Peasants, Political Police, and the Early Soviet State

Surveillance and Accommodation under the New Economic Policy

Hugh D. Hudson Jr.

Peasants, Political Police, and the Early Soviet State

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The peasants want peace and the assurance that the right to dispose of their property will not be violated.

Feliks Dzerzhinskii, head of the OGPU,
in a report to the Politburo, June 1, 1924.

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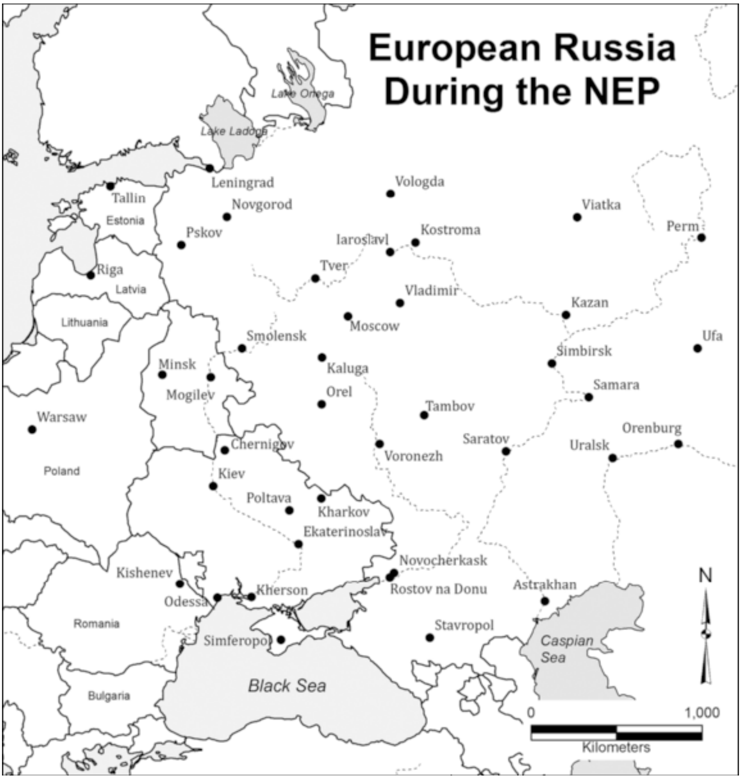
European Russia During the NEP
Lake Onega
Lake Ladoga
Leningrad
Vologda
Tallin
Estonia
Novgorod
Viatka
Pskov
Kostroma
Perm
Iaroslavl
Riga
Latvia
Tver
Vladimir
Kazan
Lithuania
Moscow
Smolensk
Ufa
Simbirsk
Minsk
Kaluga
Mogilev
Samara
Orel
Warsaw
Tambov
Orenburg
Saratov
Uralsk
Chernigov
Voronezh
Poland
Kiev
Poltava
Kharkov
Ekaterinoslav
Novocherkask
Kishenev
Rostov na Donu
Astrakhan
Kherson
Odessa
N
Romania
Stavropol
Simferopol
Caspian Sea
Black Sea
Bulgaria
0
1,000
Kilometers

European Russia during NEP

Source: Based on illustration from *Entsiklopedicheskii Slovar' F. A. Brokgauza i I. A. Efrona* (St. Petersburg, 1890–1907) utilizing ERSI base map software.

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Terms and Abbreviations

Cheka	Chrezvychainaia Komissiia (Extraordinary Commission) Precursor to the OGPU; disbanded 1922
Edinnyi sel’skokhoziaistvennyi nalog	Unified agricultural tax
Guberniia	Province, “government”
Kulak	“Tight-fisted” one; relatively affluent peasant
Mir	Village commune; often used in place of *skhod*, the meeting of heads of village households
Narkomzem	Narodnyi komissariat zemledeliia (People’s Commissariat of Agriculture)
NEP	Novaia Ekonomicheskaia Politika (New Economic Policy)
NKVD	Narodnyi komissariat vnutrennykh del (People’s Commmissariat of Internal Affairs) Until 1934 the regular police; then absorbed the OGPU
OGPU	Ob”edinennoe gosudarstvennoe politicheskoe upravlenie (Unified State Political Administration) The political police from 1922 to 1934

Prodnalog	Prodovol'stvenniy nalog (fixed food-supply tax)
Razverstka	Grain delivery quota
SR	Partiia sotsialistov-revoliutsionerov (Party of Socialists-Revolutionaries; Esers)
Zemleustroistvo	Land reorganization
Zemsvodki	OGPU field reports from the countryside

Introduction

Interrogator Gletkin, Arthur Koestler's infamous OGPU (*Ob"edinennoe gosudarstvennoe politicheskoe upravlenie*) creation, informed Rubashov, Koestler's Bukharin, about police relations with peasants: "In all other countries, the peasants had one or two hundred years to develop the habit of industrial precision and the handling of machines. Here they only had ten years. If we didn't sack them and shoot them for every trifle, the whole country would come to a standstill, and the peasants would lie down to sleep in the factory yards until grass grew out of the chimneys and everything became as it was before."[1] Gletkin remains the archetypical political policeman, a symbol of arbitrariness and brutality that proved to many that the Bolshevik Revolution stood for little more than deceit and cant. But just as our vision of the peasantry on the eve of revolution has undergone a serious critique by such investigators as Teodor Shanin,[2] political police-peasant relations in the pre-Stalinist years of the Soviet Union deserve much fuller treatment than we have had to date.

To begin with, despite the tsarist claim to absolutism, or the Soviet Union's designation under Stalin by many as totalitarian, Russia and the Soviet Union have historically been undergoverned. Particularly, Russia has been underpoliced. This has been especially true for rural Russia. This study investigates the relationship between the political police (Cheka/OGPU) and peasants during the early years of the Soviet Union, with particular focus on the period leading to collectivization, with the intent of understanding what the political police claimed to have seen when they looked into the village and what they reported back to the party leadership. It seeks to determine why the political police's views on rural reality changed so sharply on the eve of collectivization and how that reassessment impacted rural policy.

The Cheka/OGPU's agents offered initially a pragmatic, often empathetic analysis of the economic, agricultural, and political situation in the countryside. Over time those reports changed, and the once independent analyses came to influence and then legitimize the acute policy shifts enacted by the Stalin regime. Thus, the work is not an exploration of the process and consequences of collectivization. Rather I investigate the evolution to collectivization through the prism of the powerful and influential institution that is often portrayed as the essence of the Stalin regime, the political police. I examine the flow of information from police agents in the countryside during the 1920s to the Cheka/OGPU headquarters and through that office to key party and state leaders in order to better appreciate how and why policy makers chose to embark on such a fateful course. What realities preceded that event, and how did the relationship between the political police, the peasantry, and the ruling elite actually work? In short, what was the political culture within which the political police and the peasantry interacted and shaped one another's worlds prior to collectivization?

Obtaining precise information about the situation in the countryside, specifically the peasants' attitudes toward the policies of the regime, was perceived by the governing elite as one of the most pressing necessities for maintaining Soviet rule. With the ending of the Civil War in 1921, the Bolsheviks faced the problem of determining peace-time policies. In no area was this more urgent than in relations with the peasantry. Challenged with the choice of support for the Bolsheviks versus the possible return of the landlords and the loss of the lands they had seized, the peasants had offered at best begrudging support to the former and had acquiesced in most cases to grain requisitioning. But with the liquidation of the White threat, the ground was prepared for the natural reemergence of fierce opposition to requisitioning, labor obligations, and the general tyranny of the central authorities.

During the 1920s the Soviet government attempted to surveil and comprehend rural Russia through a variety of organizations. But the most important and powerful of these was the political police. And contrary to the image of the Gletkin police thug with but one means of communication—the Nagant revolver—this study demonstrates that the political police attempted in the years prior to collectivization to understand and even to establish a working relationship with the peasantry, partly on the peasants' terms. The political police further sought during most of the New Economic Policy (NEP) to provide the central authorities with accurate information on economic, social, and political conditions in the countryside. These efforts at joining state and society through the efforts of the political police clearly failed with disastrous results for the peasantry and for Soviet society at large. The attempt at using surveillance to bridge this gap, nonetheless, is worthy of our appreciation.

The collapse of the political police's faith in their own arguments regarding the possibility of compromise with rural Russia, arguments consistently promulgated during the first years of the NEP, made the decision to declare war on rural Russia appear logical and inevitable. James Heinzen has argued that the political police worked throughout the early 1920s in opposition to the efforts of the People's Commissariat of Agriculture (Narkomzem) to downplay the threat from the villages. This work, however, makes clear that until the face to the countryside campaign that began in 1924, the political police made a consistent case for a conciliatory approach to the peasantry and argued that through corrective actions peasants could be won over to support Soviet power.[3]

The linguistic (and conceptual) shift that prepared the way for collectivization had its roots in the "face" campaign. And whereas Tracy McDonald, while arguing that the NEP had distinct phases with respect to the state's approach to the peasantry, states that "1924–1926 mark a window of potential negotiation between peasant and state," and sees the window opening in 1924–1925, this analysis of political police reports shows that that window had actually begun to close during those very years.[4] Far more than E. H. Carr's "few party stalwarts and doctrinaires" had come by then to doubt the appeasing tactic.[5] The examination of political police communication carried out in this study provides a better appreciation of the transformation of the OGPU's understanding of the peasantry and the impact of that change on the state's policy toward the vast majority of its subjects. It makes clear that contrary to Paul Hagenloh's argument that from the earliest days of Soviet rule the Bolsheviks attempted to create a new society through repression,[6] the political police initially demonstrated a complex appreciation of the realities of rural Russia rather than a simple proto-Stalinist worldview and argued that the peasants were logical beings whose cooperation, just as their antagonism, could be won. That the attempt at compromise with the world of the village failed is not the same as that effort having never been exerted.

What information on the Soviet countryside was available to the government and party during the years of the NEP? The source of the political police's arguments on the nature of the peasantry and their proposals to the party and state leadership are its field reports from the countryside (*zemsvodki*). It is these field reports upon which this study relies. These *svodki*, provided to the highest leaders of the country, were compiled weekly, biweekly, or monthly by the provincial OGPU from daily local compilations and sent forward to the Information Department of the OGPU. There they were processed and a monthly report produced for the leadership on the "political situation in the USSR." These reports have the advantage in terms of understanding the evolution of all-Union rural policy that they present materials from substantial—and rather different—regions of the country. My analysis of the *svodki* focuses particularly, but not exclusively, on the primary grain-producing regions of the Central Black Earth region, Volga-Ural region, Ukraine, and Caucasus, areas that also suffered the greatest from the famines of the 1920s, and whose peasant-police interactions largely shaped the evolution of rural policy.

As McDonald maintained in her analysis of the Pitelinsk Uprising in 1930, even at that late date the *svodki* often presented "unpalatable" analysis to the center that candidly reported local conditions.[7] Merle Fainsod noted the tendency of the local Chekists "to transmit their findings without embellishment," and Volodymyr Semystiaha found the reports from village informers to be "objective and, for the most part, realistic."[8] As Peter Holquist has argued, the peasants were aware that their "mood" was being reported by the police and that the political police were "seeking to use this information to change and correct them and their views."[9] However, that is not a problem with these sources, but an advantage; for the *svodki* represent, in part, a conversation that the police were having not simply with the Bolshevik leadership but also with the peasantry as all three attempted to communicate with the other within an official discourse structured around dynamics of power and hierarchical relations.[10] Deciphering that conversation is key to comprehending how the political police and the peasantry together created the conditions for the party's decision to attempt collectivization.

CHAPTER 1

State, Peasants, and Police to 1921

That the Soviets turned to the political police in an effort to surveil and administer rural Russia is in no way surprising given the long experience in Russia of attempting to use the police to peer into society. Obtaining information about what was actually occurring beyond the limits of the capitals had, for centuries, bedeviled Russian rulers. And the government repeatedly turned to some form of police in an effort to break through the wall of incomprehension. To fathom the problems the Bolsheviks confronted in obtaining information about and influencing rural society via the political police, we need to appreciate the prior efforts at policing in Russia, and especially how those efforts related, or more accurately, failed to relate, to the peasantry.

Specialized organs of policing and incarceration, as well as formal criminal investigators, first appeared in the middle of the sixteenth century under Ivan the Terrible. The new law code (*Sudebnik*) of 1550 sought primarily to limit the arbitrariness of local officials. Decisions had to be countersigned and sworn to by clerks chosen from the local population. Without this protocol the tsar's local representative, the *namestnik,* was not legally empowered to arrest or punish peasants.

With the elimination of the position of *namestnik,* all the powers associated with investigation, adjudication, and punishment for criminal and administrative violations were given over to "*gubnyi izbi*" referred to as the "*gubami,*" a police organ that lasted from the end of the 1530s to 1702. *Gubami* were subordinated to the

Razboinyi Prikaz (Chancellery for Criminal Affairs), founded in 1539, the first central government organ with responsibility for police and criminal investigation matters for the major part of the country.[1] But the chaos of the Time of Troubles that followed the death of Ivan the Terrible and the ending of the Riurikid dynasty at the end of the sixteenth century destroyed what progress had been made in establishing surveillance and policing in the countryside.

The reign of Peter the Great saw a renewed interest in information gathering and for policing the country. The Strel'tsy mutiny of 1697–1698 undermined Peter's faith in existing structures of protection. Consequently, in 1701 he eliminated the Chancellery for Criminal Affairs, then the Chancellery of Musketeers (*Streletskii Prikaz*), and finally the Land Chancellery (*Zemskii Prikaz*), the chief police and judicial office for the city of Moscow. These acts strengthened the position of the Privy Chancellery (*Prikaz Tainykh Del*). In parallel, the *Preobrazhenskii prikaz* assumed responsibility for the investigation of state crimes.[2] Local means of legal protection were also reformed. In 1699 the governor (*voevoda*) lost authority over the town and surrounding populations. Earlier the apparatus of the local magistrate (*gubnoi starosta*) had been eliminated.

Intent on establishing functional administration based on European models, Peter determined to reorganize central and local self-government. In 1718–1720 functionally delineated colleges replaced most of the *prikazy*. Peter paid particular attention to the police needs of the major cities, establishing in 1715 the country's first specialized police office in his new capital, St. Petersburg. The creation of the position of "*General-Politsmeister*" with an associated chancellery followed shortly thereafter,[3] marking the foundation of a regular police in Russia. In January 1722 a politsmeister chancellery with an *ober-politsmeister* was also set up in Moscow. By the end of 1737 politsmeister offices, with responsibilities encompassing sanitation, engineering, and fire protection, had been set up in the 25 largest towns.

For the majority of the country, however, police functions, with the associated responsibility of providing information from the countryside to the capital, continued to fall on the local population.

Every gentry household (*dvor*) was required to regularly detach night watchmen and sentries. Local peasant populations were obligated to elect, and financially support, responsible officials: headmen (*starosty*), and subordinate *sotskie* ("hundredmen"), *piatidesiatskie* ("fifteenmen"), and *desiatskie* ("tenmen"). All of this relied upon local resources and therefore was of limited effect. The situation began to change only with Catherine the Great's "Institutions for the Administration of the Provinces" that established district (*uezd*) police offices under the head of the district police chief (*zemskii ispravnik*).[4]

Whereas rural policing had to await Catherine's efforts, the political police suffered no such neglect. On March 24, 1731, Empress Anna established the Chancellery of Secret Investigations (*Kantseliariia tainykh rozysknykh del*) that handled the most sensitive and important political and state crimes such as disgraced favorites or mass uprisings until its liquidation in 1762. The new Secret Investigation Office (*Tainaia ekspeditsiia*) headquartered in the Peter-Paul Fortress in St. Petersburg with its Moscow branch at the already constructed Lubianka took over the Chancellery's functions.[5]

Policing received its most detailed treatment in Catherine's Instructions (*Nakaz*) of 1767 to the Legislative Commission. She specifically condemned the use of torture and disproportionate forms of punishment, and called for capital punishment only in extraordinary circumstances. In the enlightened spirit of the age, she appealed for replacing fear with education as a means to combat crime. She also established a project for penal reform, addressing such matters as the separation of male and female prisoners, accused from convicted, and those condemned to death or life in prison from others.[6] But for the rural population, all such mattered little. Serfs remained under the authority of their lords and by a decree, ironically issued the same year as the Nakaz, were forbidden to complain of ill-treatment and lawlessness by their masters. Two years earlier lords had been given authority to send their peasants to forced labor (*katorga*) without trial, not to mention lesser forms of punishment.

The state did intervene in matters of rural policing with the Provincial Reform of 1775. All administrative-police authority at the local level was concentrated in the hands of the governor, and at the *uezd* level in the hands of the Police Captain (*kapitan-ispravnik*), the head of the Lower Land Court (*nizhnii zemskii sud*), and the town commandants (*gorodnichie*).

The Regulation of Good Order (*Ustav blagochiniia*), better known as the Police Statute of 1782, constituted Catherine's most elaborate decree on policing. This act specifically focused on the organization of policing, but once more almost exclusively in the towns. The statute's title indicated Catherine's regard of policing as part of the eudemonistic argument in support of absolutism and the well-ordered police state. As Marc Raeff explained, "The subjects' welfare and prosperity would increase productivity and foster their creative energies and industriousness, which in turn would rebound to the benefit of the state and the ruler's power and provide the proper framework for a Christian way of life."[7] Rather than merely passively preserving justice, Catherine saw herself responsible for actively fostering the productive energies in society and creating an institutional framework for Russia. The police formed an integral part of that social scaffolding.

She therefore created a Police Administration (*Uprava blagochiniia*) in the towns authorized to uphold "good order." She established a number of new state offices with broad legal-administrative powers headed in each guberniia town by a politsmeister and at the uezd level by *gorodnichie*. To protect public order and welfare, Catherine introduced a sector police officer and chancellery (*chastnyi pristav s kantseliariei*) for every 200–700 houses, and a district inspector (*kvartal'nyi nadziratel'*) for every 50–100 houses. These officers commanded the lower branch of the town police. The inspectors not only investigated "small quarrels and disputes" but also, in tune with the absolutist vision of the well-organized police state, "managed everyone living in his district." In the larger towns a secretariat headed by a district lieutenant (*poruchik*) supervised the police agents. This basic police structure remained in force until the 1862 reform of local administration created the supplementary positions of "*okolotochnye*" (from "*okolotok*"—neighborhood/ward) and police inspectors with responsibilities analogous to the district inspector, but without supervisory authority. The reform gave these police officers responsibility over a number of lesser administrative and criminal matters. The lowest police rank was that of the "*budochnik*" (from "*budka*"—booth), renamed "*gorodovoi*" in the second half of the nineteenth century. He manned a post, a box with black and white stripes, at a crossroad or at the most important administrative buildings.[8]

No sooner had he ascended the throne than Paul I attacked this Catherinean system of policing. In this area as well as wherever possible, Paul attempted to liquidate every organ that his mother had created. In 1799 he introduced a military-police structure in the towns; in like manner, he transferred civil governors into the military ranks. Paul even turned his attention to the villages where his new system compelled the peasants to elect a volost "headman" (*golova*) and two assistants (*zasedatelei*), one of whom had direct responsibility for protecting social order. Throughout the country he commanded the creation of military-police stations. But this effort at militarization did not outlast Paul's assassination.

The remainder of the nineteenth century saw not so much a concern with the philosophy of social development as with a drive for bureaucratization. That being said, the new emperor Alexander I desired not merely to make government more modern but to reform the entire internal politics of the country. Based on his initial liberal inclinations, he further sought to make government the defender of the legal rights and freedoms of the individual from oppression by other members of society.[9] When he established the system of Ministries on September 8, 1802, two of the first eight ministries were the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD) and the Ministry of Justice, with the administrative management of the government entrusted to the MVD and the legal system to the Ministry of Justice. Under the MVD he created the second "*ekspeditsiia,*" responsible for order and public welfare (*spokoistvie i blagochinie*). Divided into two sections, the first was in charge of general criminal statistics, control over public opinion, and supervision of the rural police. The second section was responsible for all institutions of the town police and fire departments. With its vast administrative and economic functions, the police (*pravokhranitel'nyi*) function was not the primary responsibility of the MVD.

On July 25, 1811, the Emperor established a new state organ—the Ministry of Police. Divided into three departments, the First brought together various offices of the so-called executive police (the command apparatus, the administration of police, prisons, recruit enrollment, etc.). The Second Department consisted of the economic police, responsible, in addition to providing for the operational needs of the Ministry, for the creation, protection, and supervision of local charities (including children's homes and certain places of detention [*smiritel'nye doma*]). The Third Department supervised all state and rural medical institutions. The Ministry of Police, however, faced opposition from powerful ministers who feared the ability of such an independent ministry to interfere with their ability to run things as they liked. Consequently, at the end of 1819 the Ministry of Police was eliminated and most of its functions returned to the MVD as a separate department.[10]

The era of the Great Reforms saw substantial changes in the functions of the police. On November 20, 1864, Alexander II promulgated his judicial reforms known as *Sudebnye ustavy 20 noiabria 1864 goda*, consisting of 74 volumes.[11] Among the reforms was the removal of inquest and court functions from the police together with the reorganization of the Procuracy, the establishment of the legal profession, and the institution of legal examining magistrates. The Police Courts were replaced by elected peace courts (*mirovoi iustitsiei*) to handle small local matters. But at the same time the police remained responsible for the preliminary inquest of serious criminal cases.[12]

Alexander II also attempted to reform Nicholas I's notorious Secret Police (Third Section). In 1867 he confirmed a reform that transformed the Third Section into a "national police" with only surveillance functions. Except in extreme circumstances, the Gendarmes could not actually arrest criminals. But starting in 1871 the Gendarmerie obtained the power to carry out inquests into political crimes and to decide these matters extrajudiciarily.[13]

With growing attention now being paid to the political police, the needs of the regular police received less interest, with a reported increase in crime. The report of cases of theft and robbery outstripped population growth by two times, while cases of bodily injury surpassed population growth sevenfold.[14] Nonetheless, the government's concern remained primarily focused on political crimes. Increased terrorist activity convinced Minister of the Interior Mikhail Tarielovich Loris-Melikov as head of the 1880 Supreme Administration Commission to recommend disbanding the Third Section and giving its responsibilities over to the Department of Executive Police of the MVD. On August 6, 1880, the Third Section was indeed disbanded and the Gendarmerie assigned to the MVD, with the new unified police renamed Department of State Police, and from 1883 State Department of Police. The MVD became, with the subordination of all police forces under it, the most important and powerful social institution in the administrative-police system of the Russian empire. As part of 1880 reform, the government created The Division for the Preservation of Order and Public Safety (*Otdelenie po okhrane obshchestvennoi bezopasnosti i poriadka*), eventually known as the *Okhrana*, to specialize in counterterrorism and political crimes.[15]

Despite the MVD's ever-growing police and surveillance responsibilities, and efforts at professionalization, policing remained almost entirely an urban phenomenon, with most activity centered on the largest towns, whereas the vast majority of the population continued to live in the villages, unsurveilled and a mystery to the city.[16] The staff and command of the uezd police had remained essentially unchanged since December 25, 1862. What changes had occurred in the form of elimination of the College of Police Administration, creation of the position of village constable (*uriadnik*), and an increase in the number of rural policemen (*stanovye pristavy*) in some locations, did little to improve surveillance and policing in the provinces. P. D. Sviatopolk-Mirskii, at the time assistant minister of the Interior and Commander of the Imperial Corps of Gendarmes, proposed in 1900 separating the rural police from local societal organs. To this end the positions of village police captain (*sotskii*) and corporal (*desiatskii*) were to be eliminated and replaced by a special hired village guard (*strazhik*), immediately under the authority of the village constable; in addition, where possible, police responsibilities would be removed from the volost chief (*starshina*) and the village headman (*starosta*), leaving them with responsibilities for social services.[17] The basic idea for the reform was that the lowest levels of the police should not be designated simply by virtue of being part of an administrative-territorial entity, but should come from within the population living in that area. The activities of the rural police should then parallel those of the corresponding ranks in the urban police. According to the plan, the entire uezd together with the towns located within them would fall under the authority of the uezd police. Only the guberniia capital and the most significant urban centers would remain under the jurisdiction of the urban police. As administrative organs the uezd police would be under the authority of the police administration headed by the uezd *ispravnik*.

Despite this effort and the general approval that it received from provincial governors, the Imperial government continued to concern itself primarily with urban, and especially political problems. The world of the village remained outside the view of those in the capital. As part of the effort to reorganize policing to deal with the growth of the revolutionary movement, on August 12, 1902, the so-called Investigation Department (*rozysknoi otdelenie*) was created, charged with carrying out secret "operational-investigative" work against both criminal and political suspects. By law of June 7, 1904, in order to "make a case" the police were empowered to fabricate evidence and to give false testimony.[18] In 1903 the political police in the form of Okhrana Departments (*okhrannye otdeleniia*) were expanded to encompass all the major cities of the country (prior to this the Okhrana had operated only in the capitals). With the outbreak of the 1905 Revolution, the Special Department (*Osobyi otdel*) of the Department of Police was divided into two parts, with one specialized in the gathering of information by agents within the revolutionary parties and the other spying on practically all social movements and groups.[19] On July 6, 1908, the law "On the Organization of the Detective Division (*sysknaia chast'*)" created within the town and uezd police forces a new organization consisting of special undercover agents whose work was to be directed against criminal activity. The previously created uezd police guard was placed under the Gendarmerie to enhance their work against political opposition. Finally, the law created specially selected Gendarmes-Historians to study the history, programs, and tactics of oppositional parties so that agents could better infiltrate.

But as can be seen, peasants remained invisible to the police unless they showed up in a town.

In between the creation of new political police organizations, the government also organized commissions, much as the Bolsheviks would later do, to study overall police reform. Among the problems addressed was the low pay of the police and their corresponding willingness to accept bribes. But this led to no reform; instead, the "new" idea in 1906 from the Special Interdepartmental Commission (*Osobaia mezhduvedomstvennaia komissiia*) under Minister of Internal Affairs A. A. Makarov was the need to reorganize the police along military lines with one supreme commander and a single administrative apparatus. In November 1908 yet another reform project was announced, entitled Basic Theses for the Reorganization of the Police within the Empire (*Osnovnye polozheniia preobrazovaniia politsii v Imperii*). This provided that the governor was the head of the police in the localities and created a new post of vice-governor for police affairs to handle day-to-day operations. But the provincial Gendarme administration opposed this reform as it called for the administration's elimination; furthermore, the governors saw this as primarily additional expenses added to their budgets. The idea was kicked around within the Council of Ministers from June 1911 to January 1912. Then with a change in Council of Ministers at the end of 1912 the project simply was left unattended as the new Council declared that it was not worthy of consideration at such a high level. In the meantime other special commissions were working constantly from 1906 through the First World War on projects to reform the "power departments" (*silovye vedomstva*).[20]

Thus the proposed reforms of the police after the 1905 Revolution while attempting to centralize police functions essentially left village policing untouched, with the village police—*volostnye starshiny, sel'skie starosty* and *des'iatskie*—only formally included in the composition of the police. Although the government recognized that the urban police needed professionalization and its members trained, no true attention was paid to rural policing prior to the October Revolution.[21] The Bolshevik Revolution, therefore, stands as a watershed in the effort to bring the Catherinean vision of the well-ordered police state to rural Russia, and in particular to utilize the political police as a means to obtain information about and correct policy toward the rural population.

Like their tsarist predecessors, the Bolsheviks viewed the world through an urban prism. Policing under the Bolsheviks thus was initially seen as it had been under the tsars as a matter of controlling the towns. The Provisional Government had already abolished the tsarist police on March 11, 1917, an action that one historian correctly referred to with respect to rural Russia as simultaneously losing its eyes and hands: "not only did it lose control over the countryside, but it no longer even had access to basic information about the situation at the local level."[22] On paper at least, a "people's militia" replaced the police three days later, with participation in it by former members of the tsarist police actively discouraged. On April 6, 1917, the Gendarmerie was also disbanded.[23]

Prior to the October Revolution a number of essentially uncoordinated developments related to policing had already taken place. Harkening back to the 1905 Revolution was the formation in numerous factories of armed units christened Red Guards. These had reappeared by March 1917 to defend the February Revolution against tsarist supporters. Under the influence of the Bolsheviks they played a role in the defeat of the revolt led by General Lavr Kornilov in September 1917 and then participated in the overthrow of the Provisional Government in November.

The new Soviet government, however, was not inclined to rely for social order on these semi-independent armed workers whose structures and organization varied throughout the country.[24] Thus, on November 10, 1917, the Peoples' Commissariat of Internal Affairs (NKVD) announced the decree "On the Workers' Militia" (*O rabochei militsii*) in support of having a part of the proletariat armed for the defense of the revolution and the maintenance of social order and revolutionary legality.[25] Neil Weissman described the party's motivation: "The militia was to differ from the hated tsarist police not only in its subordination to the proletarian state but also in its devotion to an ethos of civility and legality. Rather than serve as an instrument of oppression over the people, the Soviet force would be a vehicle for winning popular support, for legitimizing the regime in the eyes of the masses."[26] However, even with the declaration of a new policing force and its new ethos, the militia had to operate in an environment where numerous other groups not only professed the right to "defend the revolution," but were actively engaged in police-like activities: the Committees of the Poor (*kombedy*), Revolutionary Committees (*revkomy*), and, most important of all, the All-Russian Extraordinary Commission for Combating Counter-Revolution and Sabotage (Cheka).

Faced with the fact that few of these groups had anyone whatsoever trained in policing, on May 15, 1918, the NKVD set out a decree that attempted to clarify the functions and establish the structure of the militia in the locales. Within two months the NKVD had also established the Central Administration of the Soviet Workers and Peasants Militia. These structures were given formality in a joint instruction by the NKVD and the Peoples' Commissariat of Justice of October 12, 1918. In summer and fall 1918, in a majority of the regions of the country militias were formed on a permanent basis. In the larger towns the establishment of militias took on a more organized character. By the end of 1918, guberniia and town militia administrations had been formed.[27] The militia leaders met on December 6–8, 1918, in the First Congress of the Leaders of Town and Guberniia Militia Administrations to attempt to clarify the tasks of the militia, to determine proper organization in the local areas, and to establish the proper relationship to other institutions. These efforts to clarify the role and responsibilities of the militia continued into the spring of 1919 until the Soviet of Peoples' Commissars (*Sovnarkom*) issued its decree "On the Soviet Workers-Peasants Militia" on April 2, 1919.[28]

But given the conditions of German occupation and civil war, the establishment of a militia presence in rural Russia proceeded extremely slowly and in a disorganized manner. The Bolshevik government had initially called for policing in the countryside by a force elected by the peasants from amongst their own ranks, an idea that did not long survive the pressures of intervention and civil war. But the decision to reject village control and to create a new professional rural force under the command of provincial and district urban officers, and thus supposedly free from corruption by relatives, friends, kulaks, and speculators (in short, the entire peasant population), did not guarantee results. A report on the militia in Novgorod guberniia from October 1918 reported that "almost in all volost Soviet Departments there has been no organization of departments of armed defense. Within the Soviet Departments there are one or two militiamen who are receiving support from the district militia. The situation is made worse by the absence of funds, weapons, and precise instructions."[29] The chief of the Orshansk town and uezd militia of Pskov guberniia reported in June 1918 that of the 19 volosts in the uezd, 6 were occupied. The other 13 volosts were divided into 4 police sectors in which there was 1 captain and 16–17 militiamen. These militiamen faced constant attack by armed moonshiners.

Despite these limitations, the militia officially had responsibility during the Civil War period for a plethora of activities harking back to Catherine the Great's Police Statute: taking part in military operations on the war front; suppressing uprisings and mutinies; fighting against military and "work" desertion; leading criminal investigations; commanding interior troops; applying military instructions; taking care of matters involving foreigners, refugees, and prisoners of war; exercising control over communal economies; ensuring the fulfillment by the population of state laws and orders; supervising labor camps; registering urban inhabitants; maintaining sanitary conditions in the towns; and supervising efforts at eliminating poverty and begging.[30]

But in rural Russia, the desire remained strong for freedom from outside interference, leading villagers where possible to elect their own peace officers, maintain order without recourse to the militia, and even resist the official militiamen when they attempted to interfere in village affairs.[31] This is understandable since interaction with "militia" often simply meant dealing with armed groups from the towns, Red Guards, or others who acted as "police." Given the lack of an organized police force in most of rural Russia during the period of the Civil War, the most likely contact between villagers and the regular militia would be the squadrons sent out to the villages to deal with deserters and bandits. It is highly unlikely that the peasants could make much distinction between the deserters, bandits, and Soviet forces as these groups fought it out in their territory given that, according to the political police reports, their marauding behaviors were often identical.[32] But the forced requisitioning of grain from the peasantry, in which the militia took an active role, constituted the most intense and defining interaction between police and peasants. The militia was also involved with village society in compelling forced labor such as clearing snow from the rail lines from so-called "unemployed elements" within the rural population. The militia's responsibility for confiscating weapons from the peasantry further strained militia-peasant relations (fig. 1.1).[33]

Such interaction exacerbated what the years of world war had already produced—the peasants' ever-growing perception of the state and ruling elite as alien forces. The village experience with the "new" revolutionary form of policing originated simultaneously with

Figure 1.1 Peasants at table (*Gruppa krestian za stolom, Rossiiskaia imperiia*) Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Prokudin-Gorskii Collection, LOT 10332-B, no. 306.

conflict within the village itself, a conflict aggravated by the new government. In the spring of 1918, in connection with the growing problem of provisioning the towns, intravillage tensions sharply increased. In Moscow and St. Petersburg the bread ration for a worker had fallen to between 50 and 100 grams a day. The rural poor were also going hungry. But successful peasants, having by now learned the market, were not prepared to surrender their grain for a rapidly devaluing currency, especially as industry was unable to produce the manufactured goods that the peasants had come to expect from trade.[34] The revolution had become a war for bread.

In the meantime, for a good part of the peasantry the thirst for additional land remained unquenched. Demobilized soldiers returning from the front showed particular determination to obtain new lands from confiscated gentry and state holdings. In most situations, however, these lands had already been expropriated and now lay in the hands of the more prosperous peasants. And although it is true that the struggle within peasant society at the beginning of the revolution had been primarily that of the commune against the separators who had utilized the Stolypin reforms to establish their own homesteads free from communal discipline,[35] this communal solidarity had genuine fissures that were opening wider. The poor peasants, who remained without land, now felt an ever-sharpening sense of grievance.

Bread could be taken from the prosperous peasants and land could be redistributed in the village only through force. But the village poor, including the returned Red Army men, could not expect support from the volost soviet, which had claimed control over village affairs following the liquidation of the prerevolutionary organs of peasant self-government, as this new organ in most cases was in the hands of the prosperous.[36]

The Soviet government thus decided to deal with both the grain crisis and the lack of land for the poor by instituting a number of measures that were destined to produce strong hostile reaction from those who had benefited from the changes to date, approaches that harkened back to the efforts at dealing with the food-supply crisis by both the tsarist regime and the Provisional Government.[37] The first measure consisted of attempting to organize the village poor to support the government and combat the more prosperous and land-holding member of the village.[38] These Committees of the Poor conceptually demonstrated the evolving, confusing, and confused Bolshevik perception of village society.

The Bolsheviks began 1917 with an image of a rural world dominated by struggle between the poorest, and usually landless peasants (*batraki*), which the Bolsheviks preferred to refer to as the "rural proletariat," and the so-called "rural bourgeoisie," eventually simply termed the *kulaks*. Having to confront the existence of a middle peasantry confused this portrait when the Bolsheviks in the spring of 1918 set out to mobilize the poor peasants in the struggle to force the grain-holding peasants to cooperate in the delivery of grain to the cities. Committees of the Poor were to be set up to assist worker detachments sent into the village to locate the hypothesized large grain reserves allegedly being held by a small minority. But these landless peasants, allied with outsiders from the city, generated enormous resentment and hostility, so that instead of mobilizing everyone against the rich, the Committees of the Poor actually mobilized everyone against the poor and the city.[39] The level of violence engendered can be judged by the fact that during the summer and fall of 1918 some 20 percent of the food-supply detachments sent to obtain grain were killed; between July and September alone state and party activists suffered more than 10,000 casualties. For the year as a whole, state and party casualties reached 20,000.[40] By fall 1918, the requisition detachments and the Committees of the Poor had been discredited and a new solution to obtaining grain had to be found.

Although extraordinary violence would continue to mark the Civil War and the suppression of peasant rebellions in areas still contested, in those areas under Soviet control the resort in late fall 1918 to a specified grain delivery quota (*razverstka*) and a tax in kind introduced a minimal degree of normalcy and predictability to state-peasant relations. But the hostility of the Civil War precluded any idea of returning to the initial utopian idea of peasants policing themselves or even electing from among themselves their own militiamen. Although agents of the center and not the locale, the rural policemen would, according to Leon Trotsky, distinguish themselves from the evil tsarist police by their devotion to "revolutionary legality" and their treatment of the peasantry with tact and respect, thereby teaching the peasants the meaning of Soviet edicts and winning over popular support.[41]

The more immediate result of the end of the Civil War was the drastic reduction in the number of militiamen and the purging from their ranks of "undesirable elements." This was coupled with transferring financial responsibility for the militia from the central government to the local soviets, which led to even further reductions in numbers. While the official ratio for police to populace was set in 1925 at 1:5,000, ratios of 1:20,000 and higher were reported. Efforts to increase the numbers of rural militiamen produced extremely meager results. The few police in the countryside suffered from lack of means of communication and transportation (including few, if any, telephones and an extreme shortage of horses) and a lack of housing.[42]

Efforts at reducing the responsibilities of the rural police proved equally futile. During the Civil War years they had been reduced to serving as overburdened clerks for any and all Soviet agencies. But although the government decreed that other agencies should no longer rely on the rural militia as a substitute for missing administrative apparati, no other personnel existed in most of the countryside.[43] Thus overwork combined with low pay made it extremely difficult to recruit and retain qualified officers. Until 1931 local governments were responsible for the provisioning of the militia with weapons, uniforms, and other necessities, and only the largest and most industrialized regions had the resources to do so. During the NEP period, a doorman was paid between 1.5 and 2 times the salary of a regular militiaman and an average textile worker 2 times.[44] Even when the government turned to demobilized Red Armymen to fill the gaps, annual turnover rates among rural militiamen reached over 100 percent.[45] V. N. Tolmachev, Commissar of the Russian NKVD, reported in 1928 that the turnover rate in some areas reached 200 percent.[46] Those who did serve were prone to bribery, corruption, and petty extortion as means to solve their personal financial problems. It is thus in no way surprising that when the government sought to obtain information on rural society, it turned not to the militia but to the political police.

And yet it was the single local rural policeman, the *uchastkovyi nadziratel,* who provided essentially all policing in the localities.

The rural precinct supervisor had to tour a large area, making contact with local village officials and in general supervising the situation in the countryside. The local police chiefs served as members of the local soviet executive committees, which under the policy of joint responsibility for police with the central NKVD RSFSR had the right to direct personnel decisions and influence the daily activities of the police. The militia, thus tied to the village world, was not supposed to take on any overtly political functions and in no way be connected with political police tasks.[47] However, in the countryside no one else was available. Anti-Soviet activity that was supposed to fall under the jurisdiction of the Cheka/OGPU had to be initially investigated by the rural *uchastkovye*.[48] Further, in carrying out its policing work, even in dealing with the problem of banditry in the countryside, the militia officers were perceived by the local soviet executive committees and by the leadership of the NKVD as acting in a far less arbitrary and brutal fashion than agents of the OGPU, who, as late as 1924, were accused by the Commissar of the NKVD of "conducting the struggle against banditry with the methods of 1918."[49] Commissar Beloborodov went even further in May 1925 at a meeting of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee Presidium's Party fraction when he explained the persistence of counterrevolutionary sentiments in the country: "If you sow the wind, you will reap the whirlwind. The country can't be run this way any longer. It is impossible to hound people for eight years and deprive them of any civil rights."[50]

As the party and state police bureaucrats warred with one another in the capital, the political police were charged with providing the leadership with an accurate depiction of the rural world. This represented a major shift in "policing" efforts, given the long history of ignoring the countryside with the exception of dispatching troops to suppress rebellious peasants. And despite the relative absence of OGPU police in the countryside,[51] the OGPU nonetheless provided the central authorities with regular reports on the peasantry.

The data themselves do not allow us to determine the exact role of the militia versus other informants (*osvedomitely*) such as party members in gathering the information. In fact, determining precisely who were the village informers is not possible, although one study of informers for the Luhanske (Lugansk) okrug department of the Ukrainian GPU found that they were on the whole native-born, well-informed, relatively young peasants.[52] These peasants' characteristics paralleled those of the village correspondents (*sel'skie korrespondenty* [*sel'kory*]) who also were to provide the government with accurate information on the village, but through the vehicle of the peasant press.[53] Undoubtedly *sel'kory*, peasants thoroughly devoted to the Communist cause, also functioned as *osvedomitely.* Nonetheless, the NKVD constantly complained about the OGPU compelling its police to provide service and legwork for the OGPU in the countryside. Vice-president of the OGPU Genrikh Iagoda sent a circular letter on February 23, 1924, to the heads of the *gubotdely* complaining that much of the reports coming to the OGPU was derived from "semipublic" information provided by the militia and the executive committees of the local soviets.[54] Clearly no solid wall separated the regular police from these political police reports.

What image of rural society was being presented to the central authorities by the police? The police reports, at least until the beginning of the Stalin Revolution in the fall of 1927, concentrated not on alleged party left- and rightwing deviations and supposed anti-Soviet conspirators, but on the economic and social-political situation in the villages and peasant attitudes, in particular the reasons for peasant dissatisfaction.[55] The political police's willingness to listen as well as to command was all the more remarkable given the predominant image of the peasant at this time within urban society as either the gray, victimized, peasant or the rapacious kulak, neither of whom could provide a social milieu for progress.[56] Nonetheless, as stated above, both the party and the government were convinced that the maintenance of Soviet rule in the face of hundreds of millions of potentially hostile peasants demanded that precise information on the economic, social, and political situation in the countryside be obtained.[57] Understanding and correctly responding to the peasants' attitudes toward the policies of the regime was thus essential. The political police were tasked with providing the basis for meeting that crucial responsibility, and it is to the police reports that we must now turn.

CHAPTER 2

Famine, Market Forces, and Ameliorative Actions, 1921–1923

The final months of the Civil War had witnessed sporadic peasant disturbances throughout the Russian territory, culminating in the Kronshtadt Rebellion of new naval recruits fresh from the villages on March 1, 1921.[1] A general peasant uprising, the bête noire of governments in Russia since the seventeenth century, was understood by the party to threaten the very existence of the regime. The choices were simple and stark: either a permanent civil war with the overwhelming mass of the population or civil peace based on serious compromises with the peasantry.[2] The first compromise was the replacement of *razverstka,* the Bolshevik method of grain procurement, with a fixed food-supply tax (*prodnalog*) at the 10th Party Congress in March 1921. As opposed to the previous *razverstka* (based on a national assessment for total grain to be collected, then divided up and assigned to lower levels until it reached the village and ultimately the individual peasant household),[3] the new progressive tax was assigned to the individual homestead based on an assessment of its productive capacity.

The second, and more significant, compromise was the ending of the attempt at maintaining a state monopoly of the grain trade through the apparatus of the People's Commissariat of Food Supply (*Narodnyi komissariat prodovol'stviia*). The effort at monopoly had resulted in a renewed crackdown on local bazaars based on the long-standing prohibition of free trade in grain as well as various other agricultural products. With the demobilization that accompanied the ending of the Civil War came a return of former

Red Armymen to the villages, and it was these peasants in particular that some police identified as leading the demand for free trade.[4] Other reports, however, stressed that the drive for opening the markets originated primarily from the more prosperous peasants who were convinced that they could successfully market a surplus, whereas the poor were doubtful that the grain market would improve their situation.[5]

Regardless of who was leading the opposition to state policy, in the spring of 1921 the government reversed course and legalized the market in grain.[6] Although the government thereby hoped to quell peasant disturbances, reports from the provinces indicated that the transition from *razverstka* to *prodnalog* did not initially produce the desired result. As the head of the Tula guberniia Cheka succinctly put the matter: "The peasants respond to every step taken by the communist party with distrust, and believe it better not to change their previously taken negative and hostile position."[7]

The most important concern for the peasants—leaving aside for the moment the problem of bandits—was the grain tax. The Severo-Dvinskoi provincial Cheka reported in summer of 1921 that the peasants were arguing that although the government had claimed that the food tax would be less than the former grain procurement, such had not been the case. The peasants were particularly angered by a higher state demand for butter and eggs as well as excessive labor demands. The basic reason for peasant unhappiness, the Cheka throughout the Northern provinces noted, was economic. "The reason for all the grumbling and unhappiness," the chief of the Severo-Dvinskoi provincial Cheka assured the All-Russia Cheka in November 1921, "is solely insufficient material prosperity, and that alone."[8]

Although the police were primarily concerned at the end of the Civil War with the activities of bandit groups, and particularly with peasant support for bandits, the impact of the New Economic Policy (NEP) reforms came to dominate police concerns as the bandit situation slowly improved. The police noted varied responses to the reforms, with peasants in areas still suffering from hunger showing the least positive response to the announcement of the *prodnalog* and the free trade in grain. This was particularly true for the poorest peasants. As consumers of grain rather than producers for market, the poor were being confronted by grain prices on the legalized market that they could not afford as peasants with grain attempted to maximize profits.[9] At the same time the poorest were losing the exemption from taxes that had often existed under *razverstka*. Thus, even though some police were reporting the appearance of lower prices on the market as more commodities appeared, the impact of the new legislation varied significantly.[10] Yet the overall response to the reforms according to Chekist reports was wary but positive. Nonetheless, a constant refrain was reported by the police in peasant complaints—a lack of seed grain and forage and the failure of the government to adequately address this necessity. This disappointment was compounded by the refusal of some local authorities to adhere to the new legislation; the Tomsk guberniia Cheka reported in May 1921: "The main reason for peasant dissatisfaction is the continuation of levying the food *razverstka* despite the proclamation of the decree on *prodnalog*."[11]

In the spring of 1921 the secret police also began noting not only cases of hunger but of actual starvation. Commenting on the drought that had begun to affect the Volga-Ural region and Ukraine, and would soon help precipitate the horrendous famine of 1921–1922, the head of the Ufa Cheka reported that "One can note the effort of the peasants to sow all available land; however, because of the insufficiency of seed grain and forage, which is lacking by up to 40 percent, one sees a lack of sowing. The situation of the peasants is worsened by the fact that because of the drought the winter crop has withered and the peasants are having to resow with spring grains."[12] Reports from Saratov guberniia that May raised the alarm on an unfolding disaster. The drought was decimating the sown arable with thousands of *desiatiny* already lost. The peasants, having now seen both their winter and spring grains fail, had attempted to salvage the situation through sowing potatoes and millet, but these too were failing. The market price of grain was climbing, while objects of household use being offered by peasants on the market were fetching less than half their previous price. Reserves of foodstuffs were running low, some regions having less than two weeks remaining. Local authorities had no funds with which to provide aid. Hunger was fiercest on both sides of the Volga where peasants had already "been victimized" by bandits, Red Armymen, and refugees. Having lost everything, peasants were trying to survive by spending nights in boats on the Volga, "where they often die from hunger." Faced with famine, whole groups of peasants had begun to wander off toward the Caucasus and Ukraine in hopes of finding food.[13] The police reported that food reserves had dried up in the Don guberniia and that peasants throughout the country were holding the communists responsible for the situation. Peasants in groups of thousands were reported descending on government headquarters in Ufa guberniia demanding rations and attacking leaders of village soviets when food was not delivered.[14]

The Vladimir Cheka in June reported similar disruptions in the food campaign for the growing season 1921–1922. Peasants in the guberniia were anxious to expand their production, and even to move from the three-field system to the multi-field, but were confronted with a lack of seeds and unavailability of agricultural tools. While goods were entering the market, this was true only for private traders, with the prices on the private market out of reach of most peasants. State foods sales had essentially ceased as the state organs had no goods to offer. Meanwhile, the price of grain on the open market continued to rise throughout May and June.[15]

By late June 1921 the police were reporting that in the Volga German settlements all crops had failed and the peasants had already been reduced to eating grasses, having slaughtered their last cattle. Without seeds and lacking food for draft animals, there was no plowing for winter grains. By the beginning of July, deaths from starvation were reported increasing daily. Facing death at home, peasants were fleeing in hopes of finding food in neighboring regions. In the nearby Simbirsk guberniia, the peasants had begun the disastrous process of selling off their horses, which would leave them incapable of later carrying out agriculture even were they to survive the famine.[16] The police reported that in Krasnokutsk volost, Pokrovsk uezd, in Saratov guberniia, by January 1922, of the region's 2,000 horses, only 40 remained.[17] Those peasants not facing starvation nonetheless confronted the spread of cholera, which the police reported on more and more often throughout the summer of 1921 and into the winter of 1922. Conditions in the famine areas would not improve until the harvest of summer 1922, and even then the areas were affected by a plague of locusts.

And yet the grain tax collection continued, as the government reasoned that the major cities to the north, in particular Moscow and St. Petersburg, as well as the army simply had to be fed. In this the Bolsheviks were as much a prisoner of urbanization, industrialization, and the realities of Russian agricultural and political geography as had been the tsarist regime. Thus, the Cheka reported from Stavropol guberniia in July 1921 that the collection of the *razverstka* continued, albeit with extreme difficulty (rather than the planned 3 million puds of grain for June, only 300 thousand had been collected). At the same time the police reported that both the winter and the early spring grains had failed throughout the region, that the food situation in the guberniia was critical, that exchange had come to a halt as the peasants had nothing to sell on the market, and that the peasants were fleeing the area in the desperate hope of finding food.[18]

However, having been confronted with the enormity of the crisis, on July 18, 1921, the government formed the Central Commission for Famine Relief (*TsK Pomgol*). Earlier that summer Patriarch Nikon had established his own All-Russian Social Committee for Famine Relief, also known as *Pomgol.* Following the creation of *TsK Pomgol,* Nikon's committee was disbanded by the government on August 27, 1921.[19]

The police almost immediately reported a highly active response to the formation of *TsK Pomgol* from guberniia, uezd, and volost branches. Collection of aid for the Volga peasants proceeded far more effectively than tax collection. The formation of *TsK Pomgol* also allowed Metropolitan Arsenii to create in Novgorod a special committee for aid to the starving composed of clergy and laymen, which also began collecting money to purchase food, this despite the earlier closure of Patriarch Nikon's *Pomgol.*[20] The government also permitted the formation of the All-Russian Famine Relief Committee on July 21, consisting primarily of celebrities such as Maxim Gorky, Konstantin Stanislavsky, and a daughter of Tolstoy, as well as leading

Bolsheviks including Kalinin, Kamenev, Lunacharsky, and Krasnin, whose job it was to appeal for foreign aid.[21]

By August the Cheka was reporting some success in addressing the famine: part of the collected grain tax was now being sent to the Volga region, and children from the hunger regions were being resettled in areas with a surfeit of grain.[22] Yet conditions in Samara guberniia continued to worsen. Efforts to evacuate the hungry were running afoul of limits on railway and river transport, with the Omsk and Tashkent railroads simply unable to handle the load. Children's Homes were filled beyond capacity, and efforts to arrange a special evacuation train from Moscow had so far been unsuccessful. The overtaxing of the railroads even made it impossible to bring in relief supplies from Siberia. These failures, the local Cheka informed the central leadership, were generating enormous anger at the government and the party.[23] And although more food was arriving by September (including the first mention of efforts by the American Relief Administration [ARA]),[24] and efforts to establish state-run feeding centers had begun to bear fruit, the situation remained critical. In neighboring Saratov guberniia, the police were reporting in early December that the peasants had devoured all of their cattle, including their draft animals, and were reduced to eating dogs, cats, and rodents. In Samara, the police were reporting "massive" cases of cannibalism, with peasants stealing corpses from the graveyards.[25] By winter 1922, reports of cannibalism were becoming commonplace throughout the famine zone.

Where success in combating famine was noted, credit again was given in part to the ARA, especially for providing relief to children.[26] The police reports make clear that these efforts to address the famine were occurring while the regime continued to battle bandits throughout the country, but especially in the south, while typhus and cholera raged (and medicines were unavailable), and with a "massive exit from the party" in protest to the introduction of the NEP.[27] That any relief was arriving under such conditions was little short of a miracle.

However, despite the limited success of the legal reforms in addressing peasant discontent, the recognition by the police of the legitimacy of many of the peasants' complaints, and the acknowledgment of the disaster of the famine, the police complained of peasants in many locations being brought to ruin through the behavior of tax collectors. As the political police in Gomel' in the autumn of 1921 succinctly put the matter, "The peasants consider Soviet power to be the agent of all misfortune."[28] Local officials, the political police informed their superiors in Moscow, often continued to collect the *razverstka* despite the decree on *prodnalog*. Even when the new tax was recognized, these agents often ignored the assigned tax and confiscated both livestock and movable property from those unable to pay. The collector who forced the peasants in Novonikolaevsk guberniia into the village cemetery and threatened to shoot them all was clearly seen as excessive, but in no way unique.[29] As one agent dryly reported: "The collection of the grain tax has proceeded much more successfully following the imposition of repressive measures."[30] A *svodka* of January 21, 1922, from Krasnoiarsk guberniia reported drunken food collectors forcing peasants with arrears into confinement alongside peasants dying from typhus.[31] Another report from Omsk guberniia dated November 14, 1922, described drunken (again) local officials extorting excess grain from prosperous peasants, and beating with sabers those unable to cough up the additional grain. The president of the Losevsk volost executive committee threatened the peasants of Pamiatosvobodsk, "The stick—that is your administrator," and proceeded to bludgeon a nonpayer.[32]

According to the Omsk Cheka, "The excesses of the food procurement workers in the guberniia have reached truly unbelievable proportions." With clear disgust, the report detailed the outrages:

> Everywhere the arrested [for arrears] peasants are imprisoned in cold barns, beaten with whips, and threatened with being shot. The peasants, fearing repression, are abandoning their fields and hiding in the forests. The 156th grain procurement militia [*druzhina*] and the 3rd grain procurement detachment ordered the inhabitants of several villages to gather for a general meeting. The cavalry detachment began to beat those who had gathered with whips and unsheathed sabers. Those who had not completely fulfilled their tax obligation were driven through the village and

> trampled by horses. After that they were stripped naked and imprisoned in cold barns. Many of the women were beaten unconscious, buried naked in the snow, and raped.[33]

The police reported that such excesses were destroying the ability especially of the poor to work the land. Peasants by the thousands were being arrested for nonpayment. Those who were able to pay were often left with no grain for themselves. The Komi police reported in October 1922 that the majority of poor peasants in the region, having been forced to pay their taxes, now had food supplies sufficient to last only through the first half of winter.[34] As a result peasants were being driven to eat surrogates such as bark, straw, and bran.[35] The police in Vologodsk guberniia reported that the "unbearable" tax burden had turned the peasants hostile toward the party and government.[36] What is most striking about these reports is the stress that the local police placed on the logical basis for peasant dissatisfaction. The peasants' hostility toward both the party and the government is reported as the direct product of the tax burden in combination with the poor grain harvest. The demand for "normal" amounts of grain when the harvest had failed and reserves were nonexistent simply violated the moral economy of the peasants.

At the same time, in those locations where the harvest was good and where the single tax was perceived as an improvement over the earlier *razverstka*, the police reported the peasants' attitudes as "satisfactory."[37] Local conditions, not political abstractions, determined how most peasants viewed and responded to the government according to the secret police. Not surprisingly, therefore, when in the summer of 1922 the government brought the leadership of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party to trial, the police reported that the peasants were essentially indifferent to the event.[38] As the head of the Arkhangelsk guberniia political police argued: "The attitude of the guberniia's population to a significant degree depends on the economic condition of the masses and measures carried out by Soviet Power according to the principles of the New Economic Policy, in view of which every group of the population has its own needs, and dependent on those various forms of discontent."[39]

Peasant attitudes toward party and state were reported to be improving as the single agricultural tax became normalized and the worst of the famine overcame during the 1922–1923 agricultural year.[40] Some increased satisfaction was even noted by the Orlov guberniia Cheka as early as November 1921; well-to-do and middle peasants were reported as now able to use surplus grain to obtain goods "to better their lives" or to expand their holdings, whereas "the poor peasants are not in a position to pay the taxes levied on them."[41] Although the police recounted that the peasants in general were more pleased with the new tax system, reports of dissatisfaction and complaints that the single tax was too high and beyond the means of the peasants continued, as did protests over confiscation of property and mass arrests for nonpayment.[42] The police stated that the peasants, even the more "conscious" ones, were upset by "overdemands"; however, they could be appeased by addressing specific problems. The police in Riazan guberniia reported the peasants as explaining: "They sell us bread, the very same [grain] which we have to then use to satisfy the grain tax."[43] Poor peasants in Siberia were reported as having to sell their seed grain in an effort to avoid being sentenced to jail and having what little property they possessed seized for nonpayment.[44] According to the police in Ingushetia (then known as the "Mountain Republic" [*gornaia respublika*]) from the 50 to 60 puds of grain harvested by poor peasants, only some 10 to 15 puds remained after all expenses and grain taxes.[45] This was hardly sufficient for subsistence as from these 15 puds the peasants also had to take their winter seed grain. And although the People's Commissariat of Agriculture (*Narkomzem*) claimed to be providing agricultural machinery, no assistance was reaching the poor peasants.[46] Not surprisingly, conflict had emerged over land rights between Ingush and Russian settlers, with the Ingush seizing better lands from the colonists.[47]

These local reports were buttressed by the officials of the central OGPU. In the summary report on the political and economic condition of the country prepared for the party elite covering the period April–May 1923, the central OGPU informed the leadership:

> During the period covered by this summary the most important tax campaign has been completed. This has been a time of severe difficulty for the peasants. The extreme number, unsystematic

> nature, and excessiveness of the tax rate, [together with] the short period of its collection—all of this falling at the time of the sowing campaign—has worsened the economic condition of the peasantry, forcing them oftentimes to sell the last of their grain and even their inventory.[48]

Rather than dismissing peasant complaints as examples of perennial lying and complaining, the summary report for July, August, and the first half of September 1923 repeated this explanation for peasant dissatisfaction: taxes were inordinately high, excessive in number, and were demanded in too short a time—the peasant, receiving his individual assessment only at the time when payment was required, had no way to know beforehand what he would have to pay.[49] For poor peasants the situation was compounded by inflation, such that by the time the peasants scraped the money together, they discovered that they no longer had sufficient rubles.[50] Obtaining money by any means was a cause of peasant dissatisfaction, as the police reported throughout the early years of the 1920s on the lack of money (*denznaky*) in the countryside.[51]

Nonetheless, secret police reports could not totally avoid recourse to the well-established trope of peasant "darkness" as a further means of explaining dissatisfaction in the countryside. Thus, the vice chair of the Severo-Dvinskoi provincial Cheka reported to the All-Russian Cheka in August 1921 that the "indifferent" attitude of the peasants living in remote areas away from the cities was a result of their darkness: "People of the old breed say that regardless of who is in charge, things will be the same, everything will be as it ever was."[52] Similarly, the rapporteur for the Information Department of the Mezenskii Border Politburo, having admitted that the region suffered from a lack of basic necessities, nonetheless blamed the peasants' dissatisfaction with labor mobilizations and high taxes in part on their darkness. They dreamed of a return to what they claimed were the "good times" under tsarism, when they supposedly "lived freely and well, not feeling *barshchina* (corvée) on their spines and those chains of slavery which existed throughout Russia." The government had failed in its propaganda efforts with these peasants and had to redouble them; nonetheless, "we will be able to raise the political level among the peasant masses," the report conceded, "only when there is a sufficient quantity of items of general demand flowing at the same time to the broad peasant masses . . . [for] the peasants are still far from appreciating the achievements that the October days have brought us."[53] The police reported that the poor did not understand the goals of the NEP and saw nothing positive in it for them. Their political disposition was worsening, in large part as a consequence of rising prices on consumer goods and agricultural implements. Having paid their taxes, they had nothing with which to trade, a situation compounded by the lack of currency in the villages that further distorted market relations. The campaign of confiscating church valuables to assist in famine relief had led to further dissatisfaction.[54]

But the police cautioned that peasant economic frustration and "darkness" did not have to translate into permanent opposition to the Bolsheviks. A police report from Iarensk uezd in the summer of 1921 quoted peasants as saying "Because of the ruin [of war] we have nothing, and if we are to be prosperous and live contentedly, any government [*vlast'*] would be good, including the communists."[55] The Vologda guberniia police argued in the summer of 1922 the essentially economic basis for peasant unhappiness:

> The mood of the peasants is depressed as a result of the absence of means to improve agriculture. Their attitude toward the RKP [Russian Communist Party] is partially negative as a result of the tax burden, poor material conditions, and the influence of anti-Soviet agitation.[56]

Strikingly, political forces ranked last on the list of causes. Utilizing similar logic, the OGPU summary report for November and December 1923 stated: "The introduction of a partial reduction in taxes has significantly improved the situation of the poorest strata of the peasantry and allowed an improvement in the political situation within the village, . . . strengthened faith in Soviet power among [those peasants] and helped free them from the influence of the kulaks."[57] Repeatedly the police expressed their faith in the healing power of ameliorative actions and agitational work.

The kulak was not absent in these reports of peasant dissatisfaction, but by no means ubiquitous. During the agricultural seasons of 1921–1922 and 1922–1923, reports on kulaks were most often centered on resistance to the introduction of the new "unified agricultural tax" (*edinnyi sel'skokhoziaistvennyi nalog*). The police reported rumor campaigns that claimed that from every desiatin[58] the state would demand 40 puds (in another rumor, 100) of grain or that the new tax would assess 500 puds from every peasant.[59] Such disinformation campaigns are easy to understand. Under the previous *razverstka* system, the tax requirement reached the village level as a lump sum. The village soviet was responsible then for determining the payments from each household. As in many villages the soviet was controlled by the more prosperous peasants. The actual levy was thus not based on the ability to pay but on social and political power, the prosperous forcing the less prosperous to bear a greater burden. The new system attempted to determine the tax-paying ability of each household based primarily on the household's land holding. Properly administered, the single agricultural tax would, in most cases, result in an increased tax burden on the more prosperous peasants. The efforts by the "kulaks" to stir up opposition among the poorer peasants thus were quite logical, and oftentimes effective.

Not only was the middle and poorer peasants' confusion and fear over the introduction of the new tax system comprehensible and the wealthier peasants' anger over it rational, so too, the police reported was the poorer peasants' relationship with the well-to-do peasants. Political naiveté, police reports argued, did not explain the poor peasants' recourse to the kulaks for assistance; the poor simply had no other means to meet the tax demands, especially given the poor performance of soviet institutions, such as Narkomzem, to provide sufficient relief.[60] The net result, however, was the ever-increasing influence of the kulaks over the middle and poor peasants and the gross exploitation of the poor.[61] The police reported cases in the northwest provinces of poor peasants having to work 16 hours a day for a mere 15 pounds of rye. Other poor peasants had been denied their rights to plots under land reorganization, but given their dependence on kulaks could not protest the violation of their new legal rights.[62] The ability of the wealthiest peasants to use the land reorganization campaign as a means to obtain more and better land remained a concern of the political police throughout the NEP.

The peasants' dissatisfaction with taxes coincided with their frustration over the low prices they were offered by government procurement agents for their products versus the extremely high prices being charged for manufactured goods, the result of the infamous "scissors crisis" that had been brewing for years but struck with a vengeance in 1923–1924. This situation was exacerbated by the cessation of food rations to the poor peasants that accompanied the introduction of the food-supply tax.[63] Referencing the scissors crisis, a local politburo report stated: "There you have the main, burning questions among the peasants, which you meet with at every step, and in every village and every district." The peasants lamented that they had no clothes, foodstuffs, or agricultural instruments. "They blame Soviet Power," the police informed the central authorities, ". . . [because] it is clear for money Soviet Power provides nothing to buy."[64]

According to the police, the disproportionality between agricultural and industrial prices was paralyzing all trade operations in the villages.[65] The police in Perm guberniia summarized the situation:

> Amongst the peasant masses there is dissatisfaction as a result of taxes together with the low prices for agricultural products and the rapidly increasing prices for manufactured goods (so that to buy a pair of boots, the peasants have to sell almost 15 puds of flour). This extremely negatively impacts the development of the peasant economy.[66]

According to the police in Vladimir guberniia, the "scissors" was the prime reason for peasant dissatisfaction.[67] The police in Bashkiria credited the peasants with expending enormous effort to reestablish the viability of their farms; yet given the high taxes and the high industrial prices the peasants simply could not afford to purchase the equipment needed to further grain production. Classical capitalist theory, on which the party at this point continued to rely, argued that with restriction on trade removed, market forces would automatically adjust the terms of trade to the best advantage of all involved. Theory once more crashed into reality as the interplay of market forces further devastated the peasant economy.

The functioning of the market combined with tax policy to play havoc with the peasants. The police in the Volga provinces reported in October 1923 that at the time the agricultural tax was levied, the market price for a pud of rye vacillated between 150 and 180 rubles. The tax collectors were only crediting the peasants with 110 rubles per pud of grain for taxes paid in kind. Understandably, the peasants flooded the market with their grain in order to attempt to pay their taxes in money. As a result, the market price quickly fell to between 90 and 130 rubles, and in the southern region between 80 and 90 rubles per pud. The same flooding occurred when collection officials rejected grain as not meeting quality standards, and the peasants immediately marketed the substandard grain to obtain money to pay their taxes.[68] Peasants attempting to pay the monetary part of their taxes were forced to market almost twice as much grain, while "speculators," that is well-to-do peasants who could maneuver within a market economy, moved in to purchase the grain on the market "for a song."[69] The extraordinarily low price for grain forced many peasants to sell their cattle and even their farm implements to obtain the necessary funds for taxes.[70]

However, by the end of 1923, the OGPU was reporting that in some areas the efforts to close the scissors through increasing the price paid for grain was beginning to take effect.[71] A number of factors had come together: the harvest had been excellent now for a second year in a row, with a reported 2.76 billion puds for 1923 against 2.79 billion in 1922.[72] The government was able to resume and even promise to increase the amount of grain exports, which helped bring about a recovery in grain prices. At the same time its policy of cutting back on credit to industries and concentrating heavy industry in fewer but more efficient units had forced managers to unload inventories and had produced lower production costs with a resultant drop in industrial prices. Following the fall harvest and the collection of the agricultural tax, some peasants, those with larger holding especially, still had money to spend, which was tempted out of their pockets by the falling prices.[73]

Despite the reported improvements in the scissors crisis by the end of 1923, the market had worked throughout the period of the introduction of the NEP to undermine the peasant economy, especially when peasants attempted to sell their cattle in order to obtain a horse. But often, having sold their cattle, the price of horses would have risen beyond their purchasing power. The situation was exacerbated by peasants also selling their cattle at the same time in order to pay their taxes, thereby further depressing the market price.[74] The end result was that poorer peasants were left without either cattle or horses, and therefore had no choice but to seek work from kulaks.[75] The lack of horses, the possession of a horse or other draft animal being an absolute necessity for a functioning peasant household, was a constant source of peasant dissatisfaction and a primary reason for poorer peasants having to hire themselves out. And although the revolution had seen the reduction by about half of the proportion of landless peasants, no corresponding improvement had occurred in the proportion of horseless peasants.[76] In Siberia, even the availability of horses on the market did not improve the peasants' situation as a significant portion of those for sale were "old, unfit for work, or diseased."[77] Once again, the police recognized the logic of peasant dissatisfaction.

The market was producing other unexpected consequences as well. The Bolsheviks had inherited from their tsarist predecessors the problem of moonshining. The alcohol monopoly had emerged under the tsars as a major source for the state purse, with alcohol revenues making up a third of all state revenues by the beginning of the twentieth century. Nonetheless, Nicholas II had instituted prohibition with the start of World War I. Drinking, of course, did not slow down, as both the peasants and townsfolk were quite adept at producing moonshine (*samogon*), but the resultant loss of state revenue severely impacted the tsar's ability to prosecute the war. Not surprisingly, therefore, the Bolsheviks ended prohibition and reestablished the state monopoly on alcohol production. Vodka reemerged as the single most important source of revenue. The utilization of grain for producing moonshine not only cut into tax receipts, but also severely hampered the state's efforts to ensure adequate food production.[78] Moonshining consequently was a major economic problem for the regime. This is not to say that the economic side of alcohol was the only concern of the Bolsheviks. Like their bourgeois contemporaries, the Bolsheviks saw alcoholism as a threat to civilization and sought means to eliminate drunkenness from society as part of their cultural revolution to transform traditional Russian values in general and drinking practices in particular.[79] Crime, especially assault and murder, were also associated by the police with moonshining and drunkenness.[80]

However, in reports from spring 1923, the police argued that moonshining and associated drunkenness were not simply cultural reactions to poverty, not merely signs of peasant "*nekulturnost'*." Rather they reported that moonshining was most active among peasants with surplus grain who lived near railway lines. The production of *samogon* provided the means for such peasants to pay their taxes by converting grain into alcohol.[81] According to a report from Tula guberniia, from a pud of rye, costing 30 rubles, one could produce 250 rubles' worth of *samogon*.[82] Once more, the peasants emerged from police reports not simply as uncivilized, ignorant supporters of kulaks, but as rational actors seeking means to negotiate among conflicting political and economic demands.

Economic concerns were not the only foundation for peasant dissatisfaction, the political police informed the party leadership. The police also reported peasant discomfort over growing rumors of war. Such rumors, together with ones concerning the alleged death of Lenin and his replacement by an imposter, were spreading in the northern guberniias in the fall of 1922.[83] Police in Ekaterinslav, Omsk, and Kaluga guberniias were reporting in February and March 1923 the spread of rumors of war with Poland, associated with the registration for military service and reports of the conclusion of a Russo-French pact directed against Poland.[84] In the Far East, the rumors focused on war with China.[85] By May police in the Urals were advising that not only were the peasants responding hostilely to the war rumors, but also more ominously declaring that they would refuse to fight, whereas in October the police in Iaroslavsk guberniia reported refusals to pay the agricultural tax based on rumors of impending war.[86] One of the more intriguing reports, one that indicated the mixed reaction of peasants to signs of authority, came from Volga region. There the police reported the appearance of an unknown person claiming to be a "commissar," dressed in military uniform, who told peasants that soon there would be war with America, England, and Poland in which Russia would be destroyed. In view of this, peasants should, and did, refrain from paying taxes.[87]

The local police reports concentrated too on the impact of forces other than taxes and threats of war undermining peasant confidence. Chief among these were pests—particularly mice and locusts, and the special form of "*vreditely*," bandits. The police in Dagestan reported in May 1923 an onslaught first by field mice and then locusts, only to be followed by an attack on the crop by ravens.[88] But the worst by far were the bandits. Although Vladimir Brovkin in his study of the NEP period makes much of "Red banditry" in the countryside—by which he means harassing actions by local Communists, most often former Red Armymen, against prosperous peasants[89]—police reports indicate that marauding bandit gangs remained a constant problem.

During the Civil War, peasants had been constantly afflicted by various and sundry armed groups who attacked, seized whatever they wished, and often left the village in ruins. The ending of the majority of the fighting by late 1920, however, in no way ended armed incursions into the villages, whether by Red Armymen carrying out "self-provisioning," bandits seeking food, horses, and recruits, or the hated state grain requisitioning detachments, which the Tambovsk guberniia Cheka reported as being rightly regarded by the peasants as simply other bandits.[90] Antonov-Ovseenko, Soviet military commander and chairman of the plenipotentiary Commission for the Liquidation of Banditry in Tambov guberniia from February to July 1921, followed the political police's line of argument in his report to Lenin and the Central Committee:

> In general, in the conception of a majority of peasants, the Soviet power is identified with raiding commissars or officials, boldly giving orders to volost executive committees and village soviets, and placing the representatives of these local bodies under arrest for nonfulfillment [of requisition quotas], and all this along with entirely absurd demands [for grain]. They still identify the government with the food detachments that act with direct harm to the peasant economy and without any benefit to the state. In the mass, the peasantry is accustomed to regard the Soviet power as something external, something that only commands, giving orders quite zealously but not at all economically.[91]

In the winter of 1921 the police were reporting bandit detachments operating primarily on the southern and eastern periphery, and especially in Tambovsk guberniia, numbering well over 1,000 and often equipped with machine guns. Agitators for A. S. Antonov's anti-Bolshevik forces arrived in the village of Verkhno-Chuevo, Tambovsk guberniia, in early January 1921 promising to destroy the Communists and the Communist system. Having assembled the villagers, they harangued the peasants that the Communists took from them the last bit of grain and left them to starve to death. The agitators then presented the assembly with a printed copy of "The Program of the Union of Toiling Peasantry," that promised, among other things, increased food production, greater international trade, and self-determination for minorities. Some 150 peasants on this occasion swore to join forces with the bandits.[92] A fierce and stubborn rebellion with overwhelming peasant support continued in Tambovsk guberniia until crushed by July 1921 through overwhelming military force and mass terror.

Interaction between armed groups and peasants, however, was complex. Although the police were reporting widespread peasant uprisings in the south in spring 1921, primarily directed against efforts at grain requisitioning, as well as the presence of bandit groups throughout the region, they also reported on the failed efforts of the bandit group headed by Maslakov to mobilize peasants in the Don region and on active resistance, primarily by youths, to the bandits.[93] Reports from Ukraine two years later described peasants in Ekaterinoslavsk guberniia as continuing to be plundered by bandits and having their horses stolen, but other peasants in Kiev guberniia sheltering the bandits.[94] Peasants in Irkutsk guberniia in Siberia meanwhile were reportedly being terrorized by Don bandits burning entire villages in retribution for two of their number killed by peasants, and killing at least five peasants in a May 1923 rustling. Again there were reports of peasants helping the bandits, which the police in Irkutsk explained as a consequence of fear. However, in the Kuban, the police declared that some 90 percent of the population in the mountain region of Armavirsk sympathized with and supported the bandits.[95]

The varied peasant responses in part reflected the lumping by the police of a number of armed groups into the category of "gangs" (*bandy*). Some were, in fact, remnant units of White Guards or demobilized Red Army soldiers turning now to simple crime;[96] some (especially during the winter of 1922)[97] hungry peasants resorting to pillaging; others outlaw gangs; and finally minority rebels. The peasants responded to bandits in a logical manner following a well-established tradition. For centuries peasants had to deal with various "tribute collectors" (armed men on horseback); seldom had the peasants worried about such legal niceties as "legitimacy." The primary desire was to satisfy the demands and thereby send the armed men on their way, and, if possible, to extract from the thugs a deal of protection in exchange for tribute. If some other powerful force showed up, the peasants responded to the new force in the same manner without regard to abstractions such as "chain of command" or "legitimacy." Thus, when bandits arrived and it appeared impossible or at least unwise to resist, the peasants attempted to cut a deal. However, as the police reports indicate, if the bandits demanded too much, the peasants might well respond with violence of their own. On the other hand, if the bandits could connect in some manner with the peasants' construct of what was right and natural, as Antonov had clearly done in Tambovsk province in 1920–1921, the peasants might well offer support to the bandits. In the border regions, the police viewed peasant support of bandits as reflecting "bourgeois nationalism," and to some degree this might have been true, although ethnic and tribal tensions did not require such modern constructs. But peasant responses to the arrival of armed men most often reflected a determination on their part to negotiate the best deal possible in any given situation. Armed men had always come and gone; it almost always was best when they departed, as was also true for mice and locusts. But even reaction to such pests as locusts could be complex, as in the case of villagers in Simbirsk guberniia who reportedly were refusing to combat locusts because of rumors that they were holy, having been sent by God to destroy the Communists.[98]

Not all reported peasant behavior at this time was purely reactive. Police began reporting in the fall of 1923 a growing political movement among the peasants, not in support of monarchism, but nonetheless in opposition to the ideology of a dictatorship of the proletariat. Specifically the peasants began agitating for the creation of a peasants' union. An All-Russian Peasants' Union had first emerged during the 1905 Revolution, but had collapsed following the October Revolution. The idea of a special peasant organization independent of the Bolsheviks, however, continued to find resonance.[99] Although various ideas were voiced concerning the nature of such a union, most peasants concentrated on a body that would defend their economic interests by, for example, being involved in the regulation of prices for agricultural and manufactured products, in the conduct of foreign grain trade, and in the management of land reform. At times the peasants' union was presented as an analog to the workers' unions, and occasionally, but not often, as a political organization.[100] This was closely tied to the growing demand for equal rights with the workers.

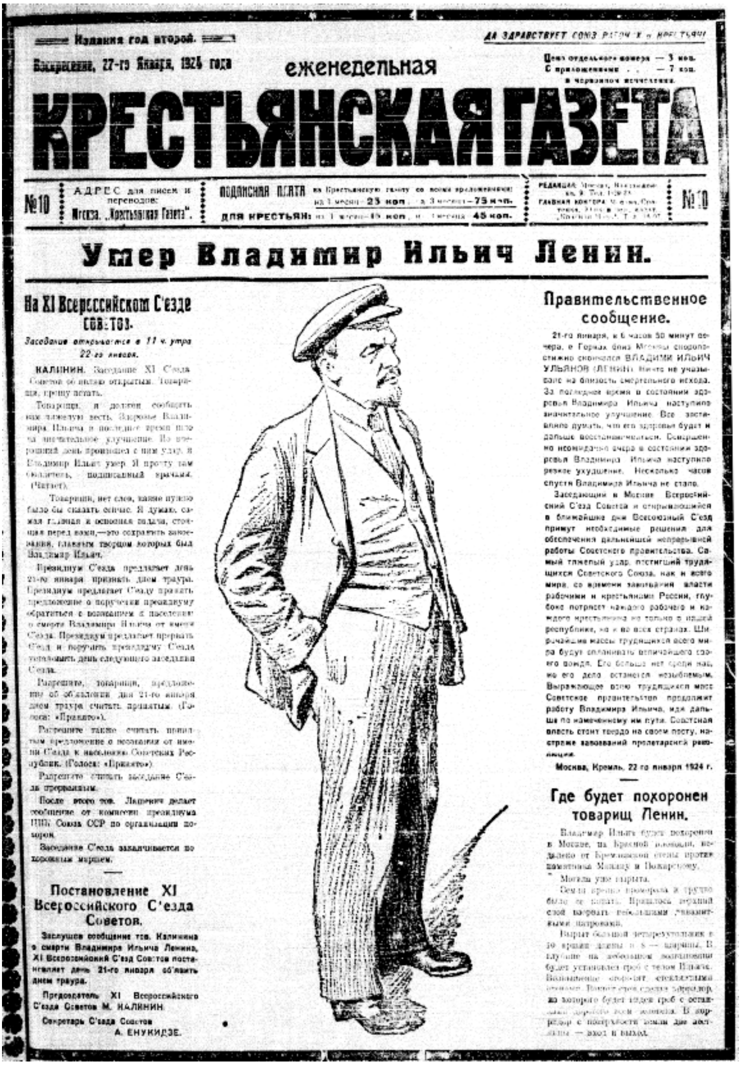
Taxes, however, remained central to everything. That the peasants were slowly coming to terms with the unified agricultural tax did not, of course, mean an end to their resentment of and protest against the various other taxes that they were forced to pay. These included taxes for fire protection and mandatory fire insurance, taxes to maintain the village school (in some cases the opposition to the school tax was expressed by burning the local school to the ground), the village soviet, the mutual aid organization, and the village militia.[101] There were even rumors during winter 1923–1924 in the Volga region that the peasants would soon be forced to pay a "theft tax" to recompense landlords for property losses in 1917![102] The frustration with these auxiliary taxes was compounded when the peasants were unable to locate subsidiary work to enable them to earn money to pay the taxes. This problem was highlighted in an August 1924 analysis of local reports by the Information Department of the OGPU that the local police in many regions were reporting that the tax policy on handicraft (*kustar*) activity had essentially killed off the possibility of the development of handicraft production as a means of obtaining auxiliary income. The police themselves reported that they were bewildered by this policy as it was the village poor who most often resorted to *kustar* work in order to survive, and the poor were supposed to be the beneficiaries of Soviet policy in the countryside.[103]

Despite these serious problems, the overall tenor of secret police reports on the political situation in the countryside at the end of 1923 was positive. The police presented evidence that the NEP was working and that economic concessions had laid the foundation for what had become by the spring of 1923 a clear pro-"well-to-do" peasant policy. While continuing to report that agitation against Communist Party members was organized primarily by "kulaks," the police also noted that the "middle" peasants had begun to gain some benefits from the new tax system and marketing regulations. Further, it appeared that the worse of the scissor's crisis might be over. A positive relationship with the peasantry that guaranteed the state the grain absolutely essential to save the revolution seemed possible based on the market. And then Lenin died.

CHAPTER 3

Lenin's Death, "Face to the Countryside," and Growing Police Fears, 1924

Lenin's death on January 21, 1924, produced serious anxiety within society, particularly among the peasants.[1] A peasant outside a teahouse in the town of Nizhnyi Novgorod was overheard ominously warning: "If Trotsky takes Lenin's place, life as we know it will not continue."[2] The peasant rumor machine swung into action: almost immediately stories circulated in the Moscow region of a schism within the party leadership. Leon Trotsky was at the center of these rumors that included claims that he had been shot by Leningrad party boss Grigory Zinoviev, that he had been arrested, and that he and Mikhail Kalinin, Chairman of the Central Executive Committee of the All-Russian Congress of Soviets (in other rumors, he and the Civil War hero General Semyon Budennyi), were in conflict. Soon, it was whispered, there would be a coup d'état. In one of the odder rumors, it was maintained that Lenin had actually been dead for the last six months and had been frozen! Only a demand from delegates to the Congress of Soviets for him to be presented dead or alive allegedly produced the report of his death.[3] The police in Moscow guberniia reported genuine sorrow among the peasants at hearing of Lenin's death. Police in various regions reported that peasants "who to this time have demonstrated dissatisfaction with Soviet Power" were grieving over his death (fig. 3.1). This was purportedly especially true among the more prosperous peasants who feared a turn away from the pro-"well-to-do" peasant policy that had emerged during the past year.[4]



Издания год второй.

Воскресенье, 27-го Января, 1924 года

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Умер Владимир Ильич Ленин.

На XI Всероссийском С'езде Советов.

Заседание открывается в 11 ч. утра 22-го января.

КАЛИНИН. Заседание XI С'езда Советов об'являю открытым. Товарищи, прошу встать.

Товарищи, я должен сообщить вам тяжелую весть. Здоровье Владимира Ильича в последнее время шло на значительное улучшение. Но вчерашний день произошел с ним удар, и Владимир Ильич умер. Я прочту вам бюллетень, подписанный врачами. (Читает).

Товарищи, нет слов, какие нужно было бы сказать сейчас. Я думаю, самая главная и основная задача, стоящая перед нами,—это сохранить завоевания, главным творцом которых был Владимир Ильич.

Президиум С'езда предлагает день 21-го января признать днем траура. Президиум предлагает С'езду принять предложение о поручении президиуму обратиться с воззванием к населению о смерти Владимира Ильича от имени С'езда. Президиум предлагает прервать С'езд и поручить президиуму С'езда установить день следующего заседания С'езда.

Разрешите, товарищи, предложение об об'явлении дня 21-го января днем траура считать принятым. (Голоса: «Правильно»).

Разрешите также считать принятым предложение о воззвании от имени С'езда к населению Советских Республик. (Голоса: «Принято»).

Разрешите считать заседание С'езда прерванным.

После этого тов. Лашевич делает сообщение от комиссии президиума ЦИК Союза ССР по организации похорон.

Заседание С'езда заканчивается похоронным маршем.

Постановление XI Всероссийского С'езда Советов.

Заслушав сообщение тов. Калинина о смерти Владимира Ильича Ленина, XI Всероссийский С'езд Советов постановляет день 21-го января об'явить днем траура.

Председатель XI Всероссийского С'езда Советов М. КАЛИНИН.

Секретарь С'езда Советов
А. ЕНУКИДЗЕ.

Правительственное сообщение.

21-го января, в 6 часов 50 минут вечера, в Горках близ Москвы скоропостижно скончался ВЛАДИМИ ИЛЬИЧ УЛЬЯНОВ (ЛЕНИН). Ничто не указывало на близость смертельного исхода. За последнее время в состоянии здоровья Владимира Ильича наступило значительное улучшение. Все заставляло думать, что его здоровье будет и дальше восстанавливаться. Совершенно неожиданно вчера в состоянии здоровья Владимира Ильича наступило резкое ухудшение. Несколько часов спустя Владимира Ильича не стало.

Заседающий в Москве Всероссийский С'езд Советов и открывающийся в ближайшие дни Всесоюзный С'езд примут необходимые решения для обеспечения дальнейшей непрерывной работы Советского правительства. Самый тяжелый удар, постигший трудящихся Советского Союза, как и всего мира, со времени завоевания власти рабочими и крестьянами России, глубоко потрясет каждого рабочего и каждого крестьянина не только в нашей республике, но и во всех странах. Широчайшие массы трудящихся всего мира будут оплакивать величайшего своего вождя. Его больше нет среди нас, но его дело останется незыблемым. Выражающее волю трудящихся масс Советское правительство продолжит работу Владимира Ильича, идя дальше по намеченному им пути. Советская власть стоит твердо на своем посту, на страже завоеваний пролетарской революции.

Москва, Кремль, 22 го января 1924 г.

Где будет похоронен товарищ Ленин.

Владимир Ильич будет похоронен в Москве, на Красной площади, недалеко от Кремлевской стены против памятника Минину и Пожарскому.

Могила уже вырыта.

Земля крепко промерзла и трудно было ее копать. Пришлось верхний слой взрывать небольшими динамитными патронами.

Вырыт большой четырехугольник в 10 аршин длины и 8 — ширины. В глубине на небольшом возвышении будет установлен гроб с телом Ильича. Возвышение окружат стеклянными стенами. Вокруг гроба сделан коридор, из которого будет виден гроб с останками дорогого всем человека. В коридор с поверхности земли две лестницы — вход и выход.

Figure 3.1 “Vladimir Il’ich Lenin is Dead”
Krest’ianskaia gazeta, January 27, 1924

Attendees at a peasant conference in Moscow were reported to have "cried like children" and demanded to be allowed to attend his funeral when informed of his passing. The secret police had feared that Lenin's death might lead to a peasant uprising against the Bolsheviks, and yet they reported to Moscow that "there has been no agitation [against the government] on this account."[5] In what was the expression of a sincere and widely felt popular outpouring, thousands of peasants waited in line in the freezing cold to enter the House of the Trade Unions where Lenin's body lay in state, a scene captured on film by Soviet Cinéma Véritéist Dziga Vertov.[6] The reported response by peasants to the news of Lenin's death thus brings to fore the problem of how some of the peasants during the NEP conceptualized Lenin versus the Bolsheviks. One can see in these reactions the reemergence of the myth of the tsar, with the sanctification of Lenin among some peasants.

The most powerful of the myths with which the Bolshevik leadership would have to deal concerned the return of the true tsar, the "Returning Redeemer" [*vozvrashchaiushchii izbavitel'*], who made his initial appearance in Russia in the beginning of the seventeenth century in the form of the pretender.[7] The legends associated with these pretenders contained an expression of the peasants' desires, hopes, and ideals. The peasants, however, needed a "tsar" to grant them their desires; without his approbation, rebellious peasants were but brigands. The image of the "true tsar" thus derived from the bottom up and reflected the peasant concept of a unity of the common people and the father-protector.[8] The true tsar had to be a "natural born" tsar who desired the best for his people, but was prevented from doing what was best by the machinations of the evil nobles, or as now confronted the party leadership, devilish communists.[9]

The connection of the ruler to the post-Nikonian reformed Orthodox Church and the post-Petrine secularized state had, however, undermined the ability of rulers to easily retain the right to be considered a "redeemer."[10] The peasants in those areas where Pugachev received support or where he was later glorified in legend (significant expanses of the Russian south and east and extending into the Muscovite heartland) give evidence of a desire to replace a "tsar-oppressor" with a "people's" tsar.[11] As James Scott has noted, such expressions of opposition, especially when joined with religion, can transform themselves into revolutionary movements whose demiurge is a utopian vision, which "entertain[s] quite worldly ambitions for salvation on this earth."[12]

Lenin's death thus brought to fore once more the question of legitimacy, of the "true tsar." In the terms of the dominant peasant ideology, the peasants sought local control and the absolute authority of the father. The tsar was "true" [*istinnyi*] when he was a magnified reflection of the peasant master, the *khoziain*.[13] The name of the tsar was, in fact, often used in defense of peasant protests against the tsarist system. Peasants usually utilized complex methods of resisting the authority and often the legitimacy of their overlords, while at the same time asserting that they had the right to live their lives within their own framework of meaning.[14] These weapons of the weak represented a fundamental struggle between peasant and elite society over what was "right and natural." However, periodically peasants substituted more lethal weapons for passive ones, especially when they perceived the regime as weak.[15] How the peasants would in time respond to Lenin's death, whether they would eventually perceive weakness, deeply concerned the leadership.

What characteristics of the good "people's tsar" did the Bolsheviks now have to deal? Peasant legends set forth the image of the "doer of all possible good deeds" [*delatel' vsevozmozhnykh blagodeianii*], which roughly translates as a defender against wicked overlords. The desired characteristics associated with a respected peasant leader helped define the traits of a true tsar.[16] The first requisite characteristic was "reliability" or "incorruptible honor," virtues closely associated with the willingness of the person to sacrifice for the community. The "formula of confidence" for an elected peasant official ran: "of good behavior, zealous in guarding his household economy, skillful in grain-growing, never fined or punished, and able without doubt to fulfill the duty entrusted to him."[17] Translated into the requirements for a true tsar, the "Little Father" was obligated to protect the people from depredation, make certain of the economic well-being of his "children," and safeguard their souls. These were the demands now placed on the post-Lenin leadership.

Lenin had managed, despite his failure to worry about salvation of souls, to lay claim to this heritage (at least for a sizable portion of the peasantry), while the party and especially its local officials, as we have seen, had assumed the role of evil overlords. But the problem the Soviet regime faced in contending with the good tsar myth revealed itself in a comment from a peasant in Rostov: "Well, this one [Lenin] was a communist who did not steal, but he has died, and now everything around us will fall to pieces."[18] As the police reported, "No one has such authority amongst the peasants as Lenin." Rumors circulating that "they poisoned him because he defended the peasants"[19] demonstrated the delicate situation the Bolsheviks now found themselves in without a "good tsar." Even without the murder charge, peasants were murmuring that while Lenin was able to manage state affairs and had planned to reduce taxes "so that within four years everyone would have lived well," his successors would simply raise taxes. The condition of the peasants, having lost their protector, would without question worsen.[20]

The government could take some solace, however, from the fact that peasant complaints immediately after Lenin's death remained predictable: the agricultural tax rate was too high, the fees for carrying out land reform were excessive, taxes to support local government and social services were too burdensome, tax assessments were incorrect, government services were nonexistent or ineffectual at best, industrial prices were prohibitively high whereas agricultural prices were disastrously low, and subsidiary work (*otkhodnichestvo*) was nonexistent.[21] The police continued to report that peasants were being forced to sell off their livestock and inventory to pay taxes, while inflation and the absence of money in the villages continued to ruin the peasants, many of whom, according to the police, were now paying more in taxes than they had "in olden times." Although kulaks might be taking advantage of the situation, the root cause of peasant dissatisfaction, the police informed their superiors in Moscow, was economic: poor harvest, high taxes, and the resultant inability to meet tax assessments.[22] In a throwback to the disputes between the tsarist Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Finance (with Interior focused almost exclusively on public order and Finance on revenue), the police singled out the agents of the Commissariat of Finance for special opprobrium, describing these officials as corrupt and motivated solely by a desire to line their own pockets.[23] The new peasant complaint that should have caught the government's eyes was that taxes had not been reduced upon the announcement of Lenin's death. Peasants were reported to have been waiting for news of the tax forgiveness, or at least amelioration, the traditional response of Russian government to the passing of the ruler.[24] In failing to take the appropriate response within a traditional society, the government, once again, revealed itself in opposition to the good tsar and his people.

Other aspects of developments within rural Russia should have caused increased concern within the party and government leadership. Starting in the spring of 1924 the police reported the growing strength of the well-to-do and middle layers of the peasantry.[25] This should hardly have been surprising; for as we have seen, to deal with the scissors crisis, the party since spring 1923 had followed a line of reasoning advanced by the OGPU (as well as the Commissariat of Agriculture) and had pursued an essentially pro-"well-to-do" peasant policy, attempting to bolster the production of the most market-oriented element of the village while bringing an end to market disjuncture. In fall 1923 the government increased grain exports, bringing about some recovery in grain prices, and reduced credits to industries while concentrating heavy industry in fewer but more efficient units. These policies forced managers to unload inventories, thereby lowering production costs and producing a drop in industrial prices, as well as bolstering agricultural production. The primary beneficiaries of these measures were those peasants with larger, market-oriented holdings.[26]

The central OGPU attempted to console itself by reporting that the class stratification of the village had produced a growing desire on the part of the poor peasants to ally themselves with the party.[27] It further noted that this sharpening antagonism within the village was manifesting itself around the most significant issue with the village—land reorganization.[28] The basic idea behind *zemleustroistvo,* at least for the Commissariat of Agriculture, had been to make the peasant economy productive again.[29] Agents of the Commissariat were to assist the peasants through the distribution of improved seeds and new equipment, and the provision of expert advice. These officials were to carry out land reorganization that would eliminate strip farming and the three-field fallow system and replace them with the multi-field, crop rotation system.[30] Where strips still remained, they were to eliminate the extreme distances between them. But for the peasants, especially the poor, the most important step in *zemleustroistvo* was prying strips away from the most prosperous in order to increase their own land holdings. Not surprisingly, the prosperous sought, by all means possible, to block repartitioning as they benefited from the weakening of poor peasants caused by their having widely scattered strips. This war over land had featured in police reports since their inception.[31]

According to police reports from various regions, this conflict was extraordinarily fierce, characterized by violence from all quarters.[32] The complex process of reallocating holdings among the peasantry was made even more difficult, according to the police, by the bureaucratic behavior of local officials, particularly that of the land surveyors, who charged huge amounts for carrying out their work, and then proceeded to abandon their labors and move on to another village before completing their tasks. Agronomists assigned to assist with these reorganizations, the police despaired, acted like tsarist *chinovniki.*

Despite assurances that the social stratification of the village was producing converts to the Communist Party, the OGPU central leadership had to confess that the idea of a peasants' union, dedicated to protecting the interests of the peasantry against the machinations of the state and its local agents, was not abating but gaining strength throughout the country. But contrary to reports in 1923 that had concentrated on the economic aspects of the peasants' desires to have their own union, as well as a means to defend themselves against the illegal acts of local officials, by spring 1924 the greatest emphasis was being placed on the alleged attempts by kulaks to utilize the union movement as a weapon against the Bolshevik system.[33] Special note was further being made of the fact that the leaders of the peasants' union drive often were former members of the Communist Party. This delegitimization of the peasants' economic grievances by the central OGPU received its clearest manifestation when vice-chairman of the OGPU Genrikh Iagoda, in a circular letter of July 24, 1924, to *gubotdely*, equated any call for a peasants' union with anti-Soviet agitation.[34] The year 1924 thus was to prove a turning point in the history of police-peasant relations. Two events were to converge to undermine the pro-"well-to-do" peasant policy. The first was the peasant response to the grain crisis of 1924. The second, and more telling, was the perceived results of the campaign in 1924 to "turn the Party's face to the countryside."

The drought and famine of 1924 put exceptional strain on the peasantry, particularly the poorer who lacked any reserves. The relative economic power of well-to-do peasants was revealed with the 1924 harvest. When the partial failure of the harvest became apparent, prices began to skyrocket. Peasants had learned about the nature of inflation: the value of grain would not fall and might even rise; the value of money would not rise and was more than likely to fall. For those prosperous enough to do so, the only logical step to take thus was to withhold grain and to pay the agricultural tax through cash reserves or by selling livestock or commercial crops. This logical response resulted in the disaster for the regime of the reality that by December 1924 the government had managed to collect only 118 millions puds of grain out of a projected 380 million. Further, the state's grain stock, which in January 1924 had stood at 214 million puds, was a mere 145 million on January 1, 1925. The state's efforts to control prices collapsed, with the official maximum price to the grower of a pud of rye rising from October to November from 78 kopecks to 85, and then to 102 in December, before reaching 206 kopecks in May 1925.[35]

The growing tension between an economic, soon to be relabeled by the Stalinists' "mechanistic" interpretation of such peasant behavior, versus a political, relabeled "voluntarist," one could clearly be seen in the report to the Politburo by the head of the OGPU, Feliks Dzerzhinskii (fig. 3.2), delivered on June 1, 1924, as news of the year's crop failure emerged.[36] At the time, Dzerzhinskii headed the Supreme Council of National Economy and the Commissariat for

Figure 3.2 Feliks Dzerzhinskii, Head of OGPU

Communications, and until August 1923 had been chief of the NKVD RSFSR.[37] Clearly one of the more influential members of the party and government and highly respected in the area of the economy, he was a man whose views on the peasantry, formed from the reports of the local secret police, played no small role in the formation of state policy.

Although Dzerzhinskii paid great heed to what he referred to as the growing class differentiation within the village, with the resultant increase in kulaks, he nonetheless attempted to remain faithful to the NEP thesis that peasant dissatisfaction with the government was rooted in economic conditions. The growth of village solidarity in the face of the mutual threat of famine, Dzerzhinskii argued, was leading to the poor viewing the kulaks not as class enemies but as potential benefactors. This misguided solidarity was also a product, Dzerzhinskii maintained, of the failure of local soviet officials to follow a class principle in their work. They often refused to assess a reduced tax burden on the families of Red Armymen and charged the poor higher taxes to the benefit of the kulaks. Confronted by a tax burden they simply could not bear, the poor were forced to turn to the kulaks. The kulaks then could readily make use of this frustration with local officials in mobilizing everyone against the government.

Economic policies in the countryside made the situation even worse, Dzerzhinskii continued. The handicraft industry, so key for the peasantry in obtaining necessary nonagricultural income, was being destroyed by high taxes and fines levied against handicraft operations. Under the Old Regime, he reminded the Politburo, the poor could turn to subsidiary handicraft labor to make up for their meager agricultural returns. This no longer was possible. State policies were forcing handicraft goods off the market, but industrial production was not meeting demand. Finally, the poor were being discriminated against by the credit system, which deemed that only those peasants clearly capable of repaying a loan could qualify for assistance, a requirement that undermined support for the government from the very peasants who, in theory, Dzerzhinskii reminded his audience, should be the mainstay of Soviet power in the countryside.[38]

Eight days later in another report to the Politburo, Dzerzhinskii went even further.[39] "The standard of living of the workers is growing at a disproportional speed without a sufficient economic basis. The peasants see this, they see it through their unemployed, and they see it through their connections with workers when they return to the village."[40] Industrial production, therefore, had to be redirected toward peasant needs.[41] Workers must sacrifice, he announced, in order to improve the lot of the peasantry. And in one of the more revealing recommendations Dzerzhinskii declared that the budget of the Red Army had to be reviewed in order to cut defense expenditures to increase investment on the development of the peasantry.

But although Dzerzhinskii clearly agreed with the interpretation of the economic roots of peasant anger being promulgated by his local police agents, he could not completely break free of a political, "Marxist," explanation of the peasant world. Thus, the growing demand for a peasants' union or at least a peasant section within the Communist Party was for him, as it was for Iagoda, clear evidence of kulak efforts to extend their influence. Dzerzhinskii saw the very idea of peasant organization as a threat to Soviet rule. Perhaps the most revealing claim by Dzerzhinskii was his long discourse on the foreign, monarchist roots of peasant disturbances. Peasant dissatisfaction was, he argued, connected to an international conspiracy centered in Romania.

The difficulty the central apparatus was having in even comprehending the world of the village was revealed in a questionnaire reported on by Dzerzhinskii, one of many that were routinely distributed at peasant conferences. *Ankety* of this nature were ubiquitous during the NEP as the Soviet government desperately attempted to obtain what it regarded as reliable information; however, Dzerzhinskii assured that this particular questionnaire would assist the Politburo in understanding the peasants' disposition. If anything, what it demonstrated was the center's ignorance.[42]

The first questions put to the peasants were, "Why do the peasants not make use of social insurance the way workers do?" and, "Why have peasants ceased to enroll in the labor exchanges?" These were highly reminiscent of the possibly apocryphal question posed by Lord Mountbatten to Jewish and Muslim leaders in Palestine—"Why can't you behave like good Christians?" The party then enquired whether the peasants believe the division between peasants and workers would continue for a long time; why unemployment continued to increase despite the expansion of industrial production; would a reduction in factories benefit the peasants; can the Soviet government make greater concessions to foreign powers than it is now; and why is Russian bread pushing American bread out of the market when there they have better cultivation? Clearly the party leaders were blind men attempting to describe an elephant.

Yet Dzerzhinskii hit upon a central truth. The peasants, he informed the Politburo, had complained that "workers live better than peasants"; "everything is done for the towns, whereas from the villages they only take taxes." And in his summation, Dzerzhinskii stated: "The peasants want peace and the assurance that the right to dispose of their property will not be violated."

Despite receiving reports from the local police that made these conclusions clear, Dzerzhinskii nonetheless remained caught between an appreciation of the economic basis for peasant dissatisfaction and a worldview of class struggle both within the village and between the village and the town, a view that more and more blinded him and other political elites to the reality surrounding them. But even a clear view of the economic truth of 1924 could not have brought cheer to Dzerzhinskii and the Bolshevik leadership. As we have seen, through its policies designed to bring restoration to the rural economy following the disasters of world and Civil War followed by famine, the party had created a situation which the more market-oriented, that is, the "prosperous" (*zazhitochnyi*) and "kulak," elements of the village could manipulate to their advantage. Land reorganization, as noted above, often resulted in the market-aware peasants seizing the better lands, to the dismay of the poorer elements, who as often as not were unable to obtain help from the local officials, themselves under the sway of the prosperous, and often their vodka. As one impoverished veteran put it: "We gave the prime of our young lives for a bright future, and yet we continue to be oppressed by any God-forsaken kulak."[43] What credit existed flowed primarily into the coffers of the prosperous, who could qualify as able to repay loans and who could afford to pay the fees associated with establishing a credit cooperative.[44] True, more grain was finally appearing in some fields (while famine continued to threaten other areas), but the policies making that possible were also strengthening those in the village least willing to acquiesce to Bolshevik demands that the village lift the entire country from its depths.

Letters from home to Red Armymen describe a world filled with drunken local officials, dysfunctional or nonexistent social assistance organizations, empty libraries, tax burdens beyond endurance, and constant fears of despoiling or jailing for nonpayment of taxes.[45] The corruption of the local authorities, whose favorite bribe was vodka, was a constant theme of peasant complaint from the earliest years of the NEP.[46] Over and again was heard the refrain "Tell me, to whom can I turn?" The prerevolution village was no paradise lost; however, as the letters testify, some within the peasantry who had believed that an improved life was possible, and that the revolution would usher in a new age, were now wondering if life before the revolution had not been better. If the party could not even allow them to retain sufficient grain to eat, then perhaps a bargain with the devil they had always known, the kulak, was the better option.

The entire situation for the government had been made worse by a severe drought that hit much of the Soviet Union in the summer of 1924, stretching from Kazakhstan, through the Urals and Volga region, into the Crimea and Ukraine, and impacting the most peasants since the droughts and famine of 1920–1921. Again, the local political police attempted to provide the central leadership with an accurate description of conditions in the countryside and the impact that the drought was having on peasant political attitudes.[47] As had occurred with previous droughts and crop failures, peasants were selling off their implements and livestock, thereby driving down prices at the same time that the price of bread was rising. Reports of crop failures ranged from 49 to 100 percent. In those fields where grain was harvested, peasants were reaping as low as 2 puds of grain per desiatin. In Samara guberniia the police reported that some 75 percent of the population had been forced to eat surrogates, including bark, straw, and bran. In an effort to escape famine, peasants were fleeing the areas of crop failure in massive numbers, overwhelming Soviet officials in those areas to which they fled. Disease, including typhus and scurvy, was rampant. As a consequence, the police reported, peasants throughout the famine areas were overcome by panic and falling into apathy: "What to do, we are all going to die."[48] Other peasants were increasingly exhibiting religiosity, with reports of miracle-producing icons and other manifestations. Still other peasants had been driven into banditry. But while local police were anxious that the party leadership understand the seriousness of the economic disaster, their reports more and more referenced kulak attempts to take advantage of the situation. For the first time in the August summary on the political-economic condition of the country, a special section on "kulak terror" appeared—a section that would expand in the subsequent months, receiving its own highlighted division.[49]

The police stress on the kulaks thus helped stimulate an increased concern within the party on the activities of "kulaks." As part of this emerging campaign against kulak strength, the peasant newspaper *Bednota* (Poor Peasant) had asked its readers earlier that spring to respond to the question of "Who is Considered a Kulak and Who a Laborer?"[50] Although the peasants did accept the existence of kulaks in their midst, their primary definition of what made a peasant a kulak—specifically the hiring *and abusing* of labor or the taking of *profit* through trade or craft—did not fit well with the more simplistic definition popular with party and police of a peasant who possessed some wealth, either in terms of the size of the farm or the number of livestock. But along with those "who, by going against the popular sense of what was economically just, acceptable, and based on tradition, broke the moral-economic code of the village,"[51] there were others who earned the epithet "kulak" by violating the village "moral-political" ethos. Whereas, as Lynne Viola explains, such violation most often related to the peasant norm of reciprocity (failure to help needier neighbors or failure to contribute one's own fair share in the community's work), the charge of kulak could also be leveled by peasants politicized in the new Soviet culture, that is, by those who had learned to "speak Bolshevik," and perhaps even to "think Bolshevik," against peasants who violated the norms of the politics of the capital. But the blending of the peasants' social definition of "kulak" (stressing one who deviated from the peasant norm) with Bolshevik pseudo-economic definitions had yet fully to take place.

Although this new emphasis on the kulaks by both Dzerzhinskii and Iagoda and particularly Iagoda's declaration boded ill for further objective analysis of peasant complaints, the local police continued to report that peasant-state relations were defined primarily by the tax burden. And despite the fact that central OGPU officials labeled the kulaks and wealthy peasants as the most persistent and "malicious" nonpayers, even they had to admit that the basic reason for tax arrears remained the weak productivity of the peasant farm. In what can be seen as an admission that the pro-"well-to-do" policy was not producing the desired results, the OGPU summary report for April 1924 admitted that only "massive repression" had guaranteed some success in tax collection.[52] Poor peasants were having their entire stock confiscated, their animals down to the last horse seized, and all of their movable property inventoried for later sequestering. Thousand of nonpayers had been arrested, including over 25,000 in Stavropol'sk guberniia alone and another 10,000 in Simbirsk guberniia. Officials of the Commissariat of Finance and local volost officials had even fallen back on the tried and true tsarist technique of knouting those with arrears. Other peasants had been force-marched from village to village, driven by the lash, in an appropriated form of *samosud*. The tax collectors often, as not, had no means to deal with the confiscated goods, including cattle, which were allowed to perish unattended. As the OGPU wryly noted, "The confiscation of agricultural inventory, carried out on such a massive scale, cannot but have a very negative impact on the spring sowing campaign." It certainly had other consequences for state-peasant relations.

Nonetheless, a report from October 1924 by the Samara OGPU provided the central administration with what could have proven a significant insight into peasant responses to environmental catastrophe:

> The peasants' mood, although it has suffered from the crop failure, is vigorous. With help from the authorities, who have given significant aid in the form of providing seeds for the sowing, the area sowed by the peasants for the 1925 crop not only has not diminished but has increased by 15–18 percent beyond that sowed for 1924. The collection of the unified agricultural tax has been successful; the peasants fulfilling it without any compulsory measures, in some locations by 100 percent.[53]

The local political police recognized in 1924 that, with the onset of another severe drought, and with memories of the horrors of the famine of 1920–1921 fresh in their minds, the peasants, hungry and often starving, were angry at the regime and especially its local officials. Yet despite peasant weakness, when provided with appropriate aid from the state, that is, the "doing of all possible good deeds," they were able, and willing, to work harder than in 1923 and sow additional lands. The Bolsheviks could not control the weather, but they could deal with the problems of delayed and insufficient food aid and seed loans. The peasants, as rational actors, could be induced to offer the regime greater support and to provide the state with the grain it desperately needed in order to advance the economy and also improve food production to provide a surplus to store against drought years.[54]

The police in neighboring Ul'ianovsk noted another important aspect of peasant response. While reporting that "the kulak element" had been carrying out various forms of agitation against the tax collection and that the peasants at times listened to and even approved of the talk, the peasants did not carry these complaints into action and "nothing more than simply words occurs."[55] Thus, even as the specter of the kulak grew ever larger within political discourse, including increasingly that of the local police, the local police nonetheless were attempting to explain the foundations of peasant attitudes and to separate idle words from counterrevolutionary acts.

But the campaign to revitalize the rural soviets helped tip the balance away from this understanding. The rural soviets had presented a major problem for the regime. Where they had managed to survive at all, following the trauma of requisitioning, they had evolved toward a nonparty orientation, oftentimes highly influenced by SR propaganda. "Revitalization" was to address this problem as well as to assist the regime in obtaining and utilizing more precise information about the situation in the countryside, specifically the peasants' attitudes toward the policies of the regime. The campaign would be known as the party's "turning its face to the countryside."

The campaign itself was part of the battle to define the revolution set in motion by Lenin's first stroke in May 1922 and his eventual death in January 1924. As radicals and reformers labored to establish the contours of economic policy and to prescribe the "orthodox Bolshevik" path for the transition to socialism in a peasant country, the actual workings of NEP (the use of the peasants' private initiative to prime Russian industry through the vehicle of the market) had produced the scissors crisis, leading to industrial goods stockpiling, unemployment increasing, and strikes breaking out in the cities. To deal with this crisis, the party, as we have seen, since spring 1923 had followed a line of reasoning advanced by the OGPU (as well as the Commissariat of Agriculture) and pursued a pro-"well-to-do" peasant policy, attempting to bolster the production of the most market-oriented element of the village while bringing an end to market disjuncture.

While the government sought a market solution that would win the peasants back to trade, the emerging Left Opposition responded by demanding a reorientation away from the peasant market and calling for the planned development of industry independent of NEP market limitations.[56] The Triumvirate of Kamenev, Zinoviev, and Stalin, supported by Bukharin, countered with the charge that Trotsky was "underestimating" the peasantry and pushed a policy of concessions to the peasantry, an orientation that Zinoviev dubbed in an article in *Pravda* on October 11, 1924, "*litsom k derevne*" (face to the countryside). This policy sought to obtain more information about conditions in the villages as well as to revitalize the rural Soviets through bringing in more nonparty, but sympathetic, elements.[57]

The OGPU summary report for December 1924, concentrating on the results of the "face" campaign, gives evidence of the growing hypnotic power of the kulak threat within the upper reaches of the government that, as noted above, had made its appearance in spring 1924.[58] The central OGPU first noted the lack of participation by peasants in elections to soviets. In some locales the proportion of those voting had fallen to a mere 5–10 percent, this after some 35 percent had voted in 1923 and 22 percent in 1922. The OGPU explained this increasing apathy in part to the coincidence of the election with the pressure to collect the grain tax. But the police admitted that in most cases this was also the result of the persistence of the electoral commissions in drawing up lists of candidates in advance, turning elections into a farce. Peasants had complained that "we have nothing to vote on; the communists have already decided without us"; "you have already brought the candidates with you in your pocket." But the OGPU added that this apathy could further be traced to the growing strength of the kulaks, who the peasants believed controlled the soviets and seized all benefits: "Whenever an economic crisis arises, the kulaks grow, like mushrooms after a rain."

Further, while the poor and middle peasants had shown no enthusiasm for the elections, the kulaks had worked hard and successfully to take advantage of the opportunity to further their influence over the local soviets and to regain the right to vote. Kulaks in a number of regions had organized campaigns against communists and brought forth their own lists of candidates so that local soviets now were even more "spoiled by kulak and sometimes even anti-Soviet elements." The very poor and middle peasants, whom the police claimed did not vote since the kulaks controlled the soviets, simultaneously were reported as having fallen under the kulaks' spell and to have aided them in defeating the candidature of communists.

The police and the party leadership had reason to be concerned regarding the apparent failure of the effort in the initial rural soviet elections in 1924 to build up a body of loyal supporters of the regime among the peasantry and thereby forge a link between town and countryside. The party reported that at best some 15–20 percent of those qualified to vote in the countryside had bothered to cast their ballot. And although the proportion of communists and Komsomol'tsy elected to village soviets had risen significantly, increasing from 7.8 percent in 1923 to 12 percent in 1924, the low participation rate in the elections indicated to the party leadership primarily not so much growth in communist influence as apathy, if not antagonism, toward the party and the government.[59]

The December OGPU summary report reflected this concern as it also claimed that the election campaign had revealed growing antagonism toward the towns, with peasants declaring that "the workers live well, although they only work 8 hours," "only communists live well," and "soviet power only concerns itself with the workers." The kulaks, the police averred, had successfully worked to aggravate this enmity, playing upon frustration with the unified agricultural tax in order to build hostility toward communists, workers, and Soviet power. According to kulak propaganda, "the communists only allow the Nepmen to profiteer, but the peasants' situation does not improve." The police further linked the antagonism toward the towns with the kulaks' pushing the political organization of the peasantry through peasants' unions, a continuation of an argument that had emerged in the spring and would become more central during the coming months.[60] This time, however, a new charge was added: in Poltava guberniia the idea was being advanced that the peasant union should be based on the model of American farmers' unions.

But what was most revealing of the growing anti-kulak frenzy was the inclusion in the summary report of an entire section devoted to "the kulak terror" and the claim of significant increases in kulak terrorist acts.[61] The police informed the central administration that compared to earlier months in December the kulaks had resorted to terror as a means to "paralyze the active, soviet-inclined elements" within the villages. The report proceeded to list 59 cases of individual terror for December as well as an unspecified number of cases of "mass terror": arson attacks on peasants who had accurately paid their taxes; attacks on reelected member of local soviets; and assaults on party members, cultural workers, and village poor over land reorganization. Those "terrorized" included 9 communists, 6 Komsomol'tsy, 12 heads of village soviets, 11 other local officials, 8 rural correspondents (*sel'kory*), and 11 village poor.

Two aspects of this report are most striking. First is the extremely low number of "terror" cases for the entire Soviet Union.[62] According to the 1926 census, the rural population of the Soviet Union exceeded 120 million, with more than 70 million aged over 15 years. Second is the labeling as "terror" acts that were endemic to rural Russia, especially the use of arson to settle scores. Violence around land reorganization predated Soviet rule. One could almost read this report as one of the passivity of village society. But the terror labeling and the prominence of the terror allegations in the report provide evidence of the growing significance of "kulak" and "kulak terror" in central police discourse.

Nowhere was this more evident than in the special report on conditions in the village for 1924, given in February 1925 by Georgii Prokof'ev, head of the OGPU Information Department. Prokof'ev, although acknowledging economic issues confronting the peasants, argued that the kulaks were now successfully mobilizing the *entire* village against the regime and increasingly using terror as their primary weapon.[63]

As a consequence, thus, of the campaign in 1924 to "turn the Party's face to the countryside," the political police overwhelmingly started to redefine the source of peasant dissatisfaction as political. With the grain crisis of 1924 and the electoral campaign of that fall, the police orientation to the peasantry had begun to waver and become uncertain. Although the turn to collectivization and war on the peasantry are rightly associated with the grain crisis of 1927, the seeds of this tragedy can be seen in this shift within the political police reports on the peasantry. It was the disintegration of the political police's belief in their own contentions promulgated during the first years of the NEP that made the decision to assault the countryside seem both rational and unavoidable. Until the face to the countryside campaign, the political police made a consistent case for compromise with the peasantry, arguing that amelioration of the peasants' economic conditions would lead to the acceptance of Soviet power.[64] The linguistic alteration laying the conceptual foundation for collectivization was rooted in the "face" campaign.

By the beginning of 1925 the police, thus, were experiencing a bipolar response to peasant expressions of dissatisfaction. In the first years of the NEP, the local OGPU had concentrated in their reports on the economic foundations for peasant discontent, with special focus on taxation and on local government failures, especially with respect to food aid and seed loans. In this the local police had closely paralleled what the peasants themselves were presenting in their letters to peasant newspapers. Writing in *Krasnaia pechat'*, member of the Central Committee's Agitation and Propaganda Section S. B. Uritskii listed some of the more important issues that the rural correspondents had brought to the fore: the privileged position in Soviet government of the working class as compared to the peasantry; the superior life in the town in contrast to that in the countryside; the power of kulaks and wealthy peasants; the high prices and low quality of manufactured goods; and the lack of genuine land reform.[65]

According to an analysis of 87,195 letters sent to *Krest'ianskaia gazeta* during the last six months of 1924, the issues of most importance to the peasantry dealt, in rank order, with everyday life

(19% of the letters); the newspaper itself (16%); legal problems (9%); taxes (8%); cooperatives, credit, insurance, and mutual aid (8%); local authority (7%); reallocation of land holdings (6%); agronomics (4.5%); artistic literature (4.5%); the Communist Party and the Communist Youth League (4%); the general condition of the peasantry (3%); forests (1%); and the Red Army (1%).[66] In 1926, *Krest'ianskaia gazeta* reported much the same, with the major exception that problems with the local authorities had moved significantly up the list: everyday life (13%); local authority (10%); cooperatives, credit, and insurance (10%); the newspaper itself (10%); legal problems (9%); taxes (9%); reallocation of land holdings (7%); education (7%); economics (6%); agronomics (5%); the Communist Party (5%); forests (4%); artistic literature (3%); and the Red Army (2%).[67]

When the party set up a debate in the pages of *Krest'ianskaia gazeta* regarding the legitimacy of peasant complaints against the Soviet regime,[68] the theme of the insolent official appeared frequently. The peasants revealed a deep resentment of the disdain with which party and state officials in the countryside held them. In the words of the peasant Golovlev, when peasants, many of them "common, grey heroes who had endured all the burdens of tsarist slaughter and civil war," turned to Soviet institutions for assistance or advice, they frequently encountered merely a sneer and a shrug rather than sympathy.[69] The veteran A. F. Rybalchenko reported that he had lost a leg in the Civil War while serving in the Red Cavalry, but despite an official policy giving preference to wounded veterans, he remained unemployed. Rybalchenko bemoaned the indifference, if not hostility, of local officials who often as not abused the peasantry and who subverted the laws and regulations coming from the capital. If the party did not decisively struggle against the illegal acts of such officials, he warned, then counterrevolutionary thoughts would multiply and the kulaks would seize upon these failings.[70] Granted, as Sheila Fitzpatrick has argued,[71] often these letters demonstrate that some peasant writers had learned to "speak Bolshevik" and utilize the language of the party to set forth their own complaints and settle their own scores, but this simply proves that a language for communication existed.

As Dzerzhinskii's reports in June and the other police reports reveal, the police had been actually listening to what such peasants were saying and had attempted to convince the central authorities that peasants were willing to work within a construct of state and society—they were willing to provide the tribute that was "right and natural" as defined by their understanding of a moral economy, their concepts of justice (*pravo*, etymologically and conceptually closely related to *pravda*, truth). This partial acceptance of the new regime while maintaining opposition to "evil administrators" was essentially the same deal that the peasants had offered tsardom. Although such an arrangement demanded that the state be able to negotiate within the peasants' definitions, it nonetheless formed a basis for social evolution. The major conduit for information by which to create policy were the police, who to the summer of 1924 were providing the party with a rather clear and ideologically unimpeded window onto the peasant world.

Utilizing the data that was coming from the countryside via the police, the Bolshevik regime had demonstrated some willingness to accept the deal and moderate its approach—a flexibility reflected in its change from confiscation to *razverstka,* and from *razverstka* to a single unified agricultural tax, and then even to modify the tax levy to reflect peasant constructs of what was "right" to pay. This flexibility emerged in large measure because the police, and not solely at the local level, had been returning to an earlier view of the peasants as rational actors rather than incorrigible irrational enemies. It is often argued that only the agricultural specialists working in the villages saw the peasants in these terms,[72] but the evidence demonstrates that the police initially also had come to share much of this view.

But for the compromise to continue to work, the central government would have to agree to this challenge of working within peasant constructs and continue to accept the arrangement whereby the peasants could oppose the actions of the regime's agents without having to oppose the regime as a whole. As the peasants did not see the Bolshevik regime as weak (and thus susceptible to being overthrown), they would need a means to demonstrate that they were loyal at the same time that they sought to force compromise on the regime. However, the clear economic dominance of the well-to-do peasants was now being seen by the party leadership as morphing into even greater political influence within the rural soviets. Rykov, Zinoviev, Bukharin, and Kamenev all emphasized in fall 1924 the menace of growing kulak political power.[73] In the ebb and flow of orders to and information from the secret police and their informers in the field, these fears were beginning to reinforce themselves and to lay the foundation for a new and very different approach to the peasantry.

CHAPTER 4

Soviet Elections, Grain Crises, and Kulaks, 1925–1926

The party's pursuit of a pro-"well-to-do" peasant policy had reflected the information provided to the party leaders by the police, who had pushed a more or less nonpolitical interpretation of peasant behavior. In particular, the police had stressed economic reasons for peasant dissatisfaction in both the local police *svodki* and the central OGPU summary reports. These documents had made a case for a conciliatory approach to the peasantry and had argued that through ameliorative actions peasants could be won over to support of Soviet power. However, as we have seen, the grain crisis of 1924 and the electoral campaign of that fall had caused the police orientation to the peasantry to begin to fundamentally change.

As demonstrated above, the exceedingly low peasant participation in the elections to the rural soviets in fall 1924 convinced the party of the need for the "revitalization" of the soviets. This translated into seeking new support for the regime outside party ranks. The central leadership saw the key to winning over more peasants in ordering new elections in those areas that had previously shown exceptionally low turnout. The leadership further sought to gain key peasant support for the regime by restricting the ability of local communists to stack the rural soviets with communists and poor peasants, as had heretofore been achieved by controlling the electoral lists and disenfranchising as many well-to-do peasants as possible. While precise figures on the percentage of peasants who voted in the re-elections are hard to determine as a result of the official numbers combining the uncancelled elections of fall 1924 with the re-elections in spring 1925, Bukharin was nonetheless undoubtedly correct when he told the Executive Committee of the Communist International:

> We must note that the peasant today has become far more active than he was in the past. His political horizon has broadened; his independence increased; he feels the need to take a more energetic part in political life, in the organs of the state apparatus—the village Soviets, the cooperatives, etc.[1]

But which peasants had become more active and with what goals? The purpose of the Face to the Countryside campaign had been to revitalize the rural soviets, which in turn was intended to enhance the party's influence over the villages and to improve conditions in the countryside. The ultimate goal was to win over peasant support for the regime. But the police reports coming from the local OGPU informers during fall 1924 and winter/spring 1925 indicated that the opposite was actually occurring.

The reports of the police during the fall and spring campaigns reflected a growing nervousness about the impact of the party's (and the police's) approach to the peasantry. During the re-election campaign itself, the police reports centered primarily on peasant dissatisfaction with the continued efforts by local party organizations to determine the electoral slates in advance.[2] Peasants resisted the attempts to force through a slate by declaring "We have a constitution and you cannot impose your candidates"; "They designate outsiders (*chuzhie v volosti*) without asking us"; and "They have not selected ours; they are outsiders." Peasants organized nonparty slates, refused to vote slates of communists put forward by electoral commissions, and demanded that slates be broken up into individual candidates so that each could be voted on separately, often with success.[3] Some local communists responded by threatening peasants with being charged with illegal voting and with sentences to forced labor, or, more mildly, with conducting repeated votes until the party slate was approved, or simply falsely reporting votes. But the issue that concerned the police most was the success of "kulaks" in getting poor peasants, and especially women, to support their candidacy and reject communists, thereby "spoiling" the re-elections and even allowing SRs to regain influence.[4]

With the re-elections for fall 1924 lasting to June 1925, new soviet elections for 1925 followed almost immediately. Given the experience with continued vote rigging in the 1924 elections and re-elections, the police, not surprisingly, reported little enthusiasm for the fall voting, especially among the poor peasants.[5] Where the peasants did show interest in the elections, it was almost entirely among the middle and well-to-do.[6] The police cited the statement of a well-to-do peasant in Orlovsk guberniia:

> We must elect independent people, so that they can defend their own interests. We must select people who will stand up for our defense before the authorities. Earlier we all elected communists, but they never gave us any thought.[7]

Peasants complained that in the past the soviets either had done nothing, or their communist members had simply looted communal funds. Repeatedly the police reported that peasants were arguing that it would be best to dump the very idea of rural soviets and return to the earlier practice of electing a village headman (*starshina*), "a man independent and prosperous, who valued his own household and would take care of the community's affairs."[8] According to the OGPU December report on the 1925 fall elections, the kulaks and well-to-do peasants, including all the so-called "former people" [(*byvshye liudi)*—former policemen, priests' and landlords' sons (and even daughters!), tsarist officers, and businessmen—as well as moonshiners, convicted bandits, and former members of the Social Revolutionary Party] had taken advantage of these attitudes and utilized the electoral campaign effectively to seize power in the villages.[9]

The Central Committee resolution of October 1924 on the revitalization of the rural soviets had set forth specific goals for the campaign.[10] First was the election to the soviets and rural executive committees of an increased number of nonparty peasants and especially peasant women, with greater nonparty peasant representation to republic and union Congresses of Soviets. Party interference in the elections was to be avoided; but at the same time, and rather contradictorily, the Central Committee decreed the necessity "to strengthen the work of the communist fractions in the Soviets and local executive committees." The final requirement for the revitalization campaign was the avoidance of antireligious provocation, a clear reprimand to rural Komsomol'tsy. The Central Executive Committee of the USSR (TsIK) followed with a decision to appoint a conference "on questions of Soviet construction" that would seek means to improve the machinery of administration in the countryside, another aspect of revitalization.

When the results of the re-election were tallied, participation had clearly improved, at least 40 percent of the peasants having voted. But other results were troublesome to many in the party. The percentage of communists elected to the soviets was revealed to have declined from 12 to 7 percent, with Komsomol'tsy especially being turned out. Poor peasants too lost ground, the percentage of "horseless" peasants elected to the village soviets falling to a mere 4 percent, and the landless (*batraks* and nonagricultural hired laborers) holding only 2.9 percent of the seats.[11] Rural Russia had always suffered from underadministration, and the labors of 1924–1925 to address this problem and further create a rural administration that would be a part of *Soviet* as opposed to *local* power clearly had not produced the results sought by the regime.

Thus, the effort by the central authorities to "turn the party's face to the countryside" (an essentially pro-kulak policy) and to revitalize the soviets as a means to secure greater rural support for the regime ironically led to the police emphasizing the kulak threat far more than previously. In its April 1925 summary of the political situation in the country, the OGPU argued that "face to the countryside" had resulted in the kulaks' believing that Soviet power was weak and about to fall, and the poor feeling that the Communists had deserted them: "Now the soviets do nothing for us; we now have different leaders who before drank our blood, and now will drink even more when they have taken power."[12]

Within the party leadership, Bukharin, who would soon himself be accused of advancing a pro-Kulak policy, echoed these police concerns. Shortly after receiving the police report on the electoral campaign, Bukharin in January 1926 complained in a speech at a meeting of the Leningrad District party conference that the kulak had crept into the soviets with the support of the middle and poor peasants.[13] This emerging shift preceded one among some agricultural specialists who also would begin to express dissatisfaction with Narkomzem's strategies for modernization, returning to an earlier vision of the village promulgated by agents of the tsarist government and liberal reformers as "helpless before the onslaught of predatory middlemen [many belonging to the peasant estate and local] carrying elemental 'capitalism'."[14] Some of the agricultural specialists thus would become open to proposals to reorder the peasant world in a vision of a modern countryside freed from the three-field system, frequent land partitions, and strip farming.[15]

While it is true that the threatening visage of the kulak had been raised well before 1924, what is significant is the growing role this specter began to play in the new image of the peasantry now being drawn by the OGPU, one that challenged the party's wager on the market-aware. Much like the agronomists of the prewar era, the political police, especially those reporting from the countryside, had to this point argued that the peasants, although unenlightened and trapped in archaic social structures, were susceptible to the forces of reason and science and could, with proper tutelage, be won over to the plans of their intellectual superiors. The OGPU summary report for November and December 1923 had stated the matter simply: "The introduction of a partial reduction in taxes has significantly improved the situation of the poorest strata of the peasantry and allowed an improvement in the political situation within the village, . . . strengthened faith in Soviet power among [those peasants] and helped free them from the influence of the kulaks."[16]

But by the end of 1924, as a consequence of the Face to the Countryside campaign, that faith was withering, as witnessed in *both* local reports and central OGPU summary assessments. Local OGPU agents began to see themselves as confronting a peasant war—they reshaped their reporting based not on demands from the center but on their perception of the local. The peasants were defined more and more as a unitary dangerous mass incapable of breaking free from the influence of the kulaks, and indistinguishable from the latter in their thoughts and actions. The peasants could not be saved from themselves—they could only be broken. Earlier, the general economic situation of the village was the defining variable that both the local police and the central OGPU administration had used to explain peasant behavior to the party leadership—now it tended to be the ability of the kulaks to control even the thinking of the poor as well as middle peasants. The kulak was evolving from *a* factor to *the* factor and from an external force to the essence of the peasantry.

In terms of the secret police's approach to the peasantry, the OGPU had not as yet fully accepted the "prophylactic policing policy" (*profilakticheskaia rabota*) argued originally by the NKVD that maintained that certain socially dangerous groups existed as recognizable social categories that should (and could) be identified, surveyed, and excised; however, the initial steps had now been taken that would lead to the kulaks (and, in truth, the peasantry as a whole with but minor exceptions) being defined as an inherently socially dangerous population, identified in sociological terms as a criminal contingent (*kontingent*).[17] The political decision to declare war on the prosperous had yet to be made; the language of that war and the necessary mental construct of a unified peasant enemy, however, were in the process of being perfected. What had previously been justified as an effort to protect backward peasants from their exploiters (kulaks, traders, moneylenders, and rural soviet authorities) was well on its way to becoming a justification for assaulting peasant culture as a whole—the only means to protect the benighted not merely from their enemies but above all else from themselves—"an attack on the villages that produced the kulaks, fed their power with ignorance and inertia, and lacked the consciousness to oppose or even recognize their enemies."[18]

Yet it would be a serious error to conclude that at the end of the elections of the winter of 1925–1926 the police had fully abandoned their argument regarding the rational basis of peasant unhappiness and had ceased to advance a policy of accommodation with rural society. While supplying leaders such as Bukharin with cause for concern over the increase in kulak influence within the newly elected rural soviets, the local police in particular continued to forcefully advance their earlier argument regarding the logical foundation for peasant behavior and dissatisfaction. The police particularly noted that peasants resented what they saw as the unfair burdens being placed upon them by the Soviet regime in order that the government (*vlast'*) "can build its own personal happiness and prosperity on the ruined [peasant] households—this is a crime against the Revolution."[19] Peasant anger came through especially with respect to the disparity between the labor demanded of peasants versus workers and officials ("Soviet *burzhui*"), with the charge that workers labored a mere 8 hours a day (and officials only 6!) and received high wages (250–300 rubles per month allegedly for officials), whereas peasants worked some 13–15 hours a day and were forced to surrender the greatest part of their earnings to the government: "All of them sit on the neck of the *muzhik*."[20] A middle peasant from the north reportedly declared: "In the district all of the officials are bloodsuckers and sons of bitches; they only know how to issue orders and ride the backs of the peasants. On their hands there are no calluses."[21] In a revealing statement, another peasant from the north was quoted: "Soviet power concerns itself about the workers, not the peasants. Before the Jews lived poorly, but now the peasants."[22]

The fear of war remained, according to the police, a major source of anxiety among the peasantry. Rumors were spreading in the northern and central guberniias during winter and spring 1925 that England, France, and Japan (and on occasion even America) were already preparing an invasion and that mobilization would be announced shortly.[23] In what could only be considered a most disturbing account, when the war began, it was murmured, not only the Communists but also children belonging to the Pioneers would be hanged.[24] But whereas war fear had been previously reported as simply spreading among the peasantry, in the reports of early 1925 there emerged a greater tendency to blame the kulaks for spreading the rumors as part of an effort to undermine support for the regime and grain speculators for seeking to drive prices up as peasants sought to set aside reserves before the war began.

The police continued to advise the central authorities on the miserable conditions confronting the poor peasants.[25] Those who lacked a horse were in the worst state as they were forced to work under "serf-like" conditions for kulaks, having to perform more labor on the kulaks' lands for the use of the horse than they could on their own lands. Without the possibility of migratory labor, the poor peasants in the northern and central provinces had no choice but to accept exploitative conditions from the kulaks, oftentimes working solely for food. But the police did not place the blame solely on the shoulders of the kulaks—government policy, which denied poor peasants the right to seek factory employment because they were not members of a labor union, was also responsible. The police reported that in the central provinces, peasant migratory labor was down by some 70–80 percent from prewar levels.[26] It was therefore, the police testified, not surprising that the regime was losing ground to the economic and political influence of the kulaks among the poor.[27]

The devil drink once more raised its head in police reports. Faced with penury, widows in particular, but the poor in general, had turned to moonshining in order to be able to put food on the table. The result of the massive outflow of *samogon* was not merely drunkenness, the police lamented, but also assaults and even murders, as drunken youths especially were attacking people, including the leaders of the village soviets, oftentimes with clubs and knives. But once more, the police noted that there was also an economic logic to the moonshine problem. In the central provinces, a bottle of vodka legally obtained from the city cost 1 ruble 75 kopecks. For the same amount of money, a peasant could produce 18.5 liters (1.5 *vedro*) of vodka.[28]

Lack of migratory labor and drunkenness were, to some degree, the least of the problems confronting the peasantry in the spring of 1925. The police reported the continuation of hunger and famine in areas of the north, the central industrial region, the Volga, and especially Ukraine. The grain crisis of 1925 is often ignored in the literature as its impact was localized, being the fiercest in the central industrial region and northern and western Ukraine. Carr referred to the harvest of 1925 as "splendid," and argued:

> The grain harvest reached 4,400 million puds or 80 per cent of the 1913 figure (which allowed for large exports). Other agricultural products registered higher percentages; potatoes, milk, fruit and

> vegetables, and tobacco had outstripped pre-war levels of production. It was the harvest of the recovery.[29]

Every agricultural problem, however, assumed the most acute expression in Ukraine, whether the issue was land shortage or social stratification within the village. The same was true for hunger. The previous year had witnessed a partial crop failure in parts of Ukraine. And while the Soviet leaders, looking as they were at aggregate national data and prognostications, were concerning themselves with fears about possible falling prices, the reopening of the "scissors," and peasant discontent as a result of overproduction, the situation in large sections of Ukraine and the central industrial region had not improved by early spring. The political police, aware of realities on the ground, informed their superiors that in some Ukrainian regions, up to 80 percent of the households lacked food; in the central industrial region the percentages were in the 20s. According to the Ukrainian Central Executive Committee, in Volynia in western Ukraine some 20–30 percent of the peasants were surviving solely on potatoes, with another 10 percent not even having recourse to that substitute and thus existing only "by making oppressive bargains with the *kulak* or by begging or in some other way."[30] Seed grain was being consumed as food, thus threatening ever more severe hunger in the coming months.[31] And once again, the police stated, government policy inflamed the situation: famine credit was only being made available to those peasants who had collateral in either cattle or inventory. The entire relief effort was marked by corruption and incompetence. Seeds, for example, intended to be loaned to the peasants to provide for spring sowing, were being sold by local authorities to cooperatives. Further, the police reported that the peasants explained their recourse to eating surrogates due to the unreasonable demands of the tax burden. The peasants were saying "For what have we lived until now; we pay our taxes and now we have nothing for ourselves, because everything that we had has been used up and even our cattle have nothing to eat and we are forced to sell them." As a result of the failure of the government to provide sufficient food aid, the police warned, the peasants were turning more and more to the kulaks.[32]

The poor peasants were also being confounded by the terms of seed and monetary loans. In the spring of 1925, the police reported, peasants were discovering that when they paid their consolidated tax and were then forced to repay their arrears from earlier seed loans, they were left without seeds for the new sowing. The problem was made worse by the requirement that seeds repaid for loans be of high quality. The peasants found the conditions for monetary loans even more unfavorable, since those loans were provided to the peasants in the spring when the price of grain was high, but had to be paid back in the fall when grain was being sold on the market at prices three times lower than in the spring.[33] This, of course, was related to the general inability of the poor peasants to accept and negotiate the market. In the eyes of the peasants, the laws of the marketplace violated the moral economy, just as did merchants and artisans who operated according to those laws. Even the economic construct of "time," the idea that loans incurred in one year had to be repaid within a set number of months, regardless of intervening events, violated peasant morality. The Soviet regime in 1925, however, was continuing to rely on those very economic constructs and laws in its efforts to deal with rural society, and in the process was being convicted by many peasants of standing in opposition to what was right and natural.

It is not surprising that the police warned the party leadership of the serious social (and moral) problems arising from the economic disasters besetting large numbers of the peasantry. In its May 1925 report on conditions within regions suffering from grain failure, the information department of the OGPU described cases of peasants eating rotting animal flesh and of murders being carried out simply to obtain minute amounts of food. According to the political police, in Tambov, Orlov, and Voronezh guberniias the hunger was reminiscent of the famine of 1921.[34] Theft of foodstuffs was endemic, as was arson carried out especially against wealthier peasants who refused to provide food aid. But the Soviet regime was also being condemned for indifference: "The peasant masses turn to the village soviets and to the volost executive committees for bread, but are refused."[35] Even when aid was offered, it was insufficient. Hunger was leading to massive outmigration as peasants desperately searched for work in the cities or attempted to migrate to Siberia. Frantic to obtain something, peasants, the police informed the leadership, were burning down their huts in order to obtain insurance payment, only to find that small amount of money eaten up immediately.

The kulak reared his ugly head in these reports, accused of holding grain off the market in order to obtain even higher prices during the famine and of buying up land and property from hungry peasants on the cheap.[36] But other cases were reported of kulaks providing grain to the poor in the hopes of obtaining their political support. And although there were reports of wealthy peasants taking some of the land of the poor in rent, the police were disturbed by the fact that much of the land (in some areas as much as 40% of the arable) was not being sown for lack of seeds and insufficient seed loans.

In these reports, it was clear that the peasants had learned to speak Bolshevik as well as to continue with the tradition of the *bab'i bunty* (women's riots).[37] On May Day 1925, women from several villages in Aleksandro-Nevskii volost, Voronezh guberniia, organized a demonstration during the day's celebration. Leaders of the demonstration first gave speeches in honor of May Day and then immediately called upon the local authorities to assist the peasants in obtaining needed bread. The next day the women, together with a few men, gathered before the headquarters of the volost executive committee and demanded that the party members carry out an investigation into conditions in the region and immediately provide the villagers with bread. The women reportedly cried out: "If you do not answer our demands we will ourselves break into the state grain reserves stored in the Aleksandro-Nevskii warehouses!" The following day, the heads of the volost executive committee and party apparat, now fearing the women's wrath, fled the village, having failed the previous day to respond to the demands for food. The police reported that similar disturbances had occurred in at least five other volosts in the central industrial region, including one case where some 400 women had seized the headquarters of the volost executive committee and conducted a sit-down strike, refusing to get off the floor of the building until bread was made available, and threatening to destroy the grain elevator.[38] Other peasants had resorted to extorting grain from well-to-do peasants and burning down mills and other buildings when aid was not provided. Still others had turned to banditry, whose increase during 1925 the chief of the information department, G. E. Prokof'ev, directly attributed to peasant hunger and unemployment.[39]

The grain crisis was not the only one confronting peasants in 1925. With the introduction of the NEP, the Bolsheviks had turned to agricultural cooperatives, both consumer and production, as a means to assist the peasantry and to raise the level of agricultural production. The purchasing cooperatives were to provide the peasantry with the necessary agricultural implements, seeds, fertilizers, and other items of "first necessity" at low cost. But in the summer and fall of 1925, the police were continuing to report on the "goods famine" in the countryside and on massive embezzlement of cooperative funds, which totally compromised the very idea of the cooperative among the peasantry.[40] The lack of such basic items as tobacco, soap, glassware, salt, and sugar was being blamed on the coming war. To make matters worse, when goods were available at the cooperative store they often were at a higher price than those offered by private traders, a problem that had bedeviled the cooperatives since private trade had been legalized in 1921.[41] The police declared that the shortage of goods, the high prices, and the excessive membership fees were leading to peasants rejecting the cooperative and to the growth of private trade in the villages in Siberia, the North Caucasus, and even in the central provinces. The police quoted the peasants: "What good are cooperatives when for matches one has to travel 80 versts!" Peasants, the police argued, were not opposed to cooperatives "in principle," but to the embezzlement that went on, especially by "outsiders" who came in, bought up all the goods available, and then left. The turn to private traders thus, according to the police, was quite logical.[42]

Taxes, however, remained the central issue for both the peasantry and the government. The police reported that tax collection was progressing extremely slowly in the fall of 1925, but once more, the police offered rational reasons for the failure.

In particular, the police cited the poor weather in the central provinces that had made it difficult for the peasants to carry out the harvest and thus be able to pay their taxes. Even when the peasants were able to market their grain, prices continued to be too low to provide the money necessary for taxes.[43] Many of the problems the police reported continued to relate to the difficulty the state was encountering in compelling the peasants into market relations. The government was intent on forcing the peasants to pay back the seed loan from the previous year, but because the price grain fetched on the market in the fall (when the market was flooded) was much lower than the price of grain that the peasants received as a loan in the spring, the peasants simply could not accept that they had to pay back more grain than they had received.[44] The burden, the police reported, fell particularly hard on the horseless peasants, the very ones that the state claimed to be caring for most.[45] As a result, the "anti-Soviet element" was able to argue to the poor peasants that "Soviet Power is good for them only on paper." Not only did the market violate peasant norms, but so did the effort by the state to tax livestock. The police reported peasants' resistance to that tax based on their belief that only land was subject to taxation.

The police also detailed the peasants' growing awareness of how to play the legal game. They were refusing to pay taxes while their petitions to have their assessments reduced remained unanswered. However, what must have been most worrisome to the central authorities was a report from Amursk guberniia that combined a number of the regime's bêtes noires. There a Baptist preacher named Grachev was arguing that the peasants should not rush to accept the tax assessments: "The authority (*vlast'*) feels itself weak, and thus for us things are better. Lenin is dead, and Trotsky soon will be dead, and with the remaining officials we very likely can cope and not pay taxes."[46] The leaders had to be aware that the peasants had rebelled against tsardom when they believed the state to be weak.

Despite the recognition of these problems, the party, following the lead of the police, continued a policy of amelioration in an effort to address the concerns of the peasantry. In 1925 the party offered the peasants, or at least those who had managed to learn the market, a number of concessions including the relaxation of government control over grain prices with the ending of maximum fixed prices and their replacement by so-called "directive" prices, the removal of various administrative barriers to freedom of trade, an increase in the legally authorized period for renting land, lessening of restrictions on hiring labor, and permitting all peasants, including well-to-do, to join the various forms of cooperatives.

But other regime policies continued to arouse peasant dissatisfaction. The police reported in March 1926 resistance on the part of Ukrainian peasants to efforts to banish kulaks and former landlords from villages, although the police claimed that the poor were being intimidated into supporting the petitions against removal.[47] The introduction by the Central Executive Committee of the USSR (TsIK) on April 25, 1926, of a tax on total income rather than merely on land, including income obtained from crop cultivation, the cultivation of meadows, livestock breeding, special branches of agriculture having a commercial character such as tobacco farming or vegetable and fruit production, as well as all nonagricultural income such as that obtain from auxiliary factory work, produced especially sharp protest from the "kulak/well-to-do" segment of the village.[48] But whereas the prosperous complained that the new income tax let the "lazy" off the hook, the poor and middle peasants complained that the new system benefited the prosperous as the latter did not have to obtain income from nonagricultural sources. Although the poor simply had no choice but to seek supplementary income, the police noted that the more prosperous peasants throughout the country were beginning to cut back on items that could be taxed, for example, by selling off excess cattle, reducing the amount of land rented, substituting the cultivation of a lower taxed crop for a higher taxed one (e.g., substituting millets for melons) and even chopping down orchards. According to a report on a gathering of peasants discussing a newspaper article on the new tax, a middle peasant commented to general agreement: "There's your tax. Soviet Power always tries to approach the peasantry with cunning in order to fleece them with taxes. So we must do the same. There are suckling pigs, heifers, and excess calves—slaughter them and eat. Then everyone will be equal."[49] As early as spring 1926, the police were warning the central authorities of the peasants' willingness (and now ability) to respond to shifts in agricultural policy perceived at the village level as disadvantageous. And although the police were inclined to place the blame for resistance squarely on the shoulders of the "kulak/well-to-do" layer of village society, they also reported the frequent tendency within the village for a united front against the party and the state.

But if there was a crack in village solidarity, according to the police, it was over land reorganization. In the fight to prevent the poor peasants from obtaining additional or improved lands, the kulaks, the police claimed, were more and more able to use the power of the village soviet. In the North Caucasus, the Cossacks were refusing to allow "newcomers," that is, Russian peasant settlers, to have access to land.[50] Procrastination in carrying out reorganization was the rule, with cases of *zemleustroistvo* having dragged on for years. Through bribing the surveyors and the heads of the village soviets, the kulaks were able in most areas, but nowhere more so than in Ukraine and the southwest, the police declared, to control the process and obtain the best lands, and to seize back lands previously provided to the poor. When surveyors were not bribed, they often proved incompetent or drunk. And as often as not, bribery and drunkenness went hand and glove.[51] And if bribery proved insufficient, there was always recourse to threats of murder and of "the red cockerel."[52] In May 1925 the Third All-Union Congress of Soviets had declared that land consolidation was a necessary condition of "correct management of the rural economy," and had decreed that it should be essentially completed within the next ten years.[53] And although the police entitled their lengthy September 1926 report on enhanced efforts to bring about land consolidation "Eagerness for Land Consolidation" (*Tiaga k zemleustroistvu*), the report itself detailed a myriad of problems associated with the process.[54]

With respect to the essential transition from the ancient three-field system of land utilization to the modern multi-field system of crop rotation and the replacement of narrow with broader strips, the police reported a growing positive response from peasants in the central, northwestern, and Volga guberniias. However, peasants remained concerned that the transition would deprive them of pasture for their cattle. Further, the lack of seeds slowed the process considerably. Nonetheless, faced with opposition to land reorganization by "the conservative part of the peasantry," "less powerful layers of villages" were attempting to separate from an existing *mir* and form a new settlement (*vyselok*) where it would be possible to introduce multi-field crop rotations, concentrate holdings, and introduce improved seeds. These efforts were occurring in the central, northwestern and Volga guberniias, and especially in Siberia. However, the well-to-do peasants recognized that such a separation would result in their losing some of the best land (as well as having fields that they had hidden from tax collectors located) and thus were doing all possible to prevent the creation of new *vyselki*. Even where there was no threat of *vyselki*, the "kulaks and sometimes the middle peasants" were forcefully resisting—oftentimes with the support of surveyors and other land workers—the redistribution of strips based on "souls."[55] This resistance was producing increased violence within the village. While fighting the efforts of the poorer peasants to create new settlements or to obtain access to additional land within the village, wealthy peasants themselves were attempting to leave the mir and to create their separate farmsteads (*khutory* and *otruby*), forms of land consolidation viewed ever more negatively by the government.

The constant conflict associated with land reorganization, the police reported, was inhibiting production. The primary source of conflict was the resistance of kulaks to the process. Kulaks, the police claimed, threatened the poor and middle peasants who wanted to introduce *zemleustroistvo* not simply with immediate violence, but also with long legal battles and with revenge were the process to actually occur. The kulaks also agitated among the poor against the costs associated with land reform: surveyors had to be paid by the village, which also had to bear all other costs associated with the process. But according to the police, terror in the form of beatings, murder, and arson were the ultimate means by which the kulaks were attempting to stop the process.

In the meantime, given the slowness with which land consolidation was occurring, the kulaks and the well-to-do peasants were seizing the best lands and taking back the lands that had been confiscated from the wealthy during the period of equalization of land holdings that initially followed the revolution or even in more recent anti-kulak campaigns.

By the fall of 1926, the policy of accommodation with rural society advocated by the police was clearly in contradiction with the emerging portrait of ever-growing kulak domination within the villages. Police reports more often than not now displayed undisguised antagonism toward "well-to-do" peasants. The police expressed frustration that local officials and apparently the central government as well could not control the kulaks and the well-to-do peasants who, they averred, were taking advantage of governmental weakness to appropriate the better lands and to subjugate the poor. And although the police voiced the greatest frustration at the poor being ruined while the wealthy were not "repressed," the police too, although condemning excesses carried out by local officials, were venting their annoyance at the poor peasants who simply could not, or perhaps would not, understand that they had to pay arrears and repay loans.[56]

As the 1926–1927 agricultural year progressed, the police, especially the Information Department of the OGPU in its monthly summary reports to the party leadership, were less often reporting the logical reasons for peasant dissatisfaction; instead, the reports were more often warning of the dangers coming from those in rural Russia whom the government for the past three years had been actively supporting through its economic and social policies. The great fear emerged: Under the influence of the kulaks and well-to-do (who comprehended the market), the peasants would simply strike and refuse to provide grain until their demands for lower taxes, higher agricultural and lower industrial prices, and a peasants' union to protect their interests were met.[57] Proof that the kulaks and the well-to-do were organizing consisted of the continuing antitax agitation, the stirring up of antiurban antagonism, the agitation to boycott the market, the "anti-Soviet" statements made at various meetings, and the calls for a peasants' union, all of which in the past had usually been explained with reference to valid peasant grievances.[58] In the final report on the political situation in the countryside for 1926, the OGPU reported as serious the calls by peasants to stage a revolt and overthrow the Communist regime.[59] What had begun two years earlier as a shift of emphasis regarding the legitimacy of peasant complaints was now becoming a major change in secret police attitudes toward the peasantry.

CHAPTER 5

Liquidation of Kulak Influence, War Panic, and the Elimination of the Kulaks as a Class, 1927–1929

As 1926 drew to a close, the party began preparations for new elections to the soviets. Looking back at recent election campaigns (the elections of fall 1924, the reelections of that year, and the elections of 1925–1926), the party leadership was determined to make significant adjustments, especially to the political advances that the political police were arguing the kulaks had achieved through the electoral process.[1] In the countryside the party was to be far more active, the class issue was to be stressed, and participation in elections (and most significantly in rural governance) by persons who by law should have been deprived of electoral rights was to be eliminated. The new instructions for the elections were circulated to the Union republics in October 1926 with elections initially set for January 1, 1927. The overwhelming theme of party pronouncements regarding the scheduled elections was the "liquidation" of kulak influence on the peasant masses.[2] For the party this signaled a turn away from conciliation of the well-to-do peasants that had been the cornerstone of party policy since the spring of 1923.

The police began reporting as early as the first week of January on efforts by kulaks and other "anti-Soviet inclined people" to prevent the election of communists and to support "our own." These groups, the police added, were also attempting to restore voting rights to former merchants, shop owners, policemen, and other *lishentsy* deprived of voting rights under either the republic or USSR constitutions with the goal of allowing everyone to vote.[3] The question of the franchise raised in these reports was especially important in the countryside, but not because the rural soviets had succeeded in supplanting the *mir* and its meeting of heads of households (*skhod*) as the effective, and peasant-recognized, organ of local government.[4] Rather, beginning with the 1925–1926 soviet elections, the regime had attempted not merely to disenfranchise employers of hired labor, merchants, "former people," and similar groups from voting, but also (and far more importantly for the peasants) to exclude the disenfranchised from the *skhod*. The attempt to bar well-to-do peasants who played prominent roles in the *mir* from the *skhod* was nothing short of a declaration of war against the very foundation of traditional village order.

Understandably then, given the stakes involved, the OGPU featured the "Preparations by the Well-to-do Layer of the Peasantry for the Elections to the Village Soviets" as a prominent chapter in its *svodki* throughout the winter and spring of 1927. The reports coming to the party leaders could not be reassuring; the police informed them that not simply kulaks and well-to-do peasants but even nonparty members of the existing village soviets were attempting to mobilize the peasants to reject all communists.[5] According to the agitation among the poor and middle peasants by a group of well-to-do in the village of Ekaterinoslavka, "They [communists] do not defend the interests of either the poor or the peasants in general. Instead they raise taxes and increase railroad tariffs. There is no medical help, medicines are expensive, and bridges are not built."[6] Members of local electoral commissions were being subjected to threats and far worse over disenfranchisement. Everywhere "illegal" meetings were taking place, where schemes for electing well-to-do peasants to the soviets and for restoring voting rights to the disenfranchised were being hatched, even with middle and poor peasants in attendance. Kulaks were seizing control of electoral commissions in order to bring these plots to fruition. In the elections themselves, lists of candidates proposed by party cells were going down to defeat.

In trying to explain these losses, the police claimed, in a special *svodka* detailing work with organizations of poor peasants, that the poor would not stand against the prosperous in elections for fear of retaliation,[7] a fear the party attempted to overcome through the organization of special "meetings of the poor" where agitation for the poor seizing control of the village soviets could be more safely carried out.[8] The police reported mixed success with this agitation approach, although the tenor of the reports was far less somber by May than it had been at the beginning of the year. But perhaps the most distressing news was that the local communists simply could not control the elections. It was not, however, simply that the well-to-do were winning elections. To complicate the situation further, the local election committees, in attempting to put to use the peasant class divisions dictated by the party leadership, were creating absolute political chaos. Middle peasants, whom the party allegedly desired to win over, were being deprived of voting rights in what the police described as a "committee of the poor deviation."[9] In their zeal to limit the influence of the well-to-do, electoral commissions disenfranchised Red Armymen, and even members of the Komsomol and the Communist Party. The result of such arbitrary behavior, the police warned, was a growing tendency among all peasants to advocate for universal suffrage, and for the poor peasants actively to support the kulaks in their bid for retaining voting rights. Clearly the police in the spring of 1927 were having a difficult time fitting peasant behavior into the categories more and more demanded by the party leadership. While the police were being told to see the village within a class structure wherein "poor" and "middle" peasants should act in certain ways, and where a clear class enemy could be distinguished (and countered), the peasants' conduct constantly countered theory.

The understanding of stratification actually held by a large part of the peasantry was summed up in a letter to the wall newspaper of Kazimirovka village in Belorussia, a copy of which was sent to Iagoda and Molotov by the Belorussian OGPU at the end of June.[10] The author, who according to the OGPU was a supporter of the revolution and a middle peasant, declared that despite the promises of a new and better life ("days of bright hope"), the "untruth" and injustice of tsarism continued. Although landlords, capitalists, and priests had been removed from the land, the peasants in many ways received the same treatment as they had before. Why? Because the party did not pay sufficient attention to the needs of the peasant masses. What information the party had about the peasantry came from a small group who actually had little in common with the people. Hence the mistakes of the party leadership regarding the class structure of the village. Following the revolution, the author continued, his village had successfully carried out land reorganization, equalizing land holdings and even the possession of cattle. Why then did the party divide the peasants into three "classes"? In an impressive display of mastery of Bolshevik discourse, the author argued that rather than being stratified into classes of kulaks, middle peasants, and poor peasants, the peasants actually divided into three "groups": (1) the hardest working peasants who used their strength; (2) the middle peasants who worked but were not particularly industrious or intelligent; (3) and the foolish and lazy (and therefore poor) who did not want to work, preferring instead to wait for help from the government. The party's erroneous class divisions destroyed initiative and the desire to improve one's household among the "hard working, enterprising, and intelligent peasants," and contributed to the increased poverty of the lazy and foolish peasants. Further, the pseudo class divisions only created unnecessary and dangerous enmity among the peasantry, which the author claimed had never existed before but which now threatened the economic prosperity of the entire village.

According to the police, the "confusion" expressed by this author regarding the class structure of the village was widespread among the peasantry. It revealed itself in the growing demand for the creation of an "extraclass" (*vneklassovyi*) peasant union that would allegedly defend the interests of "the peasants." The winter and spring of 1927 were filled with reports on peasant agitation for a peasant union.[11] Here the police continued to make the argument that this was a product primarily of economic concerns, noting initially that only a few of the calls for the union were of a political nature. The police reported that despite the efforts of the government to lower industrial goods' prices for the peasants, the peasants were complaining that lower prices existed only in newspaper accounts.[12] With the electoral campaign heating up, the police however reported (or defined) a larger percentage of the cases of agitation as having a political character. By March the police were labeling almost a third of the agitation in Ukraine as political.[13] In April and May the reports included calls, usually declared as coming from former Party of Socialists-Revolutionaries (SRs), not simply for the creation of a union but for a peasant *party*: "Soviet Power defends the workers at the cost of the peasants and thus the peasants need their own peasant party."[14] By June the Secret Department of the OGPU was instructing the OGPU Siberian branch to be especially watchful on this matter and to provide it with monthly reports on peasant agitation for a *krestsoiuz*.[15] In its July report on "anti-Soviet activities in the villages," the North Dvina OGPU simply defined calls for a Peasant Union as part of an effort by counterrevolutionaries to create a hostile political organization.[16]

As important as the peasant union was, the issue that dominated police reports in the spring and summer of 1927 was the war panic that the police warned was spreading among all layers of the peasantry. The Soviet government had become genuinely concerned in the summer of 1926 about possible new threats arising from British efforts to organize a transfer of Danzig and the Polish Corridor to Germany in exchange for Poland receiving part or all of Lithuania. This was exacerbated by anxiety over a Franco-German rapprochement that was seen as leading to a German-Polish agreement directed against the Soviet Union. By fall 1926 these apprehensions were being publicly cited in the Soviet press. The situation appeared far worse in the spring and summer of 1927 when the Kuomintang began its savage repression of the Chinese Communists (April), Great Britain broke relations with the Soviet Union (May), and Soviet minister to Poland P. L. Voikov was assassinated (June). Then in September France forced the recall of the Soviet ambassador.[17]

As early as April 1927, the police were reporting peasants' and workers' panicked hoarding of items of primary necessity such as salt, tea, sugar, and matches as well as efforts to stock up on manufactured goods in preparation for war shortages.[18] Peasants were refusing to accept Soviet currency (which they were exchanging for gold coins at highly inflated prices on the black market) and demanding to be paid in gold. Peasants were resigning from the Pioneers and even the Komsomol as a result of rumors that "soon there will be war and all Pioneers will be hanged," whereas the Komsomol'tsy would be the first sent off to war.[19] The rumors were leading peasants to sell off their livestock, especially their good horses suitable for military service, and even their good carts for fear of confiscation.[20] Allegedly "traders, kulaks, priests, and all sorts of anti-Soviet elements of the village" were primarily responsible for spreading the rumors and were using the opportunity to agitate against land reorganization, threatening the poor peasants with death if the land reforms were carried out. These rumors of war were coupled with threats of uprising against the communists.

Given the leadership's belief that war was a genuine possibility,[21] undoubtedly of greatest concern were the police reports of the peasants' refusal to fight were war to break out. In May at a peasants meeting in Tver guberniia called to discuss mechanization and land reorganization, one attendee took the floor to declare: "War is coming—to which we say: You govern, so go and also fight. We overthrew the tsar thinking that Soviet power would be better, but we received the same thing."[22] Repeating this refrain several weeks later, a peasant in Voronezh guberniia was quoted as arguing: "The party turns to us only in a difficult moment for it, but when everything is good it forgets about us; so let the party go and defend itself. We are all against war and we will not go kill workers and peasants from other countries. . . . We do not need war, we do not want it, and we will not fight."[23] In Kaluga guberniia the same argument was made: "Peasants have no reason to defend [Soviet] power; it has given us nothing. All rights and privileges have been given to you communists. So go and defend yourselves."[24]

But refusal to defend the regime was not the limit; by summer 1927 reports included peasant threats to eliminate the communists and their supporters themselves. A peasant in Nizhegorodsk guberniia was quoted: "Soviet power will soon be at an end; all that is necessary is a single spark and the entire people will rebel, and the Red Army immediately will become entirely green, as all of them will head off to the forests."[25] In Tomsk district the police reported that the well-to-do were spreading rumors that in the case of war the communists had planned to kill all the well-to-do and the poor who supported them: “We must not wait for them to kill us. Rather we must first slaughter all the communists in the village.” In Leningrad guberniia an Estonian peasant was quoted as arguing: “We must not sleep. We must decide our path and help one another. In case of mobilization we must join the Red Army and, having received weapons, steal back home with our weapons and begin to kill the communists. We must also now make connections with the border troops and convert them to our side.”[26] A middle peasant in Krasnoiarsk guberniia was quoted: “There must definitely be war. We need to first kill our own rats, who sit on our backs and each receive 130 rubles [salary] and take our last piglet in taxes.”[27] “War is coming,” declared a kulak in Tul’sk guberniia, “and all the communists and the komsomol’tsy will be strung up on the telegraph poles.”[28] A peasant from Vologodsk guberniia simply declared “Let war come—it is all the same to us; it can’t be worse. They have taken the land and meadows from us and given it to the idlers. We will not fight. Let the English come.”[29]

Meetings called in August to produce pledges to defend the Soviet Union were instead generating strong statements of resistance to the idea of war. In a typical reaction, the resolution of support proposed on August 15 at a meeting in Tambov guberniia was met with the cry: “We do not want war, and we will not go to war. If they demand money in order to avoid war, we will pay several thousands, but only if war does not break out.”[30] When in an effort to generate a mass political campaign aimed at enhancing the defense of the country following the break in diplomatic relations with Great Britain the government decreed June 10–17, 1927, as “Defense Week,” peasants throughout the country boycotted the meetings and the police reported that the campaign had merely increased the sense of panic in the countryside.[31] The few in attendance at a meeting in Saratov guberniia rather than supporting a pledge to fight declared: “First let the communists go [fight], and then the workers, and then we peasants will see.”[32] The police also reported the peasants’ refusal to contribute to a new war fund, one kulak in Tambov reportedly declaring: “There is no need to go to war; rather, we need to organize all the soldiers to surrender. It will not be worse to be under the rule of some Polish or English government.”[33]

The war scare thus served above all to confirm the image of the peasant, especially but not exclusively the kulak, as an imminent threat to the very survival of the Soviet Union. In its detailed regional analysis of peasant responses to the threat of war, the OGPU argued that on the whole the poor peasants supported the Soviet regime, whereas backing from the middle peasants was more guarded, particularly among those middle peasants "standing closest to the well-to-do."[34] The kulaks and well-to-do had demonstrated at best a defeatist attitude, if not a treasonable one. But the overall impression was not of a rural world ready to shed its blood to defend the regime.

To make matters worse, at the same time that reports of defeatism among the kulaks and well-to-do peasants were coming in, the police reported that these peasants (the very ones upon whom the regime had wagered the success of grain procurement), angered by the shortage and high prices of manufactured goods, were holding grain off the market or milling their grain and selling the flour themselves in nearby cities or selling the flour to "speculators." According to *svodki* from fall 1927 and winter 1928, the kulaks and well-to-do peasants had figured out the market, and while withholding grain from the market in hopes of higher prices either in late fall or spring, were paying their taxes from the proceeds of selling meat, vegetables, fruit, and other secondary agricultural products.[35] Meat and dairy products could be sold on the free market, their prices thus remaining outside of state control. By December 1927 only a third of the annual domestic food requirement had been secured from the 1927 harvest.[36] Disruptions in food supply were occurring in the towns and in some of the grain-consuming rural areas.

Evidence of a worsening relationship with the peasants came not only from the failure of the market to supply the towns and the army with essential food (and the peasants with industrial goods). The negative response of the peasants to the Jubilee Manifesto on the tenth anniversary of the revolution also gave warning of impending conflict.[37] Stalin, watching the approach of the tenth anniversary of the October Revolution, appears to have desired some grand gesture that might disarm his critics, particularly those led by Trotsky who were complaining of the extreme negative repercussions on the working class resulting from the regime's efforts at the rationalization of industry.[38] Thus, in spring Gosplan floated the idea of gradually introducing a seven-hour workday for industrial workers. On October 15 the Jubilee Manifesto suddenly proclaimed the change from an eight-hour to a seven-hour workday with no reductions in pay.

Along with the standard complaints overheard at celebrations regarding taxes, high prices for manufactured goods, and the wages of officials, the police reported particular dissatisfaction over the announcement of the seven-hour day, the peasants having repeatedly complained that the workers "sat on their shoulders" and hardly toiled at all while the peasants ceaselessly labored.[39] In what was appearing as a growing concern, the police reported an additional problem with grain procurement: peasants were refusing to pay their taxes (i.e., to sell their grain to the state procurement agency) in the belief that the Manifesto would result in a lowering of taxes and other concessions. By late December 1927, the police were describing a mounting confrontational atmosphere among the peasants, centered largely economically on the demand for lowered taxes, freedom to market grain privately, and the ending of the goods famine, and politically on the right to organize in a Peasant Union, but also reflected culturally in such matters as the right to carry out *samosud* (vigilantism) against suspected criminals and to settle other matters on their own terms.[40] If the police reports are to be believed (and all the evidence supports their accuracy on these matters), the middle and more prosperous peasants were becoming more prepared to organize and far less willing to compromise with the regime. A storm was gathering. The party was not simply seeing specters; a growing number of peasants appeared to desire a showdown with the regime.

The timing for the peasants could hardly have been worse. The party at that moment was confronting the issue of private traders, the so-called Nepmen. Much as had been true regarding the party's willingness since spring 1923 to pursue a pro-"well-to-do" peasant policy, so too had the party since 1925 (and the defeat of Zinoviev, Kamenev, and Trotsky) been more tolerant of private businessmen, a reflection of the economic theory being set forth by Bukharin and his supporters in the Politbureau, A. I. Rykov and M. M. Tomsky. Bukharin resisted calls for a rapid extraction of resources from the peasantry and argued for reliance on an expanding consumer market as the basis for industrialization. Such a gradual approach was possible, given the lack of state resources in the countryside—especially state and cooperative stores—only with help from private traders.[41] For Bukharin, Russian industrialization could be achieved only through peaceful market relations and the expansion of the volume of domestic trade, not through militaristic "storming." Consequently, according to Bukharin's reasoning, the Nepmen, like well-to-do peasants, not merely had to be tolerated but supported. They would serve as the essential suppliers to the peasantry as well as additional customers for state industry.

The Nepmen soon enjoyed a reduction of state pressure. At the Central Committee Plenum of April 1925, the party adopted a resolution on rural economic policy that demanded "the cessation of struggle by administrative means against private trade, the kulaks, etc. [measures that are] contradictory to the development of market relations permitted under NEP."[42] There followed more lenient policies toward Nepmen with respect to taxation, credit, and the supply of goods. But with the final defeat of the Left Opposition at the end of 1927, Stalin was in position to attack Bukharin's line. The party now began a full-scale assault on the private sector.

During the summer of 1927, the OGPU had conducted a campaign of mass arrests of former tsarist landlords and priests ("anti-soviet elements") in the villages;[43] now in September the political police carried out another mass operation, this time focusing on private traders as well as owners of leather businesses.[44] At the end of October, in a secret report to the USSR Sovnarkom, the OGPU explained the shortage of food and consumer goods in the industrial areas as primarily the result of speculative activities by private traders who essentially had driven state procurement agents from the market. The police reported that they had received requests from various state and party organizations "to carry out repressive measures against private traders who are wrecking the procurement of agricultural products and the provisioning of the population at normal prices."[45] The police now requested additional authority to "hold accountable" private traders and the officials who were assisting them.

The police reports at the beginning of 1928 continued to concentrate on the activities of private traders, who were consistently able to outbid state procurement agents for peasant grain by 50–100 percent.[46] Yet while there was growing concern in the reports regarding the peasants' reluctance to provide grain to state agents, the police continued to account for peasant dissatisfaction as the logical result of low grain prices. The reports explained too that the peasants were angry that manufactured goods were still not reaching the village. According to the police, the cooperative system of stores was simply not working. Nonetheless, by January 1928 the government was making a major effort to seize total control of trade in the belief that huge amounts of surplus grain were available ("The availability of bread amongst the peasantry is indisputable"[47]). The Politburo that month specifically added the category of kulaks to those subject to the mass operations (on the grounds that kulaks were using the confusion produced by the arrests of private traders and speculators to purchase grain for their own speculative purposes).[48] Thus, the police were actively engaged in repressing private traders and kulaks to guarantee that only state procurement agents would get their hands on these supplies.[49] In April the OGPU issued a top secret report citing 6,794 people arrested during this latest mass operation for speculation in grain and other commodities, of which 252 were officials.[50]

It was at this point that the OGPU issued its cumulative report on "anti-Soviet activities" in the villages for 1925 through 1927.[51] The kulaks, the report first declared, were the ultimate source of all counterrevolutionary activity. Their efforts had led to the opposition of the village, "as a unified whole," to the working class ("the city"); the isolation of the poor and other active Soviet elements within the village; the wrecking of measures taken by the government against the kulaks, especially taxes and land reorganization; the subordination of the lower soviet and cooperative organs to their influence; and the preparation of the peasantry for active struggle against Soviet Power and the communists, including uprisings. Yet the weight of past analysis still heavily influenced the police's interpretation of developments in the village. The primary cause of peasant dissatisfaction, the report continued, remained the scissors crisis and the goods' famine, which the kulaks argued resulted from the fact that:

> the proletariat and the party are carrying out a policy of plundering the peasantry; that the revolution gave privileges solely to the workers (the eight-hour working day, professional unions, social insurance . . . but gave nothing to the peasants except taxes and high prices; that the workers receive greater political rights than the peasantry; and that "the party's stratification of the village had in view the splitting (*raskolot'*) of the peasantry."[52]

Significantly, and in line with the arguments that the police had been providing regarding the logical basis for peasant dissatisfaction over the years of the NEP, the author did not challenge any of these perceptions. Nonetheless, the tendency throughout the report was to place all peasant activity in defense of their economic and political rights under the heading of activities by "anti-Soviet groups."[53] And while the police informed the leadership that kulaks and persons with anti-Soviet pasts dominated all activity in the village, the report is striking for its treatment of the peasants as a unified group. The attempt of the past to separate the peasants into classes, some of which could be won over to the revolution, was being replaced by a vision of a cohesive implacable enemy, an enemy that joined together peasants, NEPmen, and village intellectuals. War, which the peasants had so feared during the NEP, had indeed been declared; only the enemy at this moment was not a foreign invader.

OGPU summary reports at the beginning of 1928 now regularly referred to the kulaks, the well-to-do, and at times even the middle and some of the poor peasants wanting to "squeeze the city." And yet, even at this late date, local agents, in contradistinction to what was being presented by the central OGPU, often continued to offer a logical/economic basis for most of the peasants' behavior. The bipolar response to peasant expressions of dissatisfaction that had clearly emerged by 1925 thus intensified. Whereas local reports tended to detail the economic basis for peasant behavior, as the reports filtered upward toward the monthly summary reports intended for the top leadership, the stress more and more was placed on the political opposition of kulaks. This tendency had become far more pronounced following Dzherzhinskii's death in July 1926 and the increase in actual authority within the OGPU by Stalin's protégé Iagoda, who from 1924 had been warning of growing anti-Soviet agitation among the peasantry. But despite this clear trend, some OGPU reports to the central leadership continued to focus on the economic bases of peasant anger. The January report of the OGPU Economic Directorate is thus worthy of note:

> Among the reasons for poor supply of grain by the peasantry it is necessary to note the following: (1) The dry weather that existed during the winter-crop planting season created amongst the peasants a wait-and-see attitude. (2) The lowered directive prices announced by the Commissariat of Trade last September had a most negative effect on the supply of grain. (3) The reduction of state obligations, the delayed tax-payment deadlines, and so forth have made things substantially easier for producers and to a significant degree have deprived them of stimuli to deliver grain to the market. (4) Economic factors that have caused a decrease in grain deliveries basically come to the following: in the months since the grain harvest there have been increased sales of secondary agricultural products and livestock products, the sale of which are more profitable for the peasants than the sale of their surplus grain. The almost doubled price of livestock (in November 1926 a cow cost on average 77 rubles, while this November –120 rubles), the strengthened condition of the peasant economy, a number of sources of ancillary income, and higher prices for working hands and cart deliveries, naturally, have not provided an incentive to increased grain deliveries.
>
> Market prices for rye, which were stable July-August last year and in September even dropped by 6 kopeks a pud, in October already rose significantly. In some markets rye prices have reached 1 ruble 30 kopeks a pud (an increase of up to 60 kopeks over prices in July-August). Prices for wheat as a result of increased demand and a poor harvest have also steadily risen. At some markets the divergence in wheat prices as compared with the summer months has reached 1 ruble 38 kopeks.

> The prices for grain versus processed products have an even greater gap. At present, if the average price for rye is 76 kopeks, then rye and sifted flour go for as high as 1 ruble 80 kopeks a pud. This factor has also impacted the delivery of grain by the peasantry. The peasantry, taking account of the profitability of selling its surpluses in processed form, is reducing the supply of rye and wheat almost to nil.
>
> The lack of a maneuverable grain reserve, the weak realization by the Commissariat of Trade and local procurement agents of the plan for internal guberniia supplies, the existence of crop-failure and of grain consuming raions in the guberniia and the fact that the guberniia is adjacent to the Chuv(ash) Republic and Nizhny Novgorod Guberniia provide absolutely no possibility for eliminating the existing price gap. The supply of cities and of workers' and grain-consuming raions with grain has proceeded poorly, and speculation in processed products by private traders and in part by lower-level cooperatives has been observed. The guberniia's distilling industry, which is not supplied adequately with raw material (grain), has systematically violated procurement prices. There is an enormous gap between procurement and directive prices. There has been a tense international situation in recent months and the danger of war. All of the above-mentioned circumstances have led to a decline in supply by the peasantry.[54]

Nonetheless, within the party leadership the construct "speculation" had now emerged as *the* explanatory variable for procurement problems and the foundation for utilizing Article 107 of the Criminal Code of the R.S.F.S.R. on "speculation" as the mechanism for an all-out assault on the village and its grain.[55] In a series of directives and decrees from the center during winter 1927–1928 local agents in the countryside, with the assistance of the militia and, at this time, to a more limited degree the OGPU, were instructed to take whatever measures necessary to obtain grain—the forcible seizure of grain along with the confiscation of means of production, violent searches, arrests, and jailing all followed. Threats of severe punishment for "inactivity" and "negligence" directed at local authorities flowed from Moscow (along with contradictory, and meaningless, warnings against "excesses" combined with the accusations of "sabotage" for insufficient use of compulsion against the peasants).[56]

Confronted with such mixed signals from the center on how peasant behavior was to be understood, and the required response, local political police reports during the winter of 1928 continued to stress the economic foundation of peasant resistance to grain procurement, as well as detailing the real problems peasants confronted with the new sowing campaign. The peasants were often reluctant to expand the area sown as they saw little advantage to themselves in increased production. The biggest problem, however, for the poor peasants, the police reported, was the state's failure to provide sufficient seed loans, and those on time.[57] While the kulaks were clearly attempting to make political capital out of these difficulties—and there was now no reluctance to stress the dangers coming from this quarter—the problems, the local police reported, were genuine.

Having driven the private traders from the market, the state still had failed to offer the peasants the products that they desired, products that had been promised to the peasants time and again. Peasants had been refusing to sell their grain unless additional manufactured goods were made available. But to make matters worse, many peasants were now refusing to purchase what manufactured goods were appearing on the market in hopes of obtaining higher prices for their crops later. In the meantime, the wealthiest peasants were buying up the grain themselves since manufactured items could only be obtained in exchange for grain. The poor, on the other hand, were running short of food.[58]

Prices on the market were such, the police further informed their superiors, that more and more peasants, having brought grain to the market, were refusing to sell their supplies when offered only the official prices and were returning home. Peasants were burying their grain in pits or only selling for gold, seeing the increased pressure for grain procurement as proof of either the eve of war or extreme hunger in the cities. The result of the efforts to force peasants to offer their grain at the low state fixed rate, to enforce a self-tax (*samooblozhenie*) on the wealthier peasants in addition to the unified agricultural tax, and to collect arrears from all the peasants, including the poor, had been in many cases to drive the peasants together—including the members of the Party and the Komsomol—and, especially when such measures had "violated the party line" to exclude the middle and poor peasants from such actions, to increase support in the villages for the kulaks.[59]

The reaction reported by the police to the new taxation system and procurement process was, of course, the opposite of what the party had intended. As part of the celebration of the tenth anniversary of the revolution, the government had instituted a more progressive tax system at the end of 1927. The new law exempted the lowest 35 percent of peasant households from taxation while significantly increasing taxes on households with income over 500 rubles.[60] In April 1928 "individual taxation" was introduced for the most prosperous peasants in an effort to capture income derived from the proceeds of selling meat, vegetables, fruit, and other secondary agricultural products. Simultaneously, taxes for collective farmers were decreased. Finally, the government decreed that *samooblozhenie,* which was intended to finance village activities such as road and bridge repair, land reclamation, fire fighting, and education, was to be carried out using the class principle such that poor peasants were exempted, weaker middle peasants and families of Red Armymen were assessed a lesser load, and well-to-do peasants and kulaks forced to contribute more. The party intended all of these changes to strengthen the poorer peasants, allowing them to buy horses and other agricultural means of production and thus to increase their sown acreage, and thereby to undermine the wealthy peasants' influence over the poor.[61]

Although the new tax policies were not achieving the desired results, the Stalin leadership might have taken some solace from other reports, especially from Siberia, whose opening paragraphs indicated that the repression against "speculators" was having a "positive" effect.[62] Such upbeat reports that decorated the first page of the *svodki* were part of the ritualization and de-intellectualization of political police reports that emerged as the Stalin regime settled into power. They offered evidence for their superiors that the local political police were on board with the antikulak/antipeasant campaign. But the remainder of the reports continued to attempt to provide some genuine information, and that information revealed failure in the procurement campaign, gross excesses, general peasant discontent, and the collapse of all local order. With respect to the

Siberian "success" reported in February and March, the March summary informed the leadership that the class principle had been replaced by the *razverstka* method in which all peasants were being forced to pay the same self-tax and compelled to purchase state loans. Poor peasants who could not afford such were being subjected to beatings and other humiliations.[63] This bipolar reporting—"All is well and everything is collapsing"—demonstrated the police's efforts to work within the confines of Stalin's demand that grain be obtained "by whatever means." Yet even while singing Stalin's tune, the police had to report that the peasants, especially the poor, were being ruined.

Unable to ignore the support that the so-called kulaks were receiving from the poor, the police had to stress the "influence" that the kulaks were continuing to exert over the less prosperous.[64] This included the hiding of kulak grain by the poor, who then were allowed part of the grain. But the majority of the reports in the winter of 1928 stressed the excesses of local officials who were threatening the peasants with shooting, beating them, and seizing all grain including the next season's seed corn. According to the police, local officials were carrying out an indiscriminate assault on all the peasants. The explanation offered by the police for the refusal to meet grain quotas remained the same—the peasants were holding on to their grain because state prices were too low. Further, the peasants were determined to keep their grain in case of war, simply as a guarantee against hunger, especially as the rumor gained ground that the government was planning to depreciate the currency (*chervonets*) and confiscate grain.[65] The peasants were calling for higher grain procurement prices (1 ruble 40 kopecks for a pud of wheat and a ruble for rye) together with an increased workday for workers to drive down the price of manufactured goods.[66] Along with the now ritual reporting about kulak opposition and "terror," the police stressed that the actions of local agents in attempting to force grain from the peasants were essentially destroying the market and producing such fear among the peasants about grain confiscation that they were hiding their produce. But in an indication of the change in police analysis of peasant behavior, what had been reported in 1923–1924 as normal market conflict was now being merged into "mass disturbances" (*massovye vystupleniia*).

Signaling the approach to come, Iagoda, in a lengthy report sent to Stalin, Molotov, Kosior, Artur Artuzov, Aleksandr Smirnov, Ivan Moskvin, and G. G. Roshal', attempted to explain the failure of the grain campaign by condemning the local communists for following the lead of the backward peasantry ("tailism"—*khvostizm*) and inactivity.[67] Iagoda's reasoning became the mantra of the central authorities, who vacillated in the spring between congratulating themselves on the success of the antikulak and antispeculator campaign and condemning local authorities for "insufficient effort" in the grain collection campaign. According to the Information Department of the OGPU, "The basic reason for the lack of success in the grain collection campaign is the 'demobilized' frame of mind among workers not only in the collection organizations but also among almost all of the lower, and in particular, the district soviet apparatus."[68] But even the central OGPU could not avoid reporting that the grain campaign was producing general discontent among the peasantry directed at both the government and the party. Poor peasants who previously had supported the grain campaign were moving into opposition against the efforts to extract grain from the more prosperous because the government "has not fulfilled its promises to provision the poor with bread."[69] The Smolensk OGPU reported a poor peasant as arguing, "Why is there no bread? This clearly is the government's fault. The government doesn't care at all about the peasants; they always have their bread."[70] Another peasant was quoted: "Under the tsar we lived much better. We only paid one tax, but now we have to pay 10."[71] The poor, the Information Department explained, were suffering the most from the pressure for grain accumulation because the wealthy peasants were able to hide their grain whereas the poor were having their last bit of flour seized. Further, the kulaks were "boycotting" the poor and refusing to sell them any grain in retaliation for the poor's previous assistance in helping state agents locate "excess" grain. Local officials, confronting the horrendous impact of the grain campaign on the peasants, were refusing to take further part in the campaign, or in frustration insulting and threatening the peasants. In the summer of 1928, according to the reports of the police, the rural world was collapsing.

The state's procurement campaign was also in shambles. In a special report on the summer campaign, the Information Department advised the leadership that there had actually been little preparation for procurement. The grain collection points were not prepared to receive the grain—there were no scales, the grain elevators were in disrepair, the list went on and on.[72] State agents did not have the funds available to pay the peasants when they did bring grain to the collection points causing great disturbances. Reports continued to come from throughout the country of a lack of manufactured goods, further hindering peasant sales of grain. Preparations for fall sowing were in equally poor shape: there were no first-sort seeds, no credit for the poor, and no machines. Absolutely nothing was being done to aid the peasants.[73] And yet amidst this chaos, the central OGPU continued to make the claim that although the kulaks and the well-to-do peasants opposed procurement, the poor and the less prosperous middle peasants supported the campaign.[74] Ignoring now the reports from local agents, the central OGPU offered the Stalin leadership the image that it desired—a class-divided village where support for grain requisitioning still existed among a sizable segment of the peasantry. In the meantime the war against the peasantry proceeded at full force.

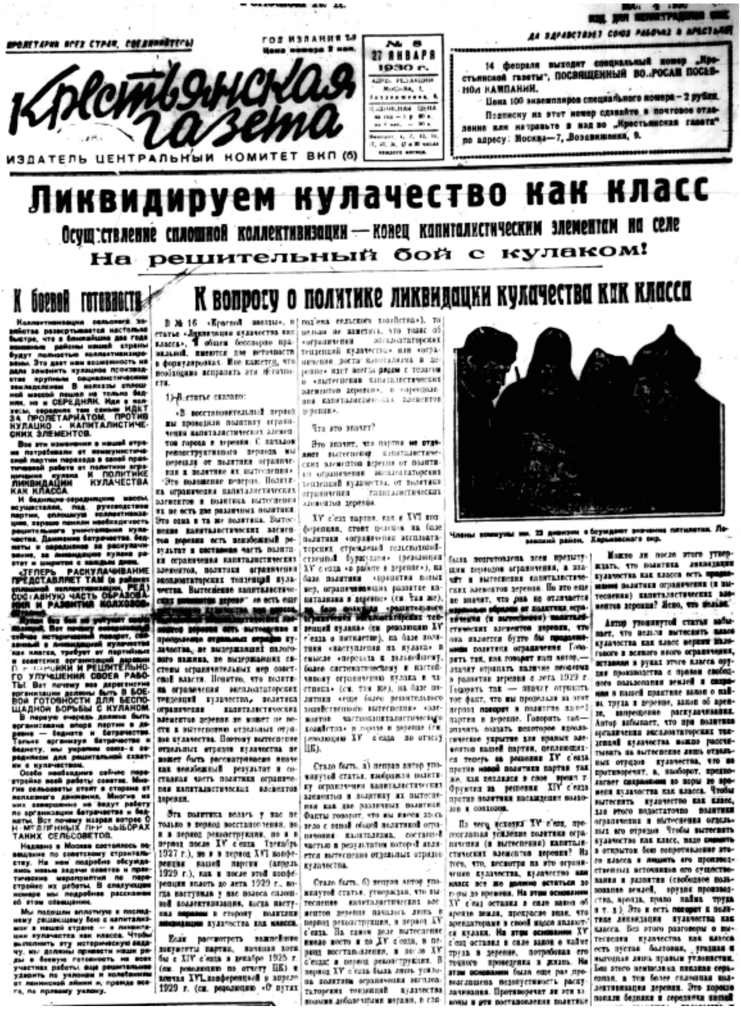
The full transformation of the Secret Police's approach to the peasantry revealed itself in the report on "The Anti-Soviet Movement in the Countryside," issued by the OGPU Secret Department in October 1928.[75] The ubiquitous kulaks were linked with every manifestation of peasant discontent dating back to the Civil War. Also the kulaks (and often the middle peasants with them) were bound to the various populist parties, especially the SRs, as part of an overall effort to overthrow the revolution. The peasants were now *the* enemy. A new category of counter-revolutionary peasant emerged in the report—the "*podkulachnik*," a term still so new to the discourse that it required explanation in the text.[76] The Peasant Union movement represented the hidden form of peasant counterrevolution. Whereas in the past the thrust of OGPU reports on the Peasant Union movement had been to depoliticize the economic grievances of the peasants, now the effort was to politicize those very grievances and to join them with émigré political activity.

As fall moved into winter 1928–1929, the OGPU expressed growing concern that the Red Army would be infected by "peasant inclination." On January 24, 1928, Iagoda dispatched a secret telegram to the Special Department of the OGPU, warning about increased peasant demands for the establishment of a peasant union and of complaints by peasants about "pressure" being put on them to meet the grain quotas as well as rumors of the reimposition of *razverstka*. Iagoda ordered the OGPU to read all correspondence from peasants to their sons in the Red Army and to confiscate letters with "clear counterrevolutionary content."[77] Although there were letters from peasants condemning "counterrevolutionaries" in the village for withholding grain, the stories told by fathers to sons were primarily of the requisitioning of all grain, including seed corn, the forced sale of all cattle in a desperate effort to meet state demands, the return to methods of War Communism, and growing hunger. In one of the mildest laments, a peasant from Tambov wrote to his son: "If you tell them that you have little grain, then they say very well, if you have little bread, then we will come ourselves and have a look, and if you are trying to wreck us, then we will seize everything and we will send you away, whatever you think, legal or not." According to a peasant in Saratovsk guberniia: "Here they are collecting arrears for seed loans—they are collecting so that everything is cleaned out. If someone does not have money, then they sell off the last cow and chicken, they even seize coats and sell all of it for arrears." From Vladikavkaz a peasant wrote: "In all the villages of the Kuban they are carrying out a registry of available grain. They are leaving only enough for sowing and sustenance, everything else they are forcing us to give up—they are using extreme violence. . . . The village soviet has ordered a permanent militia post set up. The mood amongst everyone is anxious." But for the central OGPU the only worry was that such letters would undermine support for the regime among servicemen.

As the peasants attempted to register their complaints in winter and spring of 1929 regarding the lack of any grain other than for seed and substance (and sometimes not even for that), the OGPU now registered its own complaint of a lack of forcefulness from the village soviets in compelling grain from the peasants: "Some of the workers in the village soviets are taking no measures to intensify pressure to pay debts, are weakly carrying out repressive measures against non-payers, are refusing to register the peasants who have failed to pay their taxes, and similar failures."[78] Although the reporting of "excesses" by local officials continued in the reports, the general trend had been set—failures were the products of local officials who refused to coerce the peasants sufficiently.[79] Surplus grain, according to the official line now aped by the OGPU, was there for the taking. Yet in one of the cruel ironies of the period, the local OGPU agents were reporting hunger across the Soviet Union and a lack of food in almost all regions, with examples of starvation cited.[80] In reality, the agricultural year 1928–1929 had seen an overall production shortfall of about 20 percent over the poor harvest of 1927–1928, with crop failure being particularly severe in Ukraine. The traditionally most productive agricultural zone of Ukraine (Odessa, Kherson, Nikolaev, Melitopol', Zaporozhe, Krivorog) witnessed massive peasant migrations north in search of food.[81]

As the spring and summer war for bread intensified, the central OGPU more and more simplified its "analysis" of peasant behavior by using the term "*podkulachnik*" to account for the resistance of middle or even poor peasants to forced grain expropriation. In explaining the resistance of entire villages to expropriating grain from "kulaks," the OGPU was forced to rely on "poor preparation by officials" in explaining that such expropriations supposedly were not to then extend to middle peasants. According to the OGPU, if poor peasants were properly propagandized then they would not resist the assault on the kulaks.[82]

In the meantime, the Politburo decreed that additional grain could be squeezed from the "kulaks" by having the village assembly (*skhod*) allocate quotas to households based on wealth. Those peasants not delivering the demanded grain were subjected to fines, including the *piatikratka*, equal to five times the value of the grain not supplied. In addition, recalcitrants were often subjected to "*boikot*"—being banned from purchasing at the cooperative, having blackboards attached to their homes denouncing their refusal to sell grain, having their names published in local newspapers, and being expelled from machine associations—or to state-sanctioned *samosud*.[83] In the most extreme cases, "deliberate concealers of grain" were arrested, deprived of freedom for up to three years, exiled from their villages, and suffered confiscation of their lands (fig. 5.1).[84]



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ИЗДАТЕЛЬ ЦЕНТРАЛЬНЫЙ КОМИТЕТ ВКП (б)

№ 8
27 ЯНВАРЯ
1930 г.

ДА ЗДРАВСТВУЕТ СОЮЗ РАБОЧИХ И КРЕСТЬЯН

14 февраля выходит специальный номер „Крестьянской газеты", ПОСВЯЩЕННЫЙ ВОПРОСАМ ПОСЕВНОЙ КАМПАНИИ.

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Ликвидируем кулачество как класс

Осуществление сплошной коллективизации — конец капиталистическим элементам на селе

На решительный бой с кулаком!

К боевой готовности

К вопросу о политике ликвидации кулачества как класса

Figure 5.1 "We Will Liquidate the Kulaks as a Class"
Krest'ianskaia gazeta, January 27, 1930.

As the party now moved toward Stalin's "Year of the Great Turn," with the declaration of wholesale collectivization in November 1929 and the "elimination of the kulaks as a class" the next month,[85] the OGPU had ceased to offer any unbiased analysis of the countryside. In fact, the OGPU leadership led the way in the assault on the "kulaks as a class," requesting and receiving expanded extrajudicial rights against individual peasant resisters. In October the Politburo authorized the political police to carry out "rapid methods of repression, including execution" against peasants participating in mass uprisings or committing "terrorist acts."[86] Whatever role the political police had previously played in surveilling peasant society in order to provide precise information about the situation in the countryside, specifically the peasants' attitudes toward the policies of the regime, as a means for accommodating peasant needs and adjusting rural policy had ceased. In the conceptualization of the OGPU, the kulaks (and, in truth, the peasantry as a whole with but minor exceptions) constituted now an inherently socially dangerous population, defined in sociological terms as a criminal contingent (*kontingent*).[87] Soviet rule was to be maintained by reliance on force, not on facts. And the role of the political police was to provide that force and only those "facts" that fit the party line.

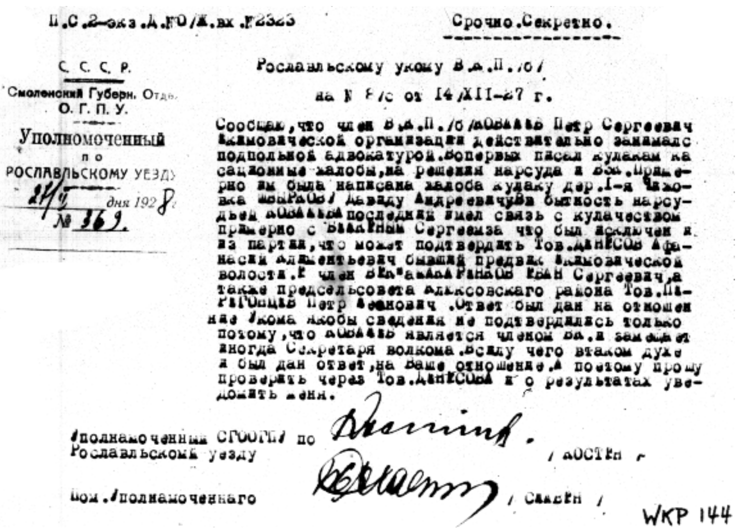
Conclusion

The wholesale collectivization drive announced at the end of 1929 marked the determination of the Stalin regime to resolve forever the "peasant question," the problem of mobilizing peasant society to provide the assets necessary for the state to pursue its objective of modernizing Russia and competing with Western Europe—a problem that had bedeviled tsarist Russia since the mid-nineteenth century as well. Accommodation with the peasantry as a means to resolve this matter had now come to an end. The collectivized farm would serve as the mechanism to control rural society, providing the state with the means, in theory, to obtain the resources (tribute) it deemed crucial to feed the cities and the army, and to export the grain needed to obtain industrial products from the West. The foundations of peasant resistance to the demands of the state—the commune (*mir*), the village gathering (*skhod*), and the market-aware peasants (*kulaks*)—would be eliminated, some as institutions, others "as a class." The peasantry, in the sense of a distinct culture that stood in opposition to the city and its drive to modernize the Soviet Union, would also be eliminated in the so-called socialist transformation of the countryside. Collectivization, the assault by urban-based Soviet power on the customary norms of village authority, ideals of social interaction, and cultural identity, was nothing short of a declaration of war.

The momentum toward wholesale collectivization had been building over the previous year. The Fifteenth Party Congress in December 1927 set collectivization as a long-term goal, at a time when only some 1 percent of peasant households were collectivized. The next Party Congress 16 months later announced a revolutionary change in plans—collectivized farms were to produce 43 percent of the marketed grain by 1932 and most of it by 1933. This required that 9.6 percent of peasant households be collectivized by the 1932–1933 economic year and 13.6 percent the following year. Just six months later, in October 1929, the 1933–1934 goal had become that for 1929–1930.[1] Regional party leaders were pushing rates even beyond these plans, which drove Moscow to press for even faster rates. The frenzy led finally to the publication in November of Stalin's "Year of the Great Turning Point" and his declaration of "*a fundamental turning point* in the development of our agriculture from small-scale and backward *individual* economy to large-scale and progressive *collectivized* agriculture, to the joint working of the land, to machine-tractor stations, to artels, collective farms, resting upon new technology, and at last, to giant collective farms, equipped with hundreds of tractors and combines."[2]

In reality, with the associated call for the elimination of the kulaks as a class, this was a battle cry. And what ensued was as violent as any civil war. Chaos reigned in the countryside as regional party organizations set out to eliminate the enemy prior to receiving any directives from Moscow.[3] By the time the Politburo attempted to provide some guidance from the meeting of a special commission that sat from January 15 to 26, Bacchanalian dekulakization, characterized essentially by looting and physical assault, had become the norm. Molotov's Commission divided the kulaks into three categories, each one to be sent into its own special circle of hell. So-called first category kulaks, deemed the greatest threat to the regime and comprising an estimated 60,000 household heads, were either to be shot or sent to special concentration camps. Their families, guilty by association, were to be stripped of all their possessions, with the supposed exception of the most basic items for survival, and sent off into internal exile under the direction of the OGPU in unsettled areas of Siberia, the Northern Region, the Urals, and Kazakhstan. Second category kulaks, set initially at some 150,000 families, were also to be expropriated and exiled to the same locations, but shooting was not ordered. Finally, the third category kulaks, a massive number of over 500,000 families, were not to suffer total expropriation, only partial, and were not to be exiled together with categories 1 and 2, but resettled outside their villages and their district (*raion*). The definition of who fits into these categories, especially category three, were broad enough to permit the "dekulakization" of almost anyone associated with the old regime (priests, former officers, etc.) or anyone who could be labeled as "counterrevolutionary." The commission set a four-month schedule for completion of the process (fig. 6.1).

Who ended up labeled a first, second, or third category kulak was in local hands, those of commissions created by the rural soviets but headed by officials from the *raion* executive committee, as well as those of organized poor peasants. And as with the rush to collectivize, local officials were not loath to increase the households to be dekulakized in a demonstration of revolutionary enthusiasm. According to a report on "excesses" in the Western province (*oblast'*) contained in the Smolensk Archive, "the representatives of the brigades of the lower village organizations believed that the greater the number of dekulakized households the greater would be the socialized means [of production] in the kolkhozes, thus in the practical carrying out of the dekulakization of kulak households they allowed the dekulakization of the households of



П.С.2-экз.Д.№0/Ж.вх.№2323

Срочно.Секретно.

С. С. С. Р.
Смоленский Губерн. Отд.
О. Г. П. У.
Уполномоченный
по
РОСЛАВЛЬСКОМУ УЕЗДУ
27/II дня 1928 г.
№ 369.

Рославльскому укому В.К.П./б/

на № 8/с от 14/XII-27 г.

Сообщаю, что член В.К.П./б/ Ковалев Петр Сергеевич Екимовичской организации действительно занимался подпольной адвокатурой. Вопервых писал кулакам кассационные жалобы, на решения нарсуда и т.д. Примерно им была написана жалоба кулаку дер. 1-я Чижовка Шарапову Давиду Андреевичу в бытность нарсудьей Ковалева последний имел связь с кулачеством примерно с [illegible] Сергеевым за что был исключен из партии, что может подтвердить Тов. Денисов Афанасий Алексеевич бывший предвик Екимовичской волости. и член ВКП/б/ [illegible] Иван Сергеевич, а также председсовета Алексовского района Тов. Парфенов Петр Афонович. Ответ был дан на отношение Укома якобы сведения не подтвердились только потому, что Ковалев является членом ВКП. и заменял иногда Секретаря волкома. В силу чего в таком духе и был дан ответ, на Ваше отношение. А поэтому прошу проверить через Тов. Денисова и о результатах уведомить меня.

Уполномоченный СГООГПУ по Рославльскому уезду /КОСТИН/

Пом. Уполномоченного /САВКИН/

WKP 144

Figure C.1 OGPU denunciation for assisting kulaks
Smolensk guberniia division of OGPU. February 27, 1928. WKP 144.

middle peasants."[4] Given this approach to the campaign, in many locations, the poor, supported by officials from the *raion* or rural soviet, had their field day, driving the relatively better off out of their homes and pillaging their property, which in many cases was simply stolen (as opposed to being provided for the benefit of the collective farm).[5] In Viazemsk area (*okrug*), the secretary of the Obkom reported that those whose name appeared "on the list" had "everything seized down to the last rag of clothes. There were cases of seizing the supper pot from the oven, taking the prepared meal, jam, and potatoes, etc. If goods were not ready and stacked up, then the property was tossed out into the courtyard, and part of it was, on the orders of the commander of the company, dispatched to the Lenin Corner and to the company's storehouse. On the orders of the commander of a group of Red Armymen it was decided for personal use to take pencils, mirrors, sewing thread, boots, trousers, and such."[6]

Stories of food being eaten on the spot ("eggs were seized and then they immediately prepared an omelet"; "the head of the kolkhoz with four others seized five pounds of honey and then immediately sat down and ate it") might at first glance seem almost comical if not simply absurd were they not combined with reports of clothes literally torn off bodies and immediately put on by the dekulakizers and other atrocities. According to a report from Smolensk *okrug,* a requisitioning team "seized from [the poor peasants] almost all of their property, including their food stuffs, leaving them not even a day's food. They seized, in addition to the cattle, their clothes, underwear, towels, shoes, dishes, flowers, violins, harmonicas, glasses, forks, and various other small items, even the wet, frozen laundry from the attic."[7] All the while the officials waved about their weapons and abused and cursed the women and their children. Furniture, manufactured cloth, guitars, anything in short of value, was carted away. Resistance to such abuses, sometimes on the part of entire villages, produced ever greater violence and maltreatment, feeding into a whirlwind of chaos.

When matters appeared to be so totally out of hand that the regime might lose any control over events in the countryside, Stalin on March 2, 1930, published his famous "Dizzy with Success" article. True to form, he placed the blame for the violence and destruction on functionaries at the lowest level while denying any central responsibility.[8] Although peasants used Stalin's denunciation of excesses as an excuse to flee the collective farms, the social and human destruction of dekulakization could not so easily be repaired.

Collectivization would resume in the fall of 1930 and would continue on throughout the 1930s. As peasants were either forced into or back into the collectives, dekulakization moved forward as well. Some 1,000,000 peasant households suffered dekulakization in one form or another. Over 1.8 million individual peasants were exiled outside their districts in just the first two years of collectivization. As no true preparations for deportation were made with respect to food, housing, clothing, or even means of transport for those who were being driven north, deaths among deportees were in the hundreds of thousands.[9]

This horrific denouement is often the starting point in describing peasant-police relations, punctuated by descriptions of horrendous torture carried out by secret policemen.[10] But as this study has demonstrated, the relationship between the political police and peasants in the years leading to collectivization is far more complex than such images would suggest. The first step in the appreciation of the evolution of police-peasant relations and in an understanding of the difficulties involved in the efforts of the political police to understand and respond to the peasants is the discard of two false beliefs concerning the peasants. The first of these is that the peasants during the 1920s were conscious of themselves as citizens, that they related to each other and to outsiders in institutional abstractions. In fact, they did not identify their social relationships in such a way. Russian peasants at the beginning of the twentieth century did not have a feeling for "freedom," or "liberty," or "justice" in their understanding of law or right (*pravo*). To the peasants of this era, law and custom were synonymous, and any act against local custom was seen by most as "illegal." The second false belief was that peasant society and the Bolshevik regime were completely separated. As was true throughout Russia's history, peasant society and government evolved together. Every peasant institution had evolved out of its relationship with the government. That did not cease with the Bolshevik Revolution. Although policemen and politicians could not formulate that relationship using modern terms, that does not mean that such a relationship did not exist.

As they had for centuries, the peasants and the Bolsheviks related to one another within the tribute collecting system. Part of this relationship was the collective responsibility of the governed. No government in Russia had truly cared how things were done in the village; the concern was that the wishes of the tribute collector were met, wishes that historically had almost always related to perceived security threats. The peasant commune was the group formed around collective responsibility, and it was with that institution that the Bolsheviks were forced to deal and whose dynamics the political police attempted to analyze. Within the *mir,* the peasants organized themselves around authority, around a boss (*vozhd'*). The basic method of dealing with authority was bribery. Thus, when we reduce the interaction between the police and the peasantry to simply a story of oppression, especially a story of the peasantry longing for some abstract freedom, we are not seeing them as they were, not seeing them within their world.

Peasants, as this study has demonstrated, were seeking in the 1920s an authority that would work in the manner that they desired, one that they could manipulate and which would somehow both satisfy all their desires and leave them alone. The modern world of "socialism" and of Soviet legality did not fit into this scheme, any more so than would have a world of "democracy" and capitalism. The peasants throughout Russia's history had revolted if the authority (*vlast'*) did not meet expectations, and if the authority did not respond with the necessary cure for the peasants' problems. Law, a limit on authority, was viewed as a weakness. This reality clearly increasingly haunted the Bolshevik regime.

Peasants were having also to deal with the forces of the market during the NEP. The modern market society that was entering the villages was destroying the peasants' identity, and was destroying the peasantry's personal relationships. The peasants on the whole had no mental mechanism to understand the new world they were being forced to enter. Thus, the conflict with the new Bolshevik regime was fundamentally an expression of disagreement with the changes in the ritual of life, an expression of disagreement with a failure on the part of the government to either protect the status quo or to fulfill the dreams of 1917. As we have seen, the peasants were especially resentful over the high taxes, high prices for manufactured goods, and low prices for agricultural products.

For the Bolsheviks the essential defect of the traditional arrangement with the peasantry was that it did not permit mobilization of power, did not permit easy bureaucratic control, did not permit modernization. Working within the traditional tribute collecting system did not allow the state to mobilize the peasantry, to make effective use of Russia's one major resource, her peasantry. Life within the village continued in the 1920s to go by habits. Peasants could not easily unite around a common issue or action. What mobilization occurred tended to be centered around an individual, a kulak. With the peasantry feeling no need to change, the government had to force the people to mobilize. The government, in order to "save" peasant society, that is, to utilize it as a force, as a resource, came to the conclusion that it had to invade traditional peasant society and modernize (destroy) it. But, as this study demonstrates, the more successful the government's modernization, the more frustrated the peasantry became.

The police reports during NEP reveal this basic continuity of Russian history. Never had the peasants loved the town. At best, a form of imagined community had existed in Russia in which the peasants imagined a holy community of true tsar and people, a community standing in opposition to the "other" of the governing elite.[11] This image resonated among Slavic peasants throughout the empire and was not peculiar to any particular geographic area. By the middle of the nineteenth century, if not earlier,[12] however, the inability of the tsar to exhibit the characteristics of the "true tsar" had shattered that imagined community. This is not surprising as the peasants of the Russian Empire and then the Soviet Union are actually best understood as part of the colonial world, not Europe, and the gentry and then the Soviet ruling elite as part of a Europeanized colonial elite. Much as the British sought to save India by transforming the subcontinent into a modern capitalist economy under a form of British law, the Bolsheviks were intent on making rural Russia into a postcapitalist, socialized world. In both cases, the inhabitants ("natives") were perceived as standing in the way of progress and therefore had to be forced aside.

Thus, the political police also were trapped within Russia's history. As I have argued before, the history of Russia, at least from the time of Peter the Great, has been the continuous, and on the whole unsuccessful, effort of elites to impose their views of "system" upon a population that was extremely hostile to such "German" concerns. Russia's history thus entails two societies that evolved in the same historical epoch and environment and in the process mutually shaped each other, but never communicated with one another, in large measure because the myths around which they organized themselves had become incomprehensible to outsiders. And yet these two cultures, almost unknowingly, continued to mold one another in a violent process of Russian social evolution. Russian elites, be they tsarist army officers, Imperial bureaucrats, radical intellectuals, Soviet political policemen, or Stalinist henchmen, deluded themselves into believing, or at least mouthing, that they could compel the Russian people into evolving along the elite's vision of progress, the most compelling of Russian (and European) myths. When confronted by those surly humans that constituted nonelite society, Russian elites tended to convince themselves that proper social evolution could be forced, if only the proper stick, and sometimes carrot, were found. Since these elites always initially desired that "the people" come voluntarily to share in the myths of the ruling elite (if for no other reason than having people mobilize themselves for their rulers' needs is by far cheaper than quartering troops on them or driving them into camps), such efforts at compelling voluntarism contained a clear but ignored logical fallacy, and were, on the whole, self-defeating.

The peasants of the NEP era on the other hand envisioned the revolution not as a step toward progress, but rather as a step in the reestablishment of their Russia, a combination of a particular type of ruler (the "peoples' tsar"), a particular people (one that excluded the landed elite and whose identity was further rooted in the institution of the village commune), and the true Orthodox religion. The "national" ideal of Russia central to the peasant definition of the revolution was a Russia without landlords, serfdom, taxes, or recruitment, a Russia of self-governing communes whose cultivators owned their land, and were ruled by "a benevolent, patriarchal monarch professing the ancient Russian faith."[13] Despite differences of geography (non-Black Soil vs. Black Soil) and the existence of social stratification within villages, a common set of "revolutionary/Russian" demands emerged during the years of revolution: repartition of the land, a "labor principle" for land utilization, and local control of life—an ending of *proizvol,* that is, of arbitrary interference in life by the government.[14]

As the police reports demonstrate, this peasant solidarity more often than not transcended divisions that were supposed to emerge as "classness" developed within the peasantry. But as Paul Gilroy has argued, traditions among groups "whose enduring jeopardy dictates that the premises of their social existence are threatened" can be the most radical.[15] The Russian peasants' awareness of their "peasantness" in the face of constant pressure to provide the surpluses demanded by the Bolsheviks within a cultural construct not of their own making ensured that almost all efforts to entice them into urban-based revolutionary politics would be perceived by the peasantry within the paradigm of mortal struggle for cultural preservation. The Bolsheviks could not create with the peasantry a "Soviet Union" because there already existed a "Russia" within peasant society, one that would be defended against elite imagining. James Scott has argued that:

> The closeness of an elite's culture to that of its peasantry depends, in large part, upon how its great tradition developed. Broadly, we may distinguish between what [McKim] Marriott calls an "indigenous" civilization that largely represents an elaboration or "dignification" of elements already present within its little tradition (e.g. India and China) and a "borrowing" civilization in which much of the elite culture is based on outside models (e.g., much of Southeast Asia).[16]

Bolshevik society represents the archetype of a borrowing civilization, if not a "borrowed" one. While the townsmen were being compelled by the Bolshevik state to change not merely their politics but also their mentalité, the Russian peasantry was engaged in a struggle to emulate their vision of Great Muscovite orthodoxies of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.[17] It was not merely "common sense" disputes over issues of taxes, prices, privileges, and interference in local affairs that motivated peasant dissatisfaction. The attempt to turn the party and especially its leader into a Messiah who no longer was required to revere the "little tradition" culture of the Russian peasantry, the Muscovite vision of *Rus'*, but rather was empowered to *replace* tradition with borrowings from the infidel West, deprived the Bolsheviks of the right, in the minds of most of the peasantry, to lay claim to legitimacy. What emerges from the police reports is not that the NEP village was the locus of a conflict between peasant common sense and Bolshevik stupidity; it was, instead, the scene of a mythic struggle for the soul of the Russian people, at least as that was understood by the peasantry.

In the past century, the peasants had been able to maintain their own definition of community in the face of elite efforts to institute a new construction of the iconography of rulership. They succeeded because despite the economic disruptions that afflicted the village, the *mir* offered successful resistance to cultural penetration by elites.[18] While it was true that the peasants, like any colonized people, could not be readily coerced into believing, with sufficient violence they could be made to obey.[19] The secret police and the special military units sent to destroy the commune in a process labeled collectivization, did exactly that.

As Dzerzhinskii's and other police reports cited in this study demonstrate, that denouement was not foreordained. The police initially did not respond simply with the gun; rather, they listened to peasant voices. The police argued that accommodation was possible, and that the peasants could be convinced to work within the Bolshevik construct of state and society. With appropriate attention to the complaints being registered by the peasantry, grain could be obtained, provided there was some appreciation for what peasant society defined as "right and natural," that is, for the peasants' understanding of justice. The political police, especially at the local level, appear thus to have operated within an image of the peasants as possessors of the "divided soul" articulated by Marx and Lenin: existing within an ambiguous class position as simultaneously part laborer and part owner. One part of the peasant tended, therefore, toward the path of petty-bourgeois property, whereas the other tended toward that of proletarian socialism. An informed response to peasant needs and desires, based on careful surveillance, the police argued, could determine which path was chosen.

This partial acceptance of the Bolshevik regime, a deal the peasants had previously offered to late tsardom, one that allowed the peasants to recognize the Soviet state while simultaneously objecting to the behavior of its local agents, required constant negotiation. But as has been argued, the deal provided a basis for social evolution. In the period prior to Lenin's death, the Bolshevik regime made use of the information coming from the political police to modify policy toward the countryside. One sees this most clearly in the change from confiscation to *razverstka*, and from *razverstka* to a single tax, and then to the modification of the tax levy to more closely parallel peasant constructs of what was "right" to pay. This effort at accommodating peasant society was largely founded on the image of the peasantry presented to the party leadership in the police *svodki,* an image of rational, if cantankerous, actors rather than incorrigible enemies.

The Face to the Countryside campaign, however, undermined this compromise. The response of the "well-to-do" peasants during the drought and famine of 1924, their efforts to turn the forces of the market against the regime and to obtain higher prices for their grain and to refuse to market if prices were not satisfactory, and especially their attempt to utilize the electoral campaigns of 1924–1925 to reduce communist influence within the rural soviets, efforts that to the dismay of the police involved not simply the wealthiest peasants but also the poor in many instances, shook the faith of the OGPU in the ability to work a deal with the peasantry. Local police agents increasingly saw themselves engaged in a war with the peasantry over control of grain and over domination of local organs of power—their reports from the countryside thus reflected this change in their perception of the local, not initially a response to pressure from the central authorities.[20] The peasants as a whole were depicted increasingly as a unified mass dominated by kulaks, a mass whose thoughts and actions could not be distinguished from those of the kulaks, this in spite of the theory that the 1929 procurement campaign was to be based on support from the poor peasants against the kulaks. The only solution, thus, was to break the entire peasantry. Whereas earlier the police had concentrated on the "objective" economic factors influencing peasant behavior, factors that the party could address, increasingly the police argued that the kulaks controlled the thinking, and behavior, of the entire village. No longer was the kulak merely one of a number of factors shaping the peasant world and its relationship to the Soviet state. To the detriment of all, the kulak and the peasantry were becoming one.

By 1925, as we have seen, the idea of preventative policing (*profilakticheskaia rabota*) had not yet come to dominate the political police's approach to the peasantry. But by this date the fundamental reconceptualization of the peasantry as a whole as a criminal *contingent* had begun. The declaration of war on not merely the prosperous but, in effect, on most of the peasantry would not be made until 1929, but the discourse and associated mental construct of a unified socially dangerous group was being finalized. Earlier justifications for measures to protect "the peasantry" from exploiters soon would become rationalizations for an all out assault on peasant culture.

What is often missing from this story, however, is peasant agency. But agency, one most always bear in mind, can well lead to tragedy. While the police and the party attempted to determine their approach to the peasantry, so too did the peasants wrestle with how they would confront the new regime. As noted above, the peasants in the early years of the NEP were on the whole seeking a compromise, seeing the relations of power following the war, the Civil War, and horrendous famine of 1921–1922, not in their favor. The War Scare of 1927 altered the peasants' equation. The initial response to the drumbeat of war was hoarding. Peasants followed with resigning from the Pioneers and the Komsomol. The rumors of war were soon coupled with threats of peasants uprising against the communists. Peasant meetings led to declarations of refusal to fight if war began. By summer1927, police reports included peasant threats to eliminate the communists themselves. Meetings in August called to produce pledges to defend the Soviet Union instead generated statements of resistance to the idea of war. In the meantime, peasants withheld grain from the market. The negative response of the peasants to the Jubilee Manifesto on the tenth anniversary of the revolution gave warning of impending conflict. By fall 1927 a growing number of peasants, seeing the regime now as weak, were expressing the desire for a showdown with the regime. The traditional peasant leadership and the OGPU had finally reached an agreement: violence would resolve the impasse.

Nikolai Bukharin, despite his own fears of kulak power and cultural domination by the rural elite, would attempt to prevent this tragedy and to lead the government in accepting the earlier give and take with the peasantry with its promise of gradually but steadily winning more grain from the countryside. Faced with opposition from both the countryside and the city, he would fail. Stalin and his agents would triumph with the declaration of wholesale collectivization in November 1929 and the "elimination of the kulaks as a class" in December; the peasants would be repressed, although further concessions would still be required.[21] Even with the compromises that eventually came to define collectivization, the peasants', as well as many Bolsheviks', revolution would nonetheless perish within the whirlwind of collectivization and rapid industrialization wherein the peasants' hearts were no longer to be won over, merely their bodies controlled. The tempering of the Russian people would begin by the men of steel, who, lacking the force of faith, could rely solely on force.

This work has demonstrated, however, that end was not fated. The organization that, for much of the NEP, led the charge for a rational approach to the peasantry, and further sought through its surveillance activities not only to transform the peasantry but also to revolutionize the governing of the peasantry and thereby the very nature of the state, was the Cheka/OGPU. The war for bread, and the threat of war from abroad, combined to destroy the political police's faith in the ability to produce a workable compromise that would allow the village and the city to labor in tandem. War thus came to the countryside, and peasant society succumbed.

Notes

Introduction

1. Arthur Koestler, *Darkness at Noon* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1941), 183.
2. Teodor Shanin, *The Awkward Class; Political Sociology of Peasantry in a Developing Society: Russia 1910–1925* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972); and idem, *The Roots of Otherness: Russia's Turn of Century* 2 vols. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985–1986).
3. James W. Heinzen, *Inventing a Soviet Countryside: State Power and the Transformation of Rural Russia, 1917–1929* (Pittsburg: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2004), argues that specialists working in the villages for the Commissariat of Agriculture saw the peasants in the terms I have presented from the police, but does not see the evolution in OGPU interpretation of peasant behavior and of OGPU reporting.
4. Tracy McDonald, "Face to Face with the Peasant: Village and State in Russia, 1921–1930," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Toronto, 2003), 274.
5. Edward Hallett Carr, *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926* (New York: Macmillan, 1958), 2: 362.
6. Paul Hagenloh, *Stalin's Police: Public Order and Mass Repression in the USSR, 1926–1941* (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press; and Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 2009).
7. Tracy McDonald, "A Peasant Rebellion in Stalin's Russia: The Pitelinskii Uprising, Riazan 1930," *Journal of Social History* 35, no. 1 (2001):125–146.
8. Merle Fainsod, *Smolensk under Soviet Rule* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1958), 156; Volodomyr Semystiaha, "The Role and Place of Secret Collaborators in the Informational Activity of the GPU-NKVD in the 1920s and 1930s," *Cahiers du Monde russe* 42, nos. 2–4 (2001): 237–238.

9. Peter Holquist, "'Information Is the Alpha and Omega of Our Work': Bolshevik Surveillance in Its Pan-European Context," *The Journal of Modern History* 69, no. 3 (1997): 415–450.
10. "Surveillance," Holquist observes, "was not a passive, observational endeavor; it was an active, constructivist one":Ibid., 449. On biases within these reports see Stuart Finkel, "An Intensification of Vigilance: Recent Perspectives on the Institutional History of the Soviet Security Apparatus in the 1920s," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 5, no. 2 (2004): 315–317; D'Ann R. Penner, "Ports of Access into the Mental and Social Worlds of Don Villagers in the 1920s and 1930s," *Cahiers du Monde russe* 40, nos. 1–2 (1999): 174–178; V. S. Izmozik, *Glaza i ushi rezhima: Gosudarstvennyi politicheskii kontrol'*za naseleniem Rossii v 1918–1928 godakh (St. Petersburg: Izd-vo Sankt-Peterburgskogo universiteta ekonomiki i finansov, 1995), 104–138.

Chapter 1

1. Iu. A. Reent, *Istoriia pravookhranitel'nykh organov: politseiskie i tiuremnye struktury Rossii* (Riazan: Akademiia prava i upravleniia Miniusta Rossii, 2002), 13–14.
2. The Preobrazhenskii Prikaz ran the secret police, the guards, and recruitment. Unlike other prikazy, this one exercised authority over the whole country.
3. Reent, *Istoriia pravookhranitel'nykh organov*, 28–29; *Polnoe sobranie zakonov rossiiskoi imperii s 1649 goda* (hereafter *PSZ*), 207 vols. (St. Petersburg: V tipografii 2 otdeleniia sobstvennoi Ego Imp. Velichestva kantseliarii, 1830–1916), 1st series, vol. 5, nos. 3202, 3203.
4. PSZ, vol. 20, No. 14392 (November 7, 1775).
5. Reent, *Istoriia pravookhranitel'nykh organov*, 31.
6. W. F. Reddaway, ed., *Documents of Catherine the Great: The Correspondence with Voltaire and the Instruction of 1767, in the English Text of 1768* (Cambridge: The University Press, 1931).
7. Marc Raeff, "The Well-Ordered Police State and the Development of Modernity in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Europe: An Attempt at a Comparative Approach," *American Historical Review* 80, no. 5 (1975): 1225.
8. Reent, *Istoriia pravookhranitel'nykh organov*, 34.
9. Viktor Petrovich Sal'nikov, ed., *Ministerstvo vnutrennikh del Rossii 1802–2002: istoricheskikh ocherk v 2-kh tomakh.* (St. Petrsburg: Fond "Universitet", 2002), 2: 5.

10. Reent, *Istoriia pravookhranitel'nykh organov*, 37–39.
11. *Polnoe sobranie zakonov Rossiiskoi Imperii,* vol. 39, 2d ser., 1864 (St. Petersburg, 1867).
12. Alexander K. Afanasev, "Jurors and Jury Trials in Imperial Russia, 1866–1885," in *Russia's Great Reforms, 1855–1881*, eds. Ben Eklof, John Bushnell, and Larissa Zakharova (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994).
13. Reent, *Istoriia pravookhranitel'nykh organov*, 41–45.
14. Ibid., 46.
15. Ibid., 47–51.
16. Sal'nikov, ed., *Ministerstvo vnutrennikh del Rossii 1802–2002*, 12–96.
17. Reent, *Istoriia pravookhranitel'nykh organov*, 53.
18. Ibid., 55.
19. Ibid., 70–71.
20. Ibid., 58–59.
21. Sal'nikov, ed., *Ministerstvo vnutrennikh del Rossii 1802–2002*, 64–69; Peter Solomon, ed., *Reforming Justice in Russia, 1864–1996: Power, Culture, and the Limits of Legal Order* (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1997), esp. 21–130; Peter Czap, "Peasant Class Courts and Peasant Customary Justice in Russia, 1861–1912," *Journal of Social History* 1, no. 2 (1967): 149–178; Stephen Frank, "Popular Justice, Community and Culture among the Russian Peasantry, 1870–1900," *The Russian Review* 46 (1987): 239–265; Cathy A. Frierson, "Rural Justice in Public Opinion: The Volost' Court Debate, 1861–1912," *Slavonic and East European Review* 64 (1986): 526–545; Joan Neuberger, "Popular Legal Cultures: The St. Petersburg *Mirovoi Sud*," in *Russia's Great Reforms, 1855–1881*, 231–246.
22. Dmitrii Liukshin, "Behind the Façade of the Revolution: The Psychology and Psychopathology of Peasant Unrest in Early Twentieth-Century Russia: A Case Study of the *Kazanskaia* Guberniia," *The Soviet and Post-Soviet Review* 27, nos. 1–3 (2000): 169.
23. Reent, *Istoriia pravookhranitel'nykh organov*, 75.
24. A. V. Borisov, A. N. Dugin, A. Ia. Malygin, et al., *Politsiia i militsiia Rossii: Stranitsy istorii* (Moscow: Nauka, 1995), 95–96.
25. V. F. Nekrasov, et al., *Organyi voiska MVD Rossii. Kratkii istoricheskii ocherk* (Moscow: Ob"edinennaia redaktsiia MVD Rossii, 1996), 183–185.
26. Neil Weissman, "Policing the NEP Countryside," in *Russia in the Era of NEP: Explorations in Soviet Society and Culture*, eds. Sheila Fitzpatrick, Alexander Rabinowitch, and Richard Stites (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991), 174.

27. Sal'nikov, ed., *Ministerstvo vnutrennikh del Rossii 1802–2002*, 151.
28. Reent, *Istoriia pravookhranitel'nykh organov*, 83–85.
29. Sal'nikov, ed., *Ministerstvo vnutrennikh del Rossii 1802–2002*, 151.
30. Ibid., 152–153.
31. Weissman, "Policing the NEP Countryside," 176.
32. Iz operativno-informatsionnykh svodok sekretno-operativnogo upravleniia VChK za 9 marta 1921 g., 9 marta 1921 g., in A. Berelovich and V. Danilov, eds., *Sovetskaia derevnia glazami VChK-OGPU-NKVD, 1918–1939: Dokumenty i materialyv 4-kh tomakh* (Moscow: ROSSPĖN,1998–2005), 1: 386–387 (Hereafter, *SDG1*).
33. Sal'nikov, ed., *Ministerstvo vnutrennikh del Rossii 1802–2002*, 161–169.
34. On the fluidity of peasant economic status ("poor, middle, prosperous") and its relationship above all to the life cycle and children, see Shanin, *The Roots of Otherness: Russia's Turn of Century* 2 vols. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985–1986).
35. Dorothy Atkinson, *The End of the Russian Land Commune* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1983); Liukshin, "Behind the Façade of the Revolution," 175–178; Corinne Gaudin, *Ruling Peasants: Village and State in Late Imperial Russia* (DeKalb, Illinois, Northern Illinois University Press, 2007).
36. Orlando Figes, *Peasant Russia, Civil War: The Volga Countryside in the Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 61–69. On the tension between veterans as well as *otkhodniki* fleeing unemployment and hunger in cities and traditional village elders, see David L. Hoffmann, "Land, Freedom, and Discontent: Russian Peasants of the Central Industrial Region Prior to Collectivisation," *Europe-Asia Studies* 46, No. 4 (1994): 637–648.
37. Lars T. Lih, *Bread and Authority in Russia, 1914–1921* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990).
38. On these efforts in Right-Bank Ukraine, see Graham Tan, "Transformation versus Tradition: Agrarian Policy and Government-Peasant Relations in Right-Bank Ukraine, 1920–1923," *Europe-Asia Studies* 52, no. 5 (2000): 915–937.
39. Lih, *Bread and Authority*, 131–148.
40. Ibid., 131–198.
41. Welcoming address to the First All-Russian Congress of Militia Workers, 1922, quoted in Weissman, "Policing the NEP Countryside," 177.
42. Ibid., 177–179; Tracy McDonald, "Face to Face with the Peasant: Village and State in Russia, 1921–1930," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Toronto, 2003), 40–58.

43. George Lin, "Fighting in Vain: NKVD RSFSR in the 1920s" (Ph.D. dissertation, Stanford University, 1997), 67–68.
44. Reent, *Istoriia pravookhranitel'nykh organov*, 103.
45. Weissman, "Policing the NEP Countryside," 181.
46. Paul Mark Hagenloh, "Police, Crime, and Public Order in Stalin's Russia, 1930–1941" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Texas at Austin, 1999), 24.
47. The political (secret) police operated under a variety of names during the early years of the Bolshevik regime. In 1922 the Cheka was officially disbanded and the GPU formed in February of that year. In summer of 1923, the GPU was renamed the OGPU.
48. Hagenloh, "Police, Crime, and Public Order," 44–45, 61.
49. Lin, "Fighting in Vain," 11–69; quotation, 47.
50. Lin, "Fighting in Vain," 68.
51. According to Nicholas Werth, "L'OGPU en 1924: Radiographie d'une institution à son niveau d'étiage," *Cahiers du monde russe* 42, nos. 2–4 (2001): 411–413, in 1924, more than 20 percent of the total OGPU force was located in the Moscow region. Much of the remaining force was concentrated in Leningrad and in Ukraine.
52. Volodomyr Semystiaha, "The Role and Place of Secret Collaborators in the Informational Activity of the GPU-NKVD in the 1920s and 1930s," *Cahiers du Monde russe* 42, nos. 2–4 (2001): 237–238.
53. Hugh D. Hudson, Jr., "Shaping Peasant Political Discourse during the New Economic Policy: The Newspaper *Krest'ianskaia gazeta* and the Case of 'Vladimir Ia.'," *Journal of Social History* 36, no. 2 (2002): 303–317; Idem, "Bridging the Russian Cultural Gap: Language and Culture Wars in the Creation of a Soviet Peasant Press," *American Journalism* 21, no. 1 (2004): 13–36.
54. In addition to these informers, the political police often had to rely on information provided not only by the local police, but also by the leaders of village soviets and the volost executive committees. A. Berelovich and V. Danilov, "Dokumenty VChK-OGPU-NKVD o sovetskoi derevne (1918–1939 gg.), in *SDG1*, 9–10; V. K. Vinogradov, "Informatsionnye materialy OGPU za 1923–1929 gg.," in A. Berelovich and V. Danilov, eds., *Sovetskaia derevnia glazami VChK-OGPU-NKVD, 1918–1939: Dokumenty i materialyv 4-kh tomakh* (Moscow, 1998–2005), 2: 30–31 (Hereafter, *SDG2*).
55. Viktor Danilov and Alexis Berelowitch, "Les documents de la VČK-OGPU-NKVD sur la campagne sovietique, 1918–1937," *Cahiers du Monde russe* 35, no. 3 (1994): 633–682;Vladimir Brovkin, *Russia after Lenin: Politics, Culture and Society, 1921–1929* (New York: Routledge,

1998), 58–60; V. Danilov, N. Vert, and A. Berelovich, "Sovetskaia derevnia 1923–1929 gg. po informatsionnym dokumentam OGPU (Vvedenie)," introduction to *SDG2*, 7–9; Vinogradov, "Informatsionnye materialy OGPU za 1923–1929 gg.," 25–27; A. M. Plekhanov, *VChK-OGPU: Otechestvennye organy gosudarstvennoi bezopastnosti v period novoi ekonomicheskoi politika. 1921–1928* (Moscow: Kuchkovo pole, 2006), 480–488.

56. Cathy A. Frierson, *Peasant Icons: Representations of Rural People in Late Nineteenth-Century Russia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993); Yanni Kotsonis, *Making Peasants Backward: Agricultural Cooperatives and the Agrarian Question in Russia, 1861–1914* (New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1999).
57. On the origins of Soviet surveillance and its relationship to earlier tsarist efforts and well as to pan-European efforts at obtaining precise knowledge of subjects, see Peter Holquist, "'Information Is the Alpha and Omega of Our Work': Bolshevik Surveillance in Its Pan-European Context," *The Journal of Modern History* 69, no. 3 (1997): 415–450.

Chapter 2

1. As late as spring 1921, the police were reporting that most of Samara guberniia was enveloped in peasant uprisings: Iz operativno-informatsionnykh svodok sekretno-opertivnogo upravleniia VChK za 9 marta 1921 g., 9 marta 1921 g., in *SDG1*, 387.
2. G. Dobronozhenko, "Krest'ianstvo i gosudarstvennaia politika v derevne v 1920-e gody: izmeneniia v politicheskikh nastroeniiakh severnogo krest'ianstva," in G. F. Dobronozhenko, compiler, *VChK-OGPU o politicheskikh nastroeniiakh severnogo krest'ianstva, 1921–1927 gody (Po materialam informatsionnykh svodok VChK-OGPU)* (Syktyvkar: Syktyvkarskii un-t, 1995), 5.
3. Lars T. Lih, "Bolshevik Razverstka and War Communism," *Slavic Review* 45, no. 4 (1986): 673–688.
4. Iz operativno-informatsionnykh svodok sekretno-operativnogo upravleniia VChK No. 66 za 15 marta 1921 g., 15 marta 1921, in *SDG1*, 392.
5. Iz operativno-informatsionnykh svodok sekretno-operativnogo upravleniia VChK za 1 aprelia 1921 g., 2 aprelia 1921, in *SDG1*, 401.
6. The decree was issued by Sovnarkom on March 28, 1921: "O razreshenii svobodnogo obmena, prodazhi pokupki khlebnykh ii khlebofurazhnykh produktov, kartofelia i sena v riade gubernii RSFSR,"

cited in *SDG1*, 765, note 203; Lih, "Bolshevik Razverstka and War Communism," 673–688, argues that the legalization took place in the fall.

7. Iz operativno-informatsionnykh svodok sekretno-operativnogo upravleniia VChK za 2 i 3 aprelia 1921 g., 4 aprelia 1921 g., in *SDG1*, 403.
8. Informatsionna svodka Severo-Dvinskoi Chrezvychainoi Komissii za oktiabr' mesiats 1921 g., in Dobronozhenko, *VChK-OGPU*, 24.
9. On market manipulation see the report on Stavropol guberniia, Iz operativno-informatsionnykh svodok sekretno-operativnogo upravleniia VChK za 5 maia 1921 g., 6 maia 1921 g., in *SDG1*, 423.
10. Iz operativno-informatsionnykh svodok sekretno-operativnogo upravleniia VChK za 10 maia 1921 g., 11 maia 1921 g., in *SDG1*, 427.
11. Iz operativno-informatsionnykh svodok sekretno-operativnogo upravleniia VChK za 11 maia 1921 g., 12 maia 1921 g., in *SDG1*, 431.
12. Iz operativno-informatsionnykh svodok sekretno-operativnogo upravleniia VChK za 11 maia 1921 g., 12 maia 1921 g., in *SDG1*, 430.
13. Iz operativno-informatsionnykh svodok sekretno-operativnogo upravleniia VChK No. 41 za 17 maia 1921 g., 18 maia 1921 g.; Iz operativno-informatsionnykh svodok sekretno-operativnogo upravleniia VChK No. 47 za 24 maia 1921 g., 25 maia 1921 g.; in *SDG1*, 435, 442.
14. Iz operativno-informatsionnykh svodok sekretno-operativnogo upravleniia VChK No. 48 za 25 maia 1921 g., 26 maia 1921 g.; Iz operativno-informatsionnykh svodok sekretno-operativnogo upravleniia VChK No. 50 za 27 maia 1921 g., 28 maia 1921 g.; in *SDG1*, 442–443, 445.
15. Iz operativno-informatsionnykh svodok sekretno-operativnogo upravleniia VChK No. 55 za 2 i 3 iiunia 1921 g., 4 iiunia 1921 g., *SDG1*, p. 448.
16. Iz gosinfsvodok informatsionnogo otdela VChK No. 13 (69) za 21 iiunia 1921 g., 22 iiunia 1921 g.; Iz gosinfsvodok informatsionnogo otdela VChK No. 28 (84) za 8 iiulia 1921 g., 9 iiulia 1921 g., in *SDG1*, 457, 464. On the significance of the horse for the peasant economy see McDonald, "Face to Face," 195–222.
17. Iz gosinfsvodok informatsionnogo otdela VChK No. 17 (255) za 21 ianvaria 1922 g., 23 ianvaria 1922 g., in *SDG1*, 562. In 1922, according to V. Danilov, *Sovetskaia dokolkhoznaia derevnia: naselenie, zemlepol'zovanie, khoziaistvo* (Moscow: Nauka, 1977), 298, in 1922 some 37 percent of all peasant households in the Russian Federation lacked any draft animal whatsoever.

18. Iz gosinfsvodok informatsionnogo otdela VChK No. 35 (91) za 16 i 17 iiulia 1921 g., 18 iiulia 1921 g., in *SDG1*, 468.
19. V. Tsypin, *Uchebnik dlia pravoslavnykh dukhovnykh seminarii* (Moscow: "Khronika," 1994), chap. 3, quoted in Dokumenty Patriarshei kantseliarii 1926–1927 godov. http://www.sedmitza.ru/index.html?sid=736&did=37905&p_comment=history.
20. Iz gosinfsvodok informatsionnogo otdela VChK No. 51 (107) za 4 avgusta 1921 g., 5 avgusta 1921 g., in *SDG1*, 477–478. On the simultaneous confiscation of church valuables allegedly for aid to the starving, see M. N. Petrov, *VChK-OGPU: pervoe desiatiletie (na materialakh Severo-Zapada Rossii)* (Novgorod: NovGU im. Iaroslava Mudrogo, 1995), 129–134.
21. Charles M. Edmondson, "The Politics of Hunger: The Soviet Response to Famine, 1921," *Soviet Studies* 29, no. 4 (1977): 513–514. Edmondson attempts to argue that the Soviet government intentionally elected to ignore information on the famine as part of a policy of minimizing political risk at all costs. The evidence from the Cheka *svodki* does not support such a conclusion.
22. Iz gosinfsvodok informatsionnogo otdela VChK No. 52 (108) za 5 avgusta 1921 g., 6 avgusta 1921 g., in *SDG1*, 479; Iz gosinfsvodok informatsionnogo otdela VChK No. 66 (122) za 23 avgusta 1921 g., 24 avgusta 1921 g., in *SDG1*, 485.
23. Svodka PP VChK Povolzh'ia, No. 1, 15 Avgusta [1921 g.], quoted in Iz gosinfsvodok informatsionnogo otdela VChK No. 66 (122) za 23 avgusta 1921 g., 24 avgusta 1921 g., in *SDG1*, 486.
24. Iz gosinfsvodok informatsionnogo otdela VChK No. 95 za 25 sentiabria 1921 g., 26 sentiabria 1921 g., in *SDG1*, 500.
25. Iz gosinfsvodok informatsionnogo otdela VChK No. 177 (236) za 28 dekabria 1921 g., 29 dekabria 1921 g.; No. 9 (247) za 11 ianvaria 1922 g., 12 ianvaria 1922 g.; No. 17 (255) za 21 iavaria 1922 g., 23 ianvaria 1922 g., in *SDG1*, 550, 555, 562.
26. Iz gosinfsvodok informatsionnogo otdela VChK No. 159 (218) za 19 dekabria 1921 g., 8 dekabria 1921 g., in *SDG1*, 541. Nonetheless a report of April 24, 1922, from Cheliabinsk guberniia cast the ARA in a different light, accusing the local representative of the ARA of having agitated for the election of members of the Black Hundreds to the local village soviet: Iz gosinfsvodok informatsionnogo otdela VChK No. 45 (309) za 24 aprelia 1922 g., 25 aprelia 1922 g., in *SDG1*, 610. Meanwhile, the central leadership of the OGPU was busy investigating and arresting Soviets, including leading members of the All-Russian Famine Relief Committee, whom it claimed were

using famine relief as a means to undermine Soviet power: Plekhanov, *VCkK-OGPU*, 497–500.

27. Iz gosinfsvodok informatsionnogo otdela VChK No. 11 (249) za 13 ianvaria 1922 g., 14 ianvaria 1922 g.; No. 19 (257) za 24 ianvaria 1922 g., 25 ianvaria 1922g, in *SDG1*, 557, 565.
28. Iz gosinfsvodok informatsionnogo otdela VChK No. 127 (182) za 28 oktiabria 1921 g., 29 oktiabria 1921 g., in *SDG1*, 518.
29. Iz gosinfsvodok informatsionnogo otdela VChK No. 169 (228) za 19 dekabria 1921 g., 20 dekabria 1921 g., in *SDG1*, 546.
30. Iz gosinfsvodok informatsionnogo otdela VChK No. 177 (236) za 28 dekabria 1921 g., 29 dekabria 1921 g., in *SDG1*, 550.
31. Iz gosinfsvodok informatsionnogo otdela VChK No. 19 (257) za 24 ianvaria 1922 g., 25 ianvaria 1922 g., in *SDG1*, 565.
32. Omskaia gub., Gosinfsvodka, No. 50, 14 Noiabria [1922 g.], in *SDG2*, 57.
33. Iz gosinfsvodok informatsionnogo otdela VChK No. 37 (274) za 14 fevralia 1922 g., 15 fevralia 1922 g., in *SDG1*, 573.
34. Gosinfsvodka Komi Obotdela Gospolitupravleniia N 71 ot oktiabria 1922 g., in Dobronozhenko, *VChK-OGPU*, 42–43.
35. Karel'skaia trudkommuna, Gosinfsvodka, No. 376, 21 ianvaria [1923 g.]; Chuvashskaia oblast'., Gosinfsvodka, No. 22, 22 aprelia [1923 g.], in *SDG2*, 68, 99.
36. Vologodskaia gub., Gosinfsvodka, No. 174, 19 ianvaria [1923 g.], in *SDG2*, 67.
37. Periodicheskii biulleten' Oblastnoi Chezvychainoi Komissii Avtonomnoi Oblasti Komi noiabr' 1922 g. in Dobronozhenko, *VChK-OGPU*, 43–44; Orlovskaia gub., Gosinfsvodka, No. 38, 22 sentiabria [1923 g.], in *SDG2*, 142.
38. Iz gosinfsvodok informatsionnogo otdela VChK No. 83 (357) za 9 iiunia 1922 g., 10 iiunia 1922 g., in *SDG1*, 641. The police were able to locate peasants in Perm guberniia attending a nonparty meeting who passed a resolution calling for severe punishment of the SRs; but these peasants clearly did not suffer from the "lack of information" that the police used to explain the passivity of other peasants: Iz gosinfsvodok informatsionnogo otdela VChK No. 105 (378) za 6 iiulia 1922 g., 7 iiulia 1922 g., in *SDG1*, 665.
39. Informatsionnyi doklad RKP o politicheskom polozhenii Arkhgubernii po sostoianiiu na 12 avgusta 1922 g., in Dobronozhenko, *VChK-OGPU*, 37.
40. Gosinfsvodka Komi Obotdela Gospolitupravleniia N 71 ot oktiabria 1922 g., in Dobronozhenko, *VChK-OGPU*, 43; Vologodskaia gub.,

Gosinfsvodka, No. 444, 16 fevralia [1923 g.], in *SDG2*, 74. Peasants prior to 1924 could pay the tax partially in kind; in 1924–1925 it became a mandatory money tax.

41. Iz gosinfsvodok informatsionnogo otdela VChK No. 137 (192) za 9 noiabria 1921 g., 10 noiabria 1921 g., in *SDG1*, 528; Iz gosinfsvodok informatsionnogo otdela VChK No. 146 (203) za 19 noiabria 1921 g., ne ranee 19 noiabria 1921 g., in *SDG1*, 535.
42. Obzor politiko-ekonomicheskogo sostoianii SSSR za iiul', avgust i polovinu sentiabria 1923 g., Sentiabria 1923 g., in G. N. Sevost'ianov, et al., eds., *"Sovershenno sekretno": Lubianka—Stalinu o polozhenii v strane (1922–1934 gg.)* (Moscow: Institut rossiiskoi istorii RAN, 2001–2008), 1: 911–914.
43. Riazanskaia gub., Gosinfsvodka, No. 1918, 7 maia [1923 g.], in *SDG2*, 101.
44. Irkutskaia gub., Gosinfsvodka, No. 18, 8 maia [1923 g.], in *SDG2*, 106–107.
45. A pud equals approximately 36 pounds.
46. Gorrespublika, Gosinfsvodka, No. 26, 4 avgusta [1923 g.], in *SDG2*, 131. On the disorganization within Narkomzem and its lack of resources at this time, see Markus Wehner, "The Soft Line on Agriculture: The Case of *Narkomzem* and its Specialists, 1921–27," in Judith Pallot, ed. *Transforming Peasants: Society, State and the Peasantry, 1861–1930. Selected Papers from the Fifth World Congress of Central and East European Studies, Warsaw, 1995* (New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1998), 210–237.
47. Gorskaia respublika, Gosinfsvodka, No. 29, 25 avgusta [1923 g.], in *SDG2*, 137.
48. Obzor politiko-ekonomicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za aprel'-mai 1923g, 16 iiulia 1923 g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 1: 869.
49. Obzor politiko-ekonomicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za iiul', avgust i polovinu sentiabria 1923 g., Sentiabr' 1923 g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 1: 911–914.
50. Ural'skaia gub., Gosinfsvodka, No. 42, 10 dekabria [1923 g.], in *SDG2*, 163.
51. Gosudarstvennaia informatsionnaia svodka N 41 Zyrobotdela GPU na 24 maia 1922 g., in Dobronozhenko, *VChK-OGPU*, 32.
52. Dvukhnedel'naia informatsionnaia svodka N 13 Severo-Dvinskoi Gubernskoi Chrezvychainoi Komissii za vremia s 15 iiulia po 1 avgusta 1921 g., in Dobronozhenko, *VChK-OGPU*, 19.

53. Vypiska iz dvukhnedel'noi informatsionnoi svodki Mezenskogo Pogranichnogo Politicheskogo Biuro za vremia s 9 po 23 sentiabria 1921 g., in Dobronozhenko, *VChK-OGPU*, 23.
54. Dvukhnedel'naia informatsionnaia svodka N 1 Komi Oblastnoi Chrezvychainnoi Komissii za period s 1 po 15 ianvaria 1922 g., in Dobronozhenko, *VChK-OGPU*, 27–28; Informatsionnaia svodka N 4 Oblastnoi Transportnoi Chrezvychainoi Komissii rek Sevbasseina za vremia s 15 fevralia po 1 marta 1922 g., in Dobronozhenko, *VChK-OGPU*, 30; Gosinsvodka Arkhgubotdela GPU N 50 na 6 iiunia 1922 g., in Dobronozhenko, *VChK-OGPU*, 33.
55. Mesiachnaia informatsionnaia svodka N 12 Severo-Dvinskoi Gubernskoi Chrezvychainoi Komissii za vremia s 15 iiunia po 15 iiulia 1921 g., in Dobronozhenko, *VChK-OGPU*, 18.
56. Iz gosinfsvodok informatsionnogo otdela VChK No. 83 (357) za 9 iiunia 1922 g., 10 iiunia 1922 g., in *SDG1*, 641.
57. Obzor politiko-ekonomicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za noiabr'-dekabr' 1923 g., Ianvaria 1924 g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 1: 964–965.
58. A desiatin is 2.7 acres.
59. Terskaia gub., Gosinfsvodka, No. 21, 15 avgusta [1923 g.]; Novonikolaevskaia gub., Gosinfsvodka, No. 36, 15 sentiabria [1923 g.], in *SDG2*, 133, 143.
60. Dvukhnedel'naia informatsionnaia svodka Zyrianskogo Oblastnogo Otdela Gospolitupravleniia za vremia ot 1 po 15 iiulia 1922 g., in Dobronozhenko, *VChK-OGPU*, 34–35; Spetspolitsvodka za 5 marta No. 53/256, 7 marta 1923 g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 1: 735–740; Kurskaia gub., Gosinfsvodka, No. 9, 26 fevralia [1923 g.], Novgorodskaia gub., Gosinfsvodka, No. 4, 15 fevralia [1923 g.], in *SDG2*, 77–78. Given Narkomzem's struggle simply to survive during this period, its failure to effectively aid the peasantry is in no way surprising: Wehner, "The Soft Line on Agriculture."
61. Spetspolitsvodka za 7 marta No. 55/258, 9 marta 1923 g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 1: 746–751; Irkutskaia gub., Gosinfsvodka, No. 7, 20 fevralia [1923 g.], in *SDG2*, 78–79.
62. Obzor politiko-ekonomicheskogo sostoianii SSSR za iiul', avgust i polovinu sentiabria 1923 g., Sentiabria 1923 g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 1: 913–914.
63. Mesiachnaia informatsionnaia svodka N 12 Severo-Dvinskoi Gubernskoi Chrezvychainoi Komissii za vremia s 15 iiunia po 15 iiulia 1921 g.; Dvukhnedel'naia informatsionnaia svodka N 13

Severo-Dvinskoi Gubernskoi Chrezvychainoi Komissii za vremia s 15 iiulia po 1 avgusta 1921 g., in Dobronozhenko, *VChK-OGPU*, 17–20; Periodicheskii biulleten' Oblastnoi Chezvychainoi Komissii Avtonomnoi Oblasti Komi noiabr' 1922 g. in Dobronozhenko, *VChK-OGPU*, 43–44.

64. Vypiska iz dvukhnedel'noi informatsionnoi svodki Mezenskogo Pogranichnogo Politicheskogo Biuro za vremia s 9 po 23 sentiabria 1921 g., in Dobronozhenko, *VChK-OGPU*, 22.
65. Kurskaia gub., Gosinfsvodka, No. 9, 26 fevralia [1923 g.], in *SDG2*, 77. The scissors reached their widest opening in October 1923 when retail and wholesale prices of industrial goods stood at 187 and 171 percent of the 1913 levels, and retail and wholesale prices of agricultural products at 58 and 49 percent of that level. According to Soviet statistician and chief economist for Gosplan, Stanislav Strumilin, *Na khoziaistvennom fronte: Sbornik statei, 1921–1925* (Moscow: "Planovoe khoziaistvo," 1925), 220, quoted in E. H. Carr, *The Interregnum, 1923–1924* (New York: McMillan, 1954), 96, the ratio of industrial prices to agricultural prices on October 1, 1923, stood at 323 percent of the corresponding ratio for 1913.
66. Permskaia gub., Gosinfsvodka, No. 12, 17 aprelia [1923 g.], in *SDG2*, 95.
67. Vladimirskaia gub., Gosinfsvodka, No. 17, 19 avgusta [1923 g.], in *SDG2*, 134.
68. Obzor politiko-ekonomicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za noiabr'-dekabr' 1923 g., Ianvaria 1924 g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 1: 960–961.
69. Tatrespublika, Gosinfsvodka, No. 4812, 22 oktiabria [1923 g.], in *SDG2*, 150.
70. Iz gosinfsvodok informatsionnogo otdela VChK No. 15 (253) za 18 i 19 ianvaria 1922 g., 20 ianvaria 1922 g., in *SDG1*, 561.
71. Obzor politiko-ekonomicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za noiabr'-dekabr' 1923 g., Ianvaria 1924 g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," I: 960. For reports on peasants responding positively to increased grain prices, see Ural'skaia gub., Gosinfsvodka, No. 42, 10 dekaibria [1923 g.] and Zabaikal'skaia gub., Nalogovaia svodka, No. 6, 7 dekabria [1923 g.], in *SDG2*, 163.
72. Carr, *The Interregnum*, 127, quoting *Ekonomicheskaia zhizn'*, no. 1–2, October 1923.
73. On the closing of the scissors and its impact on industry and politics, see Carr, *The Interregnum*, 127–158.

74. Vitebskaia gub., Gosinfsvodka, No. 47, 22 noiabria [1923g.], Votskaia oblast', Gosinfsvodka, No. 109, 8 noiabria [1923 g.], in *SDG2*, 156.
75. Bashrespublika, Gosinfsvodka, No. 9, 3 marta [1923 g.], in *SDG2*, 84–85.
76. Edward Hallett Carr, *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926* (New York: Macmillan, 1958), 1: 245, quotes figures from *Na Agrarnom Fronte*, nos. 5–6 (1925): 49–54, that the percentage of peasants in the Russian Republic not owning a horse fell from 29 to 27 between 1917 and 1920 and the percentage owning only a single horse rose during that period from 49 to 63. The percentage of peasants in the Russian Republic "without working animals" reportedly had fallen to 24 in 1922 but increased to 27 in 1924.
77. Tarrespublika, Gosinfsvodka, No. 1821, 17 aprelia [1923 g.], in *SDG2*, 95.
78. In September 1924 the OGPU estimated that some 500,000 puds of grain were being consumed per annum in the production of moonshine, this in a year when the state estimated that total grain harvest had fallen to only 2,640 million puds, and grain exports had to be halted. Gosinformsvodka No. 19 Pskovskogo gubotdela OGPU za 2 sentiabria 1924 g., 16 sentiabria 1924 g., in *SDG2*, p. 247. A. Rykov, *Sochineniia* (1929), 3: 185–187, quoted in Carr, *Socialism in One Country*, 1: 206.
79. Kate Transchel, *Under the Influence: Working-Class Drinking, Temperance, and Cultural Revolution in Russia, 1895–1932* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburg Press, 2006).
80. Gosinfsvodka Vologodskogo gubotdela OGPU za vremia s 7 po 15 iiulia 1924 g., in Dobronozhenko, *VChK-OGPU*, 76.
81. Turkmenskaia oblast', Gosinfsvodka, No. 9, 7 marta [1923 g.], in *SDG2*, 91.
82. Tul'skaia gub., Iz neopublikovannoi korrespondentsii gazety "Pravda," 23 oktiabria 1923 g., in *SDG2*, 150.
83. Gosinsvodka Vologodskogo Gubotdel Gospolitupravleniia za vremia s 12 po 16 oktiabria 1922 g., in Dobronozhenko, *VChK-OGPU*, 40.
84. Ekaterinoslavskaia gub., Gosinfsvodka, No. 6/155, 20 fevralia [1923 g.]; Omskaia gub., Gosinfsvodka, No. 12, 22 marta [1923 g.], in *SDG2*, 84, 91; Spetspolitsvodka za 26 marta No. 70/273, 28 marta 1923 g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 1: 825.
85. Amurskaia gub., Gosinfsvodka, No. 27, 15 avgusta [1923 g.], in *SDG2*, 137.

86. Tiumenskai gub., Gosinfsvodka, No. 18, 6 maia [1923 g.], in *SDG2*, 102; Iaroslavskaia gub., Gosinfsvodka, No. 6156, 23 oktiabria [1923 g.], in *SDG2*, 149.
87. Votskaia oblast', Gosinfsvodka, No. 109, 8 noiabria [1923 g.], in *SDG2*, 156.
88. Dagrespublika, Gosinfsvodka, No. 78, 22 maia [1923 g.], in *SDG2*, 110.
89. Brovkin, *Russia after Lenin*, especially 158–159.
90. Iz operativno-informatsionnykh svodok sekretno-opertivnogo upravleniia VChK za 14 marta 1921 g., 14 marta 1921 g., in *SDG1*, 390.
91. V. A. Antonov-Ovseenko, "O banditskom dvizhenii v tambovskoi gubernii," Trotsky Archives, Harvard University, doc. # T686, quoted in Seth Singleton, "The Tambov Revolt (1920–1921)," *Slavic Review* 25, no. 3. (1966): 500.
92. Iz operativno-razvedyvatel'nykh svodok shtaba Voisk Vnytrennei Sluzhby respubliki No. 10 za 10 ianvaria 1921 g., 10 ianvaria 1921 g., in *SDG1*, 384. For a study that provides much information on the peasant rebellion in the Tambov region, but severely distorts the political "consciousness" of the Antonov insurrectionists as well as the character of Antonov himself, see Oliver H. Radkey, *The Unknown Civil War in Soviet Russia: A Study of the Green Movement in the Tambov Region, 1920–1921* (Stanford: Hoover Institution, 1976). For more recent analysis, see Erik C. Landis, *Bandits and Partisans: The Antonov Movement in the Russian Civil War* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2008) and V. V. Samoshkin, *Antonovskoe Vosstanie* (Moscow: Russkii Put', 2005).
93. Iz operativno-informatsionnykh svodok sekretno-opertivnogo upravleniia VChK za 11 marta 1921 g., 11 marta 1921 g., in *SDG1*, 389.
94. Ekaterinoslavskaia gub., Svodka TO GPU, 28 iiunia [1923 g.]; Kievskaia gub., Svodka TO GPU, 28 iiunia [1923 g.], in *SDG2*, 116.
95. Irkutskaia gub., Gosinfsvodka, No. 22, 12 iiunia [1923 g.]; Kubano-Chernomorskaia gub., Gosinfsvodka, No. 6969, 15 iiunia [1923 g.], in *SDG2*, 118–119.
96. The police argued that this was particularly true in the North Caucuses, where despite periodic killings of individual soviet and party workers, the primary motivation in bandit killings was simple crime: Terskaia gub., Gosinfsvodka, No. 24, 30 iiunia [1923 g.], in *SDG2*, 122. On demobilized Red Armymen, see Iz operativno-informatsionnykh svodok sekretno-operativnogo upravleniia VChK za 9 marta 1921 g., 9 marta 1921 g., in *SDG1*, 386–387.

97. Iz gosinfsvodok informatsionnogo otdela VChK No. 13 (251) za 16 ianvaria 1922 g., 17 ianvaria 1922 g., in *SDG1*, 559.
98. Simbirskaia gub., Gosinfsvodka, No. 30, 28 iiulia [1923 g], in *SDG2*, 129.
99. A. A. Kurenyshev, *Vserossiiskii krest'ianskii soiuz, 1905–1930 gg.: mify i real'nost'* (Moscow: "AIRO-XX," 2004).
100. *SDG2*, 1048, note 43.
101. Iz gosinfsvodok informatsionnogo otdela VChK No. 166 (225) za 15 dekabria 1921 g., 16 dekabria 1921 g., in *SDG1*, p. 545; Riazanskaia gub., Gosinformsvodka, No. 28, 1 ianvaria [1924 g], in *SDG2*, 170; Krym, Gosinformsvodka, No. 22, 15 dekiabria [1923 g], in *SDG2*, 170–171.
102. Simbirskaia gub., Gosinformsvodka, No. 51, 22 dekabria [1923 g], in *SDG2*, 171.
103. Vinogradov, "Informatsionnye materialy OGPU za 1923–1929 gg.," 38.

Chapter 3

1. Obzor politekonomicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za ianvar' 1924 g, 20 fevraliia 1924 g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 2, 30–31.
2. Iz svodki No. 2 Nizhegorodskogo gubotdela OGPU o nastroenii naseleniia g. Nizhnego Novroroda v sviazi so smert'iu V. I. Lenina, ne ranee 27 ianvaria 1924 g., in *SDG2*, 175.
3. Iz informsvodki No. 317 Mosgubotdela OGPU za 24 ianvaria 1924 g. k 14 chasam, 24 ianvaria 1924 g., in *SDG2*, 174; Iz informsvodki No. 318 Mosgubotdela OGPU za 25 ianvaria 1924 g. k 14 chasam, 25 ianvaria 1924 g., in *SDG2*, 174–175.
4. Obzor politekonomicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za ianvar' 1924 g, 20 fevraliia 1924 g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 2: 30–31; Obzor politekonomicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za fevral' 1924 g, 22 marta 1924 g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 2: 47; Ocherednaia gosinfsvodka N 4 Komi Oblastnogo Otdela Ob"edinennogo Gospolitupravleniia za vremia s 22 ianvaria po 7 fevralia 1924 g., in Dobronozhenko, *VChK-OGPU*, 67.
5. Iz dvukhnedel'noi informsvodki upolnomochennnogo Mosgubotdela OGPU po Kashirskomu u. Moskovskoi gub. s 15 ianvaria po 1 fevralia 1924 g., ne ranee 1 fevralia 1924 g., in *SDG2*, 177.
6. *Kino-pravda 21(LeninskaiaKino-pravda. Kinopoema o Lenine).* Produced and directed by Dziga Vertov. Moscow, 1925.

7. Maureen Perrie, *Pretenders and Popular Monarchism in Early Modern Russia: The False Tsars of the Time of Troubles* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), would like to disassociate the pretender phenomenon of the Time of Troubles from "popular socio-utopian legends," but her arguments that the lower classes sought merely a "world turned upside down" rather than systematic change does little to challenge the evidence that the lower orders sought redemption from the "true tsar" pretenders.
8. Lewis H. Siegelbaum, "Peasant Disorders and the Myth of the Tsar: Russian Variations on a Millenarian Theme," *Journal of Religious History* 10, no. 3 (1979): 223–235.
9. Kirill Vasil'evich Chistov, *Russkie narodnye sotsial'no-utopicheskie legendy XVII–XIX vv.* (Moscow: "Nauka," 1967), 24–33; Valerie Kivelson, "The Devil Stole His Mind: The Tsar and the 1648 Moscow Uprising," *American Historical Review*, 98, no. 3 (1993): 743–744; Perrie, *Pretenders and Popular Monarchism*, 247.
10. Chistov, *Russkie narodnye sotsial'no-utopicheskie legendy*, 135–138.
11. Ibid., 136. Chistov, however, 222–223, also could not fully divorce himself from belief in the peasantry's "tsarist illusions."
12. James Scott, "Protest and Profanation: Agrarian Revolt and the Little Tradition, Part II," *Theory and Society* 4, no. 2 (1977): 225.
13. David Goldfrank, "Pre-Enlightenment Utopianism in Russian History," *Russian History/Histoire Russe* 11, nos. 2–3 (1984): 136. See also Aleksandr Il'ich Klibanov, *Narodnaia sotsial'naia utopiia v Rossii XIX vek* (Moscow: "Nauka," 1978), 83–163.
14. On everyday forms of resistance, such as dissimulation, pilfering, work slowdowns, and flight, see James C. Scott, *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985) and in Russia, E. S. Paina, "Zhaloby pomeshchich'ikh krest'ian pervoi poloviny XIX v. kak istoricheskii istochnik," *Istoriia SSSR*, No. 6 (1964): 110–117. On flight as a form of resistance among Russian peasants in the first half of the nineteenth century, see, for example, Elena Kots, "Pobegi pomeshchich'ikh krest'ian v Nikolaevskuiu epokhu," *Arkhiv istorii truda v Rossii,* kn. 5, ch. 1 (1922): 3–29 and P. G. Ryndziunskii, "O nekotorykh spornykh voprosakh istorii krest'ianskogo dvizheniia v Rossii," *Voprosy istorii,* no. 8 (1987): 79–88.
15. Ben Eklof, "Ways of Seeing: Recent Anglo-American Studies of the Russian Peasant (1861–1914)," *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* 36, no. 1 (1988): 57–79.
16. Marina Mikhailovna Gromyko, *Traditsionnye normy povedeniia i formy obshcheniia russkikh krest'ian XIX v.* (Moscow: "Nauka," 1986).

See too peasant petitions to remove impeached peasant officials: "Proshenie Grigoriia Dmitrieva i Koz'my Matveeva, poverennykh krest'ian Bogoiavlenskoi vol. Nikolaiu I o vzyskanii s volostnogo golovy Arsakova nezakonno sobrannykh deneg," February 17, 1826, in Sigizmund Natanovich Valk, ed., *Krest'ianskoe dvizhenie v Rossii v 1796–1825 gg.: Sbornik dokumentov* (Moscow: Izd-vo Sotsial'no-ekonomicheskoi literatury, 1961), 758–762; "Donesenie nizhegorodskogo gubernatora A. S. Kruikova upravliaiushchemu Ministerstvom vnutrennikh del V. S. Lanskomu o smene krest'ianami Bogoiavlenskou vol. volostnogo golovy," 1825, in Ibid., 755–757.

17. Gromyko, *Traditsionnye normy povedeniia,* 106.
18. Iz dvukhnedel'noi informsvodki upolnomochennogo Mosgubotdela OGPU po Kishirskomu u. Moskovskoi gub. s 15 ianvaria po 1 febralia 1924 g., ne ranee 1 fevralia 1924 g., in *SDG2*, 177.
19. Obzor politekonomicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za ianvar' 1924 g, 20 fevraliia 1924 g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 2: 30–31.
20. Orenburgskaia gub., Gosinformsvodka, No. 2, 31 ianvaria [1924 g], in *SDG2*, 180; Iz svodki svedenii osvedomitel'nogo otdela Zakavkazskoi chrezvychainoi komissii po bor'be s kontrrevoliutsiei i prestupleniiami po dolzhnosti pri Zaksovharkome o reaktsii naseleniia na smert' V. I. Lenina, 5 marta 1924 g., in *SDG2*, 188; Ocherednaia gosinfsvodka N 6 Komi Oblastnogo Otdela Ob"edinennogo Gospolitupravleniia za vremia 16–22 fevralia 1924 g., in Dobronozhenko, *VChK-OGPU*, 68.
21. According to an analysis of complaints registered by peasants in letters that the OGPU Politkontrol' monitored during 1924 and 1925 (Vladlen S. Izmozik, "Voices from the Twenties: Private Correspondence Intercepted by the OGPU," *The Russian Review* 55, no. 2 (1996): 287–308), drunkenness was the problem most often complained of (28.5% of the letters), followed by crime (20.6%), misconduct by local officials (20.1%), the organization of education and culture (15.5%), attitudes toward the government and party (12.5%), standard of living (11%), and the work of the cooperatives (9.3%). On the necessity of otkhodnichestvo, especially in the Central Industrial Region, see Hoffmann, "Land, Freedom, and Discontent."
22. Obzor politekonomicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za ianvar' 1924 g, 20 fevraliia 1924 g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 2: 26–31.
23. Iz svodki No. 1 informotdela OGPU za 4–18 fevraliia 1924 g., 18 fevraliia 1924 g., in *SDG2*, 182–186; Obzor politekonomicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za fevral' 1924 g, 22 marta 1924 g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 2: 43–47.

24. Iz gosinformsvodki Iaroslavskogo gubotdela OGPU za 19 fevralia 1924 g., ne ranee 19 fevralia 1924 g., in *SDG2*, 186–187; Iz svodki svedenii osvedomitel'nogo otdela Zakavkazskoi chrezvychainoi komissii po bor'be s kontrrevoliutsiei i prestupleniiami po dolzhnosti pri Zaksovharkome o reaktsii naseleniia na smert' V. I. Lenina, 5 marta 1924 g., in *SDG2*, 189.
25. Dvukhnedel'naia informatsionnaia gosudarstvennaia svodka N 6 Severo-Dvinskogo Gubernskogo Otdela Gosudarstvennogo Politicheskogo Upravleniia za vremia s 15 po 31 marta 1924 g., in Dobronozhenko, *VChK-OGPU*, 69; Obzor politekonomicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za aprel' 1924 g, 29 maia 1924 g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 2: 78–79; Ocherednaia svodka N 21 Komi (Zyrianskogo) Oblastnogo Otdela OGPU za vremia 15–22 iiulia 1924 g., in Dobronozhenko, *VChK-OGPU*, 77–78; Ocherednaia svodka N 31 Komi (Zyrianskogo) Oblastnogo Otdela OGPU za vremia s 16 oktiabria po 10 noiabria 1924 g., in Dobronozhenko, *VChK-OGPU*, 81–82.
26. Carr, *The Interregnum*, 127–158; Stephen F. Cohen, *Bukharin and the Bolshevik Revolution: A Political Biography, 1888–1938* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1974), 156–158.
27. Obzor politekonomicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za mart 1924 g, 19 aprelia 1924 g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 2: 60–64.
28. Obzor politekonomicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za mai 1924 g, iiun' 1924 g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 2: 99–100.
29. James W. Heinzen, *Inventing a Soviet Countryside: State Power and the Transformation of Rural Russia, 1917–1929* (Pittsburg: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2004).
30. D. V. Kovalev, "Iz istorii modernizatsionnykh protsessov v krest'ianskom khoziaistve Rossii kontsa XIX-pervoi chetverti XX veka (na materialakh podmoskov'ia)," *Otechestvennaia istoriia*, no. 5 (2002): 177–187, argued that great success was being achieved by the agronomists in these efforts.
31. Dvukhnedel'naia informatsionnaia svodka N 13 Severo-Dvinskoi Gubernskoi Chrezvychainoi Komissii za vremia s 15 iiulia po 1 avgusta 1921 g., in Dobronozhenko, *VChK-OGPU*, 17–20.
32. Gomel'skaia gub., Gosinformsvodka, No. 8, 1 aprelia [1924 g.], in *SDG2*, 191; Ocherednaia svodka N 21 Komi (Zyrianskogo) Oblastnogo Otdela OGPU za vremia 15–22 iiulia 1924 g., in Dobronozhenko, *VChK-OGPU*, 77–78; Obzor politekonomicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za iiun' 1924 g, 18 iiulia 1924 g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 2:119–120; Obzor politekonomicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za iiul' 1924 g, 1924 g., Avgust 1924 g., in Sevost'ianov,

"*Sovershenno sekretno*," 2: 146. This struggle continued through collectivization: Report by Smolensk OGPU to the district party committee dated September 20, 1928, in Smolenskii obkom KPSS. Partiinyi arkhiv (Smolensk Archive), WKP 144, unpaginated.

33. Obzor politekonomicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za mart 1924 g, 19 aprelia 1924 g.; Obzor politekonomicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za aprel' 1924 g, 29 maia 1924 g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 2: 62–63, 78–79.
34. Quoted in Vinogradov, "Informatsionnye materialy OGPU za 1923–1929 gg.," 37–38.
35. Edward Hallett Carr, *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926* (New York: Macmillan, 1958), 1: 208–209.
36. Dokladnaia zapiska Dzerzhinskogo v Politbiuro TsK RKP(b) o perspektivakh krest'ianskogo dvizheniia v sviazi s ozhidaiushchimsia neurozhaem, ne ranee 1 iiunia 1924 g., in *SDG2*, 197–206.
37. Dzerzhinskii had selected his replacement as head of the NKVD, Aleksandr Beloborodov, and continued to exert influence over the regular police: Nekrasov, *Organyi voiska MVD Rossii*, 229–238.
38. Once again the Soviet state followed a path well trodden by the tsarist regime. On state loans and the inability of the poor to qualify, see George L. Yaney, *The Urge to Mobilize: Agrarian Reform in Russia, 1861–1930* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1982).
39. Dokladnaia zapiska predsedatelia OGPU F.E. Dzerzhinskogo v Politbiuro TsK RKP(b) ob ekonomicheskom polozhenii, 9 iliulia 1924 g., in *SDG2*, 223–226.
40. Dokladnaia zapiska predsedatelia OGPU F.E. Dzerzhinskogo v Politbiuro TsK RKP(b) ob ekonomicheskom polozhenii, 9 iliulia 1924 g., in *SDG2*, 224.
41. On October 23, 1924, he developed these ideas further in a letter to Abram Ginsburg, Deputy Chairman of the Chief Economic Department Collegium of the Supreme Economic Council. Lowering industrial goods' prices and the manufacture of more and lower-priced means of production for agriculture would lead to the lowering of prices for agricultural commodities. "These means (tractors, fertilizers, etc.) should in a few years give such a boost to agriculture that we will have enormous reserves for both exports and luxury domestic consumption." *Felix Dzerzhinsky: A Biography* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1988), 197–198.
42. On faith in *ankety* and the limitations on information obtained through these, see A. M. Bol'shakov, *Sovetskaia derevnia 1917–1924 g.g.: ekonomika i byt* (Leningrad: "Priboi," 1924), 11–13.

43. Iz svodki krest'ianskikh pisem v armiiu 3-go otdeleniia otdela politkontrolia OGPU za marta-mai 1924 g., 2 iiulia 1924 g., in *SDG2*, 213.
44. Ocherednaia informatsionnaia svodka N 33 Komi (Zyrianskogo) Oblastnogo Otdela OGPU za vremia s 27 noiabria po 22 dekabria 1924 g., in Dobronozhenko, *VChK-OGPU*, 82–83.
45. Iz svodki krest'ianskikh pisem v armiiu 3- go otdeleniia otdela politkontrolia OGPU za marta-mai 1924 g., 2 iiulia 1924 g., in *SDG2*, 212–223.
46. Dvukhnedel'naia informatsionnaia svodka Zyrianskogo Oblastnogo Otdela Gospolitupravleniia za vremia s 15 po 31 iiulia 1922 g., in Dobronozhenko, *VChK-OGPU*, 35–36.
47. Vypiski iz gosinformsvodok mestnykh organov OGPU, iiul'-avgust 1924 g., in *SDG2*, 227–230; Obzor politekonomicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za iiul' 1924 g, Avgust1924 g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 2:144–146; Svodka materialov informotdela OGPU o sostoianii neurozhainykh gubernii na 12 avgusta 1924 g., 12 avgusta 1924 g., in *SDG2*,230–235; Obzor politekonomicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za avgust1924 g, Sentiabr'1924 g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 2:167–169.
48. Svodka materialov informotdela OGPU o sostoianii neurozhainykh guberii na 12 avgusta 1924 g., 12 avgusta 1924 g., in *SDG2*, 232.
49. Obzor politekonomicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za avgust 1924 g, Sentiabr'1924 g.; Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za sentiabr' 1924 g, 10 oktiabria1924 g.; Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za oktiabr' 1924 g, 22 noiabria1924 g.; Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za noiabr' 1924 g, 22 dekabria1924 g.; Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za dekabr' mesiats1924 g, 29 ianvaria1925g. in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 2:173, 202–203; 233; 286–287.
50. Most of these letters were published as *Derevnia pri NEPe. Kogo schitat' kulakom, kogo-truzhenikom. Chto govoriat ob etom krest'iane?* (Moscow: Krasnaia nov', 1924). The letters were analyzed by Lynne Viola, "The Peasants' Kulak: Social Identities and Moral Economy in the Soviet Countryside in the 1920s," *Canadian Slavonic Papers* 42, no. 4 (2000): 431–460.
51. Viola, "The Peasants' Kulak," 439.
52. Obzor politekonomicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za aprel' 1924 g, 29 maia 1924 g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 2: 76–78.
53. Vypiski iz informdokladov mestnykh organov OGPU, napravlennye informotdelov OGPU v Narkomzem, No. 31 Samarskogo gubotdela OGPU, 15 oktiabria 1924 g., in *SDG2*, 251.

54. Mark Tauger reports a similar case of positive peasant response to state aid following the famine of 1932: "Soviet Peasants and Collectivization, 1930–39: Resistance and Adaptation," *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 31, nos. 3–4 (2004): 445–448.
55. Vypiski iz informdokladov mestnykh organov OGPU, napravlennye informotdelov OGPU v Narkomzem, No. 38 Ul'ianovskogo otdela OGPU, 16 oktiabria 1924 g., in *SDG2*, 252.
56. Alexander Erlich, *The Soviet Industrialization Debate, 1924–1928* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960), 1–187.
57. Carr, *Socialism in One Country*, 1: 211–218; 2: 325–340.
58. Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za dekabr' mesiats1924 g, 29 ianvaria1925g. in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 2: 284–291; local reports reflected the same tendency: Ocherednaia svodka N31 Komi (Zyrianskogo) Oblastnogo Otdela OGPU za vremia s 16 oktiabria po 10 noiabria 1924 g., Ocherednaia svodka N33 Komi (Zyrianskogo) Oblastnogo Otdela OGPU za vremia s 27 noiabria po 22 dekabria 1924 g., in Dobronozhenko, *VChK-OGPU*, 81–82.
59. Carr, *Socialism in One Country*, 1: 340.
60. Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za fevral' 1925 g, 7 aprelia 1925g. in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 3: 126–128.
61. Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za dekabr' mesiats1924 g, 29 ianvaria1925g. in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 2: 286–287.
62. Roberta Manning lists 902 terror acts against officials and activists for 1925; 640 for 1926; 823 for 1927; 1153 for 1928; 9137 for 1929; and 7469 for 1930: "The Rise and Fall of 'the Extraordinary Measures,' January–June 1928: Toward a Reexamination of the Onset of the Stalin Revolution," *The Carl Beck Papers in Russian and East European Studies*, no. 1504 (Pittsburgh: Center for Russian and East European Studies, University of Pittsburgh, 2001): 33.
63. Doklad o sostoianii derevni v 1924 godu, Fevral' 1925 g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 2: 423–429.
64. Heinzen, *InventingaSovietCountryside*, argues that specialists working in the villages for the Commissariat of Agriculture saw the peasants in the terms I have presented from the police, but does not see the evolution in OGPU interpretation of peasant behavior and of OGPU reporting.
65. S. Uritskii, "Nuzhno dvinut'sia vpered," *Krasnaia pechat'*, no. 4 (1927): 12–14.
66. *Krasnaia pechat'*, No. 10 (1925): 23.
67. S. Uritskii, "Gotov'tes' ko dniu pechati, chto takoe 'Krest'ianskaia gazeta' i v chem ee naznachenie,"*Krest'ianskaia gazeta*, April 27,

1926. On the role of peasant newspapers in the effort of the Bolshevik state during the 1920s to establish a means of communicating with the peasantry, see Hugh D. Hudson, Jr., “Bridging the Russian Cultural Gap: Language and Culture Wars in the Creation of a Soviet Peasant Press,” *American Journalism* 21, no. 1 (2004): 13–36.

68. *Krest’ianskaia* gazeta, April 13, 1926; June 7, 1926; June 15, 1926; June 22, 1926; July 13, 1926; August 31, 1926. For an analysis of this debate see Hugh D. Hudson, Jr., “Shaping Peasant Political Discourse during the New Economic Policy: The Newspaper *Krest’ianskaia* gazeta and the Case of ‘Vladimir Ia.’,”*Journal of Social History* 36, no. 2 (2002): 303–317.
69. “Koren=zla v plokhoi rabote gosapparata,” *Krest*=ianskaia gazeta, June 7, 1926.
70. “Moi sobrazheniia po pis=mu Vladimira Ia. i otvetu M. I. Kalinina,” *Krest’ianskaia* gazeta, June 15, 1926.
71. Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Stalin’s Peasants: Resistance and Survival in the Russian Village after Collectivization* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994).
72. Heinzen, *Inventing a Soviet Countryside.*
73. Bukharin had not accepted all of the arguments about kulak power, but in 1924 he was caught up in the emerging fear and allowed himself to participate in the language of the day: Cohen, *Bukharin and the Bolshevik Revolution*, 189–192. On the ability of kulaks to lead all peasants, see N. I. Bukharin, *Put’ k sotsializmu: izbrannye proizvedeniia* (Novosibirsk: “Nauka” Sibirskoe otdelenie, 1990), 10–12.

Chapter 4

1. *Rasshirennyi plenum Ispolkoma Kommunisticheskogo Internatsionala (21 marta–6 aprelia 1925g.): stenograficheskii otchet* (Moscow: Gosizdat, 1925), 370.
2. Dokladnaia zapiska sekretnogo i informatsionnogo otdelov OGPU (o politicheskom sostoianii SSSR), 17 fevralia 1925 g., in Sevost’ianov, “*Sovershenno sekretno*,” 2: 299–305, 325–327.
3. Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za fevral’ 1925 g, 7 aprelia 1925g., Prilozhenie No. 5: Vtorichnye perevybory sovetov, in Sevost’ianov, “*Sovershenno sekretno*,” 3: 150–153.
4. Dokladnaia zapiska sekretnogo i informatsionnogo otdelov OGPU (o politicheskom sostoianii SSSR), 17 fevralia 1925 g., Prilozhenie No. 3: Antisovetskie nastroeniia kulachestva i blizhai-shikh k nemu sloev krest’ianstva, in Sevost’ianov, “*Sovershenno sekretno*,” 2: 328–333; Obzor

politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za fevral' 1925 g, 7 aprelia 1925g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 3:124–126; Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za mart 1925 g, 30 aprelia 1925g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 3:181–183; Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za mart 1925 g, 30 aprelia 1925g., Prilozhenie No. 2: Perevybory sel'skikh sovetov, in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 3: 200–212; Otchet o rabote sredi rabotnits i krest'ianok Viazemskogo Uzhen'otdela za period sentiabr' 1925 goda po sentiabr' 1926 goda, in Smolensk Archive, WKP 26: 83–88.

5. Svodka No. 2 materialov informotdela OGPU o khode perevyborov sovetov na 18 dekabria 1925 g., 19 dekabria 1925 g., in *SDG2*, 378–393.
6. Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za dekabr' 1925 g, ianvaria1926 g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 3:712–716.
7. Svodka No. 2 materialov informotdela OGPU o khode perevyborov sovetov na 18 dekabria 1925 g., 19 dekabria 1925 g., in *SDG2*, 383.
8. Ibid., 389.
9. Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za dekabr' 1925 g, ianvaria1926 g., Prilozhenie No. 2, Perevybory sel'sovetov, in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 3:742–755.
10. Edward Hallett Carr, *Socialism in One Country, 1924–1926* (New York: Macmillan, 1958), 1: 345–347.
11. Ibid., 358.
12. Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za aprel' 1925 g, ianvaria1926 g. in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 3: 233–238; quotation, 233.
13. "It goes without saying that when a class enemy stands before us—and the kulak is our class enemy and a dangerous class enemy—it goes without saying that we must fire on him (*streliat' po nemy*), using all the means that we have at our disposal." "Doklad na XXIII Chrezvychainoi Leningradskoi Gubernskoi Konferentsii VKP(B) (10–11 fevralia 1926 g.)," in N. I. Bukharin, *Izbrannye proizvedeniia* (Moscow: Politizdat, 1988), 231–276; quotation, 255.
14. Yanni Kotsonis, *Making Peasants Backward: Agricultural Cooperatives and the Agrarian Question in Russia, 1861–1914* (New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1999), 51.
15. Heinzen, *Inventing a Soviet Countryside.*
16. Obzor politiko-ekonomicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za noiabr'-dekabr' 1923 g., Ianvaria 1924 g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 1: 964–965.
17. On *profilakticheskaia rabota*, see Hagenloh, *Stalin's Police*, especially 1–12. As Kotsonis notes, *Making Peasants Backward,* the belief in

the necessity of protecting "the peasant" from those who might be of the peasant estate but were in truth "nonproducing," "nonlaboring," or simply "exploiters," predated these police debates and were part of the effort of educated society in the late nineteenth century to solve the peasant problem.

18. Kotsonis, *Making Peasants Backward*, 188.
19. Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za ianvar' 1925 g, 3 marta 1925g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 3: 41–42; quotation, 42.
20. Svodka No. 3 informotdela OGPU ob ekonomicheskom rassloenii i politicheskom sostoianii derevniia za vremia s 24 po 31 ianvaria 1925 g., 3 fevralia 1925 g., in *SDG2*, 273; quotation, 278;Ocherednaia svodka N 2 Komi (Zyrianskogo) Oblastnogo otdela OGPU za vremia s 10 ianvaria po 3 fevralia 1925 g.," in Dobronozhenko, *VChK-OGPU*, 85.
21. Informatsionna svodka N 13 Komi (Zyrianskogo) Oblastnogo Otdela OGPU za vremia s 16 po 30 iiunia 1926 g., in Dobronozhenko, *VChK-OGPU*, 116. Dissatisfaction with local officials was one of the major complaints (following drunkenness and crime) registered by peasants in letters that the OGPU Politkontrol' monitored. For a selection from 1925 and 1925, see Izmozik, "Voices from the Twenties."
22. Informatsionnaia svodka Vologodskogo Gubernskogo Otdela OGPU na 3 noiabria 1925 g., in Dobronozhenko, *VChK-OGPU*, 105.
23. Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za mart 1925 g, 30 aprelia 1925g., Prilozhenie No. 4: Slukhi, rasprostranennye v derevne, in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 3: 219–223.
24. Svodka No. 3 informotdela OGPU ob ekonomicheskom rassloenii i politicheskom sostoianii derevniia za vremia s 24 po 31 ianvaria 1925 g., 3 fevralia 1925 g., in *SDG2*, 275.
25. Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za ianvar" 1925 g, 3 marta 1925g., Prilozhenie No. 3: Klassovoe passloenie derevni; Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za fevral' 1925 g, 7 aprelia 1925g., Prilozhenie No. 2: Ekonomicheskoe passloenie derevni, in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 3: 60–64, 142–144.
26. Svodka No. 3 informotdela OGPU ob ekonomicheskom rassloenii i politicheskom sostoianii derevniia za vremia s 24 po 31 ianvaria 1925 g., 3 fevralia 1925 g., in *SDG2*, 283–284.
27. Informatsionnaia svodka N 18 Arkhangel'slogo Gubernskogo Otdela OGPU za vremia s 4 po 23 iiunia 1925 g., in Dobronozhenko, *VChK-OGPU*, 100.

28. Svodka No. 3 informotdela OGPU ob ekonomicheskom rassloenii i politicheskom sostoianii derevniia za vremia s 24 po 31 ianvaria 1925 g., 3 fevralia 1925 g., in *SDG2*, 286–287. According to Soviet statistics in 1928, more than 40 percent of peasant households were engaged in the production of samogon. Total production reportedly reached 6.15 million liters that year: Fitzpatrick, *Stalin's Peasants*, 26.
29. Carr, *Socialism in One Country*, 1: 313.
30. Biulleten' 4 sesii Vseukrains'kogo Tsentral'nogo Vikonavchogo Komitetu, No. 2, February 16, 1925, p. 23; quoted in Carr, *Socialism in One Country*, I: 309.
31. Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za aprel' 1925 g., iiunia 1925 goda, in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 3: 239–240.
32. Svodka materialov informotdela OGPU po sostoianiiu raionov, okhvachennykh nedorodom, 20 marta 1925 g.; Iz svodki No. 11 materialov informotdela OGPU po zemleustroistvu, lesoustroistvu i otdel'nym voprosam sel'skogo khoziaistva s 30 aprelia do 10 maia 1925 g., 11 maia 1925 g., in *SDG2*, 288–302, 310–315; quotation, 298.
33. Iz svodki No. 11 materialov informotdela OGPU po zemleustroistvu, lesoustroistvu i otdel'nym voprosam sel'skogo khoziaistva s 30 aprelia do 10 maia 1925 g., 11 maia 1925 g., in *SDG2*, 311.
34. Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za mai 1925 g., 3 iiulia 1925 goda, in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 3: 303–304.
35. Iz svodki No. 12 materialov informotdela OGPU o sostoianii raionov, okhvachennykh nedorom, na 25 maia 1925 g., 27 maia 1925 g., in *SDG2*, 315–329; quotation, 316.
36. Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za mai 1925 g., 3 iiulia 1925 goda, Prilozhenie No. 5: Sostoianie raionov nedoroda, in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 3: 350–355.
37. On women's protests and their usefulness as a means of political discourse for both peasants and soviet officials, see Lynne Viola, "*Bab'i Bunty* and Peasant Women's Protest during Collectivization," *Russian Review* 45 (1986): 23–42. That the police were particularly unnerved by threats of violence from throngs of peasant women is evidenced in reports of early 1922 from Perm guberniia, where the police stated that "for the third time" a mob of some 150 women had threatened the volost' executive committee with destroying the collection centers if they were not immediately provided with bread: Iz gosinfsvodok informatsionnogo otdela VChK No. 2 (240) za 2 ianvaria 1922 g., 3 ianvaria 1922 g., in *SDG1*, 553.

38. Iz svodki No. 12 materialov informotdela OGPU o sostoianii raionov, okhvachennykh nedorom, na 25 maia 1925 g., 27 maia 1925 g., in *SDG2*, 327–328.
39. Dokladnaia zapiska nachal'nika informotdela OGPU G. E. Prokof'eva "O dvizhenii banditizma v SSSR za period s 1 ianvaria po 1 oktiabria 1925 g.," ne ranee 1 oktiabria 1925 g., in *SDG2*, 338–344.
40. Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za iiul' 1925 g., sentiabria 1925 goda, in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 3: 417–418.
41. Gosinfsvodka Komi Obotdela Gospolitupravleniia N 71 ot oktiabria 1922 g., in Dobronozhenko, *VChK-OGPU*, 43.
42. Iz svodki No. 34 materialov informotdela OGPU o nizovoi sel'skoi kooperatsii za vremia s 23 oktiabria po 25 noiabria 1925 g., 28 noiabria 1925 g., in *SDG2*, 358–365; quotation, 360.
43. Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za avgust 1925 g, sentiabria 1925 g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 3: 461–462; Svodka No. 25 materialov informotdela i PK OGPU o khode nalogovoi kampanii za vremia s 18 noiabria po 3 dekabria 1925 g., 5 dekabria 1925 g., in *SDG2*, 366–378.
44. Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za avgust 1925 g, sentiabria 1925 g., Prilozhenie No. 3: Khod khlebozagotovitel'noi kampanii, in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 3: 491–495.
45. According to V. P. Danilov, *Sovetskaia dokolkhoznaia derevnia: Sotsial'naia struktura, sotsial'nye otnosheniia* (Moscow: "Nauka," 1979), 51, as late as 1926 one-third of the peasant households in the Central Industrial Region possessed no livestock with which to work their fields.
46. Svodka No. 25 materialov informotdela i PK OGPU o khode nalogovoi kampanii za vremia s 18 noiabria po 3 dekabria 1925 g., 5 dekabria 1925 g., in *SDG2*, 377.
47. Vypiska informotdela OGPU iz informatsionnogo doklada GPU Ukrainskoi SSR o reaktsii krest'ian na vyselenie kulakov i byvshikh pomeshchikov, 10 marta 1926 g., in *SDG2*, 397–398.
48. V. P. Danilov, "Sovetskaia nalogovaia politika v dokolkhoznoi derevne," in I. M. Volkov, ed., *Oktiabr' i sovetskoe krest'ianstvo, 1917–1927* (Moscow: "Nauka," 1977), 184; Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za mai 1926 g., 5 iulia 1926 g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 4: 314–316; Svodka N 24 Severo-Dvinskogo Gubotdela OGPU za vremia s 23 po 30 iiulia 1926 g., in Dobronozhenko, *VChK-OGPU*, 120–121.
49. Iz informsvodki No. 4 informotdela OGPU ob otnoshenii krest'ian k novomu nalogu na 10 iiulia 1926 g., 12 iiulia 1926 g., in *SDG2*, 431.

50. Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za mai 1925 g., 3 iiulia 1925 goda, in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 3: 303.
51. Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za iiun' 1925 g., iiulia 1925 goda, in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 3: 368–369; Iz svodki No. 11 materialov informotdela OGPU po zemleustroistvu, lesoustroistvu i otdel'nym voprosam sel'skogo khoziaistva s 30 aprelia do 10 maia 1925 g., 11 maia 1925 g., in *SDG2*, 303–310; Svodka No. 4 materialov informotdela OGPU po zemleustroitvu v natsional'nykh vostochnykh respublikakh i avtonomnykh oblastiakh na 15 noiabria 1925 g., 21 noiabria 1925 g., in *SDG2*, 344–358.
52. On the centrality of arson in peasant conflict, see Cathy A. Frierson, *All Russia is Burning!: A Cultural History of Fire and Arson in Late Imperial Russia* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2002).
53. *S"ezdy sovetov Soiuza SSR, soiuznykh i avtonomnykh sovetskikh sotsialisticheskikh respublik: sbornik dokumentov, 1917–1937 gg.* 7 vols. (Moscow: Gos. Izd-vo iurid. Lit-ry, 1959–1965) 3: 84, quoted in Edward Hallett Carr and R. W. Davies, *Foundations of a Planned Economy, 1926–1929* (London: Macmillan, 1969) 1: 228–229.
54. Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za avgust 1926 g., 29 sentiabria 1926 g., Prolozhenie No. 5: Zemleustroistvo, in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 4: 600–607.
55. Iz informsvodki No. 3 informotdela OGPU o zemleustroistve natsional'nykh vostochnykh respublik i avtonomnykh oblastei na 25 oktiabria 1926 g., 1 noiabria 1926 g., in *SDG2*, 460–468.
56. Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za dekabr' 1926 g., 3 fevralia 1927 g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 4: 914–915; Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za dekabr' 1926 g., 3 fevralia 1927 g., Prilozhenie No. 3: Sel'skokhoziaistvennyi nalog, in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 4: 962–966. Iz obzora informotdela OGPU o politicheskom sostoianii SSSR za dekabr' 1926 g., ne ranee 1 ianvaria 1927 g., in *SDG2*, 473–474.
57. Iz obzora informotdela OGPU o politicheskom sostoianii SSSR za sentiabr' 1926 g., ne ranee 1 oktiabria 1926 g., in *SDG2*, 445–453.
58. Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za dekabr' 1926 g., 3 fevralia 1927 g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 4: 917–926.
59. Ibid., 926.

Chapter 5

1. Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za dekabr' 1926 g., 3 fevralia 1927g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 4: 920–923.

2. Carr and Davies, *Foundations of a Planned Economy*, 2: 274–281.
3. Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za ianvar' 1927 g., fevralia 1927g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 5: 31–40; Iz informatsionnoi svodki Otdela informatsii i politkontrolia OGPU No. 1 (44) s 30 dekabria 1926 g. po 6 ianvaria 1927 g., 6 ianvaria 1927 g., in *SDG2*, 487–488.
4. On the stability of the *mir* in opposition to the village soviet, see Donald J. Male, *RussianPeasant Organisation before Collectivisation: A Study of Commune and Gathering 1925–1930* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971).
5. Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za ianvar' 1927 g., fevralia 1927g., Prilozhenie No. 4: Vybory sel'sovetov, in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 5: 68–98; Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za fevral' 1927 g., 7 aprelia1927g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 5: 136–146.
6. Iz informatsionnoi svodki Otdela informatsii i politkontrolia OGPU No. 3 s 14 po 20 ianvaria 1927 g., 20 ianvaria 1927 g., in *SDG2*, 494–495.
7. Informatsionnaia svodka No. 4 materialov informotdela OGPU po perevyboram sel'sovetov o rabote po organizatsii bednoty na 15 fevralia 1927 g., 19 fevralia 1927 g., in *SDG2*, 504–509; Informatsionnyi otchet o rabote Vologodskogo Gubkoma VKP(b) za period: noviabr' 1926 g.-mai 1927 g., in Dobronozhenko, *VChK-OGPU*, 131–133.
8. Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za ianvar' 1927 g., fevralia 1927g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 5: 35–36; Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za fevral' 1927 g., 7 aprelia1927g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 5: 139–141.
9. Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za fevral' 1927 g., 7 aprelia1927g., Prilozhenie No. 3: Perevybory sel'sovetov, in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 5: 179–194; Informatsionnaia svodka No. 9 materialov informotdela OGPU po perevyboram sel'sovetov (o rabote izbirkomov po lisheniu izbiratel'nykh prav) na 1 marta 1927 g., 16 marta 1927 g., in *SDG2*, 516–535.
10. Vypiska informotdela OGPU iz doklada Belorusskogo otdela OGPU o nastroeniiakh krestiianstva ot 21 iiunia 1927 r., 23 iiunia 1927 g., in *SDG2*, 567–568.
11. Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za ianvar' 1927 g., fevralia 1927g., Prilozhenie No. 5: Antisovetskie proiavleniia v derevne; Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za fevral' 1927 g., 7 aprelia 1927g., Prilozhenie No. 4: Trebovaniia krest'ian na vyborakh; Obzor

politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za mart 1927 g., 3 maia 1927g., Prilozhenie No. 4: Antisovetskie proiavleniia v derevne; Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za aprel' 1927 g., 25 maia1927g., Prilozhenie No. 2: Krest'ianskie soiuzy, in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 5: 99–106, 199–204, 283–285, 340–342.

12. Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za aprel' 1927 g., 25 maia1927g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 5: 317–319.
13. Iz informatsionnoi svodki Otdela informatsii i politkontrolia OGPU No. 11 s 15 po 21 marta 1927 g., 22 marta 1927 g., in *SDG2*, 537.
14. Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za aprel' 1927 g., 25 maia1927g.; Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za mai 1927 g., iiunia1927g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 5: 323–324, 366–367; quotation, Iz informatsionnoi svodki Otdela informatsii i politkontrolia OGPU No. 16 s 23 aprelia po 6 maia 1927 g., 7 maia 1927 g., in *SDG2*, 563.
15. Iz shifrtelegrammy Sekretnogo otdela OGPU v Kirenskii okrotdel OGPU i PP OGPU po Sibkraiu, 10 iunia 1927 g., in *SDG2*, 542.
16. Doklad Severo-Dvinskogo GOOGPU ob antisovetskikh proiavleniakh v derevne, in Dobronozhenko, *VChK-OGPU,* 140–143.
17. John P. Sontag, "The Soviet War Scare of 1926–27," *Russian Review* 34, no. 1 (1975): 66–77.
18. Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za fevral' 1927 g., 7 aprelia1927g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 5: 147–148.
19. Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za aprel' 1927 g., 25 maia1927g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 5: 321–322; Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za mai 1927 g., iiunia1927g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 5: 370–371.
20. Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za mart 1927 g., 3 maia 1927g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 5:251–252; Iz informatsionnoi svodki Otdela informatsii i politkontrolia OGPU No. 22 s 20 iiulia po 3 avgusta 1927 g., in V. Danilov, R. Manning, and L. Viola, eds., *Tragediia sovetskoi derevni: kollektivizatsiia i raskulachivanie. Dokumenty i materialy v 5 tomakh, 1927–1939* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 1999–2006) 1: 84–86. (Hereafter *TSD1*).
21. V. P. Danilov, "Vvedenie (Istoki i nachalo derevenskoi tragedii)," *TSD1*, 22–32, demonstrates how Stalin used the war scare of 1927 to move against his opponents in the party and against the peasantry. He concludes, however, that "no threat of war existed in 1927, and the Stalinist leadership fully understood this" (23). His argument against a genuine fear of renewed war is unconvincing.

22. Iz informatsionnoi svodki Otdela informatsii i politkontrolia OGPU No. 17 s 7 maia po 20 maia 1927 g., 26 maia 1927 g., in *SDG2*, 565.
23. Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za iiul' 1927 g., 5 sentiabria 1927g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 5: 518–519.
24. Iz informatsionnoi svodki Otdela informatsii i politkontrolia OGPU No. 22 s 20 iiulia po 3 avgusta 1927 g., in *TSD1*, 84–85.
25. Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za mai 1927 g., iiunia1927g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 5: 367.
26. Iz informatsionnoi svodki Otdela informatsii i politkontrolia OGPU No. 23 s 3 po 16 avgusta 1927 g., 16 avgusta 1927 g., in *SDG2*, 572, 574.
27. Iz informatsionnoi svodki Otdela informatsii I politkontrolia OGPU No. 22 s 20 iiulia po 3 avgusta 1927 g., in *TSD1*, 85.
28. Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za iiun' 1927 g., 11 avgusta 1927g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 5: 423.
29. Informatsionnaia politsvodka N 1 na 15 iiulia 1927 g. (Vologodskii Gubkom VKP(b)), in Dobronozhenko, *VChK-OGPU*, 144.
30. Iz informatsionnoi svodki Otdela informatsii i politkontrolia OGPU No. 24 s 17 po 26 avgusta 1927 g., 27 avgusta 1927 g., in *SDG2*, 576.
31. Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za iiul' 1927 g., 5 sentiabria 1927g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 5: 492–501.
32. Iz informatsionnoi svodki Otdela informatsii i politkontrolia OGPU No. 26 s 7 po 16 sentiabria 1927 g., 17 sentiabria 1927 g., in *SDG2*, 579.
33. Iz informatsionnoi svodki Otdela informatsii i politkontrolia OGPU No. 26 s 7 po 16 sentiabria 1927 g., 17 sentiabria 1927 g., in *SDG2*, 580.
34. Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za iiul' 1927 g., 5 sentiabria 1927g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 5: 492–510.
35. Iz informatsionnoi svodki Otdela informatsii i politkontrolia OGPU No. 29 s 1 po 21 oktiabria 1927 g., 22 oktiabria 1927 g., in *SDG2*, 587–594; Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za dekabr' 1927 g., no date, in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 5: 667–688; Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za ianvar' 1928 g., fevralia 1928 g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 6: 45–71. On the conflict between the regulated grain market and the more free meat/dairy market, see R. W. Davies, *The Socialist Offensive: The Collectivisation of Soviet Agriculture, 1929–1930* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980), 27, 39–41.
36. Manning, "The Rise and Fall of the Extraordinary Measures," 2.

37. Osoboe prilozhenie k informatsionnoi svodke N 24 Komi (Zyrianskogo) oblastnogo otdeleniia OGPU za vremia s 15-e po 30-e noiabria 1927 g., in Dobronozhenko, *VChK-OGPU,* 154–157.
38. Carr and Davies, *Foundations of a Planned Economy,* 1: 483–501.
39. Informatsionnaia svodka No. 31 za 5–21 noiabria 1927 g., 22 noiabria 1927 g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno,*" 5: 629–630; Informatsionnai svodka No. 32 za 22 noiabria-6 dekabria 1927 g., 7 dekabria 1927 g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno,*" 5: 640–641.
40. Informatsionnaia svodka No. 33 za 28 dekabria 1927 g., 29 dekabria 1927 g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno,*" 5: 648–655; Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za dekabr' 1927 g., no date, in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno,*" 5: 667–688; Informatsionnaia svodka N 19 Komi (zyrianskogo) oblastnogo otdela OGPU za vremia s 1-e po 15-e sentiabria 1927 g., in Dobronozhenko, *VChK-OGPU,* 152. On the clash between Soviet authority and village culture over *samosud,* seeTracy McDonald, "Face to Face with the Peasant: Village and State in Russia, 1921–1930," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Toronto, 2003), 195–241. On the prerevolutionary problem of *samosud,* see Frank, "Popular Justice, Community and Culture among the Russian Peasantry."
41. Alan Ball, *Russia's Last Capitalists: The Nepmen, 1921–1929* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987).
42. *Kommunisticheskaia partiia Sovetskogo Soiuza v rezoliutsiiakh i resheniiakh s"ezdov, konferentsii i plenumov TsK,* 8th ed. (Moscow: Izd-vo polit. lit-ry,1970–1973), 3: 160;quoted in Alan Ball, "NEP's Second Wind: 'The New Trade Practice'," *Soviet Studies* 37, no. 3 (1985): 377.
43. Iz spetssvodki Otdela informatsii i politkontrolia OGPU ob otnoshenii krest'ianstva k arestam, provodimym v iiune-iiule 1927g., 23 iiulia 1927 g., in *TSD1*, 77–82.
44. Iz tsirkuliara EKU OGPU "O podrotovke k massovoi operatsii na kozhevenno-syr'evom rynke SSSR," 7 sentiabria 1927 g., in *TSD1*, 86–88; Report of Smolensk Gubotdel OGPU to Ukom, September 14, 1927, in Smolensk Archive, WKP 144: 9.
45. Dokladnaia zapiska OGPU v SNK SSSR o neobkhodimosti primeneniia repressii v otnoshenii chastnykh torgovtsev, 29 oktiabria 1927 g., in *TSD1*, 100–101.
46. Iz obzora Tul'skogo gubotdela OGPU o khode khebozagotovok i sostoianii rynka po materialam na 10 ianvaria 1928 g., 10 ianvaria 1928 g., in *SDG2*, 644. Between September 1927 and September 1929, the free market price for wheat in the grain-surplus areas rose by as much as 289 percent. The price of rye flour on the private

market in the grain-deficit zone increased by 354 percent: Davies, *The Socialist Offensive*, 47–48.

47. Svodka No. 5 EKU OGPU o khebozagotovitel'noi kampanii 1927/28 goda i natroenii krest'ianstva, 11 ianvaria 1928 g., in *TSD1*, 142.
48. Hagenloh, *Stalin's Police*, 52–53.
49. Svodka No. 1 EKU OGPU o khode i resul'tatakh repressii OGPU protiv speculiativnykh elementov na khebnom, syr'evom i manufakturnom rynkakh SSSR, 13 ianvaria 1928 g., in *SDG2*, 653–655; Dokladnaia zapiska EKU OGPU o provedenii massovykh represii protiv spekuliativnykh elementov na khlebnom rynke SSSR, 8 fevralia 1928 g., in *SDG2*, 682–684.
50. Svodka EKU OGPU o kolichestve arestovannykh spekuliativnykh elementov po massovym operatsiiam, 2 aprelia 1928 g., in *TSD1*, 231.
51. Iz dokladnoi zapiski informotdela OGPU ob antisovetskikh proiavleniiakh v derevne za 1925–1927 gg., ne ranee 1 marta 1928 g., in *SDG2*, 626–641.
52. Ibid., 627.
53. See too the December 1927 monthly report on the political situation in the USSR where the same logic was applied to "agitation for peasant unions": Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za dekabr' 1927 g., no date, in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 5: 667–688.
54. Svodka No. 5 EKU OGPU o khebozagotovitel'noi kampanii 1927/28 goda i natroenii krest'ianstva, 11 ianvaria 1928 g., in *TSD1*, 143–144.
55. Article 107 of the original version of the RSFSR Criminal Code of 1926 imposed a maximum one year's imprisonment and possible confiscation of property for maliciously raising prices by purchases or by hiding and withholding goods from the market. Section two provided for up to three years' imprisonment and confiscation of property for collusion between traders. For the evolution of this law, see R. Beermann, "The Grain Problem and Anti-Speculation Laws," *Soviet Studies* 19, no. 1 (1967):127–129.
56. V. P. Danilov, "Vvedenie (Istoki i nachalo derevenskoi tragedii)," *TSD1*, 28–46; Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za ianvar' 1928 g., fevralia1928 g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 6: 32; Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za fevral' 1928 g., 31 marta1928 g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 6: 103.
57. Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za mart 1928 g., aprelia 1928 g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 6: 169–183.

58. Dokladnaia zapiska Ul'ianovskogo gubotdela OGPU o sostoianii khebo zagotovitel'nogo rynka Ul'ianovskoi gub., ne ranee 15 ianvaria 1929 g., in *SDG2*, 658; Iz svodki No. 9 EKU OGPU o khlebozagotovitel'noi kampanii 1927/28 goda, 23 ianvaria 1928 g., in *SDG2*, 663.
59. Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za fevral' 1928 g., 31 marta1928 g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 6: 113–140; Svodka No. 16 informotdela OGPU o khode khebozagotovitel'noi kampanii i politnastroenii krest'ianstva v sviazi s meropriiatiiami po usileniiu khebozagotovok, ne ranee 5 fevralia 1928 g., in *SDG2*, 672–682; Iz informatsionnoi svodki Upravleniia OGPU po Sibkraiu "Otnoshenie partiitsev i komsomol'tsev k provodimym meropriiatiiam no khebozagotovkam," 10 fevravlia 1928 g., in *SDG2*, 684–686.
60. N. A. Ivnitskii,*Klassovaia bor'ba v derevne i likvidatsiia kulachestva kak klassa (1929–1932 gg.)* (Moscow: "Nauka," 1972), 52–53, estimates that the increase of the highest tax rates impacted some 6 percent of peasant households. Previously less than 1 percent had been taxed at the highest rate.
61. Charles Bailey Hier, "Party, Peasants and Power in a Russian District: The Winning of Peasant Support for Collectivization in Sychevka *Raion*, 1928–1931" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pittsburgh, 2004), 112–122.
62. Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za fevral' 1928 g., 31 marta1928 g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 6: 127; Iz svodok No. 19, 20, i 22 informotdela OGPU o klebozagotovitel'noi kampanii i politicheskom nastroennii krest'ianstva Sibirskogo kraia v sviazi s meropriiatiiami po usileniiu khebozagotovok, ne ranee 15 fevraliia 1928 g., in *SDG2*, 689–694.
63. Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za mart 1928 g., aprelia 1928 g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 6: 180–183.
64. Otvetstvennomu sekretar' Roslavl'skogo Ukom"a VKP (b), Politsostoianie uezda [June 1928], in Smolensk Archive, WKP 144: 15–16; Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za mai 1928 g., iiunia 1928 g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 6: 267–271.
65. Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za aprel' 1928 g., maia 1928 g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 6: 223–225.
66. Svodka No. 21 informotdela OGPU o khode khebozagotovitel'noi kampanii ii politnastroenii krest'ianstva v sviazi s meropriiatiami po usileniiu khebozagotovok, ne ranee 20 fevralia 1928 g., in *SDG2*, 709–720.
67. Svodka No. 23 materialov informotdela OGPU ob otritsatel'nykh momentakh v deiatel'nosti sel'skikh kommunistov v sviazi s

provedeniem meropriiatii po usileniiu khebozagotovok po sostoianiiu na 20 fevralia 1928 g., 5 marta 1928 g., in *SDG2*, 723–731.

68. Svodka No. 28 informotdela OGPU o khode vesennei klebozagotovitel'noi kampanii po Sibkraiu, no pozdnee 5 iiunia 1928 g., in *SDG2*, 749. The "lower apparatus" in Siberia came in for special condemnation for a "peasant inclination": Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za iiun' 1928 g., iiulia1928 g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 6: 332–333.
69. Svodka No. 28 informotdela OGPU o khode vesennei klebozagotovitel'noi kampanii po Sibkraiu, no pozdnee 5 iiunia 1928 g., in *SDG2*, 753.
70. Report of Smolensk gubotdel OGPU, Smolensk Archive, WKP 144, unpaginated but before page 15, May 30, 1928.
71. Otvestvennomu sekretar' Roslavl'skogo Ukom"a VKP (b). Politsostoianie uezda, Smolensk Archive, WKP 144: 16.
72. Spetssvodka No. 1 informotdela OGPU o khode khebozagotovitel'noi kampanii na 20 avgusta 1928 g., 28 avgusta 1928 g., in *SDG2*, 766–773.
73. Spetssvodka No. 4 informotdela OGPU o khode osennei posevnoi kampanii 1928 g., ne ranee 28 sentiabria 1928 g., in *SDG2*, 775–779.
74. Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za iiun' 1928 g., iiulia1928 g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 6: 332–333. Hier, "Party, Peasants and Power in a Russian District," argues that at this time significant support for the antikulak, anti-well-to-do peasant campaign did indeed exist among the poorer peasants of the Western Oblast. This appears to be something of an aberration.
75. Iz doklada Sekretnogo otdela OGPU "Antisovetskoe dvizhenie v derevne," Oktiabr' 1928 g., in *SDG2*, 780–817.
76. On the serviceability of the construct "*podkulachnik*," see Lynne Viola, *Peasant Rebels Under Stalin: Collectivization and the Culture of Peasant Resistance* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 34–35.
77. Vyderzhki iz derevenskoi korrespondentsii, idyshchei v Krasnuiu Armiiu, Fevral' 1929 g., in *SDG2*, 839–843.
78. Svodka informotdela OGPU No. 17 o khode khebozagotovitel'noi kampanii i politnastroenii krest'ianstva v sviazi s meropriiatiiami po usileniiu khebozagotovok, ne ranee 10 fevralia 1929 g., in *SDG2*, 844.
79. Obzor politicheskogo sostoianiia SSSR za dekabr' 1928 g., ianvaria1929 g., in Sevost'ianov, "*Sovershenno sekretno*," 6: 622–626.

80. Iz dokladnoi zapiski informotdela OGPU o prodovol'stvennom polozhenii sel'slikh mestnostei SSSR po materialam na 1 iiunia 1929 g., ne ranee 1 iunia 1929 g., Prilozhenie No. 1, Golod, upotreblenie v pishchu surrogatom khleba, zabolevaniia, opukhaniia i smertnye sluchai na pochve goloda, in *SDG2*, 879–881.
81. James Hughes, *Stalinism in a Russian Province: A Study of Collectivization and Dekulakization in Siberia* (London: Macmillan Press Ltd, 1996), 24.
82. Spravka INFO OGPU o politnastroenii krest'ianstva Barnaul'skogo okruga v sviazi s poslednimi meropriatiiami po khebozagotovkam po materialam na 13 aprelia 1929 g., 24 aprelia 1929 g., in *SDG2*, 864–871.
83. Hughes, *Stalinism in a Russian Province*, 45–49.
84. Davies, *The Socialist Offensive*, 57–58.
85. "We will now move from a policy of limiting the exploitative tendencies of the kulaks to a policy of the liquidation of the kulaks, as a class": I. Stalin, "K voprosam agrarnoi politiki v SSSR: Rech' na konferentsii agrarnikov-marksistov 27 dekabria 1929 g.," in *Sochineniia*, 13 vols. (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1945–1952), 12: 169.
86. Hagenloh, *Stalin's Police*, 54.
87. Hagenloh, *Stalin's Police*, especially 1–57.

Conclusion

1. Davies, *The Socialist Offensive*, 109–147.
2. I. Stalin, "God velikogo pereloma: K XII godovshchinen Oktiabria," in *Sochineniia*, 12:124–125, published in *Pravda*, November 7, 1929.
3. Fitzpatrick, *Stalin's Peasants*, 49, argues that the "failure" to provide direction was not some oversight but a strategy to get local cadres scrambling for the maximum both to secure the fastest possible results and to determine just what was the maximum possible.
4. Raskulachivanie i iskrivlenie linii v raskulachivanii, in Smolenk Archive, WKP 260: 5.
5. Informatsionnaia svodka peregibakh v raskulachivanii, obobshchestvlenii imushchestva v kolkhozakh i t.d., in Smolensk Archive, WKP 260: 7–11.
6. Raskulachivanie i iskrivlenie linii v raskulachivanii, in Smolenk Archive, WKP 260: 5.
7. WKP 260: 8.

8. I. Stalin, "Golovokruzhenie ot uspekhov," in *Sochineniia*, 12:191–199, published in *Pravda*, March 2, 1930.
9. Hughes, *Stalinism in a Russian Province*, 198–203.
10. This is particularly true for the more popular works. For examples, see Louise I. Shelley, *Policing Soviet Society: The Evolution of State Control* (New York: Routledge, 1996); Amy W. Knight, *KGB, Police and Politics in the Soviet Union* (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1988); Ronald Hingley, *Russian Secret Police: Muscovite, Imperial Russian, and Soviet Political Security Operations* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1971); Robert Conquest, ed., *The Soviet Police System* (New York: F. A. Praeger, 1968).
11. For a debate on how "real" this imagination was among the peasantry, see Pavel Grigor'evich Ryndziunskii, "Ideinaia storona krest'ianskikh dvizhenii 1770–1850-kh godov i metody ee izucheniia, *Voprosy istorii*, no. 5. (1983): 4–16, and Daniel Field, *Rebels in the Name of the Tsar* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1976).
12. Kivelson, "The Devil Stole His Mind," would place a possible break between tsar and people in 1648 with the Moscow uprising against tsar Aleksei's favorites. But she is dealing with the capital-city service nobility, musketeers (*streltsy*), and townsmen, not the peasantry whom I address here. Her argument that Muscovites felt alienated from the growing bureaucratic ("routinized") state further does not indicate that they had defined the then ruling tsar as not "true."
13. Geoffrey Hosking, *Russia: People and Empire, 1552–1917* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), 218.
14. Teodor Shanin, *Russia, 1905–07: Revolution as a Moment of Truth*, vol. 2 of *The Roots of Otherness: Russia's Turn of Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), 120–137.
15. Paul Gilroy, "*There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack": The Cultural Politics of Race and Nation* (London: Hutchinson, 1987).
16. James Scott, "Protest and Profanation: Agrarian Revolt and the Little Tradition, Part I," *Theory and Society* 4, no. 1 (1977): 10.
17. Brovkin, *Russia after Lenin*, constantly refers to peasant opposition to the Bolsheviks as being based on "common sense"; the NEP peasants' sense of what was right and natural, however, was only "common" were one's culture rooted in the Old Belief.
18. Yanni Kotsonis, *Making Peasants Backward: Agricultural Cooperatives and the Agrarian Question in Russia, 1861–1914* (New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1999)
19. Ranajit Guha, *Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency in Colonial India* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1983).

20. Carr argues, *Socialism in One Country*, 2: 362: "In the summer of 1925 it [the wager on the *kulak*] was a policy which, except to a few party stalwarts and doctrinaires, seemed to make unimpeachable good sense."
21. Lynne Viola, ed., *Contending with Stalinism: Soviet Power and Popular Resistance in the 1930s* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002).

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