

## Mass deportations

*Death solves all problems.*

*No person - no problem.*

*J. Stalin*

The best time to arrest people is at night because sleepy people are more obedient.

Right after entering the house the leader of the operative group gathers all the members of the family into one room. Force is used in need.

The number of people is checked from a list. One member of the operative group will keep guard on the family while others search the rooms. All guns that are found will be shared between the members of the operative group. After search it is announced that the government has decided to send them to live in other regions of the Soviet Union.

People are given 20 minutes to pack all belongings. They can take clothes, shoes, laundry, sheets, kitchen ware, food and money, but not more than 100 kg.

It was recommended to arrest the father with the family. They will be separated from their children and wives in the boarding station.

There were lists with certain numbers that had to be achieved. When it wasn't possible to find the person named in the list, someone else was taken as the number of deportees had to be fulfilled.

14. June 1948 - first mass deportation (**10 205** people)

30. June - 1. July 1941 - deportations from the islands (654 people)

15. August 1948 - deportation of the Estonian Germans (340 people)

1948 - 1952 - deportations of people who were sent to Siberia in 1941, but had returned

25. March 1949 - II mass deportation (**20 722** people)

June 1949 - deportations of the local Finnish people and Ingers

February 1951 - deportations of religious people

Prisoners were sentenced on the basis of the Soviet Russian criminal code of 1926. According to these laws, it was a crime to have established the Republic of Estonia, to have protected Estonia's independence, to have conducted the nation's domestic and foreign policy. Usually, a prisoner's "guilt" consisted of having fought in the War of Independence, having been a government official, having been a Member of the State Assembly, having been a member of the Defence League, having been simply "an enemy of the working people".

People were taken away in animal carriages. Their properties and valuables were confiscated. They were sent to prisons or forced labour camps. The rest were bound for forced resettlement under very harsh living and working conditions. The

majority of them died in Siberia from cold and hunger. Some of them were executed in Estonia or Siberia. Estonian deportees were taken to the Kirov, Novosibirsk, Omsk and Tomsk oblasts, and the Altai and Krasnoyarsk territories. In Siberia the life was tough. It was cold, during the winter up to minus 50 degrees and it was hard to find food. Constant hunger left only when people were sleeping. Some searched potato peels from garbage, ate nettles, berries or anything they were able to find.

Since 1956 people were allowed to return to Estonia.

*The day of 14th June was a Saturday. It was a sunny day. In the evening it started to rain. **"The rain that comes down now is all the tears cried today."** - Aliide Kõresaar*