

RAPPORT

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ONDERWERP: Deportations and Collectivisation in
ESTONIA and LITHUANIA

Economic and Political Situation in ESTONIA.

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S O V I E T U N I O N

ESTONIA

Political/Economic

Deportations and Collectivisation in Estonia. (1949).

A. Deportations

1. In Estonia there was a big wave of deportations in March and April 1949. Information on its extent is conflicting; source estimates the total as 20,000 persons deported from the whole of Estonia. VILJANDIMAA County, where there were formerly many rich farmers, suffered particularly. Source believes there are now very few Estonians left there at all. At any rate, there are now so many Russians in the County that a Russian School has been opened there; and many farms are said to be standing uninhabited in this region.
2. Deportees are mainly selected from the agricultural population. Both political attitude and class background count: farmers who refuse to join collective farms, dubbed "kulaks" have been the main target.
3. Deportees are mainly men; source has heard of many women left behind when their husbands were deported. Old people and children are not normally deported.
4. Deportees have been mainly peasants. There are few landowners left to deport, by now; and the same is largely true of the intelligentsia. Industrial workers are only deported in exceptional cases, when required to work on special tasks in Russia.
5. Whole families, including children, are not normally deported only the father.
6. If the father is deported, the mother is allowed to work, and to keep the children.
7. If she is taken too, but not the children, relatives or neighbours take care of the children; failing this, they are sent to a local Russian kindergarten.
8. a) Deportations are all by rail, apart from local collection. Distances are too great to use road transport; source has never heard of a single case of road transport of deportees.
b) Deportees can take what food and clothes they can carry.
c) There are many stories of deportees travelling for days on end without water, but no proof of deliberate brutality.
9. Deportees are allowed to write to relatives, even to relatives in Western countries, after deportation.
10. All Estonian deportees are sent East of Moscow; some of them to Siberia, but mostly to the Urals. Many are known to be in KIROV area.
11. Most deportees are kept on compulsory labour, but a number are settled on the land, in Kolkhozes, in Russia.

12. Their living conditions are hard, but clearly do not aim at extermination. The main purpose is that deportees should work, and they are fed, clothed and housed well enough to preserve health and working ability. Source's brother, for instance, had been a burgmaster under the German occupation of Estonia; he expected to be shot as such, but instead was deported, and set to work on a kolkhoz.

B. Collectivisation

13. Deportations broke the back of any active resistance in Estonia and those remaining in the country must at least appear to conform to the situation. As for passive resistance, at any rate 22% of the peasantry remain un-collectivised.

14. Ca'canny or wasteful methods are almost the only weapons of the passive resistance to collectivisation.

15. Deportation is one means of enforcing collectivisation. Otherwise the normal methods of pressure are high taxes, and no allocation of seed or agricultural machinery. Under these circumstances, there is little need for physical violence, and source knows of no proven cases.

16. Kolhoz hands are paid mainly in kind, the rest in roubles. If they fail to perform the minimum norm of working days each year, they get no pay at all. Their real incomes depend on the efficiency of the farm.

17. Kolkhov hands do have small plots of their own; they are allowed to sell any unconsumed produce from it, but this is not likely to be much.

C. Living Conditions

18. There is usually food enough on the farms. Clothing depends on the success of the year's production at each farm; for the farm receives for distribution amongst its members a quota of cloth corresponding to its own production. Housing space on farms is not too bad on the whole, as deportations have left many homes empty.

19. As for social measures, schools are strongly encouraged and assisted, because of their political influence. Health measures in rural areas have also been stimulated, but there is a scarcity of trained doctors, nurses, etc. Pensions depend on the work done by the subject, and on his political record; stakhanovites do best in this regard, industrial workers next best. "Kulaks" and intellectuals normally get no pensions.