

OPERATIONAL ORDER OF THE USSR PEOPLE'S COMMISSAR OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS NO 00593

20 September 1937

Moscow

The organs of the NKVD have registered up to 25,000 people, so-called "Harbintsy" (former employees of the China Eastern Railway and returnees from Manchukuo), working in railway transport and industry sectors of the USSR.

Operational intelligence materials show that the overwhelming majority of *Harbintsy* who have arrived in the USSR are former White officers, police, military police, and members of various émigré fascist spy organisations etc. The overwhelming majority of them are agents of Japanese intelligence, which over a number of years has sent them to the USSR to conduct terrorist, diversionary and espionage activities.

Evidence from investigations also serve as proof of this. For example, over the last year, up to 4500 *Harbintsy* have been subjected to punitive measures/repressed for terrorist and diversionary-espionage activities in railroad transport and industries. Investigations of their cases have revealed a carefully planned and executed operation by Japanese intelligence to organise on Soviet territory a diversionary-espionage base from among the *Harbintsy*.

Enclosed with this order is a classified letter about the terrorist, diversionary and espionage activities of Japanese agents among the *Harbintsy*, with the purpose of crushing all spy cadres among them who have been planted in the transport and industry sectors the USSR.

I therefore order that:

1. As of 1 October 1937, a comprehensive operation be commenced to liquidate diversionary-espionage and terrorist cadres among the *Harbintsy* in the transport and industry sectors.
2. All *Harbintsy* are subject to arrest, who are:
 - a) exposed and suspected of terrorist, diversionary, espionage and destructive activities;
 - b) former Whites, returnees, including those who emigrated during the civil war and who served in the forces of the various white formations;
 - c) former members of anti-Soviet political parties (Socialist Revolutionaries (SRs), Mensheviks and others);
 - d) members of Trotskyist and right formations, and all *Harbintsy* linked with the activities of these anti-Soviet formations;
 - e) members or various émigré fascist organisations (the "Russian Armed Services Union", the "Cossack Union", the "Union of Musketeers", the "Yellow Union", the "Black Ring", the "YMCA", the

"Russian Student Organisation", the "Brotherhood of Russian Truth", the "Peasant Workers Party" etc);

f) former employees of the Chinese police and armed forces, both before the occupation of Manchuria by the Japanese and after the establishment of Manchukuo;

g) former employees of foreign firms, primarily Japanese, but also White Guard firms (eg Churin & Co and others);

h) Harbin graduates of well known courses 'International', 'Slavia', 'Praga';

i) owners and co-owners of various enterprises in Harbin (restaurants, hotels, garages, etc);

j) those arriving in the USSR illegally without proper Soviet documents;

k) those who held Chinese citizenship before transferring to Soviet citizenship;

l) former smugglers, criminals, traders in opium and morphine etc

m) members of counterrevolutionary sectarian groups.

3. The arrests are to be conducted in two steps:

a) First to be arrested, all *Harbintsy* working in the NKVD, the Red Army, railway and water transport, civil aviation and air force, military plants and defence workshops of all other plants, electrical power facilities of all industrial enterprises, in gas and oil refineries, in the chemical industry;

b) second, all other *Harbintsy*, working in Soviet establishments, soviet farms, collective farms etc

4. *Harbintsy*, not falling under the categories set out in point 2, regardless of the presence of compromising information, are to be immediately removed from railway, water and air transport and from industrial enterprises, simultaneously taking measures to ensure their exclusion from these sites in the future.

5. The investigations of the cases of the arrested *Harbintsy* are to be rolled out in such a way that all participants in the diversionary-espionage and terrorist organizations and groups are exposed in the shortest period of time.

The new network of spies, saboteurs and diversionaries exposed in the course of the investigation of the *Harbintsy* – ARE TO BE ARRESTED IMMEDIATELY.

6. All arrested *Harbintsy* are to be divided into two categories:

a) in the first category – are all *Harbintsy* who have been exposed in diversionary-espionage, terrorist, sabotage and anti-Soviet activities. They are subject to execution.

b) in the second category – are all other, less active *Harbintsy*. They are subject to imprisonment in jails and camps for a period of 8-10 years.

7. On those *Harbintsy*, classified in the first and second categories as a result of the investigation process, an album is to be compiled every 10 days (with individual certificates on each prisoner), with a concrete presentation of investigation and intelligence materials, identifying the degree of culpability of the prisoner.

The album is to be forwarded to the NKVD of the USSR for confirmation.

The classification of arrested *Harbintsy* into the 1st or 2nd category is derived on the basis of intelligence and investigative information – by the NKVD chief of the republics – the chief of the NKVD directorate of the region (oblast or krai), the chief of the NKVD's DTO of State Security, together with the corresponding procurator of the republic, region or railway.

8. After the confirmation of the lists by the NKVD Chief of the USSR and the Chief Procurator, the sentence is to be carried out IMMEDIATELY.

9. The release from prisons and camps of *Harbintsy* convicted earlier and completed their sentences for espionage, diversion and sabotage – IS TO CEASE.

Materials on these people are to be presented for examination by a Special Board of the NKVD USSR.

10. The operation against the *Harbintsy* is to be used to acquire qualified intelligence agents, taking measures to ensure that double agents are excluded from the secret service.

11. The operation is to be concluded by 25 December 1937.

12. My Order No 00486 of 15 August 1937 will apply in relation to the families of repressed *Harbintsy*.

13. I am to be informed on the progress of the operation by telegraph every five days (on 5th, 10th, 15th, 20th, 25th, 30th of each month).

Signed People's Commissar of Internal Affairs
Chief Commissar of State Security
YEZHOV