On Some Aspects of Soviet Kolkhoz Farmers’ Attitude toward the Stalin Regime

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On Some Aspects of Soviet Kolkhoz Farmers’ Attitude toward the Stalin Regime

HIDAI, Takeo

After the collectivization process in the late 1920s and early 1930s, the Soviet authorities introduced a new model charter for all kolkhozy from the year 1935. The process seemed to be successful, but in fact there were many violations of the charter by kolkhozniki (kolkhoz farmers). This paper discusses some aspects of kolkhoz farmers’ attitude toward the new charter, especially violations against it in the latter half of the 1930s, focusing on the Ural region.

Introduction

After the collectivization of the farmers under the Stalin regime, the relationship between the Soviet authorities and farmers changed. Kolkhoz farmers felt that they had been dispossessed of their lands by the state authorities through the process of collectivization.

Under these circumstances, the Stalin administration changed its policy towards the peasants. In February 1935, the Second Congress of Outstanding Kolkhozniki (kolkhozniki-udarniki) was held in Moscow. At the Congress, a new version of the Kolkhoz Model Charter was recognized. This new charter was to be adopted by every kolkhoz, by a full membership meeting, with only small adjustments for specific conditions in each kolkhoz. The same year, in July, a new law was passed, “On the issue of certification of indefinite (eternal) land-use of the agricultural cooperative association (artel’).” According to this new law, every artel’ (kolkhoz) had the right to receive “state certification as an agricultural artel’ with indefinite (eternal) land-use rights,” or “state certification.” This meant that the Stalin administration made concessions to the peasants: it recognized eternal tenure of land for the kolkhoz collectives and private use of specific plots by the members of the kolkhoz.

This meant that the state authorities approved private cultivation by the kolkhoz farmers.
As already discussed, in February 1935, the Second Congress of Outstanding Kolkhozniks was held, and at the Congress, a new revised version of Model Charter of Artel' was approved. In July of the same year, new legislation followed, “On the issue of certification of indefinite (eternal) land-use rights to the agricultural artel’.” After these acts announced from Moscow, each district (raion) administration made a concrete draft of the new charter for each kolkhoz, filled with specific figures to be met within the kolkhoz, and each kolkhoz adopted it after discussion in the full-member meetings. These adopted charters were registered by the Soviet state, and in exchange for state registration, the Soviet regime issued state certification for eternal land-use rights to the kolkhoz. Almost all the content of the drafts is the same as the Model Charter, except for a very few concrete figures to be met according to the specific conditions of each kolkhoz. Therefore, we can discuss the situation around the new Kolkhoz Charter using the material of the Model Charter.

1. On the usage of an employed external workforce in general

According to the provisions of the new charter, kolkhoz work in general, such as cultivation, should only be done by members of that kolkhoz, and using externally provided labor for these works was prohibited in principle. Article No.13 of the charter required that, in the kolkhoz, “employed laborers can be used for agricultural works only for their
expertise and education such as agricultural engineers, industrial engineers, assistant engineers, etc.,” and “temporary force laborers can be employed only when the required works cannot be accomplished within a given period by using the workforce of that kolkhoz, or for construction work.” The regulations of the new charter were very strict, but in fact there were many violations due largely to labor shortages, broadly in the late 1930s in Sverdlovsk State.

1.1 Trends in using an employed external work force

Table 1 indicates the trends in using an external workforce in Sverdlovsk State (this table was attached to the explanatory document on the review of the main discussion topics of the annual reports by kolkhozy in Sverdlovsk State of the year 1939). According to the table, the number of employed laborers who were engaged in cultivation amounted to 70.1% of the entire employed labor force (unit: person-day). This tells us that the number of laborers engaged in cultivation, the “core work” of the kolkhoz, was large.

In the next year, 1938, the proportion above decreased to 38.1%, and, in 1939, to 16.3%. This decrease is assessed in Table 2 and Table 3, as well as in the document below. “This decrease in using employed workforce in the kolkhozy of the state is insufficient. Employment of a workforce is in violation of the Charter of the Agricultural Artel’. In our state, there are many violations of this kind. A total of 13,329 kolkhozniki did not achieve the minimum work-days, 2,792 kolkhozniki did not work even one work-day, 89,951 kolkhozniki worked fewer than 100 work-days, and 1,616 kolkhozy were dependent on employment of labor force.”

This assessment indicates that in spite of the decreasing use of employed labor, dependence on employment of labor force in their “core” work, cultivation, was still widely seen, a basic violation of the charter. It is noteworthy that about 77% of all kolkhozy in the state, 1,616 kolkhozy, still employed a labor force, though the number of employed laborers decreased remarkably from 1937 to 1939.

### Table 1: Employment of Work Force in Kolkhoz of Sverdlovsk State

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1937 (person per day)</th>
<th>1937 (%)</th>
<th>1938 (person per day)</th>
<th>1938 (%)</th>
<th>1939 (person per day)</th>
<th>1939 (%)</th>
<th>1940 (person per day)</th>
<th>1940 (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Whole number of</td>
<td>1,488,954</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>824,417</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>503,835</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>479,598</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>employment of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>work force,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>including</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>temporary one</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultivation</td>
<td>1,043,794</td>
<td>70.1</td>
<td>614,384</td>
<td>38.1</td>
<td>82,267</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>128,582</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>148,270</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>169,411</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>146,497</td>
<td>29.1</td>
<td>152,421</td>
<td>17.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting firms</td>
<td>112,014</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>120,270</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>84,178</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>54,241</td>
<td>10.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other works</td>
<td>184,876</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>220,322</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>190,893</td>
<td>37.9</td>
<td>144,354</td>
<td>97.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 1937-1938 ЦДООСО Ф 4. Оп. 35. Д. 286. Л. 43-51. 66 (also in Колхозная жизнь на Урале 1935-1953, Москва, 2006, C.381.)
1940, ЦДООСО Ф. 4. Оп. 35. Д. 287. Л. 55-79. (also in Колхозная жизнь на Урале 1935-1953, Москва, 2006, C.320.)
Here, it can be said that there are in fact many kolkhozy after the year 1935 that deviated from “what kolkhozy should have been” from the viewpoint of the Stalin regime. There were many such kolkhozy especially in 1936 and 1937, according to the trend of usage of employed labor force and trend of the number of kolkhozniki who did not work even one work-day.

### 1.2 Incentives to use an employed external workforce

Let us consider the following quotation from the document above. “Kolkhozy spent a lot of money on payment for an employed workforce. A total of 5,101,628 rubles were spent for the purpose above from kolkhoz accounts (in Sverdlovsk State), but most of that money could be spent on payment for kolkhoz members.” Here, we see that a large amount of money was spent on the employment of workforce using the cash

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2</th>
<th>Trends of Work-Day Unit of Kolkhozniki in Sverdlovsk State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1937</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole number of Kolkhozniki who engaged in production work of Kolkhoz</td>
<td>271,975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overage male, workable</td>
<td>108,201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overage female, workable</td>
<td>126,478</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Underage members (age 12-16)</td>
<td>37,296</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Propotion of work-day unit of Kolkhozniki (including underage member) in the accounting years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>under 50 units of work-day</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-100 units of work-day</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101 – 200 units of work-day</td>
<td>23.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>201-300 units of work-day</td>
<td>21.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>301 – 400 units of work-day</td>
<td>13.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>over 401 units of work-day</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numbers of Kolkhozniki who didn't achieve even one unit of work-day</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overage male, workable</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overage female, workable</td>
<td>11,769</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Underage members</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numbers of over age Kolkhozniki who didn't achieve legal minimum unit of work-day (under 60 units of work-day)</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3</th>
<th>Numbers of Kolkhozniki who didn't achieve even one unit of work-day in Sverdlovsk State (excluding underage member)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1936</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>9,290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>10,002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>19,292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage in whole number of Kolkhozniki</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ЦДООСО. Ф. 4. Оп. 35. Д. 287. Л. 55-79. (also in Колхозная жизнь на Урале 1935-1953 Москва, 2006. С.320.)
income of the kolkhoz, with concrete figures. It should also be added that kolkhoz members chose to spend money for employment of an external workforce in exchange for decreased cash stock. The important point to note is this: What was the incentive for kolkhoz peasants to avoid cultivation work on their own kolkhoz at the expense of the cash money of the kolkhoz? The following sentence of the document offers some clue. “With suitable organization and discipline to regulate kolkhoz works, kolkhozy in our state could have undertaken their work without employment of workforce, and they could have provided highly much more workforce for industrial sector than that of actual achievement.”

There is a suggestion here that in those days in Sverdlovsk State, there were many demands on the workforce, and the necessity for labor transfer from the agricultural sector to industrial was very high, with the background that the Stalin administration forced this industry-centered economic plan on the Union nationwide. Here, we can point out the possibility that a kolkhoz member who lived not far from a factory might choose to work there and avoid cultivation work in his own kolkhoz, at the expense of the cash income from the kolkhoz. And external laborers, kolkhozniki of other kolkhozy or independent farmers, who might want to earn some cash, might fill any gaps in the workforce there. There is another possibility: kolkhoz members might choose to work on the garden plots of their own houses, not on the common land of the kolkhoz, because they could dispose of products from their garden plot relatively freely. The number of working hours devoted to work in garden plots might have increased because the earnings from common kolkhoz working such as cultivation works were very little, not enough to survive on.

So this was the situation, “unusual” and “unexpected” from the viewpoint of Stalinism, whereby there was high employment of an external workforce in kolkhozy, in other words, there were many violations of the “core” regulation of the new Kolkhoz Charter. But this situation was caused by such incentives for kolkhoz peasants to avoid cultivation work on their own kolkhoz, and these incentives were the result of Stalin’s extreme industrialization strategy as well as the survival strategy of the peasants.

2. Case study of a kolkhoz and policy change of the Stalin regime

We have discussed the use of employed labor force by kolkhozy in Sverdlovsk State in general. Let us devote more space to discussing the concrete situation there, examining some specific cases of kolkhozy. The following is an example of usage of an employed external labor force in a kolkhoz, located in Komensk district (raion), the name of which is Proletarka. Every kolkhoz had to submit annual documents to the Soviet government, and in the State Archive of Sverdlovsk State (GASO/TACO) there are annual documents of the kolkhoz Proletarka, submitted to the People’s Commissariat of Land, and the documents include annual
accounting reports of Proletarka kolkhoz from 1936 to 1939, with specific figures (see Table 4 and Table 5).

2.1. Case of the kolkhoz Proletarka

Table 4 indicates that in this kolkhoz in 1936, the number of dvor (rural family unit) was 86 and the number of kolkhozniki was 302. It is clear from Table 5 that the ratio of expenditure on employment of workforce to the whole cash expenditure is large. There are no data on the amount of expenditure on employment of a workforce itself for the year 1936, because the item of “other expenditure, cost” in Table 5 includes this amount.

In 1936, in “expenditure relevant to production,” there is an item “Other expenditure, cost (including employment of workforce).” In the item is included payment for employment of workforce, so in the year 1936, there is no concrete figure for such payment, but in 1937, there is a concrete figure for “Employment of workforce,” that is, 12,809.5 rubles.

According to Table 6, in the year 1936, the total person-days of the employed workforce in the kolkhoz was 1,078, and in 1937, this figure is 2,713, about 2.5 times that in 1936. So, with simple calculation, payment of rubles per person-day in 1937 was about 4.72 rubles.

The figure for payment for employment of workforce in 1937 is about 20% of the total cash income of the kolkhoz (63,780.24 rubles) and about 46% of the total expenditure relevant to production (27,764.2 rubles). It should be noted that in the payment for “Employment of workforce,” payment for employed construction workers is included, so we cannot evaluate the amount of payment for an external workforce engaged in the “core” work of the kolkhoz, cultivation work, with the data of the year 1937. But the data indicate that the payment for construction workers was 5,093 rubles in 1938 and 1,910.32 rubles in 1939, so an estimated figure of payment for cultivation work might be around 3493.74 rubles in 1938 and 984.54 rubles in 1939.

These data coincide with the general trend, that is, decrease in employment of an external workforce by kolkhozy.

So, from the viewpoint of participation of

Table 4   Dvor and Kolkhozniki of “Proletarka”

<table>
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<tr>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of Dvor (including single persons)</strong></td>
<td>86</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of Kolkhozniki (excluding withdrawal persons as of Jan. 1)</strong></td>
<td>302</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>296</td>
<td>266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over age of 16, workable</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age from 12 to 16</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other Kolkhozniki who went out from Kolkhoz as of Jan. 1 (Red Army, school, seasonal work, service)</strong></td>
<td>17</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1940: ГАСО. Ф. п. 2303. Оп. 1. Ед. хр. (Дело). 459. л. 6 о б.
### Table 5  Annual Fiscal Statements of Kolkhoz "Proletarka" (extracts)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1936 (unit: rubles)</th>
<th>1937</th>
<th>1938</th>
<th>1939</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>plan</td>
<td>result</td>
<td>plan</td>
<td>result</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total cash income</td>
<td>- 57,038.09</td>
<td>- 63,780.24</td>
<td>- 74,149.63</td>
<td>- 60,797.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tax on cash income</td>
<td>3,010</td>
<td>2,795</td>
<td>2,813</td>
<td>1,788</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance cost</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>1,700</td>
<td>3,200</td>
<td>2,020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other expenditure</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>2,143.6</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deduction to undivided fund</td>
<td>13,400</td>
<td>6,883</td>
<td>14,000</td>
<td>2,323.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Expenditure relevant to production

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1936</th>
<th>1937</th>
<th>1938</th>
<th>1939</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Repair of facility, machine</td>
<td>1,530</td>
<td>1,059.5</td>
<td>1,600</td>
<td>598.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase of seed, plant</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>293.3</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>446.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase of feed for animal</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>584.6</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>1,597.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical cost of animal</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase of fertilizer</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>130.9</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>80.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase of tools to exterminate vermin</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase of fuel and lubricating oil</td>
<td>2,500</td>
<td>3,318.5</td>
<td>4,500</td>
<td>4,266.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase of materials for supporting firm</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>725.4</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>258.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payment for work of MTS</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>184.7</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payment for employed specialist (veterinarian, agriculturist, etc.)</td>
<td>1,300</td>
<td>2,387.6</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>2,711.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase of flour mill</td>
<td>1,300</td>
<td>972.3</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>2,106.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payment for employed work force</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other expenditure, cost (including employment of work force) (breakdown)</td>
<td>3,700</td>
<td>6,552.6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment of work force</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5,500</td>
<td>12,809.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine and penalty</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2,439.7</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total expenditure relevant to production</td>
<td>12,780</td>
<td>16,209.7</td>
<td>20,450</td>
<td>27,764.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1937: ГАСО. Ф. п -2303. Оп. 1. Ед. хр. (Дело) 454. Л. б .
1938: ГАСО. Ф. п -2303. Оп. 1. Ед. хр. (Дело) 458. Л. 6-6 а б .
1939: ГАСО. Ф. п -2303. Оп. 1. Ед. хр. (Дело) 459. Л. 11-11 а б .

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these employed laborers, about 30% in 1936 and about 54% in 1937, were engaged in cultivation works.

Note that, from what has been discussed, the figures for the kolkhoz Proletarka coincide with the general trend of employment of external workforce in the whole of Sverdlovsk State.

Table 6  Incentive and Usage of Employed Work Force of Kolkhoz “Proletarka” (unit: person-day)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1936</th>
<th>1937</th>
<th>1938</th>
<th>1939</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cultivation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual farmer</td>
<td>307</td>
<td>1,473</td>
<td>920</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member of other Kolkhoz</td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Construction</strong></td>
<td>690</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>620</td>
<td>476</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firms (supporting)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other works</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Driving vehicle</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>210</td>
<td>286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total person-day</strong></td>
<td>1,078</td>
<td>2,713</td>
<td>1,840</td>
<td>762</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 7  Trend of participation in common works of Kolkhoz “Proletarka”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Year</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Under 50 units of work-day</strong></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>51-100 units of work-day</strong></td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>101-200 units of work-day</strong></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>201-300 units of work-day</strong></td>
<td>22</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>301-400 units of work-day</strong></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>401-500 units of work-day</strong></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total number of Kolkhozniki who participated in common works of Kolkhoz</strong></td>
<td>77</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


kolkhozniki in common kolkhoz work, Table 7 indicates that in the kolkhoz, in the year 1936, about 25% of kolkhozniki achieved only 50 or fewer work-days, and at the same time, the kolkhoz employed an external workforce for cultivation, according to Table 6. Here, we notice that in the kolkhoz Proletarka, many members did not engage in their “core” work—cultivation—and the kolkhoz employed an external workforce by way of compensation. Table 6 shows that among
2.2. Policy change of the Stalin regime toward kolkhoz

Confronted with these widespread violations of the new charter’s regulation, in 1938, the Stalin regime changed its policy toward the kolkhoz peasants, from concessionary to offensive. The Communist Party and Soviet government decided to enact the laws “On the prohibition of expulsion of kolkhoz members from their kolkhoz” and “On the unjust distribution of income in kolkhozy.” In the next year, 1939, for kolkhozniki, the regulation of minimum work-days assignment of common work on the kolkhoz was established legally. According to this legal minimum work-day regulation, those kolkhoz members who did not achieve the minimum work-days of common work in their kolkhoz would lose their benefits as a member of the kolkhoz. In May of the same year, a new decision was promulgated: “On measures for protection of common kolkhoz land from seizure by members,” which prohibited kolkhozniki from unregulated diversion of common land of the kolkhoz for their own garden plot purposes.

These changes in policy toward the kolkhoz peasants resulted in a decrease in the number of kolkhozniki who did not achieve even one work-day in 1938, and at the same time, the number of external laborers employed by the kolkhoz decreased.

3. Conclusions

As discussed, in kolkhozy, there was significant use of external workforce, in violation of the new version of the Kolkhoz Charter after 1935, especially until 1937. The local Soviet powers criticized those kolkhozy that used excessive external labor while there was very little common work done by kolkhoz members, with such expressions as “appearance of sovkhoz in the form of kolkhoz” in the proceedings of the Council of Sverdlovsk State “On expulsion of kolkhoziki from kolkhoz” as of March 19, 1938. Here, the members of the Council used metaphors such as “sovkhooz in the form of kolkhoz.” The sovkhoz was a state firm with employed workers and all workers including cultivation workers were paid wages, and the kolkhoz was instead a cooperative whose members were not paid “workers.” So, against the existence of many kolkhoz that used an external employed workforce on temporary cash pay, the local authorities used the metaphor “appearance of sovkhoz in the form of kolkhoz,” finding common ground between such kolkhozy and sovkhozy. There was a large difference between them, however. Sovkhoz workers were guaranteed an income and pension by the Soviet authorities as they were members of a state firm, but kolkhoz members were not guaranteed an income or pension by the Soviet authorities, because they were only members of a cooperative, not a state firm. It was only after World War II that the pension system was extended to members of kolkhozy.

With no guarantee of income by the Soviet State, kolkhozniki had to act so as to survive and they ignored the Kolkhoz Charter and
other regulations, independently and sometimes systematically. Here, kolkhoz members were not exemplary conformists to the Stalin regime as was expected of them, but tough peasants who acted in their own way.

References


3) Source: Центр документации общественных организаций Свердловской области (ЦДООСО). Ф. 4. Оп. 35. Д. 286. Л. 43-51 об. (also in *Колхозная жизнь на Урале 1935-1953*. Москва, 2006. С.301-316.) This document was written in May 1940 by the deputy vice chief of national economic calculation of the Sverdlovsk State Department, and the chief of national economic calculation of the section for agricultural accounting, Sverdlovsk State Department.