The Great Return: The Gulag Survivor and the Soviet System
Adler, N.D.

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Chapter V

The Politics of Re-Adaptation and Resocialization Procedures: Policy and Practice before and after the XX Party Congress

Introduction

The political climate in the Soviet Union in the 1950s was sardonically portrayed by a popular joke circulating at the time. It divided the Soviet Union into three classes: prisoners, former prisoners, and future prisoners. While it is true that after Stalin’s death, ex-zeks were less likely to be arrested and were less harassed, it is also true that in the post-Stalin era many felt an ongoing sense of injustice related to their status as ex-prisoners, or even rehabilitated persons. Their history of incarceration made it difficult to find proper work and housing. Moreover, while the XX Party Congress led to changes in the physical and legal status of zeks and returnees, it was still an era characterized by contradictory ethos. The disparity between official policy and unofficial practice resulted from and reflected the pervasive ambivalence at all levels of the government (and society). But there was a gradation in the government’s commitment. The upper levels were more reform-minded, but were often not so committed to it that they were willing to fight very hard. Because first line bureaucrats still hued to the old Party line, discrimination against returnees continued at lower levels long after it had been rescinded from above.

John Keep accurately described the ambivalent quality of rehabilitation in the post-Stalin years as having a "superficial, grudging character". He adds that, "It was less a legal than a political matter, subject to the vagaries of the struggle in the Kremlin and the interests of the Party as interpreted by the victors." Rehabilitation was not carried out in the spirit of justice, but rather as a rear guard action to preserve entrenched power, especially at lower levels. Even after legal reform was enacted, many old repressive attitudes still remained. In The Gulag Archipelago
Solzhenitsyn rails against the continuing injustice endured by many ex-zeks. He cites the tale of one former prisoner who suffered fifteen years in camp, and another eight years in silence about the experience. In 1960, when this returnee dared to share his memory of camp conditions with his fellow employees, it triggered a KGB investigation during which a KGB major had this to say: "Rehabilitation does not mean that you were innocent, only that your crimes were not all that serious. But there’s always a bit left over!" The bit that was presumably "left over" could always be employed to justify further harassment. For many returnees justice was a train which was always late. In this chapter we will continue on the road to and from the XX Party Congress, tracing the victims’ journey back into society through their search for housing, work, social rehabilitation and personal recovery. We will describe both official "top-down" pronouncements regarding returnee issues and the victims’ "bottom-up" experience created by these policies. We will find that people who left for the camps were changed so that they were not the same ones who returned, and the place to which they returned was not the same place they had left.

**Housing**

Adequate housing was a persistent and serious problem for the Soviet citizenry in general. It was an even greater problem for returnees. Among the consequences of Soviet repression was not just a loss of one’s residence permit, but a loss of one’s residence. This problem plagued most returnees. One former prisoner recounts that his apartment was occupied by staff members of the MGB: "even as my interrogation was being conducted in the Lefortovo prison, an MGB agent took the lock off of my apartment and moved in with his family." The prisoner’s family was left with one fourteen-square-meter room, where his wife and son lived together. After release in May 1955 he was allowed to return to Moscow, but he had no legal grounds on which to demand the return of the apartment.
There was a decree in Moscow that apartments of the repressed which were occupied by MGB people would not be returned to the rehabilitated former residents.\textsuperscript{6}

One returnee recalls that even after the housing policy was liberalized, the practice of denying them housing continued. In 1955, the executive committees were obligated to give returnees priority in housing. However, none of this ex-prisoner’s efforts to retrieve his room (probably in a communal apartment) succeeded. He continued to live with three other family members in a seventeen-square-meter room.\textsuperscript{7}

The requests that were finally honored generally required a considerable amount of petitioning. One woman who was arrested for anti-Soviet agitation by the counter-intelligence division "Smersh" in 1944 and released in 1947, spent the next eight years trying to register to live with her mother in Moscow. In a 1955 letter to the president of the USSR, Voroshilov, she pleads for re-evaluation of her case, because her son suffers from tuberculosis and she needs to be near a Moscow clinic. She points out that she spends all of her free time working on her rehabilitation, and that the date of re-evaluation is constantly postponed. (We are reminded of the "accused" in \textit{Der Prozess} who spends all his time desperately trying to extricate himself from the bureaucratic maze.) This ex-zek adds a patriotic note, "How I want to live, work, and feel like an equal citizen of this great motherland!"\textsuperscript{8} A hand-written instruction on the letter requests that Procurator Rudenko look into the matter. This returnee’s sentence was revoked on July 7, 1955.\textsuperscript{9} It is not clear if the exoneration resolved her problems, but at least one of the countless obstacles was removed.

Even among unequals, some were more unequal than others. Distinctions based on former political associations influenced for better and worse the treatment of some returnees. Some of the more prominent returnees did receive a ‘hero’s welcome’, compared to the reception accorded to ordinary citizens who came back from the camps. This preferential treatment extended to a wide range of needs. There were cases in which
higher officials were willing to intervene, most often on behalf of formerly privileged Party members. Aino Kuusinen, the wife of Otto Kuusinen, a Finnish communist and member of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, arrived in Moscow in October of 1955 after being liberated from the women’s camp at Potma. She went to the KGB reception office on Kuznetsky Most and told an official that she had just gotten out of camp and did not know how to begin a new life. When he saw her name, the official asked if she was related to the Presidium member. Upon hearing that this returnee was indeed Kuusinen’s wife, he advised her to go to her husband and live with him. She explained that her pride would not allow her to return. The KGB official had no other advice to offer.

Through old friends, Aino found a "guardian" official to guide her through the labyrinthine process of legal return. Even so, she spent eight months going from one institution to another. The lines of petitioners extended to the ends of long corridors. At one agency, she saw an old woman faint upon hearing that many of the people who came there every day had been coming for as long as five years. Eventually, because her estranged husband still occupied his official position, and because she had help, Aino Kuusinen was offered the apartment of her choice in Moscow. In her memoirs, she addresses both her own difficulties in reassimilating and those of others less fortunate: "It was quite difficult for me, a [well-known] political prisoner to return to a normal life. How much more complicated, and indeed even impossible, it must have been for simple people who did not have the support I did." Indeed the hardships for ordinary citizens upon return, like the hardships of ordinary citizens in Soviet society, were immeasurably greater than were those of the formerly privileged. Still, even the latter group had to endure the trials and tribulations of re-entry. Let us turn to one more such example.

Roza Yakovlevna Smushkevich

The wife of an executed Soviet Army general, Yakov Smushkevich, appealed personally to Voroshilov for help for
herself and her daughter (Roza). Up until Smushkevich’s arrest in June 1941, the family had lived in the building of the Council of Ministers, the Dom na Naberezhnoy (House on the Embankment). When his widow, Basya Solomonovna Smushkevich, and their daughter, Roza, returned from their 11-year sojourn in Karlag and exile in Kazakhstan, Roza recalled (in our 1996 interview) that they were immediately offered their old apartment. However, according to materials that have recently emerged from the archives, the process was not quite so immediate or automatic. In a May 1954 urgent plea to Voroshilov, Basya Solomonova writes, "In my old age I don’t have any place to rest my head, no corner, no roof under which I can spend my last years ... you remember my husband well ... please don’t leave us in this miserable situation without help or attention." In the interests of accuracy, it should be noted that when confronted with this document Roza insisted that it was a fabrication because she contended that her mother would never have written -- nor would she have any need to make -- such a plea to Voroshilov. It may be that this disparity can be accounted for by the known problems associated with reconstructed memories and selective recall, because it does not seem logical that a letter of this nature would be falsified and preserved in the archive of the Supreme Soviet. Furthermore, Voroshilov’s subsequent action supports the authenticity of the written request. He ordered that the matter be investigated immediately.

It was ascertained that Yakov Smushkevich had been executed without trial on the "criminal orders" of Beria. The case of Smushkevich was suspended by the General Procurator, Rudenko. This suspension of criminal status was extended to his widow and daughter as well, and they were to be offered their confiscated property, the pension appropriate to the family of a deceased general, and a place to live. Roza recalled that Malenkov met with her mother personally, gave them some money, and offered them their former residence. Her mother refused to live there. Roza maintains that this decision was based on emotional considerations -- her mother
wanted to avoid painful memories. Her refusal was not due to an aversion to living in an official Soviet building. While her mother's refusal was based on sentimental considerations, Roza's refusal was more of a political protest. She thought they were better off not living in that "accursed building where every apartment counted three, four or five arrests in its turnover of tenants." Though they chose to live elsewhere, Roza often visited, and still visits, those friends of her youth who managed to survive in the Dom na Naberezhnoy.

Work

Returnees as well as the family members of (former) "enemies of the people" continued to be oppressed at work even when this was no longer officially allowed. Complaints by returnees were either ignored or handled by pro-forma investigations which produced little meaningful improvement in the lot of the complainants. The archives have yielded some interesting paper trails that illustrate this deceptive practice.

Genri Grigoryevich Levin, who was a senior lecturer at the Kazakh Pedagogical Institute, was fired on March 18, 1953. He wrote a letter to Voroshilov challenging the grounds for his dismissal. He argued that his dismissal was not based on his work, as had been officially claimed. Rather, it was politically motivated. No evidence had been provided by the officials to substantiate the alleged "political mistakes" in his teaching and scientific work. However, he was in fact a relative of the "enemy of the people" Zinoviev (the nephew of Zinoviev's wife Zlata Ionovna Lilina, who had died in 1929). Voroshilov ordered that the USSR Ministry of Culture investigate the matter.

The Ministry, for its part, twice asked the Kazakh Minister of Education for the reasons for Levin's dismissal. The minister did not provide a substantive answer, but merely confirmed the institute director's decision. The Culture Ministry could go no further, and passed the case on to the
Kazakh Council of Ministers. The Division of Schools of the Central Committee of the Kazakh Communist Party studied the question and presented what it called an "exhaustive" reply to its USSR counterpart in January of 1954.\textsuperscript{17}

In the meantime Levin was not able to find other employment because of the \textit{kharakteristika} that he was given when he was fired. He also lost his permanent residence when he lost his job. Because he had no job, he could not register to live anywhere, not even with his mother in Leningrad. In consequence, he had no place to live.\textsuperscript{18} This was typical of the bureaucratic obfuscation with which many returnees and their family members were confronted.

The conclusions that were presented to the head of the division of schools of the Central Committee of the CPSU (in a certificate dated January 6, 1954) list Levin's family relationship to Lilina as the first reason for his dismissal. Second on the list is the fact that the majority of Levin's relatives were repressed at one time or another. It enumerates five relatives. At the end of the first page, the certificate reads, "besides that, Levin permitted political mistakes in his work ... and did not properly guide students in field work in the summer of 1952".\textsuperscript{19} The schools division concluded that Levin’s dismissal was justified. A copy of this certificate was later sent to Voroshilov's deputy.

Interestingly, in a January 26 letter from the Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan to Voroshilov, the chronology of reasons was changed in order to disguise the blatant political rationale for his dismissal. The first reason he presents for Levin’s dismissal was his professional performance. He writes that Levin’s lectures were theoretically poor and his field work with students was careless. Besides all of that, he points out, Levin was a relative of Zinoviev. The Kazakh Central Committee of the Communist Party deemed the institute’s decision to have been proper.\textsuperscript{20} The documentation of Levin’s case stopped there. We can assume that the decision for his dismissal was upheld. True, that was 1953, and the matter was related to a member of
an oppositionist’s family. Since Zinoviev was rehabilitated only under Gorbachev in 1988, it was to be expected that those connected with him would be subjected to many official and unofficial obstacles. But how was it for more ordinary people, those who were neither politically active nor well-known?

We can look at the lot of ordinary repressed citizens who were no longer considered enemies to see if there is any discernable difference in treatment between them and those still officially considered enemies. In a 2,000-page handwritten memoir Evgeny Edvardovich Gagen (see also Chapter IV) takes us through his ten-year journey in Kolyma (1937-47), his seven years of exile in the Magadan province (1947-1954), and his year-long struggle for rehabilitation and reinstatement in the Party (1955-56). His confrontations with the ever suspicious Soviet officials and his struggle to find work reveal the problems faced by ordinary citizens who are dealing with a system adapted to repression.

In the summer of 1955 Gagen lived in the Borovsk district of the Kaluga province, and wanted to find work as a journalist. In pursuit of this, he went to the Moscow reception room of the RSFSR Ministry of Internal Affairs to try to acquire temporary registration (pending rehabilitation) so that he could work in Moscow. Witness this revealing exchange between an official (C) and this former prisoner (G):

C: 'Why are you here?'
G: 'My case is being re-examined and I would like to request temporary registration in Moscow.'
C: 'Do you have article 58?' the colonel lazily [more likely passive aggressively] asked while yawning.
G: 'I have a decree of the Special Conference.'
C: 'KRD?' [counter-revolutionary activity, a "liter"]
G: 'Yes, KRD.'
C: 'That’s one and the same thing.' [art. 58 and KRD]
G: 'You may think that, but I think it is quite another thing.'
C: 'And why is it a completely different thing?' asked the colonel.
G: 'Because I was not tried. According to our constitution nobody can be condemned without a trial, in absentia, and without the right to defense.'
C: 'Oh, is that what you think? Well I think that the
Special Conference is also a court,' the colonel looked at me suspiciously. 'And why do you want to register in Moscow anyway?'
G: 'Because my family lives here.'
C: 'So have your family come to you.'
G: 'Is that how you see it?'
C: 'Yes, that is how I see it.'
G: 'But my case is being reviewed! And I am a Moscovite.'
C: 'But the case has not yet been re-evaluated.'
G: 'If it had been, I wouldn't be coming to you....'  

The conversation continued in the same obstructive vein, and ultimately led nowhere for Gagen. It is interesting to note that this particular representative of the authorities claimed that he considered the Special Conference to be a court. This, in spite of the fact that the Special Conference had already been officially condemned in early 1954 (see Chapter III). Apparently a change in the law did not necessarily mean that there would be a change in practice, because officials at this level were often able to flout the law with impunity.

At most of the official places Gagen felt that he was treated like a "second class citizen", even by people twenty years his junior.21 There were, however, some exceptions. In early September of 1955, Gagen was summoned to the regional social services office of the Borovsk district. His pension papers had arrived from Magadan and he had to come in to fill out forms. The head of this governmental agency was actually interested in learning about Gagen’s history of repression, and showed compassion when he heard the tale. When Gagen mentioned that he expected to be rehabilitated, the official confided that he had received an instruction briefing him on the privileges of the rehabilitated. First of all, they were entitled to receive a compensation of two-months salary (at current rates), based on their wages at the time of arrest. Secondly, they were to be given priority for apartments, and thirdly, those who were incapable of working could receive pensions which would be calculated so that the length of service would include the time spent in incarceration (trudovoy stazh).22 What was especially kind about the agency head’s sharing this information was that he expected that this
document would never be publicized, and he wanted Gagen to know his rights.\(^\text{24}\)

However, in spite of the inertia of the system, the swing toward liberalization was gaining momentum, and the document was made public. On September 8, 1955, the Council of Ministers of the USSR issued decree No. 1655.\(^\text{25}\) It set down directives "On the length of service, job placement, and pensions for citizens who were incriminated without due cause and subsequently rehabilitated." Even so, questions and problems regarding the implementation of this decree continued for the next forty some years. One former victim who had been released in 1946 and rehabilitated in 1963 still had not obtained this financial compensation when he wrote to Memorial in the late eighties. In his letter, he ridiculed the state's paltry and arbitrary compensation: "Why two months and not two years or two days?"\(^\text{26}\)

Gagen eventually obtained temporary registration in Moscow in the fall of 1955, but, in a Kafkaesque bureaucratic twist, his "temporary" status was considered legitimate grounds for denying him employment. To make matters worse, returnees often could not resume their old jobs because their places had been taken.\(^\text{27}\) But any number of reasons could be cited to refuse to give ex-zeks work, and any number of jobs could be considered inappropriate for them. Former prisoners had no opportunity to return to jobs they formerly held as school teachers\(^\text{28}\) (conveyers of information). Returning to a poorly paid library or museum job that afforded little contact with people was a more likely, but by no means guaranteed, option.\(^\text{29}\)

In addition to the general prejudice against returnees, there was a specific prejudice against Jews. This reservoir of anti-Semitism could be tapped at any time to justify a refusal of privileges. One Jewish doctor returnee in the Kiev region of Moscow was frankly told by a potential employer: "listen, I have a Jewish husband, I wish you no ill, but your efforts are in vain, we were given a directive 'from above' not to employ Jews and nobody has withdrawn that yet."\(^\text{30}\)
The employment problem for the ex-zeks was compounded by the fact that the executive committee demanded that ex-zeks get work, or they could be expelled from Moscow for "parasitism". They were often doubly confounded, because while they were required to have work, they could not get it. As one returnee letter to Voroshilov attests, "I can only get work after I have been registered in Moscow, and the police will not register me because I don't have proof of a job...". Trotsky's granddaughter, who had a similar experience after returning to Moscow from Kazakhstan in 1954, described this phenomenon as a "vicious circle". At the reception room of the Supreme Soviet, she lamented to an official: "you took my parents away, I don't have an official marriage, I can't get work, how am I supposed to live? Do I have to become a prostitute?" Apparently unmoved by her story, the official replied, "do you want to go back there again?".

Returnees could be frustrated in pursuing their rights at every turn, since policy often differed from practice, and since officials did not feel particularly obligated to enforce the decrees on granting them their rights. One memoirist writes of her ex-zek father's dogged efforts to find work in Kharkov: "the powers that be made it quite clear to him that full rehabilitation was only theoretical." Gagen's struggles exemplify this predicament. He had been rehabilitated in November of 1955. According to the decree of September 8, he was entitled to a new (clean) passport. Armed with a new passport, Gagen would have been permitted to seek work, receive a pension, and obtain a permanent residence. When he went to the police with completed forms to exchange his passport, the head of the division told the ex-prisoner that he saw no reason to issue a new passport. When Gagen referred to the September decree, the official told him to write a declaration about why he was incarcerated. Gagen refused to return to that stage of the rehabilitation process because his status was now changed. At his next visit, Gagen asked why there was such a delay and again reminded the
official of the decree. Whereupon the official retorted, "So what? This is Moscow, not the countryside." In fact, the same rules applied to both. The official was not right, nor did he have the legal right to block Gagen, but he apparently had the power to do so and he exercised it.

Gagen's subsequent efforts to find work, now with the status of "rehabilitated" were still met with frustration. As soon as it was mentioned that he was rehabilitated, the conversation changed. The potential employer would suddenly realize that he did not have time to talk to Gagen at that moment, but asked that he come back later. When he did, he was turned away. One potential employer did not even mask his prejudice. Gagen recounts, "without being roundabout, he told me that the only reason he was not hiring me was that, even though I was rehabilitated, in his eyes I was still a person with a dark past." After being refused job after job, Gagen concluded that, "everyone seemed to fear one word: 'rehabilitated'." Like the returning prisoners in the late forties and early fifties, what they had been labeled and where they had been sent were reasons enough to make them undesirable to potential employers. It appears that the status of being rehabilitated had come to be a "negative" label.

This was true even for some of the formerly privileged. Yadviga Iosifovna Verzhenskaya, the wife of a Red Army General who, she subsequently learned, had been shot, spent three exasperating years after release trying to acquire housing, work, rehabilitation, and an identity different from that of an outcast. In 1951 she appealed to an NKVD officer, asking to be sent back to camp. She explained that at least if she worked there, she could get bread, an option not available to many other returnees. He found work for her, and was later arrested himself.

Rehabilitation in 1956 did not significantly improve Verzhenskaya's life. She could choose to live in one of a selected number of military areas but was provided only one room for herself, her son, and her mother. Because her
husband had been demoted before arrest, the pension she received was lower than that of a general's family. Cultural and other official agencies were still wary of employing her. Their collective response seemed to be: "Rehabilitation, rehabilitation -- but she was in prison!". Indeed, the fact that someone carried the status of "rehabilitated" meant that they had been arrested and that they had once had prisoner status. Rehabilitation could not erase that stigmatized history, not for the former victims, and not in the eye of the public at large. People knew that in order to have the status of "rehabilitated" the person first had to become a prisoner. What they did not examine was how it was that this person became a prisoner. Not until the criminal behavior of the officials who decreed the imprisonment was revealed would the stigma of the prisoner be lifted.

Intellectuals fell into a category of their own. Some were praised and honored, some were reluctantly accepted, and others were merely tolerated. Under Khrushchev there was a trend toward supporting the intellectual work of returnees, which culminated in the publication of Solzhenitsyn's *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* (see below). However, it is hard to infer a uniform policy from these experiences. One scientist who spent from 1938-1948 incarcerated in Norilsk, and the subsequent seven years in exile, organized and worked in a laboratory even during his term. In 1955 he received complete rehabilitation and restoration of Party membership, with no loss of continuity in his pedagogical record. He went on to teach at prominent Moscow institutes. Another scientist, Pavel Oshchepkov, who had worked in a research laboratory developing radar in the thirties, a project supported by Tukhachevsky, was subsequently arrested. He continued his scientific work after return from the camps. It is not surprising that a biography of this returnee that appeared in a Soviet journal skips his years of incarceration. What is surprising is that the piece was entitled, "The heroic deed of a scientist." Such high regard for returnees was
hardly the norm, but it sometimes happened.

Isaak Moiseevich Filshtinsky

Isaak Moiseevich Filshtinsky (see also chapters I and IV), a professor of Arabic philology, was incarcerated from 1949-1956. While imprisoned, he was plagued with personal and professional losses: his mother died ("of an incomprehensible illness, probably simply from grief"), his wife left him, his father lost his job, and his doctoral dissertation was declared invalid. After his release he was well received in a social setting by both his friends and the people with whom he shared a communal apartment. However, if it happened that he were to meet these same neighbors in the work place, in their official capacity, he was treated much differently -- more like the former "enemy" that he was. Official establishments, he asserted, treated those who had been repressed like "second class citizens". Filshtinsky was treated even worse.

In a chapter of his memoirs entitled, "That Bitter Word Called Freedom," Filshtinsky recounts an exchange between him and an official regarding the invalidation of his doctoral dissertation. The official justified the invalidation by arguing, "You're a scientist, you should understand that in the course of six years science has moved ahead and your findings have become outdated. Write a new dissertation!"

Though he had negative feelings about Party membership, the former prisoner undertook the task of getting rehabilitated and reinstated in the Party. Eventually he succeeded, but was later excluded from the Party because of his human rights work. Unable to secure an academic position as a professor, he was only able to gain employment as an editor in the Library of Foreign Languages. The director of this institution, Margarita Ivanovna Rudomino has been praised by a number of former prisoners for having had the courage to employ them. Later, Filshtinsky worked in the Academy of Sciences, but in 1978, his apartment was searched and he was expelled from this organization. He was not invited to teach again at Moscow State University until 1992.
Lev Emmanuilovich Razgon

Some returnees were able to resume working at their previous place of employment, albeit at a lower salary and with a lower status. The writer Lev Emmanuilovich Razgon was one such case. Before his 1938 arrest (at age 30) Razgon had worked as an ideological editor at a publishing company. His history is typical of the plight of many returnees who were initially well-received upon return. After his release and rehabilitation in 1955, he was taken back to work at the same organization, taken back into his communal apartment, and taken back into the Party. Lev Razgon is among the small group of returnees who were, indeed, treated as ‘heroes’. But he, too, sustained irremediable loss. No matter how much society may have eased Razgon’s transition back toward his previous status, it could not compensate him for his personal tragedy -- Razgon’s wife never returned from the camps, having died during transit in 1938.44 Not until 1990 was Razgon permitted to see his KGB file. What it revealed was a case study of the death of a family, and the destruction of its supporting social network. These victims were his friends and others connected with him who had belonged to the upper echelons of the Party. These were "people who created this Party, made the revolution, built and governed this society...".45 Razgon made constructive use of both his talents and his experience by becoming one of the founding members of Memorial. In so doing, he helped himself as well as others toward rehabilitation.

Another ex-prisoner, Yuri Dombrovsky, released in 1955, employed the literary style of Aesop’s fables. In one work, "Obezyana prikhodit za svoim cherepom," for example, he portrayed racist Nazi Germany in a thinly veiled criticism of Russia under Stalin. Although he did manage to get published, few copies were printed. Dombrovsky was given a room in a communal apartment, a pension, and membership in the Union of Writers. But he was isolated from other writers, not allowed to go abroad, and discouraged from making public appearances.
The reluctant acceptance by his colleagues provided just enough reward to prevent him from rebelling -- using his public medium to recount his experiences in the camps. In some cases employers used the coercive power of employment and the fear of unemployment to "guide" returnees in the proper direction.

Official regulations regarding the employment of ex-zeks
The bureaucratic practice of establishing and maintaining systematic obstacles to the re-assimilation of returnees had been institutionalized in 1953-1955 (see Chapter III). The Soviet authorities were aware of it, but did little to correct it. A 1955 report on the activities of the reception room of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet quotes the following statistics: 7,601 individuals came with registration (propiska) restriction problems, 6,263 people sought assistance in work-related problems. There is no indication as to what percentage of these visitors were ex-zeks, though the problems with registration restrictions would suggest that ex-zeks comprised most of this group (as discussed above, their status often hindered their job prospects, and without work they could not get residence permits. On top of that, many still had passport restrictions). Moreover, this report to Voroshilov concedes that there were many problems with the job placement of citizens, "in particular invalids released from places of incarceration ... there were cases where they could not get work for many months."  

One of the systemic causes of the unofficial opposition to the official position on rehabilitation was the authorities' reluctance to accept moral responsibility. To do so would have shifted the stigma of criminal behavior from the returnees to the authorities, especially the 'infallible' CPSU, and that they were not yet prepared to do. Therefore, despite the promising September 1955 decree on work-placement and other official gestures, the problems of ex-zeks persisted. One memoirist recounts that he wanted to return to the factory where he had worked prior to his second arrest, but he was received with extraordinary hostility by the
director: "despite the September 8 stipulation requiring the employment of those who were rehabilitated, he refused to hire me, indignantly explaining that he does not want and is not required to hire former prisoners at 'his' factory. He didn't take me."

The returnees' complaints were, however, reaching the top. This issue is acknowledged in an April 1956 document found in the 'Special Files of Khrushchev' on "questions of work placement of those who were released from places of incarceration". It begins:

The instructions of the directive organs that obligate local Soviet organizations as well as directors of economic institutions and enterprises to render all possible assistance in job placement to those who have been freed from incarceration are being carried out unsatisfactorily, a fact which is attested by numerous complaints and declarations from ex-prisoners.

It goes on to enumerate a number of cases. Moreover, it discloses that many offices assigned to distribute manpower were even given explicit instructions by the organizations which they served that they should not hire "those who had been convicted". Similar problems with registration were highlighted in this report.

Official policy on the employment of returnees was relatively unambiguous. This issue is treated by the USSR Procuracy in an October 1956 draft of Regulations regarding correctional labor camps. The report generally deals with continuing official violations with regard to transport of prisoners, camp discipline, and camp conditions. In the section on "release and employment" the document states, "The committees [presumably executive committees, factory collectives, etc.] are obligated to help the liberated [prisoner] to register at his residence, and to quickly find work ... so that the discharged prisoner would be employed in socially useful work activity."

A May 1957 letter from the Supreme Court of the USSR to the Council of Ministers outlines even more specific legal and organizational rules with regard to this question:
Those who have been liberated from correctional labor institutions should be employed with consideration of their specialization no later than two weeks from the day of their petition for assistance.... The responsibility for timely employment of those who are liberated... lies with the Council of Ministers of the Union and Autonomous republics, and the krai, provincial, city, and regional executive committees of the councils of labor deputies.  

Still, as numerous cases in that same year attest, it remained hard for ex-zeks to find work. Documents of the reception room of the Chairman of the Presidium of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet report that in 1957 the most difficult group to assist in acquiring employment was "citizens who had been imprisoned... who did not have a place of residence." They go on to state that the reception room, however, did manage to find a position for them. It is not clear to which category of prisoners this account is referring, though it is almost a moot point since many people did not distinguish between those imprisoned for political offenses and those imprisoned for other crimes.

A report for 1958 claims that "as a rule those who are petitioning for work do not have a place to live or a permanent address.... Moreover, many of them do not want to work honestly, change their jobs often, and violate labor discipline." While these petitioners were not all ex-zeks, the combination of employment problems as well as residence problems suggests that ex-zeks constituted some part of the group.

The claim that ex-zeks did not desire to work can also be found in the correspondence of the USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs to the Central Committee dated December 24, 1959: "many individuals who have been released early from their places of imprisonment do not wish to enter the working world; many of them who have acquired jobs quit them and commit crimes again." Even if this were true, it could be argued that the very difficulty in finding appropriate jobs may have been a causal factor in the "repeat offenses". A January 1961 document of the Supreme Court supports this latter view. It states that the lack of work for ex-zeks leads to criminal
acts, and that "certain supervisors of organizations and institutions refuse to give them work. When they [ex-prisoners] turn to the police for help in these matters, they are not rendered [officially] obligatory assistance." The unwillingness of officials to respond to the legitimate needs of the returnees was evident early in the process of rehabilitation and persisted throughout. Despite their official mandate to facilitate the timely release of prisoners and aid the (ex-) zeks in their efforts to gain employment, the commissions of executive committees of councils of labor representatives did very little.

Thus, the process of discriminating against former prisoners started early, and continued for a long time. These attitudes were still (and again) extant in the seventies. For many, the official doctrines only succeeded in creating false hopes. One returnee recalls that by the time she finished the pedagogical institute in 1960 it was very hard to find work because "the fashion for us was over."

Pavel Negretov recalls his job frustrations even twenty years after his release, in 1975. When the head of the archive of the Vorkuta coal combine (plant) retired, he had hopes of replacing her. The person in charge of hiring was enthusiastic about his prospects because Negretov had a degree in history. However, when he heard that the applicant was not officially rehabilitated, "he saddened and pensively looked out the window at the statue of Kirov." Wittingly or unwittingly, the author presents the ironic image of the potential employer rejecting the clearly qualified ex-zek while looking at a statue of Sergey Kirov, whose murder helped set the Soviet terror apparatus in motion. It may be that Negretov was not hired because he was an "unrehabilitated" person, but there are many instances in which the status of "rehabilitated" made no more than a marginal difference in the returnee's struggle for re-entry.

An old saw has it that "A man convinced against his will is of the same opinion still". Many of the Soviet citizenry
had an ingrained attitude toward their government such that if a person was arrested and imprisoned by the socialist state, one had to assume that they must have deserved it. From this perspective, rehabilitation was an undeserved reward for wrongdoing. Until the government could admit its malfeasance in the imprisonment itself there would be little reason for the populace to reevaluate their attitude toward ex-prisoners. As the stories in these sections demonstrate, every potential employer in an enterprise, factory, university, or office could serve as judge and jury with regard to work opportunities. Regardless of official guidelines, returnees remained vulnerable on a number of different scores.

**Status and rights**

Returnees did not always understand their rights, and even when they did and argued for them, officials often refused to grant them. In fairness, not all of the official opposition was purposely subversive, but rather was the result of the circumstance that officials did not always understand returnees' rights. Still, despite all the mid-level official-unofficial opposition, the issuance of the September 1955 decree was a major concession on the part of the state. However, the lack of clarity of the regulations became a source of frustration for officials as well as for former victims. This problem is addressed in the correspondence of the USSR Procuracy for 1955 and 1956. The issues in question centered on returnees' rights to the two-month compensation as well as their social and legal status. The most frequently raised question was whether a person who had been incarcerated and released a number of times, and then subsequently received rehabilitation on each of the different charges, was entitled to a two-month compensation from each of the previous pre-arrest employers. The final decision was that the two-month compensation is only granted once. Those who were freed from special settlement (exile), and the relatives of posthumously rehabilitated prisoners were also entitled to
Applicants were required to show a rehabilitation certificate and proof of their employment and position on the day of arrest. The compensation did not extend to ex-prisoners who were unemployed at the time of arrest.

The XX Party Congress and its aftermath: how actions of the Congress affected the status of returnees

At the end of 1955 the Presidium of the CPSU Central Committee formed a special commission, under secretary of the Central Committee Pospelov, to study materials on the mass repressions of 1935-1940. After examining cases and documents and conducting interviews with interrogators, the commission presented its damning report to the Presidium of the Central Committee on February 9, 1956. Khrushchev argued in favor of making "a clean breast of the abuses committed by Stalin" by presenting the findings in a closed session of the Congress. To this information would also be added the revelations of rehabilitated Old Bolsheviks like Shatunovskaya and Snegov. It was decided that the Party would take responsibility for the repression, but culpability would be attributed to Stalin. The "Secret Speech" inveighed against the "cult of personality," and focused on the crimes of and under Stalin against Communists. Notable by their absence were crimes against the oppositionists and, significantly, against the ordinary citizens who were repressed by the punitive policies of the Stalinist regime. In criticizing the cult of personality, Khrushchev limited his attack to the "personality" and glossed over the offenses of the complicit "cult," the Party members who supported the repressions. By making the speech anti-Stalin rather than anti-Stalinist, the system itself was spared criticism. Khrushchev expected that the potentially damaging testimony of the returning zeks might be counterbalanced by the fact that the Party had liberated them. However, Voroshilov was fearful of the impact of the revelations on the present office-holders, and argued in favor of presenting the speech only after elections to the Central Committee Presidium had been conducted. Elections were held on February 24 and on the following day the speech was
presented to delegates of the congress and newly elected members of the Central Committee. The shock, dismay, and anger of the delegates to the "Secret Speech" is beyond the scope of our present discussion. Instead, we will examine its consequences for the lives of prisoners and returnees.

One of the first consequences of the revelations was an improvement in the procedure by which those who had been declared innocent were released from the camps. At the end of 1953, the camps and prisons contained 475,000 people who were held for "counter-revolutionary activities". By January 1, 1956, 114,000 political prisoners still remained incarcerated. These figures, of course, do not reflect the population of exiles and special settlers. According to documents of the USSR Procuracy, liberation commissions of the Supreme Soviet were being formed as early as February 7, 1956. On this date Procurator Rudenko presented a draft of a directive "on the regulations regarding work of the commissions for verification of the grounds for detainment of prisoners at places of deprivation of liberty." In contrast to the work of the earlier teams described in Chapter III, it outlines specific procedures and emphasizes that cases should be examined for "their essence and the data that characterizes the personality of the prisoner". Furthermore, the commissions were obligated to speak with every prisoner. The camp administration was charged with the responsibility of so informing those prisoners who were denied liberation. It was also to provide released prisoners with a certificate of release and a certificate of withdrawal of sentence.

The (accessible) archives have provided slightly different figures than have the historical accounts on how many people liberated how many prisoners. We will offer only a very brief sketch of these figures here, since different documents contain different information, and a number of Russian historians do not indicate the sources for their assertions, nor do they explain on what basis certain figures were derived. Moreover, since our focus is on the victim's
experience, the scope of the commissions’ work is secondary.

The USSR Procuracy attempted to be as bureaucratically inclusive as possible. Accordingly, 65 commissions were to be made up of 3–7 persons each, for a total of 291 participants. This group would include: members of the staff of the Central Committee, secretaries and heads of divisions of central committees of republics, krais, provinces, and cities, high functionaries of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, the Procuracy, the Supreme Court, the Ministry of Justice, and the Ministry of State Security of the USSR and RSFSR, rehabilitated Party members, and deputies of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and republics.71

One historian contends that 97 commissions of the Supreme Soviet were charged with the liberation of prisoners.72 Another puts the number at 100 commissions comprised of three persons each (one rehabilitated Party member, one person from the Procuracy, and one Central Committee representative), travelling the country.73 Writing about the political aftermath of the Secret Speech, Russian historian Naumov (see also Chapter I) estimates that approximately one million prisoners and exiles were released, but he does not specify whether these releases were immediate.74 Elsewhere, he points out that hundreds of thousands returned from prison and exile shortly after the speech.75 Gorbachev, in a 1996 speech, claimed that Khrushchev initiated the release of millions of prisoners as well as the "rehabilitation of those who were turned into ‘camp dust’".76 (What a difference these nine years had made in Gorbachev’s public estimate of the number of victims! See Chapter I)

More specific figures have also come to light. A November 1956 document (from the Special Files of Khrushchev) states that 107,979 prisoners (50,562 of whom were politicals) were released by the commissions in that year.77 It does not mention rehabilitation. One Russian source contends that as a result of the "broadening rehabilitative practices," 232,000 persons were rehabilitated by mid-1957, and between 1954-1961 a total of 737,182 rehabilitations were carried out.78 (See
Chapter I for more statistics on rehabilitation.) He does not specify, however, whether these numbers included posthumous rehabilitations (since relatives were also petitioning for exoneration of perished prisoners). Nor does he make it clear how many of these cases were politicals, and if they were released by decision of the commissions.

Turning from numbers to qualitative assessments, let us examine the effect of the commissions' decisions on the prisoners' experience. Prisoners' accounts have generally been critical of the rehabilitation procedure. One memoirist recalls that a common impression among zeks was that the commission disliked those who claimed that they had been arrested without good cause. Nor, according to this ex-prisoner, were they willing to hear about the lawlessness and torture in the camps. They just wanted the prisoner to listen passively, and answer the questions asked. Solzhenitsyn is indignant as he contrasts what should have happened with what did happen:

Should not the commission have stood before a general line-up of prisoners, bared their heads, and said: 'Brothers! We have been sent by the Supreme Soviet to beg your forgiveness. For years and decades you have languished here, though you are guilty of nothing.... Accept our belated repentance, if you can.'

He goes on to remonstrate that the "unloading commissions" were "no way to lay new moral foundations for our society", since "the prisoner is put in a position of one forgiven, not one who forgives!" What could they have realistically expected? Given the time and place of the commissions, the message of the Secret Speech, and the system's adaptation to repression, the grudging character of this work is not all that surprising.

In the summer of 1956, a tidal wave of released prisoners was washing over the land. "...in railway trains and stations there appeared survivors of the camps, with leaden grey hair, sunken eyes and a faded look; they choked and dragged their feet like old men." They were sometimes strangers even to
themselves. They were no longer prisoners, but neither were many of them really free. Still they were better off than their comrades who continued to languish in prison. It was an unsettling time for officials as well as prisoners. Officials had to re-examine the legal and moral assumptions that had previously justified the repression. Prisoners and ex-prisoners had to reassess their allegiances to a system that had imprisoned them and had to find ways of putting their shattered lives back together.

In the confusion of shifting directions and changing directives, some instructions defied what had come to be common sense. An October 1956 letter from the Krasnoyarsk krai Procuracy to the USSR Procuracy complains that since the publication of the March 1953 amnesty, they have repeatedly asked what they should do with article 7-35'ers (mostly children of "enemies of the people") who had been exiled for ten-year terms in 1948, and with the "especially dangerous criminals" who received exile from the Special Conference after release in that same year. In a reversal of what might have been expected, the answer was: "If there are any [of the latter category of] exiles in the krai at this time ... you must take measures to liberate them," because the directive that detained them was abolished in 1954. The 7-35'ers would have to be reviewed on an individual basis.

Some returnees could not yet hope for rehabilitation, but they could strive for more privileges. One letter from the Estonian Procuracy to the USSR Procuracy addresses the issue of the legal status of the article 58'ers who were accused of having collaborated with the occupying forces during the "Great Patriotic War". A March 10, 1956 decree of the Supreme Soviet released this group from exile. To the extent that they were entitled to rights under the September 17, 1955 amnesty (which provided release for 55,480 prisoners in 1955 and 4,130 in 1956) the ex-prisoners were protesting the fact that they were only granted limited passports. The Estonian police were refusing to exchange these citizens' passports, "because the order of the General Procuracy of the USSR, the
Ministry of Internal Affairs of the USSR and the Chairman of the KGB of the Council of Ministers of the USSR states that the charges are not cleared from individuals freed from exile on the decree of March 10, 1956. 86

The reform-minded Estonian Procuracy did not concur with the Estonian police because, according to their interpretation, the September amnesty provided for the rescinding of sentences and the restoration of rights. They even wrote a follow-up letter to the USSR Procuracy urging that they quickly expedite the matter because the Estonian Procuracy was becoming inundated with complaints. 87 The USSR Procuracy responded that the Estonian police had acted incorrectly in not issuing clean passports to those who were freed under the September 1955 amnesty. Cases relating specifically to the March 10 decree would have to be considered on an individual basis. 88 With questions abounding, the Supreme Soviet had to issue a clarification on the September 17 directive. 89 There was not only conflict between governmental and judicial bodies but confusion within both establishments. However, through all this turmoil, ex-prisoners were becoming more aware of returnees' rights, and it was becoming more difficult for officials to blatantly violate them.

Achieving the status of rehabilitation became especially important to the returnees because their compensation was contingent upon this status. A bureaucratic barrier to this was the confusion regarding whether those prisoners freed by the 1956 commissions of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR were to be considered as amnestied or rehabilitated, because the only documents they were given were a release certificate, and a paper stating their entitlement to the privileges outlined in the September decree. 90 The confusion of the release process with the rehabilitation status made accurate calculation of compensation for the latter exceedingly difficult. A September 1956 letter from the Kazakh SSR Procuracy to a regional sub-division is unambiguous.
regarding this issue:

individuals who were freed from their places of incarceration by decision of the commissions of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR for being convicted without due cause are considered rehabilitated and are entitled to all privileges, including the two-month allowance in accordance with the decree of the Council of Ministers of the USSR of September 8, 1955. 91

These official rules were clear, but whether they were considered to be equitable by subordinates and whether they would be carried out were entirely different issues.

While some in the upper levels of government were recoiling from the horrors of Stalinist repression and moving toward reform, many of those at lower levels remained uninformed of the justification for reform. In consequence, they resisted dispensing what they considered unwarranted privileges to undeserving criminals. This resulted in a systemic passive resistance in the bureaucracy charged with overseeing release and rehabilitation. Moreover, resistance, passive and otherwise, was already built into the program for dealing with ex-prisoners.

While prisoners freed by the commissions were entitled to privileges, they were indeed not automatically rehabilitated. Since the camps did not issue rehabilitation certificates, ex-prisoners still had to apply for that status. One prisoner who was released by a commission in May of 1956 was not accepted again at the university, because she did not have a rehabilitation certificate. She petitioned the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, which in turn sent her letter on to the Procuracy. They responded that, "there is no basis for re-examining your case." 92 It subsequently took this returnee nine years to achieve rehabilitation. The fact that this group of returnees had already been reviewed by committees apparently had little bearing on the pace of their process of official exoneration. Still, it is likely that they fared better in threading their way through the rehabilitation maze than did those who were released under one of the amnesties. One returnee who had been freed under the 1953 amnesty and had
unsuccessfully petitioned for rehabilitation from July 1955 - 
July 1956, complained: "I don’t understand why I should be 
punished twice. The first punishment was camp and exile; the 
second was the refusal to rehabilitate me."⁹³ She added that 
now that she was 73 years old, rehabilitation would soon no 
longer be necessary.

As noted earlier, one of the systemic problems that 
impeded the progress of reform was that the government did not 
adequately address its ambivalence. The same people who had 
overseen the persecution of yesterday’s "enemies of the 
people" were now being asked to treat them as victims or 
martyrs -- without the government’s acknowledging its own 
culpability. In consequence, while there were some genuine 
efforts toward reform at one level, new repressive measures 
were still being implemented at another level. In order to 
conceal this political ambivalence, a good bit of internal and 
external propagandizing was necessary. A September 1956 
article in Izvestiya entitled "'Today Inmates Are Criminals': 
Butyrka as Model Jail," boasts of an improved prison 
environment. After claiming that all the present inmates had 
indeed committed crimes, it describes the sumptuousness of 
their daily menu: "mashed potatoes with vegetable oil and 
herring for breakfast, sour cabbage soup with meat and barley 
porridge with butter for dinner, and millet porridge with 
vegetable oil for supper."⁹⁴ The credibility of the menu has 
the same standing as the claim that all of the inmates have 
committed crimes. During this time, arrests were still being 
carried out for such transgressions as the reading of Marx, 
out of fear that his texts would be given a different 
interpretation than that dictated by the Party line. Consequently, such intellectual activity was treated as "a 
struggle for violent overthrow of the existing social 
structure".⁹⁵ However, in the liberalized post-XX Party 
Congress atmosphere, the sentence for such a criminal offence 
was now merely incarceration rather than execution!

While the preposterous Izvestiya account was not true to
the facts of the prison environment, it did reflect the efforts of some -- failed efforts one might say -- at policy re-orientation. Still, for the most part, Stalinist practices continued. Official repression even extended to those who had only recently been released from the camps. A December 19, 1956 Central Committee letter to party organizations, for example, cautions that there may be "anti-Soviet elements" among this group:

there are people among the returnees who are unfavorably disposed to Soviet authority, especially among the former Trotskyites, right opportunists, and bourgeois nationalists. They surround themselves with anti-Soviet elements and politically unreliable persons, try to renew their hostile anti-Soviet activity.\(^9\)

In terms of true 'oppositional' elements, it should be noted that quite often many of those who were convicted as Trotskyites, for example, were rather arbitrarily categorized as such. The label did not reflect their own political orientations as much as that of their relatives, friends, or the quota of the day. However, taken at face value, the December 1956 Central Committee letter reflected the (not altogether unwarranted) paranoia of a repressive system whose inability to tolerate dissent keeps creating the enemies it attempts to destroy. It led to the drafting of a Supreme Court regulation "On the elimination of mistakes in the work of the courts on re-evaluation of cases of counter-revolutionary crimes".\(^9\) After a pro-forma preamble on the necessity to rehabilitate those who were convicted without due cause in the Stalin years the document goes on to note that:

certain courts, especially recently, sometimes allow serious mistakes ... that attest to dulled vigilance and underestimate the danger of counter-revolutionary activities ... These mistakes [are reflected in] groundlessly closing a number of cases ... and acquitting those who are guilty [-- actions that are the] result of incorrect political and juridical evaluation of their activities.\(^9\)

The concluding instructions reflect the persisting ambivalence of the system. Like the contradictory double messages
conveyed in 1954-55 (see Chapter III), they urge increased vigilance in the "merciless struggle" against these types of crimes, but also caution against permitting the "conviction without due cause of honest Soviet people." In a democratic political system, this admonition might simply have been an attempt to strike an equitable balance, although democratic governments have also encountered the problem of determining "right" from "wrong" citizens or acts. (The post World War II efforts of the Dutch government to ascertain which of its citizens had been Nazi collaborators is one such example.) In the Soviet system, the "merciless struggle" to weed out "counter-revolutionary" tendencies was used as a license to continue repression. In February 1957, the KGB responded to the draft regulations by emphasizing the need for the courts to "carefully examine all the circumstances of a case [to insure that] enemies of the Soviet government will not receive acquittal or lighter punishments [when they should in fact be receiving] more severe punishments."

Not surprisingly, this was followed by an increase in the prosecution of cases of counter-revolutionary activities in 1957. Memorial researcher Nikita Petrov, one of the first scholars given access to the KGB archives, found an exceedingly high number of political convictions in the year 1957. Another Russian researcher found that in comparison to 1954 there was a 25% increase in convictions, that there were twice as many convictions compared to 1955, and as many as four times the convictions compared to 1956. He quotes the figure of 2,948 convictions for 1957, though he does not record the number of arrests. This researcher also asserts that a 1958 Supreme Court summary on the results of judicial practices with regard to cases of counter-revolutionary crime was one of the "central documents that paved the way to new punitive policies." It provided the basis for new approaches to consolidating the "law on state crimes" that had been passed on December 25, 1958 as part of the new Soviet Penal Code. It is unclear whether this provision was initiated by the Supreme Court or the Central Committee.
since the materials that might answer this question are located in archives that are still inaccessible.

Others have also described the inconsistencies and turmoil of this period. Naumov cites the ruthless shootings of peaceful demonstrators in Tbilisi (1956) and Novocherkassk (1962) [not to mention Hungary in 1956] as just a few of the many examples of the employment of brutal repression under Khrushchev, a leader who presented himself as a reformer. Considering the changes that were being attempted within a short time period with the same entrenched leaders, with the same political system, and without the cleansing consequences pursuant to a military defeat, it is little wonder that the pace of reform lurched and veered. Antonov-Ovseenko, a historian whose father was a prominent victim of the terror, asserts that the rehabilitation campaign was greeted with some degree of satisfaction only at the center, and even then many officials only feigned their approval of the abrupt reversal of the Party line. In the provinces, he goes on to point out, an attitude of fear and mistrust prevailed. It often seemed that the right hand did not know what the left hand was doing. For example, while the victims of repression of the thirties and forties were being rehabilitated, new political prisoners were being created. Such contradictions could not continue indefinitely, and it was the rehabilitation process that was curtailed. Naumov points out that after re-examining many thousands of cases in 1956-1957 there was such a sharp drop that in 1962 there were only 117 (not necessarily individual) reviewed. Of these, 25% of the petitioners were refused rehabilitation or reinstatement in the Party. In 1963, 13% (seven of the 55) of the cases reviewed were rejected, while 1964 saw only 28 case reviews. By 1965 the process had virtually halted.

A further sign of the inconsistency of the rehabilitation process, according to Semyon Vilensky, was the burning of hundreds of thousands of prisoners’ dossiers in the sixties, under Khrushchev. The motivation for this action was that "people wanted to eliminate the traces of their crimes".
Vilensky added that certain books that might have aided in establishing the number of arrests were being destroyed in Moscow during this period.  

The social contract of rehabilitation

In the absence of a program to change the perceptions of the bureaucracy and to inform the populace of the injustices committed by the government, official directives instituted from above and implemented from below were bound to founder. Ambivalence about rehabilitation and the rehabilitated was reflected at all levels. Arseny Roginsky (see Chapter VII), was born in the camp zone because his father, a political prisoner, had been released with restrictions. He went on to become a historian, dissident, prisoner, ex-prisoner, and one of Memorial's founders. He offers an insider's perspective of this period. "Rehabilitation," Roginsky observed, "became a sacred word; the rehabilitation certificate became a sacred document," and the rehabilitation status occupied a central place in mass consciousness. In consequence, for personal, social, and political reasons, many ex-zeks waged a principled struggle to achieve a status equal to those who were not viewed with suspicion. Roginsky maintains that "...that status influenced the concrete factors by which you measure how someone returned: finding an apartment, job, and so on". The rehabilitation process progressed through three stages: release (physical separation from the camp), attainment of the certificate (recovering one's personal status), and finally reinstatement in the Party for those who had been members (recovering political/social status). A revoked sentence, for example, was similar to rehabilitation because it offered certain privileges, but in Soviet consciousness it was not equivalent to rehabilitation. Those who were not rehabilitated experienced "eternal instability," a status which required repeated explanations, for example, every time they had to fill out a questionnaire. Some, however, did not even dare to apply for rehabilitation, so
ingrained was their fear of any kind of contact with official authorities.\textsuperscript{110} Others did not want to "humiliate" themselves by requesting reconsideration from the Soviet authorities.\textsuperscript{111}

All this notwithstanding, there was often an ironic futility to the struggle to attain the rehabilitation status, because, as we have seen, it was still politically stigmatized and it often had little positive influence on landlords or employers. One returnee characterizes "so-called rehabilitation" as "phony" because, he maintains, all former zeks, even Party members, remained on a special register and were under surveillance.\textsuperscript{112} One former zek was told by the KGB that "the mark was removed, but the stain remained."\textsuperscript{113}

They told him that he could forget about returning to his field of specialization, that he should just be happy that he got a pension and an apartment and leave it at that. Another describes what happened when he received his "so-called rehabilitation" certificate in 1957:

> after eighteen years of suffering, I was given a two-month teacher's salary by the Moscow Historical Archive Institute where I worked until my arrest. I was put in line for an apartment, and led a miserable homeless existence for two years inside and outside Moscow.\textsuperscript{114}

There were many social and political factors that complicated the rehabilitation process. Roginsky contrasts the differences between the "glASNOST ARESTA" (the public openness with which arrests were carried out) and the "TAINAYA REABILITATSIA" (the poorly publicized, almost secretive process of rehabilitation).\textsuperscript{115} When the victims were repressed by the State, the action was public knowledge; when the State recanted, it was a private matter. What was consistent in both procedures was that victims were still stigmatized. They were a political embarrassment because the very status of rehabilitation confronted the State with a past it was still trying to deny. The rehabilitated served as a reproach regarding both a past which the Party could not defend and a present to which the Party was not adapted. As the rehabilitated attempted to take their places in the
community, these same issues were confronted at lower levels of society. As one ex-prisoner observed, "even if we were heartily greeted, we knew that society as a whole still lived by previous laws. Nothing essentially changed.... We were given back our freedom, but it was done very quietly."\(^{116}\)

The public's attitude toward returnees was especially relevant when the returnees applied for rehabilitation because testimonials regarding their character were sometimes required. In a general atmosphere of social disapproval, favorable testimonials could be hard to come by. It was also hard to get the plight of the returnee before the public, even in literary works. Ivan Lazutin's "Chernie Lebedi" (Black Swans), a fictional tale that dealt with this and other returnee themes, had its own history of repression. Lazutin's detailed account of the problems encountered by returnees was apparently too controversial for the authorities to abide. It was published in installments in the journal *Baikal* in 1964, but discontinued in 1965 after receiving a rather critical review in *Voprozy Literatury*.\(^{117}\) The final thirty pages, perhaps in a face-saving gesture, were included in a 1966 installment.\(^{118}\)

According to the story, in order to initiate the rehabilitation process the Military Procuracy required character references from people who knew the returnee well. The testimony of a rehabilitated former camp-mate was acceptable, but only as a supplement to the references of others who knew the person in question before 1937.\(^{119}\) Lazutin portrays the predicament of Rodimov, a Deputy People's Commissar arrested in 1937. Years later, he runs into an old camp-mate who is surprised to see him, because Rodimov was supposed to have been executed. In fact he was taken out for execution but was only wounded by the bullet. He managed to crawl away, bury himself in a pile of coal on a freight train, find a soldier's uniform (it was 1941), and even fight in the war.

After that, Rodimov lived with his sister under an
assumed identity until 1955, when she received a certificate of Rodimov’s posthumous rehabilitation. When he went to the MGB to declare that he was still alive (and rehabilitated), they said they needed proof from others that he was indeed the person he professed to be. Rodimov’s four remaining former colleagues at the Ministry refused to identify him. Through this episode, Lazutin conveys the pathos of people unwilling and/or unable to help a person in political trouble, either because of their allegiance to the Party or their fear for their own safety.

Lazutin dramatically portrays the duplicity of a Party more interested in rehabilitating its public image than in rehabilitating people. It was the dead Rodimov, not the living Rodimov that was rehabilitated. Rodimov had, after all, been executed by official decree. Now that he stood before his peers, they would only rehabilitate the living Rodimov if they got an official directive. Lord Acton’s dictum that “Power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely,” is widely accepted. The obverse is also true: weakness corrupts and absolute weakness corrupts absolutely. The support of former colleagues was withered by their fear of the government. Posthumous rehabilitation was generally less challenging to the system than accounting to the living, remembering, talking survivor in their midst.

Eventually Rodimov received assistance from below. The cloak-room attendant recognized him and had the courage to step forward on his behalf. Thereafter, he was restored to the Party, and was offered his old job as Deputy-Minister. A major theme of this tale is that the people in entrenched positions of authority were more interested in protecting their Party position than in helping returnees. Such portrayals may well have contributed to the impediments Lazutin’s writing encountered.

Rodimov’s story described the ethos that prevailed in 1955, prior to the XX Party Congress. In the aftermath of the XX Party Congress people were much more willing to be character witnesses. In a letter to Memorial, one woman
provides a success story. In 1955 she approached the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court to request (posthumous) rehabilitation for her husband. They had no documents whatsoever on him. She managed to gather the testimonies of high officials at the Zhukov Military Aviation Academy where he had worked. Two letters of reference written in June of 1956 secured her husband’s 1956 posthumous rehabilitation. This was a heartening but not typical experience.

Sometimes the authorities tried to render the living rehabilitated returnees as politically inactive as their posthumously rehabilitated comrades. A number of rehabilitated returnees were cautioned that they should leave the past behind. One returnee, released in 1960, was given a passport without limitations, but with one restriction: he was not to talk about what he had seen in "the zone" (camp). Another ex-zek was pressured by the authorities into signing a pledge when she was released in 1956. In it, she acknowledged that she could be imprisoned for three years if she were to carry out requests from campmates, or if she were to disseminate information about the way the regime ran the camp. Though these silencing practices could not have had any legal basis, they were clearly still being enforced.

In spite of the threat of reincarceration, it was often difficult to refrain from expressing the anguish created by the experience of arbitrary repression. It was even more challenging to keep silent in the era of rehabilitation, with its facade of liberalization. A former exile, the daughter of an "enemy of the people", was indignant when she finally received her father’s posthumous rehabilitation certificate in 1957. She protested to an official at the Military Tribunal, "It took you twenty years to clarify that he was innocent, and I always knew it ... so tell me how this monstrous injustice that destroyed so many honest, devoted people could have occurred!" The major tried to mollify her, at the same time telling her very pointedly that the certificate entitled her to a number of privileges, but asking such questions was not
one of them. For this woman and others like her, rehabilitation required a tacit agreement to keep quiet about the past in exchange for privileges in the present.

Yuri Aikhenvald, the son of repressed parents, was arrested in 1949 and exiled. He was re-arrested in 1951 and committed to the Leningrad Psychiatric Hospital, where he was kept until 1955, at which point he was discharged and later rehabilitated. In his collection of memoirs and poetry, he describes the experience of a woman who returned to Moscow after rehabilitation. Some people could not look her in the eye, because ten years earlier they had condemned her as an "enemy of the people". Aikhenvald poignantly conveys the double jeopardy of the returnee who is first stigmatized by repression and then stigmatized because she stirs up unwelcome memories in the society that repressed her. The prevalent feeling that he inferred from the public’s response was "enough, already, about 1937."126

The public’s reaction may be less callous than it seems because it may be at some level a misguided response to an unbearable guilt. Freud illustrated the paradox of sensitivity presenting as callousness by quoting a humorous story. A beggar walking in a wealthy neighborhood found a door ajar, walked in, and found himself face to face with the rich owner of the mansion. Before the rich man could say anything, the beggar poured out his tale of misery. The rich man immediately rang for his butler and said, "I have never before heard such a tale of compelling misery. I can’t stand it. Please, throw him out."127 Bearing witness to the plight of the victims of repression not only carried political risks, but was also emotionally taxing. Isolating and blaming the victim was an easy, albeit cruel solution.

The literary works whose themes deal with the problems of rehabilitation tend to contain at least two messages: first, rehabilitation is essentially a conditional pardon;128 second, full rehabilitation tends to silence people. How accurate was this depiction? In the words of Shatunovskaya, many of those who were reinstated in the Party and secured important
Stephen Cohen describes this "unwritten but often-spoken social contract" offered by the Soviet government to Gulag survivors thus: "Having freed you, we now will meet your welfare and work needs within limits, and we will let you live in peace. In return, you must not make political demands or clamor about the past."  

The recognition that rehabilitation was bought and sold for silence -- a kind of Khrushchevian deal -- was sometimes dealt with quite explicitly as a fictional plot, for lack of a safer venue. A tale written by a returnee, Iosif Aronovich Bogoraz, will be illustrative. His personal history attests to his right to speak about repression as an insider. He witnessed the repression spreading around him in widening circles to engulf his network. A Memorial questionnaire filled out by his daughter, the well-known former dissident Larisa Bogoraz, lists nine family members who were incarcerated. They included Bogoraz' first husband, Yuli Daniel, whose 1965 trial ushered in the dissident movement, and her second husband, Anatoly Marchenko, a political prisoner who died in incarceration in 1986.

Iosif Bogoraz opens Otshchepenets (The Renegade) with the funeral of an ex-prisoner, Pavel. It was attended by many returnees whose stories of Soviet society after Stalin are explored through flashbacks. By the use of vignettes he examines the personal choices of returnees, recounts their arguments, and attempts to explain why so many ex-prisoners remained silent. The story raises the question of why the moral principles that had been for many such a sustaining source of courage throughout the prison years failed to lead to a firm stand and active search for truth when the tyranny was officially over. The answer it offers is essentially that the Party under Khrushchev offered political prisoners a deal to which years of grinding deprivation made them amenable -- rehabilitation in exchange for silence. Silence in exchange for never having to go back. Many ex-prisoners wanted to put their hardships behind them and return to the
positions of authority they had once enjoyed, or perhaps to gain new privileges. Moreover, many had always considered themselves loyal to the Party, even to Stalin and even while in camp, and were ready to serve the Party. Indeed, we have seen a number of prisoners who, upon release, took jobs with the MVD authorities if they were offered.

Through two characters, Bogoraz offers two contrasting ways by which returnees could resolve the issues of rehabilitation. Pavel, the main character, remained an ideologue. He could not adjust to his returnee status, did not want restoration of Party membership, and was unforgiving. In contrast, another character was pragmatic. His approach was essentially 'you’re back from that cold and bitter Vorkuta earth, forgive, and get yourself a decent place in the Party.' Accordingly, he helped returnees to re-assimilate.

In one particularly revealing scene, Pavel inveighs against the pragmatic ex-prisoners, "pathetic comedy ... you’ve been paid off [with]... two months compensation, rehabilitation, good jobs, ... apartments, dachas, personal pensions ... Vorkuta never existed ... don’t raise it from the ashes ... you’ve sold out." Later he remonstrates "they shut your mouths, be silent [since you are] in an enviable position." This work was fictional, but the issues it depicted were true to the reality of returnee life.

Zorya Leonidovna Serebryakova

In spite of the difficulties encountered by many returnees, there were a number of them who fared well under Khrushchev. They insist that there was no commitment of silence, implicit or explicit. Zorya Serebryakova, daughter of "enemy of the people" Leonid Serebryakov, lost her father and step-father, Grigory Sokolnikov, (both high Soviet officials) to the Great Terror. Her mother, Galina, a Party writer, spent twenty years in camps and prisons. (Cohen cites Galina Serabryakova as an example of a returnee who "rose high in the Soviet establishment by outwardly forgiving or forgetting the Gulag." Zorya’s father was arrested in 1931, and by the time she was sent to an orphanage in 1937 at age 13, her
father had already perished. Like other children of "enemies of the people," in this children's home, where the windows had bars, she was fingerprinted and photographed with a number. Zorya went on to join her mother in exile in Semipalatinsk. She studied there from 1945 to 1947 and was married in 1948. Her husband, a Polish Jew, was arrested in 1949 because of connections with a family member of the "enemy of the people" Serebryakov. During this time, her mother had been in camp, then in exile, then in a "political isolator" in Vladimir, then exiled to Dzhambul, Kazakhstan and then arrested again.

When Zorya returned to Moscow in 1950, she too was arrested. Apparently the authorities considered her suspect because she was married to an "enemy of the people," her mother was a political prisoner, she had corresponded with an "enemy of the people" Sokolnikov, and she had preserved a photo of the "enemy of the people" Serebryakov. In the nineties, when Serebryakova was allowed to see her "delo" [dossier], she noted that there was no mention of the fact that these charges against her were for corresponding with men who were respectively her step-father and father. She spent two months in isolation, and in the meantime, the KGB ordered that her baby son be put in a children's home. In November of that year, Zorya was reclassified from Article 58-10 to article 7-35 and sentenced to ten years of exile into which she was allowed to take her son as well. Serebryakova recalls that she was so happy upon hearing her new status of detainment that she jumped up and kissed the man who read the sentence. In exile in Dzhambul she worked as a teacher of Russian language at a Kazakh school on a kolkhoz. In 1952, she managed to get a job teaching English, but could not get a job in her own field of history.

In 1955, Zorya Serebryakova's sentence was halved, permitting her immediate liberation under the 1953 amnesty. Zorya's mother, who had been in the Potma camps, was also released into exile. In the summer of 1955 Zorya returned with her son to the home of friends in Moscow. Serebryakova
asserts that "When Stalin died the terror ended ... there may have been repression, but there was no terror. You could say everything under Khrushchev. [She adds] We did not have this horrible corruption that we have today [1996]." She also recalls that shortly after her arrival in Moscow in 1955, the police came to the home where she was staying with friends and demanded that this "politically compromised" person leave the capital within 72 hours.

Despite her early personal history, or maybe because of her later personal history, Serebryakova disagreed with the view that the Soviet system was adapted to repression. Zorya was rehabilitated in February of 1956. Then, on February 14, 1956 the first day of the XX Party Congress, Zorya’s mother, Galina, was also rehabilitated. At that time the Military Procuracy would not consider her father’s posthumous rehabilitation, but they did treat Zorya politely. Serebryakov’s rehabilitation came under Gorbachev. Zorya defended her candidate dissertation under Khrushchev, and her doctoral dissertation under Gorbachev. After rehabilitation she was even called by the Academy of Sciences and invited to join. Interestingly, the place of our interview -- Serebryakova’s spacious dacha on the outskirts of Moscow -- had its own history of repression and adaptation. This dacha had been taken over and occupied by Procurator Vyshinsky until Zorya and her mother regained their privileges. It is ironic, but not unusual, that this victim’s house was occupied by a henchman, and then once again by the victim.

Zorya contends that from the end of 1955 until 1964, the rehabilitated were treated as heroes. Indeed, some formerly high functionaries were released, immediately rehabilitated, reinstated in the Party, and officially honored as Party veterans and builders of communism. One military engineer who was incarcerated from 1938-1948 was lauded with official certificates congratulating him on his 70th and 75th birthdays (1971 and 1976), and commemorating the 30-year anniversary of the victory of the Soviet armed forces. Absent from these certificates of praise for his service to the
country was any mention of his incarceration.\textsuperscript{144}

This stance on the celebrated returnee is also shared by Serebryakova’s fellow historian and colleague at the Gorbachev Foundation, Vladlen Terentevich Loginov. Loginov challenges the credibility of the presentation and representation of the victims’ experience that has been disseminated by organizations such as Memorial. Since returnees were really afforded a "hero’s reception" under Khrushchev, he argues, their stories to the contrary cannot be true.\textsuperscript{145} In opposition to his position is the evidence presented by many former victims. That evidence regarding their stigmatized status is so abundant and so consistent with corroborating data, that it has both face validity and convergent validity. Nevertheless, to the extent that Loginov’s data are accurate, this illustrates the variability and unevenness of the process of rehabilitation.

The return of confiscated property

As it was with the restitution of social and legal status, so it was with the return of property confiscated at the time of arrest. Restoration of property to the previous owners was impeded by the grudging attitude on the part of Soviet officials as well as honest confusion. Since inventories made at the time of arrest were often as arbitrary and illegitimate as the arrest itself, even if officials were willing to be helpful, it was difficult for them to know what to give back. Thus, the recovery of valuables now in the hands of the state often became a matter of the victim’s word against the official document.\textsuperscript{146} We have already seen how little credibility the state extended to the victims.

According to the Procuracy, early in 1956 there was no direct law governing the question of whether rehabilitated persons should be reimbursed for the 1956 value of their confiscated property or for the NKVD 1937-38 assessment of its worth.\textsuperscript{147} One memoirist describes what was seized at the time of her grandfather’s arrest: an antique carpet, a porcelain
tea set, a Swiss hunting rifle, a gold watch and an engagement ring, among many other items. The value assigned to the truncated inventory -- not all of the items were listed -- was so "ridiculous," the author tells us, that when her grandmother presented this document during the rehabilitation procedures, "even the lawyers were indignant." Gold watches, for example, were often described as "yellow metal" watches, and valued accordingly. When confiscated items could not be returned, officials often based financial compensation on these descriptions, despite their apparent knowledge of this deceptive practice. Moreover, even though the family members who stayed behind sometimes received a copy of the inventory, this, too, was seized if they themselves were arrested. Some clearly incomplete inventories were signed by family members who, in the confusion and shock of the arrest of a loved one, did not bother to read the document. Upon seeing the inventory of her property that was confiscated in 1957, the widow of a posthumously rehabilitated Old Bolshevik protested, "Judging by this description, we were sitting on stools and eating from earthen bowls with tin spoons. At the time I did not pay any attention and just signed what they gave me to sign."

By the end of 1956, no doubt as a result of the chaotic practice of restitution, the USSR Ministry of Finance instituted a process of re-assessment of the value of confiscated property. The November correspondence of this agency attests to numerous "expert assessments" to determine how much more money the state owed to the returnee. Each object was evaluated in terms of its quality, its 1937 value, and its 1956 cost. The difference was to be paid to the returnee.

There were some instances in which petitioners insisted on the return of property that was not listed on the inventory. This presented a problem that had to be investigated. Yekaterina Ivanovna Muravieva maintained that a number of items, including a painting, were not returned. Her daughter identified other missing materials, such as documents
and letters, that were seized by the MGB during its 1948 search. The investigation into this matter resulted in a decision for the henchmen and against the victim. An August 1956 KGB letter to the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet asserts that the former MGB agents who carried out the search and listed the inventory, as well as others who were present, confirm that Muravieva never owned such things. With regard to the documents and letters to which her daughter referred, they had been "indiscriminately destroyed". The outcome of this case and many like it must have discouraged other returnees from pressing their legitimate claims. Also discouraging was the impunity with which officials engaged in deceptive practices and subverted their own laws. The conclusions in this case were perhaps a reflection of the same type of passive aggressive bureaucratic behavior observed in 1953-1955 (see Chapter III).

These practices did not, however, escape official notice. An October 1956 provincial Procuracy document to the General Procuracy complains about a particular directive which gave the KGB a wide latitude in deciding these disputed matters. The provincial division requested that the courts should make the final decision on confiscated property, and that the KGB should only be responsible for verifying the petitions. The General Procuracy's dismissive response was that a different KGB directive governed compensatory practices, and that the provincial procuracy official should familiarize itself with it. The General Procuracy's response was a flimsy attempt to rebut the obvious fact that the KGB had a conflict of interest in judging its own cases. The KGB along with the Ministry of Finance continued to determine the outcome of these cases.

All this notwithstanding, it would be a mistake to conclude that petitioners were always honest about their confiscated property. Clearly there must have been cases in which items were claimed to have been seized, when in fact they never even existed. Quite often, the facts of the matter
were hard to ascertain, but sometimes the authorities were right. In one case, in 1957 and 1958 Vasily Kotlov tried to claim compensation on behalf of his wife, whose father was posthumously rehabilitated. He insisted on a re-assessment of his father-in-law's confiscated property. In 1956 Kotlov's wife began the petitioning process with a claim for reimbursement for a car, a piano, and three bicycles that supposedly belonged to her father. These items were not listed on the inventory. The KGB checked into this claim and found that he had owned a motorcycle and two bicycles. Furthermore, they contended that while he did own a piano, he had sent it to his daughter in Moscow in 1936 -- a year before his arrest in Ufa. According to a Supreme Soviet document, witnesses at his former place of work and residence also attested to these facts, and confirmed that he did not have a car.

Kotlov went to the reception room of the Supreme Soviet fifteen times between the end of 1957 and April of 1958. To the extent that the documentation is credible, there were good grounds to challenge the legitimacy of his request. Kotlov was arrested in 1952 for swindling. His chief offence was "underground advocacy" -- he pretended to be a lawyer and took money to write citizens' complaints to official institutions. He was then sent to the Serbsky Institute to establish whether he could be held accountable for his actions. He was declared accountable and sentenced to ten years of correctional labor camp. Subsequently, his sentence was lowered and he was released under the amnesty in 1953. In this instance, it seems indeed possible that the official assessment of the falsity of Kotlov's claims may have been correct. However, because it was often the case that officials lied, ordinary citizens may also have felt justified in lying. In a system so flagrantly exploitative of the repressed, the victims felt warranted in finding ways to manipulate the system in order to gain some small recompense. It might be added that those who survived the camps well enough to return would likely have had to acquire manipulative and deceptive practices. As in any
other social organization, some were more likely than others to bend the rules to their advantage.

Not all problems with obtaining compensation were official in origin. Sometimes domestic problems complicated the process of compensation. In one such case, Dmitry Danilovich Golovin, an opera soloist of the Bolshoi Theater, was arrested in 1944, sentenced to ten years of correctional labor camp, and released in 1953. Golovin’s son and brother had also been convicted with him, but they were released earlier and were rehabilitated in 1956. Upon his release, Golovin was told that he could not return to his family in Moscow because they wanted nothing to do with him. Golovin claimed that his former wife’s "slander" hindered his rehabilitation. Many highly placed artists petitioned on his behalf, and rehabilitation was finally granted in November 1965. In the meantime, Golovin remarried in 1956. The family from his previous marriage maintained their distance, and only started to show some interest in him after his 1965 official exoneration. When Golovin died in 1966, his ex-wife did not attend the funeral. She did, however, make an immediate claim to inherit the money he had received in compensation after rehabilitation. It is not clear what the outcome of this case was, since these documents were part of a Memorial dossier, rather than an official archive which generally would have included both complaints and responses. It is, however, entirely possible that this matter lingered on for years. This is one of the many examples of how personal and domestic issues interacted with the camp experience to influence the compensation process.

In a country where service to the motherland was intensely promoted by propaganda, the symbols of that service in the form of awards were an important indicator of social status. For many ex-prisoners the strongest confirmation of their acceptance back into Soviet society was the restitution of their state honors. The return of previously awarded decorations was a special kind of acknowledgement of their
rehabilitated status. It was the official and public emblem of legal exoneration and regained social status. Armed with their medals, ex-prisoners could display their regained status and once again feel proud of their past service to the motherland. That is why this issue ranked high in the concerns of many returnees. That is why Stalinist henchmen had moved so quickly to strip victims of their official decorations. After robbing them of the symbols of state service, it became easier to stigmatize them as enemies. In the years between 1938-1958, 72,791 citizens were stripped of their decorations. The process of restoration of these honors began in 1953 but progressed very slowly. Between 1953 and 1958 the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet granted only 2,125 ex-prisoners the right to retrieve their medals. This figure included the return of decorations to the families of posthumously rehabilitated victims of the terror like Tukhachevsky and Yakir.

The co-existence of destalinizing and restalinizing policies

The years between the XX Party Congress in 1956 and Khrushchev’s ouster in 1964 were characterized by ambivalent attitudes, inconsistent directives, and sometimes contradictory policies toward returnees and the rehabilitated. Still, during this period there was evidence that the old repressive bureaucracy was lumbering toward reform. A number of new regulations were instituted to accommodate the needs of the growing segment of society comprised of ex-prisoners. One such accommodation was the establishment of legal provisions for supporting the financial and other needs of returning prisoners. In July of 1956, a new law on state pensions was proposed. Though it did not refer specifically to returnees, the recommended budgetary reforms were tailored toward incorporating large masses of pension-seekers into the system. Moreover, in a gesture toward clearing returnees’ names, the Academy of Science’s Institute of State and Law published an article arguing that interrogators do not have
the right to coerce confessions, and that verdicts based on confessions of guilt (Vyshinsky's theories) were a "gross violation of socialist justice." The article defended the presumption of innocence — a major departure from the Stalinist presumption of guilt without the right to prove one's innocence.

However, many reforms did not go very far. In 1956 the restrictions that had been placed on a number of deported peoples were lifted, but that did not necessarily give them the right to return to their homelands. Zemskov has characterized these half-measures thus: "The directives on the abolition of the special regime with regard to deported peoples and other groups were distinguished by indecisiveness, and attempts to avoid being subjected to the slightest criticism of the previous policies of mass deportation." Tens of thousands of Chechens and Ingush returned to their homelands without official permission. Some of the turmoil created by these mass returns to places Russians had occupied has been recounted earlier (see Chapter III). Finally, in November of 1956 the Chechens, Ingush, Kalmyks, Balkars, and other national groups did receive official autonomy which entitled them to return. Even after their official return, problems abounded. For example, despite numerous Central Committee directives on the work placement of these returnees, by April of 1957, only 1/6 of the Chechens and Ingush were able to find employment.

The returning deported peoples generally aspired toward the re-establishment of their national identity and the restoration of their rights rather than re-assimilation. Ongoing conflicts to resolve the problems related to the return eventually led to massive bloodshed. It is in this context no coincidence that the Chechen separatist leader, Dzhokhar Dudaev, like most of his cohorts, was a returnee.

As with much of the reform process, it was variable in its application. In 1967, the Volga Germans received legal rehabilitation, though they were not permitted to return to
the Volga region. The Crimean Tatars were partially exonerated in 1967, though they were not granted autonomy at that time, nor were they permitted to return en masse to the homeland. In the sixties and early seventies, dissidents like Pyotr Yakir, son of the executed Red Army commander Iona Yakir, were to jeopardize their own legal standing by campaigning for restoration of the rights of the Crimean Tatars. For his support of this unpopular cause, General Pyotr Grigorenko was committed to a Special Psychiatric Hospital. The Volga Germans, like the Crimean Tatars, were not fully rehabilitated until late in the Soviet era. The problems associated with the return of the deported peoples lingered for decades (see Chapter VII).

Various amnesties through the years resulted in the staggered release of prisoners. A 1957 amnesty in celebration of the 40th anniversary of the October revolution, for instance, liberated 196,713 prisoners. The November 1958 document from the Khrushchev Special Files that reveals this statistic, does not specify, however, what percentage of these releasees were political prisoners. Moreover, the amnesty was primarily aimed at prisoners with terms of under three years, so it did not appear to be dealing with Stalin’s zeks. However, it did improve returnees’ status since it revoked the sentences of those who were freed, reduced by half the terms of those still in camp, and provided release for exiles who had finished their prison terms. There was thus a considerable movement of ex-prisoners back into society during these years. Again, according to the Khrushchev Files, in the period between 1953 and 1958, a total of 4,118,414 prisoners were released from correctional labor camps and colonies by decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet. This number includes many ordinary criminals, and states only that they were released; it discloses nothing about their rehabilitation status. Elsewhere it is recorded that the number of incarcerated "counter-revolutionaries" declined from 480,000 in the fall of 1953 to approximately 11,000 on January 1, 1959.
In the spring of 1958 the restrictions were lifted from 25,000 special settlers, including former kulaks and family members of "leaders and participants in the nationalist underground". This regulation did not necessarily carry the implication that these ex-exiles were entitled to return to their homeland or to the return of their confiscated property. This is typical of the half-way measures taken toward reform. Typical also were the back and forth oscillations of the reform movement. While the process of de-Stalinization under Khrushchev often moved two steps forward and one step backward, it sometimes moved one step forward and two steps backward. While the government was releasing old political prisoners it was arresting new ones. And although the numbers of new political arrests were low by historical standards they attest to an ongoing policy of official repression during this 'period of liberalization.' According to Memorial researchers, materials culled from the KGB archives have revealed that in the year 1958 alone, 1,416 people were arrested and convicted on the basis of Article 70 ('anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda', a new version of 58-10). And these were only the documented cases. In that same year, Boris Pasternak was forced to decline the Nobel Prize for Dr. Zhivago for fear of deportation. The novel's criticisms of the political system had not been sufficiently disguised by the fiction.

In this climate of censorship, camp city reports, starting in the late fifties and published from regions like Kolyma/Magadan, revealed precious little on their history of forced labor. These "gosizdat" (i.e., official) publications generally portray what went on there as the heroic, self-sacrificing conquest of the wilderness, but do not refer to the conquest of the laborers who conquered the wilderness. When the camp labor is addressed, the references are usually oblique, misleading, and euphemistic. One work, Notes on the History of the north-east RSFSR (1917-1953) tells us that in Dalstroï "there was ... large and intense work aimed at the re-education through socially useful work of a contingent of
former criminals and other socially dangerous elements." It does not detail the principle of pedagogy employed in the effort at re-education. Another book, A Historical Chronicle of the Magadan Province, employs local archives in its historical description. It mentions the fact that Magadan provincial and city organizations met in March 1956 to discuss the results of the XX Party Congress. This was probably the time when the Secret Speech was read in Magadan. A later work on the industrial development of Siberia published in 1982 strives to refute Western claims that Siberia was developed exclusively through the use of forced labor.

While the repressive policies emanated from Moscow, it was mostly in the geographically peripheral regions that they came to reside. It was also in these regions, the places where the Gulag was being dismantled, that the political climate was slower in thawing. An example of this is the troubled history of the publication of a collection of memoirs from Kolyma victims and survivors described by Semyon Vilensky (see Chapter IV). Also revealing were some works whose subject matter and place of publication allude to the personal history of their author. A book published in Perm in 1963, regarding recent developments in lumbering, was very likely written by someone who had found out more than he ever wanted to know about chopping down trees! Likewise, we need not stretch our imaginations to recognize that the editor of the 1967 Handbook of Selection and Seed Growing of Oil Plants is a returnee.

At the same time, through veiled (or not so veiled) criticism, important steps were being taken in the direction of examining the Stalinist terror. In 1961, for example, the journal Novy Mir published a review of a book, edited by the Soviet General Procurator(!) Rudenko, on the Nuremberg trials. It stressed the importance and "timeliness" of the publication of such documents, because they "reveal the crimes of German imperialism." It summons us to "be vigilant about any attempts at new German [my italics] imperialist aggression." Considering the year, the place, and the
subject matter of the publication, one wonders if there was not an implicit question raised about the trial of Soviet henchmen.

In contrast to his more careful speech at the XX Party Congress in 1956, Khrushchev's indictment of Stalin at the XXII Party Congress in the fall of 1961 was relatively open and broad. He also revealed the complicity of Molotov, Kaganovich, Malenkov and Voroshilov in Stalin's crimes by showing their signatures on death sentences of even the wives of "enemies of the people."178 Such was the anti-Stalin mood at the Congress that Dora Lazurkina, a delegate who had spent 17 years in the Gulag, disclosed that in her daily contact with Lenin he had expressed to her, "I do not like being next to Stalin, who inflicted so much harm on the Party."179 The motion to remove Stalin's body from the Lenin Mausoleum, where it had been since 1953, was proposed and accepted, and Stalin was relegated to a place alongside the Kremlin wall. A proposal to build a monument to victims of the terror was also submitted. The fulfillment of this sentiment would not be realized until three decades later, and it was not the state that inspired or created this commemoration of the victims of Soviet terror -- it was the organization Memorial.

The silence from above had been broken by the XX Party Congress, and the muted struggle from below to deal with the history of repression and the histories of the repressed could now be expressed. Medvedev characterizes the period that immediately followed the XXII Party Congress as a "time of memoirs".180 Two of the more stirring publications of 1962 were Solzhenitsyn's story, One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich, and Yevgeny Yevtushenko's poem, "The Heirs of Stalin." Solzhenitsyn's tale, published in Novy Mir, was about a typical day in a Siberian labor camp during the war as described by a prisoner.181 Yevtushenko's poem, written after Stalin's removal from the mausoleum, warned of the dangers of Stalin's spirit escaping the grave. It was published in Pravda in October of 1962. The taboos against speaking and writing about the Gulag had been removed. The terror, the
camp theme, and anti-Stalin sentiments found their way into literature, memoirs, film, and theater. Fiction followed a more cautious, but no less effective approach to treating these issues. For this reason the present research has incorporated many of these stories.

Stephen Cohen describes the effect of the pivotal discussions that ensued in this period thus:

The magnitude of the unfolding picture shattered the corollary fiction that only Stalin and a few accomplices had been guilty. Publicizing the camps meant publicizing the conduct of millions. Face-to-face confrontations between victims and their former tormentors were being portrayed in literature and on the stage. And this raised the question of present-day Stalinists....

The present-day Stalinists, many of whom were still in positions of influence, tried to stem the tide of anti-Stalinism. The publication of *Ivan Denisovich* led to a debate between its "friends and foes," who had opposing opinions on this approach to the examination of the Soviet past. When Solzhenitsyn's book was nominated for the Lenin Prize for Literature in 1963, conservative forces realized that the popularity of a book with such a potentially incriminating theme was a sign that things were getting out of hand -- at least out of the Party's hands.

A letter to the editor published in *Kazakhstanskaya Pravda* provides an example of the "foe" view. The writer, presents himself as a returnee who disputes Solzhenitsyn's portrayal and expresses the hope that a journalist (whom he names) will write a true story about zeks in the Gulag. This true story should not dwell on the inmates' struggles for survival, as Solzhenitsyn had, but rather should emphasize their sense of comraderie, humaneness, and communist convictions. The "returnee," if indeed he was a genuine returnee, must be counted among the true believers, one of those who felt that they were the builders of socialism, no matter that they were imprisoned in its edifice.

Another sign from the literary front that the times were changing was a change in the editorship of the *Concise*
Literary Encyclopedia (CLE). This general reference work on literature, the first volume of which appeared in 1962, provided biographical and terminological information. A number of editors and consultants were returnees who brought with them the perspectives of their own personal histories of repression as well as a wealth of information on other repressed writers. The editorship had its own history of repression. In the fall of 1964 one of the editors who had spent ten years in prisons and labor camps, was expelled on orders of the KGB from the Institute of World Literature and the Writers’ Union, and stripped of his editorial posts.

Despite this Stalinist measure, and despite the fact that the staff still had to accommodate more to the demands of Party critics than to those of scholars, some of the early traditions of the encyclopedia were maintained. One significant illustration of continuity of the scholarly tradition was that later volumes of the CLE did include entries on some returnees, though their personal history was sometimes referred to in the Soviet tradition euphemistically. The entry on Galina Serebryakova, for example, reads "She was one of the first in Soviet literature to create a picture of the founding father of scientific communism, K. Marx, in the novel 'Marx’s Youth' (books 1-2, 1933-34). After a twenty year interval she returned to literary activity."

Volume 9, however, published in 1978, abandoned the policy of referring to anyone’s history of repression.

By 1964, officials began to harness the forces that they had unleashed, and the de-Stalinization process from above ended abruptly with the end of the regime of Khrushchev. "The screws were so tightened," observed one ex-zek, "that the rehabilitated no longer felt rehabilitated." Brezhnev made the Khrushchev regime’s political ambivalence, even with all of its impediments, retrospectively look good to reformers. The discrepancy between reform policy and reform practice which characterized the ambivalent efforts of Khrushchev was
replaced by unfettered consistency in the Brezhnev years. It was a consistency of retrenchment. There was no equivocation with regard to returnees' rights, because the new leadership did not purport to resolve the lingering problems associated with returnee status. Among the more visible signs of re-Stalinization (and practice reflecting policy) in this period were the trial and conviction of the writers Andrei Sinyavsky and Yuli Daniel in 1966, and the placement of a marble bust of Stalin on his gravesite in 1970. Cohen contends that this official gesture was not "unequivocal rehabilitation . . . but it was rehabilitation nonetheless.... Governments do not erect monuments, even small ones, to people they consider to be criminals."186

Significantly, one of the few real rehabilitations of the period was Molotov, who had been expelled from the Party after the XXII Party Congress and restored to membership in 1984. At a 1984 Politburo meeting attended by Gorbachev, a discussion about "illegal rehabilitations" was raised. This referred to prisoners who were "rightly punished," and therefore whose official transgressions did not deserve exoneration. Solzhenitsyn was named as one such example. Furthermore, taking a stance that further reflected the resurgence of political conservatism, Gorbachev supported restoring Party membership to Malenkov and Kaganovich.189

In the Khrushchev years, reform policy often differed from practice because the problems presented by returnees could not be fully and consistently dealt with until the political issues represented by their repression were addressed. To acknowledge that these former "enemies of the people" were really innocent victims of repression by the state is to undermine the moral foundations and legitimacy of the state. If criminals caused the problem, and the inmates were not the criminals, then where should one look for the malefactors? They would not be hard to find because many of them were still in office. The politically expedient partial truth was that the blame rested with Stalin. A more honest
appraisal of the repression was not to happen for nearly four decades.

Repression had been used as a significant instrument of governance. Moreover, even after this was officially recognized, repression continued to be used as an instrument of governance. The political system was not ready to correct its fundamental flaws. This ambiguity from the "top-down" was also present from the "bottom-up". So it was that many people (employers, landlords, officials) who had not been directly victimized believed in the system, supported the Party, and had trouble confronting the historical reality, or at least adjusting to it. This attitude was consequently reflected in their antipathy toward the returnees.

That people who had not been incarcerated continued to believe in and support the Party is not surprising. What is surprising is that so many prisoners, despite their lost youths, lost families, and long years of hard labor under deplorable conditions, were not politicized by their experience to the extent that they challenged the legitimacy of the governing system. On the contrary, many individuals retained their belief and strove for restoration of Party membership not just on practical but on ideological grounds. Their political convictions and the way that repression affected the political system will be explored in the next chapter.
References

1. Lipper, Eleven Years in Soviet Prison Camps, p. 162. A former camp inspector's slightly different version is also quoted in Helmut M. Fehling, One Great Prison: The Story behind Russia's Unreleased POW's (Boston: The Beacon Press, 1951), p. ix. This joke is also employed in a 1997 Izvestiia article. In a commentary on Stalinist repression and Stalinism, it cites increasingly limited access (reclassification) to Party archive documents as one of the enduring consequences ("Vechnyi Rab: Pravda o 37-m gode vnov' zasekrechivaetsia," Eternal Slave: the Truth about 1937 is Once Again Classified," Izvestiia, 6 September 1997).

2. Keep, Last of the Empires, pp. 79-80.


6. Ibid.


8. GARF, f. 7523, op. 107, d. 123, 11. 59, 56-58. A number of files in this fund (the USSR Supreme Soviet), especially those containing correspondence with the USSR Procuracy on citizens' petitions for re-examination of their cases (or those of their relatives), could not be investigated because they are still classified.

9. Ibid., 11. 60-61.


11. Roza Iakovlevna Smushkevich, interview held at her Moscow home, November 30, 1996.

12. GARF, f. 7523, op. 107, d. 255, 1. 54.


14. GARF, f. 7523, op. 107, d. 255, 1. 56.

15. Smushkevich, interview.
16. GARF, f. 7523, op. 107, d. 255, ll. 1-4.
17. Ibid., 1. 5.
18. Ibid., 1. 11.
19. Ibid., ll. 7-8.
20. Ibid., 1. 9.
22. Ibid., ll. 1050-1051.
23. see also GARF, f. 8131, op. 32, d. 4754, 1. 2.
27. See, for example, Aleksandr Kron's fictional "Bessonitsa," in Novyi Mir 4 (April, 1997): 41.
31. GARF, f. 7523, op. 107, d. 123, ll. 84-85.
34. Gagen, ll. 1071-1073.
35. Ibid., 1. 1105.
36. Ibid., 1. 1106.
37. Iadviga Iosifovna Verzhenskaia, "Vospominaniia," Memorial, f. 2, op. 1, d. 33, ll. 2909 1068-1073.

38. Ibid., l. 1095.


41. Fil’shtinskii, My shagaem pod konvoem, p. 186.

42. Ibid., interview held at his Moscow home, April 20, 1995.

43. Ibid., p. 187.

44. Lev Emmanuilovich Razgon, interview held at his Moscow home, April 16, 1995.


47. GARF, f. 385, op. 25, d. 151, l. 2 and ll. 1, 4, 5, 36.


49. GARF, f. 9401, op. 2, d. 479, ll. 379-380.

50. GARF, f. 8131, op. 32, d. 4957, l. 123, also ll. 78-80, 82-87, 97, 121-129.

51. GARF, f. 9474, op. 16, d. 604, l. 81, also ll. 104, 105, 217, 218.

52. GARF, f. 385, op. 25, d. 154, l. 7, see also d. 150, 11. 39, 40; d. 152, ll. 1, 2, 16; d. 153, ll. 18-26; d. 154, ll. 1, 2, 6, 15, 16, 18.

53. Ibid., d. 155, l. 8, and also ll. 1-3.

54. GARF, f. 9401, op. 2, d. 507, l. 87, and ll. 85, 86, 88.

55. GARF, f. 9474, op. 16, d. 723, l. 16.

56. Ibid., l. 2.

57. Materials sent by Roy Medvedev to Stephen Cohen, early eighties.


60. Ibid., l. 182.

61. GARF, f. 8131, op. 32, d. 4754, 11. 4, 2.

62. GARF, f. 411, op. 4, d. 80, l. 6.

63. Memorial, f. 1, op. 1, d. 1693, 11. 0016 1612 1878-880, 1893-1912.

64. See N.A. Barsukov, "XX S"ezd v retrospektive Khrushcheva," Otechestvennaia Istoriia 6 (1996).


66. Ibid., p. 348.


68. Barsukov, p. 171.

69. GARF, f. 8131, op. 32, d. 4581, l. 3.

70. Ibid., l. 31.

71. Ibid., l. 7.


73. Medoveedev, transcript of Cohen interview, pp. 13-14.


76. M.S. Gorbachev, "Vstupitel'noe slovo," XX S"ezd: Materialy Konferentsii..., p. 6.

77. GARF, f. 9401, op. 2, d. 482, l. 69.

78. Barsukov, p. 175.

80. Solzhenitsyn, pp. 489-90.

81. Ibid., p. 490.

82. Keep, Last of the Empires, p. 79, citing E. Nosov, "Kostriuma ne Alova," in Nikita Sergeevich Khrushchev: Materialy k biografii (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1989), p. 98. Nosov goes on to assert that many returnees died soon after release because they were unable to adapt, alienated as they were from their families, from whom they were separated by barbed wire for the best years of their lives.

83. Some very poignant scenes from this first journey have been described in memoirs. Former prisoners were not only confronted with society, and vice-versa, but they were also confronted with themselves. In Kino: Politika i Liudi (30-e gody) (Moscow: Materik, 1995), for example, one ex-zek describes a touching scene from the train ride home: "In liberty we had the good fortune of riding in passenger trains. I went into the bathroom to clean up a bit. I am washing my face, and peering at me from the mirror is an unfamiliar old woman with short hair ... and a slight face. I was frightened and ran out into the corridor, where an officer asked me: 'what's with you?'. I pointed to the bathroom. There's some old woman in there. He opened the door -- no one was there. And then I understood: that woman was I...." (p. 179).

84. GARF, f. 8131, op. 32, d. 4847, l. 185-187.

85. Ibid., f. 9401, op. 2, d. 500, l. 319.

86. Ibid., f. 8131, op. 32, d. 4847, l. 142-43.

87. Ibid., l. 144.

88. Ibid., l. 145.


90. GARF, f. 8131, op. 32, d. 4847, l. 90, 198, 199.

91. Ibid., l. 201.

92. Memorial, f. 1, op. 1, d. 47, l. 0008 3111 2027-28.

93. Ekaterina Ivanovna Murav'eva, GARF, f. 7523, op. 107, d. 184, l. 28.

94. Izvestiia, 13 September 1956, p. 3.


98. Ibid., p. 64.

99. Ibid., p. 65.

100. Ibid., p. 66.


103. Ibid., p. 111.


105. Naumov, "N.S. Khrushchev i...," p. 34.

106. Semën Vilenskii, interview held at his Moscow home, October 16, 1997.

107. Arsenii Roginskii, interview at Memorial headquarters, Moscow, April 26, 1996.

108. Ibid.


110. Memorial, f. 1, op. 1, d. 4088, l. 0028 2201 1896.


115. Roginskii, interview.


118. The information on Lazutin’s work was made available by Stephen Cohen, Princeton archive.


120. Ibid., pp. 95-105.

121. John Emerich Edward Dalberg-Acton, Letter to Bishop Mandell Creighton, April 5, 1887.

122. Memorial, f. 1, op. 1, d. 610, l. 0011 0113 1396-1407.

123. Iurii Alekseevich Anokhin, response to questionnaire for this project, December 12, 1995.


131. Memorial, f. 1, op. 1, d. 498, l. 0011 0113 0422-24. See "Ekhali po nebu oblaka...," *Ogonëk*, no. 12 (March, 1991) for a portrait of Larisa’s mother (Ol’ga Grigor’evna) and her artistic endeavors while in camp.

132. Bogoraz’ family had clearly always taken an active stand against Soviet repression. On the 20th anniversary of the Moscow Helsinki group, Larisa Bogoraz related the following exchange that she had had with Gorbachev. In a forum in which she was talking about Soviet abuses of human rights, Gorbachev proudly quipped: "Who freed the political prisoners?". Bogoraz retorted: "I did." Moscow, May 13,
1996.


134. Ibid., p. 8.


139. Zoria Leonidovna Serebriakova, interview held at her dacha outside of Moscow, November 29, 1996.

140. Id., interview.

141. Id., "Ottepel', zamorzki, ottepel'...," p. 91.

142. Id., interview.

143. Khrushchev personally intervened on behalf of individuals like Ol'ga Shatunovskaya. She, in turn, assisted others (materials on rehabilitation from Antonov-Ovseenko to Stephen Cohen, complete with the instruction not to publish during the lifetime of ‘O.G.Sh.’).

144. Edvard Frantsevich Kondrat’ev, Memorial, f. 1, op. 1, d. 2333, l. 0020 2712 0430-443.

145. Vladlen Terent’evich Loginov, interview held at Serebriakova’s dacha outside of Moscow, November 29, 1996.


147. GARF, f. 8131, op. 32, d. 4847, l. 139.

149. Comments of a rehabilitated person, materials given to Stephen Cohen by Roy Medvedev, early eighties. See also Bondarevskii, p. 118.

150. GARF, f. 7523, op. 107, d. 123, l. 49 (ob).


152. GARF, f. 7733, op. 45, d. 520, l. 1-123. The fact that the 1956 correspondence of the USSR Ministry of Finance regarding such issues fills over 32 volumes attests to the enormity of the problem.

153. Ibid., d. 184, l. 26-31.

154. GARF, f. 8131, op. 32, d. 4847, l. 195-97.

155. GARF, f. 7523, op. 107, d. 74, l. 4, 99-14, 19-22, 24, 25.

156. Memorial, f. 1, op. 1, d. 1136, l. 0014 0712 0607, 608, 619-22, 624, 625, 634-37, 646, 647, 653, 654, 677-79.

157. GARF, f. 7523, op. 107, d. 136, l. 100.

158. Ibid., l. 95, 99.

159. Pravda, 12 and 15 July 1956.


166. In a sign of full official recognition, the anniversary of Pëtr Grigorenko's 90th birthday was commemorated in the 'House of the Russian Army' on October 16, 1997. Speakers included the human rights activist Liudmila
Alekseeva, and Grigorenko's son, Andrei Petrovich who came to Moscow from New York for the presentation of Grigorenko’s memoirs on this occasion. In addition to speaking about his father's life and struggle for human rights (which ended in New York), Andrei Petrovich voiced a plea in support of more humane conditions for the impoverished Russian armed forces.

167. GARF, f. 9401, op. 2, d. 500, l. 316.


170. GARF, f. 9401, op. 2, d. 497, ll. 335, 337.


175. V.V. Shmidt, Novoe prikhodit v lesoseky (Perm: Perm’skoe knizhnoe izdatel’stvо, 1963).


180. Medvedev, Cohen interview, p. 30. See also Van Goudoever.

181. In 1963 prisoners in the camps were allowed to read Ivan Denisovich. For their reactions, see Leonid Sitko, "Dubrovlag pri Khrushcheve," *Novyi Mir* 10 (1997): 160.

183. These terms were used in the title of an article by V. Lakshin in *Novyi Mir* 1 (January 1964): 223-245.


186. Ibid., p. 108.


189. Davies, p. 213.