

## THE STAFF POLICY IN THE MOLDAVIAN SSR'S GOVERNMENT IN 1940–1941/1944

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**Abstract:** *In this paper the author addresses the special aspects of the staff policy of the Moldavian /Moldovan SSR's government during the establishment of the Soviet power in Bessarabia, in 1940–1941/1944. Special attention is paid to the fact that a significant number of the government members managed to get key positions in the MASSR government even in 1937–1938, during and after Stalin's repressions. With the establishment of the Soviet regime the Party staff that had experience in MASSR was in a special demand. These people obediently executed all the orders received from Moscow, so they were a comfortable tool of the central authority. It should be noticed that though the idea of involving the locals in the management process was actively promoted among the government's members, in 1940–1941/1944 it was just one person of Romanian origin from the south region of Bessarabia. One of the major principles of the staff policy promoted by the central authorities was the cadre's transfer, predominantly Russians and Ukrainians. It is also necessary to mention that the level of education of the government members was very low. Instead, the social background was 100% "healthy" (workers and peasants origin), and they were very young.*

**Keywords:** *People's Commissar, key positions, staff policy, communist cadres, "healthy" social origin, level of education*

In the newly formed Moldavian/Moldovan SSR<sup>1</sup> (August 2, 1940) one of the major tasks of the Soviet regime was the formation of a new staff for the republican authorities. Therefore, our discussion focuses on two distinct time periods: 1. From 1940 to 1941, during the establishment of the Soviet power and assignment of government new leaders, and 2. 1944 – The moment when the before war government came back in Bessarabia. The main target of the article is to show the evolution of the government leaders between 1940 and 1944.<sup>2</sup> The term "leaders of

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<sup>1</sup> According to the Soviet ideology the name of the Republic was written as Moldavian and the author kept the official name of that period.

<sup>2</sup> The subject of the article covers the cases of 21 members of the Government and does not include some other persons that occupied less important functions (such as I. Dmitriev, born in 1900, in a peasant family, Panchevo village, Kirovograd region, declared as Moldovan, Chief administrator of the Government in 1940 and in 1944; Gh. Shinkariuk, born in 1909, in a peasant family, Slobodzia, left bank of Dniester, declared as Moldovan, Chairman of the Radio Committee in 1940-1941), or

government” is defined as: a part of the highest echelons of the nomenklatura – the making decision staff. The paper is based on documents consulted in the fund 51 of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Moldova from Archive of Social and Political Organizations from Republic of Moldova (former Central Committee of the Communist Party of Moldova archive) and fund 2948 of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of Moldavian /Moldovan SSR from National Archive of the Republic of Moldova (former State Archive of the MSSR).

We have to take into account that during Stalin’s purges<sup>3</sup> was exterminated the national elite formed in the 1920s, and in their place came people of Stalinist inspiration. The mass repressions freed functions for accelerated promotion of the cadres of the second-echelon positions in the party, producing important changes in the political class. The quick arrival of the new figures in the government, in the period of 1937-1939, brought on a major generation change. It is necessary to mention some people who were rapidly advanced to the high level posts and who belonged to the new generation of communists<sup>4</sup> such as: T. Konstantinov, Chairman of the Central Executive Committee (1938), Head of Government (April 1940), N. Mozolevsky, People’s Commissar of Finance (1938), G. Antoseak, People’s Commissar of Education (1938), V. Forș, Deputy People’s Commissar of Education (1939), G. Soloviev, Deputy People’s Commissar of Education (1937), I. Bobanov, Deputy People’s Commissar of Health (1938), I. Moskovko, Empowered People’s Commissariat for material provision of the USSR for MASSR (1939), F. Gonța, Main Referee of the Government of MASSR (1937), L. Dyachenko, Chief administrator of the Government (1937) and others.

Others were promoted in key positions of the government from the middle level of the Party, as for example is the case of N. Koval, who held the position until autumn 1940 as a Agronomist and from the fall of 1940 – People’s Commissar of Agriculture, or S. Bondarchiuk, that during the period of 1934-1940 worked as a district prosecutor in Camenca (Kamenka), Dubăsari, Kotovsk (Birezula) and then he was named prosecutor of MSSR, or A. Shevchenko who served as the first secretary

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functionaries with unidentified personal files (such as B. Rusnac, Chairman of the Radio Committee in 1944). Another representative is V. Dmitrienko, born on April 4, 1912, Shopino village, Belgorod County, Kursk gubernia in a peasants family, Russian, member of VKP (B) since 1938. He was the People’s Commissar of Internal Affairs just for several months. In 1944 appears such function as People’s Commissar of Defense that was occupied by A. Gervasiev (personal file not identified).

<sup>3</sup> The general purges affected all Soviet institutions and at the same time they became a way of replacing cadres.

<sup>4</sup> This political elite constantly added new cadres called *vydvizhentsy*, which means persons who were promoted from working class or peasants.

of the District's Party Committee in Balta and was appointed in 1940 to the post of People's Commissar, and others.<sup>5</sup>

A major part was played by the political past of the government officials appointed to their positions in 1940-1941. Some people passed through the verification, like the case of A. Varvaretskaya – People's Commissar of Social Protection in the period of 1940-1951. The wave of repressions has affected her directly in August 1938, when she was expelled from the party as "enemy of the people" and arrested for organizing a series of diversions in the People's Commissariat for Public Health, where she served as Deputy People's Commissar. We do not know the reason, but probably because the repressions were in decline, on December 1, 1938, Varvaretskaya's file was closed on the grounds of lack of evidences, so she escaped from extermination. In the period of 1938-1940 she could occupy only the modest post of the chairman of the trade union committee of the medical staff of MASSR.

Lazar Kaganovich appreciating the purges of the party and state apparatus remarked that the whole stratum of people were arrested and exterminated. As it was mentioned, a violent replacement of generations and of the social structures had occurred. We have to note that the existing system was not able to prepare the new change of the body of cadres. That is why available human resources, loyal to the Soviet power, even if with different levels of education and culture, were in demand. In terms of social transformations of MSSR, it is important to consider the essential characteristics of this new generation that ascended to the top of the party and state hierarchy. We have to find out how and why they were able to get the top-level power positions. Which were the principal differences between the composition of government in 1940 and 1944? And how did they change after Stalin's repressions?

To answer these questions it is necessary to analyze the age, party membership, ethnic composition, social and geographical origin differences of the government officials, and study what level of education had the leaders of the government. The nominal lists of Narkoms (People's Commissar) for the period of 1940-1941 and 1944 is presented below, followed by a summary of the tables and graphs that helps to evaluate them.

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<sup>5</sup> Other examples are as follows: G. Gorbunov, Chairman of the executive committee of Kodyma, then Deputy People's Commissar of Local Industry of the MSSR, N. Maximov, Chairman of the executive committee of Red Okny (Okna Roşie), in autumn 1940 – vice chairman of Gosplan.

**Table no. 1. The 1940-1941 Government members (date of birth, age, education)<sup>6</sup>**

Name	Key position	Born	Age	Education
Konstantinov Tihon Anton	Head of government	1898	42	Secondary
Akimov Grigory Grigory	People's Commissar of Trade	1903	37	Elementary
Antoseak Grigory Feodor	Head of State Planning Committee (GOSPLAN)	1907	33	Higher
Bobanov Ilya Pantelei	People's Commissar of Health	1893	47	Higher
Butko Andrey Hariton	People's Commissar of State Control	1904	36	Secondary
Forș Valentin Feodor	People's Commissar of Education	1909	31	Higher
Gonța Feofan Semen	People's Commissar of Justice	1900	40	Higher incomplete
Dyachenko Luca Stepan	People's Commissar of Forest Industry	1902	38	Secondary incomplete
Koval Nicolai Grigory	People's Commissar of Agriculture	1904	36	Higher
Mozolevsky Nicolai Nicolai	People's Commissar of Finance	1903	37	Elementary
Pokatilov <sup>7</sup> Piotr Yakov	People's Commissar of Food Industry	1902	38	Higher
Popovici Vasile Ivan	People's Commissar of the Local Industry	1897	43	Secondary
Sazykin <sup>8</sup> Nicolai Stepan	People's Commissar of Internal Affairs (NKVD), from 18th of march 1941 People's Commissar of State Security (NKGB)	1910	30	Higher
Varvaretskaya Ana Nicolai	People's Commissar of Social Protection	1904	36	Secondary incomplete
Shevchenko Alexei Piotr	People's Commissar of Municipal Economy	1901	39	Elementary
Soloviev Guriy Kuprian	People's Commissar of Motor Transport	1906	36	Secondary
Lukyanov Alexander Ivan	Head of the Department for Arts	1903	37	Higher
Samarkin Stepan Mihail	Head of the Department for Cinematography	1908	32	Secondary unfinished
Volkov Nicolai Ivan	Head of the Department for Roads	1901	39	Secondary

<sup>6</sup> Source: Archive of Social and Political Organizations from Republic of Moldova, fund 51, inventory 1, file 34.

<sup>7</sup> Lately since April 23, 1941 he was named the Secretary for local industry of Central Committee of the Communist Party (of Bolshevik) of Soviet Moldova. After the war he returned to this position that he was occupying till his death in 1950.

<sup>8</sup> After gaining experience in the MSSR, N. Sazykin was named the empowered of NKVD – NKGB of Estonia and in 1947 – the Deputy Minister of the State Security of Belorussian SSR.

Kushnarev Yakov Tihon	Empowered People's Commissariat for transmission of the USSR for MSSR	1903	37	Secondary
Moskovko Ivan Ivan	Empowered People's Commissariat for material provision of the USSR for MSSR	1892	48	Elementary

**Table no. 2 The 1940-1941 Government members (ethnicity, party membership and social origin)<sup>9</sup>**

Name	Social origin	VKP(B) <sup>10</sup> member	Declared Ethnicity	Place of birth
Konstantinov Tihon Anton	peasants	since 1924	Moldovan	village of Horoshee, Voroshilovgrad Region, (now Lugansk Region), Ukraine
Akimov <sup>11</sup> Grigory Grigory	workers	since 1928	Russian	village of Sireț, Chișinău, Bessarabia
Antoseak <sup>12</sup> Grigory Feodor	workers	since 1937	Russian	workers settlement Surashevka, Amur Region, Russia
Bobanov Ilya Pantelei	peasants	since 1927	Russian	village of Jukovici Smolensk Region, Russia
Butko Andrey Hariton	workers	since 1926	Ukrainian	city of Makeevka, Voroshilovgrad Region, (now Donetsk Region), Ukraine
Forș Valentin Feodor	peasants	since 1932	Moldovan	village of Tașlâc (Tashlyk), Grigoriopol District, the left bank of Dniester, (RASSM)
Gonța Feofan Semen	peasants	since 1924	Moldovan	village of Baitaly, the left bank of Dniester, (RASSM) <sup>13</sup> , now Ananiev District, Odessa Region, Ukraine
Dyachenko Luca Stepan	peasants	since 1931	Moldovan	village of Yasinovo, Odessa Region, Ukraine

<sup>9</sup> Source: Archive of Social and Political Organizations from Republic of Moldova, fund 51, inv. 1, f. 34.

<sup>10</sup> All-Union Communist Party (of Bolsheviks).

<sup>11</sup> Although in the personal file it is indicated that his father was a shoemaker, most probably he also had a peasant origin because it was not the only occupation in the country region.

<sup>12</sup> It is indicated in the personal file that he originated from a workers' settlement, from the family of a political convict though his father was from the Mokra village, Râbnița (Rybnitsa) district, left bank of Dniester.

<sup>13</sup> As indicated in the document.

Koval Nicolai Grigory	peasants	since 1939	Moldovan	Camenca, the left bank of Dniester, (RASSM)
Mozolevsky Nicolai Nicolai	workers	since 1926	Russian	city of Tighina, Bessarabia
Pokatilov Piotr Yakov	workers	since 1924	Ukrainian	city of Herson, Ukraine
Popovici <sup>14</sup> Vasile Ivan	workers	since 1920	Moldovan	Bessarabia <sup>15</sup> (Izmail County)
Sazykin Nicolai Stepan	peasants	since 1939	Russian	village of Kolobovka, Leningrad District, Stalingrad Region (now Volgograd Region), Russia
Varvaretskaya Ana Nicolai	peasants	since 1932	Moldovan	village of Gonorata, the left bank of Dniester, (RASSM) <sup>16</sup> , now Odessa Region, Ukraine
Shevchenko Alexei Piotr	workers	since 1926	Ukrainian	city of Berezovka, Odessa Region, Ukraine
Soloviev Guriy Kuprian	peasants	since 1938	Russian	village of ...oselova <sup>17</sup> , Odessa Region, Ukraine
Lukyanov <sup>18</sup> Alexander Ivan	workers	since 1924	Moldovan	village of Horoshee, Voroshilovgrad District, (now Lugansk Region), Ukraine
Samarkin Stepan Mihail	workers	since 1932	Ukrainian	Ukraine <sup>19</sup>
Volkov Nicolai Ivan	peasants	since 1931	Moldovan	village of Novo-Gheorghievka, Odessa Region, Ukraine
Kushnarev Yakov Tihon	peasants	since 1929	Ukrainian	village of Malinovka, Harkov Region, Ukraine
Moskovko Ivan Ivan	workers	since 1926	Ukrainian	city of Yanpole, Summy Region, Ukraine

<sup>14</sup> We do not know the village of origin but he was definitely from the country region.

<sup>15</sup> As indicated in the personal file where the exact place of birth is missing. We could only deduce that it was in Izmail County. Only in his personal file from the Party College of Control in 1951 he mentioned that at age of 10 he with his family settled in Leova town from the South of Bessarabia. The family came from Cernoguz village, Bukovina. Archive of Social and Political Organizations from Republic of Moldova, fund 51, inv. 37, f. 3349, l. 2.

<sup>16</sup> As indicated in the document.

<sup>17</sup> Unclear writing in the document; we could only discern the ending string of the toponym.

<sup>18</sup> He also has a peasant origin because his first non-peasant occupation took place in 1915–1918 (scribe apprentice) in his native village.

<sup>19</sup> Detailed data is missing.

**Table no. 3 The 1944 Government members (date of birth, age, education)<sup>20</sup>**

Name	Key position	Born	Age	Education
Konstantinov Tihon Anton	Head of government	1898	46	Secondary
Akimov Grigory Grigory	People's Commissar of Trade	1903	41	Elementary
Antoseak Grigory Feodor	Head of State Planning Committee (GOSPLAN)	1907	37	Higher
Bobanov Ilya Pantelei	People's Commissar of Health	1893	51	Higher
Poloz Piotr Matvei	People's Commissar of State Control	1902	42	Secondary
Radul Macariy Mihai	People's Commissar of Education	1910	34	Higher
Bondarenko Vasile Marc	People's Commissar of Justice	1903	41	Secondary incomplete
Dyachenko <sup>21</sup> Luca Stepan	People's Commissar of Forest Industry	1902	42	Secondary incomplete
Koval Nicolai Grigory	People's Commissar of Agriculture	1904	40	Higher
Mozolevsky Nicolai Nicolai	People's Commissar of Finance	1903	41	Elementary
Țurcan <sup>22</sup> Kiril Ivan	People's Commissar of Food Industry	1900	44	Higher unfinished
Popovici Vasile Ivan	People's Commissar of the Local Industry	1897	47	Secondary
Mordovets <sup>23</sup> Iosif Lavrentiy	People's Commissar of State Security (NKGB)	1899	45	Higher
Varvaretskaya Ana Nicolai	People's Commissar of Social Protection	1904	40	Secondary incomplete
Shevchenko Alexei Piotr	People's Commissar of Municipal Economy	1901	43	Elementary
Bezrodny Nicolai Alexei	People's Commissar of Motor Transport	1903	41	Elementary
Kutkovetsky Yakov Afanasi	Head of the Department for Arts	1907	37	Secondary
Markeev <sup>24</sup> Mihail Ivan	People's Commissar of Internal Affairs (NKVD)	1905	39	Secondary
Moskovko Ivan Ivan	Head of the Department for Roads	1892	52	Elementary

<sup>20</sup> Source: Archive of Social and Political Organizations from Republic of Moldova, fund 51, inv. 1, f. 32, 34; inv. 2, f. 97.

<sup>21</sup> During 1944 Dyachenko was transferred from this position, being named Chief administrator of the Government. He occupied this position until 1946 and later during 1949-1973. In his place, on July 17, 1944 was named A. Oleynik.

<sup>22</sup> In the period of 1941-1944 K. Țurcan was named a Permanent Representative of MSSR in Moscow.

<sup>23</sup> Only in 1955 he lost his position. During 1955-1956 he worked in the Ministry of Municipal Economy as a Head of Human Resources Department and after that he retired.

<sup>24</sup> Having the experience of sovietisation in Western Ukraine and Belorussia (1939) M. Markeev was appointed to the position of the Minister of Internal Affairs of MSSR on April 1, 1944 and occupied it until April 3, 1946. In 1946 he was transferred to the Mari Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic as a Minister of Internal Affairs.

Kushnarev Yakov Tihon	Empowered People's Commissariat for transmission of the USSR for MSSR	1903	41	Secondary
Damaskin Vasile Nikifor	Empowered People's Commissariat for material provision of the USSR for MSSR	1903	43	Elementary

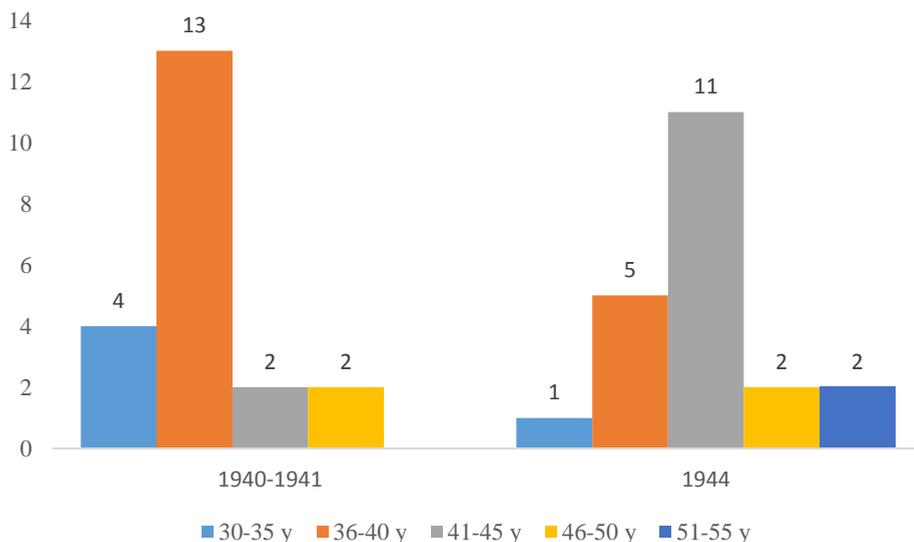
**Table no. 4. The 1944 Government members (ethnicity, party membership and social origin)<sup>25</sup>**

Name	Social origin	Member of the VKP(B)	Declared Ethnicity	Place of birth
Konstantinov Tihon Anton	peasants	since 1924	Moldovan	village of Horoshee, Voroshilovgrad region, (now Lugansk Region), Ukraine
Akimov Grigory Grigory	workers	since 1928	Russian	village of Sireț, Chișinău, Bessarabia
Antoseak Grigory Feodor	workers	since 1937	Russian	workers settlement Surashevka, Amur Region, Russia
Bobanov Ilyja Pantelei	peasants	since 1927	Russian	village of Jukovici Smolensk Region, Russia
Poloz Piotr Matvei	peasants	since 1927	Moldovan	village of Dikovka, Herson Region, Ukraine
Radul Macarii Mihai	peasants	since 1940	Moldovan	village of Martonosha, Kirovograd Region, Ukraine
Bondarenko Vasile Marc	peasants	since 1927	Ukrainian	village of Iunakovka, Sumy Region, Ukraine
Dyachenko Luca Stepan	peasants	since 1931	Moldovan	village of Yasinovo, Odessa region, Ukraine
Koval Nicolai Grigory	peasants	since 1939	Moldovan	Camenca, the left bank of Dniester, (RASSM)
Mozolevsky Nicolai Nicolai	workers	since 1926	Russian	city of Tighina, Bessarabia
Țurcan Kiril Ivan	peasants	since 1939	Moldovan	village of Plot, Râbnîța (Rybnitsa) District, the left bank of Dniester, (RASSM)
Popovici Vasile Ivan	workers	since 1920	Moldovan	Bessarabia (Izmail County)
Mordovets Iosif Lavrentiy	peasants	since 1929	Ukrainian	village of Nedaovoda, Krovoi Rog District, Dnepropetrovsk Region, Ukraine

<sup>25</sup> Source: Archive Social and Political Organizations from Republic of Moldova, fund 51, inv. 1, f. 32, 34; inv. 2, f. 97.

Varvaretskaya Ana Nicolai	peasants	since 1932	Moldovan	village of Gonorata, the left bank of Dniester, (RASSM), now Odessa Region, Ukraine.
Shevchenko Alexei Piotr	workers	since 1926	Ukrainian	city of Berezovka, Odessa Region, Ukraine
Bezrodny Nicolai Alexei	peasants	since 1927	Ukrainian	village of Kirmiciki, Odessa Region, Ukraine
Kutkovetsky Yakov Afanasi	peasants	since 1930	Moldovan	Camenca, the left bank of Dniester, (RASSM)
Markeev Mihail Ivan	workers	since 1926	Russian	city of Syzran, Samara region, Russia
Damaskin Vasile Nikifor	peasants	since 1931	Moldovan	village of Dobranka, Odessa Region, Ukraine
Kushnarev Yakov Tihon	peasants	since 1929	Ukrainian	village of Malinovka, Harkov Region, Ukraine
Moskovko Ivan Ivan	workers	since 1926	Ukrainian	city of Yanpole, Summy Region, Ukraine

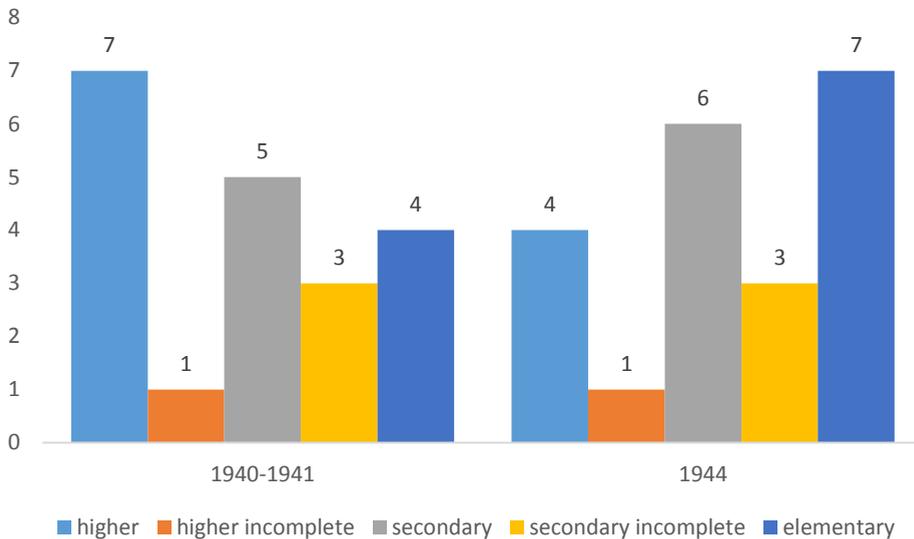
**Graph no. 1. Age of People's Commissars, 1940-1941 and 1944**



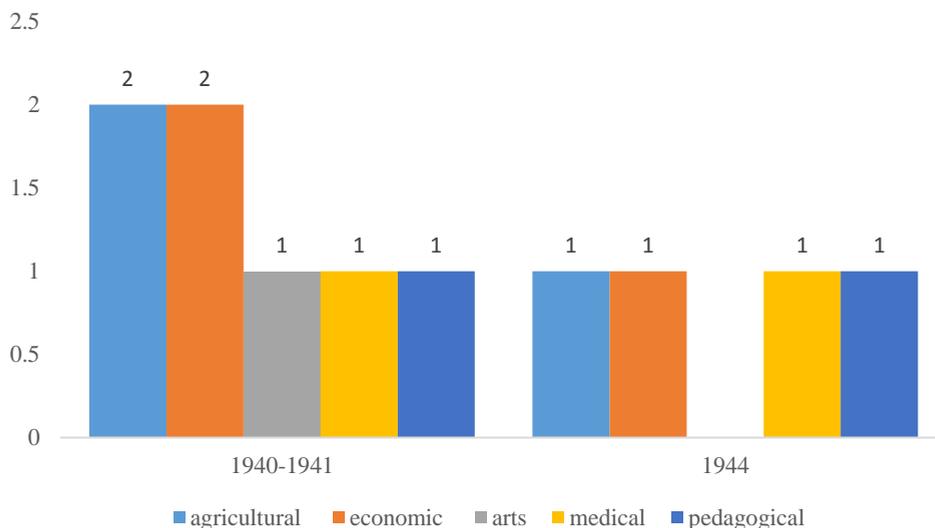
It is easy to observe, on Table no. 1 and no. 3, and Graph no. 1, that most of the leaders of the government from 1940-1941 and 1944 were born between 1900 and 1910, presenting a most normal phenomenon after Stalin's repression. Their numbers remained relatively constant in the two time-periods (see Table no. 1 and no. 3, and Graph no. 1 for details). One can note that the new government leaders were very young; the overwhelming majorities (i.e. about 83%) were aged up to 40

years. The youngest leader in the period of the 1940-1941, N. Sazykin who headed the People's Commissar of Internal Affairs (NKVD), was 30 years old and V. Forș, People's Commissar of Education, was 31 years old. By comparison, in the government of 1944 was only one person aged up to 35 years: M. Radul, also like Forș, was a People's Commissar of Education. So we can see that in the government were recruited more and much younger people. At the same time, Stalin's new generation in 1940-1941 and 1944 was the major force in the government. Only four persons in both cases were born before 1900, and only two government figures were over 45 years of age in 1940-1941 and respectively in the 1944 period over 50 years of age. The oldest members of the government for both time-periods were I. Moskovko and I. Bobanov.

**Graph no. 2. Education level of People's Commissars, 1940-1941 and 1944**



### Graph no. 3. The type of higher education of People's Commissars, 1940-1941 and 1944



In 1940-1941 the priority was given to people with higher education, preferably from MASSR or regions in the vicinity, especially from Ukraine. During the repressions were removed educated persons and therefore there was a massive shortage of educated cadres. As it can be seen from Table no. 1 and Graph no. 2, among the heads of commissariats from government 1940-1941 only 7 people (33%) had higher education (this group included the following members of the executive body: N. Koval, G. Antoseak, I. Bobanov, V. Forș, P. Pokatilov, N. Sazykin, A. Lukyanov). The figures will decrease significantly for 1944, to just 4 persons (18%) (N. Koval, G. Antoseak, I. Bobanov, M. Radul). The majority of the leaders of the government in both cases had only elementary,<sup>26</sup> secondary and secondary unfinished education.<sup>27</sup> Even the head of the government, T. Konstantinov had only secondary education. Therefore the new generation often could not cope with the challenges.

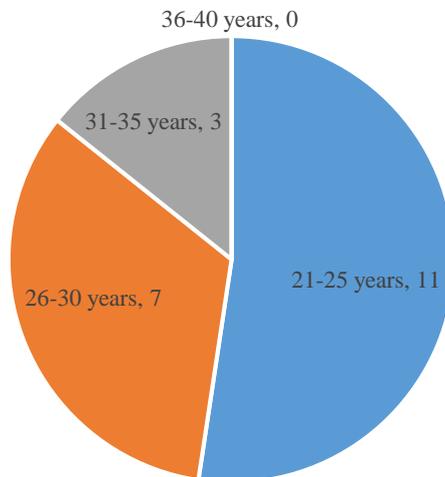
<sup>26</sup> Elementary education is normally completed in 3-4 years.

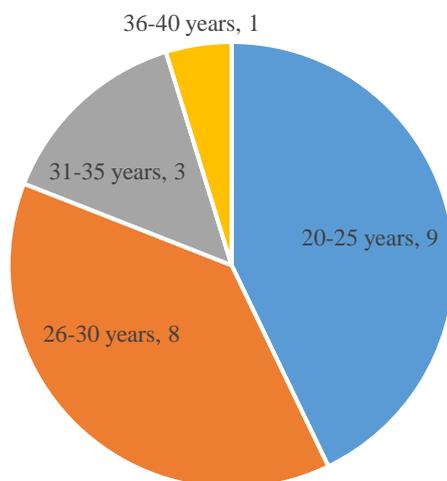
<sup>27</sup> This category includes persons who studied in the specialized secondary schools, ordinary general schools or party schools, and also communist universities.

**Graph no. 4. Length of Party membership of People's Commissars, 1940-1941 and 1944**



**Graph no. 5. Age of joining the Party for People's Commissars, 1940-1941**



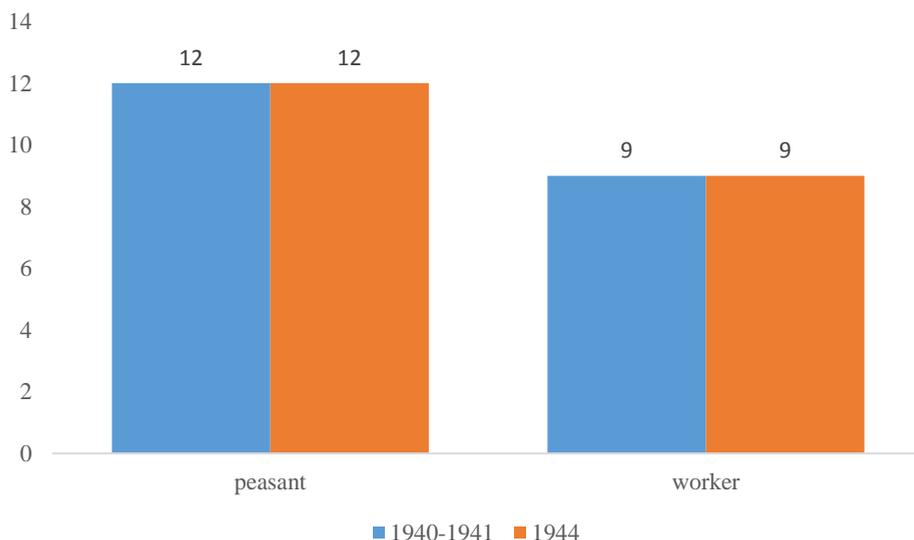
**Graph no. 6. Age of joining the Party for People's Commissars, 1944**

The competent people were rarely appointed to leadership positions if they were not party members. Even the best specialists were not named to high functions if they did not join the party. The principal criteria for selecting cadres became the evolution of one's political profile. Thus only those who became members of the All-Union Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) had a chance to get to the top of the Party and state hierarchy. Although we do not have complete data for all leaders of government but, it can be seen in both cases that they all had the USSR Party membership card (see Table no. 2 and no. 4). 11 people (52%) joined the party between 1920 and 1928. This index is true for both governments. Another 10 persons in each of the both cases had become party members in the period of 1929 and 1940, when there was a need to increase the number of party members. Only one person, Popovici, had long-term party experience. He was being enrolled in its lines since 1920. We do not know yet many details about the political past of Popovici and how he escaped the Stalinist repressions. But the fact is that he was used by the Soviet authorities as indigenous element and also with a solid party experience. In order to dominate the republican staff a special attention was paid on biographical compromising information that helped to annihilate any person who was "uncomfortable". Later in 1949 Popovici would be dismissed because he was considered compromised in the face of the new power.

With regard to the age of joining the party, by members of the government, Graphs no. 5 and no. 6 highlight that all of them enrolled while still very young. After the purges between 1933 and 1938 there were no government members with experience in any political party prior to 1917.

It is noted that it was a limited access to functions within the party and state administration for the members of the illegal communist movement from Bessarabia, even if during the interwar period in Romania they had a loyal attitude to USSR. Some of the members of the Romanian Communist Party were executed during the Great Terror (E. Arbore, People's Commissar of Health, V. Holostenko, chief of propaganda and agitation of the Moldovan Regional Committee, H. Bogopolskiy, first Secretary of the Moldovan Regional Committee), others were sent to Romania to serve the interests of Moscow (A. Bârlădeanu, Minister of Foreign Trade, I. Chișinevschi, Secretary of the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party for propaganda and culture, L. Răutu, Secretary of the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party for ideology). In both cases these people were ably used at the appropriate time. In the case of MSSR no communist activist from Bessarabia hold any important post, being regarded with suspicion and constantly overlooked.

**Graph no. 7. Social origin of People's Commissars, 1944**



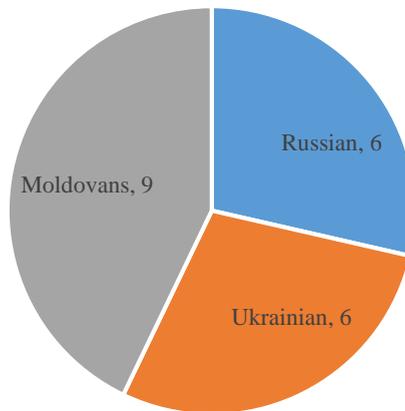
The social background emerged the main route for the new class and at the same time it was the basic criterion for obtaining the appropriate privileges. After the purges, the nomenklatura of the government took shape from the lower strata of the society. All the government officials promoted in the high position in 1940 and 1944 indicated that they had “healthy” social origin.<sup>28</sup> In 1940, 12 heads of People's

<sup>28</sup> Often it was not so. Among the members of the nomenklatura were several cases of people with incorrect or incomplete data in their personal file about their origin. For instance, G. Akimov, F.

Commissar indicated that they had peasants and 9 of them working-class origin. This index remained constant in 1944 (see Graph no. 7). In order to increase the percentage of the proletariat it was a common practice to indicate in the personal files a “workers” origin though in most cases those persons worked as cottagers at landowners.

Education, social background, and the social milieu from which the members of the government were selected had a considerable impact on the quality of governance. Only five people in 1940 and four persons in 1944 had been born in localities with urban elements, but they were peripheral. The other members of the government had been born in rural areas and regions.

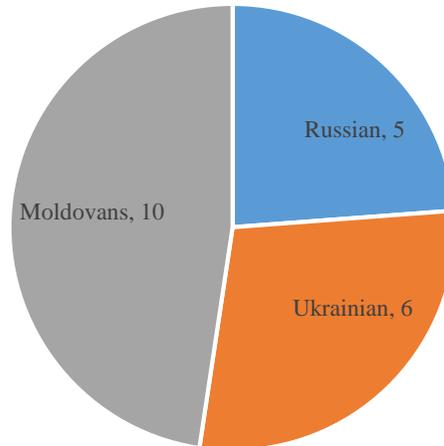
**Graph no. 8. Ethnic composition of People's Commissars, 1940-1941**



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Koval, N. Koval and others. See L. Crudu, *Marginalii la biografia unui functionar de partid – Cazul lui Gherasim Rudi* (Notes to the biography of a party functionary. Case study: Gh. Rudi), in M. Tarîță (coord.), *Cadrele de partid și sovietice din RASSM și RSSM (1924-1956)*, Chișinău, Tehnica-Info, 2015, p. 9.

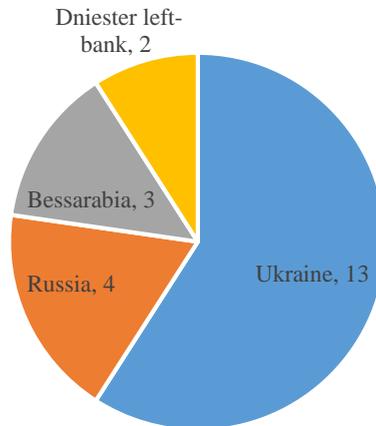
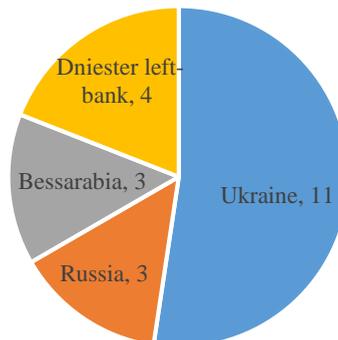
**Graph no. 9. Ethnic composition of People's Commissars, 1944**



In contrast to MASSR, in MSSR attracting local people in the party and state hierarchy was not a policy. Tables no. 2 and no. 4 shows that in 1940 and 1944 there were only three persons from Bessarabia. Out of these three, two had Russian ethnicity and left Bessarabia as young people (G. Akimov, People's Commissar of Trade and N. Mozolevsky, People's Commissar of Finance). It seems that only one ethnic Romanian, who declared himself as Moldovan was from Southern Bessarabia: V. Popovici, People's Commissar of the Local Industry, but he also left Bessarabia at a young age, similar to G. Akimov and N. Mozolevsky.

In the case of the nine people who declared that they were ethnic Moldovans, this statement was purely formal, and in fact their geographical origin was mentioned only in order to highlight the participation of the Moldovan element in the creation of the new formations. They were originally from Odessa, Lugansk, Kirovograd regions, and the districts from the left bank of river Dniester. They did not know and could not speak the so called Moldovan language. A very representative is the case of the P. Poloz<sup>29</sup> that declared himself as Moldovan from Herson region.

<sup>29</sup> In 1940-1941 P. Poloz was the Head of the executive committee of the Bălți district. In February 1941 at the First Congress of the Communist Party (of Bolshevik) of Soviet Moldova, P. Tereschenko, chief editor of „Moldova Socialistă” (Socialist Moldova) newspaper, analyzing the Communist Party of the Soviet Moldova highlighted that the Russians and the Ukrainians had the majority. Their knowledge the so called of Moldovan language was very poor. As example he mentioned P. Poloz that: „... didn't possess enough good neither Russian, neither Ukrainian, neither Moldovan language ...” Archive of Social and Political Organizations from Republic of Moldova, fund

**Graph no. 10. People's Commissars' country of origin (1940-1941)****Graph no. 11. People's Commissars' country of origin (1944)**


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51, inv. 1, f. 40, p. 48-54. Another remark was made by S. Zelenciuk, the Secretary for propaganda of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (of Bolshevik) of Moldova in September 1940, speaking about the situation in the Soviet Moldova. He accentuated that in the MASSR were people that were in functions for rather a long period, some for 7 years, but anyway they did not possess the local language: „Not because they could not study the language but just because they did not have such a purpose, they did not want to do that. Some people came in RSSM from Kazakhstan where they studied the local language just in two years. Why the staff that comes in the RSSM could not study the Moldovan language? Communication with us without [Moldovan] language is imposible”. Archive of Social and Political Organizations from Republic of Moldova, fund 51, inv. 1, f. 2, p. 143-146.

The six Ukrainians in the structure of government in 1940 and 1944 came from the regions of Donetsk, Herson, Odessa, Summy, Harkov and Kirovograd. (see Table no. 4 for details). Three other people in the government's leadership in 1940 were of Russian origin, being from the regions of Smolensk, Amur and Voroshilovgrad (I. Bobanov, G. Antoseak, N. Sazykin). Another Russian, Soloviev, originated from Odessa region. This indicator remains constant for 1944, with the small detail of Samara taking the place of Voroshilovgrad (I. Bobanov, G. Antoseak, M. Markeev). From this point of view, the case of Antoseak, who declared himself ethnic Russian, is worth a note. He was born in Russia, in the Amur region, from a family sentenced for life to hard works in Siberia. His parents came, however, from the left bank of Dniester, Mokra village, Râbnița (Rybnitsa) district. Like in the case of V. Popovici he was considered indigenous.

We should mention that immediately after the war began, the issue of organizing an illegal partisan activity in Bessarabia was brought up. The active participation of the top leaders of the MSSR was expected. But organizing this activity turned out to be difficult because the officials refused to participate in it. Some good examples in this case could be: N. Koval, People's Commissar of Agriculture, V. Forș, People's Commissar of Education, L. Dyachenko, People's Commissar of Forest Industry, A. Butko, People's Commissar of State Control, F. Gonța, People's Commissar of Justice, N. Volkov, Head of the Department for Roads, S. Bondarchiuk, prosecutor of MSSR and others.

Some of these people were excluded from the party, removed from their positions and sent to court probably with the purpose of "education", or in order to mobilize the body of cadres of the Soviet administration. It was mentioned above that the vast majority of people declaring themselves Moldovans were originating from the left bank of Dniester or Odessa region as in the case of V. Forș, or S. Bondarchiuk. Their loyalty was questioned by Moscow in the soviet period. It was assumed that they knew the language of the natives or they had to learn it while being in the region (A. Butko). In reality things were different. Some got off only with the reprimand on party line, though later they were sent to the war and never returned<sup>30</sup> as in the case of V. Forș, F. Gonța, S. Bondarchiuk.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Another example is the case of P. Borodin, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist (Bolshevik) Party from Soviet Moldova in 1940-1941. In 1942 Borodin was dismissed from his position, like Forș, and sent to the front line, more than on the formal reason. He survived but did not return to the MSSR being held on the secondary positions in the apparatus of Ukrainian Communist Party.

<sup>31</sup> S. Bondarchiuk was prosecutor of MSSR in 1940-1941. He was born in 1905, in Plot village, Râbnița (Rybnitsa) district, left bank of Dniester, in a peasant family, declared himself as Moldovan,

During the war, five members of the MSSR Government of 1940–1941 were killed on the front.<sup>32</sup> Among them were V. Forș, People's Commissar of Education, G. Soloviev, People's Commissar of Motor Transport, N. Volkov, Head of the Department for Roads, F. Gonța, People's Commissar of Justice, S. Bondarchiuk, prosecutor of MSSR. Due to this fact executive positions at these Commissariats were free, being occupied in 1944 by the deputies that were promoted from within, or by other referred persons. At the position of People's Commissar of Justice of MSSR was appointed V. Bondarenko, former deputy of People's Commissar of Justice; at the position of Prosecutor was named F. Donchenko, former deputy prosecutor; at the position of the Head of the Department for Roads was named I. Moskovko, former Empowered People's Commissariat for material provision of the USSR for MSSR; The People's Commissar of Transport became N. Bezrodny; the position of People's Commissar of Education was named M. Radul former headmaster of the Pedagogical Institute. Advancement of some government members in 1944, such as K. Țurcan or V. Damaskin, may be explained by their active participation in partisan movements along with Gh. Rudi and L. Dyachenko, when major part of high party functionaries refused to take part in partisan activity.

It is necessary to mention that from 21 People's Commissars from 1940–1941, 12 persons (57%), the head of the government included, were in the list of government executives in 1944 (T. Konstantinov, G. Akimov, G. Antoseak, I. Bobanov, L. Dyachenko, N. Koval, N. Mozolevsky, V. Popovici, A. Varvaretskaya, I. Moskovko, A. Shevchenko, Ya. Kushnarev).

We have to emphasize that the following period (1945-1950) the basic staff of the Government of 1940-1941 suffered significant changes: T. Konstantinov<sup>33</sup>, I. Bobanov<sup>34</sup>, and A. Shevchenko<sup>35</sup> were reprimanded and dismissed from their functions in summer 1945. In May 1946 N. Mozolevsky<sup>36</sup> also lost his position. In

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Party member since 1926. In 1935 he was excluded and then reestablished in the Party. He was excluded from the Party for the second time in 1941.

<sup>32</sup> National Archive of the Republic of Moldova, fund 2948, inv. 1, f. 18, p. 207-233; f. 23, p. 68-70; f. 22, p. 35; Archive of Social and Political Organizations from Republic of Moldova, fund 51, inv. 38, f. 1367, p. 4, 53-55.

<sup>33</sup> T. Konstantinov was strongly reprimanded in July 1945 for the abuse of power and transferred to an insignificant function of the Head of the Department of Information and Statistics in the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the MSSR.

<sup>34</sup> On June 7, 1945 Bobanov was also reprimanded and the reason was rather formal. He was accused for irresponsibility in construction of public baths in rural regions. After that he was transferred to a lower position – Head of the Medical-Sanitary Directions no. 4, a medical unit for the soviet elite.

<sup>35</sup> In June 1945, A. Shevchenko, People's Commissar of Municipal Economy was dismissed from this function and named the Secretary of Party Committee of Krasnoarmeysk District of Chișinău.

<sup>36</sup> On May 20, 1946 N. Mozolevsky was reprimanded for „...non-observance of the tax policy and insufficient taxation of merchants and craftsmen, violation of the tax policy and insufficient purification of fiscal institutions.” In June 1946 he was dismissed from the function of the People's

1948 Ya. Kushnarev died. The cause and the circumstances of his death are unknown. V. Popovici<sup>37</sup> was reprimanded and lowered in function in summer 1949. În 1946 just N. Koval managed to obtain the highest position in the Communist Party (of Bolshevik) of Soviet Moldova – Prime Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (of Bolshevik) of Soviet Moldova. But in 1950 he was replaced by L. Brejnev and the following periods had only the secondary positions.

Thus in 1950 in the executive body of the MSSR remained just four persons from initial staff: G. Akimov, A. Varvaretskaya, G. Antoseak, and L. Dyachenko. G. Akimov<sup>38</sup> and A. Varvaretskaya<sup>39</sup> were dismissed in 1951. Only two persons from the initial Government composition managed to preserve their functions till 70's - G. Antoseak, and L. Dyachenko.

In order to make a complete general image of the government executives from 1940–1941 and 1944 we can mark some dominant characteristics:

1. Referring to the age structure, we can mention that during 1940–1941, the 30–40 years old cohort enjoyed an overwhelming majority (83%). In 1944 the same age category constituted only 52% and represented a relatively young group (being aged comparatively to the previous period and being part of the 41–45 years old cohort).
2. The education level was very low. In the Government of 1940–1941 just 7 persons (33%) had completed higher education, and for 1944 this indicator declined dramatically down to 19%.
3. Though in both cases it was declared that the local elements had priority in entering the power structures, in reality in 1940 as well as in 1944 among the government leaders there was just one single local element (Moldovan as declared in personal files but most probably Romanian) from the south region of Bessarabia (Izmail County) – V. Popovici. In other words national cadres were presented in the power structures just symbolically. It is quite

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Commissar of Finance and transferred to State Planning Committee (Gosplan) as a vice president. Though he claimed for the cancellation of this reprimand as it was too severe, it was cancelled only in April 1947.

<sup>37</sup> On August 9, 1949 V. Popovici was liberated from the function and reprimanded because baptized his children. During the period between October 1949 and 1961 was lowered in functions being named Director of wine factory of champagne industrial complex, and later Director of Prosthesis factory.

<sup>38</sup> After the dismissal G. Akimov was transferred within the government apparatus as the Head of Forestry and Fuel industry group.

<sup>39</sup> On April 17, 1951 Varvaretskaya was dismissed from her function for the penetration of the „hostile political and social elements” in the ministry apparatus and also for insufficient function of the Ministry. Later in 1951-1953 she was sent to the Republican Party School and after that had only insignificant functions.

evident that the Party apparatus as well as the soviet institutions of the MSSR were lack of indigenous cadres. Along with the representatives from outside the MSSR such as T. Konstantinov, A. Butko, M. Radul, F. Gonța, L. Dyachenko and others, natives from the Dniester left bank were promoted in key positions as well. Among them were V. Forș, N. Koval, N. Mozolevsky, A. Varvaretskaya, K. Țurkan, Ya. Kutkovetsky and others. Despite all the support from these staff the quality of management was still very low.<sup>40</sup> The transfer of cadres, mainly Russians and Ukrainians (I. Bobanov, N. Sazykin, P. Pokatilov, A. Shevchenko, S. Samarkin, Ya. Kushnarev, I. Moskovko and others) that represented about 57% of the government members mentioned in this article, was one of the main principles used by the central power in the staff policy.

4. Regarding the party membership we can see that in both cases the key positions in the Government of 1940 and 1944 were occupied by representatives of the Communist Party from all USSR. It is necessary to mention that V. Popovici, as it was mentioned before, had the longest experience in the Party, being its member since 1920. In 1917–1918 he fought in the Civil War in Russia as member of the Kotovski (Kotovskiy) detachment.

Neither in 1940, nor in and after 1944, members of the illegal Bessarabian Communist movement that were actually members of the Romanian Communist Party were not accepted in the upper echelons of the Communist Party and state administration of Soviet Moldova. These persons were treated with mistrust and suspicion. A different situation can be observed in some Baltic countries, where former clandestine members of the Communist Party were becoming official leaders of the local Communist parties. Moreover they were occupying their positions for a rather long period. One of them was Antanas Sniečkus, Head of the Lithuanian Communist Party that had been taking this position from 1940 to 1974. In Latvia, Jānis Kalnberzinš, Head of the Latvian Communist Party, left his position in 1959. A reserved attitude of the Soviet regime is also explained by the fact that, despite the fact that a large part of the communist activists from interwar Bessarabia were much easily accepted by local population because they knew the specific of local life,

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<sup>40</sup> The destiny of Efim Verlan, Head of the Supreme Court of Justice in 1940 and 1944–1945, as member of the high echelons of the nomenklatura, is another very representative case. He was born in 1907, in Cocieri village, Dubăsari district, Left bank of Dniester, had secondary incomplete education, declared himself as Moldovan, as well as all other government members from the left bank of Dniester. In October 1945 he was reprimanded and dismissed, being transferred to a lower position – Deputy of the Head of a Department of Government. The name of the Department is not indicated. On July 25, 1946 he died in the line of duty. Details of the accident were not described in the archive documents.

Moscow was placing them in the category of potential spies. Moreover, some leaders of the Communist (Bolshevik) Party from Soviet Moldova developed a negative attitude towards the “old guards” of Bessarabia from the very moment of their arrival in Chişinău, since the latter could become at any moment real competitors for the key positions in the Party.

5. In regard to social origin we can highlight that in both cases it was 100% “healthy”. The social milieu in which future government leaders were formed was just 23% urban and in most cases peripheral.

In the end, it is possible to affirm that during the repressions of 1930s the professional revolutionaries were eliminated. In their place came the careerists and functionaries of the Party (also named “Stalin’s Guard”) that rapidly adjusted to the new conditions, graduated from the communist universities and joined the Party, fulfilling the requirements of the new times. Such persons, being appointed to key positions within the higher echelons, knew very well that they owe to the goodwill of their chiefs, and that proofs of loyalty were mandatorily required in order to pursue a career path.

