

MASS ARRESTS AND TORTURES IN 1944-1953

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INTERROGATIONS AND TORTURES.

In 1944-1953, the organised system of terror execution was drafted by the Services of the Interior and Security of the Soviet Union. No unauthorised action could be performed following this system. Employment of tortures during the inquest was concealed so that no documents testifying it would be left. In official jargon, tortures were called “means of physical effect”, “active inquisition”, etc. Although torturing was a commonplace thing for the officers of the National Committee of the Interior (hereinafter – NKVD), the National Committee of State Security (hereinafter – NKGB) and the inquest division of SMERSH counterintelligence (but not limited to these institutions), very few cases came into the open. There occurred sanctioned and unsanctioned tortures. “Sanctioned” tortures were these performed with the authorisations received from the Heads of the Ministry of the Interior (hereinafter – MVD) or the Ministry of State Security (hereinafter – MGB). Meanwhile, “unsanctioned” tortures were executed with neither authorisation nor particular need. Unsanctioned tortures were employed in cases when the remanded person was arrested officially, the inquest was not urgent, while the information to be obtained was of little importance in the struggle against the resistance. Unsanctioned tortures for the obtaining of useless information, in the opinion of the security officers, were considered by the MVD and MGB as the inaptitude in work, and sanctions for this were imposed even on the employees of the terror execution system. Let us take a typical case. In May 1946, the war tribunal convicted I. Sulaev and P. Isaev, the officers of the Joniškis Branch of the MVD. They were sentenced neither for beating the remanded person, Kuliavas, with a rubber baton for three hours on 13 March 1946 (the remand died next day), nor for beating the remanded person, Geležiūtė¹, with a rubber baton with the aid of an interpreter, but for the failure to compile a file for the employment of tortures.

Actually who exercised the authorisations received from the MVD and the MGB Ministers and their deputies for the application of “means of physical effect”? During the period from 1944 to the 15 March 1946, this was vested with the Banditry Control Department of the NKVD. Before 15 March 1946, the Head of this Department, Lieutenant-Colonel B. Burylin, had to apply for the authorisation for employing tortures (“means of active inquest”) to the Minister or his deputies. After the restructure of the Department into the Board, the Head of the Board became the deputy of the Minister and was entitled to sanction the employment of tortures or “means of physical effect”. This position was held by Major-General P. Kapralov. The members of armed resistance who fell

¹ Lithuanian Archives of Public Organisations (hereinafter – LVOA). Funds 1771. Folder 9. File 269. Page 49.

into the clutches of the Board interrogators faced Lieutenant-Colonel V. Vasilyev, the Head of the First Division, M. Smirnov and I. Glazunov-Eysmont, his deputies (all three were the deputies of the Head of the NKVD Banditry Control Department), A. Gulyaev, Deputy Head of the Second Division, and other NKVD officers².

It is possible to claim that all terror executors and their accomplices took to inhuman methods. S. Grimovitch, Military Prosecutor of the MVD Army, was formally in charge of the inquest, but in fact merely wrote indictments for the cases of “special jurisdiction”. Fight against the occupants was labelled “treason of fatherland, execution of terrorist acts and sabotages”. Although, in the “investigation” of the majority of cases of “special jurisdiction”, beating and torturing of the remanded was employed, not even every fourth case was accomplished in 1948 (10% of cases were left unresolved in 1949, and 7.1% in 1950)³. The officials of neither the Lithuanian Communist Party (hereinafter – LKP(b)), nor the MGB were satisfied with the situation of this kind. Anti-Soviet resistance organisations were still active in 1948-1950, and the officers of both the MVD and the MGB had to interrogate the same remanded people. Yet, the operation of the violence apparatus of the totalitarian regime was ordered so as to imprison people merely for the unwary word and interrogate them like the most proactive resistance organisers. S. Grimovitch, Military Prosecutor of the MVD Army, was forced to note on the 08 March 1951 that “(...) most testimonies of the confessing persons (...) were obtained by employing ‘means of physical effect’”⁴. Every other person arrested in 1951 was first detained and forced into “confession”, then arrested for the same “confession”, that is, the testimonies of the “confessing” persons served as other evidence. Meanwhile, the promotion or reward awaited the MVD and MGB officers who had employed the tortures. Complaints of the prisoners were rejected as “libellous”. After all, it was unusual for prisoners to complain since they could again fall into the hands of the same interrogators for the “further interrogation”. The Communist Government of the Lithuanian SSR was well-aware of the tortures employed in the interrogations, but only after the arrest of L. Berya in Summer 1953, A. Sniečkus took vague interest into certain details of tortures. On 08 August 1953, Justice Colonel S. Grimovitch, Military Prosecutor of the MVD Border Army, provided the following information: “As is well known to the Central Committee of the LKP(b), the former Ministry of State Security of the USSR had special instructions, according to which in certain cases “means of physical effect” were authorised in the interrogations of persons arrested for the state crimes. Following these instructions, former Minister of State Security, Major-General Kondakov, and his deputy Colonel

² Ibidem. File 264. Page 131.

³ Report of Military Prosecutor S. Grimovitch of 08 March 1951 // Ibidem. Folder 108. File 2. Page 192.

⁴ Ibidem. Page 194.

Pochkay issued authorisations to the interrogating officers for the use of “means of physical effect” in respect of the arrested persons”⁵.

During the period from January to March 1953, the Minister of State Security and his deputy authorised Colonel Chelnakov, Lieutenant-Colonel Marakushev, Colonel Jarockiy, Colonel Pahomichev and their subordinates to torture seven arrested persons: I. Prapuolenis, V. Česnauskaitė, K. Diržys, J. Cibulskis, etc. Interrogated K. Diržys told to his torturers: “if you are going to continue beating me, I will tell you that I have recruited all population of Panevėžys City into "Aušros tėvūnija" organisation”⁶. Arrested J. Cibulskis testified that in Panevėžys he “was beaten with a rubber whip, while in Vilnius he was beaten with a rubber baton by a Lieutenant-Colonel”⁷.

The following conclusion could be drawn to wind up the description of interrogation methods: pursuant to the instructions of both the MVD and the MGB of the USSR, tortures were widely used in the interrogations of persons charged with “lese-majesty”, i.e. active or passive resistance against the occupational government. Inhuman methods were employed for the interrogation of detained and arrested people by the officers of the NKVD, the MVD and the MGB central (most often Banditry Control, 2-N, Inquest, etc.) departments, regional and district divisions, as well as the military officers of SMERSH divisions of reconnaissance and counterintelligence of the NKVD, the MVD and the MGB military units. Militiamen, MVD and MGB interpreters and collaborators “sribai” (annihilators, “national defenders”) also employed tortures either following the orders or on their own initiative.

Besides interrogations, there existed one more activity “field” of the Soviet security, that is, robbing of detained and arrested people and their families. The property of arrested persons who were imprisoned pursuant to the articles of the Criminal Code providing for the property confiscation was seized. As soon as the sentence was passed by a war tribunal or the extraordinary council, the said property was confiscated. This was provided for in the orders of the USSR NKVD and the Criminal Procedure Code of the Soviet Union. The NKVD and the NKGB introduced different regulations in the occupied Lithuanian, which esp. refers to the period of 1944-1945. Thousands of people were detained and deported to the NKVD infiltration (displaced persons’) and screening camps, while even more people were arrested and imprisoned in the GULAG camps. Their property was taken over by the NKVD and the NKGB, while the officers of these institutions took this property (including flats) for the “temporary usage”. Even the Head of the Department A of the USSR

⁵ The Deed of S. Grimovitch, Military Prosecutor of the MVD Border Army, to A. Sniečkus, dated 08 August 1953 // LVOA, funds 1771, folder 133, file 57, pages 135, 136.

⁶ Ibidem. Page 178.

⁷ Ibidem.

NKGB, Major-General Gercovskiy, called it “looting” in May 1945. He referred only to the seizure of property owned by those deported to the infiltration camps. As a rule, all NKGB top officers were keen on using the property of people who got into their hands or were murdered. For example, Major-General Gercovskiy received a present from the MGB of the Lithuanian SSR, which was 26-volume encyclopaedia in Italian earlier owned by a man shot for “a counter-revolutionary offence”. The unowned property of people who had died tortured to death in prisons or were executed was first shared among the genocide executors. In this case, the appropriated property did not need to be masked as being taken “for temporary usage”.

PRISONS AND IMPRISONMENT CONDITIONS.

At the start of the re-occupation in July 1944, there were immediately initiated the arrests of defined categories of persons (former members of Lithuanian inter-war political parties, rifle-men, policemen, participants of the uprising of June 1941, prisoners freed in June 1941, etc.). The entire system of prisons and internal prisons was also re-established. The whole prison system was restored within few months. It comprised twelve general prisons (two in Vilnius, and one in each Kaunas, Panevėžys, Šiauliai, Marijampolė, Ukmergė, Šilutė, Raseiniai, Utena, Telšiai and Švenčionys, whereas Tauragė prison was destroyed at the very wake of German-Soviet war and never restored afterwards). The prisons constituted an integral part of the prison system of the Soviet Union, which in 1945 consisted of 5 special-purpose, 494 general and two central internal prisons, as well as two prisons-hospitals⁸. The number of prisons in Lithuania changed slightly: the second Vilnius prison was closed since March 1945, but the prison in Klaipėda was opened in June 1945; the prison in Telšiai was closed from May 1946, in Ukmergė in July 1948, while in Raseiniai in April 1952. All prisons were called detention centres (or “sledstvennyje” – inquisitorial in Russian). All prisons operated under the Prison Department of the Ministry of the Interior (hereinafter – VRM). This Department was in charge of the order in prisons, the conditions of imprisonment, food provision, etc.⁹ 1,457 people (740 Russians, 586 Lithuanians, 131 – other nationalities) were employed in the prisons in 1953.

Meanwhile, the network of secret internal prisons was developed, too. The imprisonment conditions in both general and internal prisons of both the NKVD (MVD) and the MGB were especially difficult. The internal prisons used to be housed in the cellars of the NKVD (MVD) and the MGB Departments in order to conceal the fact that arrested people were tortured. According to the official data (of 20 February 1949), prisons could serve 6,790 prisoners, while internal prisons had place for

⁸ Certificate on the operating prisons of the USSR NKVD, dated June 1945 // State Archive of the Russian Federation (hereinafter – RFVA), funds 9413, folder 1, file 62, page 37.

⁹ Certificate on the operation of Prison Department of the Lithuanian SSR and the detention centres of the first quarter of 1953, Lithuanian Special Archive (hereinafter – LYA), funds K-1, folder 10, file 159, page 143.

1,290 prisoners as of 01 January 1945¹⁰. The Soviets sought to break the prisoners both physically and mentally by either increasing the conditional number of inmates or otherwise worsening the imprisonment conditions in the prisons, built during the times of the Lithuanian Independence. Conditions provided for the prisoners of the NKVD and NKGB in the Lithuanian prisons were much worse than those in the rest of the Soviet prisons. Twelve Lithuanian prisons constituted only the minority of all prisons but the percentage of inmates who died, were murdered or tortured to death here was relatively higher. In 1945, there died 6,834 persons¹¹ in the prisons of the Soviet Union, while in Lithuania the figure stood at 490. Epidemics, mental disorders and suicides were typical. The exact number of prisoners in the major prisons in 1946-1947 is not known. However, 718 prisoners died or were killed in the general prisons in 1944-1945 and 1948-1952 (765 cases of deceased prisoners survived in the KGB archives). The family of the deceased were issued a death certificate but were not notified of the burial place. Prisoners who died in Vilnius prisons were thought to be taken to the fence of the Antakalnis Cemetery: "(...) burials started after the war. All was performed secretly in the dark. Covered vehicles would come from the direction of Šilo Street at night before dawn. (...) Corpses were buried without any coffins. Pits were back-filled by the convicted (...)"¹². Victims of the MVD and the MGB were to disappear without any trace.

The number of prisoners killed in the internal prisons is not known. But the locals were well-aware of the sites where the victims were imprisoned, interrogated and tortured. Thousands of people went through such internal prisons as Šubartinė in Tauragė City. In 1944-1945 alone, 133 thousand people were detained or arrested. Some were detained and interrogated for a few days or months, others never saw freedom again.

When the Soviet-German war was drawing to an end, the twelve prisons housed the highest number of prisoners throughout the period of 1944-1953, that is, 16,591 prisoners¹³ (according to the data of 01 February 1945). In-line with the results of the military penal operations, the number of prisoners in the regional prisons also increased. The place usually provided for one person now accommodated 3, 6, 9 or 13 prisoners.

In the Soviet-occupied Baltic States, human extermination policy of Soviets did not differ much, but Lithuania was marked out by the especially great number of military penal operations, arrests and

¹⁰ Note of Lieutenant-Colonel Zinovyev, the Head of Prison Department of the MGB of the Lithuanian SSR, dated 21 February 1949 // LYA, funds K-1, folder 10, file 83, page 49.

¹¹ Note of Colonel Dostovalov, the Head of Hygiene Division Prison Department of the MVD, dated 17 May 1946 // Ibidem, file 73, page 130.

¹² *Liutkevičienė I.* Vilniaus Antakalnio kapinės: ar bus atskleista politinių kalinių laidojimo paslaptis? (Vilnius Antakalnis Cemetery: Will the Burial Secret of Political Prisoners Be Ever Revealed?) // LIETUVOS RYTAS Daily, 14 April 1992.

¹³ A few thousand more people were imprisoned in the internal prisons. Although the accurate number of prisoners is not known, but on average it constituted about 25% of all prisoners kept in the major prisons. Cf.: Bulletin of 1945 of prisoner number in the prisons of the USSR NKVD. // RFVA, funds 9413, folder 1, file 63 pages 27-28.

deportations. The statement remains valid even comparing Lithuania to the Western Ukraine where the anti-Soviet movement was especially vehement.

RESULTS OF THE ARRESTS.

According to the preliminary data, the MVD arrested 80 thousand more people (besides the resistance participants, their supporters and other persons charged with counter-revolutionary or anti-Soviet activities) within the period of 1944-1952¹⁴. The total number of people arrested (and later deported to the extermination camps or released, imprisoned, dead, tortured to death or executed in prisons on 01 December 1952) by the NKVD, the MVD, and the MGB would amount to approximately 186 thousand.

The courts, including war tribunals and extraordinary councils, used to stand at the end of the genocide execution chain. During 1944-1953, the war tribunals of the NKVD army convicted at least 29,052 people (16,763 cases), while the extraordinary councils of the NKVD-MVD and the MGB sentenced at least 15,887 people (9,892 cases). The majority were convicted pursuant to the first section of Article 58 of the Criminal Code of the Russian SFSR (“high treason”). In 1945 alone, 468 political prisoners were sentenced to capital punishment. The first representative M. Suslov commissioned by Moscow did not find it enough. In his opinion, “taking into account the political situation, the penal policy like this (...) was far from being stringent, rather on the contrary”¹⁵.

The killing of political prisoners was among the physical annihilation methods of Lithuanians. As early as on the 01 September 1944, the Lithuanian prisons accommodated 31 condemned persons, but on 20 January 1945 the number stood at 331. At this point, they started shooting large groups of the condemned. The doom was carried out by a “special group”. The condemned were shot one by one in the special cell located in the cellar of Vilnius internal prison of the NKGB. Most often they were shot by a shot to the head (back of the head). The second or “control” shot would finish the lying victim. Among the executioners there was V. Dolgirev from the Kurgan Region, commissioned to the post of a Superior of the NKGB internal prison in July 1944¹⁶. The corpses of the executed prisoners used to be taken to the Tuskulėnai estate, managed by the NKVD, on the right riverside of Neris. The bodies were buried in a twelve-section garage here. One pit (4x2 m

¹⁴ During the period from 1944 to 01 July 1946, the MVD arrested 11,102 people, including 1,254 persons for avoiding the mobilisation and defection; in 1947, about 19,187 people were arrested, in 1948 - 18,228; in 1949 - 14,670; 1950 - 14,136; 1951 - 12,764. These are incomplete data covering merely those charged with offences or convicted (pursuant to penal articles) persons. Rf.: LVOA, funds 1771, folder 108, file 21, page 125. Also Certificate of Major Lysenka of 05 July 1946, LYA, funds K-1, folder3, file 217, page 79.

¹⁵ Report of M. Suslov in 1946 to G. Malenkov // Ibidem, file 24, page 8.

¹⁶ *Simanaitis E.* Vilniaus budelis profesionalas (Professional Vilnius Executioner) // TREMTINYS Magazine. 1995. No. 3.

size, 4 metre deep) provided room for 154 bodies, another for 89, and the third for 48 victims of the NKVD¹⁷. The total number of shot victims reaches about 760 people, one third of which were participants and supporters of the post-war Lithuanian resistance.

After capital punishment was abolished in the Soviet Union on 26 May 1947, the prisoners were not shot for three years. However, the physical annihilation of counter-revolutionaries resumed in 1950 before deporting prisoners to the extermination camps. Starting from 12 January, the shooting of “fatherland traitors, spies and saboteurs” recommenced. During the period from October 1950 to June 1953, minimum 250 persons were sentenced to death in Lithuania¹⁸. From August 1952, the condemned prisoners were taken for execution to the Butyrki prison in Moscow. Partisan General J. Žemaitis, the partisan leader of entire Lithuania, and the presidium chairman of the Lithuanian Freedom Fighters’ Union (hereinafter – LLKS) was shot here on 26 November 1954. One burial site of the victims is known in Tuskulėnai (Vilnius), however, the number of such sites is unknown. The NKVD and the MGB-KGB guarded this secret indeed stringently. The Head of the Department A of the Lithuanian SSR MGB was in charge of the supervision of the burial sites of shot victims. After the establishment of the KGB, this duty was taken over by the Head of the Archival Accounting Department of the KGB.

GULAG CAMPS.

Thousands and tens of thousands prisoners from Lithuania used to be transported to the GULAG camps annually. Prisoners were usually deported in certain steps, i.e. from a prison to a prison, or directly to the destination camp. The major waves occurred in 1945: 2,603 prisoners were deported on 01-10 February, 2,503 - on 10-20 February, 2,552 - on 20-30 June, 2,528 - on 01-10 August, and 2,436 - on 20-30 November. During the period of 1945-1952, there were total of 54 waves deporting over 100 and more prisoners each time. The deported were accompanied by the jeers and robbing of the guardians and criminal offenders. “Actually, certain prisons are controlled not by their administration but by the recidivists the prison houses,”¹⁹ - admitted Colonel Ilyin, one of the superiors of the Prison Department of the USSR MVD. According to the testimonies of surviving political prisoners, the roughhouse of the criminal offenders was deliberately encouraged and directed against political prisoners. Former inmate A. Stabingis recalls: “Out of the prison yard, escorted by the barking dogs and surrounded by the guards with ready guns (...) we moved (...) towards the railway station. (...) There we were forced to kneel along the long train of the cattle-

¹⁷ In 1994, the total of 32 pits were discovered in the garage. They contained the remains of 593 shot persons. Rf.: *Urbanavičius V.* Tuskulėnai... P. 38-39, 46.

¹⁸ *Gaškaitė N.* Lietuvos okupacija: suėmimai ir kalėjimai (Occupation of Lithuania: Arrests and Prisons) // LIETUVOS AIDAS Daily. 17 June 1994.

trucks. Next, according to the list read aloud they crammed us into cars, forty to one car (...). As we got to know later, people were cruelly robbed in other cars, since there were 3 or 4 Russian bandits who took away the property and food of the Lithuanians. They would give the things to the guards through the window. The latter would exchange the things into vodka with the locals and would share vodka with the criminal offenders (...)"²⁰. According to another former prisoner A. Statkevičius, "every day guards would enter the car and beat the prisoners with wooden clubs. Criminal offenders used to rob people in the car: they would undress the prisoners, take away their clothes and food served"²¹. No NKVD (MVD) documents would record such transportation procedure. Well-prepared instructions concealed the crimes of the NKVD officers and their "social comrades" – criminal offenders.

Detained and arrested people, deported from Lithuania in 1945, were directed to two types of camps, namely, the NKVD special screening and infiltration camps of the USSR, and the GULAG camps. The first housed persons detained during military penal operations, raids and according to the lists. No legal proceedings were commenced against them. They were used for free-of-charge labour in special NKVD building sites and mines. If they survived, they would be released after one to three years later. 6,487 people were deported to these camps from Lithuania in 1945. Most often, people were transported to Jelgava (Latvia) screening and infiltration camp (hereinafter – SIC) No. 266, Medvezhya Goros (Karilia) screening and infiltration camp No. 0313, Brest (Belarus) SIC No. 284²², Archangelsk and Kalinin (now Tverj) regions, etc. Persons against whom legal proceedings were not commenced either but they were already officially classified as arrested were also transported to the GULAG camps. These people included rural residents arrested during military penal operations because they were suspected to support resistance. They could not provide the NKVD officers with any information on the participants of resistance movement. These prisoners were deported for the "initiation of legal proceedings" to the GULAG camps in order to reduce the number of prisoners held in Lithuania (and also the possibilities of their escape) and to use their labour force. Sooner or later, these prisoners were interrogated by the "operational chekist departments", whereas the extraordinary council of either USSR MVD or the MGB would sentence them to 10 to 25 years of imprisonment.

The below table shows the numbers of people deported from Lithuanian prisons to the GULAG camps in 1944-1952.

¹⁹ Minutes of the Counsel held by the officers of the Lithuanian SSR MVD prisons on 05-07 September 1950 // Ibidem, file 105, page 75.

²⁰ *Stabingis A.* Tryliktas vagonas (The Thirteenth Car). P. 7, 11.

²¹ *Statkevičius A.* Okupantų ir kolaborantų valdomoje Lietuvoje (In the Lithuania Ruled by the Occupants and the Collaborators) // *Laisvės kovų archyvas* (Archive of Freedom Fights). 1992, No. 5. P. 106.

Number of prisoners deported to the GULAG camps:

Year	Prisoners deported
1944	1,338
1945	32,661
1946	16,182
1947	19,324
1948	20,837
1949	14,948
1950	12,948
1951	12,763
1952	12,332
Total:	142,579

The table has been drafted according to 1944-1952 Bulletins of prisoners housed in the prisons of the USSR MVD // RFVA, funds 9413, folder 1, file 58, pages 104-284; file 63, pages 3-284; file 71, pages 1-284; file 90, pages 1-185; file 100, pages 1-188; file 118, pages 1-327.

Part of these prisoners found themselves in the Lithuanian GULAG branches, that is, Vilnius Camp Division No. 1 (it was divided into camp points (*LP - lagernyj punkt (Rus.)*): Rasų Camp LP-1, women camp on the Danilevičiaus and Gudų streets LP-2, agricultural camp in Riešė "Liubov LP-3"), Pravieniškės Camp (Camp Division No. 2), Šilutė (Macikai) Camp (Camp Division No. 3 and Rusnė LP-5), Klaipėda and Akmenė Corrective Labour Centres (No.4 and 9), Vilnius Transit Prison (receiving site of prisoners to be transported to the camps) and Prison Hospital. The said camps and centres were established in Lithuania in 1944-1951.

Formally, these camps were developed for the criminal offenders but obviously they also housed people sentenced for “counter-revolutionary crimes”, whereas the others were convicted for the so-called domestic crimes, avoidance to pay state taxes or non-performance of grain tribute. Women – 2,026 females - constituted a large portion of prisoners (according to the data of 01 April 1952). Šilutė camp was exceptional. 1,000-3,000 prisoners were housed here in 1946-1952. This tiny territory of 160x180 m accommodated all attributes of a Soviet camp: barracks, sanitary unit, solitary confinement cell, etc. The small camp gradually grew into a huge homicidal division of the GULAG. Hundreds of people died here of starvation, diseases and hard labour behind the three-metre tall fence made of spiked wire (there was BRUNO spiral in-between the fences).

²² Grunskis E. Lietuvos gyventojų deportacijos... (Deportations of Lithuanian Residents...), P. 9.

All inmates bar none would face the interrogators of both the NKVD (MVD) and the MGB. Great attention was dedicated to the interrogation of the arrested in the Soviet system of terror execution. Tortures were the main method in the wide array of interrogation approaches. Soviet security officers employed tortures for not only obtaining required information for the execution of purposeful violence but also morally breaking the interrogated persons.

The system of the interior and state security bodies has served as a reliable tools of Communist terror execution throughout the entire Soviet period. Each officer of both the NKVD and the MGB-KGB had signed a respective undertaking to retain a secret: “I, the undersigned, hereby undertake to keep all information and data about the operation of the NKVD and its bodies in the strictest secret both performing my duties and after my dismissal from service. I hereby undertake to never disclose or tell this information by any means even to my closest family and friends (...)”²³.

CONCLUSIONS:

1. ***Period of Terror.*** The paper covers the third period of unlawful arrests in Lithuania, which started at the beginning of the re-occupation on 13 July 1944 (when the Red Army entered the territory of Lithuania followed by the operational groups, formed by the repressive structures, and the units of internal army, front rear defence and border defence), and lasted until 1953 inclusive.
2. ***Setting of Repression Criteria.*** New repression execution priorities were formed and amended in accordance with the ongoing war and internal politics. During the first period, i.e. July 1944 – October 1945, the arrests were directed against people (mostly, Lithuanians, also Russians and Belarussians) accused of collaboration with the Germans, involvement in the resistance aiming at the restoration of the pre-war states (Lithuanians and Polish). During the second period, i.e. October 1945 – April 1948, the arrests mainly targeted the participants of the Lithuanian resistance and politically incorrect persons (of former pre-war political or cultural organisations). During the third period, i.e. May 1948 – May 1953, the arrests for the most part were aimed at the participants of the Lithuanian resistance, as well as persons of certain social background and former status, and formerly engaged in certain professional or political activities. For the duration of this period, in terms of the scope, the arrests were exceeded by the deportations. In 1944-1953, 186,000 persons were arrested and imprisoned. More than half of these people were political prisoners convicted pursuant to Article 58. The political prisoners

²³ Undertaking of an NKVD officer, dated 04 August 1944 // Rf.: Archives of the Lithuanian Genocide and Resistance Research Centre.

were imprisoned breaching even the regulations of the Soviet Criminal Procedure Code as they were put in prison without placing any charges, renewing the arrest or interrogation terms.

3. ***The Role of Soviet Institutions in the Terror Organisation.*** Brand new structures, which had the resemblance to the pre-war structures more in outer constitution, were set up for the execution of Soviet terror policy. In 1944-1953, the Services of the Interior and Security of the Soviet Union formed a solid system of terror execution. They followed Extraordinary Laws that had been effective during war. All chain links of terror execution, including special courts and extrajudicial structures (extraordinary councils), were restored.
4. ***Other Forms of Violence (Tortures).*** Political prisoners usually suffered the effect of “necessary interrogation actions”. Tortures used to be sanctioned by the top officers of the NKVD, the MVD, and the MGB. Testimonies obtained or confirmed by torturing would become the principal incriminatory evidence.
5. ***Property Appropriation of the Arrested.*** As a rule, personal property of the arrested was confiscated. However, this method was mainly directed against the families of the political prisoners whose movable and immovable property (houses, land, livestock, etc.) was also appropriated. This method had esp. wide application during the first period at the time of the Second World War.
6. ***Sentences and their Execution.*** During the period of 1944-1952, 142,579 people were taken to the Soviet GULAG camps. The interrogated people constituted the majority of the deported people only in 1944-1945. Later, people were deported after the adoption of the sentence. The sentences were usually passed by either the war tribunals of the internal army or the extraordinary council. Pursuant to the Decree of 21 February 1948 of the Supreme Council of the USSR, after serving the entire term the political prisoners had to settle in exile under the supervision of the MGB in certain Siberian and Northern territories.
7. ***Constitution of Prisoners.*** There were people of all national groups among the political prisoners imprisoned in Lithuania in 1944-1953, however, the Lithuanians (about 94%) prevailed (while the Polish constituted 5%, and the Jewish – 0.5% of the total). There were people from all social and professional levels among the arrested and imprisoned people. The farmers, public servants (about 10%) and workers constituted the majority of the persons arrested and imprisoned in Lithuania.
8. ***Qualitative Changes in the Lithuanian Society.*** Unlawful arrests and deportations to camps that took place in 1944-1953 further aggravated the losses suffered by the Lithuanian society during the period of 1940-1944, that is:

- a) accomplished the annihilation of trained professional officers (politicians, teachers, military officers, policemen, etc.) in Lithuania, while the surviving ones were ousted to the periphery of social and public life;
- b) annihilated the majority of participants of armed and non-armed resistance and provided the conditions for the implementation and enhancement of Soviet farming and political reforms and campaigns;
- c) created the atmosphere of suspicion and fear in the society that did not fade away even after the mass terror period was ended.