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THE ROLE OF THE DISTRICT SECURITY THREES AND REGIONAL SECURITY FIVES IN IMPLEMENTING THE HEGEMONY OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA IN THE COUNTRYSIDE WITH THE EXAMPLE OF THE EAST BOHEMIAN REGIONS*

The issue of security threes and fives has not yet been sufficiently reflected in Czech historiographic production. Their activity was first pointed out by the historian Zora Dvořáková,¹ and they were also dealt with by Karel Kaplan² and Jan Frolík³ to a limited extent. The activity of the district security three (DS3) in Nová Paka⁴ has been documented in the most detail, and the role of the DS3 in Hradec Králové in carrying out the “Operation Meat” has also been captured.⁵ Much more extensive is the world literature on the internal mechanisms of the Soviet system, although the topic of security troikas has not yet been elaborated in a monograph. The historians David R.

* The article is a modified English edition of the existing Czech study, J. Urban, “V zemědělství je nutno věnovat pozornost všem otázkám: role bezpečnostních trojek a pětiek při prosazování kolektivizace” [in:] *Kolektivizace v Československu*, ed. J. Rokoský, L. Svoboda (Prague: Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes, 2013), pp. 245–259.

¹ Z. Dvořáková, *Z letopisů třetího odboje* (Prague: Josef Hříbal, 1992), p. 57.

² However, Kaplan's data displays multiple inaccuracies (K. Kaplan, *Nebezpečná bezpečnost: Státní bezpečnost 1948–1956* (Brno: Doplněk, 1999), pp. 179–180).

³ J. Frolík, “Nástin organizačního vývoje státněbezpečnostních složek SNB v letech 1948–1989”, *Sborník archivních prací* 1991, vol. 41, no. 2, p. 484.

⁴ J. Urban, *Venkov pod kolektivizační knoutou: okolnosti exemplárního “kulackého” procesu* (Prague: Vyšehrad, 2010), pp. 140–174.

⁵ *Idem*, “Počátky kolektivizace na Královéhradecku ve světle dokumentů centrálních archivů”, *Sborník prací východočeských archivů* 2009, no. 13, pp. 181–218, particularly pp. 196–203.

Shearer,⁶ Paul Hagenloh⁷ and J. Arch Getty⁸ deal with the operation of troikas deal in their works in great detail. The Soviet troikas were designed to simplify the process of repression by bypassing the judicial system's normal requirements for submission of evidence and thus, the troikas could convict and pass sentence on an individual whose case might be quashed by a regular court for lack of evidence. Shearer also pointed out the role of special troikas during the passportisation of the Soviet population in 1933–1934.⁹ Their role as extraordinary tribunals in the first half of 1928 was enlightened by Roberta T. Manning.¹⁰ Barry McLoughlin¹¹ has dealt with the activities of the troikas during the Mass Operations of the NKVD in 1937–1938, as well as Petrov and Roginskii in the case of the Polish Operation.¹² Although the inspiration of the troikas by the Soviet model is undeniable and also the staffing (the troika composition was: NKVD commander, state prosecutor, and local Party secretary) is based on the same or very similar principle, we will see that in the scope of activities the Czechoslovak district security threes and regional security fives differed.

In attempting to reconstruct the activity of these political bodies, historians face the fragmentariness of the sources. The minutes of the meetings of district security threes and regional security fives (RS5s) were not taken or have not been preserved due to later shredding. With regard to the analysed East Bohemian regions,¹³ the situation is as follows: the minutes of the meetings of the Hradec Králové RS5 are available for the period from May to December 1949, as well as June and October 1951; the meetings of the RS5 members in Pardubice are documented by a continuous series of minutes from August 1949 to June 1951. The documents are partially located in the State Regional Archive in Zámorsk and partially in the National Archives of the Czech Republic. The contents of DS3 members' meetings are only documented in a few districts: the minutes of the DS3 meetings in Přelouč have been preserved for the period of June to November 1951, the activity of the DS3 in Hradec Králové can be studied for the period from May

⁶ D.R. Shearer, *Policing Stalin's socialism: repression and social order in the Soviet Union, 1924–1953* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009); D.R. Shearer, V.N. Chaustov, *Stalin and the Lubyanka: a Documentary History of the Political Police and Security Organs in the Soviet Union, 1922–1953* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015); D.R. Shearer, "Stalinist Repression, Modernity, and the Social Engineering Argument" [in:] *The Anatomy of Terror: Political Violence under Stalin*, ed. J.R. Harris (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 105–119.

⁷ P. Hagenloh, *Stalin's Police: Public Order and Mass Repression in the USSR, 1926–1941* (Washington: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2009); *idem*, "Mass Operations' under Lenin and Stalin" [in:] *The Anatomy of Terror*, pp. 163–175.

⁸ J.A. Getty, O.V. Naumov, *The road to terror: Stalin and the self-destruction of the Bolsheviks, 1932–1939* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999); *idem*, "Pre-election Fever: The Origins of the 1937 Mass Operations" [in:] *The Anatomy of Terror*, pp. 216–235.

⁹ D.R. Shearer, "Social Disorder, Mass Repression and the NKVD during the 1930s." [in:] *Stalin's Terror: High Politics and Mass Repression in the Soviet Union*, ed. B. McLoughlin, K. McDermott (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), pp. 95–97.

¹⁰ R.T. Manning, *The rise and fall of "the extraordinary measures", January-June, 1928: Toward a reexamination of the onset of the Stalin revolution* (Pittsburgh: Center for Russian and East European Studies, University of Pittsburgh, 2001).

¹¹ B. McLoughlin, "Mass Operations of the NKVD, 1937–8: A Survey" [in:] *Stalin's Terror*, pp. 118–152.

¹² N. Petrov, A. Roginskii, "The 'Polish Operation' of the NKVD, 1937–8" [in:] *Stalin's Terror*, pp. 153–172.

¹³ In the monitored period, these are the Hradec Králové Region and the Pardubice Region.

1950 to September 1951; the minutes concerning the activity of the DS3 in Nová Paka have been preserved for July and August 1950, as well as the period from February to December 1951; the most continuous series of minutes were taken by the Dvůr Králové DS3, namely for the period from March 1950 to November 1951. Documents about their activities [needed] to be searched in local state district archives, most often in the collections of the district committees of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (CPC).

Although we will be particularly interested in the analysis of the activities of security fives and threes in relation to the countryside and the CPC's agricultural policy, it will certainly be useful to outline the circumstances of establishment, personnel composition and definition of RS5s' and DS3s' roles. Regional security fives were established by the resolution of the Security Commission of the CPC Central Committee of 2 February 1949.¹⁴ Their primary tasks were to assist and check the work of security authorities, as well as to deal with personnel issues, focusing on "the most important tasks in the political and economic spheres". The security five was to be "politically responsible for security in the region and for moral and political purity in the Corps".¹⁵ Therefore, it was a body for political supervision of security in its broadest sense, which was a very important area of exercising powers in Czechoslovakia after February 1948. This was naturally reflected in its functionary composition, so the RS5 consisted of the Regional Chief Secretary of the CPC Regional Committee, the Security Secretary of the CPC Regional Committee, the Security Official of Regional National Committee, the Chief of the Regional Headquarters of the State Security Service and the Chief of the Regional Headquarters of the National Security Service. In the regions where battalions of the Border Guard Service were based, RS5s were also to be attended by the Border Guard Service battalion commander. So in fact, they were security fives or sixes. Any other functionaries (such as commanders of the People's Militias and chairs of Regional National Committees) were to be invited to RS5 meetings only as officials for a particular item of the agenda, leaving the meeting after it was discussed. If a RS5 member wanted to use a proxy, such a proxy had to be approved not only by the RS5 itself, but also by the Security Section of the CPC Central Committee. At the district level, the Chief Secretary of the CPC District Committee, who chaired the three, the Security Official of the District National Committee and the District Chief of the National Security Service met in the DS3. In those districts where a district unit of the State Security Service was formed,¹⁶ the chief of this unit naturally also attended DS3 meetings. Therefore, they were security trees or fours.¹⁷

¹⁴ K. Kaplan, *Nebezpečná bezpečnost*, pp. 179–180.

¹⁵ National Archives (hereinafter: NA), Prague, Defence and Security Department of the CPC Central Committee collection (not processed), vol. 1, file 9, Abolition of security commissions and establishment of security fives – instructions, undated (1949).

¹⁶ For more information on the development of the State Security Service in Czechoslovakia, see K. Williams, D. Deletant, *Security Intelligence Service in New Democracies: the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Romania* (Basings-toke: Palgrave, 2001), pp. 24–54; J. Dvořáková, *Státní bezpečnost v letech 1945–1953: (organizační vývoj zpravodajských a státně bezpečnostních složek)* (Prague: Úřad dokumentace a vyšetřování zločinů komunismu, 2007).

¹⁷ For example, district security "fours" were mentioned at the beginning in the Pardubice RS5 as a regular alternative, the designation "DS3" being exceptionally replaced by the form "DS4" (NA, Prague, Defence and

In mid-September 1949, Albert Vyškovský, a high-ranking security officer of the CPC Central Committee, could state that RS5s had been established in all regions, while the DS3 network was still far from complete.¹⁸ In Hradec Králové, an RS5 was established on 21 March 1949¹⁹ and began to meet regularly in May 1949; its meetings were to be held every Monday afternoon, but from September they were moved to Wednesday afternoon and then to Tuesday afternoon. The Hradec Králové RS5 meetings were attended by the Chief Political Secretary of the CPC Regional Committee, Jan Souček, the Security Official of the Regional National Committee, Josef Prokop, the Security Secretary of the CPC Regional Committee, Alfred Synek, the Chief of the Regional Headquarters of the State Security Service, Karel Vlček, and the Regional Chief of the National Security Corps, Josef Luňáček.²⁰ In Pardubice, the RS5 did not begin to meet regularly until the end of August 1949, and its meetings were to be held every Friday after lunch. The Pardubice RS5 began to meet with the following composition: the Political Secretary of the CPC Regional Committee, Oldřich Vyhnálek, the Security Official of the Regional National Committee, Dominik Stehlík, the Regional Chief of the National Security Service, Capt. Špitálský, the Regional Chief of the State Security Service, Polanský, the Security Secretary of the CPC Regional Committee, Josef Beran, as well as the Political Secretaries of the Regional Headquarters of the National Security Corps and the State Security Service, Bayer and Arazim.²¹ In mid-October at the latest, DS3s were also set up in all districts of the Pardubice Region, and a briefing was prepared for them.²² Reports from the Hradec Králové Region are not different in this respect; according to the RS5 work plan, DS3s were to start operating also in its districts by mid-October at the latest. It seems that the Hradec Králové representatives managed to fulfil the plan and, during the first half of October 1949, they stated that DS3s were “operating and receiving instructions”.²³

In April 1950, Vyškovský informed the Regional Security Secretaries of the Security Section of the CPC Central Committee represented by Vyškovský intention to send prosecutors to the regional security fives in the near future.²⁴ The representatives of

Security Department of the CPC Central Committee (not processed), vol. 33, file 213, Minutes of the RS5 meetings in Pardubice on 16 IX and 11 XI 1949).

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, vol. 2, file 22, Work plan of the Security Section for September, October and November, 13 IX 1949.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, vol. 34, file 219, Minutes of the meeting, 21 III 1949.

²⁰ State Regional Archive, Zámorsk, Hradec Králové CPC Regional Committee collection, Box 465, inventory number 260, call number 1/45/3/2, Minutes of the RS5 meeting in Hradec Králové, 10 V 1949; NA, Prague, Defence and Security Department of the CPC Central Committee collection (not processed), vol. 34, file 217, Minutes of the RS5 meeting in Hradec Králové, 23 V 1949.

²¹ NA, Prague, Defence and Security Department of the CPC Central Committee collection (not processed), vol. 33, file 213, Report on the RS5's activity and meetings, Pardubice CPC Regional Committee Secretariat, 26 VIII 1949. Minutes of the meeting, 16 IX 1949.

²² *Ibidem*, Record of the briefing held on 16 IX 1949 in Pardubice, Prague, 17/9/1949. RS5 briefing in Pardubice on 14 X 1949. Minutes of the RS5 meeting, Pardubice, 21 X 1949.

²³ State Regional Archive, Zámorsk, Hradec Králové CPC Regional Committee collection, Box 465, inventory number 260, call number 1/45/3/2, RS5 work plan; NA, Prague, Defence and Security Department of the CPC Central Committee collection (not processed), vol. 34, file 217, Minutes of the RS5 meeting in Hradec Králové, 11 X 1949.

²⁴ NA, Prague, Alexej Čepička collection, vol. 23, file 167, Minutes of the meeting of Regional Security Secretaries at the CPC Central Committee Secretariat on 18 IV 1950.

the prosecutor's offices for work in RS5s and DS3s were carefully selected by Čepička's Ministry of Justice and by the Security Commission of the CPC Central Committee.²⁵ In Pardubice, the prosecutor's office representative (Deputy Regional Prosecutor Ferdinand Goldšmíd) began to attend RS5 meetings from June 1950.²⁶ In Hradec Králové, the elected representative (Deputy Regional Prosecutor Oldřich Hlaváček) began to attend RS5 meetings probably also from summer 1950, but minutes from the meetings held in 1950 are missing. The selection of politically reliable and "class" conscious representatives of the prosecutor's offices at the district level was a little more complicated. Such a representative was regularly invited to DS3 meetings only in those districts where a working class prosecutor had been appointed. The representative then informed the DS3 about the activities of the prosecutor's office and court, as well as on the cases "of public or Party interest".²⁷

After the first months of their operation, DS3s were generally seen as the weakest element in the organisation of the network having to ensure the perfect interconnection of the regions with the centre in terms of political and security issues. In the spring of 1950, therefore, it was stressed that "a proper and regular briefing" must be prepared for DS3 members.²⁸ In the Pardubice Region, DS3s regularly met only in six districts from the autumn of 1949 to April 1950, and they did not meet in the remaining six districts at all. From April to August 1950, DS3 meetings were apparently not held anywhere. According to the Regional Security Secretary's report, DS3s "started operating at full stretch" in October 1950.²⁹ At the end of 1950, the Security Secretary of the Pardubice CPC Regional Committee, Jan Vyčítal, who periodically attended DS3 meetings in individual districts, stated that the level of DS3s' work was rising, best evaluating the districts with operating State Security Service units, whose chiefs joined the threes or, as the case may be, fours. In general, what was criticised was the irregularity of DS3 meetings and the quality of the minutes of such meetings, where it was often not possible to tell what was discussed. No minutes were provided by the Chrudim, Hlinsko and Litomyšl Districts.³⁰ In the spring of 1951, the situation was still unsatisfactory, and it was only in five districts (out of twelve) where the functionaries correctly understood the political significance

²⁵ *Ibidem*, Security Commission of the CPC Central Committee collection (not processed), vol. 1, file 14, Material discussed in S5, 6 IV 1950 – Proposed members of security commissions; *ibidem*, vol. 1, file 5, Report on the staffing of regional security committees, Prague, 2 IX 1950; *ibidem*, Alexej Čepička collection, vol. 23, file 167, Proposed members of security commissions of 23 I and 13 III 1950. Record for Comrade Minister of 15 III 1950. Addendum to the proposed staffing of security commissions in the Hradec Králové and Karlovy Vary Regions of 3 IV 1950.

²⁶ *Ibidem*, Defence and Security Department of the CPC Central Committee collection (not processed), vol. 33, file 213, Record of the regular RS5 meeting in Pardubice, 2 VI 1950.

²⁷ *Ibidem*, vol. 34, file 217, Report on the experience from the RS5's work, Hradec Králové, 27 XII 1950.

²⁸ *Ibidem*, Alexej Čepička collection, vol. 23, file 167, Minutes of the meeting of Regional Security Secretaries at the CPC Central Committee Secretariat on 18 IV 1950.

²⁹ *Ibidem*, Defence and Security Department of the CPC Central Committee collection (not processed), vol. 33, file 213, Proposal for RS5 meeting, Pardubice, 5 XII 1950. Official document Ref. No. 134 taj./50-B-Vě addressed to the CPC Central Committee Secretariat, Pardubice, 23 XII 1950.

³⁰ *Ibidem*, Minutes of the RS5 meeting in Pardubice on 8 XII 1950. Proposal for RS5 meeting, Pardubice, 5 XII 1950.

of DS3s and followed the guidelines from the region.³¹ The Pardubice RS5 therefore tentatively divided its districts into three groups according to the quality of their work in the DS3s. The DS3 in Pardubice and Hlinsko worked best, the second group being the DS3s in Ústí nad Orlicí, Chotěboř and Lanškroun. In the Čáslav, Holice, Chrudim, Litomyšl, Polička, Přelouč and Vysoké Mýto Districts, the DS3s' activity was assessed as weak, the worst situation being in Vysoké Mýto and Litomyšl, where the DS3s only met to discuss the issue of hunting weapons.³²

Both RS5 and DS3 meetings were led by the chief secretaries of the Party, who were also formally responsible for the RS5s' and DS3s' activities.³³ RS5 meetings were held once in one or two weeks.³⁴ It was emphasised that the meetings were secret, the minute-taker had to be one of the members of the five or tree, and the minutes and file materials had to be deposited in the CPC Chief Secretary's safe³⁵ and ideally sent by the courier service.³⁶ Messages from all RS5 meetings were to be sent to the Security Department of the CPC Central Committee. The minutes of the meetings were numbered, and all members of the RS5 received one copy, which they had to return to the Security Secretary of the CPC Regional Committee after the execution of the resolution, or within 3–4 weeks at the latest. A copy of the minutes from each meeting was to be sent to the Security Section of the CPC Central Committee (mostly for the attention of Vyškovský), and the minutes were deposited at the Central Committee Secretariat.³⁷ The person who communicated with the Security Section of the CPC Central Secretariat was the Security Secretary of the Party's Regional Secretariat. Indeed, this person was a certain secretary of the RS5 who prepared the material for meetings, proposing a work plan, meeting agenda and officials who were to be invited to discuss certain items at the RS5 meeting. In addition, the Security Secretary of the CPC Regional Committee had to instruct the DS3 in the individual districts and check their work.³⁸ The minutes of DS3 meetings sent to the regional centres were collected by this person (at the Security Department of the CPC Regional Committee).³⁹

In the spring of 1949, following the February approval of the Unified Agricultural Cooperatives Act, the collectivisation of the countryside began in all regions of communist Czechoslovakia. Although the preparation of standards for the commencement of collectivisation and the instruction to form RS5s overlap, we have no direct evidence that the establishment of security fives and threes was motivated by the decision to commence collectivisation. Indeed, in the initial phase of collectivisation (in 1949 and 1950), it was

³¹ *Ibidem*, Minutes of the RS5 meeting in Pardubice on 24 IV 1951.

³² *Ibidem*, Proposal for RS5 meeting, Pardubice, 4 IV 1951.

³³ *Ibidem*, Defence and Security Department of the CPC Central Committee collection (not processed), vol. 2, file 24, Report on the Security Section's activity, 31 V 1951.

³⁴ *Ibidem*, vol. 1, file 9, RS5 meetings – overview by region, undated (end of 1950).

³⁵ In Hradec Králové, confidential files were deposited "in the armoured cabinet" in the office of the CPC Regional Committee Security Secretary; an alarm system was also installed there (*ibidem*, vol. 34, file 219, Record of the meeting on 21 III 1949).

³⁶ *Ibidem*, vol. 33, file 213, Record of the regular RS5 meeting in Pardubice, 11 XI 1949.

³⁷ *Ibidem*, vol. 1, file 9, Official document Ref. No. VIII/2 – Vy/1134/T of 6 VII 1950.

³⁸ *Ibidem*, vol. 2, file 22, Content of the work of the Security Section of the CPC Regional Secretariat.

³⁹ *Ibidem*, vol. 1, file 9, RS5 visit and briefing, undated (end of 1950/beginning of 1951).

predominantly believed that farmers would enter unified agricultural cooperatives with enthusiasm and, above all, in large numbers. The gradual sobering up from these ideas, caused by the unrestrained resistance to collectivisation, can also be traced in the activity of security threes and fives, and it is mirrored in the guidelines, work plans, official documents pointing out shortcomings and, above all, preserved minutes of individual meetings and sessions.

Let us now take a closer look at the responsibilities, activity and operation of the examined fives and threes. According to the initial instructions of the Security Section of the CPC Central Secretariat, RS5s were supposed to deal with the following issues at their meetings: 1) support for DS3s, 2) the Party's life in the Security Service, 3) recruitment to the National Security Corps and Prison Guard Corps, 4) security in plants, unified agricultural cooperatives, machinery and tractor stations, and Czechoslovak state farms, 5) protection of the Party's buildings, 6) forced labour camps, 7) composition of the Security Section of the CPC Regional Committee. RS5s' and DS3s' work became more intensive after the involvement of the prosecutor's offices.⁴⁰ The representative of the regional prosecutor's office was to inform the RS5s of "all essential judiciary issues that are important in terms of security". RS5 members were given the task to discuss "political and security preparation of major trials". At regular intervals, RS5s were to submit situational reports 1) on the delicts under the Republic Protection Act, 2) on criminal offences damaging national, municipal and cooperative entrepreneurship, 3) on delicts against the Party's agricultural policy, 4) on criminal offences committed by ecclesiastical officials, 5) on general crime (illicit trade, traffic accidents, fires) and 6) on youth crime.⁴¹

The guidelines for the DS3s' work were supplemented in a similar way with regard to the district authorities' scope of activity. The first instructions from autumn 1949 highlighted the DS3s' responsibility for the security situation in the districts. "The framework and focal task is to focus on the most important tasks in the political and economic spheres", a significant amount of tasks at the district level being represented by agriculture.⁴² The later guidelines were more specific: "In agriculture, attention must be paid to all issues, planning and performance of sowing and harvesting, performance of delivery contracts, monitoring the course of harvests, dealing with the issue of guarding agricultural cooperatives' warehouses, monitoring the development and operation of unified agricultural cooperatives, state machinery stations and Czechoslovak state farms, and the like. In addition, factory farms must be monitored to avoid sabotage or loss of feed material. The progress of work must be monitored on state farms".⁴³

⁴⁰ Supplementation of the RS5 activity guidelines with regard to the participation of prosecutors was assigned to Dr. Karel Klos from the Ministry of Justice and Albert Vyškovský from the Security Section of the CPC Central Committee. On that occasion, Karel Klos tried to ensure that RS5s screen prosecutors and criminal judges at regular intervals [*ibidem*, Security Commission of the CPC Central Committee collection (not processed), vol. 2, file 4, Information for the Minister for the Security Commission meeting, undated (April to May 1950)].

⁴¹ *Ibidem*, Defence and Security Department of the CPC Central Committee collection (not processed), vol. 1, file 9, Supplementation of RS5 guidelines, undated (end of 1950).

⁴² *Ibidem*, vol. 33, file 213, Instructions for security threes approved at the RS5 meeting in Pardubice, 11 XI 1949.

⁴³ *Ibidem*, vol. 1, file 9, Guidelines for DS3s, Ref. No. 215taj/51-B-Vč-Jgn, CPC Regional Committee, Pardubice, 2 V 1951.

In criminal cases concerning farmers, DS3s were to decide on the application of court or administrative proceedings, depending on what was “more beneficial for the political situation”.⁴⁴ The DS3s’ decisions were binding in this respect.

One of the first agriculture-oriented tasks carried out by DS3s in the Pardubice Region was the operation focused on the inspection of mills within the purchase of grain from the 1949 harvest.⁴⁵ The Party headquarters were given assurances from Pardubice of the strengthening of security measures at the agricultural cooperatives’ granaries and state farms’ stacks.⁴⁶ According to the report submitted by Security Official Stehlík from the Regional National Committee in Pardubice, at the end of 1949 attention was paid to the punishment of larger farm owners who were unable to fulfil their prescribed deliveries. The highest number of those punished (including both pecuniary and imprisonment sentences or, as the case may be, assignment to forced labour camps) was reported by the Čáslav, Chotěboř and Chrudim Districts within the region. On that occasion, the members of the Pardubice RS5 decided to “[...] take measures to punish large-scale peasants pursuant to the Five-Year Economic Plan Protection Act, which was associated with the confiscation of all property, and to hand over more serious cases to the Regional Headquarters of the State Security Service to bring actions pursuant to the People’s Democratic Republic Protection Act”.⁴⁷

They agreed to carry out such operations “always upon agreement and with the approval of the Party and, in particular, to be politically viable and effective”. The relevant guidelines for the entire security apparatus in the region were to be drawn up by comrades Stehlík and Vavrejn, that is the Security Official of the Regional National Committee together with the Deputy Regional Chief of the National Security Corps. They decided to charge the Agricultural Department of the CPC Regional Committee to draw up a proposal to entice away seasonal labourers from large-scale farmers.⁴⁸

The Hradec Králové RS5 focused in the agricultural sector on the security of grain warehouses, machinery and tractor station facilities, and Czechoslovak state farms.⁴⁹ Unified agricultural cooperatives were first mentioned in the Hradec Králové RS5 in September 1949, when Chief Secretary Jan Souček laid down that “the places with unified agricultural cooperatives must be provided with the best chiefs of stations [of the National Security Corps] who would cooperate politically”.⁵⁰ In the middle of November 1949, Regional Chief of the State Security Service Vlček alerted his colleagues in the RS5 to an “organised network of agrarians to break up unified agricultural cooperatives”, but also announced that the Ministry of the Interior had not given consent to arrest them “so as

⁴⁴ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁵ *Ibidem*, vol. 33, file 213, Record of the regular RS5 meeting in Pardubice, 23 XII 1949.

⁴⁶ *Ibidem*, Report on the RS5’s activity and meetings, Pardubice CPC Regional Committee Secretariat, 26 VIII 1949.

⁴⁷ *Ibidem*, Record of the regular RS5 meeting in Pardubice, 30 XII 1949.

⁴⁸ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁹ State Regional Archive, Zámorsk, Hradec Králové CPC Regional Committee collection, Box 465, inventory number 260, call number 1/45/3/2, Minutes of the RS5 meetings in Hradec Králové on 8 VI, 23 IX and 27 IX 1949.

⁵⁰ *Ibidem*, Minutes of the RS5 meeting in Hradec Králové on 27 IX 1949. RS5 work plan, undated (September 1949).

not to unsettle the villages”.⁵¹ The interventions were to be consulted with the relevant CPC District Committees and District National Committees in the future, using the card files of farmers with 15 or more hectares as a tool to help the functionaries orient themselves better.⁵² The National Security Corps station in Vamberk was praised in the RS5, namely for several “good interventions against large-scale farmers and butchers”.⁵³

Naturally, contracting, that is, the institution of mandatory transfers of a prescribed amount of the yield to the state, was also a frequent topic of the meetings. The performance of delivery contracts was to be demanded “unconditionally” at the end of 1949.⁵⁴ The wave of often unscrupulous agricultural inspections that was commenced thereafter triggered outraged reactions among the public. The most extensive manifestation of them was a large peasant demonstration that took place in the Dobruška district at the beginning of December 1949.⁵⁵ As a result of the Dobruška events, which confirmed “the seriousness of the situation”, and following the motto of increased “vigilance and alertness”,⁵⁶ the members of the Hradec Králové RS5 focused even more on squeezing society by tightening security measures of all kinds, including vigorous monitoring of the population’s moods using informers and snoopers whose activity was euphemistically called “agency penetration”. A significant part of society began to perceive the distressing atmosphere of fear and suspicion.

The year 1950 brought the involvement of the prosecutor’s offices in DS3s’ and RS5s’ work, as well as a further expansion of interest in the issues of agriculture, country and collectivisation. At the beginning of September 1950, the changed Pardubice RS5 adopted a resolution on the discussed issue called “Fighting the reaction when working in villages”. Those present (the Chief Secretary of the CPC Regional Committee, Jičínský, the Security Official of the Regional National Committee, Pospíšil, the Security Secretary of the CPC Regional Committee, Vyčítal, the Chief of the Regional Headquarters of the State Security Service, Filka, and the Chief of the Regional Headquarters of the National Security Service, Pruška) agreed that in the future the relevant representatives of the State Security Service and the National Security Corps would be invited to those meetings of the CPC Regional Committee whose agenda included agricultural issues, that the chief of the State Security Service would submit monthly reports on the activities of illegal groups, and that the minutes of the meetings held by the individual DS3s whose work was to be assessed every month would be strictly required. Capt. Pruška proposed going to villages more and organising talks between security authorities and local communists the purpose of which would be to gain their trust and “to rebut the population’s view that National Security Corps members only come to the village when arresting someone”.⁵⁷

⁵¹ *Ibidem*, Minutes of the RS5 meeting in Hradec Králové on 15 XI 1949.

⁵² *Ibidem*, Minutes of the RS5 meeting in Hradec Králové on 21 XII 1949.

⁵³ *Ibidem*, Minutes of the RS5 meeting in Hradec Králové on 15 XI 1949.

⁵⁴ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁵ For more details see J. Urban, “Rolnická manifestace: motivace, manipulace, existenční důsledky”, *Securitas Imperii* 2009, no. 15, pp. 98–136.

⁵⁶ State Regional Archive, Zámorsk, Hradec Králové CPC Regional Committee collection, Box 465, inventory number 260, call number 1/45/3/2, Minutes of the RS5 meeting in Hradec Králové on 21 XII 1949.

⁵⁷ NA, Prague, Defence and Security Department of the CPC Central Committee collection (not processed), vol. 33, file 213, Minutes of the RS5 meeting, Pardubice, 1 IX 1950.

In Hradec Králové, the DS3 was attended by Chief Secretary of the CPC District Committee, Karel Zárbybnický, the Security Official of the Unified National Committee, Miroslav Gebert, the District Chief of National Security Corps, Pavel, and the District Chief of the State Security Service Bedřich Radoň, and at the beginning quite often also by the District Commander of the People's Militias, Doboš. During 1950, the agenda of the meetings included thguarding of agricultural machinery, taken over under the guise of "purchase", guarding of grain warehouses,⁵⁸ shortcomings in the work of machinery and tractor stations,⁵⁹ threatening letters and other anti-communist provocations,⁶⁰ criticism of the agricultural policy and unified agricultural cooperatives,⁶¹ the case of the National Security Corps officer supporting peasants,⁶² problems in ensuring of cultivation of land held by National Committees,⁶³ revocation of hunting licences and seizure of rifles from farmers marked as "kulaks",⁶⁴ and the activities of the Criminal Commission of the Unified National Committee.⁶⁵ The DS3 was continuously involved in recruitment for the National Security Corps, assignment to forced labour camps and dealing with specific criminal cases.

The security measures were very impressive during the harvest, and it was to them that the leading regional representatives ascribed the successful course of the harvest (although the electric grid was often overloaded during threshing, and Zetor 15 tractors were too weak to pull heavy mowers). Agitation loudspeaker cars passed through villages during the day, and established guards patrolled at night. Despite large service districts and insufficient staff levels at stations,⁶⁶ National Security Corps members mostly performed their duty during the harvest with great self-sacrifice; with the deployment of many National Security Corps stations far exceeding the average performance. When the Pardubice RS5 assessed the security measures associated with the previous harvest in the autumn of 1950, it appreciated the initiative of "class" conscious functionaries in "eliminating the kulak influence in villages". In particular, the Pardubice District Chief of the National Security Service was praised, who "very energetically sanctioned the village rich after consultation

⁵⁸ State District Archive, Hradec Králové, Hradec Králové CPC District Committee collection, Box 631, inventory number 939, Minutes of the DS3 meetings in Hradec Králové on 23 V, 15 VIII and 24 VIII 1950.

⁵⁹ *Ibidem*, Minutes of the DS3 meetings in Hradec Králové on 11 VII and 2 VIII 1950.

⁶⁰ *Ibidem*, Minutes of the DS3 meetings in Hradec Králové on 11 VII 1950.

⁶¹ *Ibidem*, Minutes of the DS3 meetings in Hradec Králové on 5 IX, 23 X and 11 XII 1950.

⁶² *Ibidem*, Minutes of the DS3 meetings in Hradec Králové on 2 VIII 1950.

⁶³ *Ibidem*. For more information see K. Jech, *Kolektivizace a vyhánění sedláků z půdy* (Prague: Vyšehrad, 2008), pp. 74–78.

⁶⁴ State District Archive, Hradec Králové, Hradec Králové CPC District Committee collection, Box 631, inventory number 939, Minutes of the DS3 meeting in Hradec Králové on 6 XI 1950.

⁶⁵ *Ibidem*, Minutes of the DS3 meeting in Hradec Králové on 4 XII 1950.

⁶⁶ Some National Security Corps stations only had one or two members although up to 15 municipalities and several settlements fell under their area. In addition, there were persisting problems with the allocation of flats in the places, so the new members of the National Security Corps often remained separated from their families (NA, Prague, Defence and Security Department of the CPC Central Committee collection (not processed), vol. 33, file 213, Official document Ref. No. 134 taj./50-B-Vč addressed to the CPC Central Committee Secretariat, Pardubice, 23 December 1950. Essentially the same situation was reported by the RS5 from the neighbouring Hradec Králové Region; *ibidem*, vol. 34, file 217, Report on the experience from the RS5's work, Hradec Králové, 27 XII 1950).

with the political representatives and the State Security Service”.⁶⁷ Utterly in contrast to the praise of the Security Service’s work, local CPC organisations were criticised for lack of activity: “It is enough if a sneaky reactionary sends a pitiful threatening letter to a member of the CPC village organisation, and the existence of the organisation is significantly threatened, and the political work gradually ceases. As a result, the Party loses the overview of the real situation in many villages, the functionaries of the village organisations pull back, reporting to the higher Party representatives unobjectively, etc. If radical rural differentiation is to be achieved, it is necessary to continue to help villages politically!”⁶⁸

According to the reports from the end of 1950, the “class struggle sharpened” in the agricultural areas of the Hořice, Hradec Králové, Jaroměř, Jičín and Nový Bydžov Districts; in other words, the resistance against the post-February regime, characterised by the unscrupulous collection of mandatory deliveries and the effort to establish unified agricultural cooperatives in the country, increased.⁶⁹ When the Pardubice RS5 discussed the issue of illegality in the region and the contours of cooperation between the prosecutor’s office and the Security Service in November 1950, the Security Secretary of the CPC Regional Committee Jan Vyčítal called on his colleagues in the five to focus “on the village rich who hinder the building of the village”, that is on farmers marked as “kulaks” who resisted the process of collectivisation.⁷⁰ They focused their work in the neighbouring Hradec Králové region in the same way. The members of the DS3 in Hradec Králové stated the following in December 1950: “it is absolutely necessary to coordinate the work of the Criminal Commission of the Unified National Committee with the National Security Corps, because it has happened that the Criminal Commission, especially when intervening against the village rich, resolved the case with a fine, although if properly processed for criminal proceedings before court, the village rich could be sanctioned much harder”.⁷¹

This was how the “class” approach to justice was applied in the contemporary context.

In February 1951, the Chief Political Secretary of the Pardubice CPC Regional Committee, Jičínský, in RS5 pointed out the stagnation of some unified agricultural cooperatives in the region, stating that the Security Service must eliminate “faster and more boldly” the enemy elements that damage the work of the unified agricultural cooperatives.⁷² In fact, he anticipated Slánský’s “sharpened course” against farmers marked as “kulaks”, announced at the meeting of the CPC Central Committee.⁷³ Those present

⁶⁷ *Ibidem*, vol. 33, file 213, Evaluation of the security measures during the 1950 harvest – experience.

⁶⁸ *Ibidem*.

⁶⁹ *Ibidem*, vol. 34, file 217, Report on the experience from the RS5’s work, Hradec Králové, 27 XII 1950. Pardubice State Security Service Regional Chief Filka pointed out in this context: “I warn again that what we read in the book *Virgin Soil Upturned* is manifested in the Prague and Budějovice regions” (*ibidem*, vol. 33, file 213, Minutes of the RS5 meeting in Pardubice on 16 II 1951).

⁷⁰ *Ibidem*, vol. 33, file 213, Minutes of the RS5 meeting in Pardubice on 17 XI 1950.

⁷¹ State District Archive, Hradec Králové, Hradec Králové CPC District Committee collection, Box 631, inventory number 939, Minutes of the DS3 meeting in Hradec Králové on 4 XII 1950.

⁷² NA, Prague, Defence and Security Department of the CPC Central Committee collection (not processed), vol. 33, file 213, Minutes of the RS5 meeting in Pardubice on 16 II 1951.

⁷³ Rudolf Slánský (1901–1952), long-term member of the CPC Central Committee and Secretary General of the CPC Central Committee in 1945–1951. He was executed in political trials with enemies within the party [for more details see K. Kaplan, *Report on the murder of the General Secretary* (Columbus: Ohio State University

agreed that the Agricultural Department of the CPC Regional Committee would provide the Security Service with a list of municipalities where the collectivisation efforts had stagnated and where it was therefore desirable to reveal an “obvious enemy”. Attention was to be paid to the municipalities where only the preparatory committees of the unified agricultural cooperatives were set up and where no other activities were carried out for the benefit of collectivisation.⁷⁴ In the same vein, prosecutor Goldšmíd appealed that “special attention be paid to disrupters and saboteurs against the socialist rebuilding of the village, that the village bourgeoisie be prosecuted and that failure to fulfil agricultural plans be sanctioned, thereby isolating the village rich from the masses of small and medium-sized peasants”.⁷⁵ These were the rules and practices of the “class struggle” that involved defamation and disuniting of neighbours, incitement to envy and stirring of contention, intimidation and exemplary punishment.

With the approaching summer of 1951, the hostile rhetoric continued to intensify. The functionaries in the district threes paid enormous attention to security measures during the harvest.⁷⁶ The Pardubice RS5 issued an instruction to respond quickly to all cases of sluggish harvest and failure to fulfil deliveries, and “to commence a sharper course in punishing and thus suppressing the village rich”. In those months, both RS5s and DS3s more and more supported “bolder holding of public hearings” with farmers marked as “kulaks”.⁷⁷ Subsequently, the 3rd (criminal) departments of the District National Committee were given the task of drawing up overviews of “the village rich” and “monitoring them”.⁷⁸ At that time, the DS3 in Přelouč was dealing with the possibilities to sequester the funds of the farmers marked as “kulaks”, restrictions in employment

Press, 1990); *idem*, *Kronika komunistického Československa. Klement Gottwald a Rudolf Slánský* (Brno: Barrister & Principal, 2009).

⁷⁴ For specific examples of such development in the municipalities of Chudečice and Dolní Lánov see J. Urban, *Počátky kolektivizace na Královéhradecku*, pp. 193–194; *idem*, “Odpor proti kolektivizaci v Podkrkonoší: JZD, výhrůžky a ozbrojené zastrašování aneb proti politice KSČ jejími vlastními zbraněmi” [in:] *Protikomunistický odboj v střední a východní Evropě*, ed. P. Jašek (Bratislava: Ústav paměti národa, 2012), pp. 542–563.

⁷⁵ NA, Prague, Defence and Security Department of the CPC Central Committee collection (not processed), vol. 33, file 213, Minutes of the RS5 meeting in Pardubice on 16 II 1951.

⁷⁶ State District Archive, Hradec Králové, Hradec Králové CPC District Committee collection, Box 631, inventory number 939, Report for DS3: What security measures have been adopted in our district regarding harvest?, Hradec Králové District Headquarters of the National Security Service, undated (July 1951); State District Archive, Pardubice, Přelouč CPC District Committee collection, Box 2, inventory number 59, Minutes of the DS3 meetings in Přelouč on 2 VII, 31 VII and 22 VIII 1951; State District Archive, Jičín, Nová Paka CPC District Committee collection, Box 1, inventory number 59, Minutes of the DS3 meeting, Nová Paka, 13 VIII 1951. Harvest protection plan and crop security, undated; State District Archive, Trutnov, Dvůr Králové nad Labem CPC District Committee collection, Box 18, inventory number 57, DS3 minutes, Dvůr Králové n. L., 25 VI, 9 VII and 16 VII 1951; NA, Prague, Defence and Security Department of the CPC Central Committee collection (not processed), vol. 1, file 9, Guidelines for DS3s, Ref. No. 215taj/51-B-Vč-Jgn, Pardubice CPC Regional Committee, 2 V 1951.

⁷⁷ NA, Prague, Defence and Security Department of the CPC Central Committee collection (not processed), vol. 33, file 213, Report for the RS5, undated (material for the RS5 meeting in Pardubice, 3 VII 1951); State District Archive, Trutnov, Dvůr Králové nad Labem CPC District Committee collection, Box 18, inventory number 57, Minutes of the DS3 meeting in Dvůr Králové n. L. on 25 VI and 16 VII 1951; State District Archive, Jičín, Nová Paka CPC District Committee collection, Box 1, inventory number 59, Minutes of the DS3 meeting in Nová Paka on 6 VIII 1951.

⁷⁸ NA, Prague, Defence and Security Department of the CPC Central Committee collection (not processed), vol. 33, file 213, Report for the RS5, undated material for the RS5 meeting, 3 VII 1951.

and study of the children of “the village rich”, as well as the sentencing of the farmer Adolf Olexa from Kasalice.⁷⁹ The Hradec Králové DS3 was busy preparing the public trial with the Plačice farmers.⁸⁰ In Dvůr Králové, the DS3 focused on “revealing the village rich and their helpers” in the municipalities of Velký Vřeštov and Nové Lesy. The local farmers marked as “kulaks” were to be under the supervision of the National Security Corps and People’s Militias to ensure that the trial could be directed “as soon as possible”.⁸¹ In Jaroměř, the DS3 members were apparently reluctant to approve public trials; on the contrary, in Nová Paka, the DS3 was interested in organising too many public court proceedings.⁸² The cases suitable for public trials were selected by the relevant prosecutor in conjunction with the DS3, the more important cases being assessed by the RS5.

It was not until the end of the summer that the historian Karel Jech called dramatic⁸³ in the context of the rapid organisation of public trials that the issue of political preparation and propagandistic use of public trials was dealt with by the Hradec Králové RS5. The individual items of its resolution indicate what was forgotten about in organising theatrical regional trials. The comrades present made a resolution in the RS5 that the decisions on public hearings must be preceded by a clear idea of the political use of the case in question in the future. Both public and party meetings were to be held before and after the trial, and editors had to be invited to the course of the trial. In the case of trials with “the village rich”, it was now necessary to ensure that the seized property was taken over and managed before the trial. In addition, it was desirable to familiarise the judiciary of all individual districts with the “technique of the public trial”. Therefore, the RS5 decided that “prosecutors, people’s judges, professional judges and attorneys would be mandatorily called to some trials selected for that purpose to see the course of the trial and to assess the trial and the interventions of the prosecutor, court and attorneys in the following discussion”.⁸⁴ The Přelouč DS3’s procedure was exemplary in this respect: first, it approved a selection of “the village rich” whose agricultural activities were to be criminalised, then it discussed the criminal complaint with regard to the political acceptability of the

⁷⁹ CPC District Committee Political Secretary Pospíšil pressed for a quick resolution of Olexa’s removal to be moved to “a more distant village” from his birthplace. Pospíšil was upset by the appeal of Olexa’s attorney Krpata, who refuted the individual parts of the sentence. “It is not possible for the attorney to hinder with his arguments a quiet development in the village”, said Pospíšil, proposing that Krpata be held accountable “immediately after the case has been heard” (State District Archive, Pardubice, Přelouč CPC District Committee collection, Box 2, inventory number 59, Minutes of the DS3 meeting in Přelouč on 2 VII 1951).

⁸⁰ State District Archive, Hradec Králové, Hradec Králové CPC District Committee collection, Box 631, inventory number 939, Minutes of the DS3 meetings, Hradec Králové, 6, 13 and 20 VIII 1951.

⁸¹ State District Archive, Trutnov, Dvůr Králové nad Labem CPC District Committee collection, Box 18, inventory number 57, Minutes of the DS3 meetings in Dvůr Králové n. L. on 16 VII and 6 VIII 1951.

⁸² NA, Prague, Defence and Security Department of the CPC Central Committee collection (not processed), vol. 34, file 218, Ensuring the political preparation of public trials and their political use – annex to the Report on the result of the legal survey in the Hradec Králové Region, 24 and 25 V 1951. Compare with J. Urban, *Venkov pod kolektivizační knutou*, pp. 140–157.

⁸³ K. Jech, *Kolektivizace a vyhnání*, p. 103.

⁸⁴ NA, Prague, Defence and Security Department of the CPC Central Committee collection (not processed), vol. 34, file 217, Minutes of the RS5 meeting in Hradec Králové on 25 X 1951.

sentences, and finally it issued an instruction that nine elected farmers be sentenced. Everything was to be done within three weeks. It was only after assessment of the public's response to their convictions that other candidates were to be selected and punished.⁸⁵

Although efforts to unify procedures and to define DS3s' and RS5s' powers more clearly can be observed, excesses in the abuse of power and usurpation of competencies could not be overlooked. Smetana, a member of the Secretariat of the Ministry of Justice, was certainly not the only stakeholder who was aware of the "danger of the rumour that the punishment is not decided by court but by a DS3 or RS5".⁸⁶ Some district prosecutors requested the DS3 to make a statement on the extent of punishment.⁸⁷ Although this practice became a subject of criticism during 1950, it persisted.⁸⁸

Before Christmas 1951, the Political Secretariat of the CPC Central Committee adopted a resolution which abolished regional and district security fives and threes, and which introduced a practice of security meetings from the start of 1952. The stated reason for this step was the occurrence of numerous cases where security fives and threes intervened in the competence of the individual security and state administration authorities, usurping the position of the decision-making authority in the regional or district committee of the Party. The ignored competent authorities were increasingly reluctant to take responsibility for the decisions they were supposed to make in these situations. The new four-member composition of security meetings consisted of the Chief Secretary of the CPC Regional Committee, who was to convene meetings as necessary, the Chair (or another member of the Presidium) of the CPC Regional Committee, the Chair of the Regional National Committee and the Regional Chief of the National Security Service. The same composition of meetings was used at the district level.⁸⁹ Although the DS3 and the RS5 ceased to exist at the end of autumn 1951,⁹⁰ the habits of the leading Party and security functionaries who embodied the DS3s and RS5s in the individual regions persisted.

To conclude, if we are to attempt to summarise the role of security threes and fives, we must first distinguish the role of DS3 as an executive, active and initiative component, and the role of RS5, which was more of a coordination, management and supervision

⁸⁵ State District Archive, Pardubice, Přelouč CPC District Committee collection, Box 2, inventory number 59, Minutes of the DS3 meeting in Přelouč on 3 X 1951.

⁸⁶ NA, Prague, Security Commission of the CPC Central Committee collection (not processed), vol. 1, file 5, Official document of Dr. Smetana of 12 V 1950 requesting Dr. Karel Klos for his statement.

⁸⁷ *Ibidem*, Defence and Security Department of the CPC Central Committee collection (not processed), vol. 33, file 213, Minutes of the RS5 meeting in Pardubice on 8 XII 1950.

⁸⁸ On 1 X 1951, the Pardubice CPC Regional Committee Secretariat sent to the districts its remarks on the DS3s' work, including the following warning: "Never comment on the extent of punishment when communicating with the prosecutor; they write down notes on the files" (State District Archive, Pardubice, Přelouč CPC District Committee collection, Box 2, inventory number 59, Remarks for DS3s, Pardubice CPC Regional Committee, 1 X 1951).

⁸⁹ NA, Prague, Political Secretariat of the CPC Central Committee collection (KSČ-ÚV-02/5), vol. 12, file 74, point 5, Material for the meeting of the Political Secretariat of the CPC Central Committee, 21 XII 1951; Cf. *ibidem*, Defence and Security Department of the CPC Central Committee collection (not processed), vol. 1, file 9, Draft framework policy for new regional and district security meetings of 20 VIII 1951.

⁹⁰ Jan Frolík writes about the abolition of operation of DS3s and RS5s on 10 III 1952, but no support can be found for this claim in the preserved materials on the activity of DS3s and RS5s (J. Frolík, "Nástin organizačního vývoje", p. 484).

component. RS5s coordinated various security measures, checked the security cooperation of the Security Service with CPC organisations, gave direction to the cooperation of prosecutor's offices with the Security Service and National Committees, assessed the public trials held in the territory of the region, and were responsible for their use in propaganda. DS3s addressed the district's current security issues, discussed the cases of criminal complaints, and politically assessed whether the case was a matter for the court or for the Criminal Finding Commission of the District National Committee, and "pre-discussed" cases that were to play the role of exemplary public trials. With regard to specific agricultural issues, the regular seasonal issues discussed at DS3 and RS5 meetings were security measures accompanying the harvest and crop purchase (harvest patrols, official threshing); after the involuntary takeover of machinery from private farms, great emphasis was placed on the security of machinery and tractor stations, as well as of pig factory farms, grain warehouses and state farm facilities. Particular attention was paid to the municipalities in which unified agricultural cooperatives had been or were to be established. During the second half of 1950, security threes began to focus more and more on peasants marked as "kulaks". Card files of farmers with 15 or more hectares and overviews of "the village rich" were to be used as tools to help the functionaries orient themselves better.⁹¹ The initiative of "class" conscious functionaries in "eliminating the kulak influence in villages" (for example, sequestration of financial accounts) was supported and appreciated. The practice of a "sharper course" in punishing and the "bolder holding" of public hearings with farmers marked as "kulaks", represented by an assessment of the "political importance" of the cases, "pre-meetings" and evaluation of trials in relation to the collectivisation process, was very quickly incorporated into DS3s' and RS5s' work. At the regional level in 1949–1951, security threes and fives significantly contributed to the consolidation of the post-February regime, characterised in the country mainly by the unscrupulous collection of mandatory deliveries and the effort to establish unified agricultural cooperatives.

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⁹¹ Based on the DS3 initiative, the first "kulak" lists emerged in 1950 and 1951, and at the end of 1952 they became a compulsorily required instrument of the communist state's discriminatory policy (for more details see K. Jech, *Kolektivizace a vyhánění*, pp. 150–155).

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The role of the District Security Threes and Regional Security Fives in Implementing the Hegemony of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia in the Countryside with the Example of the East Bohemian regions

This paper focuses on the period 1949–1951, when the district security groups of three (*troikas*) and the regional security groups of five were active in Czechoslovakia. These groups of leading district and regional apparatchiks were charged with handling of the entire security and criminal agenda that deserved interest "from a political point of view", and through them there was almost perfect interconnection of the regions with the central authorities of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia. They were established by a resolution of the security commission of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of 2 February 1949. Their primary task was to control and help the work of security bodies and to resolve personnel issues. In May 1950, their agenda was expanded by a new directive of the Security Commission of the Central Committee of the Communist Party to include other assignments. They were to provide and coordinate cooperation between the party, security organs, local authorities and prosecutors' offices. The district and regional security groups of three and five were abolished in the autumn of 1951. The paper analyses their role and contribution in securing the hegemony of the Communist Party in the countryside of the East Bohemian regions.

KEYWORDS

Czechoslovakia, East Bohemia, Communist Party, district security threes, regional security fives, power hegemony, security policy, countryside, 1949–1951

Rola powiatowych trójek bezpieczeństwa i regionalnych piętek bezpieczeństwa w utrwalaniu hegemonii Komunistycznej Partii Czechosłowacji na obszarach wiejskich na przykładzie rejonów wschodnioczeskich

Niniejszy artykuł skupia się na latach 1949–1951, kiedy to w Czechosłowacji działały powiatowe trójki (*troiki*) bezpieczeństwa oraz regionalne pięcioosobowe grupy bezpieczeństwa. Grupy te składały się z czołowych aparatczyków powiatowych i regionalnych, którym powierzano wszelkie kwestie bezpieczeństwa i przestępczości budzące zainteresowanie „z politycznego punktu widzenia”, i za sprawą których utrzymywana była niemal pełna łączność pomiędzy regionami a władzami centralnymi Komunistycznej Partii Czechosłowacji. Struktury te utworzone zostały uchwałą komisji ds. bezpieczeństwa Komitetu Centralnego Partii Komunistycznej z 2 lutego 1949 r. Ich najważniejszym zadaniem było kontrolowanie i wspieranie działań organów bezpieczeństwa oraz rozwiązywanie problemów personalnych. W maju 1950 r. zakres ich zadań zwiększono na podstawie nowej dyrektywy komisji ds. bezpieczeństwa Komitetu Centralnego Partii Komunistycznej. Do zadań tych należało zapewnianie i koordynowanie współpracy pomiędzy partią, organami bezpieczeństwa, władzami lokalnymi a prokuraturą. Powiatowe i regionalne trójki i piętki bezpieczeństwa rozwiązano jesienią 1951 r. Niniejszy artykuł analizuje ich rolę i wkład w utrwalanie hegemonii władzy komunistycznej na wschodnioczeskich obszarach wiejskich.

SŁOWA KLUCZOWE

Czechosłowacja, Cechy Wschodnie, partia komunistyczna, powiatowe trójki bezpieczeństwa, regionalne piętki bezpieczeństwa, hegemonia, służby bezpieczeństwa, obszary wiejskie, lata 1949–1951

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