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**ACCESSION OF SOUTHERN BESSARABIA TO THE
UKRAINIAN SSR IN THE DOCUMENTS
OF THE SOVIET SECRET SERVICES**

Abstract: Based on the archival documents and materials, the article examines the activities of Soviet state security authorities in Southern Bessarabia (since the annexation of the Cahul-Izmail-Bolhrad strip to the Ukrainian SSR), aimed at building a Soviet-style political system in the region, combating “anti-Soviet manifestations and anti-Soviet elements” and aiming at the repressions of various categories of citizens, including the Orthodox clergy. The paper focuses on the functioning of special groups staffed by the officers from various departments of the People’s Commissariat of Internal Affairs of the USSR, that conducted activities in the towns of Northern Bukovina and Bessarabia. Based on the documents of the Soviet secret services, the socio-political and economic situation in Akkerman and Izmail counties in the second half of 1940 is depicted, as well as the peculiarities of the Bessarabian Germans’ repatriation to Germany or the reaction of the population of the Ukrainian SSR to the adoption of the Law “On the Inclusion of the Northern Part of Bukovina and Khotyn, Akkerman and Izmail Counties of Bessarabia into the Ukrainian SSR” by the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

Keywords: Southern Bessarabia, annexation, People’s Commissariat of Internal Affairs of the USSR, repressions, Orthodox Church, Bessarabian Germans.

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The accession of Bessarabia and the northern part of Bukovina to the USSR in June-July 1940 was preceded by a thorough preparatory campaign on the scale of the All-Union state and party leadership centre and punitive law enforcement agencies and departments. To solve the “Bessarabian question”, the Stalinist leadership of the USSR used political and diplomatic levers and military propaganda measures. Referring to the illegal armed shelling of the Soviet territories, the Red Army Command (the Workers’ and Peasants’ Red Army – RSCA) began concentrating troops along the border with Romania since April 1940. In the first decade of June 1940, the Military Councils of the Kyiv Special Military District (KOVO) and the Odesa Military District (ODO) were sent a directive by the People’s Commissar of Defense of the USSR, that obliged the territorial military operational-strategic associations to put their troops on alert, to concentrate them on the Romanian border, and to develop an operation to invade Bessarabia. On the basis of the units of the Kyiv Special and Odesa Military Districts, the General Staff of the Red Army formed the Southern Front headed by General of the Army G. Zhukov. Military political bodies began to actively prepare for the future propaganda work in the annexed territories of Romania, they established the editorial offices of Romanian-language newspapers, organized the concert brigades, created propaganda posters about the “liberation mission” of the Red Army and the portraits of the party and state leadership of the USSR. At the same time, the Kremlin obliged the Comintern to begin the implementation of the political actions aimed at the annexation of Northern Bukovina and Bessarabia. At the end of June 1940, the Executive Committee of the Communist International prepared the lists for the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine Mykyta Khrushchov. They included the lists of the members of the Communist Party of Romania from among the “Bessarabians and Bukovinians”, who were in the USSR and Romania and could be used for the Party work in Bessarabia and Bukovina”, as well as a “list of provocateurs and persons who cooperated with Siguranza”¹.

¹ Письма отделов кадров ИККИ на имя Генерального секретаря ИККИ Г. М. Димитрова с приложением данных о составе Бессарабского обкома Компартии Румынии, членов КПП бессарабов и румын, находящихся в СССР, которые могли бы быть использованы на партийной работе, списки провокаторов и лиц, подозреваемых в связях с румынской сигуранцей и др. Письмо Г.М. Димитрова на имя Н.С. Хрущева с характеристикой на Скворцова (члена Политбюро ЦК КП Румынии) и Моргенштерна (члена Бессарабского обкома КП Румынии), 25 июня 1940 – 4 июля 1940, оп. 20, спр. 7376, арк. 4, Центральный комитет компартии Украины, м. Київ (1), Центральный державний архів громадських організацій України (ЦДАГО України), Київ / Central State Archives of Public Organizations of Ukraine, Kyiv.

During the preparation of the “liberation mission” of the Red Army, the People’s Commissariat of Internal Affairs of the Ukrainian SSR formed several operative-Chekist groups to promote the establishment of the Soviet totalitarian regime in the “liberated” territories. The operational unit of the State Security Captain Oleksandr Martynov was instructed to expand its work in the towns of Northern Bukovyna (Khotyn, Chernivtsi and Byeltsi counties). A special operational unit led by the State Security Senior Lieutenant Mykola Kazin was to enter the territory with regular Soviet troops and gain a foothold in Kyshyniv, Orhiyiv and Soroky (in the territory of the future Moldavian SSR). The group of the State Security Major Mykola Sazykin was to take control of the southern direction of the territories of Bessarabia, namely Akkerman and Izmail regions (Akkerman, Bendery, Comrat, Cahul, Bolhrad, Izmail)². Before the military operation on June 28, 1940, the staff of the special operational unit gathered in Kyiv to get acquainted with the operational situation in the areas of the future deployment and the list of tasks to be solved during operational and investigative activities: the identification of the former gendarmes, policemen, agents of Ciguranza; identification of foreign intelligence agents; the fight against espionage, sabotage, terrorism and other counter-revolutionary activities in the controlled territory. After the meeting, the operational units were sent to the western border with Romania.

At 10 p.m. on June 26, 1940, the People’s Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the USSR V. Molotov handed an ultimatum to the Romanian envoy G. Davidescu, demanding the return of Bessarabia and the transfer of Northern Bukovina to the USSR. Official Bucharest, in the absence of support from leading Western powers, was forced to agree to the evacuation of its troops to avoid a military conflict with the USSR.

On June 28, 1940, Soviet troops crossed the Dniester and entered the territory of Bessarabia and the northern part of Bukovina, and occupied Chernivtsi, Khotyn, Kyshyniv and Akkerman without a fight. On the morning of June 29, 1940, the leadership of the NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR telegraphed the Commissioner of State Security of the 1st rank L. Beriia about the reaction of the inhabitants of the capital of Ukraine to the annexation of Bessarabia. The special report referred to the raised Kievans’ sense of pride for the Soviet Union and a “sense of power” in connection with the accession of the Danube lands to the USSR “without a drop of blood.” Soviet secret services drew the attention of the People’s Commissar of Internal Affairs of the USSR to the powerful militaristic euphoria that gripped the residents of the capital of the Ukrainian SSR, “A remarkable success. Now you need

² Сергей Степашин, ред., *Органы государственной безопасности СССР в Великой Отечественной войне*. В 2 томах, т. 1, кн. 1. *Накануне (ноябрь 1938 г. – декабрь 1940 г.)*. (Москва : Книга и бизнес, 1995), 205-8.

to receive Transcarpathian Ukraine” (a proofreader of the “Communist” Publishing House Koshelnyk); “Now it is Turkey’s turn ... We must surround ourselves with the states like Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. The main thing now is that the war in the West will not end so soon, we must take some more pieces” (an employee of the Main Directorate for Literature and Publishing I. Orlyand); “Now, with our permission, Bulgaria will demand Dobruja from Romania... It is good to live in a country like ours. How much strength and confidence is felt in Molotov’s note – “Immediately cleanse” and that is all” (the Head of the Office of the Young Author of the State Publishing House of the National Minorities of the Ukrainian SSR O. Shapiro); “... There is so much intelligence and wisdom in our behaviour. What a brilliant success. We need the Dardanelles now, only this will give us protection at the side of the Black Sea” (a literary contributor to the newspaper “Der Stern” Kvitnyy).³

Positive responses to the Soviet leadership were interspersed with negative remarks, which were certainly reflected by the informants of the secret services, “The occupation of Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina by our troops is an act of aggression by the Soviet Union, which was refused by the Soviet Union before” (an employee of the Institute of Nutrition Budzynovskyy); “We got Bessarabia because Hitler helped us defeat Poland and France. In fact, all our conquests should be considered as Hitler’s gifts” (a former Socialist Revolutionary Kerkis); “There will be tears and grief again. After the occupation of Bessarabia, they will begin cleansing operations against the foreign elements, and this will bring suffering to the people” (an employee of the Health Education Station Gaideman).⁴

The NKVD operational units immediately started their work in the newly annexed territories. According to the report of the NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR № 2135/CH to the NKVD of the USSR “On the work of the operative-Chekest groups in Bessarabia” of July 3, 1940, the operational group of M. Sazykin, that

³ Документи (телеграми, доповідні, повідомлення, списки, протоколи допиту) НКВС МАСРР-МРСР, НКВС УРСР та НКВС СРСР про результати роботи оперативно-чекістських груп на території Бессарабії та Північної Буковини, наявність консульств іноземних держав у Бессарабії, надзвичайні події. Листування УРСР з оперативними групами НКВС у Бессарабії з питань розгортання агентурно-оперативно-слідчої роботи. 7 травня 1940 – 28 червня 1940, оп. 1, спр. 401, арк. 266-8, Секретаріат ДПУ УСРР – КДБ УРСР, ГДА СБУ, м. Київ (16), Галузевий державний архів Служби безпеки України (ГДА СБУ), Київ / Sectoral State Archive of the Security Service of Ukraine (GDA SBU), Kyiv.

⁴ Документи (телеграми, доповідні, повідомлення, списки, протоколи допиту) НКВС МАСРР-МРСР, НКВС УРСР та НКВС СРСР, 7 травня 1940 – 28 червня 1940, Секретаріат ДПУ УСРР – КДБ УРСР, (16): 269, 276, ГДА СБУ, Київ.

acted in the southern direction of Bessarabia, arrested 227 people, among them in the towns: Akkerman – 38 people, Bendery – 47 people, Comrat – 42 people, Cahul – 53 people, Bolhrad – 11 people, Izmail – 36 people⁵. However, the People's Commissar of Internal Affairs of the Ukrainian SSR Ivan Serov was dissatisfied with Major M. Sazykin's agency and operational activities in the densely populated areas of Akkerman, Bendery, Cahul, and Izmail counties and suggested that Lubyanka strengthen the operational unit with the extra 150 NKVD officers⁶. During the organizational activities that took place in the first decade of July 1940, the operative-Chekist group of M. Sazykin was divided into 4 sectors: Bendery County (the Head of the County Department, the State Security Junior Lieutenant Linyev); Akkerman County (the Head of the County Department, the State Security Junior Lieutenant Bobrov); Cahul County (the Head of the County Department, the State Security Junior Lieutenant Sorokin); Izmail County (the Head of the County Department, the State Security Junior Lieutenant Dolhov). The county department of the NKVD consisted of 15 to 20 operatives, who in turn were divided into agency and operational activities group and investigative group. In addition, in each county department at the cost of the NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR, the head of the county police with the necessary staff, the head of the prison with a staff of guards, the fire chief started their work.

With the arrival in Bessarabia, one of the main tasks for the NKVD county units was to take control and protection of banks, power plants, factories, bakeries, water pumping stations, and warehouses with food and industrial goods. Simultaneously with taking measures to prevent the theft of state and private property, Stalin's secret services and their units began their fieldwork on the seizure of weapons from the population. Between July 28 and July 3, 1940, alone, Sazykin's operational unit seized 3,000 firearms and nearly 200 hand grenades left at random by the Romanian Army.⁷

⁵ Степашин, *Органы государственной безопасности*, 207-8.

⁶ Документи (телеграми, доповідні, повідомлення, списки, протоколи допиту) НКВС МАСРР-МРСР, НКВС УРСР та НКВС СРСР, 7 травня 1940 – 28 червня 1940, Секретаріат ДПУ УСРР – КДБ УРСР, (16): 74-5, ГДА СБУ, Київ.

⁷ Документи (телеграми, доповідні, повідомлення, списки, протоколи допиту) НКВС МАСРР-МРСР, НКВС УРСР та НКВС СРСР про результати роботи оперативно-чекістських груп на території Бессарабії та Північної Буковини, наявність консульств іноземних держав у Бессарабії, надзвичайні події. Листування УРСР з оперативними групами НКВС у Бессарабії з питань розгортання агентурно-оперативно-слідчої роботи. 7 травня 1940 – 28 червня 1940, оп. 1, спр. 409, арк. 97, Секретаріат ДПУ УСРР – КДБ УРСР, ГДА СБУ, м. Київ (16), Галузевий державний архів Служби безпеки України (ГДА СБУ), Київ / Sectoral State Archive of the Security Service of Ukraine (GDA SBU), Kyiv.

From the first days of the annexation, the NKVD operational units actively searched for Romanian government officials, the members of the National Tsarist Party and National Liberal Party, the gendarmes, the policemen, the security agents, the former White Guardsmen and the soldiers of the Army of the Ukrainian People's Republic on the basis of the materials that were collected beforehand by the 3rd and 5th Departments of the NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR. By July 9, 1940, the number of arrested in the counties was distributed as follows: Akkerman County – 113 people; Izmail – 64; Cahul – 193, as well as Bolhrad – 40 and Reni – 57⁸. By mid-July 1940, the operational groups of O. Martynov, M. Kazin, and M. Sazykin had arrested 1542 people and recruited 957 agents. The subordinates of the State Security Major M. Sazykin “disclosed” a branch of an international monarchical organization in Izmail. According to the plan of the secret services, the branch was “headed” and exercised the organizational leadership from the Serbian city of Belgrade by Major General of the Tsarist Army Inokentiy Zybin. At the same time, a fascist group of German colonists was “revealed” in the village of Shabo in Akkerman County⁹.

Indeed, the German population of Bessarabia was of the greatest operational interest to the Soviet secret services. The People's Commissar of Internal Affairs of the Ukrainian SSR Ivan Serov ordered the subordinate structural units in Budjak to work on the organization “German People's Council of Bessarabia” with its centre in the village of Tarutyne. On July 10, 1940, the NKVD sent an orientation from the centre to the periphery alleging that the diplomats of the Third Reich allegedly used German public organizations in Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina as a cover for intelligence activities against the USSR¹⁰. According to the archival documents, in the last decade of July 1940, a Chekist operation was launched in Southern Bessarabia to find an enemy element from among “landowners, village elders, and tax collectors who carried out the Romanian government's policy in the countryside”¹¹.

⁸ Документи (телеграми, доповідні, повідомлення, списки, протоколи допиту) НКВС МАСРР-МРСР, НКВС УРСР та НКВС СРСР, 7 травня 1940 – 28 червня 1940, оп. 1, спр. 409, Секретаріат ДПУ УСРР – КДБ УРСР, ГДА СБУ, м. Київ (16): 98-9.

⁹ Документи (телеграми, доповідні, повідомлення, списки, протоколи допиту) НКВС МАСРР-МРСР, НКВС УРСР та НКВС СРСР, 7 травня 1940 – 28 червня 1940, оп. 1, спр. 409, Секретаріат ДПУ УСРР – КДБ УРСР, ГДА СБУ, м. Київ (16): 81, 201.

¹⁰ Документи (телеграми, доповідні, повідомлення, списки, протоколи допиту) НКВС МАСРР-МРСР, НКВС УРСР та НКВС СРСР, 7 травня 1940 – 28 червня 1940, оп. 1, спр. 409, Секретаріат ДПУ УСРР – КДБ УРСР, ГДА СБУ, м. Київ (16): 179.

¹¹ Документи (телеграми, доповідні, повідомлення, списки, протоколи допиту) НКВС МАСРР-МРСР, НКВС УРСР та НКВС СРСР, 7 травня 1940 – 28 червня 1940, оп. 1, спр. 409, Секретаріат ДПУ УСРР – КДБ УРСР, ГДА СБУ, м. Київ (16): 203.

With large experience in combating “religious obscurantism” in the 1920s and 1930s, the Communist government struck hard at the Church in the pre-war year, as the Church, while maintaining its long tradition, certainly did not fit into an atheistic society. The repressive Soviet system began an insidious struggle against the priests and other worshipers as early as June 1940, i.e., immediately after the entry of Soviet troops into the annexed lands. The Soviet secret services chose the clergy of the region to be the target of a devastating blow, as it was the pastors who were the bearers of a non-Marxist ideology and morality. Consequently, the pastors’ ideology was a priori hostile, because before that they served the Romanian government for a considerable period (from 1918 to the summer of 1940).

Almost all priests and other members of the clergy were accused of “fascist activities”, “espionage”, “counter-revolution”, “anti-Soviet activities”, involvement in Romanian political parties (“Kuzists”, “Tsaranists”, “Georgist”, “National Liberation Front”) and then repressed. For various reasons, the total number of repressed clergy in Southern Bessarabia remains unclear. However, the scale of crime of the Soviet government against the pastors and the congregation is clear. Thus, the victims of the anti-church campaign were: Fr. Georgy Muntianu, the priest of the church of Nerushay, a lecturer at the Izmail Theological Seminary, who was arrested by the operational group of the Department of State Security of the NKVD in July 1940, along with many members of the Bessarabian intelligentsia (sentenced under Articles 54-13 of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR to 8 years in labour camps)¹². From July 6 to August 1, 1940, the operational group of the Bolhrad Department of the NKVD arrested 12 members of the Tsaranist Party (Peasant Party), mostly parishioners of the Orthodox churches in Bolhrad. The Church Choir-master Vasyl Ahura was imprisoned among other Church activists. According to the decision of a special meeting of the NKVD of the USSR of June 5, 1941, V. Ahura, along with twelve Orthodox Christians, was sentenced to 8 years in labour camps on group charges¹³. The convicts served time in different places: Karaganda (Kazakh SSR), Northeastern camps, Inta and Vorkuta (Komi Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic) camps of the NKVD. On April 28, 1941, the priest of the village of Hadzhi-Kurda (now the village of Kamyshove), Fr. Afanasiy Kostrytskyu, was also arrested under Articles 54-10, Part 1 and 54-13 of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR) Department of the NKVD in Izmail Oblast¹⁴. In June 1941, the

¹² Микола Михайлуца, “Одеський мартиролог”, *Репресії духовенства на Одещині в першій половині 40-х років ХХ ст.* Уклад. Лідія Ковальчук, Георгій Разумов (Одеса : ОКФА, 2005), 874.

¹³ Михайлуца, “Одеський мартиролог”, 876.

¹⁴ Кострицкий Афанасий Васильевич, 1941-1989, оп. 2, спр. 7511, арк. 1-79, Архів управління служби безпеки України в Одеській області. 1927-2006, м. Одеса (Р-8065),

Sarata Regional Department of the NKVD arrested Anton Vustyan, a priest from the village of Matroska of Izmail region, later he was transferred to Vologda Oblast¹⁵. The same operational group of the Tatarbunary Regional Department of the NKVD under Article 54-10 part 1 of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR arrested a priest from the village of Borysivka of Tatarbunary region Pylyp Byelinskyy. The cleric was deported to Eastern Siberia as the Front was approaching¹⁶. The situation at the beginning of the war in June-July 1941 was typical for thousands of those arrested.

The persecution of the clergy and believers by the Communist authorities and the NKVD in the region was not uncommon. The repressive measures against the peasants from Southern Bessarabia, intelligentsia and other segments of society, who were guilty only of living in another socio-political and religious society before the advent of Soviet tyranny, were not uncommon as well.

The rapid advance of Romanian-German troops into Soviet territory led to the surrender of settlements to the enemy, and for this reason, the decisions of the tribunals were mostly reduced to vigilante justice, and sometimes the decisions were absent. Thus, from June 27 to July 3, 1941, 13 people were shot in the Izmail prison (there were 2-3 days between the date of arrest and the date of execution), two people were shot without the court decision¹⁷.

Socialist transformations, ideologization and “cleansing operations” of the “bourgeois-landowner and church elements” during the summer of 1940 – summer 1941, on the whole, led to terrible consequences. They painfully hit the heterogeneous community of Southern Bessarabia, and then led to a sharply polar reaction to the Nazi war against the USSR and provoked the corresponding reflections of some public executions, defining their behaviour in war conditions.

The intensification of the systematic repressive work of the Soviet secret services in Budjak accelerated the long-standing problem of reforming the NKVD in the southern part of Bessarabia. In early August 1940, the leadership of the USSR

Державний архів Одеської області, Одеса / State Archive of the Odesa Oblast (SAOO), Odesa.

¹⁵ Вустян Антоній Титович, 1941-1960, оп. 2, спр. 3609, арк. 1-132. Архів управління служби безпеки України в Одеській області. 1927-2006, м. Одеса (Р-8065), Державний архів Одеської області, Одеса / State Archive of the Odesa Oblast (SAOO), Odesa.

¹⁶ Белинский Филип Иванович, 1942-1959, оп. 2, спр. 3084, арк. 1-44. Архів управління служби безпеки України в Одеській області. 1927-2006, м. Одеса (Р-8065), Державний архів Одеської області, Одеса / State Archive of the Odesa Oblast (SAOO), Odesa.

¹⁷ The list of citizens shot by the NKVD in the prisons of Kyiv and Izmail at the beginning of the Soviet-German war is given in the publication of I. Bukhareva and P. Kulakovsky (see: Бухарева Ирина, Кулаковський Петро, “Списки громадян, розстріляних органами НКВС у в'язницях міст Києва та Ізмаїла (липень 1941 р.)”, *3 архівів ВУЧК-ГПУ-НКВД-КГБ*, no. 1(20), (Winter, 2003: 438-439).

State Security authorities decided to cut special Chekist groups in the newly annexed regions. Instead, on the basis of a secret order of the NKVD of the USSR № 00964 of August 9, 1940, the NKVD Department of Akkerman Oblast of the Ukrainian SSR was established. The appendix to the secret order of the NKVD of the USSR contained a list of local NKVD bodies that were subordinated to the NKVD Department in Akkerman Oblast: the Izmail Regional Department of the NKVD, the Reni Regional Department of the NKVD, the Bolhrad Regional Department of the NKVD, the Kiliya Regional Department of the NKVD, the Novi Troyany Regional Department of the NKVD, the Petrovskyy Regional Department of the NKVD, the Delzhyler (now – Dmytrivka village) Regional Department of the NKVD, the Shabo Regional Department of the NKVD, the Sarata Regional Department of the NKVD, the Starokozache Regional Department of the NKVD, the Volontyryvka Regional Department of the NKVD, the Sturdzen Regional Department of the NKVD, the Tarutyne Regional Department of the NKVD¹⁸. The former deputy head of the NKVD Department in Ternopil Oblast, the State Security Senior Lieutenant O. Sedov, was appointed the head of the NKVD Department in Akkerman Oblast. According to researcher E. Burova, the staff of the Akkerman Oblast Department of the NKVD was formed not only of Ukrainian “Chekists” but also of people from other regions of the Soviet Union, and at the beginning of 1941, it was staffed by only 83%. It is noteworthy that almost 50% of the staff of the NKVD Department in Akkerman Oblast was mostly illiterate, as they had only primary education¹⁹.

In the mid-summer of 1940, a wide range of specific work carried out by Soviet secret services in Southern Bessarabia included tasks related to the processes on population exchange between the Ukrainian SSR and Nazi Germany and Romania. On July 20, 1940, the Stalinist leadership agreed to evacuate Romanian officials, servicemen, and civilians who wanted to leave for Romania. A total of 13750 people expressed a wish to leave²⁰.

¹⁸ Владимирцев Николай, Кокурин Андрей, сост. *НКВД-МВД СССР в борьбе с бандитизмом и вооруженным националистическим подпольем на Западной Украине, в Западной Белоруссии и Прибалтике (1939-1956)*. Сборник документов, (Москва: Объединенная редакция МВД России, 2008), 28-29.

¹⁹ Бурова Євгенія, “Формування і становлення органів НКВС в Південній частині Бессарабії після її входження до складу УРСР (серпень 1940 – лютий 1941 рр.)”. *Актуальні проблеми політики*, вип. 41, (2011): 345-6.

²⁰ Макаруч Володимир, “Обмін населенням при врегулюванні післявоєнних кордонів Української РСР (за підсумками Другої світової війни 1939-1945 рр.)”, *Вісник Національного університету «Львівська політехніка»*, серія: юридичні науки : збірник наукових праць, no. 850 (2016): 455.

On September 5, 1940, a Soviet-German agreement was concluded to evacuate ethnic Germans from Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina. The work of resettlement (the repatriation lasted from September 23 to November 13, 1940, during this process 133138 Germans left the territories that seceded from Romania to the USSR²¹) was immediately taken under control by the USSR secret services. In pursuance of a secret order from L. Beriya, the Akkermann Oblast Department of the NKVD directed its efforts to recruit agents among Germans who were moving to Germany. At the same time, the State Security authorities exercised control over the contribution of money from German farms to the Soviet bank, in particular, the money earned from the sale of the property. Such meticulous attention of the Soviet secret services to the financial deals of the German colonists was caused by the fact that the real estate of displaced persons was subject to nationalization. Numerous detailed notes prepared by the members of the local units of the NKVD included warnings about the secret purchases of German colonists' property by the local population and the military; and specific examples of "combating the speculative element that has intensified the activities in German settlements"²² were provided.

Conclusion

The totalitarian nature of the Soviet state was expressed in the insidious foreign policy towards neighbouring countries, such as Finland, Poland, Romania and others. In this policy of annexation, sometimes very similar to Hitler's one, the Stalinist leadership of the USSR made extensive use of the secret services – the NKVD in pursuing its policy of expanding communist borders. The formation of an extensive chain of the local law enforcement agencies, their active use in punitive and repressive measures against various social groups, the deportation of the German population from the region, etc., became the basis for the Stalinist-Comintern goal in Bessarabia annexed by the USSR.

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²¹ Пасат Валерий, "Эвакуация немецких колонистов с территории Бессарабии и Северной Буковины в 1940 году", *Отечественная история*, no. 2 (1997): 87-106.

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