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Regional Control Commissions: Workers' and Peasants' Inspections of the AUCP (B) as Bodies of Extrajudicial Prosecution: Archival Materials of the Kuban Region (1933)

Abstract

The article attempts to reveal the role and forms of implementation of punitive functions by the local Control Commissions—Workers' and Peasants' Inspections of the AUCP (B) during the kolkhozes creation in the rural areas. It draws on unpublished archival documents (1933) from

the Center for Documentation on the Contemporary History of the Krasnodar Krai (TsDNIKK). Late 1932 – first half of 1933 was a special period in the life of the Soviet state, and its rural grain-producing zone in particular. One of these areas was Kuban, where the famine began, largely due to the ongoing Stalin's grain procurement policy. The newly organized agricultural associations, collective and state farms (kolkhozes and sovkhozes), became its first victims. The villagers were weakened by undernourishment, there was a great increase in the mortality of draft animals caused by malnutrition, poor care, and related accidents. The collectivization of national agriculture concurrent with "destruction of the kulaks as a class" was coming to an end. The basis of the article is a microhistorical approach, where the object of study is local historical events providing a deeper understanding of the diverse social component of the process. The leadership and control over the policy, the "fight against kulak sabotage" was officially carried out by the authorities represented by the executive committees of the Soviets of People's Deputies. However, the analysis of archival materials shows that the main driving force behind these covert punitive processes were bodies of the AUCP (B). The bodies of the party-state control of the AUCP (B) —Control Commissions—Workers' and Peasants' Inspections played the key role. They were the main directing and controlling forces acting through officials (communists, leaders and representatives of party bodies and non-party institutions with their mandatory party organizations). The interaction of the Control Commissions—Workers' and Peasants' Inspections with law enforcement agencies (police, prosecutor's office, courts, the OGPU bodies) was characteristic. It has been revealed that the Control Commissions—Workers' and Peasants' Inspections of the AUCP (B) at the district level were among genuine governing authorities, at the same time acting as bodies of extrajudicial persecution of communists and non-party men. The instrument of persecution was purges, checks, investigations through party and Soviet agencies. In some cases, when seeking to place the blame for certain events, the investigations and decisions had a clear accusatory bias.

Keywords

Regional Control Commissions — Workers' and Peasants' Inspections of the AUCP (B), collectivization in the Kuban region, extrajudicial persecution, sabotage, collective farm construction, famine in Russia of the 1930s, control, repression.

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