

Personal and Political:
A Micro-history of the “Red
Column” Collective Farm,
1935-36



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Samantha Lomb

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Dr. Samantha Lomb is a Dotsent in the Department of Foreign Languages at Viatka State University in Kirov, Russia, where she has been teaching since 2012. Dr. Lomb completed her PhD in History at the University of Pittsburgh in 2014. Her Dissertation, “Speaking Out: the Public Discussion of the 1936 Constitution and the Practice of Soviet Democracy” focuses on popular reaction to the draft 1936 Constitution in the Kirov region. Her current research focuses on life on collective farms in the 1930’s, focusing particularly on the Kirov region, which offers rich archival sources for her research.

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Abstract

This article investigates the confluence of personal interests and official policy on collective farms in the mid-1930s, a period that has received far less scholarly attention than the collectivization drive. The current historiography on collective farmers' relationship with the state is one-sided, presenting peasants either as passive victims of or idealized resisters to state policies. Both views minimize the complex realities that governed the everyday lives of collective farmers for whom state policies often were secondary to local concerns. This paper, which draws upon rich archival materials in Kirov Krai, employs a micro-historical approach to study the struggle to remove the chairman of the "Red Column" collective farm in Kirov Krai in 1935-36. It demonstrates that local and personal issues (family ties, grudges, and personality traits) had more influence on how collective farmers reacted to state campaigns and investigations than did official state policy and rhetoric. The chairman's rude and arrogant behavior, mistreatment of the collective farmers, and flaunting of material goods led to his downfall. But to strengthen their arguments, his opponents accused him of associating with kulaks and white guardists. The chairman and his supporters struck back, alleging that his detractors were themselves white guardists and kulaks, who sought revenge for having been expelled from the collective farm.

Such a micro-historical approach reveals the importance of popular opinion, attitudes, and behavior on collective farms and the level of control that collective farmers had over shaping the implementation of state policies. This paper enables one to appreciate that peasants knew well how to manipulate official labels, such as kulak or class enemy, as weapons to achieve goals of local and personal importance. It enriches the historiography by offering a different way to appreciate peasant attitudes and behavior, and collective farm life in the mid-1930s.

Personal and Political: A Micro-history of the “Red Column” Collective Farm, 1935-36

Introduction

This micro-history investigates the confluence of the personal and the official on collective farms in the mid-1930s. Current historiography on collective farmers after the process of collectivization (1932-1939) tends to focus on collective farmers’ relationship with the state, casting them as victims, or as resistant to state policies. Such a view of collective farmers tends to misrepresent the complex realities that governed their everyday lives. Collective farmers often accorded state policies, language, and initiatives less importance than local and personal problems and concerns. A case study of the removal and prosecution of the chairman and other administration members of the “Red Column” collective farm (Debesskii district, Udmurt Autonomous *Oblast*, Kirov Region) demonstrates that the local and personal aspects, such as family ties, personal grudges, and personality traits often had as much -- if not more -- influence on how the collective farmers reacted to state campaigns and investigations as official state policy and rhetoric. This multi-layered case illustrates how the private and personal underpinned many disputes and struggles in the countryside and how these local actors appropriated state language and forms of appeal to serve local and personal purposes.²

In the case of [Nikolai Iosifovich Lozhkin](#), the chairman of the “Red Column” collective farm, his rude and arrogant behavior, his alienation of segments of the collective farm population, and his flaunting of material goods seemed to be his downfall. Denunciations from collective farmers focused almost exclusively on these personal aspects. However, in order to strengthen their arguments, Lozhkin’s opponents created a narrative of personal, professional, and political error, accusing him of associating with kulaks and White Guardists, accusing his fellow administration members of having served under Kolchak, and all of them of moral depravity. Lozhkin and his supporters struck back, seeking to create a counter narrative through letters to communist party officials and newspapers³ that alleged his detractors were themselves White Guardists and kulaks who, having been expelled from the collective farm, were seeking revenge upon him.⁴ Nikolai Lozhkin and his supporters then sought to create a dialogue of trust with party members at the regional and national level. Nikolai and his supporters used a common language of revolution and service, establishing Nikolai’s communist credentials as a longtime party member who had an important role in creating the collective farm, as a way to gain party officials’ confidence.⁵

This article’s local focus provides a unique perspective on rural life in the 1930s. In his discussion of micro-history as a method of historical analysis, Giovanni Levi asserts that “the unifying principle of all micro-historical research is the belief that microscopic observation will reveal factors previously unobserved.”⁶ The micro-historical study of the “Red Column” collective farm allows the reader to see how local and personal factors were often the driving forces behind decisions and power struggles that on a macro level may seem driven by communist rhetoric and policies originating in Moscow. For most of the inhabitants of the “Red Column” farm, Moscow was very far away and often only had a tangential influence on their lives. It was the local power structure that ruled their lives, and a network of informal connections and personal connections governed local power relationships.⁷

In the case of the “Red Column” farm, all these layers of local power and popular participation are visible. The initial inquiry into unfulfilled quotas, District Party Committee and Regional Party Committee reports on their involvement, and the outpouring of complaints against the administrators are all accessible. Such rich documentation allows the reader to see the transition from collective farmer complaints of violence and personal attack to the District Party Committee reports and the indictment, which modified many of these charges to fit the broader narrative of abuse, political and professional incompetence, as well as Lozhkin’s counter denunciations and the District Party Committee’s damage control measures. Because of the wealth of documentation, the intricacy and detailed nature of the records allow all of the local complexities -- plurality of opinions about the collective farm, personal interests of the actors, and the manner in which these actors used the framework of investigation, denunciation and the language of the state as tools in a local power struggle -- to be explored.

At the same time, micro-history presents a challenge in that, when one ventures into Soviet records at the local level, one finds, rather than the smooth master narrative of party and state documents, a cacophony of voices, all trying to make their own, often conflicting, points. The documents on Nikolai Lozhkin’s removal from power and subsequent trial are contained in two different regional archives: the State Archive of Social And Political History of the Kirov *Oblast’* (GASPI KO) and the Center for the Documentation of Modern History of the Udmurt Republic (TsDNI UR).⁸ These documents were generated by a number of organizations and their representatives, including the Regional Party Committee (Kirov), Udmurt *Oblast’* Party Committee (Izhevsk), the Debesskii District Party Committee (Debessy), the local district newspaper, the “Red Column” party cell and its general meeting body, and several individuals. Most of the witness testimony against Nikolai Lozhkin and his fellow administration members was recorded by regional or district instructors sent to investigate the situation. Very few letters from the individual complainants exist, though Nikolai and his supporters did write a number of letters, which have been preserved in the files. As happens when the same incident is related by multiple sources, these documents provide multiple, widely varying accounts of Nikolai’s behavior. The goal of this article is not to decide which variant is “the truth” or to comment on the guilt or innocence of any party but to show the complexity that exists in small worlds such as the collective farm and how issues like agency and the role of the state and citizen played out on this stage.

The historical literature on collectivization and life in the Soviet countryside during the 1930s tends to look at the state as the main agent and evaluate the actions of the collective farmers within the framework of their interaction with the state. Early works on collectivization, such as R. W. Davis’s *The Socialist Offense: The Collectivization of Soviet Agriculture, 1929-1930* and Moshe Lewin’s *Russian Peasants and Soviet Power: A Study of Collectivization*, focus almost exclusively on the policies and reactions of the central state and party apparatus and the policies of specific leaders. More recent works, while beginning to acknowledge the agency of the peasantry, almost always frame that agency within the context of state-peasant interactions, with the state as the superordinate agent that peasants have to accommodate, circumvent, or resist. In *Stalin’s Peasants*, Sheila Fitzpatrick discusses the peasant’s subaltern status in society and the various ways the inherently weak peasantry tried to assert itself against the dominant state.⁹ In Siegelbaum and Sokolov’s *Stalinism as a Way of Life*, the authors focus primarily on the peasantry’s relationship to the state while acknowledging that local conflicts did play an important role in shaping and implementing policy.¹⁰ Lynne Viola takes this struggle between the weak peasantry and the strong state to an extreme, claiming that the only time the peasants spoke out was when they engaged in active resistance against the state and that these acts of resistance allowed the normally silent historical peasant constituency to be heard.¹¹ Such historical studies largely deny the existence

of local networks and relationships, dominated by local and personal concerns, which had few tangible relationships to the policy of the state other than borrowing form and language.

Nevertheless, several historical studies stand out as exceptions to this trend. Roberta Manning, in “Government in the Soviet Countryside in the Stalinist 1930’s,” a case study of Belyi *Raion*, finds “a grassroots government far more human, more prey to events outside of its control (like crop failures) and more vulnerable to the vagaries of public opinion” than previously imagined.¹² In *Mobilizing Stalin’s Peasants*, Mary Buckley argues that, in a dialogue between the people and the state, the impact of personal preferences, local conditions, and alcoholism, among other factors, played a significant role.¹³ The unfolding Stakhanovite movement was a result of an interplay of official policies and exhortations from above and their interpretation and implementation in the locales.¹⁴

The conflict described in this article is hardly unique to this collective farm or to the Kirov region. Corruption, violence, moral depravity, and political unreliability were all common charges against both local officials and collective farm leaders throughout the 1930s. Many historians, such as Lewis Siegelbaum, Andrei Sokolov, Arch Getty, and Sheila Fitzpatrick, have all noted this trend. In her article “How the Mice Buried the Cat,” Sheila Fitzpatrick examines rural show trials in 1937. The defendants in these trials were petty bureaucrats who were most often “corrupt, venal, illiterate and almost invariably drunk” and incredibly ill prepared for their positions.¹⁵ They were usually charged not with treason and political conspiracy charges, as in the Moscow show trials, but rather with the abuse of the peasantry. Unlike the outrageous charges of the Moscow show trials, the charges against the local officials were almost always believable.¹⁶

As we will see, denunciations played a vital part in the “Red Column” collective farm case. Investigating denunciations during World War II and late Stalinist period, Vladimir Kozlov concludes that denunciations played an indispensable role in allowing the center to exercise governing control over regional party and state apparatuses and thereby provided a way to curb the independent and arbitrary actions of regional bureaucracy which often functioned without much oversight, giving the populace hope for justice in cases of abuse, preserving the central leadership’s aura of infallibility, and redirecting popular dissatisfaction onto local organs of power.¹⁷ Denunciations were therefore an important tool of paternalistic statism in an “underdeveloped” country.¹⁸

The best study on denunciation at the local level is Wendy Goldman’s *Inventing the Enemy*, which focuses on the intersection of policy and personal factors on the shop floors in Moscow factories during the great purges¹⁹ in the late 1930s. Goldman investigates denunciations in terms of the interactions among the people who wrote them, those who investigated them, and those who were victims of them – categories, which often overlapped. The state is portrayed as an overwhelming presence, which atomized the people, destabilized their sense of self and security, and forced them into a self-perpetuating culture of denunciation.²⁰

This sense of powerlessness in the face of state campaigns and aggression that most of the abovementioned authors describe as part of life in the 1930s is not present in the case of the “Red Column” farm. Part of this may be because, though Lozhkin and the other collective farm leaders’ cases were investigated in 1936, they were not “repression victims” in the traditional sense. Nikolai Lozhkin and the other administrators were guilty of administrative transgressions, and the central state played very little role in either encouraging or pursuing charges against these men. In what appears to be a trend within the Kirov region,²¹ the Debessy District Party Committee created a dialogue of malfeasance to serve the short-term purpose of removing obstinate and

possibly ineffective local administrators from office, but once this task was accomplished, no further denunciations of other collective farmers were sought or accepted. Additionally, all those involved, from the collective farmers to the Regional Committee, seemed to be aware that the use of party language was a ploy to strengthen their hand in a local power struggle, rather than the heartfelt denunciations and betrayals that Goldman describes.

Background

Formerly called Viatka, the Kirov region is located about 550 miles northeast of Moscow. An independent administrative region under the tsars, Viatka province merged with Nizhny Novgorod region in 1930. In 1934, following a series of administrative reforms, the Viatka region broke away from the Gorky (Nizhny Novgorod) region, and the newly formed administrative territory was named for the murdered Leningrad party leader, Sergei Kirov. The region was predominantly ethnically Russian, with Tatar, Udmurt, and Mari ethnic minorities. In December 1936, following the ratification of the Stalinist Constitution, the Udmurt Autonomous Region was transformed into the Udmurt Autonomous Republic and became a separate territorial unit, answering to a new republic administration in Izhevsk rather than to the Regional administration in Kirov city. Because the investigation began in 1935 but the trial of “Red Column’s” leadership took place in 1937, the documents are located in two separate territorial administrative units.

The Kirov region (and its subordinate Udmurt autonomous region) was agriculturally marginal, having a harsh northern climate and short growing season. However, this marginality had some benefits for the inhabitants of the Kirov region. Serfdom, and therefore landlords, was almost non-existent, and the peasants were very active and well represented in the *zemstvos*, meaning that the region had a long history of independence and strong local government. These two factors may be the reason collectivization does not seem to have been as harsh in Kirov as in other regions of the USSR such as Ukraine.

However, life, even on a well-run collective farm was neither simple nor easy. Collective farms were formed from amalgamations of villages, and while the incorporation statute guaranteed equal rights and privileges for all collective farmers, in reality this was rarely the case. Tightly stratified hierarchies developed on collective farms almost immediately: the chairman and the *kolkhoz* administration were at the top of the ladder; brigadiers, school teachers, and skilled farm workers in the middle; and unskilled farm laborers, the elderly, and handicapped people were at the bottom.²² Such stratification resulted in a marked difference in pay, access to goods, and standard of living, which often evoked jealousy in those lower on the social ladder.

The higher rank and privileges that went with the post of collective farm chairman were not without greater demands. The chairman was often caught between the demands of the state and the needs of the collective farmers. As far as local and national state and party officials were concerned, the first duty of a collective chairman was to his political superiors, the state and its agencies, and his second duty was to the collective farm as a legal and economic entity. The needs of the collective farm general assembly and collective farm members were ranked at the bottom of this list.²³ This again caused much conflict on the collective farm, as the chairman often had to exploit his collective farmers, cut their grain rations, or seize other property to meet state demands, all while trying to motivate the collective farmers to work harder. Additionally, the collective farm chairmen frequently had to deal with meddling local officials. Those who did not perform their duties to the expectations of district officials faced criticism and often were pressured to leave the position. Chairmen were often the subjects of criticism at general assembly meetings, and it was common for both collective farmers and visiting

officials to use the assembly meeting as a public forum to challenge the decisions of the chairman and berate him if he was performing his duties poorly.²⁴

Local officials often wanted to control who was appointed chairman, especially when they had their own candidate ready to step into the position or when the first chairman repeatedly failed to meet their expectations.²⁵ They often tightly controlled the process of appointing and dismissing collective farm chairmen. In theory, the general assembly could nominate or fire the chairman at any time, but local state or party officials almost always had the final say in such matters.²⁶ These are the conditions that Nikolai Lozhkin faced in 1935-36: collective farmers angry that their place in the hierarchy limited their privileges, hard-to-fulfill state demands, and a very involved and meddling District Party Committee leadership. But the independent nature of the region and its overall economic unimportance to the USSR meant that these conflicts were resolved at the local level, with very little participation of regional or national actors.

Problems began for the “Red Column” collective farm administration in June 1935, when the investigative bureau of the Debessy District Party Committee launched an investigation into the “Red Column” collective farm for the nonpayment of state debt, though both Nikolai and [Trofim Lozhkin](#) were on the District Party Committee’s radar already for not properly organizing party work. The investigation resulted in the removal of the collective farm chairman, Nikolai Lozhkin, and other members of the collective farm administration and sparked a serious conflict in which Nikolai Lozhkin’s supporters and detractors sent statements, petitions, and complaints to various state and party agencies in Kirov and Moscow alleging moral misconduct and their opponents’ class enemy affiliation to strengthen their arguments. Many of the arguments made for and against Nikolai Lozhkin and other members of the collective farm administration appear rooted in personal and local conflicts, but the language and labels of state discourse and class enemy affiliation were used to give this local conflict national context and justify the actions taken against men who, until the 1935-1936 investigation, were considered upstanding party members.

The “Red Column” collective farm was a well-established collective farm, founded in 1928. It had been formed from the merger of two villages: Nimoshur and Dzil’ii in Debesskii district (Udmurtiia, Kirov Region). When it was founded, the collective farm was composed of 127 households; by 1936, there were only 97. Nikolai Lozhkin was one of the principle organizers of the collective farm and was elected as the first collective farm chairman, a post he occupied until his removal in July 1936. The Kirov Regional Party Committee considered the collective farm economically viable and used it as a model farm in the early 1930s. In 1933, during the celebration of the 10th anniversary of the Udmurt region,²⁷ the collective farm received the banner of the *Oblast*’ Executive Committee, as a recognition of their success. Additionally, for the early 1930s, the farm had an exceptionally well-developed infrastructure. It had the first electric power station and electric mill in the area, a butter factory, large-scale animal husbandry with 225 head of cattle on the milk farm, 232 head of sheep, an apiary, electrical lights, a *banya*, an apartment house with sixteen apartments, a car, a mechanical thresher, and other agricultural equipment. There was also a large-scale party organization on the collective farm, which from 1933-1935 counted twenty-five members and candidate members among its ranks, though this number had been reduced to sixteen members and candidate members by 1936, primarily due to people leaving the collective farm.²⁸ Overall, the collective farm had been very successful for the first seven years of its existence, but in 1935-1936, the farm began to decline.

The world of the “Red Column” collective farm was very complex with many actors and personalities

playing roles in the denunciation and defense of Nikolai Lozhkin and the other collective farm administrators. Many of the collective farmers shared the same last name, Lozhkin or Khokhriakov, and with the exception of Nikolai and Vasilii Lozhkin, who were identified as brothers in the documents, there is no evidence that any of these people were related. It was not uncommon for residents of an entire village to share one last name and not be closely related. Therefore, the collective farm actors will be identified by name and last name and, in some cases, name, patronymic, and last name to avoid confusion. For the reader's convenience, a list of the main actors and the positions they held is provided in [Appendix 1](#), and their names are hyperlinked to this biographical data throughout the text.

The "Red Column" collective farm administration members were representative of local Soviet officials in the 1930s. Sheila Fitzpatrick describes typical local officials as being poorly educated, of peasant origin, in their thirties or forties and members of the communist party. She notes that while senior district officials were likely to have spent about a year in a party school in addition to primary school and have traveled to other district centers within their home region and its neighboring region, rural soviet members and collective farm chairmen often had not even completed primary school and usually did not have work experience outside their native district.²⁹ [Nikolai Lozhkin](#), the chairman of the "Red Column" collective farm, was a local peasant who joined the communist party in 1918, served in the Red Army during the Civil War, and became a member of the Kirov Regional Party Committee (*Kraikom*) and a candidate member of the Udmurt Regional Party Committee (*obkom*) until he was removed from these posts in 1936. He was illiterate; all of his letters were written by someone else, and he would sign them.³⁰ His brother, [Vasilii Iosifovich Lozhkin](#), who worked on the Moscow Regional Railroad, was also a party member but was literate, if not well-lettered. Unlike Fitzpatrick's archetype, both men had work experience outside of Debesskii district, and Vasilii used his work experience and connections in Moscow to advocate for his brother.

The other collective farm administrators were also local peasants who were party members and not particularly well-educated.³¹ Their local connections meant that they were well-known in the region and were familiar with the inner workings of local and familial politics, but their poor education undoubtedly hindered the execution of their duties. Many of the collective farm administration members held more than one position: Nikolai Lozhkin was a Regional Party Committee and *obkom* member, in addition to his duties as collective farm chairman; [Trofim Nikiforevich Lozhkin](#) was both the collective farm bookkeeper and the collective farm party secretary; [Mitrofan Fedorovich Lozhkin](#) was the chief supply manager and the collective farm paymaster; [Aleksandr Fedorovich Khokhriakov](#) was the collective farm chauffeur and chairman of the collective farm auditing committee; and [Serafim Andreevich Khokhriakov](#) was the former head of the rural soviet and a brigadier. One of these positions would have required a lot of time and effort to faithfully execute; the fact that under-educated or illiterate men occupied more than one such post meant that duties were inevitably neglected.

According to the June 16, 1935 meeting minutes from the Debesskii District Party Committee, the district officials began to investigate the internal workings of the "Red Column" collective farm because the farm was delinquent in making payments in kind to the state. It owed meat, butter, flax, and other goods to fulfill its portion of state plans. Upon inquiry, the investigative bureau uncovered a laundry list of fairly common complaints against the collective farm administration: nepotism, mismanagement, and intimidation of the other collective farmers. The bureau claimed that such misbehavior had a negative effect on the economic solvency of the farm, citing poor recording of workdays as demoralizing to the shock workers, who often stopped coming to work thinking they were not going to be paid,³² a decline in cattle, the death of a pedigreed mare, the deaths of fifty-six pigs and piglets, and complete unpreparedness for the harvest. The investigation also uncovered an

unequal allotment of livestock among the collective farmers: some collective farm households remained cowless despite the large number of animals on the farm. The investigators further noted that many of the collective farm administrators' personal animals were being kept in collective farm buildings and cared for at the farm's expense. However, the District Party Committee Investigative Bureau recommended giving the collective farm administration time to correct these problems rather than removing them or starting criminal proceedings against them.³³

The investigative bureau ordered the collective farm administration to take specific steps to fix the problems on the collective farm. It ordered Nikolai Lozhkin, as the chairman, to force all collective farmers to remove their personal animals from the collective farm barns before July 20 and begin fulfilling grain quotas no later than July 25. The investigative bureau also instructed party secretary and collective farm bookkeeper, Trofim Lozhkin, to guarantee the complete preparedness of the farm for harvest, to liquidate all collective farm debts, to pay collective farmers their bonuses, and to step up political work on the collective farm,³⁴ especially focusing on the verification of party documents. However, the District Party Committee did not trust the collective farm administration to complete these tasks and dispatched a number of local officials and party members to oversee the affairs of the collective farm, to try to improve conditions, and to establish financial responsibility.³⁵

In addition, the District Party committee tried to strengthen the collective farm by offering continuing education opportunities to the collective farm chairman. According to a 1936 report by District Party Committee Instructor Kuz'min, the District Party Committee had tried to send Nikolai Lozhkin to literacy school and even for private lessons with a teacher, but he refused to go. The District Party Committee Secretary, Dolgushev, with the approval of the Udmurt Regional Party Committee (*Obkom*), ordered Nikolai Lozhkin to come to Izhevsk to study, but he quickly returned home. According to Kuz'min, when questioned why he did not study, Nikolai Lozhkin answered, "I am already a distinguished person. I have worked as the chairman of the collective farm since 1922 and there is no such senior official in the Debesskii Party Committee except me. There is no need for me to study, I do not work poorly."³⁶ The District Party Committee found Nikolai's attitude towards his education and continuing educational initiatives on the collective farm unacceptable.³⁷ Nikolai's arrogance and pugilistic attitude towards the District Party Committee would prove to be his undoing.

The situation between the District Party Committee and the leadership became even tenser when two brigadiers from the "Red Column" farm were turned over to the judicial organs in the first half of 1936. The exact charges against [Serafim Andreevich Khokhriakov](#) and [Andrei Lozhkin](#) are unclear, but [Nikolai Lozhkin](#), [Trofim Lozhkin](#) and [Aleksandr Khokhriakov](#) reacted vehemently to their colleagues' sentencing. According to the District Party Committee's May 21, 1936 report, Nikolai Lozhkin, Trofim Lozhkin, and Aleksandr Khokhriakov considered the District Party Committee's actions wrong, and Aleksandr spoke out at a party meeting against the District Party Committee, stating, "The District Party committee works with the hands of kulaks and squeezes the collective farm." The personal ties between these men were clearly strong: the deputy District Party Secretary, Kozlov, noted that they continued to support their friends even after their sentencing, writing them good letters of recommendation (*kharakteristika*) and giving them one hundred rubles for the road, even though the District Party Committee alleged that many other collective farmers had not received cash in years.³⁸ These close personal ties between members of the collective farm administration sparked conflict not only with the District Party Committee but with other collective farmers as well, and probably to a far greater

extent than is shown in the documentation.

Perhaps because of this solidarity and resistance to change, despite the prompt investigation and the dispatch of district personnel to the “Red Column” farm, actual change was slow to take place. Nikolai Lozhkin and many of his fellow administration members remained at their posts for almost a year following the initial investigation. The District Party Committee waited until Nikolai was kilometers away in Kirov for two-week courses pertaining to his duties as a Regional Party Committee member, from May 22 through June 6, 1936, to vote him out of office.³⁹ Comrade Kozlov, the deputy District Party Committee secretary, was dispatched to the farm where he organized a general meeting and urged the removal of Nikolai Lozhkin as collective farm chairman. Shortly afterwards, the District Party Committee gathered complaints from collective farmers at meetings and removed many of the other collective farm administrators from their posts. Among those removed were the bookkeeper and party secretary, Trofim Lozhkin; Aleksander Khokhriakov, the head of the auditing committee; and Mitrofan Lozhkin, the supply manager. The District Party Committee appointed a new chairman, Mikhail Ivanovich Popov, who came from outside the collective farm.⁴⁰

Upon his return and finding that he had been replaced, Nikolai Lozhkin complained to the Regional Party Committee about the decision. His complaints launched a Regional Party Committee investigation. This investigation irritated the District Party Committee, which began to press criminal charges against him for alleged personal, political, and professional malfeasance during his tenure as collective farm chairman and for undermining the new District Party Committee-appointed leadership after he had been removed from office. In response to Nikolai Lozhkin’s appeals, the Regional Party Committee dispatched an agricultural section inspector, Comrade Shakirskii, to investigate the charges against Nikolai and the other administrators by reviewing meeting minutes and interviewing collective farmers. The District Party Committee and Regional Party Committee investigations yielded much damning testimony against the collective farm leadership. It appears the presence of the various officials provided those with personal grievances the opportunity to make their grievances known to an audience very willing to receive complaints of all varieties against the collective farm leadership.

The fact that an investigation into unfulfilled quotas rather than a denunciation launched the larger inquiry of the collective farm’s administrative conduct raises some interesting questions. If Nikolai Lozhkin’s leadership was as corrupt as witnesses alleged, why were denunciations not filed? Why did collective farmers wait until they were interviewed by District Party Committee and Regional Party Committee officials to give testimony? Several possibilities exist. Sheila Fitzpatrick notes that collective farmers’ denunciation letters had a propensity to backfire, leading to the author’s possible prosecution if the accusations were considered unfounded.⁴¹ Perhaps, given Nikolai Lozhkin’s service record and the economic achievements of the collective farm, the collective farmers were afraid that the district officials would dismiss their complaints or, even worse, investigate the complainers. Another reason may have to do with Nikolai Lozhkin’s alleged proclivity for violence, which could have intimidated the collective farmers into silence until he left for training in Kirov and they had the protection of District Party Committee officials. A third possibility is that some of what Nikolai Lozhkin said in his defense was true and that the majority of those who came forward and denounced him were motivated by personal vendettas and simply found willing ears in the form of the District Party Committee and Regional Party Committee officials, whose investigation they used to settle their own scores. The fact that many of those who did offer testimony against Nikolai Lozhkin and other collective farm leaders had been expelled from the collective farm earlier lends some credence to this last theory.

On August 16, 1936, the Debessy District Party Committee listened to the results of Instructor Shakirskii’s

investigation and decided to pursue a court case against Nikolai Lozhkin, Trofim Lozhkin, and Aleksander Khokhriakov and asked the Kirov Regional Party Committee and the Udmurt *obkom* to expel Nikolai Lozhkin from their respective organizations.⁴² The official charges against the three men were quite standard and used the language of the party and state, or what Larry Holmes, in his study of the educational apparatus in Kirov, describes as “a symbiosis of error.” This symbiosis involved failures in the professional, political, and personal spheres which Kirov party organizations developed into a narrative of denunciation in the 1930s.⁴³ These three spheres were seen as having a symbiotic relationship: what happened in one sphere affected and was affected by what transpired in the others. For the urban party members and educational administrators whom Holmes studied, political errors unsurprisingly coincided with drunken behavior and professional incompetence.⁴⁴

This symbiosis of poor behavior in multiple areas of one’s life had counterparts in the countryside as well. In this case, it was particularly evident in the party organization reports and indictments, which added the political charge of suppressed criticism to the list of economic and moral charges against Nikolai Lozhkin and the collective farm bookkeeper and party secretary, Trofim Lozhkin. This symbiosis permeated the official Regional Party Committee instructor’s report, which provided the basis for the indictment and which described the collective farm leadership as having “become morally and politically corrupt and conducting relations with the collective farm and collective farmers in an anti-collective farm manner.”⁴⁵ And this was reflected in the District Party Committee’s decision. The District Party Committee charged Nikolai Lozhkin, Trofim Lozhkin, and Aleksandr Khokhriakov with embezzling from the collective farm and neglecting their duties as chairman, bookkeeper, and head of the auditing committee, respectively, to the detriment of the collective farm. Their poor leadership was blamed for the destabilization of the farm through mass expulsions, the decline of livestock, a decline in the physical state of the farm, and other economic troubles, such as poor financial management of the butter factory, allowing some collective farmers to accrue large debts that were often over 16,000 rubles while simultaneously failing to pay other collective farmers.⁴⁶

In addition to their moral and professional failings, these men were also accused of stifling self-criticism and contributing to a decline of party activity on the collective farm. Moreover, the Regional Party Committee inspector alleged that, during the verification and exchange of party documents, it was revealed that Nikolai Lozhkin had recommended two White Guardists to the ranks of the party, thereby discrediting himself in the eyes of the collective farmers and party organization.⁴⁷ Furthermore, the District Party Committee accused Nikolai Lozhkin and Aleksandr Khokhriakov of not “acknowledging and correcting mistakes [but] remain[ing] on the path to eliminating the new collective farm leadership, terrorizing collective farmers and forming a circle of discontented people who presented written statements to Sovnarkom⁴⁸ UASSR.”⁴⁹ Yet outside these party reports, this symbiosis was not accorded much importance. The collective farmers who made the initial complaints focused on the economic and personal wrongdoing of the collective farm administrators, particularly that which had a negative effect on the lives of the collective farmers.

Overall, there is nothing exceptional about these charges. Holmes’s work documents the use of this triumvirate of sins to discredit party members and officials in the educational spheres and elsewhere. However, these official accusations gloss over the nature of most of the accusations that the Regional Party Committee instructor recorded in the course of his investigation and which formed the basis of the Debessy District Party Committee’s decision. The Regional Party Committee instructor’s report, which features synopses of interviews with collective farmers, highlights a very personal, practical dimension to the accusations against the collective

farm administrators. While these personal complaints did not make it into the official indictment, they played a large role in the collective farmers' support for the indictment and their willingness -- even eagerness -- to testify against these men.

The Collective Farmers' Complaints

The complaints against Nikolai Lozhkin and the other collective farm administrators fell into three interrelated categories: corruption, drunkenness, and abuse of collective farmers. These categories were united by the fact that this behavior was seen as harmful to the collective farmers and violated their sense of fairness. Any allegations of political misdeeds were added by the District Party Committee or the Regional Party Committee inspector and were not reflected in the testimony that the inspector gathered from the collective farmers. This study focuses on peasant complaints rather than to the political charges, which appeared to be an afterthought, added as part of the formula for party denunciations rather than an area of concern for those making the complaints.

In the case of "Red Column" farm, the archival documents contain very little direct testimony from collective farmers, except [Mitrofan Lozhkin](#). Instead, the accusations against Nikolai and the other administration members come mainly from District Party Committee and Regional Party Committee reports. This raises the question if Inspector Shakirskii and the District Party Committee instructors cherry-picked these incidents to reinforce a certain narrative and to paint the deposed collective farm leadership as debauched and corrupt. Some general collective farm meeting protocols are also included in the archival record of this case, and these documents provide more plurality of opinion but also testify to the same negative behaviors. So while the examples selected and presented in the Regional Party Committee inspector's report were unquestionably chosen to reinforce the negative narrative, the consistency in the accusations as presented in the Regional Party Committee report and the meeting protocols does suggest that the personal behavior of the collective farm administration, particularly that of Nikolai Lozhkin, also played a large role in collective farmers offering testimony against him. The recorded accusations are personal and virulent and lack any mention of the political malfeasance that appears in the Regional Party Committee inspector's conclusion and the District Party Committee's indictment. Therefore, even if these examples were manipulated to support the District Party Committee and Regional Party Committee narrative, they nonetheless reflect the collective farmers' personal concerns and anxieties. Despite the limits of the materials, they still provide an important window into the local conflicts that helped drive the denunciations and abuse allegations that collective farmers made against local officials in the mid 1930s.⁵⁰

Fitzpatrick notes that most peasant abuse denunciations were directed against collective farm chairmen, listing crimes such as stealing from the collective farm, monopolizing resources, drunkenness, rudeness, and demanding their punishment.⁵¹ Fitzpatrick cites "the kind of misappropriation of *kolkhoz* funds that was easily done by *kolkhoz* chairmen and accountants: cheating *kolkhozniki* on labor-day payments, confiscating their animals, imposing illegal fines and a variety of other forms of extortion, treating the *kolkhoz* horses as personal property, drawing money out of the *kolkhoz* bank account for personal use, etc." as the most common types of collective farm theft complaints.⁵² Collective farmers from the "Red Column" farm made many such charges against Nikolai Lozhkin and the other collective farm administrators. The farmers alleged that the administrators had added extra workdays to their own payment books, that they took collective farm property and animals for their own, and that they took "loans" that they did not pay back. Nikolai Lozhkin, in particular,

was named in several assaults against collective farmers, as well as being accused of being verbally abusive towards those he disliked or who challenged him.

Despite the similarities of the charges against the “Red Column” leadership to Fitzpatrick’s study, charges of economic failure, rotting crops and so on were absent from collective farmers’ testimonies. These charges only later appeared in Nikolai Lozhkin’s letters, accusing the new collective farm chairman, Popov, of mismanagement. Dolgushev, the District Party Committee secretary, also leveled charges of economic mismanagement at Lozhkin but only after Nikolai Lozhkin denounced him to both the Regional Party Committee and the Central Committee. At the time of Nikolai Lozhkin’s dismissal, the “Red Column” farm was one of the most successful and efficient collective farms in the Udmurt Autonomous *Oblast*. This suggests that economic problems were not driving the denunciation of Nikolai Lozhkin and the other administration members, lending more credence to the idea that these charges were leveled for personal, rather than economic or political, reasons.

Corruption and drunkenness

All of the charges the collective farmers brought against Nikolai Lozhkin and the other collective farm administrators negatively affected the collective farmers’ standard of living and could be spun to create a narrative of the former leaders’ criminality and moral deprivation. Corruption and drinking formed a symbiotic relationship in which one funded the other. It was alleged that Nikolai Lozhkin organized bacchanalias on the collective farm, which in 1935-36 became almost institutionalized, and that [Fedor Lozhkin](#)⁵³, [Mitrofan Lozhkin](#), [Trofim Lozhkin](#), [Aleksandr Khokhriakov](#), [Serafim Khokhriakov](#) and [Pavel Maksimov](#) -- all members of the administration -- were regular participants.⁵⁴ However, the drinking parties themselves were not the major complaint of the other collective farmers, but rather how they were funded and provisioned. The Regional Party Committee inspector’s report alleged that “in connection with these systematic bacchanalias led by the head of the collective farm Nikolai Lozhkin and other administration workers, the collective farm headed down a path of abuse - they embezzled collective farm property and freely and without recording the transactions took collective farm products.”⁵⁵ Several collective farmers testified that, in March 1936, the storekeeper Pavel Maksimov sold collective farm meat at the bazaar and then got drunk in his apartment with Nikolai Lozhkin and others on alcohol purchased with the money from the market. [Mitrofan Lozhkin](#)⁵⁶ stated that Nikolai Lozhkin often “compelled” him to buy wine, sometimes giving him money for it, sometimes ordering him to pay for it with collective farm property and telling him to “put it on my tab.” It was alleged that, on at least one occasion, they paid for wine at the village co-op with a collective farm horse.⁵⁷ Such testimony reflects a connection between moral debauchery and crime, providing an account that resonated with the dialogue of a tripartite symbiosis of errors that dominated party rhetoric in Kirov in the mid-1930s. This construction of a rudimentary symbiotic narrative may have been purposeful, but it may also been how the collective farmers viewed the chairman’s actions. His use of collective farm resources for personal pleasure undoubtedly violated the collective farmers’ sense of fairness and seemed to cause genuine resentment of the administrators’ higher standard of living, which the majority of other collective farmers, even on such a prosperous collective farm, could not enjoy.

Denunciations of Nikolai Lozhkin’s decadent lifestyle conveyed this sense of unfairness and focused on his

appropriation of everyday items that strongly influenced the quality of life on the collective farm. For example, several collective farmers complained about Lozhkin's livestock holding, which was reflective of the daily struggles that occupied them as well as the deep-seated rifts between the haves and have-nots in such a tightly knit community. Livestock ownership, particularly ownership of cattle, had long been a marker of prosperity in the villages. The state, aware of the important role cattle played in the everyday life of rural inhabitants, paid particularly close attention to this issue, making sure every household had the opportunity to have a household cow and making it a primary goal of collective farm management and local state officials.⁵⁸ During collectivization and the subsequent evaluations of the standard of living on collective farms, the ownership of a private cow by a majority of the collective farm members was a marker that district inspectors used to denote a successful collective farm.⁵⁹ The livestock helped define quality of life in the countryside, and the collective farmers resented Nikolai Lozhkin's livestock-keeping practices that served to make him richer and grant him a comfortable life at their expense. They alleged that the chairman and several other administrative workers had kept their personal livestock on the collective farm livestock farm and that the personal livestock ate collective farm fodder at the farm's expense. This practice continued until Nikolai Lozhkin was removed from office in June 1936, despite the categorical request by the District Party Committee in 1935 for Lozhkin to quickly remove his personal livestock from the collective farm barns. Additionally, several collective farmers alleged that he had also repossessed a cow he had given to the collective farm when one of his personal cows died and that he did this unilaterally, without ever consulting the other members of the collective farm.⁶⁰ The report emphasized that the collective farm had not approved this measure, signifying that not the action itself but its unilateral nature was the problem.

Collective farmers testified that Nikolai Lozhkin also took such important commodities as meat, butter, and honey, all of which were relatively rare treats in the Soviet countryside, from the collective farm. His drinking buddy and fellow administration member, Mitrofan Lozhkin, the supply manager for the collective farm, facilitated this behavior. Mitrofan was seen on at least one occasion dragging a whole pig carcass, weighing 10-20 kilograms, to Nikolai Lozhkin's house. [Aleksii Samoilovich Lozhkin](#)⁶¹ accused the collective farm leadership of having his dead cow butchered, collecting over 6 poods of meat, and only giving him the head. He stated that he had no idea where the rest of the meat went and insinuated that the collective farm leadership had taken it for themselves.⁶² Nikolai also purportedly took butter from the butter factory and had whole poods of honey delivered to his house so that his wife could cook a good meal for collective farm holidays and entertaining.⁶³ These accounts served to bolster the narrative of the gluttonous and debauched collective farm leadership who exploited the collective farmers.

However, the narrative gets more complicated. According to materials compiled by deputy secretary of the District Party Committee Kozlov, the local newspapers *Tractor* and *Udmurt Commune* investigated claims that Nikolai was stealing collective farm property in the form of meat, flour, etc. and keeping his livestock on collective farm property in 1935. According to Kozlov's May 21, 1936 report on *Tractor* and *Udmurt Commune's* investigation, the investigators found that all of the accusations were unsubstantiated. The investigators noted that many of the foodstuffs Nikolai was accused of stealing were actually used by his wife to prepare meals for the local nursery and that his animals had been stabled on collective farm property but were kept, as of 1935, in his personal barn.⁶⁴ It is unclear why the local newspaper found such accusations to be unsubstantiated in 1935. It is unlikely that the newspaper editors were Nikolai's allies. The documents do not mention the editor of *Udmurt Commune*, but *Tractor's* editor was [Ilyia Protopopov](#), an outspoken critic of Nikolai with whom Nikolai appeared to have had a personal grudge. In direct conflict with the materials from

the newspapers’ investigation, a July 12, 1935 report from a District Party Committee Instructor claimed that all the accusations had been substantiated through collective farmers’ letters of complaint.⁶⁵ Such conflicting documentation reminds the reader to retain a healthy skepticism about what the “truth” may be and illustrates the deep conflicts and contradictions that were a part of everyday Soviet life.

Whatever conflicting versions may have existed, the narrative of the collective farm leadership as corrupt and criminal seems to have become the master narrative by 1936, and the collective farmers provided plenty of testimony to support it. In addition to embezzlement of collective farm property, some collective farmers accused the leadership of financial malfeasance. The Regional Party Committee inspector, based on financial investigations and collective farmers’ testimony, inculpated Nikolai Lozhkin and other members of the administration of using their positions to manipulate the collective farm books and collective farmers for financial gain. Some even accused them of embezzling money from the collective farm. The Regional Party Committee inspector argued that Nikolai Lozhkin, with the help of Trofim Lozhkin, the bookkeeper, and [Mitrofan Lozhkin](#), falsified the collective farm books. The inspector also claimed that Nikolai ordered the bookkeeper and Mitrofan to add a large number of fake workdays to the payroll accounts to cover his debts. The number of allegedly fraudulent workdays was enormous. He added an extra 500 work days for 1931, falsifying the number from 793 work days to 1,393, and for 1932, he “corrected” 687 work days to 1,687 work days, thereby adding 1,000 workdays. The income from these forged workdays exactly covered the 1,663 rubles that he owed in arrears. Though he signed the summary in the payroll book for these “corrections,” Nikolai Lozhkin maintained that he had not asked Trofim and Mitrofan to add these workdays. The inspector viewed it differently, claiming that, because he had signed off on the changes, he was still complicit.⁶⁶ The inspector alleged that other collective farm administration members, brigadiers and the like, had also had fake workdays added, cheating the collective farm out of a total of 4,545 rubles. Additionally, several collective farmers complained that the administration borrowed money from the collective farm and never paid it back. These administrators supposedly exploited the semi-literacy of collective farmers and compelled them to sign that they had borrowed money, when in fact they signed the opposite, saying that they had received this money.⁶⁷

Collective farmers also alleged that the collective farm leadership had misappropriated other funds from the collective farm as well, citing low-reported revenue for collective farm goods and services as proof. For example, in 1936, 101 hogs were slaughtered and fifty-five died, but from the sale of the 156 pigskins, the collective farm cashiers office received only sixty-eight rubles. However, the new collective farm leadership, run by the new collective farm chairman, Mikhail Popov, reported receiving 151 rubles for thirty-five pigskins. Additionally, Lozhkin’s administration had lent out the collective farm car for a year and a half and received less than 5,000 rubles for its use, but under the new administration, the farm made more than 5,500 rubles just renting the car for two months.⁶⁸ The complainants used such incidents to create a narrative of a morally dissipated and corrupt collective farm leadership.

Abuse of Collective Farmers

The other major theme of the complaints was violent behavior towards collective farmers. In both the Regional Party Committee instructor’s report and the collective farm protocols, Nikolai Lozhkin was accused of being rude, abusive, and threatening his fellow collective farmers and enlisting his cronies to help him. While

the incidents reported in Inspector Shakirskii's report are possibly exaggerated and played up to fit the narrative of a ruthless and unscrupulous leadership, Nikolai's own brother acknowledged his propensity for rudeness.⁶⁹ Therefore, it is quite probable that Nikolai Lozhkin employed violence, or the threat of it, to coerce collective farmers into obedience or to punish them for disobedience or challenging his authority.⁷⁰ Peasants also charged that he used violence to settle personal disputes.

The collective farmers alleged that Nikolai Lozhkin used violence to intimidate his detractors and those who did not meet his expectations as a way to assert control on the collective farm. This appeared to be a long-standing problem and perhaps reflective of his management style. Supposedly, in 1933, a newly created Komsomol group called "Light Cavalry" went to verify the quality of threshing on the threshing floor.⁷¹ When Nikolai Lozhkin heard about this, he sent [Aleksandr Khokhriakov](#) with a weapon "to arrest them." Khokhriakov escorted the "Light Cavalry" members to the chairman, where Nikolai Lozhkin "properly" scolded them because they had "butted" into what was not their business.⁷²

Nikolai Lozhkin was accused of physically and verbally abusing many collective farmers to impose order in many situations. Beatings were often allegedly used to punish those who failed to do their work properly. For example, collective farmers testified that in the winter of 1935, Nikolai Lozhkin, together with former brigadier [Serafim Khokhriakov](#),⁷³ beat the sentry at the horse barn, senior groom [Iakov K. Protopopov](#), for sleeping on the job and letting horses wander loose around the stable aisles⁷⁴ and because Serafim had been sent to court over a horse that had disappeared on Protopopov's watch.⁷⁵ They then allegedly persuaded a different groom, Al. Fedorovich Khokhriakov, a witness to the beating, to say nothing about it.⁷⁶ Not only did Nikolai try to impose order by beating a poor worker; he also helped his friend Serafim get justice/vengeance for the legal trouble Protopopov's actions caused him. In November 1935, Nikolai Lozhkin purportedly beat an old watchman, [Aleksei Samoilovich Lozhkin](#), who had gone into the stokehole of the power plant to warm himself and fallen asleep there. According to witness testimony, the old collective farmer had gone into the power plant because Nikolai had failed to send someone to relieve him from his watchman duties and Aleksei was freezing. However, upon finding the old man sleeping, Nikolai, who was allegedly drunk, punched him in the head while cursing at him. Nikolai also supposedly threatened Evdokia Lozhkina, who had witnessed the crime, with being fired from her position at the power plant if she reported the crime.⁷⁷ In January 1936, Nikolai Lozhkin, together with brigadier [Grigorii Ivanovich Lozhkin](#), supposedly beat the collective farmer [Ivan Osipovich Lozhkin](#) because he supervised the threshing floor poorly.⁷⁸ According to witness reports, Ivan Osipovich had been supervising the threshing floor for over twelve hours without anyone sent to relieve him, so he decided to go home. Ivan Osipovich had arrived at his home and was in the process of undressing when his supervisor, Perevozchikov, came and tried to send him to a different post. Freezing and having just returned home, Ivan Osipovich refused. At three a.m. the next day, Ivan Osipovich was awaked by the brigadier Grigorii Ivanovich Lozhkin, who told him to go back to his post, that there had been a theft of grain from the threshing floor he had been charged with supervising. Ivan Osipovich got ready and headed out on the street where he was met between two houses by Nikolai Lozhkin, Grigorii Ivanovich Lozhkin, and Perevozchikov, who began blaming him for the lost grain. Grigorii Ivanovich allegedly struck the first blow; then Nikolai joined in and beat Ivan Osipovich unconscious. According to the testimony given at Nikolai's trial, Ivan Osipovich was beaten so badly by the two Lozhkins and Perevozchikov that he was unable to say anything about it. In fact, no grain had been stolen.⁷⁹

Once again, the local Udmurt newspapers, *Tractor* and *Udmurt Commune*, investigated these claims in 1935, and, according to Kozlov's May 21, 1936 report, the newspapers' investigation decided, based on witness

statements, that some of these acts of cruelty did not take place. According to Kozlov’s materials, the investigation concluded that Nikolai Lozhkin behaved very respectfully towards Aleksei Samoilovich, waking him up and explaining to him that sleeping on the job was not permitted. When Aleksei Samoilovich went back to sleep, Nikolai threw a pipe on the ground to wake him up. *Tractor* and *Udmurt Commune’s* investigators concluded no beating had taken place. They also concluded that Nikolai and [Grigorii Ivanovich](#) had not beaten Ivan Osipovich because he could not clearly state who had attacked him. According to *Tractor* and *Udmurt Commune’s* investigation, Ivan Osipovich originally blamed Perevozchikov for beating him but then changed his story to blame the chairman and the brigadier. However, the investigators did conclude that Nikolai and Serafim had drunkenly harassed the chief groom, [Iakov Protopopov](#).⁸⁰ And, once again, the July 12, 1935 report from a District Party Committee instructor directly contradicted the newspapers’ findings, claiming that all the accusations had been substantiated through collective farmers’ letters of complaint.⁸¹ It is impossible to know the truth, but the accusations of violence certainly helped create a master narrative of an abusive tyrant.

The collective farmers testified that Nikolai Lozhkin was often verbally abusive as well, using such epithets as “bastards,” “vermin,” and “loiterers” when he addressed them and routinely threatening to shoot them for seemingly minor infractions. Nikolai Lozhkin owned a pistol that he had brought back with him from his time in the Red Army which he allegedly used to intimidate collective farmers. For example, in the winter of 1935, the collective farmers went into the forest to cut timber and mistakenly took the wrong road. Upon realizing this was not the correct path, an allegedly drunk Nikolai Lozhkin leapt out from the sledge, snatched up his revolver, and began to threaten and curse at the collective farmer, Pavel Ivanovich Lozhkin, because they had gone up the wrong road.⁸² Several collective farmers testified to the Regional Party Committee inspector that, at more than one collective farm and brigadier meeting, particularly at meetings with the fourth brigade, Nikolai Lozhkin and [Fedor Lozhkin](#) said things like, “If it were 1918, it would be necessary to shoot you all,” and “It is necessary to shoot you all in the name of the Party committee, but many bullets would be wasted on you. Better to chase you all out.”⁸³ Collective farmers reported that, in 1935, at a collective farm meeting, Nikolai Lozhkin cursed at the collective farmer Ivan Iosifovich Lozhkin, saying, “It would be necessary to shoot you if I wasn’t sorry to waste the bullet. It cost 18 kopeks and you are not worth that.”⁸⁴ These death threats were often targeted at specific individuals who challenged or failed to live up to Nikolai’s expectations.

The collective farmers took Nikolai Lozhkin’s threats with the revolver seriously since he had, on other occasions, demonstrated a tendency to use his gun to solve administrative problems. In one incident, for example, in 1934, collective farmers’ sheep got out of their pens and into the collective farm’s winter crops. In order to give the appearance of decisively dealing with this problem, Nikolai Lozhkin supposedly asked the brigadier Al. Iak. Lozhkin to shoot the sheep, and he added, “when you find the sheep’s owner, [do the same to him].” The collective farmers stated Nikolai Lozhkin himself shot many sheep and actively participated in this “hunt.”⁸⁵ The sheep represented valuable livestock, and their loss would have been devastating for their owners who relied on them to supplement their collective farm wages to maintain a more than subsistence standard of living. His willingness to shoot such valuable animals demonstrated both his lack of concern for other collective farmers and a disturbing propensity to use lethal force to solve problems. This behavior was so concerning that, on July 26, 1936, the new head of the collective farm, Mikhail Popov, and another collective farm member, T. Lozhkin, wrote to the Debessy District Party Committee about seizing Nikolai’s gun. They wrote that they were concerned for their safety because Nikolai Lozhkin “has a gun and doesn’t want to give the position of

collective farm chair to anyone else.”⁸⁶

Nikolai Lozhkin’s violence was a means of correcting the failings of collective farmers or defending his station, but his violent tendencies were not just limited to punishing those who challenged his position as head of the collective farm.

According to testimony from some collective farmers, Nikolai Lozhkin used violence to punish people who should have otherwise gone to court, setting himself up as judge and jury. This tendency towards extralegal justice (*samosud*) was already demonstrated by the way Nikolai helped Serafim punish the head groom. But according to collective farmer testimony, this was a longstanding behavior and one that Nikolai engaged in often, in direct conflict with the law. For example, in 1933, the wife of collective farmer Vasilii Grigorievich Lozhkin was tried and sent to prison in Izhvesk for unspecified crimes. She somehow escaped prison and returned to her husband who hid her from the authorities for two days. When the collective farm administration found this out, they arrested her and told her husband that they were getting ready to arrest him as well for aiding and abetting her. However, instead of sending him to court, Nikolai Lozhkin, Trofim Lozhkin, and Mitrofan Lozhkin decided to administer their own extra-legal punishment. Allegedly, the night Vasilii Lozhkin was supposed to be sent to Debessy to the people’s court, he was instead summoned by the collective farm administration and taken into a house where Nikolai, Trofim, and Mitrofan Lozhkin were waiting for him. Nikolai Lozhkin purportedly grabbed him by the head and bent him over a sack and ordered Trofim and Mitrofan to beat him with their fists on his back. After Vasilii was badly beaten, they released him, and Nikolai supposedly told him, “Now go home, we will not send you to court.”⁸⁷ While, in 1936, this incident served to paint Nikolai as an arrogant tyrant who thought himself above the law, in reality Nikolai’s actions were probably less harsh than the court punishment would have been and allowed Vasilii to remain at home with his twelve-year-old son, while not escaping justice. In many ways, the beating of Vasilii Grigorievich Lozhkin is an event whose interpretation probably changed greatly over time as the context of Nikolai’s life changed.

Violence was common in Russian peasant life, and Nikolai seemed to be a master of it. He allegedly employed hyper-violent measures to settle personal disputes as well. This mixture of personal animosity and an inclination towards violence, while executing his duties as a communist and collective farm chairman, was well illustrated by Nikolai Lozhkin’s apparent relationship with his fellow collective farmer Aleksei Strelkov. The details of this incident vary widely in the documentation, but these variations serve to illustrate how powerful personal motivations were in driving local politics and daily interaction. One of the most violent conflicts between the two appeared to take place at a christening party at Aleksei Strelkov’s home. Communists were supposed to discourage traditions like christenings because of their ties with religion, and the fact that communists’ wives often had their babies christened was frequently held against them during Party purges. As a good communist, Nikolai was supposed to discourage such events, but he allegedly exceeded his party mandate and terrorized the family. The director of the power plant, [Semen Sychugov](#), testified that Nikolai Lozhkin hated Aleksei Strelkov, stating that once, in the winter of 1935, he and Nikolai Lozhkin returned a “bit tipsy” from Debessy, and Nikolai Lozhkin told him, “we need to get rid of Strelkov, but it will be bad for us [to do it directly],” and he asked Sychugov if he could urge Strelkov’s son to kill his father.⁸⁸ In statements to the Regional Party Committee inspector, collective farmers contended that Nikolai Lozhkin burst in to the christening and attempted to chase out the guests. When he failed, he returned with Serafim Khokhriakov⁸⁹ and began to abuse the master of the house and his son. Nikolai supposedly smacked the elderly collective farmer on the shoulder, hitting him several times and then grabbed Pavel Strelkov by the hair, pulling down and then against the grain of his hair and asked Pavel if this was painful. When Pavel answered affirmatively, Nikolai

told him to do the same to his father and urged Pavel to grab the old man by the hair and kill him, saying, “You bend his head back and cut his throat with your knife.”⁹⁰ The collective farmers claimed that, through such behavior, Nikolai “taught” Strelkov’s son to fall out with his father.⁹¹ However, the local newspapers *Tractor* and *Udmurt Commune* offered a slightly different version of events. According to its investigation of the “Red Column” collective farm, Serafim Khokhriakov was the one who spearheaded the breakup of the party, and Nikolai had come along to try and calm Serafim down but was himself drunk and ended up screaming at Aleksei Strelkov. *Tractor* and *Udmurt Commune*’s report, made in 1935, does not mention any beating or attempted murder. It is possible that the details of this event were embellished after the fact, misremembered, or simply were not given to *Tractor* and *Udmurt Commune*’s investigators for fear of reprisal from Nikolai and his friends.

The reasons given for Nikolai’s alleged assault on the Strelkov family also varied. Witness testimony presented at his trial alleged that Nikolai hated Aleksei Strelkov because he had criticized Nikolai and the collective farm administration to his neighbor while they were in the *banya* together; this neighbor allegedly told one of the brigadiers who, in turn, told Nikolai.⁹² However, a far more compelling reason is offered up in *Tractor* and *Udmurt Commune*’s material and corroborated by Debessy Party Committee instructor Bazhanov’s report and a letter of complaint from the collective farmer Anna Fedorovna Khokhoriakova. According to these sources, Nikolai blamed the elder Strelkov for Andrei Lozhkin’s imprisonment. The newspapers reported that Nikolai was shouting at Aleksei Strelkov, accusing him of being the reason brigadier Andrei Lozhkin was sent to court, and yelling that he needed to scutch flax rather than have a party.⁹³ According to Bazhanov, Nikolai yelled at Strelkov, “it is because of your shit that brigadier Andrei was sentenced to prison.”⁹⁴ It is unclear from the documentation why Andrei Lozhkin was sent to prison, but Nikolai seemed to blame Aleksei Strelkov’s poor flax harvesting. Andrei had been part of Lozhkin’s circle of administrators and friends. Nikolai had sponsored Andrei’s party membership and had written him a letter of recommendation (*khoroashaia kharakteristika*), so undoubtedly the two men had had a close personal bond. Personal friendships and loyalties seemed to drive many of the conflicts on the “Red Column” farm, as they do in most aspects of Russian and Soviet life, and it seems far more logical that his friend’s imprisonment would have prompted such a vengeful outburst, rather than some third hand *banya* commentary. Either way, it would appear that Nikolai Lozhkin’s personality and behavior played a large role in prompting collective farmers to denounce him.

On yet another occasion, another personal grudge allegedly drove Nikolai to violent outbursts. During the October festivities in 1935, [Ilyia Kuzmich Protopopov](#), the editor of the local Udmurt newspaper, *Tractor*, came to the festivities hall, and Nikolai Lozhkin persistently urged the young Komsomol member, [Ilyia Nikolaevich Lozhkin](#), to grab Protopopov by the collar and hurl him from the premises. Nikolai Lozhkin allegedly had the boy under his influence and reminded him that Protopopov’s grandfather was the reason the Komsomol member’s father had been shot by the Whites. However, witnesses claimed that Nikolai Lozhkin’s real motives were not to help the boy get revenge for his father’s death but to chase Protopopov out because he had often spoken out against Nikolai at party meetings and criticized him in *Tractor*.⁹⁵ Either way, it was personal resentments that drove this conflict.

According to the Regional Party Committee instructor, Nikolai Lozhkin’s violent temper had an even greater effect on collective farm life than just disrupting it. Inspector Shakirskii cited Nikolai Lozhkin’s rude and violent temper as one of the causes for the decline of the collective farm, alleging that he really did “chase

out” collective farmers from the collective farm as he had threatened, expelling twenty-five households in 1933-34, primarily for insubordination to the administration (See [Appendix 2](#)).⁹⁶ Additionally, in 1935, thirty-five households from the village of Azim’ia sent in a written request to separate from the “Red Column.” While the exact reason for this request is not included, it is not hard to believe Nikolai Lozhkin’s violent behavior played a role in this decision.⁹⁷

Mitrofan

[Mitrofan Lozhkin](#), one of Nikolai’s co-defendants and the former supply master, corroborated many of the accusations against Nikolai Lozhkin. Mitrofan’s case exemplifies how personal interests and local politics shaped the denunciation process, sometimes having far greater effect on who was denounced and how these denunciations were formed than state politics and rhetoric. In the case of the “Red Column” collective farm, it would appear that the District Party Committee orchestrated much of the testimony against Nikolai Lozhkin and manipulated this testimony to fit into the state narrative of a morally, politically, and economically corrupt local leader. But the impetus behind Nikolai Lozhkin’s and other administrators’ removal from power appeared to be strictly local, based on personalities and local politics. Mitrofan played a central role in giving testimony and legitimizing the District Party Committee’s narrative, but his testimony’s reliability was dubious. Mitrofan appeared to have been spared prosecution for his role in the theft of collective farm property and violence towards collective farmers in return for his testimony against his former friends and colleagues. One could easily believe that, at the very least, Mitrofan downplayed his role in these affairs and highlighted Nikolai’s role. It is not, after all, unheard of for those who testify against their codefendants to fabricate a story they believe the prosecution wants to hear in exchange for immunity. Moreover, his fellow collective farmers paint a less than flattering portrait of Mitrofan. The collective farmer Nikita Kornilovich Skobkarev testified that drunken parties often took place at Nikolai Lozhkin’s apartment but more often at Mitrofan’s apartment with Nikolai simply participating.⁹⁸ Zoya Stepanova Lozhkina described Mitrofan as “systematically drunk” and an embezzler of collective farm property such as leather goods.⁹⁹ The picture Mitrofan paints of Nikolai Lozhkin further illustrates the personal rather than official nature of the complaints against him and helped further develop the narrative of moral and economic corruption. In Mitrofan’s testimony, Nikolai Lozhkin’s personal behavior and his flaunting of his ill-gotten wealth and privilege were what made him “a bully.”¹⁰⁰

Mitrofan substantiated the charges of assault, verbal threats, and the misuse of his position for economic gain, but his testimony focused more on Nikolai’s bullying than the testimony of the other collective farmers, possibly to give himself an excuse for colluding, at times, with Nikolai. Because of this focus on Nikolai’s intimidation, Mitrofan’s testimony contains some of the most lurid accounts of assault and embezzlement. Mitrofan alleged that Nikolai Lozhkin beat Andrei Vasil’evich Lozhkin and chased him from the administration, punching him in the neck, and that he also beat Vaslii Grigor’evich with his fists at collective farm meetings. Mitrofan corroborated and embellished charges of drunken gun violence, stating that, in the winter, E. F. Lozhkin and Nikolai Lozhkin went to the village of Debessy and came back drunk and started shooting at people, “but I am not sure if they were shooting at them or just shooting in the villages of Zetymskii and Malozetymskii and were targeting curtains.”¹⁰¹ In addition to accusations of violence, Mitrofan confirmed Nikolai Lozhkin’s financial misdeeds, claiming that “he asked for money and promised that he will sign something in Debessy and so I gave him the money and now he says he did not take it.”¹⁰² Mitrofan also testified that Nikolai Lozhkin was caught falsifying account records and grossly inflating the number of

workdays he worked as well as adding sick leave and other bonuses.¹⁰³

While most of these accusations simply reiterate the District Party Committee's narrative of corruption and debauchery, Mitrofan created his own narrative of privilege, alleging that Nikolai Lozhkin used his position as collective farm chairman to secure better goods and opportunities for himself, which he flaunted in the community. These charges are interesting because they demonstrate once again that Nikolai's violation of the collective farmers' sense of fairness and propriety influenced many denunciations. Mitrofan focused intensely on items, such as livestock, that enhanced Nikolai's quality of life and his standing in the collective farm at others' expense. But more than the statements from the other collective farmers, Mitrofan's language and the detail he provided hint at jealousy as a possible motive for denouncing Nikolai Lozhkin. For example, he accused Nikolai of pilfering butter from his wife's job at the butter factory.¹⁰⁴ Mitrofan enviously described how Nikolai and his family used large quantities of scarce butter carelessly, stating, "they didn't live a day without butter, frying and stewing not only in the morning but also in the evening."¹⁰⁵ Butter, meat, and other foodstuffs were luxuries on collective farms; that Nikolai could indulge in butter both morning and evening raised many suspicions about how he acquired the butter and, as Mitrofan's language suggests, created jealousy.

Butter wasn't the only commodity Nikolai Lozhkin was accused of misappropriating. He was accused of letting straw rot rather than distributing it to collective farmers and using his position as a member of the Regional Party Committee to hoard food. Mitrofan also reiterated the charge that Nikolai Lozhkin took a cow without permission when his personal cow disappeared. Appropriating material goods for himself and his family was not the only way Mitrofan alleged that Nikolai abused his office. He also accused Nikolai Lozhkin of securing special privileges for his children, allowing them to study more than the obligatory seven years, which was not an option for the children of other collective farmers.¹⁰⁶ All of these ill-gotten privileges vastly raised Nikolai's standard of living as well as the level of success and comfort his family could enjoy. However, such privileges were not available to the majority of the other collective farmers. Mitrofan's narrative of Nikolai Lozhkin's crime focused on the privileges he enjoyed in his daily life and conveyed a certain jealousy that may have motivated others to testify against him as well. For Mitrofan, Nikolai Lozhkin's crimes were personal and local.

Nowhere is this emphasis on the personal more evident than in Mitrofan's description of Nikolai's administrative techniques and practices in which personal violence, connections, and favors were the main ways he maintained power. According to Mitrofan, up until the District Party Committee investigation, Nikolai Lozhkin felt secure enough in his standing as a good communist and a member of the *obkom* and Regional Party Committee that he routinely reminded the collective farmers that he could act with impunity, feeling that the party apparatus would shield him from reprisals. He allegedly often stated, "You vermin need [to be] shot. I shot many vermin like you in 1917 and 1918, and although others really want to get rid of me, the District Party Committee, the *obkom* and the Regional Party Committee won't get rid of me, and in light of this fact no one will come forward and speak up because I will kick out of the collective farm anyone who says or does that."¹⁰⁷ Possibly to emphasize Nikolai Lozhkin's domineering personality or to shift blame for his actions from himself to Nikolai, Mitrofan testified that even Nikolai's cronies were not safe from his violent manipulations. Mitrofan claims that he was a victim of violence on several occasions, beginning in 1935, when Nikolai Lozhkin and Maxim A. Lozhkin visited him when they were very drunk. He claimed that they wanted to shoot him because he didn't listen to them but that he ran away before he was shot.¹⁰⁸

According to Mitrofan's testimony, Nikolai Lozhkin's bullying behavior only got worse as the District Party Committee investigation progressed. For example, Mitrofan claimed that Nikolai bribed Ivan Kondrat'evich Protopopov with two liters of wine so that he would say negative things about the District Party Committee instructors Bazhanov and Kuz'min, a fact that Protopopov later related to Mitrofan.¹⁰⁹ Once Nikolai Lozhkin was removed from his job and it was becoming clear he was facing criminal charges, Mitrofan alleged that he engaged in a campaign of intimidation. For example, Kuzma Popov verbally attacked Nikolai Lozhkin at the district party meeting and Nikolai (who was forbidden to be present) found out about it from his son, Mitrofan, and Aleksandr Khokhriakov. According to Mitrofan, he then "called us to his apartment and asked why we had not defended him and swore we were trying to sell him out but that it would not happen."¹¹⁰ Perhaps knowing Mitrofan's propensity for giving up former colleagues to save his own skin, Nikolai Lozhkin allegedly decided to further pressure Mitrofan. According to Mitrofan, after the last party meeting he called him and said, "you, Mitrofan, sold me out, and I heard you were in the White Army and we checked it, though we didn't tell you about it and we found out it is true, and if I would tell it to comrade [Dolgushev](#) you would be expelled from the party and arrested."¹¹¹ Mitrofan related further resistance and haughtiness on Nikolai's part, painting a picture of a desperate and arrogant man trying to hang on to his position of privilege and power. Mitrofan claimed that Nikolai Lozhkin, when confronted about his opposition to the new collective farm leadership, stated he would not submit to the District Party Committee's decision but would continue fighting, which he believed would end in a decision in his favor. He allegedly expressed his confidence that he would be vindicated, stating, "All you little nonentities will be in jail and I won't be because everyone knows me and the District Party Committee and Regional Party Committee will help me humiliate you."¹¹²

Popular Opinion on the Collective Farm

The testimony included in the Regional Party Committee report and Mitrofan's testimony created a negative account of the collective farm administration and suggests that the collective farm chairman had victimized the majority of collective farmers. However, excerpts from an August 18, 1936 general collective farm meeting protocol demonstrate that, despite the charges against Nikolai Lozhkin and other administration members, popular opinion about both his guilt and his character varied wildly on the collective farm. The nature of testimony given at this meeting suggests that many of those testifying against Nikolai were not disinterested parties. There is evidence that the District Party Committee was trying to shape the description of events on the "Red Column" farm in a way that firmly implicated Nikolai Lozhkin, who had become a thorn in their side, while freeing themselves from any blame for the farm's failings. In this Party protocol, it is possible to catch glimpses of local politics, family alliances, and grudges which were often sanitized out of District Party Committee and Regional Party Committee reports in favor of a master narrative that used the language of class enemies and moral depravity to explain failures.

There were, of course, many collective farmers who agreed with the Regional Party Committee inspector's characterization of the collective farm administration and gave damning testimony at the farm meeting. The treatment of collective farmers personally and materially seems to have motivated much of this testimony, most of which focused on their individual experiences. Aleksei Trofimovich Lozhkin, who described himself as a handicapped collective farmer, claimed Nikolai Lozhkin, Andrei Efimovich Lozhkin, and Mitrofan Lozhkin assaulted him because he refused to listen to them.¹¹³ Another collective farmer, [Geraeim Tronin](#), also spoke out against Nikolai, stating, "I was an honest collective farm worker but I required all actions in the collective farm

be proper and Nikolai Iosifovich kicked me out of the collective farm.”¹¹⁴ Ivan Petrovich Protopopov accused the collective farm leadership of treating the farmers poorly, letting them go hungry and shoeless, not “giv[ing] us bread besides old rotten bread and instead of improving our living conditions feeding this bread to cattle.”¹¹⁵ Praskovia Petrovna Danilova noted, rather casually, that Lozhkin had allowed the previous secretary to embezzle funds but became impassioned when speaking about how he had begun to support kulaks over poor peasants and “cleaning ladies” whom he “forgot, humiliated and cursed at, calling her a thief.”¹¹⁶ Undoubtedly, the poor wronged cleaning woman she described was herself. All of these witnesses use aspects of supplicate testimony to demonstrate their powerlessness in the face of the allegedly tyrannical Lozhkin, painting themselves as innocent victims.¹¹⁷

However, one should not assume that the testimony of the last three collective farmers offered is unbiased or even accurate. Official collective farm documents show that Geraeim had been removed from the collective farm. The official reason for his expulsion was listed as unauthorized departure from the collective farm, more than likely for one of the nearby cities as a factory worker.¹¹⁸ Nikolai Lozhkin, in a later letter to the Regional Party Committee Secretary, accused Geraeim of being a thief and notes that he ran away from the Izhevsk machine-building factory where he had worked.¹¹⁹ Likewise, Nikolai Lozhkin denounced Ivan Protopopov to the Regional Party Committee Secretary as a Red Army deserter, a poor collective farm worker, and an embezzler of funds from the local co-op¹²⁰ and claimed that Danilova was a *batrak* and Komsomol member who had been prepared by the District Party Committee to testify against him.¹²¹ Certainly, her rather dry description of Nikolai Lozhkin’s permission of embezzlement stands in contrast with her description of his treatment of poor cleaning ladies. It seems plausible that Danilova was offended by his personal attitude towards her and was convinced (perhaps by the District Party Committee during the preparation work they conducted before the general meeting) that this was connected with his promotion of kulaks into positions of power. However, the sources do not allow the “truth” of the situation to be discovered, only the differing interpretations of these events.

Praskoviia Iosifevna¹²² Lozhkina’s statements at the meeting raised further questions about how involved the District Party Committee was in directing witnesses and the spontaneity of such testimony. She noted that “Everyone blames Nikolai Lozhkin and Vasilii Lozhkin. Comrade Polikarpov says it is bad to drive Vasilii around and he uses free train tickets too.”¹²³ Polikarpov was a party member and the director of the *Raion* Land Organization (RaiZO) who had been dispatched to audit the collective farm and then later to conduct meetings with collective farmers. Nikolai Lozhkin claimed that Polikarpov, at Dolgushev’s request, prepared *bedniaks* and Komsomol members to testify at this August 18th meeting.¹²⁴ It would appear, based on Praskoviia’s statements, that he was influencing people by censuring the behavior of Nikolai Lozhkin and his brother (who were at that time engaged in filing complaints against the District Party Committee secretary Dolgushev) and claiming that they were using privileges denied to most collective farmers, such as car use or free rail tickets. The issue of Nikolai Lozhkin’s innocence aside, it appears that his accusations that the District Party Committee was manipulating people against him were not entirely unfounded.

Other collective farmers were a bit more sympathetic to Nikolai’s plight. Andrei Efimovich Lozhkin (who was accused of participating in the beating of Aleksei Trofimovich Lozhkin) took a dispassionate stance on the former leaders, stating, “The old management and its leadership had both good and bad sides and I don’t think he [Nikolai] is guilty because we were supposed to help him with his work.”¹²⁵ Andrei Efimovich’s sympathies

could be genuine, or they could be explained by the fact that he and Nikolai had both participated in the assault on Aleksei Trofimovich. However, not all of Nikolai Lozhkin's supporters had such credibility issues. Natalia Grigorevna Lozhkina spoke up in Nikolai's defense, stating, "the old management wasn't bad but didn't have any support from the district party organization and Trofim Nikiforevich Lozhkin was overloaded with work as the bookkeeper and party committee secretary and the Party committee is guilty in the collapse of the collective farm."¹²⁶ Most of the collective farm administrators were overburdened, and a majority of them occupied more than one post. However, her opinion did not fit the narrative that the District Party Committee was trying to construct, probably in part because it implicated them in the failures on the collective farm. According to Nikolai Lozhkin (admittedly not an unbiased party), Dolgushev interrupted her, not allowing her to continue speaking, and then later chastised her for defending Nikolai.¹²⁷ While Nikolai was not allowed to participate at this meeting, his co-defendant, Trofim Lozhkin, spoke up, echoing Natalia's comments. Trofim claimed Nikolai Lozhkin was telling the truth and that "he didn't organize feasts for himself and wasn't drunk and didn't beat collective farmers and self-criticism wasn't repressed."¹²⁸ Trofim did take responsibility in part for the troubles on the collective farm, noting, "Accounting was in bad shape because I was overloaded with work and this is why we had this collapse on our farm."¹²⁹ The protocol from this collective farm meeting shows that those who denounced Nikolai Lozhkin and the other former collective farm leaders were perhaps the loudest voices, but not the only ones. This document reveals the local interests, such as revenge and struggles for power, illustrating the powerful influence local and personal concerns exercised over denunciations. In this case, the state merely provided the channels for making denunciations and taking official and legally sanctioned action in local disputes. Central and even regional state and party officials were not actors in this drama.

The War of Words

Channels of petition and using labels

Given what we know about his pugilistic character, it is no surprise Nikolai Lozhkin did not go quietly into the night. Upon his removal from office, he launched a campaign, with the help of his brother and fellow defendant Aleksandr Khokhriakov, to disprove the charges against him, discredit those who made such accusations, and return to his position of power. While Nikolai may have been illiterate and quite probably a drunk, he was quite savvy and used the labels of the day to discredit his enemies and strengthen his case.¹³⁰ Nikolai Lozhkin pursued all avenues of appeal, sending letters to the Kirov Regional Party administration as well as having his brother bring his appeal before the highest level of authority, the Central Committee in Moscow.¹³¹ The Lozhkin brothers also sent written appeals to the Regional Party Committee secretary, to *Pravda*, and even to Iakov Iakovlev, head of the Central Committee's Agricultural Department. While none of these letters were published, both of Vasili Lozhkin's letters, the one sent to *Pravda* and the one sent to Iakovlev, were forwarded to the Kirov Regional Party Committee for investigation. This investigative function was one of the most important functions of writing to newspapers and officials.¹³² Citizens expected results from letter writing, and the Party and state put pressure on newspapers to investigate as many cases as possible. Letter writing provided a path for citizens to seek justice from the highest echelons of power.

In response to the District Party Committee's actions and its narrative of the former chairman's errors, Nikolai Lozhkin created his own counter-narrative, which featured him as a heroic communist beset by enemies. He created a very consistent narrative in which he alleged that the local District Party Committee

members orchestrated his removal from office on false pretenses and that people who had personal grudges against him because of his actions either as a party member or as the head of the collective farm supported them in this naked grab for power. Nikolai Lozhkin had served in the Civil War, and the language of constant enemies and encirclement by White forces dominates his later petitions.¹³³ He framed his account as the story of a heroic communist victim, fighting against the forces of the class enemies and their friends, by emphasizing his service during the Civil War and the hardships his family endured and by debasing his critics, claiming they were connected with enemies and waging a campaign of revenge against him. As historian Vladimir Kozlov notes, linguistic signals, such as the author’s revolutionary past, social status, and Soviet patriotism, were designed to trigger a whole system of symbols in the consciousness of the reader that reflected the basic ideological and political preferences of the government and which would create a connection between informer and the regime, conveying that the author was a person who could be trusted.¹³⁴ Nikolai and Vasiliï Lozhkin were masters of using such signals to launch a counter strike against those who denounced the former chairman.

Nikolai Lozhkin’s counter offensive began following his removal from office in June 1936. At the end of July 1936, he wrote a letter to the Regional Party Committee, in which he set about debunking the charges leveled at him. He complained that while he was in Kirov for Regional Party Committee courses, the District Party Committee manipulated the collective farmers to stealthily vote him out of office and select a new leader of the collective farm.¹³⁵ In Nikolai Lozhkin’s version, shortly after he left for Kirov, Deputy District Party Committee Secretary Kozlov called a general collective farm meeting and told the assembled farmers that the courses he went to were a yearlong and therefore it was necessary to elect a new collective farm chairman.¹³⁶ It was unclear what motivation the District Party Committee had for making such a move, and Nikolai himself was also apparently in the dark, writing, “to this day I don’t know the reasons for the elections.”¹³⁷ Nikolai Lozhkin claimed that after his return from the city of Kirov, he was met with accusations of financial impropriety, and District Party Committee representatives informed him that he had been replaced because he had misspent 400 rubles. Nikolai expressed his shock at such charges, stating, “Before the elections there had been no talk of squandered money.”¹³⁸ To further justify his claim that the charges against him were a fabrication, Nikolai Lozhkin argued that the auditing commission established by the District Party Committee worked with all the documents on the collective farm for several days and then took them with them to the village of Debessy for continued auditing but that their current location was unknown, implying that the committee’s findings could not be independently verified.¹³⁹

Nikolai Lozhkin also alleged that, following his removal from the chairmanship position, he was continually victimized by the District Party Committee. He complained that he and his family were surrounded by an atmosphere of fear, humiliation, and distrust in the collective farm.¹⁴⁰ He also alleged that when he was summoned to a Regional Party Committee plenum, he was denied the use of a horse and had to go on foot to Kez station.¹⁴¹ This was a great inconvenience and humiliation for Nikolai Lozhkin. As a Party member going about Party business, he should have been granted the use of a horse, but forcing him to walk was a way to underscore his powerlessness and loss of status. According to Nikolai, the District Party Committee took other measures to isolate and humiliate him and his family. He claimed that Dolgushev and [Kozlov](#) forbade him from talking with the other collective farmers and communists at Party meetings and collective farm meetings, and the collective farmers and communists were informed they shouldn’t speak to him. He stated that he was unable to refute the charges against him and claimed that those who had been his colleagues and companions were now

afraid to even be seen talking to him for fear of the District Party Committee's reprisal. To illustrate his isolation from his former comrades and fellow collective farmers, Nikolai Lozhkin offered up this anecdote: "I met the secretary of our party committee, Trofim Lozhkin in Dzil'e, I asked him to go home together and he was forced to decline, stating, 'I won't go together with you, if Dolgushev can know or see.'"¹⁴² Nikolai was isolated from his support base, and those who had grudges against him supposedly took advantage of his isolation to victimize his family. He claimed, "Now they scoff at us and those, who had been on the side of the White forces during the time of the revolution, scoff at our family and also give malicious insults. Further no one will talk with my sons and daughters."¹⁴³ He pointedly blamed the local officials for his situation, maintaining, "Now such stonewalling is employed by the District Party Committee, so that every one of these loiterers may taunt me."¹⁴⁴

Having established himself as the victim, Nikolai Lozhkin attempted to discredit the District Party Committee and the new leadership of the collective farm. He argued that the current collective farm leadership was so focused on isolating and humiliating him that it was not performing its daily duties. He claimed no one paid attention to the siloing of animal food, that the sowing was abruptly cut short, that all young crops were ruined, and that nothing on the collective farm had improved. Nikolai consistently used this two-pronged narrative when appealing to higher authorities: playing himself up as the loyal but victimized communist, isolated by a manipulative and corrupt District Party Committee secretary who was so preoccupied with destroying Nikolai Lozhkin he was willing to sacrifice the collective farm's well-being to do so. Nikolai's two confederates, his brother and Aleksandr Khokhriakov, also used this narrative when appealing against the District Party Committee.

Nikolai Lozhkin had a powerful ally in his struggle with the District Party Committee in his brother Vasilii. Vasilii Lozhkin had moved away from the Kirov region and worked on the railroad in Moscow. However, he maintained close ties with his home village and used his residence in Moscow to appeal to central authorities, involving them in this local power struggle. Vasilii Lozhkin straddled both worlds, having strong connections with village life but also building a professional career and using those ties to his own advantage. He wrote an article describing his brother's plight, which he titled "Petty Tyrant in the role of the secretary of Debesskii District Party Committee" and sent to the editorial board of *Pravda* in Moscow. *Pravda* forwarded this article to the Regional Party Committee on August 9. According to the Regional Party Committee instructor's report, Vasilii Lozhkin used this article to describe all the success of the collective farm during its existence, the positive aspects of Nikolai Lozhkin's administration and character, and the alleged ill treatment his brother suffered at the hands of the District Party Committee chairman and his deputy. Vasilii alleged that Dolgushev and Kozlov had conspired to remove his brother from power because of their personal biases against Nikolai, describing him as "obsolete, dumb as a rock and politically and functionally illiterate, a whitewasher of facts." Vasilii reported that Dolgushev and Kozlov believed that former District Party Committee officials were sheltering Nikolai Lozhkin and enabling him to continue in his post, which Dolgushev and Kozlov were intent on stopping.¹⁴⁵

Vasilii and Nikolai Lozhkin offered almost identical accounts of how the District Party Committee officials used deception to remove Nikolai from office and how they continued to bully and isolate him. Vasilii also reinforced his brother's assertions that the District Party Committee secretary was so intent on isolating and humiliating Nikolai Lozhkin that he was willing to sacrifice the economic viability of the collective farm. According to Vasilii Lozhkin, Dolgushev told Nikolai that "it is quite enough, ruling the collective farm like a landlord, now don't dare interfere in the affairs of the collective farm. Let Popov, the new chairman, do

whatever, even if it is harmful for the collective farm, you be quiet, don't dare talk to him or criticize him.”¹⁴⁶ With such a narrative, the brothers were playing to the political sensibilities of the regional and central party officials. They emphasized Nikolai Lozhkin's credentials as a communist and the economic achievements of the “Red Column” farm under his leadership and contrasted that with a personally motivated District Party Committee, willing to sacrifice the paramount goal of collective farm solvency to pursue its vendetta.

In addition to attacking the District Party Committee leadership for their alleged misuse of power, Nikolai Lozhkin argued, not without some merit, that the District Party Committee had allied itself with enemies in its struggle to discredit him. Nikolai Lozhkin claimed that his main detractors on the collective farm were former kulaks and White Guardists who had been expelled from the collective farm and were seeking revenge now that he was in a vulnerable position. Gulfo Alexopoulos notes that it was not uncommon for those who had been denounced to use the fact that their accusers had been arrested or otherwise sanctioned to prove their innocence or at least call their guilt into question. However, whereas Alexopoulos views this behavior as illustrative of how the mechanism of state repression was self-supportive and self-sustaining, this case suggests an astute citizenry co-opting and manipulating the language of the state to strengthen their case and couch it in a language that drew the attention of plenipotentiaries.¹⁴⁷

Nikolai Lozhkin presented his argument and corroborating testimony to the Secretary of the Regional Party Committee, Comrade Stoliar, on August 30. Nikolai vehemently argued that his removal was the work of active class enemy agents in the collective farm who scorned him. He testified that, at the August 18-19 collective farm meetings, where the decision of the District Party Committee bureau to turn him over to the judicial organs was discussed, only hostile collective farmers, such as the de-kulakized individual small holders who had been excluded from the collective farm, came forward to give testimony.¹⁴⁸ In his memorandum, Nikolai Lozhkin laid out a laundry list of sins allegedly committed by the six collective farmers who testified against him on August 18. In each case, he focused on their suspicious backgrounds and behaviors. He accused two of the collective farmers (Andrei Ivanovich Maksimov and Geraeim Ivanovich Tronin) of being unreliable migrant workers who abandoned both their responsibilities on the collective farm, where they were members in name only, and their other responsibilities at the Izhevsk Machine Building factory, where they had been employed.¹⁴⁹ Nikolai denounced the remaining three collective farmers (Nikolai Grigorivich Acheev, Ivan Protopopov and Ilyia Kuzmich Protopopov) as affiliates of various enemy groups, either as White supporters during the Civil War or as kulaks or, in some instances, both. He claimed that Nikolai Grigorivich Acheev had a suspect past and had preserved his “anti-Soviet” character. He supposedly was a former noncommissioned police officer under Kolchak and was under investigation by the NKVD, following his expulsion from the collective farm for “scandalous behavior.”¹⁵⁰

Nikolai Lozhkin directed even more serious accusations against his other two denouncers. He alleged that Ivan Protopopov deserted the Red Army, and, during his time as a deserter, he killed and ate peasants' pigs. He also accused Ivan Protopopov of conspiring with the Whites to beat and terrorize his (Nikolai Lozhkin's) wife and children while Nikolai was serving in the Red Army because they were family members of a communist and Red Army volunteer. Further, Nikolai alleged that Ivan Protopopov was unreformed, lazy, and corrupt even after he had joined the collective farm, noting that, in 1933, while working as the chairman of the village Coop, Ivan Protopopov was sentenced to forced labor for embezzlement. He claimed that Ivan Protopopov “systematically loafed around [on the collective farm], and because of this always lacked bread, despite the fact

that he had lived as a rich man before the revolution.”¹⁵¹ Nikolai Lozhkin likewise accused the district newspaper editor, Ilyia Kuzmich Protopopov, of having suspect family history, connecting with enemy groups, and presuming a personal vendetta against him for executing his duties as a communist and loyal Red Army soldier. According to Nikolai Lozhkin, Ilyia Protopopov’s family had a long and sinister history of opposition to Soviet power. Ilyia Protopopov’s grandfather was supposedly a former master sergeant, who was the main actor in betraying Nikolai Lozhkin’s family as the family of a communist volunteer in 1919 and participating in the beating of Nikolai Lozhkin’s wife and children with the Whites. However, the grandfather’s most heinous crime was handing over the chairman of the Committee of the Poor, Nikolai Ignativich Lozhkin,¹⁵² who was executed by Kolchak’s forces in the village of Soznovka. According to Nikolai Lozhkin, the rest of the men in the family followed in the grandfather’s anti-Soviet footsteps. Nikolai alleged that Ilyia Protopopov’s father was a deserter from the Red Army, whom he helped apprehend during his term of service in the Red Army. Nikolai claimed that Ilyia Protopopov’s father and grandfather remembered how he helped bring them down and unmask them and that Ilyia Protopopov was using his position as the editor of the district newspaper *Tractor* and member of the Debessy District Party Committee Plenum to slander him and give false facts to the District Party Committee.¹⁵³

Another person with close ties to the current district leadership, whom Nikolai Lozhkin accused of bearing a grudge against him and using the situation to exact his revenge, was the new collective farm chairman, Mikhail Popov. Nikolai alleged that the new head of the collective farm was de-kulakized in 1930 and that Popov organized a group of individual small holders who resisted giving their land to the collective farm in the same year. Nikolai Lozhkin claimed that when Popov did contribute land, he didn’t give his best land to the collective farm. Nikolai claimed that the District Party Committee personally dispatched him to Popov’s home village and, despite the secretive nature of that group, Lozhkin succeeded in unmasking Popov as the main organizer of this gang. Nikolai Lozhkin claimed that Popov still bore a grudge against him for his role in this operation and was giving false information about him to the current District Party Committee in revenge. He claimed that the deputy director of the political section of the Kizskii MTS, A. A. Lozhkin, could corroborate this.¹⁵⁴ According to Nikolai Lozhkin, those who testified against him on August 19 had similar resumes.¹⁵⁵ In his opinion, all the participants in this meeting were formerly de-kulakized. He claimed that the participants at the August 19 meeting had voted to turn him over to the courts for revenge because of his service and his fight against them in his capacities as the former head of the collective farm and a communist.¹⁵⁶

However, in Nikolai Lozhkin’s opinion, those who testified against him on August 18 and 19 were merely pawns in the hands of the district officials. He accused members of the District Party Committee of orchestrating this cabal of former class enemies to discredit and persecute him and preventing his supporters from sharing their opinions. Nikolai Lozhkin stated that Dolgushev led and orchestrated the testimony against him and suppressed anyone who tried to speak in his defense. He claimed that when Natalia Lozhkina came to his defense, she was interrupted and not allowed to speak, and after the meeting Dolgushev yelled at her because she had come to his (Lozhkin’s) defense. Nikolai also claimed that, in order to get collective farmers to give “proper” testimony (in light of Natalia Lozhkina’s outburst), Dolgushev and the head of the District Executive Committee, Comrade Babkin, ordered the editor of the district newspaper, Ilyia Protopopov; the District Party Committee instructor Kuz’min; and the head of the district land organization Polikarpov to prepare people to give testimony at the general meeting. Nikolai Lozhkin claimed that much of this preparatory work was focused on the former landless laborers, poorest collective farmers, Komsomol members, and communists whose testimony, based on their social status, would be most damning. As a result of the district

officials' efforts, several poor peasants and party members testified against Nikolai Lozhkin.¹⁵⁷ Nikolai never gave a reason for Dolgushev to plot against him but wrote that the Chairman of the District Executive Committee, Comrade Babkin, was motivated by revenge. He claimed Babkin was instrumental in organizing people against him because, in 1933, he gave a written statement to the *obkom* that Babkin's wife was a kulak's daughter and he materially supporting his mother-in-law, a kulak.¹⁵⁸ He believed that "Babkin [wa]s still angry with [him] and currently received false information from the abovementioned people and gathered them to lead the work of mocking me."¹⁵⁹ "Consequently," wrote Lozhkin, "I have fallen into a circle, with agents of the class enemies on one side and their acolytes on the other, the District Party Committee secretary and Chairman of the District Executive Committee and other leaders of the *raion* organizations."¹⁶⁰

At no time did Nikolai Lozhkin depict himself as anything other than the victim of a localized group of vengeful enemies. He expressed complete faith that the system he had dedicated his life to would have the intelligence and vision to see through the lies of this localized group. In his appeal to comrade Stoliar, he asserted that

On the evidence of jabbering and gossip and the sabotage of agents of the class enemy and their minions, I cannot be found guilty by our proletarian court, or by the decision of the District Party Committee. And even if they have an agreement between them they cannot find me guilty because I agitated against grain collection and for the squandering of collective farm money, suppressed self-criticism, and other false, libelous facts, which are meant to shame me, it cannot be proven as such facts were made up by them for reasons I already stated.¹⁶¹

He was confident that the courts would see that the charges against him were false and that the Soviet system would vindicate him.

His brother, Vasili, demonstrated an equal amount of faith in the system. As noted above, he sent an article to *Pravda* blaming Dolgushev for abusing his brother, and, on August 21, 1936, he wrote to Iakov Arkaidiovich Iakovlev,¹⁶² the head of the Agricultural Section of the Central Committee in Moscow. Although Vasili appears to have been better educated and more eloquent than Nikolai, he used the same basic argument of the loyal communist beset by enemies in his letter to Iakovlev. Using both his personal experience and information provided in a frantic letter from Nikolai Lozhkin's friend and co-defendant, Aleksandr Khokhriakov, he outlined Nikolai's and other administration members' service to the collective farm, the party, and the state and systematically questioned the credibility of witnesses and District Party Committee officials.

Aleksandr Khokhriakov's letter deserves note. He wrote to Vasili Lozhkin on August 17, 1936, explaining the situation on the collective farm. He wrote that all the organizers of the collective farm -- Nikolai Lozhkin, Trofim Lozhkin, Serafim Khokhriakov, Grigorii Ivanovich Lozhkin, and himself (Khokhriakov) -- were being charged with large scale embezzlement and, that the materials presented against him were selected from the testimonies of kulaks' sons and loiterers and witnesses who were bought off or whom Dolgushev coached with the intention of sending them to prison. Aleksandr Khokhriakov claimed that Dolgushev was quite brazen, bragging about fixing the evidence and stating that "We will give you 10 years now that we bought Mitrofan off."¹⁶³ Khokhriakov stated that Mitrofan had become the District Party Committee's star witness, cooperating with Dolgushev in return for the District Party Committee dropping its prosecution of him. He

claimed that

[Mitrofan] started to give false evidence against us. He blames Nikolai for forcing him to work for him and says all the disgraceful goings-on at the collective farm were created by Nikolai, Serafim and Sashka [Khokhoriakov]. This is the way in which Mitrofan chose to survive. And District Party Committee believed him and acquitted him. Mitrofan remains on their side.¹⁶⁴

Describing how embattled the loyal former collective farm administrators had become, Aleksandr Khokhriakov wrote that the harvest was a failure that year (1936)¹⁶⁵ and that the old administration [Nikolai Lozhkin, himself and the other defendants] was being blamed for this on the grounds that they had organized against the new administration and undermined the new administration's efforts to have a successful harvest. Dolgushev interpreted Nikolai and Vasilii's appeals to the Regional Party Committee and *Pravda* as opposition to the new collective farm administration and cracked down on the former administrators to try and prevent further counter-denunciations. Khokhriakov seemed genuinely terrified, and he mailed the letter secretly from his office in Kez so it wouldn't be intercepted. He begged Vasilii Lozhkin to help his brother and the other administration members, writing, "Vasia, come soon, so that they won't succeed in sending us to jail."¹⁶⁶

Vasilii responded to Aleksandr Khokhriakov's letter by directly appealing to Iakov Iakovlev and asking the Central Committee to overrule the District Party Committee's decision. He began his letter to Iakovlev by laying out the party credentials of the men accused; he noted on three separate occasions that his brother had been a party member since 1918, a member of the Udmurt *obkom*, the Kirov Regional Party Committee, and a delegate to the 6th All-Union Congress of Soviets.¹⁶⁷ He reiterated the long-term duties and responsibilities that Nikolai had shouldered for the party and that for years he had held positions of trust and responsibility as a way of proving his brother was more credible than those denouncing him. He treated the other indicted administration members similarly, noting that Aleksandr Khokhriakov, who sent him the letter, was the collective farm chauffer, a party member, and a former delegate to the All Union Congress of Collective Farmer-Shockworkers; Trofim Lozhkin was the secretary of the collective farm's party committee; and Grigorii Lozhkin was a permanent collective farm brigadier. They were, he argued, the "same faithful people who built the collective farm."¹⁶⁸

He echoed secondhand accounts of Dolgushev's deception used to remove Nikolai Lozhkin from his post as chairman and his orchestration of the class enemies' testimony against Nikolai. Vasilii's testimony was most poignant when he described the hardships his brother and his brother's family faced. Vasilii Lozhkin claimed that Nikolai was owed thirty poods of grain, but the collective farm refused to give it to him because Dolgushev hadn't ordered it, and, as a result, his family had no grain or flour. The family struggled to eat and felt incredibly isolated from the community. Vasilii Lozhkin wrote that his sister-in-law described the situation thusly:

The exact same thing that happened when Kolchak's forces came. We didn't have flour or bread and no one was interested in how we were living. Like typhoid patients, no one comes to visit us except the White-guardists who searched us. No one spoke with us, everyone turned away from us. It is exactly like the current situation. No one will talk with us, they are afraid of us. No one comes to visit us. We ask for the bread we earned but they don't give it to us.¹⁶⁹

By comparing her current situation to the hardships of the Civil War, Nikolai Lozhkin’s wife reiterated the misery she faced as a loyal communist during that period and likened those who were currently oppressing her family to enemies of the regime, simultaneously painting her family as long-suffering loyal communists and discrediting those who denounced her husband. Vasilii Lozhkin built on her testimony, explaining how his brother was suffering at the hand of the District Party Committee Secretary Dolgushev, whom he portrayed as corrupt and manipulative. Vasilii noted that Dolgushev had isolated his brother from family, community, and party supporters, reiterating that Dolgushev had banned him from attending or speaking at party meetings. Dolgushev even had tried to prevent Nikolai Lozhkin from contacting Vasilii Lozhkin. Vasilii reported that the party member Aleksandr Andreevich Khokhriakov told him, “Sometimes Nikolai Iosifovich wanted to talk with you, very bad business had already taken place on the collective farm, but he is afraid that Dolgushev will find out and curse at him.”¹⁷⁰

Vasilii Lozhkin then represented Dolgushev as a petty, shortsighted tyrant. He stated, “I could, from my personal observations, bring up a number of facts which characterize Dolgushev as a petty tyrant, but I believe that the communists of this collective farm themselves can tell all such facts better than I can.” Vasilii had come to visit the “Red Column” farm and had accumulated accounts of Dolgushev’s abuse of other leading workers and communists of the “Red Column” farm, which he related to Iakovlev as a way to discredit Dolgushev. Such actions were loaded with linguistic signals that the Central Committee would have instantly recognized. The fact that Vasilii Lozhkin claimed that these accounts had come from communists on the farm was meant to signal to Iakovlev that these accounts could be trusted; likewise, Dolgushev’s alleged abuse other shockworkers and communists was meant to establish a pattern of anti- Soviet behavior. Vasilii Lozhkin claimed that, on Dolgushev’s initiative, the delegate to the second All-Union Congress of Collective Farmers from the “Ant Hill” collective farm was removed from leadership roles and sent on a punitive logging expedition shortly after he returned from this conference, which suggested a pattern of behavior. He also related the case of Kudriavtsev, a party member since 1918, who “already can scarcely breathe from tuberculosis,” claiming that Dolgushev told him that he needed to study first and then he would receive treatment.¹⁷¹ These stories were meant to illustrate how capricious, disrespectful, and abusive Dolgushev was. Vasilii further claimed that “all the communists on the [Red Column] collective farm speak about Dolgushev as a person who runs the administration without properly consulting with the communists.”¹⁷²

Having argued that Dolgushev had a history of acting despotically on other collective farms, Vasilii described what happened when someone dared to challenge him. Vasilii Lozhkin claimed that the communists of this collective farm, particularly Nikolai Lozhkin and Aleksandr Fedorovich Khokhriakov, repeatedly criticized Dolgushev’s actions, and Vasilii noted that Dolgushev didn’t like being criticized. Aleksandr Khokhriakov wrote in his letter to Vasilii that Dolgushev started creating “‘special conditions’ for the best people of the collective farm.”¹⁷³ Such conditions seem to refer to the isolation of Nikolai Lozhkin and other collective farmers from the party and the interception of mail and other communiqués, which Aleksandr Khokhriakov mentions. Additionally, Vasilii supported his brother’s theory that Babkin, the District Executive Committee secretary, was helping Dolgushev carry out his campaign against the loyal communists of the “Red Column” farm. Vasilii reiterated Babkin’s alleged familial ties to kulaks and added that “I have personally known Babkin for a long time, as a very bad communist, quick to take offense, clever at taking revenge against people.”¹⁷⁴

Having established his brother's and other former administrators' credentials and their plight as victims of latently anti-Soviet members of the District Party Committee, Vasiliï did acknowledge that his familial ties to Nikolai could be seen as a conflict of interest. In an effort to be open and maintain his credibility, he confessed the situation to Iakovlev, stating, "It is possible to say that I approach this question as a concerned party, but that isn't so."¹⁷⁵ Vasiliï explained that he was not blind to his brother's character flaws and in fact did not support his reinstatement as collective farm chairman but believed he was being persecuted and did not deserve to go to prison:

My brother has a lot of shortcomings, he is unduly rude in his management, and he thinks that no one but himself can lead this collective farm and a number of other failings. If I were on the collective farm I would absolutely vote for relieving him of the duties of collective farm chairman. It is necessary to give him different work. I think it is necessary to put into office a collective farm chairman who is a young, energetic, communist - collective farmer, not unlike that Khokhriakov who wrote to me, but to send a person with a party card to prison at the suggestion of *lishetsy* is just tyranny. He is still one of the founders of the collective farm. He was already a communist when he fought against Kolchak, an old communist who had never been punished before. In truth the whole time the collective farm had been considered a leading collective farm in every respect. To this day it holds on to the *Obkom* Red Banner, which is re-awarded every year. There is no such other collective farm in the *raion* that "Red Column" hasn't helped.¹⁷⁶

Vasiliï Lozhkin ended his letter with a plea to Iakovlev to "put an end to this petty tyranny of Comrade Dolgushev" and to hold him responsible for this abuse of the communists and the collective farm.¹⁷⁷

The Lozhkin brothers' narrative masterfully used linguistic signals to appeal to the regional and central authorities and demonstrate their trustworthiness while simultaneously discrediting the collective farmers and District Party Committee officials who had denounced or acted against Nikolai Lozhkin. The Lozhkin brothers worked within the established framework of denunciations. They actively argued their case and created a powerful narrative, which highlighted local and personal conflicts but nestled them firmly in national dialogue.

Dolgushev's Counter-Offensive

Needless to say, Dolgushev did not appreciate being labeled a petty tyrant or surreptitiously accused of anti-Soviet activity. He became aware of the Lozhkin brothers' criticism when Iakovlev and *Pravda* forwarded Vasiliï Lozhkin's letters to the Regional Party Committee. The receipt of the materials from Moscow, combined with Nikolai Lozhkin's letters to the Regional Party Committee, prompted an investigation by a Regional Party Committee inspector. In light of the accusations against him, Dolgushev had to respond, and he took a two-pronged response to the Lozhkin brothers' accusations: stopping Nikolai Lozhkin and his supporters from making further petitions to higher authorities, and discrediting Nikolai and his supporters.

He and other District Party Committee members issued what was basically an ultimatum, threatening Nikolai Lozhkin and Aleksandr Khokhriakov with further punishment if they continued to petition outside powers. They framed the two men's actions as a plot to undermine the authority of the new collective farm administration and, by proxy, the District Party Committee that appointed this administration. Following the August 16, 1936 District Party meeting minutes, the District Party Committee notified Nikolai Lozhkin and

Aleksandr Khokhriakov that "if they [did]n't stop slighting the new leadership of the collective farm and [did]n't stop working to undermine their authority, and gathering malcontent elements around them, strict measures w[ould] be taken against them."¹⁷⁸ Nikolai Lozhkin was forbidden to attend collective farm or party meetings, and Aleksandr Khokhriakov testified that their letters from the collective farm were being intercepted. The District Party Committee was very clearly trying to limit Nikolai and Aleksandr's access to forums of complaint.

At the same time they sought to silence Nikolai, the District Party Committee, particularly Dolgushev, set about trying to discredit him. After issuing their warning to Nikolai Lozhkin and Aleksandr Khokhriakov, the District Party Committee instructed the new collective farm party secretary to keep them apprised of any other misbehavior. In this vein, the new party secretary sent a note to Comrade Kozlov, detailing how Nikolai Lozhkin "severely messes" with the collective farm's work. He alleged that Nikolai Lozhkin got drunk on a recent Udmurt holiday and swore at several collective farmers, yelling, "I worked to organize these affairs, but you sold me out, and I haven't forgotten."¹⁷⁹ He also allegedly violated collective farm rules by sneaking off to Izhevsk on unknown business, possibly to send another letter of complaint. Nikolai was also blamed for organizing an "attack by Komsomol members, during the address of the chairman of the collective farm, at which time they threw sticks at him."¹⁸⁰ The new party secretary did admit that it was unclear if Nikolai was really involved, though he did suspect him. The Party secretary's closing remarks ("I don't know anything else right now, but I will keep an eye out") firmly demonstrated that Nikolai Lozhkin was under constant surveillance and the farm party cell and the District Party Committee were willing to use any suspected infraction to discredit him.¹⁸¹

Dolgushev also directly addressed and worked to systematically disprove the Lozhkin brothers' and Aleksandr Khokhriakov's accusations in an explanatory letter. Dolgushev took the District Party Committee's original narrative of denunciation and transformed it into a much more official and less personal denunciation by adding charges of political malfeasance and economic mismanagement to create a true "symbiosis of errors" with which to discredit Nikolai Lozhkin. He claimed that the collective farm was severely mismanaged for several years under Nikolai's leadership, leading to a crisis, which prompted many families to want to leave and that Nikolai had personally recommended many former class enemies for responsible positions in the party and on the collective farm. Dolgushev may have changed the existing narrative of Nikolai Lozhkin as merely morally corrupt to make his argument more palatable to the Regional Party Committee and other party organizations following the case but also because, as a District Party official, the symbiosis of political, personal, and professional mistakes may have been the lens through which he viewed the world. Dolgushev did not live on the collective farm. It was his duty as a district official to make sure the collective farm was solvent and cohesive enough to meet the state's quotas, which may also help explain his focus on the economic mismanagement and political crimes that the collective farmers did not emphasize. The picture Dolgushev created of Nikolai Lozhkin was unflattering, but it differed from the peasants' initial charges. According to Dolgushev, Nikolai Lozhkin was more of an arrogant and ignorant man who refused to accept help from the very tolerant local authorities, rather than the petty tyrant, terrorizing the collective farm and living so affluently, that the collective farmers' testimonies depicted.

Dolgushev began his letter by discrediting Nikolai's claims that the collective farm had been economically very successful under his leadership and had begun slipping under the new administration appointed by the

District Party Committee. Where Nikolai and his brother (and even the Regional Party Committee instructor's report) noted that the "Red Column" farm had been one of the best in the *oblast'*, having won prizes for its achievements several years in a row, Dolgushev claimed that the collective farm had been economically behind for a long time but that the administration had "whitewashed" these facts.¹⁸² According to Dolgushev's testimony, difficulties began as early as 1934 when they experienced problems with harvesting. He claimed that the preparation for the 1934 harvest campaign failed, despite the fact that harvest was very good, which resulted in the spoiling and shortage of many agricultural goods. Dolgushev stated that a lot of hay became rotten and "smelled really bad"¹⁸³ and that the problems with the harvest became so bad that half of the village of Dzil'ia signed a statement urging separation from the collective farm, motivated by rotten bread and shortages of cow fodder.

Dolgushev placed the blame for this alleged mishandling of crops squarely on Nikolai Lozhkin and his administration, noting that the party had reprimanded Nikolai and Fedor Lozhkin for these actions. He claimed that, in 1934, many local officials visited the collective farm to try to improve the situation and had great hopes for improvement. But the complaints from collective farmers allegedly just kept coming. According to Dolgushev, the crisis point came in the winter of February 1935, when a large number of collective farmers petitioned to separate from the collective farm. According to Dolgushev, the situation was resolved when Secretary of the District Executive Committee Babkin and deputy secretary of the District Party Committee Kozlov visited "Red Column" and promised to rectify the situation.¹⁸⁴ In May 1935, investigators were sent to the collective farm to verify the complaints. But according to other District Party Committee documents, unfulfilled state quotas, not complaints, were the reason for initiating a *raion* level investigation into the workings of "Red Column" collective farm. He notes that the District Party Committee made a decision on July 16, 1935, and issued strict guidelines and recommendations to Nikolai Lozhkin and the other administrators, which were largely unfulfilled. Dolgushev claimed that the collective farm leadership remained unwilling to implement changes, and, as a result, the harvesting campaign and the grain requisitioning for the state (*zernozagotovka*) were poorly executed. People began "to signal" about the suppression of self-criticism, about bacchanalias, and the overall state of the collective farm continued to deteriorate.¹⁸⁵

According to Dolgushev, at the end of 1935, the District Party Committee consulted regional officials, and they collectively decided Nikolai Lozhkin needed agricultural training to improve the situation on the collective farm. Dolgushev alleged that, despite the local administration's willingness to work with Nikolai Lozhkin, he was arrogant and inflexible. When presented with the opportunity to study agriculture, Nikolai "refused to study and came back and started laughing: 'here they want to send me to study thinking I am allegedly not aware how to work.'¹⁸⁶ Dolgushev claimed that Nikolai Lozhkin's intransigence forced the District Party Committee's hand. At the beginning of 1936, the District Party Committee and regional authorities decided that the issue of Nikolai Lozhkin's chairmanship should be raised and voted on at a general collective farm meeting. As mentioned above, they decided to have this meeting while Nikolai Lozhkin was away in Kirov on Regional Party Committee business. Dolgushev tried to pretend that this was not purposeful, claiming that they didn't know how long he would be away and bad circumstances on the collective farm allowed for immediate action. However, even Dolgushev could not keep up pretenses that this move hadn't been intentional. He finally admitted that "the courses gave an opportunity to remove him from office and then he was to be sent away for party work elsewhere."¹⁸⁷

However, things did not go as planned. A week after the collective farm voted him out, an incensed Nikolai Lozhkin returned to the "Red Column" farm. According to Dolgushev, he began immediately harassing the new

collective farm chairman Mikhail Popov and his brother, an accountant from the District Land Organization, demanding to know why they were there. Dolgushev and one of the regional officials, Berman, discussed this turn of events and allegedly decided the best course of events was to send Nikolai to socialist construction courses in order to send him to work elsewhere. However, Dolgushev reported, Nikolai refused this offer of continuing education and a position elsewhere in the *raion*, stating point blank, “I won’t go.” Dolgushev contradicts himself a sentence later, stating that Nikolai initially had agreed to go to these courses, but then Dolgushev went on a holiday, and Nikolai Lozhkin didn’t go to the courses.¹⁸⁸

According to Dolgushev, Nikolai Lozhkin continued to struggle against his loss of the chairmanship and attempts to send him elsewhere to work. As a result of his appeals to the *obkom* and a Sovnarkom, a brigade of investigators arrived in Debessy in July 1936. This brigade reportedly included Ivanov, the deputy of the bureau of complaints at Central Executive Committee; Petrov, from the People’s Commissariat of Land Management (NarkomZem); and Zorin, a deputy from another commissariat. This brief mention by Dolgushev is the only mention of these regional and national state officials being involved with this case. Nikolai Lozhkin does not ever mention their presence in his correspondence. Dolgushev claimed that the role this investigative brigade played was minimal: that they had a conversation with the collective farmers, conducted an inspection for several days, but did not leave any materials or make a decision.¹⁸⁹ Dolgushev does not mention any other outside inspectors, and even the existent Regional Party Committee report was turned over to the District Party Committee, leaving us to conclude that all decisions were probably left to be made at the district level.

As this case demonstrates, such labels were fluid and often assigned by local officials or citizens themselves, rather than fixed by the party or state as some scholars believe. Both Nikolai Lozhkin and Dolgushev used the other’s alleged association with former enemies to discredit each other. According to Dolgushev, Nikolai helped nominate and secure privileges for no fewer than six former class enemies: Serafim Khokhriakov, Sergei Khokhriakov, Tikhon Khokhriakov, Glavatskiikh and Andrei Lozhkin. Dolgushev alleged that Serafim Khokhriakov was the son of a kulak who had been enrolled as a Stakhanovite and received one hundred rubles for his nomination. In addition to his class enemy background, he had been recently sentenced to two years for moral corruption, drunkenness, shooting at people, embezzling collective farm property, and beating collective farmers. Nikolai Lozhkin supposedly nominated him for party membership and a Stakhanovite position. Tikhon Khokhriakov was allegedly a participant in the White army; he was accepted to the collective farm through Nikolai’s recommendation. Glavatskiikh, another supposed nominee of Nikolai’s, was purportedly prosecuted for anti-collective farm activity, in this case meaning that he hid property (cows) from collectivization. Finally, Dolgushev claimed that Andrei Lozhkin, a former brigadier, had served in the White army and was recently prosecuted for beating collective farmers and similar shameful conduct. Dolgushev noted that when Andrei Lozhkin was arrested, he had a letter of recommendation (*хорошая характеристика*) from Nikolai Lozhkin and supported Nikolai.¹⁹⁰ The fact that Nikolai Lozhkin and Dolgushev both used class enemy labels such as “kulak” and “White Guardists” shows they were both aware of the power such labels and the fluidity with which they could be assigned at the local level.

Results

Despite his quite impressive campaign of appeals to higher authorities, the fate of Nikolai Lozhkin and the other former collective farm administrators was decided at the district level. On August 8, 1936, a Debessy District Party Committee meeting decided that the former leaders of the collective farm (the former chairman of the collective farm, Nikolai Lozhkin; the bookkeeper Trofim Lozhkin; and chairman of the auditing committee Aleksandr Khokhriakov) “systematically engaged in the theft of collective farm property through the falsification of documents, submission of false information and the rewriting of workdays” and that they “permitted administrative arbitrariness, intimidated people with invalid and illegal expulsion from the collective farm, sent collective farmers before the courts, and in order to cover their inactivity, gave false information about the completion of economic and political tasks.”¹⁹¹ The District Party Committee decided to remove Trofim Lozhkin from his position as Party cell secretary and take away his party membership. Nikolai Lozhkin was stripped of his Party membership and positions in the *obkom* and Regional Party Committee. The case was also forwarded to the prosecution.¹⁹²

Two days later at a general collective farm meeting, similar charges were leveled against the former administrators, but the collective farm meeting notes called for Mitrofan Lozhkin and Serafim Khokhriakov to be turned over to judicial organs as well.¹⁹³ The collective farmers, who openly accused Mitrofan of being as debauched as Nikolai, called for his prosecution too. The protocol from the August 18th collective farm general meeting requested that the courts investigate the activities on the collective farm more quickly.¹⁹⁴ On September 30, 1936, Nikolai Lozhkin’s name appeared in a collective farm general meeting minute protocol, which recounted the charges against him and concluded that “he [Nikolai Lozhkin] was kicked out of the collective farm and will be prosecuted.”¹⁹⁵

The “Red Column” collective farm case was referred to the Debesskii People’s court (*narodnii sud*), which heard the case over the course of three days. The court sentenced Nikolai Lozhkin and seven other people on the grounds of close relations with kulaks -- including hiring a kulak’s daughter as a cashier -- financial misdeeds, and theft of collective farm property. Nikolai was sent to prison for six years, Trofim A. Lozhkin¹⁹⁶ for five years, Pavel Maksimov for five years, Semen A. Sychugov for five years, and Serafim Khokhriakov for three years. Aleksandr Khokhriakov and Mitrofan Lozhkin were both sentenced to one year compulsory labor.¹⁹⁷

Nikolai Iosifovich disappeared from the archival record at this point. Many of the local collective farm documents have been destroyed, and he does not appear in either lists of war dead or repressed people from the Udmurt republic. However, it does appear that his family suffered as a result of his arrest. In 1938, his son Anfanasiy Nikolaevich was expelled from the “Red Column” Komsomol cell as the child of a criminal (*podsuзhdenyi*).¹⁹⁸

Despite the hardships Nikolai and his family faced, several of the most active of his co-defendants successfully reintegrated back into the local community and continued to be active in Soviet and collective farm life. By 1938, Aleksandr Khokhriakov was once again an active party member in the “Red Column” party cell. He noted that, as part of his sentence, his picture appeared in the newspaper *Tractor* twice in one month under the title “enemy of the people,” but the shaming seemed to do little to exclude him from party and collective farm life. He took an active role in planning local propaganda campaigns and discussions throughout 1938.¹⁹⁹ He appears to have remained a Soviet citizen in good standing until the Second World War when he was drafted in to the Red Army in 1941. Aleksandr Fedorovich Khokhriakov was killed in action on September 25, 1942, at the age of 38, and is buried in Smolensk *oblast*.²⁰⁰ Likewise, Mitrofan Lozhkin was party member and collective farmer in good standing in 1938 as well, even though he was less active in party meetings and organizational affairs than Aleksandr Khokhriakov. He was also drafted into the Red Army in 1942 and was killed in action that same year at the age of 43.²⁰¹ Trofim Lozhkin was stripped of his party membership; it is unclear if he returned to the “Red Column” farm. But by the time war broke out, he was also a citizen in good standing and was called upon to serve his country. Trofim Nikiforevich Lozhkin was drafted into the Red Army in 1941 and was killed in action on March 15, 1942, and is buried in Leningrad *oblast*. He was 39 at the time of his death.²⁰²

Conclusions

While there are many parallels between this study and the work of historians like Moshe Lewin, Sheila Fitzpatrick, and Lewis Siegelbaum, we differ greatly in our conclusions. These historians see peasant participation in Soviet society as a tool of Stalinist state-building that was permitted as long as it was beneficial, concluding that active methods of participation such as peasant denunciations only helped larger “predators” locate local officials to eliminate by denouncing unpopular bosses. While this is undoubtedly true in some respects, it presumes that the peasants only aided an already ongoing process and precludes the fact that they may have manipulated or even initiated action against local officials to serve purely local purposes and used the language of the state to give it legitimacy. In the case of Nikolai Lozhkin, peasant testimony, combined with Lozhkin’s own non-compliance with District Party Committee orders,²⁰³ was instrumental in creating a criminal case against him. The District Party Committee was initially satisfied with addressing the shortcomings of his leadership and leaving him in a position of power. They were not “hunting” for Nikolai Lozhkin and people like him. They demanded competence and accountability, and the disaffected collective farmers used the presence of outside investigators to voice their complaints.

The case of Nikolai Lozhkin and the other “Red Column” administrators does not substantiate Fitzpatrick’s characterization of denunciations as weapons of the weak, which focus on powerlessness and natural justice. Lozhkin’s denouncers rarely refer to themselves as powerless; in fact, they seemed to view the act of denunciation as empowering, using the forum the District Party Committee and Regional Party Committee investigations provided to actively pursue the former collective farm administrators they believed had abused them. Instead, the crimes they accuse Lozhkin and the other administrators of (embezzlement, assault, and drunkenness) are more reflective of the trends that Siegelbaum and Sokolov noted in that the charges were

ordinary and often personally focused but dressed in the language of the state, with buzz words like “kulak” and “White” used to justify the complaints.²⁰⁴

What a finely detailed study such as this reveals is the importance of personal and local interests in shaping historical events. No less surprising is the level of control that collective farmers had over the implementation of state policies. Scholars tend to view collective farmers’ denunciations and labels such as “kulak” and “class enemy” within the framework of state collective farmer relations, in which the state played the superordinate role. However, as the foregoing case study from the Kirov region demonstrates, in the 1930s there was not always strict state control at the local level, which created a space in which local power players could assert themselves and use the framework of the state -- specifically, linguistic cues, avenues of protest, and labels -- to struggle for local and personal interests that had little to do with the overall goals of the central state. These tools were often used to highlight or strengthen local power struggles that were not “political” as the central Party leadership would define political struggles, but were of great importance to the local inhabitants who were involved in them. Thus, what was often a familial or local power struggle assumed the label of a struggle against class enemies and wreckers. This served to strengthen the central leadership’s belief that such factions existed and were indeed dangerous and to help the locals effectively deal with local nuisances.

Appendix 1

Main Actors

Nikolai Iosifovich/ Iosipovich/ Osipovich²⁰⁵ Lozhkin -- Born in 1890 or 1889²⁰⁶ to a *bedniak* family, he was chairman of the “Red Column” collective farm, Kirov Regional Party Committee member (Kraikom), and candidate member of the Udmurt Regional Party Committee (obkom) until 1936.²⁰⁷ A party member since 1918,²⁰⁸ he had served in the Red army during the Civil war, 1917-1920, and was Chairman of the Red Column collective farm at its inception in 1922. He was also functionally illiterate (*malogramotnyi*).²⁰⁹

Trofim Nikiforevich Lozhkin -- Born in 1903, he was collective farm bookkeeper and secretary of the collective farm party committee in 1936. He had an elementary education and had attended political school and a three-month course for teachers. In 1928, he became active in the communist party cell, becoming a candidate party member on December 16, 1929, and a full party member on May 19, 1931. He began his working life as an agricultural laborer. From 1930-1932, he was an elementary school teacher. He became head of the collective farm party cell in 1932 and collective farm bookkeeper in 1933.²¹⁰ He died on March 15, 1942, in Leningrad *Oblast*’.

Fedor Lozhkin -- Former Party Secretary, he moved to Iukamenskii district and was expelled from the party in connection with his role in Nikolai’s actions.

Mitrofan Fedorovich Lozhkin -- Born in 1899, he was the chief supply manager and former paymaster on the “Red Column” collective farm in 1936. He was made a candidate party member on December 22, 1928, and became a full party member on June 4, 1930. He had an elementary education and attended a course at the Communist University (Komvuz) in 1931. He began his working life as an unskilled laborer in Dzil’ia. In 1921, he became a brigadier on the “Red Column” farm, a position which he occupied until 1934 when he was promoted to Zavkhoz. He worked a year in that capacity before being promoted to supply manager in 1935.²¹¹ He gave evidence against his fellow administration members, which probably

got him leniency in sentencing. He died in combat in 1942.

Vasilii Iosifovich Lozhkin -- He worked in the city of Moscow on the Moscow Regional Railroad, was a party member, and Nikolai Iosifovich Lozhkin's brother.²¹²

Aleksandr Fedorovich Khokhriakov -- Born in 1904, he was the chauffeur and chairman of the collective farm auditing committee in 1936. He had been accepted as a candidate party member July 19, 1929, and was made a full member on October 12, 1930. He had an elementary education plus special training in a four-month tractor driving course and a three-month chauffeur training course. He started his working life in 1917 in the village of Nimoshur, where, at the age of 13, he began working as an unskilled laborer and remained in that position until 1930 when he became a tractor driver. He remained a tractor driver until 1935 when he became the chauffeur for the "Red Column" collective farm.²¹³ He died in combat September 25, 1942, in Leningrad *Oblast*.

Pavel Mitrofanovich Maksimov -- The former collective farm stock keeper.

Serafim Andreevich Khokhriakov -- The former head of the rural soviet and brigadier who was excluded from the party and tried for abuse and beating of collective farmers.²¹⁴ He allegedly participated in the beating of head groom Iakov Protopopov because he had been held legally responsible for a horse lost while in Protopopov's care. According to witness testimony presented to the people's court, Nikolai considered him his right-hand man.²¹⁵

Mikhail Ivanovich Popov -- The new collective farm head who was chosen to replace Nikolai Lozhkin.

Dolgushev -- The secretary of the District Party Committee.

Kozlov -- Deputy Secretary of the District Party Committee.

Iakov Protopopov -- Head groom of the "Red Column" farm, he was allegedly beaten at work by Serafim and Nikolai Lozhkin because he had lost a horse Serafim was deemed legally responsible for.

Andrei Lozhkin -- Brigadier who was removed from his position and sentenced in the first half of 1936. Nikolai had sponsored his party membership and written him letters of recommendation and held Aleksei Strelkov responsible for his prison sentence.

Aleksei Samoilovich Lozhkin -- Collective farmer who accused Nikolai Lozhkin of stealing meat from his butchered cow and beating him when he fell asleep on watch at the power plant.

Ilyia Protopopov -- Editor of the district Udmurt language newspaper *Tractor*, he is listed as a strong opponent of Nikolai's at party meetings. According to various documents, his grandfather had fought for the Whites and had handed over a prominent local Bolshevik leader, Nikolai Ignatovich Lozhkin, to be shot. This family history seemed to have created tension between Protopopov and Nikolai Iosifovich Lozhkin as well as Nikolai Ignatevich's son, Ilyia Nikolaevich Lozhkin.

Grigorii Ivanovich Lozhkin -- Brigadier on the "Red Column" farm, he supposedly helped Nikolai carry out the beating of Ivan Osipovich Lozhkin. He was one of Nikolai's co-defendants and was sentenced to prison by the People's court.

Ivan Osipovich Lozhkin -- Collective farmer who was allegedly beaten by Nikolai and Grigorii Ivanovich Lozhkin for poorly supervising the threshing floor. According to collective farm records where he is listed as Ivan Iosifovich, he was expelled from the collective farm in 1935 for highlighting an administrative mistake but later readmitted.

Semen Artem'evich Sychugov -- Director of the collective farm's power station, he was tried and

sentenced together with Nikolai for his role in embezzling collective farm property.

Ilyia Nikolaevich Lozhkin -- A young Komsomol member, his father, Nikolai Ignatevich Lozhkin, had been the leader of the local Committee of the Poor during the Civil War and had been executed by the White army. According to Nikolai Lozhkin, the grandfather of Ilyia Protopopov was the person who turned Nikolai Ignatevich over to the White army and caused his death. Nikolai Iosifovich Lozhkin supposedly urged the boy to seek revenge against Protopopov on several occasions.

Andrei Efimovich Lozhkin -- A collective farmer who supposedly participated in the beating of Aleksei Trofimovich Lozhin and supported Nikolai at the August 18, 1936 collective farm general meeting. I do not think he is the same person as brigadier Andrei Lozhkin, as the brigadier had been sentenced in May 1936 and was probably in prison, not on the collective farm.

Geraeim Tronin -- Former collective farmer who gave testimony against Nikolai Lozhkin at the August 18th general meeting. He had been expelled from the collective farm in 1935 for unauthorized departure for work elsewhere. According to Nikolai, he was also a thief and had run away from his post at the Izhevsk machine building factory after having first deserted the collective farm.

Ivan Petrovich Protopopov -- Collective farmer who gave evidence against Nikolai at the August 18th general meeting. Nikolai claimed that he was a Red Army deserter, a poor collective farm worker, and an embezzler of funds from the local co-op.

Appendix 2

This is a list of the collective farmers expelled from the collective farm and the reasons for their expulsion. Several of these former collective farmers returned to the collective farm and gave damning testimony against Nikolai Lozhkin and the other administration members. Their expulsion from the collective farm, which often meant the loss of their property and house and increased economic hardship and taxation, could have influenced their testimony and prompted revenge against Nikolai. Also, many of these farmers were expelled for challenging Nikolai's leadership, which lends further credence to the argument that he was a petty tyrant.

List of collective farmers excluded from the Collective farm²¹⁶

№	Last name, first name, patronymic	Number of family members	Number of family members able to work	Reason for expulsion	Year and collective farm meeting protocol number	Those who were re-admitted to the collective farm
1	Protopopov, Semen Grigorivich	3	1	For insubordination to the administration	33	Re-admitted (36)

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№	Last name, first name, patronymic	Number of family members	Number of family members able to work	Reason for expulsion	Year and collective farm meeting protocol number	Those who were re-admitted to the collective farm
2	Lozhkin Il'ia Egorovich	3	1	For not going to work	33	No
3	Lozhkin Aleksandr Alekseevich	1	-	For misappropriation	33	Re-admitted (36)
4	Khokhriakov Il'ia Vasilivich	2	-	For insubordination	33	No
5	Lozhkin Trifan Andreevich	1	-	For not going to work	34	No
6	Lozhkin Ivan Iosifovich	6	4	For exposing a mistake of the administrative apparatus	33	Re-admitted (35)
7	Lozhkin Grigorii Iosifovich	3	1	For not going to work	33-34?	Re-admitted (36)
8	Lozhkin Vasilii Grigorievich	5	3	For misappropriation	33	No
9	Glavatskikh Aleksei Alekseevich	8	2	For insubordination to the administration/not going to work	33	No
10	Glavatskikh Pavel Ivanovich	6	5	For stealing sheep	32	Re-admitted (36)

№	Last name, first name, patronymic	Number of family members	Number of family members able to work	Reason for expulsion	Year and collective farm meeting protocol number	Those who were re-admitted to the collective farm
11	Maksimov	5	2	Causing damages	33	Re-admitted (35)
12	Simanov Filipp	1	-	For insubordination to the administration	No. 17 1934	Re-admitted
13	Kniazev Vasilii	5	2	For not going to work	33	No
14	Vlishanova Natal'ia Andreevna	3	1	For insubordination to the administration	33	No
15	Lozhkin Aleksandr Ivanovich	3	1	For insubordination to the administration	35 not going to work	No
16	Khokhriakov Ignatei Ivanovich	6	1	For insubordination to the administration	34 for causing the administration	No
17	Protopopov Stepan Sidorovich	-	-	For insubordination to the administration	No. 17 34	No
18	Chirkov Nikolai Andreevich	6	2	For insubordination to the administration	33 for not going to work	No
19	Sitnikov Aleksei Vasilieevich	5	3	For insubordination to the administration	32 for theft	No
20	Malykh	2	1	Moved to a different collective farm	-	No

№	Last name, first name, patronymic	Number of family members	Number of family members able to work	Reason for expulsion	Year and collective farm meeting protocol number	Those who were re-admitted to the collective farm
21	Tronin Geraeim	2	-	Unauthorized departure	34	No
22	Lozhkin Andrei Vasileevich	1	-	Unauthorized departure	34	No
23	Acheev Nikolai Grigorivich	1	-	For scandalous behavior	No. 17 34	Re-admitted
24	Maksimov An. Ivanovich	2	-	-	34	-
25	Lozhkin Egor Ivanovich	-	-	-	34	-

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f. 16- The Udmurt Republic (*Oblast'*) Party Committee 1921-1991

f. 315- The Debesskii District Party Committee 1929–1962, 1965–1991.

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Endnotes

1. Many different authors have dealt with the appropriation of state language by the public in the USSR, but none more successfully than Stephen Kotkin’s discussion of “Speaking Bolshevik” in *Magnetic Mountain: Stalinism as a Civilization* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995).
2. Sheila Fitzpatrick notes in her study on letters of denunciation that the main goal of most letter writers who wrote to newspapers was not to get their letters published but rather to launch an official investigation. Likewise, newspapers played a vital role in investigations of local and regional problems, becoming the ombudsmen who gathered up complaints and sent them to the appropriate organizations to be dealt with. “Signals from Below: Soviet Letters of Denunciation in the 1930’s,” *The Journal of Modern History* 68 (December 1996): 835.
3. Lozhkin’s approach was not new. Vladimir Kozlov notes that discrediting the character of the denouncer was an important weapon of defense that bureaucrats employed against denunciations. “Denunciation and Its Functions in Soviet Governance: A Study of Denunciations and Their Bureaucratic Handling from Soviet Police Archives, 1944-1953,” *The Journal of Modern History* 68 (December 1996): 895. Sheila Fitzpatrick records similar instances of local officials claiming that the charges collective farmers brought against them in court were the result of personal grievances during the 1937 show trials in the countryside. “How the Mice Buried the Cat: Scenes from the Great Purges of 1937 in the Russian Provinces,” *Russian Review* 52, no. 3 (July 1993): 306.
4. Sheila Fitzpatrick notes that it was common for male letter writers to underscore their dedication to the state through a statement of party membership and military service, particularly during the Civil War. “Supplicants and Citizens: Public Letter-Writing in Soviet Russia in the 1930s,” *Slavic Review* 55 (Spring 1996): 96. She also discusses the importance of constructing a narrative of Life in *Tear Off the Masks! Identity and Imposture in Twentieth-Century Russia* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005).
5. Giovanni Levi, “On Microhistory,” in *New Perspectives on Historical Writing*, 2nd ed., ed. Peter Burke (University Park, PA, 2001): 101.
6. J. Arch Getty deals with the importance of studying these informal patronage networks in his new book, *Practicing Stalinism: Bolsheviks, Boyars and the Persistence of Tradition* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013).
7. In both regional archives, Nikolai Lozhkin’s case was preserved in its own separate files, which leads me to believe it received more attention than other collective farm investigations, possibly because Nikolai involved both *Pravda* and the Commissar of Agriculture for the USSR, both of whom wanted follow-up reports on the outcome of the investigation.
8. Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Stalin’s Peasants: Resistance and Survival in the Russian Village after Collectivization* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 5.

9. Lewis Siegelbaum and Andrei Sokolov, *Stalinism as a Way of Life: A Narrative in Documents* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000).
10. Lynne Viola, *Peasant Rebels Under Stalin: Collectivization and the Culture of Peasant Resistance* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 2.
11. Roberta T. Manning, "Government in the Soviet Countryside in the Stalinist 1930's: the Case of Belyi Raion," *The Carl Beck Papers in Russian and Eastern European Studies* (University of Pittsburgh Center for Russian and East European Studies, 1984), 45-46.
12. Mary Buckley, *Mobilizing Stalin's Peasants: Heroines and Heroes of Stalin's Fields* (New York: Roman and Littlefield Publishers, 2006), 10.
13. Ibid., 11.
14. Fitzpatrick, "How the Mice Buried the Cat," 300.
15. Ibid., 300.
16. Kozlov, "Denunciation and its Function in Soviet Governance," 868.
17. Ibid., 868.
18. This is Goldman's word choice.
19. Wendy Goldman, *Inventing the Enemy: Denunciation and Terror in Stalin's Russia* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 2-3.
20. Larry Holmes, *Grand Theater: Regional Governance in Stalin's Russia, 1931-1941* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2009), 66.
21. Colin P. Neufeldt, "The Public and Private Lives of Mennonite Kolkhoz Chairmen in the Khortytsia and Molochansk German National Raiony in Ukraine (1928-1934)," *The Carl Beck Papers in Russian and East European Studies*, no. 2305 (2015), 15.
22. Ibid., 21.
23. Ibid., 36.
24. Ibid., 17.
25. Ibid., 64.

26. In 1935-36, Udmurtiia was an Autonomous *Oblast* which was subordinate to the Kirov Regional Administration. In late 1936, following the ratification of the Stalinist Constitution, Udmurtiia was separated from the Kirov Region and became an Autonomous Republic.
27. GASPI KO f. 1255, op. 1, d. 672, l. 14-15.
28. Fitzpatrick, “How the Mice Buried the Cat,” 305.
29. TsDNI UR f. 16, op. 3, d., 19826, l. 85.
30. Aleksandr Khokhriakov, the collective farm chauffer and head of the auditing committee, had an elementary education plus special training: a four-month tractor driving course and a three-month chauffer training course. TsDNI UR f. 16, op. 3, d., 19901, l. 67. Mitrofan Lozhkin, the supply manager, had an elementary education and attended a course at the communist university in 1931. TsDNI UR f. 16, op. 3, d., 19826, l. 72. The bookkeeper and head of the collective farm’s party cell, Trofim Lozhkin, was the most educated, having an elementary education, plus attending a special three month-course for teachers and political school (политшкола). TsDNI UR f. 16, op. 3, d., 19826, l. 112.
31. TsDNI UR f. 315, op. 1a, d. 127, l. 36.
32. GASPI KO f. 1255, op. 1, d. 672, l. 3.
33. The District Party Committee issued a different directive, about the same time, listing concrete steps that party members needed to take, such as creating red corners, stepping up literature reading, and increased work with the *aktiv* and Komsomol cells. TsDNI UR f.315, op. 1a, d. 127 l-6-7.
34. GASPI KO f. 1255, op. 1, d. 672, l. 3.
35. TsDNI UR f. 315, op. 1a, d. 127, l. 36.
36. Ibid., l. 36, 44.
37. Ibid., l. 18 .
38. GASPI KO f. 1255, op. 1, d. 672, l. 46.
39. Ibid., l. 10.
40. Fitzpatrick, “Signals from Below,” 860-61.

41. The District Party Committee recommended that Pavel Maksimov, A.F. Khokhriakov, and A.A. Khokhriakov be recalled and sent to work in their specialties on different collective farms. Nikolai Iosifovich Lozhkin was to be handed over to the courts, probably because he fought hard against his dismissal. Mitrofan is conspicuously absent from this list because he gave evidence against his former comrades in return for escaping serious prosecution. GASPI KO f. 1255, op. 1, d. 672, l. 10.

42. Holmes, *Grand Theater*, 66.

43. *Ibid.*, 66.

44. GASPI KO f. 1255, op. 1, d. 672, l. 16.

45. *Ibid.*, l. 15.

46. *Ibid.*, l. 10.

47. The Council of People's Commissariats of the Udmurt Autonomous *Oblast'*.

48. GASPI KO f. 1255, op. 1, d. 672, l. 10.

49. Sheila Fitzpatrick describes a similar trend in the nature of peasant testimonies during rural show trials in 1937, noting, "curses, insults beatings, humiliation, intimidation and unjustified arrests were described as commonplace in the behavior of rural officials towards peasants". "How the Mice Buried the Cat," 307.

50. Fitzpatrick, "Supplicants and Citizens," 86.

51. Fitzpatrick, "Signals from Below," 846-47.

52. He left the collective farm before the investigation began but did not escape punishment entirely. He is listed as being expelled from the party.

53. GASPI KO f. 1255, op. 1, d. 672, l. 16.

54. *Ibid.*, l. 17; The embezzlement of collective farm property and tales of collective farm chairmen were quite common in the mid-1930s with many examples appearing in the archives in Kirov. Other historians, such as Sheila Fitzpatrick ("How the Mice Buried the Cat," 307-08), note that this was a common complaint in other parts of the Soviet Union as well.

55. Mitrofan was an interesting fellow; he was investigated with his fellow administration members but gave evidence against them and thus escaped jail time, all of which makes his testimony highly suspect.

56. However, the poor state of the books did not allow this allegation to be confirmed or denied. GASPI KO f. 1255, op. 1, d. 672, l. 17.

57. GASPI KO. f. 1255, op. 1. d. 642, l. 171; f. 1255, op.1. d. 643. l. 64.
58. GASPI KO. f. 100, op. 1. d.99, ll.10,11; f. 1255, op.1. d. 643. l. 64.
59. GASPI KO f. 1255, op. 1, d. 672, l. 16-19.
60. Aleksei also accused Nikolai Lozhkin of beating him for sleeping on the job.
61. TsDNI UR f. 315 op. 1a, d. 127 l. 75.
62. GASPI KO f. 1255, op. 1, d. 672, l. 17. Nikolai often entertained the workers assembling the electric power station, as well as workers home from the factories in Izhevsk. Not only was he embezzling foodstuffs for himself; he was distributing it to non-collective farmers, trying to impress them. Undoubtedly, such actions violated the collective farmers’ sense of fairness and propriety.
63. TsDNI UR f. 315, op. 1a, d. 127. l. 18.
64. Ibid., l. 21.
65. GASPI KO f. 1255, op. 1, d. 672, l. 18.
66. Ibid., l. 17-18.
67. In the case of the car, this difference in profit is attributed to the fact the chauffer was also the former chairman of the auditing commission, Aleksandr Fedorovich Khokhriakov, who participated, together with N. I. Lozhkin, in group bacchanalias and who actively defended N. I. Lozhkin. GASPI KO f. 1255, op. 1, d. 672, l.18.
68. This will be addressed in a later section of this article.
69. Of the twenty-five collective farmers and their families who were excluded from the collective farm in 1935, at least ten were excluded for insubordination to the collective farm, so it does seem that Nikolai acted quickly and harshly against those he viewed as a challenge to his authority. GASPI KO f. 1255, op. 1, d. 672, l. 105-06.
70. Such “Light Cavalry” groups were commonplace and active from 1929. They were common in both urban and rural locales and often tried to subject local officials to control from below. Siegelbaum and Sokolov address this further in *Stalinism as a Way of Life*, 30.
71. GASPI KO f. 1225, op. 1, d. 672, l. 20-22.

72. He was tried separately for the abuse and beating of collective farmers.

73. TsDNI UR f. 315, op. 1a, d. 127, l 77.

74. Ibid., l 18.

75. GASPI KO f. 1255, op. 1, d. 672, l. 21.

76. TsDNI UR f. 315, op. 1a. d.127, l. 78.

77. GASPI KO f. 1255, op. 1, d. 672, l. 20-21.

78. TsDNI UR f. 315, op. 1a. d.127, l. 78.

79. Ibid., l. 18

80. Ibid., l. 21.

81. GASPI KO f. 1255, op. 1, d. 672, l. 21.

82. Ibid., l. 20.

83. Ibid., l. 20.

84. Ibid., l. 22.

85. GASPI KO f. 1255, op. 1, d. 672, l. 32, TsDNI UR f. 315, op. 1a. d.127, l. 8.

86. TsDNI UR f. 315, op. 1a. d.127, l. 77. In this same witness statement, it was also alleged that Nikolai Lozhkin had told Vasillii Lozhkin's twelve-year-old son that the only way he would wear *valenki* was to steal a pair, which the boy apparently did.

87. GASPI KO f. 1255, op. 1, d. 672, l. 21.

88. Other versions of this also have a drunken Mitrofan running around asking if he was in the hospital and a drunken Aleksandr Khokhriakov present as well. TsDNI UR f. 315, op. 1f, d. 217, ll. 22-23, 26-27.

89. TsDNI UR f. 315, op. 1a, d. 127, l 79.

90. GASPI KO f. 1255, op. 1, d. 672, l. 21.

91. TsDNI UR f. 315, op. 1a, d. 127, l 79.

92. Ibid., l 18.
93. Ibid., l 23.
94. Ibid., l 80.
95. GASPI KO f. 1255, op. 1, d. 672, l. 20.
96. Ibid., l. 15.
97. Ibid., l. 122.
98. Ibid., l. 107.
99. Ibid., l. 34.
100. Ibid., l. 34.
101. Ibid., l. 34.
102. Ibid., l. 38-41.
103. Mitrofan admitted, however, that he did not know the details of how Nikolai acquired the butter and was merely speculating that it was stolen. GASPI KO f. 1255, op. 1, d. 672, l. 34.
104. Ibid., l. 34.
105. Ibid., l. 34.
106. Ibid., l. 34.
107. Ibid., l. 34.
108. This story is also related in other witness testimony against Nikolai. TsDNI UR f. 317, op 1a, d. 217, l. 81.
109. GASPI KO f. 1255, op. 1, d. 672, l. 34.
110. Ibid., l. 34.
111. Ibid., l. 34.
112. Ibid., l. 44.

113. Ibid., l. 42.

114. Ibid., l. 42.

115. Ibid., l. 43.

116. For more information on the use of supplication as a tool of denunciation and self- defense, see Sheila Fitzpatrick, “Supplicants and Citizens” and “Signals from Below.”

117. Shelia Fitzpatrick notes that expulsion conflicts most frequently arose when members of the collective farm departed to work for wages elsewhere as it raised questions about a decreased labor pool on the collective farm and the possible shirking of the payments the other collective farmers were required to make. “How the Mice Buried the Cat,” 309, 105-06.

118. GASPI KO f. 1255, op. 1, d. 672, l. 61.

119. Ibid., l. 61-64.

120. Ibid., l. 63.

121. It is not clear from the documents if Praskoviia is Nikolai and Vasili Lozhkin’s sister, but given that she talks familiarly about them both and shares their patronymic, it is a possibility.

122. GASPI KO f. 1255, op. 1, d. 672, l. 43.

123. Ibid., l. 63.

124. Ibid., l. 43.

125. Ibid., l. 43.

126. Ibid., l. 62.

127. Ibid., l. 43.

128. Ibid., l. 43.

129. Sheila Fitzpatrick notes that “Just as peasants quickly learned to use the term kulak to discredit collective farm chairmen with higher authorities, so also they were quick to pick up the preferred rhetorical terms of indictment of the Great Purges period: ‘enemy of the people,’ ‘terrorist,’ ‘Trotskyite.’” “Signals from Below,” 848. In this case, it was the peasants in positions of power, Nikolai Lozhkin and his rival Dolgushev, rather than

the collective farmers, who proved to be masters at manipulating labels.

130. All of these routes of appeal were through party, not state, organs. Part of this may be because Nikolai was a party member or, as Vladimir Kozlov notes, "Ideological rhetoric had a greater effect when addressed not to state but to party organs, which were responsible for the total political situation in the country and were therefore more concerned with the mood of the population and its grievances." "Denunciation and Its Functions in Soviet Governance," 889.

131. Fitzpatrick, "Supplicants and Citizens," 81.

132. Lynne Viola also notes that the language and mentality of the Civil War pushed the Bolsheviks into a siege mentality, seeing themselves as constantly encircled by enemies. "Questions of the Perpetrator in Soviet History," 15.

133. Kozlov, "Denunciation and Its Functions in Soviet Governance," 883.

134. GASPI KO f. 1255, op. 1, d. 672, l. 11.

135. Ibid., l. 46. The Debessy District Party Committee investigated Lozhkin's accusations against Kozlov and unsurprisingly decided that his actions were both legal and correct, P10.

136. Ibid., l. 46.

137. Ibid., l. 46.

138. Ibid., l. 46.

139. Ibid., l. 11.

140. Ibid., l. 46.

141. Ibid., l. 46.

142. Ibid., l. 46.

143. Ibid., l. 46.

144. Ibid., l. 12.

145. Ibid., l. 13.

146. Golfo Alexopoulos, "Victim Talk: Defense Testimony and Denunciation Under Stalin," *Law & Social Inquiry* 24 (Summer 1999): 639.

147. GASPI KO f. 1255, op. 1, d. 672, ll. 12-13.

148. Ibid., l. 61.

149. Ibid., l. 62.

150. Ibid., l. 62.

151. His son, Ilyia Nikolaevich Lozhkin, was a Komsomol member who was allegedly exhorted by Nikolai to violence against Ilyia Protopopov for his grandfather's role in Nikolai Ignatovich's death. TsDNI UR f. 315, op. 1a, d. 127, l. 80.

152. GASPI KO f. 1255, op. 1, d. 672, l. 62.

153. Ibid., l. 62.

154. At that meeting were the still-not-rehabilitated kulak Afanasiia Petrovna Maksimova and her daughter Valentina Sergeevna, who were formerly de-kulakized and later became individual smallholders; also Iakov Vasilivich Khokhriakov and his wife Anna Vaslievna; Dariia Dmitrovna Khokhriakova; Aleksandr Ivanovich Khokhriakov; D. Eg. Lozhkin; and others who persistently organized the presence of the above mentioned former White Guardists, traitors, and kulaks. GASPI KO f. 1255, op. 1, d. 672, l. 62.

155. Ibid., l. 63.

156. After such preparations, P.P. Danilov, a former *batrak* and Komsomol member; Dmitrii Protopopov, a Komsomol organizer; Petr Semenovich Perevozchikov, a candidate party member; and Nikolai Vasilivich Lozhkin, a *bedniak*, testified against Nikolai Lozhkin. Ibid., l. 63.

157. Ibid., l. 13.

158. Ibid., l. 63.

159. Ibid., l. 13.

160. Ibid., l. 63-64.

161. A party member since 1913, Iakovlev was the organizer and editor-in-chief for *Krestian'skaia Gazeta* from 1923-1929, member of the Central Control Commission from 1924-1930, Commissar of Agriculture USSR from 1929, and head of the Agricultural Section of the Central Committee from 1934. He was arrested in 1937 and executed in 1938.

162. GASPI KO f. 1255, op. 1, d. 672, l. 51.

163. Ibid., l. 51.

164. The 1936 harvest was a failure throughout much of the USSR and was probably not linked to the personal actions of collective farm administrators. Roberta Manning, “The Soviet Economic Crisis of 1936-1940 and the Great Purges,” in *Stalinist Terror. New Perspectives*, eds. J. Arch Getty and Roberta T. Manning (Cambridge; New York : Cambridge University Press, 1993), 117-141.

165. GASPI KO f. 1255, op. 1, d. 672, l. 51.

166. Ibid., l. 53.

167. Ibid., l. 53. Serefim Lozhkin is curiously absent from Vasilii’s letter, despite being mentioned by Khokhriakov, possibly because he had already been indicted and convicted on different charges of collective farmer abuse.

168. Ibid., l. 54.

169. Ibid., l. 54.

170. Ibid., l. 54.

171. Ibid., l. 54.

172. Ibid., l. 54.

173. Ibid., l. 54.

174. Ibid., l. 54.

175. Ibid., l. 54.

176. Ibid., l. 55.

177. Ibid., l. 10.

178. Ibid., l. 33.

179. Ibid., l. 33.

180. Ibid., l. 33.

181. Ibid., l. 75.

182. Ibid., l. 75.

183. Ibid., l. 75.

184. Ibid., l. 75.

185. Ibid., l. 75.

186. Ibid., l. 75.

187. Ibid., l. 75.

188. Ibid., l. 75.

189. Ibid., l. 75.

190. Ibid., l. 49.

191. Ibid., l. 49.

192. Ibid., l. 44.

193. TsDNI UR f. 315, op. 1a, d. 127, l. 15.

194. GASPI KO f. 1255, op. 1, d. 672, l. 109.

195. Though listed as TA Lozhkin in the newspaper, I believe this is Trofim Nikiforevich. The newspaper was published in the Udmurt language, and that changed the spelling of several names. For example, Nikolai Lozhkin appears as “Nikolai Osipovich” instead of “Nikolai Iosifovich.”

196. *Traktor*, no. 41, May 18, 1937.

197. TsDNI UR f. 2342, op 1., d. 1., l. 23.

198. Ibid. l. 21

199. *Kniga Pamiatniki*, Vol. 3, Izhevsk, Udmurtiia 1994, 207.

200. Ibid., 208.

201. Ibid., 207.

202. The non-compliance of local officials as impetus for further investigation and punishment of local officials is addressed in detail by J. Arch Getty and Oleg Naumov in *The Road to Terror: Stalin and the Self-Destruction of the Bolsheviks, 1932-1939* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002).

203. Siegelbaum and Sokolov, *Stalinism as a Way of Life*, 310-321.

204. His patronymic appears spelled three different ways in the documents, depending on who wrote them. I think this reflects more the semi-literacy of those giving and recording testimony (as well as whether the documents were originally in Russian or Udmurt, as Osipovich is more common in the Udmurt language documents) than any confusion over Lozhkin’s patronymic.

205. His party card lists 1889, and the land book for the village of Nimoshur lists 1890.

206. GASPI KO f. 1255, op. 1, d. 672, l. 14.

207. Ibid., l. 14.

208. TsDNI UR f. 16, op. 3, d., 19826, l. 85.

209. Ibid., l. 112.

210. Ibid., l. 72.

211. GASPI KO f. 1255, op. 1, d. 672, l. 11.

212. TsDNI UR f. 16, op. 3, d., 19901, l. 67.

213. GASPI KO f. 1255, op. 1, d. 672, l. 20.

214. TsDNI UR f. 315, op. 1a, d. 217, l. 83.

215. GASPI KO f. 1255, op. 1, d. 672, l 105-106.

Обзор монографии на русском языке

Главный редактор - Ольга Перевалова

Переводчики - Александра Гагарина, Александра Шакирова, Анна Баранова, Никита Бульчев, Никита Былов, Вероника Волынчикова, Екатерина Дудина, Всеволод Кустенко, Екатерина Лушникова, Ирина Морозова, Любов Подлевских, Алена Семенчина

Личные и политические факторы: Микроистория колхоза «Красная колонна» 1935-36

Эта микроистория исследует влияние личных и служебных интересов людей в коллективных хозяйствах середины 30-х годов XX века.

Текущая историография колхозного крестьянства периода после коллективизации (1932-1939 гг.) фокусирует свое внимание на отношениях государства и колхозников в качестве жертв последних или на их сопротивлении государственной политике. Такая точка зрения привела к искажению той сложной действительности, которая на самом деле управляла повседневной жизнью колхозов.

Зачастую колхозное крестьянство придавало государственным политике, языку и инициативам меньшую важность, чем проблемам на местном уровне и личным заботам. Изучение материалов дела отстранения и уголовного преследования председателя и других членов правления колхоза «Красная колонна» (Дебёсский район, Удмуртская автономная область, Кировский край) показывает: что местные проблемы и личные отношения (семейные связи, обиды, особенности характера) часто имели такое же - если не более сильное - влияние на реакцию колхозников на государственные кампании и расследования.

В случае Николая Иосифовича Ложкина, председателя колхоза "Красная колонна", его грубое и высокомерное поведение, отчуждение от коллектива колхоза и выставление напоказ материальных благ, по-видимому, и стали причиной отстранения. Колхозники в своих жалобах сосредотачивали внимание исключительно на этих личностных качествах Ложкина. В целях укрепления своих аргументов его противники рассказывали об аморальном поведении, профессиональных и политических ошибках, обвиняли в связях с кулаками и белогвардейцами, а его коллег из правления колхоза – в моральной развращенности и службе в рядах Колчака во время Гражданской войны. Николай Иосифович и его товарищи в ответ отправляли письма коммунистическим партийным чиновникам и газетам о том, что якобы обвинители сами были белогвардейцами и кулаками, которые, будучи изгнанными из колхоза, теперь жаждут мщения. Также Ложкин и его сторонники попытались установить доверительные отношения с членами партии на региональном и национальном уровне, рассчитывая на репутацию Николая как давнего члена коммунистической партии, сыгравшего важную роль в создании колхоза.

Данная статья позволяет взглянуть под другим углом на сельскую жизнь в 1930-х годах. В своих рассуждениях о микроистории как методе исторического анализа Джованни Леви утверждает, что «объединяющим принципом всех микроисторических исследований является убеждение: при таком микронаблюдении будут выявлены факторы, ранее незамеченные». Микроисторическое исследование жизни колхоза «Красная колонна» позволяет увидеть, как локальные и персональные факторы часто были движущими силами в принятии решений и в борьбе за власть, а не исходящая из Москвы коммунистическая риторика, как может показаться на макроуровне. Для большинства жителей «Красной колонны» Москва была слишком далеко, чтобы оказывать прямое влияние на ситуацию. Их жизнью, неформальными связями и личными отношениями управляла местная структура власти.

Это многоуровневое дело наглядно демонстрирует, как персональные интересы ложатся в основу споров и противоборств в сельской местности и как местное население приспособило государственный язык и формы обжалования для использования в личных целях. Трудность при изучении микроисторических сюжетов заключается в том, что, при работе в местных советских архивах, вместо стандартных партийных и государственных документов можно найти какофонию голосов, каждый из которых пытается донести свою, зачастую противоречащую другим, точку зрения.

Документы по отстранению Николая Ложкина с должности и последующему судебному разбирательству содержатся в двух региональных архивах, Государственном архиве социально-политической истории Кировской области и Центре документации новейшей истории Удмуртской Республики. Эти документы были созданы партийными организациями и их представителями, в том числе: крайкомом партии, Удмуртским обкомом, Дебёским райкомом, партячейкой «Красной Колонны», местной районной газетой и несколькими частными лицами.

Большая часть свидетельских показаний против Николая Ложкина и его товарищей из правления колхоза были записаны региональными и районными специалистами, направленными для расследования ситуации. Эти документы содержат разнообразные свидетельства поведения Ложкина. Существует очень мало жалоб отдельных истцов, хотя сам Николай и его сторонники написали множество писем, которые сохранились в архивах.

Цель данной статьи состоит не в выяснении правды или подтверждении виновности или невинности какой-либо из сторон, а в том, чтобы показать всю сложность таких маленьких сообществ, как колхозы, и какое место занимают в них такие участники, как государство и граждане.

Историческая литература о коллективизации и жизни в сельской местности в 1930-х годах, как правило, смотрит на государство как на основную действующую силу и оценивает деятельность колхозников в рамках их взаимодействия с ним. Такие исторические исследования предполагают существование сильного государства, которое в состоянии навязать свою волю сельским жителям, и отрицают существование местных связей и отношений, имеющих мало общего с политикой государства, кроме языка официальных заявлений и других формальных бумаг. Эта статья утверждает, что в сельской местности за принятием политических и повседневных решений зачастую стоят проблемы обычных людей.

Государство обеспечивало возможности подачи жалоб, но часто не принимало активного участия в их рассмотрении. В деле Николая Ложкина и колхоза «Красная Колонна» все конфликты и разногласия решались на местном уровне. Жалобы, направленные краевым и центральным органам власти, возвращались назад, оставляя местных колхозников и их начальников один на один. Местные активисты принимали непосредственное участие в обвинении и сборе доказательств, без участия Москвы решая конфликт между колхозниками и их руководством.

Доносы сыграли существенную роль в деле колхоза «Красная Колонна». Обычно историки исследуют особенности обвинения в рамках отношений государства и гражданских позиций, рассматривая его как «оружие слабых». Это «оружие» позволяло простым людям обвинять и должностных преступлениях и неподобающем поведении людей на высоких руководящих должностях. В подобных ситуациях приводится много примеров бессилия и беспомощности, слышатся призывы к истинной справедливости, а не к формальным законам.

Однако дело Николая Ложкина и других руководителей «Красной Колонны» состоит не только из доносов. Обвинители Ложкина с целью получения больших прав и возможностей предъявили обвинительный акт райкому и обкому партии, а те, в свою очередь, оказали доверие колхозникам, начав собственное расследование, самолично преследуя нерадивых руководителей колхоза. Кроме того, преступления (а в частности: воровство, оскорбления и пьянство), в которых обвиняются Ложкин и его сообщники, отражали необходимость в защите колхозников в рамках уголовного кодекса, а не в самосуде. Участники обвинительного процесса против колхозных лидеров активно защищали свои права и интересы

Конфликт, описанный в этой статье, вряд ли является исключением для данного колхоза в Кировском крае. Коррупция, насилие, моральный разврат и политическая неблагонадежность были типичными обвинениями против местных чиновников и колхозных лидеров в 1930-х годах. Большое количество руководителей колхозов в те времена являлись мелкими чиновниками, которые чаще всего были «коррупцированными, продажными, неграмотными и почти всегда пьяными». Вдобавок ко всему, они были невероятно плохо подготовлены к занимаемым должностям. Свергнутое руководство колхоза «Красная Колонна» не было исключением. Несмотря на оправдательные приговоры московских судов, доминировавших в середине 1930-х годов, обвинения против местных чиновников практически всегда имели под собой вес.

В деле колхоза «Красная Колонна» самое большое количество обвинений было выдвинуто против колхозной администрации. Эти люди обвинялись в воровстве, физическом насилии и словесных оскорблениях. Полнота и тщательность исследования районных и краевых документов позволяет задуматься о правдоподобности всех этих обвинений. Более того, документы райкома и обкома партии подтверждают, что многие преступники, обвиняемые в разного рода конфликтах и манипуляциях, как и Николай Ложкин, стремились попасть в чиновники партийных райкомов. Эта запутанность придает делу особый интерес.

Жизнь даже в хорошо налаженной колхозной системе управления не бывает простой и легкой. Такие хозяйства были сформированы путем объединения сел с получением статуса колхоза на законодательном уровне. Всем колхозникам на бумаге давались гарантии равных прав и привилегий, что в действительности было явлением редким. Практически сразу развивалась жесткая колхозная иерархия: председатель и член правления колхоза занимали главенствующие позиции, бригадиры, школьные учителя и квалифицированные работники были на средней ступени, а неквалифицированные сельскохозяйственные рабочие, пожилые и люди с ограниченными возможностями находились на самой низшей ступени. Такое расслоение приводило к значительной разнице в размере заработной платы, доступе к рынкам товаров и общему уровню жизни, что часто вызывало зависть у тех, кто ниже по социальному статусу. Вместе с тем, высокие звания и привилегии председателя колхоза несли за собой высокие к нему требования. Председатель часто разрывался между потребностями колхоза с государственной точки зрения и нуждами самих колхозников.

Местные и партийные чиновники в первую очередь были заинтересованы исполнением своих служебных обязанностей. Главной задачей для них было удовлетворить потребности колхоза и поддерживать его как экономический и юридический субъект. Потребности же колхозного общего собрания и самих колхозников были в конце этого списка. Это вызывало много конфликтов: председателю приходилось часто эксплуатировать своих подопечных, урезать рацион зерна или налагать арест на колхозное имущество для удовлетворения потребностей государства, одновременно пытаясь мотивировать людей работать усерднее. Кроме того, руководству часто приходилось сталкиваться с вмешательством местных чиновников во внутренние дела колхозов. Неоправдавшие ожиданий районных чиновников подвергали критике и принуждению покинуть пост.

Представители местной власти всегда хотели контролировать председателя, особенно если у них был свой кандидат, готовый вступить на эту должность, или когда предыдущий председатель не оправдал их ожиданий. Под контролем находился и процесс назначения и отстранения главы колхоза. В теории у общего собрания было право назначать или увольнять председателя в любое время, но местное правительство или партийные представители всегда имели вес в принятии подобного решения. С этим столкнулся Ложкин в 1935-1936 годах: колхозникам не нравилось, что ограничивались их привилегии, было тяжело при выполнении госзаказа, а главы областного партийного комитета вмешивались в дела колхоза. Но независимость региона и его низкая экономическая важность для СССР оставляли конфликты на местном уровне с малым участием представителей региональной или государственной власти.

Колхоз «Красная колонна», основанный в 1928 году, был сильным хозяйством. Он сформировался после слияния двух деревень: Нимошурь и Дзили в Дебёсском районе (Удмуртия, Кировский край). Поначалу колхоз состоял из 127 дворов; к 1936 году дворов было уже 97. Один из основателей колхоза Николай Ложкин был избран первым председателем и работал, пока его не отстранили в июле 1936 года. Партийный комитет Кировского края видел экономический потенциал колхоза и использовал его как демонстрационное хозяйство в начале 1930-х годов. В 1933 году во время празднования десятой годовщины Удмуртской республики колхоз получил знамя от Облисполкома как признание успеха. Тогда же колхоз значительно улучшил инфраструктуру: была построена первая электростанция и мельница в регионе, маслобойня, крупное скотоводческое хозяйство, пасека, появилось электричество, баня, дом на 16 квартир, автомобиль, молотилка и другое сельскохозяйственное оборудование. В колхозе имела крупная партийная организация, которая сократилась на 36% к 1936 году, в основном из-за покинувших колхоз людей. Первые семь лет существования колхоза были весьма успешными, но в 1935-1936 годах хозяйство пошло на спад.

Члены правления колхоза «Красная колонна» были типичными представителями местной советской власти 1930-х годов: плохо образованные люди 30-40 лет, крестьянского происхождения, члены коммунистической партии. Николай Ложкин, председатель колхоза «Красная Колонна» был местным крестьянином, который вступил в коммунистическую партию, воевал за Красную армию во время Гражданской войны, стал членом Кировского регионального партийного собрания (крайкома) и кандидатом в члены Удмуртского регионального партийного собрания (Обком) вплоть до его отстранения в 1936 году. Он был безграмотен, и все документы писались за него, а Ложкин только подписывал. Его брат Василий Иосифович Ложкин был более образованным, работал на Московской железной дороге и тоже был членом партии.

Другие члены правления колхоза так же были простыми, малообразованными крестьянами. Они были известны во всей области и были знакомы с механизмами местной семейной политики, но низкий уровень образования, без сомнения, мешал исполнению обязанностей. Многие члены администрации занимали более одной должности: Николай Ложкин был членом Обкома, вдобавок к должности председателя колхоза; Трофим Николаевич Ложкин был и бухгалтером, и секретарем колхоза; Митрофан Федорович Ложкин был начальником снабжения и казначеем; Александр Федорович Хохряков был шофером и членом ревизорского комитета колхоза, а Серафим Андреевич Хохряков прежде был главой Сельского совета и бригадиром. Каждая должность сама по себе требовала больших усилий и то, что малообразованные люди занимали сразу две должности, вело к пренебрежению некоторыми обязанностями.

В соответствии с протоколами собрания Партийного комитета Дебесского района от 16 июня 1935 года должностные лица района начали исследовать внутреннюю работу «Красной Колонны» в связи с тем, что колхоз не осуществлял своевременную натуральную оплату государству. После наведения справок расследовательное бюро нашло список схожих жалоб и порекомендовало укрепить колхоз.

Отношения между обкомом и администрацией колхоза стали напряженнее, когда двоих бригадиров, Серафима Андреевича Хохрякова и Андрея Ложкина, арестовали в первой половине 1936 года. Николай Ложкин, Трофим Ложкин и Александр Хохряков были этим возмущены. Личные взаимоотношения между ними были очень крепкими, и они продолжали поддерживать товарищей даже после вынесения приговора, написав для них хорошие характеристики и дав 100 рублей на дорогу. Тесные отношения между членами руководства колхоза, которые и работали, и веселились вместе, спровоцировали конфликт не только с районным комитетом партии, но и с другими колхозниками, и, вероятно, куда более серьезный, чем отражено в документах. Возможно, именно эта сплоченность, а также неприятие перемен вопреки быстрому расследованию и приезду районного руководства в колхоз «Красная колонна», затормозили какие-либо реальные изменения. Еще в течение года после первичного расследования Николай Ложкин и многие его товарищи удерживали свои места в руководстве.

Районному комитету партии пришлось дожидаться двухнедельной поездки Николая в далекий Киров на курсы, связанные с его обязанностями как члена крайкома, чтобы проголосовать за его отстранение.

Узнав по возвращении о смещении с должности, Николай направил жалобу в Краевой комитет партии. В связи с этим началось расследование, вызвавшее недовольство райкома, который принялся выдвигать против Ложкина обвинения в деморализованности, политических и должностных преступлениях, совершенных им в период управления колхозом, а также в подрыве репутации нового начальника районного комитета партии после устранения Ложкина с руководящего поста.

16 августа 1936 года Районный комитет партии в Дебёсах, заслушав результаты расследования, принял решение назначить судебное разбирательство против Николая Ложкина, Трофима Ложкина и Александра Хохрякова и запросил у крайкома партии в Кирове, а также у Удмуртского обкома исключения Николая Ложкина из этих организаций. Официальные обвинения против троих мужчин были довольно стандартными, использовали партийную и государственную терминологию и касались профессиональной, политической и личной несостоятельности, что рассматривалось кировскими партийными организациями в 1930-х годах как преступление. В целом, в данных обвинениях нет ничего примечательного. Подобный триумвират грехов использовался для дискредитации членов партии и руководителей. Однако официальные обвинения скрывают тот факт, что личные качества главы колхоза играли важную роль в желании и даже рвении колхозников выступить против них в суде.

Претензии колхозников

Обвинения против Николая Ложкина и других руководителей колхоза можно разделить на три группы: коррупция, пьянство и жестокое обращение с колхозниками. Все обвинения в политических преступлениях были добавлены инспекторами Районного комитета партии и крайкома, и свидетельские показания колхозников, собранные инспекторами, их не опровергали. Данное исследование сосредоточено на претензиях крестьян, поскольку политические обвинения были добавлены позже как часть государственного обвинения.

Коррупция и пьянство

Все обвинения против Николая Ложкина и других руководителей колхоза, выдвинутые колхозникам, касались преступлений, негативно повлиявших на уровень жизни, что могло свидетельствовать о криминальности и деморализованности бывшего руководителя. Коррупция и пьянство составляли симбиоз, в котором одно дополняло другое.

Утверждалось, что Николай Ложкин устраивал в колхозе пьяные вакханалии, и это фактически вошло в практику в 1935-1936 годах, а также что Федор Ложкин, Митрофан Ложкин, Трофим Ложкин, Александр Хохряков, Серафим Хохряков и Павел Максимов – все члены правления – регулярно в них участвовали. Но колхозники по большей части жаловались не на сами гулянки, а на то, сколько денег и продуктов на них тратилось. В отчете инспектора крайкома значилось: «Коллективное хозяйство оказалось под угрозой разорения из-за систематических пьяных разгулов, устраиваемых главой колхоза Николаем Ложкиным и другими членами руководства. Они присваивали себе коллективное имущество, а также безо всякого учета, безнаказанно забирали продукты, принадлежавшие коллективному хозяйству». Несколько жителей дали показания, что в марте 1936 года владелец магазина Павел Максимов продал на базаре колхозное мясо, а затем напился в своей квартире вместе с Николаем Ложкиным на деньги, вырученные от продажи. Митрофан Ложкин заявил, что Николай часто «принуждал» его покупать вино, иногда давая деньги, иногда заставляя расплачиваться колхозным имуществом, говоря при этом: «Запиши на мой счет».

Предполагалось, что, по крайней мере, один раз они платили за вино на деревенском кооперативе лошадь. Такие показания отражают связь между моральной распущенностью и криминалом,

показывая, что партийная риторика доминировала в Кирове в середине 1930-х годов. Все показания могли быть подстроены, а могли и действительно отражать взгляд колхозников на действия руководства. Использование ресурсов хозяйства для удовлетворения персональных потребностей, несомненно, пошатнуло общее мнение о справедливости и вызвало неподдельное недовольство начальниками, так как для большинства других колхозов, даже процветающих, такое было не доступно.

Засвидетельствовано, что Николай Ложкин принимал от колхоза такие продукты как мясо, масло и мед, которые были редким удовольствием для деревни. Его собутыльник и товарищ Митрофан Ложкин, завхоз колхоза, способствовал его действиям. Митрофан был замечен по крайней мере один раз, перетаскивая свиные туши в 10-20 кг в дом Николая. Тот же якобы брал масло и пуды меда для жены. Она, в свою очередь, использовала эти продукты для приготовления еды на праздники и развлечения. Слухи о прожорливых и развратных начальниках колхоза, эксплуатирующих своих рабочих, были постоянными.

Однако эти слухи неоднозначны. Согласно материалам, собранными заместителем секретаря райкома партии Козловым, местные газеты «Трактор» и «Удмуртская коммуна» утверждают, что Николай воровал колхозную собственность в виде мяса, муки и других продуктов, а также содержал свой скот на собственности колхоза в 1935 году. По словам замсекретаря райкома Козлова в газетах «Трактор» и «Удмуртская коммуна» от 21 мая 1936 года, в ходе расследования выяснилось, что не все обвинения были обоснованными. Также было подмечено, что продукты питания, которые якобы воровал Николай, действительно использовались его женой для готовки в детские сады, а животные, находившиеся в собственности колхоза, были перемещены в сарай Николая в 1935 году. До сих пор остается непонятным, почему местные газеты нашли такие обвинения необоснованным. Маловероятно, что авторы статей были союзниками Николая. В документации не упоминается имя автора в «Удмуртской Комуне», однако автор статьи в газете «Трактор» известен, это Илья Протопопов, который был открытым критиком Николая и имел к тому личную неприязнь. В прямом противоречии с вышесказанным приводится статья руководителя горкома районной партии, который заявил, что все обвинения обоснованы письменными жалобами колхозов. Такая противоречивая документация напоминает о необходимости сохранять здоровый скептицизм в вопросе, что такое правда, и иллюстрирует глубокие конфликты и противоречия советской жизни.

Жалобы колхозников

Также были жалобы на агрессивное поведение по отношению к колхозникам. Николай Ложкин был обвинен в использовании насилия, физического и словесного оскорбления колхозников. Избиения якобы были чаще всего использованы для наказания плохих работников. К примеру, колхозники утверждают, что зимой 1935 года Николай Ложкин, совместно с бывшим бригадиром Серафимом Хохряковым, избил старшего караульного конюха Якова Протопопова за то, что он уснул на рабочем месте и позволил лошадям свободно бродить по хлеву. Из-за этого инцидента Серафим был отправлен под суд.

В ноябре 1935 году Николай Ложкин якобы избил старого сторожа Алексея Самойловича Ложкина, который ушел в кочегарку электростанции и уснул там. Согласно показаниям свидетелей, сторож ушел потому, что замерз, а смену ему не отправили. Найдя Алексея спящим, Николай, якобы пьяный, начал кричать проклятия и бить того по голове. Более того, он также якобы угрожал свидетельнице преступления Евдокии Ложкиной увольнением в случае распространения информации об увиденном.

В январе 1936 года Николай Ложкин с бригадиром Григорием Ивановичем Ложкиным якобы избили колхозника Ивана Осиповича Ложкина, потому что последний плохо руководил работой гумна. Согласно показаниям свидетеля, Иван Осипович работал без помощи и подмены в течение двенадцати часов, после чего ушел домой. Он уже раздевался, когда его начальник Перевозчиков хотел отправить

Ивана по другому поручению, но получил отказ от замерзшего и уставшего работника. На следующий день в 3 утра Ивана Осиповича разбудил его бригадир Григорий Иванович Ложкин, который велел ему возвращаться на свое рабочее место, а также сообщил о краже зерна из тока (место молотыбы), за которым тот должен был следить. Иван Осипович собрался и вышел на улицу, где между двумя домами был встречен с обвинениями в краже зерна Николаем Ложкиным, Григорием Ивановичем Ложкиным и Перевозчиковым. Предположительно, Григорий Иванович нанес первый удар, затем к нему присоединился Николай, и вместе они забили Ивана Осиповича до потери сознания. Согласно показаниям свидетелей, данным в ходе судебного разбирательства по делу Николая, Ивана Осиповича били Ложкины, сам Перевозчиков был не в силах что-либо прокомментировать по этому поводу. В действительности же зерно не было украдено.

И снова местные удмуртские газеты «Трактор» и «Удмуртская коммуна» провели расследование по этим делам в 1935 году и пришли к выводу, что некоторых из этих проявлений бессердечности и жестокости вовсе не было. Согласно результатам расследования, Николай Ложкин вел себя очень вежливо по отношению к Алексею Самойловичу, разбудив его и объяснив, что спать на рабочем месте не разрешается. И когда Алексей Самойлович снова уснул, он сбросил трубу на землю, чтобы тот проснулся. По заключению расследования, проведенного «Трактором» и «Удмуртской Коммуной», не было никаких побоев. Они постановили, что Николай и Григорий Иванович не били Ивана Осиповича, потому что последний не мог точно установить личности напавших. Из расследования этих газет следует, что изначально Иван Осипович обвинял в избиении Перевозчикова, а затем изменил свои показания, обвинив председателя и бригадира. И вновь, 12 июля 1935 года ответ руководителя райкома партии напрямую опроверг выводы газет, заявляющие, что все обвинения доказаны жалобными письмами колхозников. Сейчас невозможно докопаться до истины, но обвинения в жестокости помогли понять, что Николай - настоящий деспот.

Будучи коммунистом, руководителем колхоза, Николай Ложкин проявлял личную неприязнь и склонность к насилию, что хорошо показывают его отношения с колхозником Алексеем Стрельниковым. Подробности инцидента, описанного ниже, сильно отличаются в разных документах. Одна из самых бурных ссор произошла во время церемонии крещения в доме Стрельникова. Известно, что коммунисты были настроены развеять такие церковные традиции как крестины из-за неприятия религии. Часто за то, что их жены крестили детей, коммунисты исключались из партии. Таким образом, как примерный коммунист, Николай был настроен искоренить пережитки царской России, однако переборщил, выйдя за рамки своих полномочий и наведя страх на всю семью Стрельниковых. В заявлениях руководителю обкома партии колхозники утверждали, что Николай Ложкин ворвался на крещение и попытался выгнать всех гостей, что не вышло. Вернувшись с Серафимом Хохряковым, он начал оскорблять хозяина дома и его сына Павла. Далее предполагается, что Николай толкнул в плечо колхозника, ударил несколько раз, а затем схватил его за волосы, толкнул вниз, а потом резко поднял вверх, спросив, больно ли было. Павел ответил положительно. Тогда Николай приказал ему проделать то же самое с его отцом. Под давлением Павел схватил пожилого мужчину за волосы, и затем Николай приказал ему убить отца: «Ты выгнешь ему шею назад и перережешь своим ножом его горло».

Однако газеты «Трактор» и «Удмуртская Коммуна» предположили иное развитие событий. Согласно результатам их расследования, Серафим Хохряков был инициатором срыва праздника, и Николай был единственным, кто попытался его успокоить. Но так как он сам был пьян, дело закончилось тем, что он накричал на Алексея Стрельникова. В статье, опубликованной «Трактором» и «Удмуртской Коммуной» в 1935 году, не упоминаются какие-либо побои или покушение на убийство. Возможно, некоторые детали этого происшествия впоследствии были либо приукрашены, либо забыты, либо вообще не донесены до следователей «Трактора» и «Удмуртской Коммуны» из-за всеобщего страха перед Николаем и его товарищами.

Причины, по которым Николай предположительно напал на семью Стрельникова, тоже варьируются. Из свидетельских показаний, данных на суде, следует, что Ложкин ненавидел Алексея, так

как тот во время похода в баню пожаловался своему соседу на неумелое управление колхозом. Сосед, якобы, рассказал об этом одному из бригадиров, а тот, в свою очередь, донес Николаю. Но самая невероятная причина выдвинута и подтверждена материалами газет «Трактор» и «Удмуртская Коммуна». Согласно этим источникам, Ложкин обвинил старшего Стрельникова в том, что Андрей Ложкин был приговорен к лишению свободы. По информации газет, Николай кричал, что Стрельников должен трепать лен вместо того, чтобы праздновать: «Это из-за тебя Андрюха сейчас в тюрьме!».

Из документации неясно, почему Андрей Ложкин был отправлен в тюрьму, Николай, похоже, считал всему виной неспособность Алексея Стрелкова собрать лен. Андрей входил в круг друзей Ложкина, Николай спонсировал его членство в партии и написал ему хорошую характеристику, так что, несомненно, эти двое состояли в хороших отношениях. Личные отношения приводили ко многим конфликтам в хозяйстве, как и в других областях российской и советской жизни, и гораздо более логично, что тюремное заключение приятеля как раз и вызвало вспышку гнева, чем какой-то комментарий, услышанный в бане. В любом случае, можно предположить, что характер и поведение Николая Ложкина стали причиной выдвинутых против него обвинений.

Война слов

Направления прошений и использование штампов

Учитывая факты о боевом характере, неудивительно, что Ложкин просто так уйти не мог. По отстранению от должности он провел кампанию с помощью своего брата, а также приятеля Александра Хохрякова, с целью опровергнуть обвинения и вернуться к власти. Несмотря на то, что Николай был безграмотным и, судя по всему, пьяницей, он был очень хитрым и использовал штампы советского времени для укрепления своей позиции.

Ложкин решил обратиться во все возможные инстанции, отправляя письма в администрацию Кировского обкома, а также послав брата подать апелляцию в высший орган власти – Центральный Комитет (ЦК) - в Москве. Братья также послали письма секретарю обкома партии, в газету «Правда» и даже самому Якову Яковлеву, руководителю сельскохозяйственного отдела ЦК. Хотя ни одно из этих писем не было опубликовано, письма, отправленное в «Правду» и Яковлеву, были направлены в Кировский обком для расследования. Такой шаг - письма газетам и должностным лицам - был психологически важным. Граждане ожидали результата от подобных обращений, партия и государство оказывали давление на газеты, чтобы те расследовали как можно больше дел. Письма предоставляли возможность добиваться правосудия от высших эшелонов власти.

В ответ на действия райкома партии, Николай Ложкин создал свою собственную версию событий, которая изображала его доблестным коммунистом, окруженным врагами. Он создал очень последовательное повествование, в котором утверждал, что местные члены райкома организовали его отстранение от должности обманном путем, и люди, которые имели личные обиды против него из-за действий или в качестве члена партии, или председателя колхоза, помогли им в этом невооруженном захвате власти. Николай Ложкин воевал в Гражданской войне, и в его более поздних прошениях часто упоминались враги-белогвардейцы.

Доклад выставлял его в качестве жертвы врагов рабочего класса и их союзников, он подчеркивал свою службу во время Гражданской войны и тяготы, которые пережила его семья. Такие темы как революционное прошлое автора, социальный статус и советский патриотизм служили для того, чтобы вызвать целую систему символов в сознании читателя, отражающих основные идеологические и политические предпочтения правительства, и создать связь с режимом, показывая, что автор - человек, которому можно доверять. Николай и его брат Василий мастерски использовали такие методы для нанесения ответного удара по своим оппонентам.

Контратаку Ложкин начал сразу после снятия его с должности в июне 1936 года. В конце июля он написал письмо в обком партии, в котором пытался развенчать выдвинутые против него обвинения. Николай жаловался, что, когда он был в Кирове для прохождения курсов в обкоме, райком партии обманным путем заставил колхозников проголосовать за снятие его с должности и за избрание нового главы колхоза.

По версии Ложкина, вскоре после его отъезда в Киров заместитель секретаря райкома, Козлов, созвал общее собрание колхоза и объявил, что курсы, на которые Николай уехал, будут длиться целый год, и поэтому нужно выбрать нового председателя колхоза. Николай заявил, что вернувшись, он был встречен с обвинениями в финансовых махинациях, и представители райкома сообщили, что он снят с должности из-за растраты в 400 рублей. Ложкин был потрясен такими обвинениями, заявив: «Перед выборами не было и речи о растроченных деньгах».

Николай также сообщал, что вслед за смещением его персоны с поста председателя колхоза, он подвергся издевательствам со стороны членов райкома партии, а его семью в колхозе окружила атмосфера страха, унижения и недоверия. Ложкин заявлял, что Долгушев и Козлов запрещали разговаривать ему с другими колхозниками и коммунистами на собраниях партии, а тем в свою очередь было запрещено разговаривать с ним.

Он отметил, что даже не имел возможности опровергнуть выдвинутые против него обвинения, а его коллеги и товарищи после этих событий боялись разговаривать с ним, опасаясь наказания со стороны райкома. «Встретив в деревне Дзилье председателя парткома Трофима Ложкина, я предложил ему идти домой вместе, но тот вынужден был отказаться, ответив: «Я не пойду с тобой, а то еще Долгушев увидит или узнает», - рассказывал Ложкин, чтобы проиллюстрировать свою изоляцию от бывших товарищей и членов колхоза. Плюсом к изоляции, недоброжелатели, по его словам, изводили его семью. Николай заявлял: «Теперь те, кто был на стороне белых, издеваются над нами, надсмехаются, а также наносят нам злостные оскорбления. Больше никто не разговаривает с моими сыновьями и дочерьми». Он особенно подчеркнул вину местных властей в сложившейся ситуации, утверждая, что «райкомом партии создана такая оппозиция, что все эти бездельники могут безнаказанно насмехаться надо мной».

В лице своего брата Василия Николай Ложкин нашел сильного союзника в борьбе против райкома партии. Василий Ложкин переехал из Кировского края в Москву, где работал на железной дороге. Тем не менее, он сохранил тесные связи с родной деревней и использовал свое положение в Москве, чтобы обратиться в центральное руководство, вовлекая его тем самым в борьбу местных сил. Василий Ложкин написал статью под названием «Самодур в роли секретаря Дебесского отделения райкома партии», описав в ней тяжелую участь брата, и послал в редакцию московской газеты «Правда», откуда 9 августа ее перенаправили в обком партии. В отчете инструктора обкома указывается, что в статье Василий Ложкин описал успехи колхоза на протяжении его существования, позитивные аспекты руководства брата и утверждал, что Николай пострадал от рук председателя райкома и его помощника. А Долгушев и Козлов сговорились сместить его брата с поста из-за своих личных обид.

Василий и Николай Ложкины предоставили практически одинаковые описания того, как чиновники райкома с помощью обмана сместили Николая с места, а затем продолжали издеваться над ним и попытались изолировать его от общества. Василий пошел даже дальше брата в идее о том, что секретарь обкома партии был так поглощен идеей изоляции Ложкина, что был готов пожертвовать ради этого экономическими интересами колхоза. По словам Василия, Долгушев сказал Николаю: «Достаточно того, что ты правил колхозом как помещик, теперь даже не смей вмешиваться в наши дела. Пусть Попов, новый председатель, делает, что хочет, даже если это вредит колхозу, а ты сиди и помалкивай и не смей говорить с ним или критиковать его».

Излагая ситуацию таким образом, братья играли на политических чувствах членов райкома и обкома партии. Они сделали акцент на заслугах Ложкина как коммуниста, экономических достижениях

колхоза во время его председательства и противопоставили это эгоистически мотивированным членам райкома, которые были готовы пренебречь финансовой стабильностью колхоза ради совершения своей кровной мести.

К обвинениям в злоупотреблении должностными полномочиями и властью, Николай Ложкин добавил также предположения о том, что в борьбе против него райком объединился с врагами народа. Ложкин заявил, что его главные недоброжелатели - бывшие кулаки и белогвардейцы, исключенные из колхоза и жаждущие мщения, особенно теперь, когда Николай оказался в легкоуязвимом положении.

Николай Ложкин предоставил свои доказательства и подкрепляющие свидетельские показания секретарю обкома партии, товарищу Столяру, 30 августа. Он заявил, что на собрании колхоза от 18-19 августа, на котором обсуждался вопрос о его сдаче в руки судебных властей, присутствовали только враждебно настроенные против него колхозники, в том числе раскулаченные собственники, которые были исключены из колхоза.

В своей пояснительной записке Николай Ложкин указал список нарушений, предположительно совершенных шестью колхозниками, выступавших с обвинениями против него на собрании 18 августа. И в каждом случае Николай Ложкин делал акцент на их подозрительном прошлом. Он обвинил двоих работников колхоза в том, что они являются безответственными мигрантами, которые забросили свои обязанности как в колхозе, где числились только на бумаге, так и на Ижевском машиностроительном заводе, где они также были наняты. Николай обвинил оставшихся трех работников (Николая Григорьевича Ахеева, Ивана Протопопова и Илью Кузьмича Протопопова) в том, что они члены вражеских группировок и либо поддерживали белых во время Гражданской войны, либо являлись кулаками, либо и то, и другое вместе. Он заявил, что Николай Григорьевич Ахеев имел сомнительное прошлое и сохранил свой «антисоветский» характер. Вероятно, он служил полицейским сержантом под управлением Колчака и находился под следствием у НКВД после увольнения из колхоза в связи с «возмутительным поведением».

Николай Ложкин сделал еще более серьезные заявления против двух других обвинителей. Он утверждал, что Иван Протопопов дезертировал из Красной армии, и во время своего дезертирства убивал и ел крестьянских свиней. Он также обвинял его в сговоре с белыми с целью избить и запугать жену и детей Ложкина, пока Николай служил, потому что они были членами семьи коммуниста и добровольца Красной армии. Далее Николай Ложкин заявил, что Иван Протопопов был ленивым и коррумпированным человеком и даже после того, как вступил в колхоз, отмечая, что он «систематически слонялся без дела, из-за чего ему не хватало хлеба, несмотря на то, что до революции он был богатым».

Подобным образом Николай обвинил редактора районной газеты Илью Кузьмича Протопопова в том, что его семья имеет темное прошлое, а сам он связан с вражескими группировками и хочет отомстить Ложкину за приверженность коммунизму. По словам Николая Ложкина, дед Ильи Протопопова, вероятно, был основным действующим лицом в предательстве семьи Николая Ложкина в 1919 году и участвовал в избиении жены и детей вместе с белыми. Однако самым ужасным преступлением его деда являлась передача председателя Комитета бедноты Николая Игнатьевича Ложкина, который был впоследствии казнен по приказу Колчака. Николай Ложкин способствовал их разоблачению, и Илья Протопопов использовал свою позицию редактора районной газеты «Трактор» и члена собрания районного комитета партии, чтобы оклеветать Ложкина и предоставить Районному комитету партии ложные факты.

Еще одним человеком, обладающим тесными связями с районным правительством, которого Николай Ложкин обвинил в личной неприязни и использовании ситуации для осуществления своей мести, был новый председатель колхоза Михаил Попов. Ложкин утверждал, что новый глава колхоза был раскулачен в 1930 году и являлся организатором группы индивидуальных предпринимателей, которые не хотели отдавать свою землю колхозу. Николай заявил, что районный комитет партии лично послал его в родную деревню Попова, и, несмотря на тайный характер этой группы, Ложкину удалось

разоблачить Попова как главного организатора. Попов затаил обиду и специально предоставлял Районному комитету ложную информацию. Ложкин утверждал, что участники собрания 19 августа проголосовали за передачу дела в суд только из-за желания отомстить за его действия в качестве председателя колхоза и настоящего коммуниста.

Тем не менее, Николай считал, что те, кто свидетельствовал против него 18 и 19 августа, были всего лишь пешками в руках районных чиновников. Он обвинил членов районного комитета партии в организации сговора бывших классовых врагов с целью дискредитировать и подвергнуть его гонениям и в намеренном лишении его сторонников возможности высказывать свое мнение. Николай Ложкин утверждал, что Долгушев давал и организовывал показания против него и не разрешал никому свидетельствовать в его защиту. Он заявил, что вставшая на его защиту Наталья Ложкина была прервана и не могла больше говорить, а после собрания Долгушев кричал на нее за то, что она пыталась защитить Николая. Он также заявил, что для того, чтобы заставить работников колхоза дать нужное свидетельство (в свете «бунта» Натальи Ложкиной), Долгушев и глава райкома товарищ Бабкин приказали редактору районной газеты Илье Протопопову, руководителю районного комитета партии Кузьмину и главе районной земельной организации Поликарпову подготовить людей для дачи показаний на генеральном собрании

В результате усилий данных служебных лиц несколько бедных крестьян и членов партии засвидетельствовали против Николая Ложкина. У Долгушева не было причин устраивать заговор против Николая. Однако последний писал, что председатель районного исполнительного комитета товарищ Бабкин хотел отомстить, потому что Ложкин в 1933 году сделал письменный донос в обком на жену Бабкина, обвиняя ее в родстве с кулаками. «Следовательно, - писал Ложкин, - я попал в замкнутый круг, с агентами классовых врагов с одной стороны и их помощниками с другой, такими как секретарь райкома партии и председатель райисполкома и другими руководителями районных организаций».

Встречное наступление Долгушева

Само собой, Долгушев не относил себя к тиранам. Он узнал об обвинениях против него, когда Яковлев и газета «Правда» послали письмо Василию Ложкину в обком партии. В связи с этим, Долгушев написал ответ, мешая Николаю и его сторонникам подавать дальнейшие прошения в более высокие органы. Он и другие члены райкома партии опубликовали ультиматум, угрожая Николаю Ложкину и Александру Хохрякову расправой и наказанием, если они продолжат подавать прошение внешним властям. Они представили обвинения как заговор с целью подорвать власть новой администрации колхоза, утвержденной райкомом. Райком партии уведомил Николая Ложкина и Александра Хохрякова, что «если они пренебрегут новым руководством колхоза, не прекратят работать на подрыв власти и объединение оппозиционеров вокруг них, то будут приняты строгие меры». Николаю Ложкину также запретили посещать колхоз и партийные встречи, а Александр Хохряков подтвердил, что их письма с колхоза перехватывались: райком партии пытался ограничить возможность Николая и Александра жаловаться.

Пока райком стремился заставить Николая замолчать, Долгушев приступил к попытке полностью дискредитировать Ложкина. Он направил свои силы на то, чтобы методично опровергнуть обвинения братьев Ложкиных и Александра Хохрякова в объяснительном письме. Долгушев взял оригинал изложенных фактов обвинения райкома партии и превратил его в намного более официальный и менее личный текст, добавив пункты обвинения в злоупотреблении властью и неумелом экономическом управлении. Он утверждал, что вследствие плохой административной работы Ложкина колхоз был приведен в кризисное состояние, из-за которого многие семьи хотели уехать, и что Николай лично выдвигал многих бывших классовых врагов на ответственные должности в партии и колхозе. Портрет этот был нелицеприятным, но он отличался от первоначальных обвинений крестьян. Согласно Долгушеву, Ложкин был более чем высокомерным и некомпетентным человеком, который отказался

принимать помощь от очень терпимых местных властей, будучи мелким тираном, терроризирующим колхоз и живущим в роскоши, как его описали свидетельские показания колхозников.

Долгушев начал свое письмо, опровергая слова Николая, что под его руководством колхоз был очень успешен в экономическом плане и начал приходить в упадок уже под новым руководством, назначенным райкомом партии. Он утверждал, что колхоз отставал в экономическом плане на протяжении долгого времени, но администрация «скрывала» эти факты. Согласно Долгушеву, кризисный момент наступил зимой февраля 1935 года, когда большое количество колхозников подало прошение об отделении от колхоза. Он отмечает, что райком партии принял решение 16 июля 1935 года о мерах для экономического усиления колхоза и издал строгие инструкции и рекомендации Николаю Ложкину и другим руководителям, которые в основном не были выполнены. Долгушев утверждал, что руководство колхоза продолжало находиться в прежнем состоянии, не желая осуществлять изменения, и в результате уборочная кампания и заготовка зерна для государства были плохо выполнены, люди начали говорить о вакханалиях и постоянно ухудшающемся состоянии колхоза.

Согласно Долгушеву, в конце 1935 года райком партии консультировался с краевыми чиновниками, и они коллективно решили, что Николаю Ложкину нужно сельскохозяйственное образование, чтобы улучшить ситуацию в колхозе. Долгушев утверждал, что, несмотря на желание местных органов власти работать с Ложкиным, тот был высокомерен и упрям. Когда была предоставлена возможность изучить сельское хозяйство, Николай «отказался учиться, вернулся и начал смеяться», заявив, что «они хотят отправить меня учиться, полагая что я не знаю, как работать».

В начале 1936 года райком партии и краевые власти приняли решение о том, что вопрос о председательстве Николая Ложкина следует вынести на голосование на общем собрании колхоза. Как уже упоминалось, они решили провести эту встречу, пока Николай Ложкин был в Кирове по заданию обкома партии. Долгушев пытался сделать вид, что это было сделано не специально, утверждая, что они не знали как долго он будет отсутствовать, а плохие условия в колхозе вынуждали к незамедлительным действиям. Однако даже Долгушев не смог притворяться и скрывать, что этот шаг был преднамеренным. Он также признал, что «курсы дали бы возможность отстранить его от должности, а затем отправить на партийную работу в другое место».

Однако все пошло не так, как планировалось. Спустя неделю после того, как колхоз отозвал его с должности, возмущенный Николай Ложкин вернулся в «Красную Колонну», и, по словам Долгушева, немедленно явился к новому председателю колхоза Михаилу Попову и его брату, бухгалтеру из районной организации по землеустройству, с целью узнать, почему они здесь. Долгушев и другой краевой чиновник Берман обсудили такой поворот событий и якобы приняли решение, что лучшим выходом было бы отправление Николая на курсы по социалистическому строительству для того, чтобы он работал в другом месте. Но Ложкин отказался от предложения продолжить образование и работу в другом месте, решительно заявив: «Я не уеду!».

По словам Долгушева, Николай Ложкин продолжал бороться против потери поста председателя и попыток сослать его на другое место работы. В результате его обращений в обком и совнарком в июле 1936 года в Дебёсы приехала бригада следователей. Это краткое упоминание Долгушева является единственным упоминанием региональных и национальных государственных должностных лиц, которые имели причастность к делу, хотя их роль была в нем минимальна. Долгушев утверждал, что они разговаривали с колхозниками, несколько дней проводили проверку, но не оставили никаких материалов и не вынесли решения. Долгушев более не упоминает никаких следователей, а существующий отчет обкома партии был передан райкому, что позволяет сделать вывод: все решения были оставлены для принятия на краевом уровне.

Данный вывод в дальнейшем подкрепляется тем, что Долгушев продолжает составлять список членов колхоза, которых райком партии исключил в результате чистки. Долгушев показал значимость таких ярлыков как «кулак» и «белогвардеец», так как именно он вешал ярлыки на людей, которых Николай определял как классовых врагов. По словам Долгушева, Николай помогал выдвигать

кандидатов и добивался льгот для шести бывших «классовых врагов»: Серафима Хохрякова, Сергея Хохрякова, Тихона Хохрякова, Главатских и Андрея Ложкина.

Долгушев утверждал, что Серафим Хохряков был сыном кулака, который был записан как стахановец, и получил 100 рублей за выдвижение. В дополнение он был недавно приговорен к двум годам лишения свободы за аморальное поведение, пьянство, стрельбу по людям, хищение колхозной собственности и избивание колхозников. Николай Ложкин якобы выдвинул его в качестве кандидата в партию и на позицию стахановца. Тихон Хохряков был якобы участником Белой армии, а в колхоз был принят благодаря рекомендациям Николая Главатских, другой предполагаемый кандидат Николая, был привлечен к ответственности за анти-колхозную деятельность, так как спрятал имущество (коров) от коллективизации.

Наконец, Долгушев утверждал, что бывший бригадир Андрей Ложкин служил в Белой армии, и недавно против него было возбуждено уголовное дело за избивание колхозников и безобразное поведение. Долгушев отметил, что когда Андрей Ложкин был арестован, у него была хорошая характеристика от Николая Ложкина. Тот факт, что Николай Ложкин и Долгушев использовали ярлыки классовых врагов, такие как «кулак» и «белогвардеец», показывает, что они оба знали об их значимости, которая в дальнейшем помогла бы им быть назначенными на местном уровне.

Результаты

Несмотря на многократные обращения в вышестоящие инстанции, судьба Николая Ложкина и других бывших управляющих колхоза была решена на краевом уровне, райком партии решил снять Трофима Ложкина с поста партийного секретаря и лишить его членства в партии. Николай Ложкин был лишен членства в партии и должностей в обкоме.

Дело колхоза «Красная Колонна» было передано в Дебёсский народный суд, который слушал его в течение трех дней. Суд приговорил Николая Ложкина и семерых граждан по обвинению в тесных отношениях с кулаками, включая случай найма дочери кулака в качестве кассира, финансовых махинациях и краже колхозной собственности. Николай был отправлен в тюрьму на 6 лет, Трофим Ложкин на 5 лет, Павел Максимов на 5 лет, Семен Сычугов на 5 лет и Серафим Хохряков на 3 года. Александр Хохряков и Митрофан Ложкин были оба приговорены к 1 году исправительных работ.

Имя Николая Иосифовича исчезло из архивных записей. Множество документов местного колхоза было уничтожено, и его имя не появлялось ни в списках погибших на фронте во время Великой Отечественной войны, ни в списках репрессированных в Удмуртской республике. Как бы то ни было, все это указывает и на то, что в результате его ареста пострадала его семья. В 1938 году его сын Афанасий Николаевич был исключен из комсомола колхоза «Красная колонна» как сын преступника.

Несмотря на все трудности, с которыми столкнулся Николай и его семья, некоторые другие осужденные смогли вновь влиться в жизнь местного общества, продолжая принимать активное участие в советской жизни и жизни колхоза. В 1938 году Александр Хохряков вновь считался активным членом партии «Красная колонна». Он отмечал, что его фотография дважды за один месяц появлялась в газете «Трактор» с подписью «Враг народа» в качестве наказания, но этого позора было недостаточно, чтобы исключить его из партийной и колхозной жизни. Он принимал активное участие в планировании местных пропагандистских кампаний и дискуссий в 1938 году. Он считался честным советским гражданином, и в 1941 году был призван в Красную армию. Александр Федорович Хохряков был убит на фронте 25 сентября 1942 года в возрасте 38 лет; он похоронен в Смоленской области. В 1938 году Митрофан Ложкин был членом партии и находился на хорошем счету в колхозе, хотя и был менее активным на партийных собраниях и в организационных делах, чем Александр Хохряков. Он был призван в Красную Армию в 1942 году и погиб в том же году в возрасте 43 лет.

Выводы

Такое точное и детальное исследование показывает важность личных и общественных интересов в формировании исторических событий. Не менее удивительным является то, как колхозники могли контролировать вмешательство государства. Ученые склонны рассматривать колхозников, доносы и такие ярлыки, как «кулак» и «враг народа» в рамках отношений государственных колхозов, где главную роль играло государство. Однако, как показывает этот пример, в 1930-х годах в Кировском крае государственный контроль на местном уровне не всегда был строгим. Это и создало пространство, в котором местные представители власти могли заявить о себе, используя государственные структуры, протесты и ярлыки, чтобы бороться за общественные и личные интересы, что имело мало общего с целями государства.

Эти инструменты часто использовались, чтобы усилить или выдвинуть на первый план борьбу за власть на местном уровне. Эта борьба не была «политической» в том смысле, как руководство центральной партии определяло политическую борьбу, но она имела большое значение для местных жителей. Таким образом, то, что часто являлось семейной или местной борьбой за власть, получало ярлык борьбы против классовых врагов и вредителей. Это укрепило веру центрального руководства в то, что такие группировки существовали и были очень опасны, и они помогали жителям решать местные проблемы.