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### Cadres Issue in the Post-war Baltic Republics: Characteristics and Solution

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**Abstract:** The article analyzes the main qualitative characteristics and features of the leadership and specialists' formation of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia in the period of "late Stalinism." The main sources for the article were the archival documents of the thematic cases of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of the Bolsheviks and the materials of the "Survey of executives and specialists as of November 1, 1947" - a unique closed census, the results of which were reported only to the top Soviet leadership. The article analyzes the total number of employees in specific industries, the proportion of the workers of the "indigenous" nationality and the number of managers who came to work to the republics after the end of the war. The latter data are of particular importance, since they made it possible to calculate the proportion of workers in certain industries who lived in the republics during the occupation. Special attention is paid to the management system and political campaigns that exerted direct influence on cadres policy. The analysis carried out by the authors showed that the proportion of leaders and specialists of "indigenous nationalities" did not exceed 85 %, and most often was 50-60 %. At the same time, at the level of uyezds and volosts, the proportion of "indigenous" nationalities increased to 95 %, i.e. at the grassroots level, most of the leaders and professionals were local residents, usually non-members, who had spent the war years under the occupation. Probably, this circumstance caused concern of the central authorities and led to a number of political campaigns in the late 1940s - early 1950s. Only after J.V. Stalin's death did the reform of cadres policy begin; L.P. Beria and N.S. Khrushchev can be considered its authors.

**Keywords:** nomenklatura, Baltic countries, late Stalinism, political repressions, party apparatus **For citation:** Boldovskiy, K.A., and Pivovarov, N.Yu. "Cadres Issue in the Post-war Baltic Republics: Characteristics and Solution." *RUDN Journal of Russian History* 21, no. 2 (May 2022): 190–203. https://doi.org/10.22363/2312-8674-2022-21-2-190-203

## Кадровый вопрос в послевоенных прибалтийских республиках: характеристика и решение

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**Аннотация:** Проанализированы основные качественные характеристики и особенности формирования руководящего состава и специалистов Латвии, Литвы и Эстонии в период «позднего сталинизма». Основными источниками для подготовки статьи стали архивные документы, отложившиеся в тематических делах Политбюро ЦК ВКП(б), и материалы «Единовременного учета руководящих ра-

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ботников и специалистов на 1 ноября 1947 года» — уникальной закрытой переписи, обнаруженной в Центральном государственном архиве историко-политических документов Санкт-Петербурга. В статье были проанализированы общая численность работников в конкретных отраслях, доля, которую составляли работники «коренной» национальности и количество руководителей, приехавших на работу в республики после окончания войны. Последние данные особенно важны, так как позволяют определить долю работников тех или иных отраслей, проживавших в республиках во время оккупации. Особое внимание уделено системе управления и политическим кампаниям, которые оказывали непосредственное влияние на кадровую политику. Анализ, проведенный авторами, показал, что доля руководителей и специалистов «коренных национальностей» не превышала 85 %, а чаще всего находилась в диапазоне 50–60 %. При этом на уровне уездов и волостей доля «коренных» национальностей возрастала до 95 %, то есть на низовом — большинство руководителей и специалистов состояло из местных жителей, как правило беспартийных, проживавших в годы войны на оккупированных территориях. Вероятно, это обстоятельство вызывало беспокойство центральных властей и привело к ряду политических кампаний конца 1940-х — начала 1950-х гг. Только после смерти И.В. Сталина началось реформирование кадровой политики, авторами которой можно считать Л.П. Берия и Н.С. Хрущева.

**Ключевые слова:** номенклатура, страны Балтии, политические репрессии, партийный аппарат, поздний сталинизм

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### Introduction

One of the most important tasks that the Soviet leadership had to solve after the end of the Great Patriotic War was the problem of organizing the management system in the regions liberated from occupation. The most complicated situation was in those territories that were included in the USSR shortly before the start of the war: Lithuania, Latvia, Moldavia and Estonia, as well as in the western regions of Belorussia and Ukraine.

At the same time, it is worth noting that the main body of historiography devoted to Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia in the period of late Stalinism, as a rule, was associated with two subjects – armed resistance and mass repressions. Exceptions in this regard are the publications of historians O. Mertelsmann, D. Feest, E.Yu. Zubkova, M.V. Khodjakov, devoted mainly to the socio-economic aspects of the development of the three Baltic republics. The problems of formation and distribution of leading cadres as the basis of Sovietization in the republics were considered in some works by E.Yu. Zubkova, Estonian historians – T. Tannberg and H. Tammela, as well as in a special issue of the journal "Ajalooline Ajakiri" (under the general editorship of T. Tannberg). However, in those

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> O. Mertelsmann, *Der stalinistische Umbau in Estland. Von der Markt- zur Kommandowirtschaft* (Hamburg: Kovač, 2006); O. Mertelsmann, and A. Rahi-Tamm, "Cleansing and compromise. The Estonian SSR in 1944–1945," *Cahiers du Monde Russe* 49, no. 2–3 (2008): 319–340; O. Mertelsmann, Die Sowjetisierung Estlands und seiner Gesellschaft (Hamburg: Kovač, 2012); D. Feest, *Zwangskollcktivierung im Baltikum* (Koln und Wien: Böhlau, 2007); E.Yu. Zubkova, *Pribaltika i Kreml'. 1940–1953* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2008); E.Yu. Zubkova, "Tsentr i baltiiskie Respubliki: 'perezagruzka' vzaimootnoshenii v 1950-e gg.," *Ural'skij Istoricheskij Vestnik*, no. 2 (2019): 112–119; M.V. Khodjakov, "Materials of Estonia State Archive as a source for the study of foreign prisoners of World War II in the camps of the NKVD-MVD ESSR history. 1944–1949." *Herald of an Archivist*, no. 2 (2013): 121–132; M.V. Khodjakov, "Partiino-sovetskoe rukovodstvo Estonskoi SSR i bor'ba za trudovye resursy lagerei NKVD dlia inostrannykh voennoplennykh v 1944–1946 gg.," *Trudy istoricheskogo fakul'teta Sankt-Peterburgskogo universiteta*, no. 21 (2015): 272–282.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> E.Yu. Zubkova, "Fenomen 'mestnogo natsionalizma': 'Estonskoe delo' 1949–1952 godov v kontekste sovetizatsii Baltii," *Otechestvennaya istoriya*, no. 3 (2001): 89–102; H. Tammela, *Eesti NSV nomenklatuur* (1944–1953). Bakalaureusetöö. Juhendaja (Tartu: Ülikool, 2005); T. Tannberg, *Politika Moskvy v respublikakh Baltii v poslevoennye gody* (1944–1956). *Issledovan ya i dokumenty* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2010).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> M. Hämäläinen, "Eestimaa Kommunistliku Partei Keskkomitee nomen klatuur 1945–1990: areng ja statistika," *Ajalooline Ajakiri*, no. 4 (2015): 357–386; O. Liivik, "Nomenklatuurisüsteemi funktsioneerimisest aastatel 1944–1953 Eesti NSV valitsusliikmete näite," *Ajalooline Ajakiri*, no. 4 (2015): 387–406.

works, historians paid attention to the changes in the composition of the top leading cadres, whereas the issues of the functioning of the middle and lower management were not considered.

The article sets the task of a comprehensive study of the leadership of the Baltic republics in the first post-war years, while paying special attention to the problems of the ratio of "local" (Latvian, Lithuanian and Estonian) and "visitant" (mainly Russian-speaking) cadres.

The main sources for the article were the materials of the Politburo of the Central Committee on Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia, from the funds of the Russian State Archive of Contemporary History (hereinafter – RGANI). The main numerical data were obtained as a result of the analysis of the materials of the "Survey of executives and specialists as of November 1, 1947," stored in the Central State Archive of Historical and Political Documents of St. Petersburg (hereinafter – TsGAIPD SPb)

# Creation of the Bureau of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks for the Baltic Republics

From the end of 1944 to March 1947, the administration of the republics was exercised by the Bureau of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks. There can be distinguished several periods in the administrative-territorial management of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia in the first post-war years. The administrative division from 1944 to 1949–50 remained traditional and was represented by uyezds and volosts (in Lithuania, apylinkė also functioned as one of the lowest administrative units). At the end of 1949, there began the process of formation of districts. In 1950–52 there was the second stage of administrative-territorial changes associated with the formation of regions in the republics. In the spring of 1953, the final stage began, associated with the elimination of the regional division.

The bureaus of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks for the republics appeared almost immediately after the liberation of the territories from occupation. In accordance with the resolution of the Politburo of November 11, 1944, there were formed the Bureaus of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks for Lithuania and Estonia, on November 29 of that year — the Bureau of the Central Committee for Latvia. In accordance with the preamble of the text of the resolutions, all three Bureaus were created in order to assist the local Central Committees of the Communist Party in strengthening the leadership of the party, Soviet and economic organizations. At the same time, the functions of the Bureaus of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks for Lithuania and Estonia were laid out in much more detail than for Latvia. This was probably due to the fact that one person was appointed chairman of the Bureaus for Estonia and Latvia — N.N. Shatalin, the former First Deputy Head of the Cadres Department of the Central Committee that already knew his powers.

The functions of the republican Bureaus were reduced to four main tasks: a) strengthening the leading cadres of the apparatuses of central and local, both party and state bodies; b) struggle "against bourgeois nationalists and other anti-Soviet elements"; c) implementation of measures to restore the economies of the republics; and d) organization of ideological work among the population and the "Bolshevik education of party and Soviet cadres." The Bureaus were directly subordinate to the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks and were to regularly report to the party leadership.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Russian State Archive of Contemporary History (hereafter – RGANI), f. 3, op. 61, d. 205, l. 62; Ibid., d. 905, l. 49.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Ibid., d. 193, l. 55.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Ibid., d. 205, 1. 62; Ibid., d. 905, 1. 49.

The composition of all three Bureaus was quite standard – the direct leaders (chairmen and their deputies) were people sent from Moscow, whereas the members were "local" cadres: commissioners of NKVD and NKGB of the USSR for the republics, first secretaries of the Communist parties and chairmen of the Council of People's Commissars. Thus, the Bureau for Latvia, in addition to N.N. Shatalin and his deputy F.M. Butov, included the following members: A.N. Babkin (commissioner of NKVD and NKGB of the USSR for Latvia), Ya.E. Kalnberzin (First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Bolsheviks of Latvia) and V.T. Latsis (Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of Latvia). In May 1946, the Commander of the Baltic Military District I.Kh. Bagramyan was approved as the Bureau member. The Bureau of the Central Committee for Lithuania, in addition to M.A. Suslov<sup>7</sup> and his deputy F.G. Kovalev, included I.M. Tkachenko (commissioner of NKVD and NKGB of the USSR for Lithuania), A.Yu. Snechkus (First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Bolsheviks of Lithuania) and M.A. Gedvilas (Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of Lithuania). The Bureau of the Central Committee for Estonia, in addition to N.N. Shatalin and his deputy G.V. Perov, included N.S. Sazykin (commissioner of NKVD and NKGB of the USSR for Estonia), N.G. Karotamma (First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Bolsheviks of Estonia) and A.T. Weimer (Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of Estonia).

Relationships between the chairmen of the Bureaus and local leaders were complicated. Thus, in his report for the first half of the year of work in Lithuania, M.A. Suslov stated that at first his reception by the leadership of the Central Committee and the Council of People's Commissars of the republic was rather cool. Already at the first meeting, Snechkus, the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Bolsheviks of Lithuania, asked Suslov a question: "Does your arrival mean that now Russian comrades will play the leading role?" N.N. Shatalin also faced similar sentiments on the part of the local leaders. In the report for the first year of the work of the Bureau, which Shatalin presented to J.V. Stalin, it was indicated that Ya.E. Kalnberzin and V.T. Latsis feared "the possibility of substituting the local governing bodies, and, consequently, reducing their authority."

All three Bureaus focused on "cleansing" the republics from "hostile elements," defeating the "bourgeois-nationalist underground" and "bourgeois-nationalist gangs"; to this end, from the end of 1944, the NKVD, NKGB, SMERSH, party and Komsomol bodies were used. As a result, by April 1945, in Latvia alone almost 56 armed gangs had been liquidated, almost 8 thousand people had been detained and killed, several underground printing houses had been liquidated. In Estonia, by April 1945, about 9 thousand people had been arrested and killed.<sup>10</sup>

Along with the special operations in the republics, there was an active propaganda work among the population. Taking into account the fact that before the war Soviet rule had not existed in the Baltic States for too long, and before the integration of these territories into the USSR and during the German occupation, there had been carried out anti-Soviet, nationalist agitation there, it took a lot of effort to cover the widest possible range of the population. To do this, at the suggestion of the leadership of the Bureaus and the local Central Committees of the Communist Parties, there were held volost, uyezd, republican meetings and congresses of peasants, youth, etc., at which the policy of the Communist Party of Bolsheviks and the Soviet government to restore the economy of the re-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> More about the role of M.A. Suslova see: D. O'Sullivan, "Reconstruction and Repression – the role of M. Suslov in Lithuania, 1944–1946," *Forum für osteuropäische Ideen und Zeitgeschichte*, no. (2000): 195–208.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> RGANI, f. 3, op. 61, d. 213, l. 53.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Ibid., d. 194, l. 32–33.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., d. 907, 1. 26.

publics was explained, speeches were made on the issues of military-political and international position of the USSR, the atrocities of the German fascists and their Latvian (Lithuanian, Estonian) accomplices, etc.

Along with ideological work, there was actively going on the process of restoring agriculture and industry of the republics. Under these conditions, the leaders of the Bureaus focused on solving the cadres' issue, which was a key one in the plans for the Sovietization of the Baltic republics. However, the issue of appointing people to responsible offices was hard to solve. In mid-May 1945 Shatalin complained that after seven months of work, the central apparatus of the Estonian Communist Party had not been fully staffed. The matter concerned about 78 responsible positions. By the beginning of 1946, the local administration apparatus had been more than half staffed. At the same time in Latvia, according to Shatalin, the issue of the middle (uyezd) and lower (volost) levels of government was also acute.<sup>11</sup>

The problem largely was that in these republics there were actually no pro-Soviet cadres, and various positions on the ground were occupied by people who had no experience in managerial work (former partisans, war invalids, and sometimes workers and peasants who had suffered from the fascists and received their positions as a kind of compensation). For the Soviet leadership, the priority was to appoint their people to administrative posts as soon as possible. For example, in Courland, which was liberated by the Red Army after the end of the war with Germany, the secretaries of local volost party committees were literally air dropped and brought on military equipment.

As a result of such emergency appointments, there were numerous errors that were found out during inspections and purges. For example, in May 1945 in Estonia, during the first large-scale inspection of cadres, one people's commissar, six deputy people's commissars and 15 heads of departments in the government were relieved of their posts. Up to 1946 in uyezds and volosts, there were constant removals from office, since during the inspections it was found out that party and state posts were occupied by figures of bourgeois-nationalist organizations and accomplices of the German invaders. According to Shatalin, the greatest "number of dubious and even hostile people" was among the Estonian chairmen of the volost executive committees – the main opponents of collectivization, the defenders of "kulaks and German accomplices." As a result of forced rotation of office, in 1945, out of 238 chairmen of the volost executive committees, 176 people were removed from post. Only those chairmen retained their positions that evacuated after the occupation of the republic or spent the war in German captivity. In addition, when appointing to positions it was nationality that was a priority. As a rule, they tried to appoint representatives of "local" cadres to all major party and government positions. Moreover, most often candidates didn't have high professional qualities.

It stands to reason that there were not enough "local" cadres for all positions. Therefore, throughout the USSR, there was carried out the selection of communists among Latvians, Lithuanians and Estonians to be sent to the Baltic republics; citizens of other nationalities, mainly Russians, were also sent there. In May 1953 E.I. Gromov, the head of the Department of Party, Trade Union and Komsomol Bodies of the CPSU Central Committee, noted that as a result, after the German occupation, in Lithuania, it was Russians that almost everywhere held the posts of second secretaries of volost and uyezd committees, and then of district party committees, deputy chairmen of the executive committees of volost, uyezd and district councils of working people's deputies. The same situation was in the other republics. This led to friction on ethnic grounds, especially since the "visitants" underestimated the local national traditions and mentality. M.A. Suslov wrote back in 1945:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> RGANI, f. 3, op. 61, d. 193, l. 29.

Some of the Russian comrades who arrived in Lithuania, in party and state work, showed to a certain extent a reaction to the errors of the nationalist character made by local party organizations, as well as underestimation, and sometimes even ignoring of national peculiarities. Thus, for example, comrade Shilin, the secretary of the Klaipeda City Party Committee, relieved of his duties, stated at the plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Bolsheviks of Lithuania: "We don't need to take into account the national peculiarities; our task is to pursue a revolutionary line." 12

However, in the first post-war years, they tried to get rid of such people as Shilin.<sup>13</sup> But this did not affect the numerical superiority of the Russians in the first post-war years. By July 1945, the party organization of Lithuania consisted of 3,157 members and candidate members of the party, of which almost 2,000 were Russians, and only 1,200 were Lithuanians.<sup>14</sup> Lithuanian researcher V. Tininis cited other data: by 1947, there were 18 % of Lithuanians among the party members, and by 1953 this number had increased to 38 %.<sup>15</sup> In other words, the number of Lithuanians among the rank and file party members was less.

# Composition of the leaders and specialists of the Baltic republics according to the records as of November 1, 1947

By 1947, the political situation in the Baltic republics had generally stabilized, which led to the abolition of the special Bureaus of the Central Committee. From that time, as in other Soviet republics, direct control was carried out by the local Central Committees of the Communist Parties, but under the control of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks.

The composition of the leading cadres also stabilized, as evidenced by the results of a special census – "Survey of executives and specialists as of November 1, 1947," which was carried out on the basis of the Decree of the Council of Ministers of the USSR No. 2974 of August 22, 1947 "On conducting the survey of executives and specialists as of November 1, 1947." The document recommended:

There should be recorded all persons holding managerial positions and positions of specialists, as well as persons who graduated from higher and secondary specialized educational institutions, regardless of their position. <sup>16</sup>

The survey was to be carried out in all state, cooperative and public enterprises, institutions and organizations. The Ministries and central institutions of the USSR provided information to the central statistical office of the State Planning Committee, other organizations – to the regional commissioners of the State Planning Committee. It should be noted that the results of the survey were confidential; the generalizing data for all regions were brought to the attention of exclusively the highest authorities and administration – the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks and the Council of Ministers of the USSR. The local authorities could only get to know the generalized data of their region, territory or republic. The statistical forms developed for conducting the survey contained a variety of information on the quantitative, gender and age composition of institutions and organizations, the educational level and party affiliation of employees.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> E.Yu. Zubkova, Pribaltika i Kreml', 157.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> I.O. Demet'ev, "Politika pamiati v Klaypede na rubezhe 1940–1950-kh godov (po materialam gazety 'Sovetskaya Klaypeda')," *Vestnik Baltiyskogo federal'nogo universiteta im. I. Kanta. Ser.: Gumanitarnye i obshchestvennye nauki*, no. 4 (2016): 101.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> RGANI, f. 3, op. 61, d. 193, l. 58.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> V. Tininis, *Political Bodies of the Soviet Union in Lithuania and their Criminal Activities: the second soviet occupation (1944–1953)* (Vilnus: Margi Rastai, 2008), 96.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Central State Archive of Historical and Political Documents of St. Petersburg (hereafter – TsGAIPD), f. 25, op.7, d. 849, l. 2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Learn more about organizing and conducting accounting in: K.A. Boldovskiy, "Sotsial'nyi sostav rukovoditelei poslevoennogo Leningrada po dannym ucheta 1947 g." *Modern History of Russia*, no. 3 (2012): 197–213.

In the course of the survey, there were also collected data on the employees of the party apparatus, including information on the proportion of specialists of "indigenous" nationalities in it that had higher and secondary specialized education. In the Latvian SSR, this share was 48 % in the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Latvia, and 39 % in the uyezd and city party committees. In the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Bolsheviks of Lithuania – 18 %, in the uyezd, city and district (within cities) committees – 11 %. In the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Bolsheviks of Estonia – 47 %, in the uyezd, city and district (within the city) committees – 58 %. It is reasonable to assume that these ratios can be extended with reasonable certainty to the general national composition of the employees in the party apparatus of the Baltic republics. <sup>18</sup>

 ${\it Table~1}$  Information on the composition of the employees of the Latvian SSR by industry

	pers.	of Latvian employees, %	arrived after the liberation of the republic from occupation, %		
Bodies of authority and ma	anagement				
Central office of ministries and departments of the republic	155	66	95		
Heads of local bodies of republican ministries	823	61	89		
Chairmen of village and volost councils	1860	80	38		
Industrial trusts, plants and industrial enterprises					
Heads of trusts, directors of enterprises, their deputies, chief engineers	1851	56	78		
Production engineers, technicians and foremen	3037	55	51		
Construction					
Site managers and heads of construction companies	110	23	85		
Chief engineers	70	25	23		
Foremen, foremasters, taskmasters	616	32	79		
Agriculture					
Directors of state farms, senior agronomists	223	61	82		
Trade organizations					
Heads of trade organizations, their deputies, directors of shops, canteens, trading depots and warehouses	2676	49	71		
Education					
Directors, rectors of universities and technical schools and their deputies	373	64	81		
Professors, associate professors, lecturers and assistants	1936	74	36		
Teachers of secondary, junior high and elementary schools	9173	85	14		
Healthcare					
Heads, their deputies, head doctors	338	45	72		
Doctors	1388	42	96		
Scientific institutio	ons				
Heads and their deputies, academic secretaries	223	45	25		
Researchers (senior researchers, junior researchers, research workers)	410	76	32		
Publishing houses, newspaper editorial offices, entertainment enterprises and art institutions					
Heads and their deputies	137	58	96		

Compiled according to: RGANI, f. 5, op. 57, d. 370, l. 3–119.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> RGANI, f. 5, op. 57, d. 198, l. 24–26 v., 32–35 v.; Ibid., d. 200, l. 95–99 v.

Of particular interest are the data on the number of employees in specific industries, the proportion of representatives of the "indigenous" nationality, the number of managers who came to work after the end of the war. The latter data make it possible to determine the proportion of industry workers that lived in a given territory during the occupation.

The summarized data for the Latvian SSR as of November 1, 1947 are presented in Table 1.

The survey data for the Lithuanian SSR as of November 1, 1947 are presented in Table 2.

The survey data for the Estonian SSR as of November 1, 1947 are presented in Table 3.

 ${\it Table~2}$  Information on the composition of the employees of the Lithuanian SSR by industry

	Total number of employees, pers.	Number of Lithuanian employees, %	Number of employees that arrived after the liberation of the republic from occupation, %		
Bodies of authority and management					
Central office of ministries and departments of the republic	162	52	91		
Heads of local bodies of republican ministries and departments	1053	71	47		
Chairmen and deputy chairmen of city executive committees	27	59	92		
Chairmen of uyezd executive committees	44	93	54		
Industrial trusts, plants and in	dustrial enterpr	ises			
Heads of trusts, directors of enterprises, their deputies, chief engineers	1540	52	57		
Production engineers, technicians and foremen	1992	64	37		
Construction					
Site managers and heads of construction companies	86	50	59		
Chief engineers	21	38	67		
Foremen, foremasters, taskmasters	292	23	35		
Agriculture	2				
Directors of state farms, senior agronomists, senior zootechnicians	312	54	51		
Trade organizations					
Heads of trade organizations, their deputies, directors of shops, canteens, trading depots and warehouses	1545	50	42		
Education					
Directors, rectors of universities and technical schools and their deputies	273	63	48		
Professors, associate professors, lecturers and assistants	1626	81	18		
Teachers of secondary, junior high and elementary schools	8029	90	13		
Healthcare					
Heads, their deputies, head doctors	466	49	33		
Doctors	981	54	25		
Scientific institutions					
Heads and their deputies, academic secretaries	45	62	51		
Researchers (senior researchers, junior researchers, research workers)	88	70	21		
Entertainment enterprises and art institutions					
Heads and their deputies	88	57	71		

Compiled according to: RGANI, f. 5, op. 57, d. 371, l. 2-61 v.

Information on the composition of the employees of the Estonian SSR by industry

Table 3

Industries	Total number of employees, pers.	Number of Estonian employees, %	Number of employees that arrived after the liberation of the republic from occupation, %		
Bodies of authority and management					
Central office of ministries and departments of the republic	235	71	95		
Heads of local bodies of republican ministries	392	82	76		
Chairmen of village and settlement councils, chairmen of volost executive committees	873	95	34		
Industrial trusts, plants and industrial enterprises					
Heads of trusts, directors of enterprises, their deputies, chief engineers	1851	56	79		
Production engineers, technicians and foremen	1389	33	80		
Construction					
Site managers and heads of construction companies	68	51	75		
Chief engineers	40	57	57		
Foremen, foremasters, taskmasters	413	36	76		
Agriculture					
Directors of state farms, senior agronomists, senior zootechnicians	290	83	37		
Trade organizations					
Heads of trade organizations, their deputies, directors of shops, canteens, trading depots and warehouses	1379	68	50		
Education					
Directors, rectors of universities and technical schools and their deputies	280	83	53		
Professors, associate professors, lecturers and assistants	1228	93	20		
Teachers of secondary, junior high and elementary schools	5010	85	18		
Healthcare					

335

88

208

76

104

61

89

45 43

53

27

34

Compiled according to: RGANI, f. 5, op. 57, d. 357, l. 6-56 v.

Heads, their deputies, head doctors

Heads and their deputies, academic secretaries

Editors, artistic directors, directors and conductors

Researchers (senior researchers, junior researchers, research

Doctors

workers)

Heads and their deputies

The analysis of the data presented in the tables allows us to draw some conclusions about the structure of the composition of leading cadres and specialists in the Baltic republics during the period of "late Stalinism." Thus, in the republican public authorities and administration, there is a trend towards an increase in the proportion of employees of "indigenous" nationalities and a decrease in the proportion of "returnees and visitants". Whereas in the central offices of the republican ministries there worked approximately 60–70 % of "indigenous" employees, and the proportion of "visitants" was more than 90 %, then at the level of uyezd and volosts the ratio changed almost in inversed manner: the proportion of "indigenous" employees increased to 80–90 %, and the number of "visitants" fell to 30–50 %. Thus, most of the grassroots leaders of government agencies consisted of people that during the war years were in the occupied territory.

Scientific institutions

Publishing houses, newspaper editorial offices, entertainment enterprises and art institutions

The characteristics of heads and specialists in industry, construction, and agriculture depended significantly on the specific conditions of the republics. In those of them where the creation of new industrial facilities (for example, in the Estonian SSR) was just beginning, the proportion of visitants both among the heads and the grass-roots workers was considerably higher. At the same time, the percentage of heads of industrial enterprises and associations that were representatives of indigenous nationalities barely exceeded 50 % in all three republics.

Of interest is the analysis of the proportion of the party stratum among the above categories of employees. There is an obvious tendency for a sharp decrease in the level of party membership with a decrease in hierarchy. In the central offices of republican ministries and departments, the proportion of non-party people<sup>19</sup> was insignificant: 2 % in Latvia, 12 % in Lithuania, and 14 % in Estonia. Directly opposite was the proportion at the level of heads of rural, uyezd and volost structures. The proportion of non-party people among them was 81 %, 91 % and 78 % respectively. Almost the same pattern is observed among health care workers and scientists.

Among teachers, university lecturers and specialists of cultural institutions, the proportion of employees of "indigenous" nationalities was significant – 85–90 %, and the proportion of "visitants" in this area was relatively small – 13–18 %. Consequently, most of them (over 80 %) were people who spent the wartime in the occupied territory. The party members stratum was also extremely low in this category. Among the teachers of secondary, junior high and elementary schools, 94–97 % were non-party people. This situation was due to a clear shortage of professional party cadres, including those familiar with national peculiarities. This situation caused concern among the leaders of the republics, in many cases the authorities resorted to repressive measures. Thus, in 1949 in Estonia, first secretary of the Central Committee of the Republican Communist Party N.G. Karotamm removed from office almost one thousand teachers, recognizing them as "unreliable elements." <sup>21</sup>

### Cadres policy and political campaigns in the period of "late Stalinism"

Numerous political campaigns also had an impact on the cadres policy in the Baltic republics. Conducting special operations aimed at combating the "nationalist underground" or organizing expulsions became commonplace for the Baltic republics in the post-war period. In Latvia from 1944 to 1952 119 thousand people were arrested and/or deported, and 2 thousand 321 people were killed during special operations in the same period.<sup>22</sup> In Lithuania from 1944 to 1952 there were repressed, that is, "arrested, killed and deported outside the republic 270 thousand people – almost 10 % of the population of the republic."<sup>23</sup>

There were also political campaigns directed against the top leaders of the republics. In 1946, due to the materials received against K. Syare, the former First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Bolsheviks of Estonia, V.S. Abakumov proposed to initiate proceedings against Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic Kh.Kh. Kruss.<sup>24</sup> Kruss was accused of the fact that in 1919–1920 he advocated the secession of Estonia from Russia, and in 1940 he prepared a book on the history of the Estonian people written in an anti-Soviet manner.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Non-Party workers in the course of accounting included those who were not a member of the CPSU(b), a candidate member of the CPSU(b) or a Komsomol member.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> See: R. Laukajtite, "Sovetskie i natsional'nye tsennosti v poslevoennoi Litve: rychagi indoktrinatsii obshchestva, 1944–1953 gg.," in *Sovetskoe gosudarstvo i obshchestvo v period pozdnego stalinizma. 1945–1953 gg.* (Moskow: ROSSPEN Publ., 2015), 164–171.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> RGANI, f. 3, op. 61, d. 907, l. 60.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> E.Yu. Zubkova, *Pribaltika i Kreml'*, 321.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> L. Maksimenkov, "Priznaniia lubianskogo marshala. Neizvestnyy memorandum Lavrentiya Beriya o polozhenii v Litve v 1953 g." *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, August 5, 2005.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Compiled according to RGANI, f. 5, op. 57, d. 371, l. 2–61 v.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Ibid., f. 3, op. 61, d. 905, l. 96.

At that time J.V. Stalin did not sanction the start of the campaign, but already in 1950, a considerable purge was launched in Estonia, during which the cadres policy of the republic's authorities was sharply criticized by the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks. The resolution of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks of March 5, 1950 "On the work of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks of Estonia" stated that the leadership of the republic had shown "political indiscrimination, which resulted in numerous cases of bourgeois-nationalist elements' taking up responsible posts in the republic". This was followed by high-profile dismissals – of N.G. Karotamm from the post of the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Bolsheviks of Estonia and Kh.Kh. Kruss (this time the minister was accused of being associated with the chairman of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party in Estonia, and his son allegedly served in the German army). In addition, V.S. Abakumov prepared for J.V. Stalin a number of notes with proposals to arrest not only the above-mentioned persons, but also Minister of Trade A. Hansen, Deputy Minister of Food Industry L.D. Lyuyus, Minister of State Security B.G. Kumm, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the ESSR A.T. Veimere, Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Bolsheviks of Estonia V.I. Kuusike et al. The accusations were pretty standard. For example, Karotamm was accused of opposing the eviction of kulaks and taking politically compromised workers under protection.

The situation in the other republics cannot be considered calmer. As early as 1947, in Lithuania, in the course of spy mania launched in the fight against cosmopolitanism, there was dismissed Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Lithuanian SSR P. Rotomskis. One of the accusations was that he had been taught English by the daughter of famous professor L.P. Karsavin. In early 1953, a real anti-Semitic campaign was launched in Lithuania, and it was the top leadership of the republic that was supposed to bear the brunt of the campaign. The reason for its launch was an anonymous letter, dated no earlier than February 21, 1953, about the "espionage activities of Jewish foreign agents" allegedly taking place in the republic. The letter is full of judophobic terminology. It stated that the wife of First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Lithuania A.Yu. Snechkus is a Jewess and that "it is through her that many of the dirtiest deeds are being done to use Jews in the republic," and the Supreme Council of the republic was declared "a haven for Jewish dealers." The anonymous writer of the letter stated:

Woe to an official, who will begin to dismiss Jews in his institution; if it is a minister or deputy, then with the direct participation of Snechkus and his entourage, sooner or later he will be removed.<sup>26</sup>

G.M. Malenkov did not neglect this anonymous letter. Inspector of the Central Committee Yu.V. Andropov (the future chairman of the KGB of the USSR) was sent to Lithuania. He fully confirmed the facts stated in the letter. On March 4, 1953, secretaries of the Central Committee of the CPSU N.M. Pegov and A.B. Aristov reported to Malenkov that in Lithuania the leading cadres were being selected incorrectly and that "persons of Jewish nationality" had a significant impact there; they "created an atmosphere of nepotism and mutual responsibility, which contributed to the violation of Soviet laws, state discipline, and the emergence of abuses". Pegov and Aristov recommended that during the next visit of Snechkus to Moscow, they should speak with him on this issue and draw his attention to a more "vigilant attitude towards the selection and placement of leading cadres in the republic." However, a few days later all the papers on this issue were sent by N.S. Khrushchev, in consultation with Malenkov, to the archive, and the anti-Semitic campaign ended before it really began.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> RGANI, f. 3, op. 61, d. 205, l. 81–82.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> Ibid., 1. 75.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> Ibid., 1. 77.

A new stage in the Kremlin's policy towards the Baltic countries after J.V. Stalin's death were the proposals presented in 1953 in the notes of members of the collective leadership and the apparatus of the Central Committee of the CPSU. It concerns the following documents: L.P. Beria's note "On the Situation in Lithuania" dated May 8; the note of the Head of the Department of Party, Trade Union and Komsomol Bodies of the Central Committee of the CPSU E.I. Gromov "On the Shortcomings in the Promotion, Education of Local Cadres and Mass-Political Work in the Lithuanian Party Organization" dated May 18; the note by N.S. Khrushchev "On the situation in the Latvian SSR" of June 8; and, finally, Gromov's note "On the situation in Estonia" of June 20.29 The general meaning of all the documents boiled down to the fact that there were no "local" national cadres in the leadership positions in all three republics, there was a dominance of Russians who did not know the peculiarities of the republics well. In addition, official office work in the party and state bodies was in Russian, which, as emphasized, led to a misunderstanding of Soviet policy by the population, gave rise to discontent and served as a basis for the activity of nationalist elements. However, it is worth mentioning that Beria's proposals were largely devoted to improving the operational work to combat the nationalist underground in Lithuania and only to a small extent concerned the need to change the forms and methods of work in the regional and district party and state authorities, whereas the proposals of the party apparatus touched upon the scale of the national problem in the republics in more detail. At the same time, the activities of special agencies were also criticized. Thus, in the note on Lithuania, Khrushchev considered that the fight against the nationalists was unsatisfactory not only due the predominance of Russians in the bodies of the MGB/MIA, but also due to the fact that these bodies used "indiscriminate punitive measures and repressions, often affecting innocent citizens." 30

The result of the proposals voiced in the documents was the resolutions of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the CPSU "Issues of the Lithuanian SSR" of May 26<sup>31</sup> and "Issues of the Latvian SSR" of June 12, 1953,<sup>32</sup> which contained proposals to eliminate shortcomings in the national policy in the Baltic republics. For example, in the resolution on Latvia, the main task was "training and wide promotion of Latvian cadres for leading party, Soviet and economic work." In addition, the resolution abolished the practice of nominating non-Latvian working people to the posts of second secretaries of district party committees and deputy chairmen of executive committees of deputies. The directors of state farms, machine and tractor stations and industrial enterprises were recommended to appoint only Latvians and dismiss from administrative positions all those who did not know the Latvian language. Finally, formal office work, as well as any meetings of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Latvia, city and district committees, executive committees of councils of people's deputies were to be held only in the Latvian language.<sup>33</sup>

After the arrest of L.P. Beria the cadres policy in the Baltic republics was once again changed.<sup>34</sup> The leaders of the USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs were the first to propose revising Beria's appointments in May-June 1953 in Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia. In a detailed note by S.N. Kruglov, I.A. Serov and K.F. Lunev dated August 22, 1953, it was reported that in violation of the party principle of recruitment "on political

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> See all notes for more details: E.Yu. Zubkova, *Pribaltika i Kreml'*, 326–333.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 329.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> The project was preliminary considered on May 20. The decision of the commission headed by G.M. Malenkov to prepare the final text of the resolution.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> The draft resolution of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the CPSU for Estonia was prepared, but not approved due to the arrest of Beria and the introduction of adjustments to the national policy.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> RGANI, f. 3, op. 10, d. 24, l. 1–2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> "V prokurature SSSR," *Pravda*, December, 17, 1953.

and business qualities, only employees of local nationality were appointed to senior positions in the bodies of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of these republics, without regard to their political personality and ability to perform work."<sup>35</sup> The leaders of the central Ministry of Internal Affairs proposed to remove all incompetent and politically immature leaders of the local Ministries of Internal Affairs. Similar processes to review the "Beria" appointments were carried out in other state and party bodies.

### **Conclusions**

In the first post-war years, the problems of cadres policy were among the most important for organizing an effective management system in the liberated regions of the Baltic republics. To ensure control by the union authorities, there were created the Bureaus of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks for the three Baltic republics as emergency bodies that existed from 1944 to 1947. The list of their main tasks, in addition to coordinating the fight against the "nationalist underground," included the organizing of a management system, and, consequently, the selection of cadres necessary for this. The results of the work in this direction can be seen in the statistical information obtained while conducting the "Survey of executives and specialists on November 1, 1947," which is a unique source for the state of the cadres policy of the USSR during the period of "late Stalinism." The survey shows that a significant part of the heads of government bodies, industrial enterprises and other organizations at the level of the republics were specialists who came from other regions of the USSR. The proportion of leaders and specialists of "indigenous nationalities" most often amounted to 50-60 %. At this hierarchical level, the proportion of "visitants" was also high, that is, those employees who returned from evacuation or arrived in the republics after demobilization. At the level of uyezds and volosts, the situation was just the opposite. Here there was a high percentage of workers of "indigenous" nationalities (80-95 %) and a significantly lower proportion of visitants. The number of party members greatly decreased in the bodies of a lower level. Thus, at the grassroots level, in almost all areas, with a few exceptions, the leaders and specialists were local residents, as a rule, non-party people who lived during the war years in the occupation. In organizations and institutions of education, science and culture, local natives made up the vast majority, while the party members stratum was insignificant (6–8 %).

This situation worried both the party leadership of the republics and the central authorities. It seems reasonable to assume that a number of political campaigns of the late 1940s – early 1950s were caused, among other things, by the dissatisfaction of the country's leaders with the state of affairs in the field of cadres policy, especially after the familiarization with the data of the "Survey."

In the short period from Stalin's death to Beria's arrest, there were made declarative attempts to reform the cadre's policy in the Baltic republics. Whereas in L.P. Beria's note, the need for changes in the cadre's policy towards a wider involvement of local people was motivated by the needs of the fight against the "nationalist underground," then in N.S. Khrushchev's note and the accompanying documents there were set political goals for reforming cadres practices in the republics in general. In the period of "late Stalinism," such cadres problems in the Baltic republics were the result of an imminent systemic crisis of governing structures, when rigidly centralized management could no longer cope with the growing number of political challenges and the complication of social relations.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> RGANI, f. 3, op. 58, d. 11, l. 54.

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