing construction in the special settlements led to sustained conflict over economic resources. The OGPU told its PP in the Urals on 21 February that its request for 3.7 million rubles for barracks was "exaggerated" and that only 500,000 would be provided to house temporarily fifteen thousand families.¹⁷⁰ On 26 March, the OGPU also told its Northern PP that its request for building materials was "exaggerated."¹⁷¹ By April, the OGPU was demanding that the economic administrative agencies provide housing for workers and their families and take charge of the construction of the special settlements.¹⁷² On 26 April, the OGPU told its Siberian PP again that the economic administrative agencies should provide housing for exiles, although that would mean, as it did in September in the North, that able-bodied workers had to be moved temporarily from their employment to housing construction for their families.¹⁷³ Although all exiles were supposed to be transported to their final destinations by September at the latest (at least in the North), housing and resettlement problems continued into the fall and beyond.¹⁷⁴ As kulaks came to be employed by the economic administrative agencies, the agencies were expected to supply rations at free worker norms to exiles, while providing a wage 25 percent below the norm

(25 percent for guard services).¹⁷⁵

An additional response to the disaster of early 1930 was the formation on 10 April at the regional level of temporary commissions to weed out peasants who had been incorrectly exiled.¹⁷⁶ These commissions followed the example of the Bergavinov Politburo commission (Bergavinov, chair; with members Tolmachev, Russian Republic People's Commissar of Internal Affairs; Iagoda; Lebed; Tuchkov, OGPU; and Eremin, People's Commissariat of Justice), organized on 5 April, to check mistakes in exile in the North.¹⁷⁷ Prior to the organization of these commissions, haphazard decisions en route or at collection points to release incorrect exiles were sometimes taken. The OGPU told its Northern PP on 7 March to house incorrect exiles separately, close to railway stations, in order to return them if necessary.¹⁷⁸ According to a 9 March report on echelon #308 from the Central Black Earth region, 153 people were freed (including two eighty-year-old parents of soldiers) on local initiative.¹⁷⁹ On 28 March, the OGPU instructed its PPs in the North, Urals, and Siberia to check all complaints, to separate incorrect exiles, improve their conditions, and tell them that they would be resettled in special settlements as free citizens, with land, inventory, animals, and seed.¹⁸⁰

There was conflict over the issue of the return of incorrect exiles. A letter of 25 April from Iagoda to the Northern PP indicated that Tolmachev's subcommission (see below) had decided to return all incorrect exiles. Iagoda wrote not to return them "under any circumstances," as they would complicate further work on dekulakization.¹⁸¹ On the same day, Iagoda and Ol'skii instructed the Northern PP under no circumstances to return former members of various civil war antibolshevik peasant and nationalist partisan groups.¹⁸² In the end—or at least as of 10 May—a decision had been taken not to return any incorrect exiles from the North with the exception of the relatives of civil-war veterans and soldiers, while allowing others to work as "free" citizens with special privileges in industry, agriculture, and other rural occupations.¹⁸³

Information from the Bergavinov commission indicated that as of May, 35,000 of 46,261 exiled families had submitted complaints, of which the commission (via special county subcommissions, barracks commissions, and personal investigations) had examined 23,360 families. The commission concluded that 77.7 percent of these families were exiled correctly, 8 percent were doubtful, and 6 percent were incorrectly exiled. The doubtful cases would be reviewed again by the OGPU through the special county commissions by 1 June.¹⁸⁴ Tolmachev and Eremin both objected to the commission's report and submitted their own dissenting report which was subsequently rejected. They objected to the majority report, claiming that up to 60

percent of exiles in certain areas had been incorrectly exiled and that the general percentage was around 15 percent, with doubtful cases at 10 percent. They attempted to insert into their report the following clause: “given that it is impossible to define fully [and] precisely the number of incorrect exiles” and taking into account that some *troikas* found up to 60 percent incorrect exiles, “10 percent incorrect exiles is a minimal figure . . . [and we] consider it essential to return to the village all 10 percent.” Not only did they present radically different percentages, but also urged a general return of incorrect exiles.¹⁸⁵ Bergavinov objected strenuously, writing that all the “rumors” of incorrect exile were tantamount to the “slander of local party and soviet organs and through them the policy of the party.” Bergavinov also suggested that Tolmachev went to Arkhangel’sk determined to find excesses and that his slogan to the subcommission there was “*ne stesniaisia*”—that is, don’t be afraid to take a liberal approach.¹⁸⁶ In the end, Bergavinov submitted the statistics outlined in table 6 from his inspection of “incorrect,” “correct,” and “doubtful” exiles.

Table 6. Analysis of Exiles to the North

<u>Region of Origin</u>	<u>Incorrect No.</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Correct No.</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Doubtful No.</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Total</u>
Ukraine	943	9	8,644	82.4	908	8.6	10,495
Lower Volga	321	9.2	2,720	77.6	462	13.2	3,503
Central Black Earth	751	16.5	2,888	63	938	10.5	4,577
Middle Volga	192	6.1	2,614	82.8	349	11.1	3,177
Belorussia	134	8.3	1,290	79.1	206	12.6	1,630

Complaints continued to pour in from exiles. On 5 July, at its conference on the escapes of special settlers, the OGPU told its PPs not to examine complaints about incorrect exiles. On 24 September, the All-Russian Central Executive Committee established a special commission under Shotman to examine complaints, and by 19 October the OGPU told its PPs in the North, Urals, Siberia, and Far East that regional commissions would henceforth examine all complaints.¹⁸⁷

The administrative and organizational mayhem undergirding the campaign was not the least important factor in the tragedy of the 1930 deportations. The Politburo and OGPU conducted the operation in an ad hoc, haphazard, emergency fashion, formulating plans and policy “*na khodu*” (along the way) as one functionary put it.¹⁸⁸ While the OGPU had exclusive control over category-one kulaks and a central role in the deportation and transportation of category-two kulaks from the very beginning of operations, it was only on 1 April that the USSR Council of People’s Commis-

sars created a commission to take charge of actual resettlement issues. The USSR Council of People's Commissars commission, chaired by Shmidt, was to serve as a central organizing command for issues concerning special settlers.¹⁸⁹ Concrete work on policy implementation (provisioning, land clearing, resettlement, and labor use) was left to the regional soviet executive committees. The OGPU was to remain in charge of observation and other "chekist services."¹⁹⁰ On the RSFSR level, Tolmachev chaired an additional (Russian Republic Council of People's Commissars) commission on second- and third-category kulak issues, a commission that existed from 9 March to 13 August 1930 and appears to have paralleled the Shmidt commission in directing the work of the commissariats and regional soviet executive committees regarding kulak resettlement. The People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs administered the special settlements through its commandant departments (*komendantskie otdely*) and the militia, with the participation of the district soviet executive committees and the district departments of the GPU.¹⁹¹

In the meantime, from late winter to early spring 1930, very nearly every institution in the USSR became involved in one aspect or another of the operation. The People's Commissariat of Agriculture's Main Migration Administration worked on resettlement, especially land surveys, while its regional branches complained as early as April that their responsibilities were unclear, as were budgetary issues and relations with the OGPU. Problems were attributed to the absence of a preliminary plan of work and preparation; one report stated that it normally took four years to survey and prepare land for settlers, while now it was a question of only months. When the Tolmachev commission was dissolved on 13 August 1930, responsibility for the special settlers in the Russian Republic devolved directly onto the relevant republic-level commissariats. The two most important roles belonged to the People's Commissariat of Agriculture for the Russian Republic (for land and agriculture issues) and the Supreme Council of the People's Economy for the Russian Republic (for industrial employment).¹⁹² The People's Commissariats of Finance, Trade, and Supply would be drawn into supply problems; the People's Commissariat of Education into the construction of schools for exile children; the People's Commissariat of Labor and the Supreme Council of the National Economy into industrial employment issues; the People's Commissariat of Justice into complaints and legal matters; the People's Commissariat of Transportation into transport; the People's Commissariat of Health into epidemic and other health measures; while all levels of the party, OGPU, commissariats, and soviet apparatus were involved in one aspect or another of the operation. During all this time the OGPU appears to have played the combined roles of conductor, information conduit, troubleshooter, and whistle-

blower, constantly involving itself and interfering in the resettlement process. The organizational structure remained chaotic at least until 11 March 1931 when the Politburo established the Andreev commission to oversee all matters relating to dekulakization and special settlers.¹⁹³ Finally on 1 July 1931, the USSR Council of People's Commissars transferred from the regional soviet executive committees all administrative and financial issues to the OGPU, leaving it to farm out exile labor, via contract, to the economic administrative agencies, although an earlier protocol of the Andreev commission had already made this decision on 15 May (confirmed by the Politburo on 20 May) 1931.¹⁹⁴ An OGPU Department of Special Settlements (*otdel spetsposelenii*, or OSP) replaced the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs commandant departments whose personnel was transferred to the OGPU's department.¹⁹⁵ By mid 1931, the OGPU was at the organizational center of the campaign.

Conclusion

From early January 1930, the OGPU endeavored to take over the patchwork of repressive practices, procedures, and policies that had developed during the previous six months from a complex combination of regional and central initiatives and legislation and that came to be subsumed under the heading of dekulakization. Dekulakization "took off" regionally once Stalin proclaimed the policy of the "liquidation of the kulak as a class" in late December 1929. Soon after, the OGPU and its regional organs stepped in to take control of what by that time amounted to a disorganized, destabilizing, and at times frenzied punitive operation lacking coordination and planning, not to mention foresight. Motivated by concerns of security and central control, the OGPU delivered a preemptive strike against category-one kulaks, surgically removing what maximalists in the government perceived as the greatest political threat in the countryside. At the same time, the OGPU and its regional organs began to formulate a hurried series of plans for the operation against category-two kulaks, an operation already underway in many parts of the country. The OGPU thus began both planning and operational procedures prior to the convocation of the Molotov Politburo commission, traditionally viewed as the prime mover of dekulakization.

The Politburo decree on dekulakization of 30 January 1930 was grafted onto a preexisting, albeit hastily improvised, OGPU operational plan, which, in turn, very likely was shaped by dekulakization practices in the regions. The OGPU, not the

Communist party and not the soviet administrative hierarchy, led dekulakization and the deportations. As noted above, Iagoda said in reference to dekulakization, “we lead *all* the Union.” What this essentially meant was that Stalin and the Politburo had handed over control of a key operation with momentous political and economic implications to the OGPU, thereby allowing the OGPU to take the first step toward the institutional aggrandizement that would turn it into a state within a state by 1937.

In 1930, the OGPU was the only institution in the Soviet Union capable of administering a policy of such vast dimensions as dekulakization. And although the OGPU was not initially intended to maintain its central role beyond dekulakization and deportation and into the actual resettlement process, its powers as an information gatherer, enforcement agency, and troubleshooter led it to continue to play a major role in resettlement through 1930 and until the Politburo finally turned once again to the OGPU in mid 1931 to take over the emerging empire of special settlements.

There was no master plan for dekulakization. The added tragedy of what was from the outset one of the most monumentally brutal acts of the twentieth century was that there was so little foresight and planning behind an operation that would eventually forcibly relocate close to 2 million people, resulting in tens of thousands of deaths and incalculable suffering. In his classic study of Smolensk under Soviet rule, Merle Fainsod concluded that, “it was the very inefficiency of the state machine which helped make it [Soviet power] tolerable.”¹⁹⁶ In the exercise of mass campaigns of repression, precisely the reverse of Fainsod’s maxim was true. The “inefficiencies,” the criminal negligence, and the administrative weaknesses of the Soviet government augmented the atrocities of the times, whether in dekulakization and special resettlement or in the “Great Purge” and the concentration camp system. The archival documents examined in this study reveal how little control even the OGPU had over the cataclysm of dekulakization. A cloak of order constructed of intricate plans and amazingly detailed instructions hid the greater reality of policy and planning “*na khodu*,” a reality that, in part, defined as much as described the tragedy of dekulakization, mass deportations, and the special resettlements in 1930.

Notes

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1. V. P. Danilov and S. A. Krasil'nikov, eds., *Spetspereselentsy v Zapadnoi Sibiri, 1930–1945*, 4 vols. (Novosibirsk, 1992–1996), 3: 13.
2. We do not have complete access to the records of key Politburo and other commissions relevant to our topic, nor do we have complete access to OGPU files on dekulakization and special settlers. My own work in the archives is complemented here by documents coming available through the five-volume documentary history in progress, V. P. Danilov, R. T. Manning, and L. Viola, eds., *Tragediia sovetskoi derevni* (Moscow: Rosspen, forthcoming; hereafter cited as *Tragediia*) and the many fine documentary publications that have been released in recent years. Because of the incomplete state of knowledge on the topic, all conclusions are tentative.
3. Rossiiskii tsentr khraneniia i izucheniia dokumentov noveishei istorii (RTsKhIDNI), f. 17, op. 162, d. 9, ll. 138, 161; f. 17, op. 162, d. 10, ll. 51–54; Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii (GARF), f. 9479, op. 1, d. 2, ll. 10–16; f. 9479, op. 1, d. 949, l. 77.
4. This article is intended to complement the work of N. A. Ivinskii, *Kollektivizatsiia i raskulachivanie (nachalo 30-kh godov)* (Moscow, 1994), who was the first historian to begin the attempt to clarify the role of the OGPU in dekulakization.
5. GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1943, l. 136.
6. “[O]t politiki *ogranicheniia* ekspluatatorskikh tendentsii kulachestva my pereshli k politike *likvidatsii* kulachestva, kak klassa.” I. Stalin, *Sochineniia*, 13 vols. (Moscow, 1946–1952), 12: 166 (italics in original). See the discussion in *Trudy pervoi vsesoiuznoi konferentsii agrarnikov-marksistov*, 2 vols. (Moscow, 1930).
7. Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Riazanskoi oblasti (GARO), f. 2, op. 1, d. 236, ll. 8–16.
8. For further information, see R. W. Davies, *The Socialist Offensive: The Collectivisation of Soviet Agriculture, 1929-1930* (Cambridge, Mass., 1980); N. Ia. Gushchin, *Raskulachivanie v Sibiri (1928–1934 gg.)* (Novosibirsk, 1996), 51; and M. Lewin, *Russian Peasants and Soviet Power: A Study of Collectivization*, trans. Irene Nove (New York, 1968), part 2.
9. Tsentral'nyi arkhiv federal'noi sluzhby bezopasnosti (FSB), f. 2, op. 6, d. 567, ll. 278–81,

409, 498–504. These documents are derived from *Tragediia*, cited above. All further documents from this project are prefaced by *Tragediia* and followed by an archival citation number.

10. Gushchin, 47–49; *Tragediia*: GARF, f. 1235, op. 140, d. 1250, ll. 6–2.
11. *Tragediia*: FSB, f. 2, op. 5, d. 394, ll. 76–78; f. 2, op. 7, d. 523, ll. 1–8; RTsKhIDNI, f. 17, op. 3, d. 667, ll. 10–12.
12. *Tragediia*: RTsKhIDNI, f. 17, op. 3, d. 746, l. 10. See also the discussion in James Hughes, *Stalinism in a Russian Province: Collectivization and Dekulakization in Siberia* (London, 1996).
13. Lynne Viola, *Peasant Rebels Under Stalin: Collectivization and the Peasant Culture of Resistance* (New York, 1996), 79–80.
14. Lynne Viola, “The Case of Krasnyi Meliorator or ‘How the Kulak Grows Into Socialism’,” *Soviet Studies* 38, no. 4 (Oct. 1986): 510.
15. *Ibid.*, 510–11.
16. *Kolkhozsentr*, 1927–1932, was the agency in charge of the new collective farm system, nominally under the jurisdiction of the People’s Commissariat of Agriculture.
17. Viola, “Krasnyi Meliorator,” 511.
18. *Ibid.*, 511–12, 522.
19. RTsKhIDNI, f. 17, op. 162, d. 7, ll. 22–23.
20. *Ibid.*, ll. 158, 171.
21. *Tragediia*: RTsKhIDNI, f. 17, op. 3, d. 761, l. 17.
22. Lynne Viola, “The Campaign to Eliminate the Kulak as a Class, Winter 1929–1930: A Reevaluation of the Legislation,” *Slavic Review* 45, no. 3 (Fall 1986): 508; RTsKhIDNI, f. 17, op. 32, d. 184, ll. 8, 16, 18–19; Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi arkhiv ekonomiki (RGAE), f. 5675, op. 1, d. 23a, ll. 42–41.
23. RGAE, f. 7486, op. 37, d. 40, l. 190.
24. Viola, “Campaign,” 508–09.
25. The best discussion of the planning process remains Davies, *The Socialist Offensive*,

chap. 4. In Russian, N. A. Ivnickii published the most important evidence on this process. Among his valuable works, see especially, “Istoriia podgotovki postanovleniia TsK VKP (b) o tempakh kollektivizatsii sel’skogo khoziaistva ot 5 ianvaria 1930 g.,” *Istochnikovedenie istorii sovetского obshchestva*, vol. 1 (Moscow, 1964).

26. See Viola, “Campaign.”
27. RTsKhIDNI, f. 17, op. 2, d. 441, l. 70 (vol. 1).
28. *Ibid.*, ll. 56, 50.
29. *Ibid.*, l. 42.
30. RGAE, f. 7486, op. 37, d. 40, l. 220.
31. *Ibid.*, l. 229.
32. Khlebotsentr was the acronym for the All-Russian Union of Agriculture Cooperatives for the Production, Processing, and Sale of Grains and Oil Seeds (Vserossiskii soiuz sel’skokhoziaistvennykh kooperativov po proizvodstvu, pererabotke i sbytu zernovykh i maslichnykh kul’tur).
33. RGAE, f. 7486, op. 37, d. 40, l. 58.
34. *Ibid.*, ll. 58–54.
35. *Tragediia*: RTsKhIDNI, f. 17, op. 21, d. 2542, ll. 312–17.
36. See Ryskulov’s report in *Tragediia*: RTsKhIDNI, f. 85, op. 27, d. 385, ll. 2–5.
37. *Tragediia*: RTsKhIDNI, f. 17, op. 21, d. 2542, ll. 312–17.
38. *Tragediia*, Politburo Protocol #113 from 15 January 1930 (no archival citation number).
39. Information from personal conversation with N. A. Ivnickii.
40. RTsKhIDNI, f. 17, op. 162, d. 8, ll. 64–69. Published in *Istoricheskii arkhiv*, no. 4 (1994): 147–52.
41. RGAE, f. 7486, op. 37, d. 38, ll. 4–2.
42. *Tragediia*: RTsKhIDNI, f. 17, op. 3, d. 776, l. 14.

43. Viola, “Campaign,” 508; A. A. Bazarov, *Kulak i agrolug* (Cheliabinsk, 1991), 193.
44. I. E. Plotnikov, “Kak likvidirovali kulachestvo na Urale,” *Otechestvennaia istoriia*, no. 4 (1993): 159. (See text below for a reference to an even earlier North Caucasus decision.)
45. GARO, f. 2, op. 1, d. 236, ll. 8–16.
46. Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Moskovskoi oblasti (GAMO), f. 7121, op. 1, d. 1, ll. 301–04, 321, 322–28, 329.
47. RTsKhIDNI, f. 17, op. 32, d. 184, ll. 18, 28–29.
48. V. P. Danilov and N. A. Ivitskii, eds., *Dokumenty svidetel'stvuiut: Iz istorii derevni nakanune i v khode kollektivizatsii, 1927–1932 gg.* (Moscow, 1989), 318, 321–22.
49. Davies, *The Socialist Offensive*, 231.
50. See the reference to this request in GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1943, l. 27.
51. *Tragediia*: FSB, f. 2, op. 9, d. 21, ll. 393–94. Note the difference between Iagoda’s concern over the “rural class struggle . . . worsening” and the December Politburo commission’s conclusion that “the power of the kulak has weakened” (quoted above).
52. *Tragediia*: FSB, f. 2, op. 8, d. 337, l. 3.
53. *Ibid.*, ll. 5, 12–15. It is not yet clear to me what was going on in Belorussia. A. P. Vrublevskii and T. S. Prot’ko, *Iz istorii repressii protiv Belorusskogo krest’ianstva, 1929–1934 gg.* (Minsk, 1992), offers no clue.
54. On 16 January, a conference of regional GPU workers took place in North Caucasus to work out further plans on dekulakization, and on the same day Andreev telegraphed Stalin with a request for Central Committee sanction of their detailed plan for exile. *Tragediia*: FSB, f. 2, op. 8, d. 337, ll. 148–49; Ivitskii, *Kollektivizatsiia i raskulachivanie*, 123.
55. Ivitskii, *Kollektivizatsiia i raskulachivanie*, 122.
56. GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1944, ll. 12–14.
57. *Ibid.*, l. 15. Presumably, the Politburo was the “relevant institution.”
58. *Tragediia*: FSB, f. 2, op. 8, d. 35, ll. 222–24.
59. *Tragediia*: FSB, f. 2, op. 9, d. 21, ll. 396–97; He also called for the beginning of arrests

of first category kulaks here. Later, on 30 January, the Politburo would revoke the Moscow regional party committee decision. *Tragediia*: RTsKhIDNI, f. 17, op. 3, d. 775, ll. 15–16.

60. GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1944, l. 16. A similar directive went out to PPs in Leningrad, the Far East, and the Western region on 26 January (*ibid.*, l. 88).

61. *Tragediia*: FSB, f. 2, op. 8, d. 504, ll. 16–18.

62. *Tragediia*: FSB, f. 2, op. 8, d. 840, ll. 17–23.

63. Based on the Molotov Commission's work.

64. *Tragediia*: FSB, f. 2, op. 8, d. 35, ll. 1–8.

65. GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1943, ll. 27–28.

66. GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1944, ll. 17–25. Also published in *Neizvestnaia Rossiia: XX vek* (Moscow, 1992), 1: 237–45.

67. *Ibid.*; see also GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1943, ll. 28–29.

68. *Tragediia*: FSB, f. 2, op. 8, d. 329, l. 202. See also f. 2, op. 9, d. 21, ll. 395–97.

69. GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1944, ll. 17–25; *Neizvestnaia Rossiia*, 1: 237–45.

70. GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1944, ll. 26–30.

71. *Ibid.*, ll. 34–35.

72. *Ibid.*, ll. 31–32.

73. *Ibid.*, ll. 37–38.

74. *Ibid.*, ll. 42–50.

75. *Ibid.*, ll. 51–60.

76. *Ibid.*, ll. 61–64.

77. *Tragediia*: FSB, f. 2, op. 8, d. 35, ll. 25–28.

78. *Tragediia*: FSB, f. 2, op. 9, d. 21, ll. 395–97.

79. *Tragediia*: FSB, f. 2, op. 8, d. 337, l. 71.
80. *Tragediia*: FSB, f. 2, op. 8, d. 41 (or 91?), ll. 38–41.
81. *Tragediia*: FSB, f. 2, op. 8, d. 329, l. 202
82. Several alternative explanations for these startling figures suggest themselves. The figures may be deceptive and, in fact, include not only arrested heads of households but family members as well, thus inflating the overall figure. Alternately, the figures may include peasants arrested during demonstrations and second-category kulaks caught in flight (both then rebranded as first-category kulaks). The issue is further complicated when we attempt to make sense of even the smaller figure of 124,889 arrested first-category kulaks within the general statistics for exiled kulaks. Presumably, their families were exiled in most cases, although the original and later legislation allowed for exemptions with local authorization and in the absence of able-bodied family members. The range of statistics for 1930 deportations would not seem to allow for the inclusion of this large number of families, although the total figures for 1930 and 1931 may. In any case, these figures are in need of further research and contextualization, which will prove very difficult as long as FSB and the presidential archives continue to offer only restricted access. (My thanks to R. W. Davies for highlighting this puzzling issue and suggesting several lines of further analysis.)
83. GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1944, ll. 65–66.
84. Ivnitskii, *Kollektivizatsiia i raskulachivanie*, 99.
85. *Ibid.*, 97–100.
86. GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1944, l. 67. See *Neizvestnaia Rossiia*, 2: 324–36, for more information.
87. GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1944, ll. 72–77.
88. *Ibid.*, l. 80.
89. GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1943, ll. 28–29.
90. *Tragediia*: FSB, f. 2, op. 8, d. 204, l. 468.
91. GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1944, ll. 128–29, 135; f. 5446, op. 11a, d. 560, l. 5.
92. GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1944, l. 98.
93. Danilov and Ivnitskii, *Dokumenty svidetel'stvuiut*, 350–55. Given the costs of

resettlement, especially of “native” kulaks resettled within their own regions, the types of regional initiatives in the competition for labor, which James Harris has investigated for the Urals, do not seem to have come into play yet. As long as the economic administrative agencies and the regional soviets were required to play a central financial and administrative role in special resettlement, kulak labor seems not to have been much of an immediate benefit and, in some cases, an extremely onerous burden to bear. I would hypothesize that the economic advantages of kulak labor became more practically apparent—and real—to some regions only when the Andreev Politburo commission and the OGPU took full charge of special resettlement in 1931, releasing the hard-pressed regions from their heavy obligations to special settlers. I would also question whether this experience was uniform for all regions. My guess is that the Urals benefited in later years much more than, for example, the Northern region where the number of “imported” kulaks was drastically lowered in the second year of the deportations. See the important and pioneering article by James Harris, “The Growth of the Gulag: Forced Labor in the Urals Region, 1929–31,” *Russian Review* 56 (April 1997): 265–80.

94. He added that this warning had been violated with the publication of the North Caucasus decree in *Pravda* and the publication of the Lower Volga decree. Reports of executions of first-category kulaks were also not to be published without Central Committee permission for each case according to a 15 February Politburo protocol. RTsKhIDNI, f. 17, op. 162, d. 8, l. 80.

95. RTsKhIDNI, f. 17, op. 165, d. 15, ll. 1-3, 32, 61, 65, 93.

96. RTsKhIDNI, f. 17, op. 162, d. 8, ll. 94–101.

97. RTsKhIDNI, f. 17, op. 165, d. 16, ll. 53, 83.

98. *Tragediia*: FSB, f. 2, op. 8, d. 142, ll. 92–93; GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1944, l. 189.

99. *Neizvestnaia Rossiia*, 1: 244.

100. GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1944, l. 154.

101. *Ibid.*, ll. 65–66, 154–58; *Istoricheskii arkhiv*, no. 4 (1994): 151.

102. GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1944, ll. 164–66.

103. *Neizvestnaia Rossiia*, 1: 244; RTsKhIDNI, f. 17, op. 162, d. 8, ll. 109–10; GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1944, l. 82. The Ukrainian Council of People’s Commissars had already passed a decree on 13 November 1929 on exiling “socially dangerous” elements from border areas. RGAE, f. 5675, op. 1, d. 23, ll. 42–41.

104. *Neizvestnaia Rossiia*, 1: 242.

105. See the excellent collection of documents, edited by Andrea Romano and Nonna Tarkhova, *Krasnaia armiia i kollektivizatsiia derevni v SSSR (1928–1933 gg.)* (Naples, 1996).
106. *Neizvestnaia Rossiia*, 1: 244. Voroshilov was involved in discussions about the effects of repression in the countryside on soldiers from at least 30 January. See RTsKhIDNI, f. 17, op. 162, d. 8, l. 84.
107. *Tragediia: FSB*, f. 2, op. 9, d. 22, ll. 5–6.
108. GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1944, l. 69. Similar directives were issued on 5 March (l. 85) and on 20 March (l. 86).
109. *Tragediia: FSB*, f. 2, op. 8, d. 329, l. 203; GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1943, ll. 12–13.
110. *Tragediia: FSB*, f. 2, op. 8, d. 35, ll. 25–28; *Tragediia: GARF*, f. 353s, op. 16a, d. 9, ll. 12–13; GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1943, ll. 7, 10, 57.
111. *Tragediia: FSB*, f. 2, op. 8, d. 840, l. 109; GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1943, l. 20.
112. *Tragediia: FSB*, f. 2, op. 8, d. 840, l. 109; GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1944, ll. 126, 135, 139.
113. GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1944, l. 118.
114. *Tragediia: FSB*, f. 2, op. 8, d. 840, l. 109.
115. GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1944, l. 148.
116. *Ibid.*, l. 149.
117. *Ibid.*, l. 30.
118. *Ibid.*, ll. 34–36.
119. *Tragediia: FSB*, f. 2, op. 8, d. 504, l. 308.
120. GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1944, l. 126.
121. *Ibid.*, l. 121.
122. GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1943, ll. 20–21.
123. GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1944, l. 115.

124. *Tragediia*: GARF, f. 393s, op. 43a, d. 1796, ll. 306–07.
125. *Tragediia*: FSB, f. 2, op. 8, d. 504, ll. 200–18, 224–25; GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1944, l. 119. By the end of 1930, Austrin would report that 21,213 people had died in the North alone (*Tragediia*: FSB, f. 2, op. 8, d. 504, ll. 494–96).
126. RGAE, f. 7486, op. 37, d. 122, ll. 191–90.
127. GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1943, l. 16.
128. *Tragediia*: GARF, f. 393s, op. 43a, d. 1798, ll. 56–59; f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1943, ll. 27–28.
129. *Tragediia*: FSB, f. 2, op. 8, d. 840, ll. 48–52.
130. *Tragediia*: FSB, f. 2, op. 8, d. 329, ll. 59–65. These troops were supplied with 4494 new rifles and 445 revolvers.
131. See *Istoricheskii arkhiv*, no. 3 (1994): 128–38, for documents on the Parbigaskaia komendatura (in the northern part of Western Siberia) revolt in the summer of 1931.
132. GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1943, l. 47a.
133. *Tragediia*: FSB, f. 2, op. 8, d. 504, ll. 187–88; GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1943, ll. 47–48.
134. *Tragediia*: FSB, f. 2, op. 8, d. 504, l. 262; GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1943, ll. 47–48.
135. GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1943, l. 48.
136. *Tragediia*: FSB, f. 2, op. 8, d. 504, ll. 200–18, 224–25.
137. *Tragediia*: FSB, f. 2, op. 8, d. 840, ll. 243–69.
138. RGAE, f. 7486, op. 37, d. 122, ll. 191–90.
139. GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1944, ll. 163, 170.
140. An April decision in the Urals created the system of collective responsibility as well as the appointment of two informers (from youth, whenever possible) for every fifty families. In the Urals, local peasants received thirty rubles for the capture of escapees. *Tragediia*: FSB, f. 2, op. 8, d. 840, ll. 243–69.

141. GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1944, ll. 168, 171.
142. *Tragediia*: FSB, f. 2, op. 8, d. 35, ll. 30–37.
143. *Ibid.*
144. *Tragediia*: FSB, f. 2, op. 8, d. 329, ll. 198–208.
145. *Tragediia*: FSB, f. 2, op. 8, d. 653, ll. 176–77.
146. *Tragediia*: FSB, f. 2, op. 8, d. 35, ll. 30–37; GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1944, l. 171.
147. GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1944, l. 171.
148. *Tragediia*: FSB, f. 2, op. 8, d. 653, ll. 311–25.
149. GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1944, l. 152.
150. *Tragediia*: FSB, f. 2, op. 8, d. 35, ll. 30–37.
151. *Tragediia*: FSB, f. 2, op. 8, d. 504, ll. 494–96. There were similar rulings on the return of elderly peasants. The problem of what to do with non-able-bodied peasants was soon officially “resolved” by the creation of agricultural and artisanal “colonies.” See *Tragediia*: FSB, f. 2, op. 8, d. 840, ll. 243–69; GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1944, l. 192.
152. GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1944, l. 167.
153. *Tragediia*: FSB, f. 2, op. 8, d. 504, ll. 494–96.
154. GARF, f. 9479, op. 1, d. 89, l. 217.
155. GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1944, l. 115.
156. *Ibid.*, ll. 128–29.
157. *Ibid.*, l. 115.
158. *Tragediia*: GARF, f. 393s, op. 43a, d. 1796, ll. 306–07.
159. *Ibid.*, l. 231.
160. RTsKhIDNI, f. 17, op. 162, d. 8, l. 163.

161. GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1944, l. 115; f. 393s, op. 43a, d. 1796, ll. 229, 231, 388, 408–09; f. 393s, op. 1a, d. 292, l. 48; f. 1235, op. 141, d. 786, ll. 4–2.
162. RTsKhIDNI, f. 17, op. 120, d. 52, ll. 37, 73, 80, 85, 219; f. 17, op. 120, d. 26, ll. 196–97, 199; Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Sverdlovskoi oblasti (GASO), f. 88r, op. 21, ed. khr. 74a, l. 93; GARF, f. 9479, op. 1, d. 7, ll. 5, 9; f. 9479, op. 1, d. 11, l. 9. My thanks to James Harris for the GASO document.
163. GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1944, ll. 116, 118, 121.
164. *Ibid.*, l. 119.
165. *Tragediia*: FSB, f. 2, op. 8, d. 504, ll. 210–18, 224–25.
166. GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1944, ll. 123–24.
167. *Tragediia*: FSB, f. 2, op. 8, d. 840, ll. 243–69; RTsKhIDNI, f. 17, op. 162, d. 8, l. 173.
168. GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1944, ll. 97–98, 128–29, 131–33.
169. *Tragediia*: GARF, f. 393s, op. 43a, d. 1796, ll. 203–06; f. 5446, op. 57, d. 13, l. 37.
170. GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1944, l. 135.
171. *Ibid.*, l. 98.
172. *Tragediia*: FSB, f. 2, op. 8, d. 840, ll. 243–69; GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1944, l. 100.
173. *Tragediia*: FSB, f. 2, op. 8, d. 504, ll. 443–45; GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1944, ll. 101–02.
174. *Tragediia*: FSB, f. 2, op. 8, d. 504, ll. 443–45, 454–60; GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1944, ll. 108–09.
175. *Tragediia*: FSB, f. 2, op. 8, d. 504, l. 361; Danilov and Krasil'nikov, *Spetspereselentsy v Zapadnoi Sibiri*, 1: 274, n. 12.
176. *Tragediia*: GARF, f. 393s, op. 43a, d. 1796, l. 231. “Incorrect exiles” included poor and middle peasants and the families of Red Army soldiers and longtime industrial workers.
177. RTsKhIDNI, f. 17, op. 3, d. 781, l. 1; f. 17, op. 162, d. 8, ll. 152–53.

178. GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1944, l. 140.
179. *Tragediia*: FSB, f. 2, op. 8, d. 504, l. 111.
180. GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1944, l. 140.
181. *Ibid.*, l. 141.
182. *Ibid.*, l. 142. The Russian reads: “*makhnovtsy, petliurovtsy, savnitkovtsy, bandelementy*”.
183. RTsKhIDNI, f. 17, op. 162, d. 8, ll. 152–53.
184. *Ibid.*, ll. 152-53; f. 17, op. 120, d. 26, ll. 1, 8–9; GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1944, ll. 143–44.
185. RTsKhIDNI, f. 17, op. 120, d. 26, l. 9.
186. *Ibid.*, ll. 2, 4–5.
187. *Tragediia*: FSB, f. 2, op. 8, d. 35, l. 37; f. 2, op. 9, d. 21, ll. 333–35; GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1944, l. 146.
188. GARF, f. 393s, op. 43a, d. 1796, ll. 2–18.
189. *Tragediia*: FSB, f. 2, op. 9, d. 760, l. 6; GARF, f. 393s, op. 43a, d. 1796, l. 232. The members of the commission were Messing, Tolmachev, Teumin, Grin’ko, Muralov, Ol’skii, Lobov, and Gredinskii.
190. GARF, f. 9414, op. 1, d. 1944, ll. 100, 107.
191. GARF, f. 393s, op. 1a, d. 292, ll. 34, 82; Danilov and Krasil’nikov, *Spetspereselentsy v Zapadnoi Sibiri*, 1: 274, nn. 6, 12, and 279, n.63.
192. *Tragediia*: FSB, f. 2, op. 9, d. 760, ll. 20, 27; RGAE, f. 5675, op. 1, d. 23a, ll. 216–15, 148, 121, 53–52, 50–49; GARF, f. 393s, op. 1a, d. 292, ll. 34, 82.
193. The matter of the commission first came up in the Politburo on 20 February 1931, and it seems clear that Andreev had already taken control of matters from that time. RTsKhIDNI, f. 17, op. 162, d. 9, ll. 138, 161. Iagoda and Postyshev were members of the commission, with Postyshev acting as chair in Andreev’s absence. From October 1931 to the end of 1932, Rudzutak took over as the head of the commission. Danilov and Krasil’nikov, *Spetspereselentsy v Zapadnoi Sibiri*, 2: 5, 309, n.1.

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