

INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE EVALUATION OF THE CRIMES OF THE NAZI
AND SOVIET OCCUPATION REGIMES IN LITHUANIA

IV. The Second Soviet Occupation: First Phase (1944-1953)

IV.1 Crimes

IV.1.4 Mass Deportations

Deportations of the Population in 1944-1953

CONCLUSIONS

Approved on 20 April 2005

The Commission discussed the report submitted by Dr. Arvydas Anušauskas “Mass Deportations in 1944-1953” and the conclusions of the study. The Commission also acquainted itself with the evaluation of this report by Dr. Eugenijus Grunskis, and has adopted the following Conclusions.

1. As soon as the reoccupation started and both passive and active resistance of the Lithuanian nation occurred, the officials of the NKVD, the NKGB and the Soviet Public Prosecutor’s Office provided grounds for the necessity of mass deportations. Each man in hiding, armed or unarmed, was declared a “bandit”, while their families were called “bandit families”. On 20 October 1944, the Soviet officials proposed taking necessary “repression measures in respect of bandit families” and arresting, imprisoning and /or deporting the members of their families. The beginning of mass deportations, however, had to be delayed due to the unfavourable circumstances of internal and international affairs (ongoing war, mobilisation boycott, etc.).
2. Deportations based on nationality were initiated in 1945. Germans residing in Lithuania were deported first following the general Soviet directives concerning the deportation of Germans to Siberia and Kazakhstan. The Soviets deported 1,048 persons, who were not included in the lists of Lithuanian deportees.
3. The first mass deportations were carried out in connection with the struggle against the Lithuanian resistance, and the legalisation of men in hiding. Improvements of deportation procedures were implemented during the armed resistance: five-man combat groups were formed to carry out deportation, raids on deportees’ residences (the latter groups were called cover groups of operation object), security of the deportation route to the railway station (the latter groups were called security groups of deportee evacuation route), security of railway stations (so-called collection points) and deportee convoys. Deportations were carried out by officers of both the NKVD and the NKGB as well as soldiers (of all ranks) of the NKVD army. Local collaborators constituted 50-70% of all raiding, route and railway station security groups. The deportee convoys were secured by the NKVD army only.
4. Local collaborators (including local inhabitants, first secretaries of the district committees of the LKP (b), chairmen of executive committees and the agents of the People’s Commissar Board (hereinafter – LKT)) actively participated in the drafting of deportee lists and in carrying out deportation. The latter were mostly concerned with arranging for the seizure of the deportees property, and the utilisation of the seized property (livestock, grain, etc.), however, they also used to check deportee lists together with the NKVD soldiers in the stations.

5. During these deportations it was typical to exile people who were the members of guerrilla families and their supporters, while their farms (with few exceptions) were confiscated before the deportation. Official permission to take with them “up to 1.5 tons of their belongings” was not implemented. This further increased the deportees’ poverty. Thus, forced labour, starvation and diseases accounted for the demise of approximately 25% of all the deportees in the deportation locations as early as during the period of 1945-1947.
6. The deportations on the largest scale occurred after the MGB took over a number of the MVD functions. At the start of 1945-1948, Lithuanians used to be deported as hostages, i.e. “in response to the guerrilla attacks”. 12,304 people, including 3,785 so-called kulaks, were deported within two and a half years before the major deportation of 1948.
7. In 1948-1951, the majority of people selected for deportation were chosen not because of supporting the resistance movement, but in order to implement the postulate of the Communist ideology, i.e. “to liquidate the kulaks as the class”. The said selection principle of the deportees prevailed when the Communist reform in agriculture, including forced collectivisation of land, was being conducted in Lithuania, and Lithuanian resistance was not as effective as during the first years.
8. The major deportations of Lithuanians during the period of 1948-1951 were carried out pursuant to the following Resolutions of the Cabinet Council of the USSR: No. 447-160-ss dated 21 February 1948, No. 390-138-ss dated 29 January 1949, and No. 3309-1568-ss dated 5 September 1951. The first two deportations were officially targeted at the families of identified guerrillas and persons in hiding, guerrillas who had been killed and convicted persons, as well as supporters of the resistance. The deportations of 1951 were directed against peasants who resisted the collectivisation wave and did not give up their individual farms, and against “the kulaks who acted in collective farms”.
9. The Cabinet Council of the Lithuanian SSR and the local branch of the MGB used to detail in their instructions and orders all resolutions adopted by both the Cabinet Council of the USSR and the MGB. The final approval of the resolutions concerning the deportations of so-called kulaks was given by the Cabinet Council of the Lithuanian SSR, while those concerning the deportation of the families of guerrillas and their supporters were approved by the Extraordinary Council of the USSR MGB. The district (region) branches of the MGB were engaged in the preparations for deportations and the conclusion of cases for deportees, while the secretaries of the LKP (b) regional committees and the chairmen of the executive committees approved the lists of people to be deported. The year 1951 was some kind of exception since the deportee lists were drafted by the local Soviet institutions.
10. The total number of deportees in 1945-1952 is estimated to be at least 118,000 (data remains only on 115,000 deportees). A total of 155,796 persons were included in potential deportee lists. In 1948 and 1951, the deported Lithuanians accounted for respectively 49 and 46.5 per cent of all deportees of the Soviet Union, or 16.4 per cent of people deported in 1946-1952.
11. Children of the deportees aged 16 were included into the deportee lists. The deportees and their children were subjected to the inhuman Order (applied to the deportees of certain nationalities including Lithuanians), issued by the Presidium of the Supreme Council of the USSR on 26 November 1948, which provided for punishment of 20 years of imprisonment for a deportee who escaped.

12. The Lithuanians were mostly classified as “specially relocated persons” (deportees of 1941, who were included in the group of deportees “settled by force” in 1951), and deportees “settled by force”. Pursuant to the Resolution issued by the Government of the Soviet Union on 8 January 1945, the deportees had no right to leave the deportation location and had to check in with the special governorates regularly. Furthermore, they were attached to some industrial enterprise or had to perform agricultural or some other tasks. Lithuanians were requisitioned as slave labour in the Siberian forestry sites, gold and coal mines, construction sites and the huge Soviet industrial complexes “Čeliabinskugol”, “Karagandaugol”, “Vostsibugol”, “Kuzbasugol”, “Tomles” and “Lenzoloto”, where they were left to the absolute disposition of the special governorates and factory directors. So far, the Commission cannot determine the quantitative extent of the forced labour carried out by the deportees. The Commission confirms that the deportees have not yet been compensated for the forced labour in the enterprises of Soviet industrial conglomerates and the Soviet agricultural sector.
13. When mass deportations of the Lithuanians started in 1948, the situation of the deportees was even further restricted and regulated by the regulations of the USSR Government:
- a) the deportees had no right to leave the deportation destination without the MVD permit;
 - b) they had notations showing the restriction of their place of residence (restricted to the deportation region) made in their passports by the militia, but the passports were taken away from them in any case;
 - c) at least once per month the deportees were checked, that is, the adults had to check in with the special governorates.
14. About 80% of 118,000 Lithuanian deportees exiled in 1948-1951 were settled in Irkutsk District and Krasnoyarsk Region. On 1 January 1953, the number of surviving Lithuanian deportees stood at 98,286. Furthermore, about one thousand of deportees were imprisoned or killed in the strict regime labour camps. During the period of 1945-1952, over 32,000 children were deported from Lithuania. The number of the deportees increased by approximately 2,000 children born in exile, who were entered into the deportee list. The total of Lithuanian deportees who died in 1945-1958 is estimated at 20,000 including about 5,000 children.
15. In 1954-1958, the Soviet officials admitted that the deportation of 2,573 families had been unfounded and allowed them to recover their confiscated property (or what remained of it). After the issue of the Order of 19 May 1958 by the Presidium of the Supreme Council of the USSR, a new policy was implemented in regard to these last deportees. Only resistance members and their families were left in exile, while all others were conditionally released from exile. They were not subject to the restoration of confiscated property nor were they allowed to return to their Motherland. A huge number of 37,505 Lithuanians (about 48,000-50,000 people including children) who still lived in exile on 1 January 1958 never returned to Lithuania.

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