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CONTROL OF STATE SECURITY BODIES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE REGION ECONOMY

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Abstract

Based on the analysis of newly declassified archival political reports and special reports of state security bodies to the party leaders in the Soviet and post-Soviet period the authors examine the control activities of special services for the economic development of the region. Special units of the All-Russian Extraordinary Commission and the State Security Committee under the conditions of centralization, planning and directiveness of the socialist management of the country's economic complex carried out daily supervision of enterprises in industry, transport, agriculture, and finance in the Novgorod region. The authors study the organizational and functional aspects of control, operational measures taken by state security officers to prevent and investigate emergencies in the industrial and agricultural sectors of the economy, and to identify the destabilizing factors for the stable development of the region as a whole and of separate organizations and institutions. In retrospect, there is a change in the specifics of control depending on the internal transformations and the foreign policy situation in the country and the region: suppression of major speculative crimes in the post-revolutionary, military and post-war years; enhanced control in the economic sphere during the transition to nep; the focus of economic departments of state security agencies on the search for pests in the Stalin period; strengthening oversight measures for lateral lines of communications in the frontline Novgorod regions during the Great Patriotic War; ensuring economic security during the period of active industrial construction in the postwar decades.

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Keywords: Economics, state security, USSR State Security Committee, Federal Security Service of the Russian Federation, Novgorod Region.



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1. Introduction

An effective way to manage the economic complex of the Soviet Union and its regions was the operational supervision and control of state security bodies, starting from the Economic Directorate of the All-Russian Emergency Commission (VChK) and ending with the Sixth Directorate of the KGB of the USSR. Without interfering in the management processes, the employees of the departments using their specific methods controlled the operational and social situation, counteracted economic espionage, and prevented industrial emergencies. To solve some issues, the resources of the committees of the Communist Party, which played a leading role in the Soviet political system, were attracted. The solution to all-union problems was reflected in ensuring the security of the economy of one of the regions of Russia - the Novgorod province and the region. The experience of ensuring the economic security of the country as a whole and the region in particular continues to be relevant for Russia, despite the dramatic changes.

2. Problem Statement

Ensuring internal and external security is one of the most important functions of the state. The most effective method of knowing the true state of affairs is the supervision of state security bodies over all spheres of society. If necessary, specific operational measures inherent to special services are used to improve the situation. The most important object requiring constant monitoring is the economy, the state of which has a primary influence on the political and social situation.

During the years of Soviet power, powerful branches of the national economy, which ensured the progressive movement of the USSR, were created. The characteristic methods of managing the economic complex were centralization, planning, directivity. A little-known, but the most effective way of management was the control of state security agencies over enterprises in industry, transport, agriculture, and finance. Without interfering in the processes of production management and technological subtleties, their employees controlled the operational and political-social situation. Such was the specificity of the Soviet Union, where security agencies occupied a special place for decades, directly and indirectly influencing absolutely all aspects of state and public life. When political, organizational or personnel decisions were required, the security services informed the communist party committees that played a leading role in the country's political system.

3. Research Questions

The research aims to study the following issues:

- 3.1. What was the mechanism of state security control over the economic sphere of Soviet and post-Soviet society?
- 3.2. What is the effectiveness of daily supervision by state security agencies over the work of enterprises in the region under the conditions of the Soviet system with the leading role of the Communist Party?

- 3.3. How did the control of state security agencies over the economic development of the Novgorod region change depending on the domestic and foreign policy situation in the country?
- 3.4. What new methods of operational work were introduced into the activities of special services during the period of active industrial development of the Novgorod region?

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this publication was a study on the basis of archival documents reflecting the activities of state security agencies in pursuing a centralized policy for ensuring economic security in the USSR and the Novgorod region. The solution to all-Union problems was reflected in ensuring the security of the economy of one of the regions of Russia - the Novgorod province and the region.

A retrospective analysis of the documentary material will make it possible to draw a conclusion about the degree of effectiveness of the everyday supervision of state security agencies over the region economic sphere under the conditions of the Soviet system with the leading role of the Communist Party.

5. Research Methods

The article was written on the basis of the analysis of political reports and special messages of the Cheka (VChK)-KGB authorities stored in the Central Archive of the Federal Security Service of Russia and the State Archive of the Recent History of the Novgorod Region in the funds of the provincial and regional committees of the Communist Party. The most informative messages were declassified specifically for this article. Messages are printed on letterheads of security institutions and signed by their superiors. The information was intended for the leaders of the Novgorod provincial, then the Novgorod and Borovichi district committees of the RCP(b) (Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks))- All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks)) and the first secretaries of the regional committee of the VKP(b)-CPSU (Communist Party of the Soviet Union). According to the resolutions of the first persons, the heads of specialized departments of party committees got acquainted with the messages. The reports were accompanied by lengthy references on the measures taken.

Security issues of the union, republican and regional economies became the subject of research. An objective research on protecting the economic interests of the state during the years of the new economic policy was carried out by Epikhin and Mozokhin (2007) on the materials of the Central Archive of the FSB (Federal Security Service) of Russia. Some aspects of ensuring the economic security of the Novgorod province and the region are considered in one of the author's monographs (Petrov, 2016).

6. Findings

The first Soviet state security agency, the All-Russian Emergency Commission (VChK), was formed on December 7 (20), 1917. After only four days, a department to combat speculation was created in its structure. The term refers to any market action in relation to standardized products. In the summer of 1918, the formation of local commissions began. As part of the provincial and district ChK, there were departments to combat speculation. Their employees refused to conduct minor cases, turned them over to

the police and concentrated their efforts on the suppression of major speculative crimes. In the conditions of the Civil War, the political component prevailed over the economic one.

In the transition to NEP, the fight against crimes in the economic sphere came to the fore as an urgent task. On January 22, 1921, on the eve of the announcement of the reform, the Economic Directorate of the ChK is created. A year later, it became part of the structure of the State Political Administration (GPU). Forms and methods were diverse and required skilled action, therefore, economic departments are created in the provincial departments of the GPU, subordinated vertically to the Economic Department. In the early years of the NEP, the Gubotdel's (GPU Departments) informational bulletins on the political and economic situation were sent to the GPU daily (TsA FSB, n. d., pp. 49, 345, 411).

The ChK services, as the most mobile and loyal part of the state apparatus devoted to Soviet power, provided real assistance in ensuring the work of various sectors of the economy. In political reports, the Novgorod provincial department of the GPU informed) GUB Committee of the RCP (b about the problems at the enterprises: payment delays and small salaries, fires, and accidents. Subsequently, a permanent section on the situation in the economy is introduced in the reports. The Chekists had reason to argue that dissatisfaction with low wages, mismanagement, tactless actions, rudeness and abuse of the administration, difficult living conditions was used to conduct anti-state agitation, accusing the political regime of inability to establish the functioning of the country's economic mechanism (GANINO, n.d., f.1, op.1, d. 1266, 1300). It should be noted that the crimes uncovered in the mid-1920s were not interpreted as an economic counter-revolution, which had the intent to harm the state.

In the Novgorod province, cooperation was widely developed. The transition to NEP gave the cooperative movement a new impetus, but revealed negative facts about which in the spring of 1924 the head of the provincial department of the United State Political Administration (OGPU) informed the secretary of the RCP(b) Provincial Committee and the chairman of the Provincial Executive Committee. According to the Chekists, a number of leaders abused their official position and used the means of cooperation for personal enrichment. Cash registers were chronically lacking working capital, so the purchased goods were in warehouses and cooperatives could not redeem them, or the goods were sold at a loss, lower than the purchase price, their range did not meet the requirements of the buyers. It happened not without political rhetoric about the increasing influence of the kulaks in cooperative societies. The secretary of the Provincial Committee imposed a general resolution: the district committees of the RCP(b) should intensify the work of involving communists and the poorest peasants in the board of cooperatives.

An economic analysis of the department of the OGPU revealed the state of affairs in the consumer cooperation of Staraya Russa District. There were no trading and financial plans, there were no working capital and it was impossible to redeem thirty rye wagons, procurement stopped and cooperative trade sharply lost ground. In August, the secretary of the district committee of the RCP(b) informed the gubcom that the issues of cooperation were discussed at the city party meeting and in cells, half of the leaders of cooperative partnerships were relieved of their posts; at least two communists were sent to each society, six party members took up the positions of cashiers and storekeepers (GANINO, n. d., f.1, op.1, d. 1552, 1598). According to the documents, however, it is not traceable whether personnel decisions brought an economic effect.

Many heads of state security agencies led various sectors of economic construction. In March 1924, the head of the Novgorod governor's department of the OGPU, A.I. Milner, was appointed chairman of the provincial economic council, "given his broad horizons, great economic and administrative abilities, and his personal desire to work in the field of industry" (CGAIPD, n.d., f. 9, op. 1, d. 95, 733).

At a meeting of the bureau of the provincial committee of VCP(b) on June 11, 1927, information was heard by the head of the provincial department of the OGPU, K.M. Kalabukhov, on the protection of industrial enterprises and structures. A letter was sent to the county party committees on measures to strengthen the protection of enterprises, including the match factories "Proletarian Banner" in Chudovo and named after Lenin in Gruzino, Borovichi plant "Red Ceramics", an artillery warehouse in Kuzhenkino, railway lines. The letter emphasized: "But these measures can give positive results only with the active support of the workers. Each worker must take care of the safety of his enterprise, and must help the relevant authorities and administrations to protect it". The bureau instructed the executive committee to consider the submitted materials and outline measures to improve the protection of national economic facilities.

The need to protect enterprises was confirmed by investigations of several incidents in the first months of 1929. At the match factory named after Lenin at midnight a fire broke out. The fire completely destroyed the shop with 104 boxed and labeling machines, killed three people, five got burns. The factory was stopped for a week and a half, 425 workers were out of work, the loss was estimated at 300 thousand rubles. The fire at the Bolshaya Vishera Glass Factory in was quickly eliminated. At the Vybiti state farm in the Soletsky district, a production building caught fire, in which a sawmill, a mill and an engine room were under one roof; the hull adjoined the threshing floor. Evil intent was obvious - the first farm workers who came to extinguish the fire felt a strong smell of kerosene (GANINO, n.d., f. 1, op. 1, d. 2532; f. 128, op. 1, d. 25).

By the end of the 1920s OGPU economic units aimed at searching for pests, those who, according to Art. 58 p. 7 of the current Criminal Code of the RSFSR, for counter-revolutionary purposes, undermined state industry, transport, trade, cooperation, monetary circulation and the credit system. The start was made by the infamous Shakhty affair. The processes aimed at establishing an undivided political influence on the scientific and technological intelligentsia. Fortunately, in the industrially underdeveloped Novgorod and Borovichi districts, the cleanings of engineers and technicians did not become widespread, as in economically significant regions.

In the agrarian sphere, state intervention in economic affairs has acquired a comprehensive character. The system of small-scale peasant production could not provide the necessary amount of food to the urban population and the army. The so-called grain procurement crisis broke out in the country. In huge queues for bread, there was more and more talk about the inability of the authorities to provide the population with food.

Several employees of the Novgorod Trade Trust took advantage of the crisis, who established "business ties" with the NEPs in Novgorod and Staraya Russa and supplied private traders with bread products, bypassing the public sector. The latter raised prices in the market. The case of the "Starorusskye Muzhniki" (Millworkers of Staraya Russa) was investigated by employees of the Novgorod department of

the OGPU, 17 people were brought to justice. Ten buyers of dairy products were arrested. Paying peasants one third more than fixed prices, they bought large quantities of butter, cottage cheese, sour cream, sent them to Leningrad and sold them there at high prices. So, one of those arrested bought a ton of butter and cottage cheese on the Novgorod market in just a day. Accused by the Novgorod District Court, they were sentenced to imprisonment for 1-2 years with confiscation of property. In publications in the regional newspaper *Zvezda*, the OGPU department warned of the application of punitive measures to individuals who sought profit in the resale of standardized food products (GANO, n.d., f. 1570, op. 4, d. 2, 3).

The object of protection was the first collective farms. Employees of the Novgorod district department of the OGPU in January - April 1930 investigated 16 arson attacks. In the village of Ostrov of the Chudovo district and in the Krasny Putilovets artel of the Borovichi district, collective farm sheds with hay were burned. Fires took on a catastrophic character. In the village of Staroe Rakhino of the Kresttsy district, fire destroyed 69 peasant households and the entire seed stock. In the village of Astreshno, Polnovo District, 45 households were burned with all their equipment and livestock (A FSB NR, n.d., d. 1a / 11846).

Since the beginning of the Great Patriotic War, the life of Soviet society has been shifting to the regime of wartime with the tightening and addition of normative acts of the prewar period. In the context of the introduction of a card system for distributing products and an acute shortage of workers, the USSR and the RSFSR People's Commissariats of Justice paid special attention to the analysis of judicial practice in such formulations as speculation, violation of trade rules, embezzlement, failure to comply with defense measures, desertion from enterprises, unauthorized abandonment of workers places (Pishulina, Davydova, & Vilkov, 2018).

During the Great Patriotic War, in the front-line Novgorod districts, the territorial state security organs ensured the functioning of lateral lines of communications and enterprises, especially important for iron and steel enterprises such as the refractory products manufacturing plant in the city of Borovichi. The importance of economic security problems is evidenced by the fact that in April 1943 the functions of the Economic Department were transferred to the Second Directorate of the People's Commissariat of State Security (NKGB), the counterintelligence department.

On July 5, 1944, the Novgorod Region was formed. At existing and hastily restored facilities in Novgorod and districts, technology violations, delays in the payment of wages, irresponsibility of managers and their inattention to the living conditions of workers became frequent. Operational maintenance was carried out at the important enterprises for the region: "Krasny Ceramic" and the Okulovka pulp and paper plants, car repair and sawmills Pestovo plants, Tesovo peat enterprise, glass factories and district industrial plants. It is significant that these shortcomings were not associated, as in the pre-war time, with the purposeful subversive work of anti-Soviet elements.

The head of the regional department of the Ministry of State Security (MGB), Colonel I.V. Rechkalov, informed the first secretary of the regional committee of the VCP(b) about the shortcomings in the work of the meat factory. During the sanitary inspection, carried out on the instructions of the committee, facts of technology violation, non-compliance with hygiene requirements, damage to finished products were revealed. The departmental doctor controlled the products in appearance, without

laboratory tests; in the city there have been cases of poisoning by low-quality products. Violations were eliminated in a short time and without significant costs under the control of the light industry department of the regional party committee. The stable operation of the plant was ensured by the construction of production facilities and the reconstruction of equipment (GANINO, n.d., f. 260, op. 6, d. 100; op. 8, d. 123).

A characteristic feature of the daily life of cities and rural areas in the first post-war years was speculation, which was spurred by a significant difference between the prices of goods in state trade and on “collective farm markets”. The drought of 1946 exacerbated the plight of the country (Bogdanov, 2009). On the depressing situation on the collective farms and state farms of the region, the MGB Directorate sent special messages to the secretaries of the regional committee and district party committees. The district committees of VCP(b) received information from the heads of the regional branches of the MGB. Grains for a workday were given from 100 to 400 grams, money was not paid, so most villagers could not buy food on the market. Mass death of cattle was allowed due to poor care and lack of feed. Labor discipline was low, collective farmers used the slightest opportunity to escape to the cities. Most of the leaders of the cooperatives were economically unprepared; specialists were lacking. The negative attitude was supplemented by the data of the military censorship from the perceived correspondence of servicemen who were abroad. According to reports, they took measures of party influence, held meetings and organizational rearrangements. The party committees did not have real economic leverage over the crisis.

As it turned out, the impact of state security was insufficient for the two structures. Firstly, to the party apparatus. In October 1947, the bureau of the Novgorod regional committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks examined a report by the head of the Batetsky branch of the Ministry of State Security about senior employees of the district who illegally received state loans for economic establishment. The bureau issued guilty party penalties, obliged to return the money to the bank, but suggested to transfer the officer to another position.

Secondly, to their own rear services. With a continuing shortage of material resources, normalized supply according to the existing card system, the Novgorod Special Trade provided the employees of the MGB and Ministry of Internal Affairs departments unsatisfactorily. The merchandising of cards and limits began at the end of the month with a small assortment, substitutes were given out instead of some products, products of good quality and high demand were distributed among the trading staff or exchanged for building materials. The quality of the dishes in the dining room was low, the menu was monotonous, the domestic service was not organized. The products of the farm and the catches of the fishing brigade diverged to an unknown destination. Complaints to the head of Glavspetstorg (the Head of Special Trade) had no effect. Then the officers of the department for combating the theft of socialist property of the police department of the regional Ministry of Internal Affairs arrested several robbers (GANINO, n.d., f. 260, op. 4, d. 28; op. 8, d. 123). Obviously, in the context of rationing, it could only be a matter of limiting the extent of abuse in this area by actively opposing them by law enforcement agencies and tightening control over the distribution of commodity funds (Tverdyukova, 2010).

The economy of Novgorod began to change. At the plenum of the regional committee of the CPSU on July 11, 1953, the head of the department openly said for the first time that there are objects in the

region that are of interest to foreign intelligence; around them, marked activity of employees of a number of Western embassies was noted. Such objects were security enterprises, “mailboxes”, later known as television and radio plants. The deputy chairman of the regional executive committee, who supervised the economy, made a report to the management on the prospects for the industrial development of the region.

Soon in Novgorod, large enterprises of the radio-electronic and radio-technical industries entered into action, which were included in the military-industrial complex of the country. Over time, they became the research and production associations “Volna”, “Kvant”, “Planeta”, “Elkon”, “Complex”, “Start”. Western intelligence agencies showed primary interest in new products, looked for approaches to facilities and workers, but countering economic intelligence requires a separate study and is beyond the scope of this article.

The increasing complexity of the political situation demanded new methods of operational work. The Department of the State Security Committee (KGB) launched special training with the help of experienced colleagues from the Leningrad KGB, and introduced them to the latest electronic engineering and equipment. It has become the norm to recruit a specialized unit with employees with higher technical education and knowledge of foreign languages. In 1982, the safety of industrial enterprises was entrusted to the newly formed Sixth Directorate of the KGB of the USSR and its regional departments. Earlier, since 1967, the socio-political situation, including one among national economy workers, was controlled by the Fifth KGB Directorate.

The chemical plant under construction was the object of special attention in the Novgorod region. Its capacity was to meet the needs of agriculture in the northwestern region in mineral fertilizers and provide raw materials to other industries. The new construction was announced as the All-Union Komsomol construction, but on hard work of the zero cycle they used the labor of the conditionally released prisoners. Already in March 1966, the head of the KGB, Colonel V.A. Allabert, informed the first secretary of the CPSU regional committee V.N. Bazovsky about mass thefts of electrical equipment instrumentation, mounting wires, tools, everything that could be quickly implemented. Thefts were in a fever of construction, created a nervous atmosphere among installers, and interfered with the planned conduct of work. It was indicated that the most sophisticated equipment was being assembled and the slightest violations in the operation of the units, if they could not be detected in time, would lead to serious consequences. The bureau of the Novgorod City Committee of the CPSU obliged the leadership and the Party Committee of “Novgorodkhimstroy” trust to decisively fight the thieves and strengthen security at the launch complex. Police created a post at a construction site.

In subsequent years, the KGB found information about errors in projects, disruptions in the supply of components, defective equipment, irregularity in the shipment of finished products, violations of the rules for storage and transportation of potent toxic substances and dangerous goods, inadequate staff training, lack of control and negligence on the part of officials, and other adverse factors that could have emergency consequences (GANINO, n.d., f. 260, op. 24, d. 94).

The collective farms and state farms of the region continued to remain on operational service. Messages were sent to district committees of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and district prosecutors about negligent attitude to agricultural machinery, theft of artel property and violations of labor discipline. But it was not the economic problems that attracted the main attention. When receiving

the signals, it was necessary to find out if there were any hostile intentions with the aim of undermining one of the two components of the country economic foundation.

So, in April 1959, the head of the Novgorod Directorate of the KGB, Colonel I.S. Korotkov, informed the first secretary of the CPSU regional committee about the results of “Parizhskaya Zelenj” (“Parisian green”) search case. The Borovichi KGB department received an urgent message from “Novaya Zhiznj” collective farm. One of the milkmaids, collecting water from the boiler in the feed mill, noticed that it was an unusual, greenish hue, in the other boilers the water had the same color, and green powder was scattered on the covers. The analysis determined that the powder was a pesticide “Parisian green”, and its concentration in the water was sufficient to poison the cows. The operatives examined the various versions, checked the farm workers, and quickly installed a man who had been seen near the farm in the early morning and who had bought a kilogram of a pesticide for processing the garden shortly before. He admitted that he poured out “greens” because of hostile relations with the chairman of the collective farm and the head of the farm, but not for poisoning collective farm cattle (GANINO, n.d., f. 260, op. 16, d. 137). The case left the competence of state security bodies and was decided in the manner prescribed by law. It can be noted that twenty years ago, the perpetrator with a high degree of probability would have been prosecuted under Art. 58 of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR clause 7 (sabotage) or clause 9 (wrecking), which provided for the most severe sanctions.

In the process of preventing and investigating emergencies at industrial and agricultural facilities in the Novgorod Region, the KGB department employees tried to be proactive: identify and eliminate the negative causes and conditions through enterprise administrations, analyze the situation in labor collectives, reveal negative processes and phenomena, and warn their unwanted development. The situation on collective farms and state farms were controlled. Emergencies decreased, but there were explosions, wrecks, accidents at the facilities, accompanied by loss of life and significant material damage.

It can be noted that in most cases, information received by operational employees from proxies at enterprises, due to the specifics, could not cause direct actions. This kind of information was implemented through the police. The direct investigation department of the KGB conducted cases of embezzlement on an especially large scale, when the financial security of the state was threatened.

With the beginning of perestroika, the vector of interests has changed. Foreign economic relations increased, joint ventures appeared, foreign specialists became frequent guests at previously closed facilities. Foreign industrial intelligence took advantage of new opportunities. It was necessary to close the channels of a possible leak of classified technical information. The head of the KGB General V.M. Bogov twice informed the first secretary of the CPSU regional committee I.I. Nikulin about the problems of secret paperwork and the positive experience of solving them in the production associations “Elkon” and “Planeta”.

The last special message from the KGB administration to the regional committee of the CPSU was dated February 23, 1990 and contained information about the increase in foreign economic relations and violations of the instructions when specialists from previously regime industries contact with foreigners (GANINO, n. d., f. 260, op. 66, d. 551). The following month, the Third Congress of People's Deputies of the USSR canceled Art. 6 of the Constitution on the CPSU as the leading force of Soviet society. By this

time, party committees had completely lost their former influence on the formation of political and social status, while economic relations were changing radically.

7. Conclusion

The state and historical and legal experience of ensuring the economic security of the country as a whole and the region in particular is relevant. The state is obliged to control the most important areas that are of decisive importance for the life of society. Currently, protection of the economy in accordance with the program “National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation” is provided by the Economic Security Service of the FSB of the Russian Federation and its local administrations and operational units.

Relations between the VCHK (Cheka)-KGB and the committees of the RCPR(b)-CPSU from the first post-October days to the collapse of Soviet statehood are examined. Analysis and generalization allowed us to draw conclusions about the certain effectiveness of the everyday supervision of state security agencies over the work of enterprises in the region under the conditions of the Soviet system with the leading role of the Communist Party. The maintenance of advanced scientific achievements and technical developments was ensured, many emergency and technological incidents were prevented, and the human factor was enhanced. Historical and legal experience is relevant and should be used at present to ensure security, despite the fundamental changes in the economy of the Russian Federation.

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