

*Cahiers du*  
MONDE RUSSE

## **Cahiers du monde russe**

Russie - Empire russe - Union soviétique et États  
indépendants

**47/1-2 | 2006**  
**Repenser le Dégel**

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# Making Hooliganism on a Mass Scale

The campaign against petty hooliganism in the Soviet Union, 1956-1964

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### **Édition électronique**

URL : <https://journals.openedition.org/monderusse/9606>

DOI : [10.4000/monderusse.9606](https://doi.org/10.4000/monderusse.9606)

ISSN : 1777-5388

### **Éditeur**

Éditions de l'EHESS

### **Édition imprimée**

Date de publication : 1 juin 2006

Pagination : 349-375

ISBN : 2-7132-2096-3

ISSN : 1252-6576

### **Référence électronique**

BRIAN LAPIERRE, « Making Hooliganism on a Mass Scale », *Cahiers du monde russe* [En ligne], 47/1-2 | 2006, mis en ligne le 01 janvier 2006, consulté le 02 septembre 2022. URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/monderusse/9606> ; DOI : <https://doi.org/10.4000/monderusse.9606>

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BRIAN LAPIERRE

## MAKING HOOLIGANISM ON A MASS SCALE

### The campaign against petty hooliganism in the Soviet Union, 1956-1964\*

Hooliganism was a persistent problem in the Soviet Union and the subject of periodic anti-crime campaigns in the pre-World War II period.<sup>1</sup> But in the mid-1950s, it reached a tipping point. In 1956, convictions for hooliganism exploded and a wave of deviant activity swept through the country that was noted as new and unheralded. “Hooliganism is not getting less,” a group of workers noted

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\* The research for this article was made possible by a Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad Grant with funds provided by the United States Department of Education and by an International Research and Exchange Board (IREX) Regional Scholar Exchange Program Fellowship with funds provided by the US Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. The views aired in this article are mine and do not represent the position of either of the organizations listed above. I would like to thank the University of Chicago’s Russian Studies Workshop, Sheila Fitzpatrick, Richard Hellie, Klaus Gestwa, Marc Élie and the two anonymous reviewers for the *Cahiers* for their critical comments on previous drafts of this paper. Any problems that remain in it are, however, mine alone. As always, I would like to thank Manuela and Aline for their goodwill and support.

1. Hooliganism, in the Soviet Union, was more than just a term of admonition. It was a crime that covered everything from using foul language to knife fighting and for which one could be imprisoned (from three days to five years) or fined. Hooliganism was defined (post-1960) as “intentional actions that rudely violate public order and express clear disrespect for society.” There were two types of criminal hooliganism differentiated according to seriousness and punishment: simple hooliganism (*prostoe khuliganstvo*), for which punishments ranged from fines to one year in prison, and malicious hooliganism (*zlostnoe khuliganstvo*), for which prison sentences ranged from three to five years. For hooliganism in the pre-Revolutionary period, see Joan Neuberger, *Hooliganism: Crime, Culture and Power in St. Petersburg, 1900-1914* (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 1993). For hooliganism in the Soviet Union during the NEP era, see Anne Gorsuch, *Youth in Revolutionary Russia: Enthusiasts, Bohemians and Delinquents* (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 2000), 167-176 and N. B. Leбина *Povsednevnaia zhizn' sovetskogo goroda: normy i anomalii 1920/1930 gody* (SPb: Letnii sad, 1999), 57-68. Peter Solomon explores hooliganism in the Stalin and post-Khrushchev periods in *Soviet Criminal Justice Under Stalin* (New York: Cambridge

alarmingly. “With every passing day, it is growing more and more.”<sup>2</sup> Showing a 69 percent increase from 1953 to 1956, statistics confirmed that hooliganism had, as a man from Riazan’ noted in a letter to *Pravda*, “surpassed all previous bounds.”<sup>3</sup>

In 1956, the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (RSFSR) decided to crack down on the rising hooligan problem not by giving a small number of people heavy prison sentences, but by giving a large number of people light ones. By decreasing punishments rather than increasing them, the RSFSR took a counterintuitive approach to rising crime rates and reversed its former approach to anti-hooligan campaigning. In the mid-1930s, the state had created a more serious form of deviance (malicious hooliganism) and heavier prison terms (three to five years) in order to combat dangerous forms of hooliganism involving physical assaults and knife fighting.<sup>4</sup> With the passage of the petty hooligan decree, they did the opposite. They created a less serious form of hooliganism and a less serious form of hooligan punishment in order to combat this multivalent criminal category’s most minor and mundane manifestations. In the months following the RSFSR’s 19 December 1956 decree, all the union republics would pass similar petty hooligan legislation.

Before the creation of petty hooliganism, minor anti-social offenses were often allowed to slide through the criminal justice system unpunished because local police, prosecutors and judges lacked lenient sentencing options or were unwilling to devote scarce investigative and judicial resources to non-serious offenses.<sup>5</sup> With the promulgation of petty hooliganism, the state ordered local law enforcement to go after minor offenders and gave them a fast-track punishment process and a petty variant of hooliganism with which to pursue and process them. By creating a new form of hooliganism that coupled little offenses to light punishments, the state inserted degrees of deviancy into hooliganism and made it into a flexible catchall

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University Press, 1996), 58-59, 224-225, 330-332 and *Soviet Criminologists and Criminal Policy: Specialists in Policy-Making* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978), 81-90. Valerii Chalidze has a useful chapter on hooliganism in his *Ugolovnaia Rossiia* (New York: Khronika Press, 1977), 123-148 as does V. A. Kozlov in his *Massovyie besporiadki v SSSR pri Khrushcheve i Brezhneve* (Novosibirsk: Sibirskii khronograf, 1999), 184-216. For an idiosyncratic look at hooliganism, see V. I. Shaposhnikov, *Khuligani i khuliganstvo v Rossii: aspekt istorii i literaturny XX veka* (M.: Moskovskii litsei, 2000).

2. Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii (GARF), f. r-9474, Verkhovnyi sud SSSR, op. 10, d. 147, l. 52.

3. GARF, f. r-8131, Prokuratura SSSR, op. 32, d. 5682, l. 44. In 1953, Soviet criminal courts convicted 116,592 persons of hooliganism. In 1956, the number of convictions increased to 196,558. For the *Pravda* letter, see *ibid.*, d. 5206, l. 29.

4. Solomon, *Soviet Criminal Justice Under Stalin*, 224-225.

5. The residents of Leningrad’s Fruzenskii raion, complained that: “The police often do not press charges in such ‘trifles’ or if they do then the procuracy drops them because of the insignificance of the crime. But we think such trivial actions as striking a stranger or cursing are hooliganism” (GARF, f. r-8131, op. 32, d. 4597, l. 30). A November 1955 report of the USSR Procuracy noted that hooligan cases “only go to court when the hooliganism takes an extreme and cynical form. Until this [point], a person committing hooliganism is frequently not punished” (*ibid.*, d. 3338, l. 92-93).

category that could be ratcheted up or watered down to fit any occasion or action no matter how small or non-serious.<sup>6</sup>

Ending the atmosphere of impunity that reigned around minor misbehavior was important because unpunished minor misbehavior was, according to many jurists, one of the root causes of major crime.<sup>7</sup> Unpunished minor offenders, they argued, were emboldened to try more serious offenses, devolved farther down the slippery slope of deviancy and developed into tomorrow's hardened criminals. By allowing police and judges to go after the little stuff, the petty hooligan decree went after the seemingly small misdeeds from which serious deviant disturbances and criminality later arose.<sup>8</sup>

With its peculiar blend of increased prosecutions and decreased punishments, the decree on petty hooliganism mixed hard line anti-crime policies with the new soft-line tactics of the Thaw period. It decriminalized non-serious hooliganism by making it into an administrative offense. It abandoned the harsh mandatory one to five year prison sentences found in the criminal codes and created a new three to fifteen day prison sentence for petty hooligans that was to be spent performing mandatory physical labor. The convicted petty hooligan would not be burdened with a criminal record upon release and his job would be held for him during his detention. Emphasizing the key soft-line word the regime used to differentiate itself from the Stalinist past and the capitalist West, the architects of the petty hooligan decree stressed its "humane" (*gumannyi*) nature.<sup>9</sup> Scholars of Soviet law have, likewise, interpreted the petty hooligan decree as a liberalizing reform of the Thaw period: one in a series of mid-1950s liberalization measures that included, most famously, reducing punishments for petty theft of state and public property (1955).<sup>10</sup>

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6. A key lobbyist for differentiating deviancy, USSR Minister of Justice K. P. Gorshenin, noted at a July 1954 meeting: "There are various types of hooliganism. There are cases when they bring to responsibility a law-abiding person who while in a drunken state causes a ruckus. But there is another type of hooliganism in which a person inspires fear in the residents of some settlement. We must distinguish between such things. [These less serious offenders] must answer for the actions they have committed but not to the same degree as malicious hooligans." GARF, f. r-7523, Verkhovnyi Sovet SSSR, op. 45, d. 18, l. 17.

7. The USSR Procuracy argued, for instance, that: "The main reason for the growth of crime is that a significant number of people go unpunished. An atmosphere has been created in which criminals [...] [believe that] they will be able to avoid punishment." GARF, f. r-8131, op. 32, d. 3338, l. 92-93.

8. Hooliganism, according to legal experts, was a "primary school (*nachal'naia shkola*) for the commission of more serious crimes." Every fourth criminal recidivist convicted of murder, rape or robbery was earlier convicted of hooliganism. For hooliganism as a gateway crime, see N. F. Kuznetsova, "Izuchenie i preduprezhdenie khuliganstva," in A. A. Gertsenzon, *Kriminologiia* (M.: Iuridicheskaiia literatura, 1968), 439.

9. At a June 1957 meeting, the head of the USSR Procuracy, R. A. Rudenko, called the decree "humane" because it "serves as a warning, does not have serious consequences, allows the person to keep his job and gives him the possibility to reform himself." GARF, f. r-7523, op. 45, d. 32, l. 7.

10. For interpretations of the petty hooligan decree as a form of liberalization, see Harold Berman, *Justice in the USSR: An Interpretation of Soviet Law* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963), 73 and Solomon, *Soviet Criminologists and Criminal Policy*, 81.

However, the petty hooligan decree was not just about reducing punishment. It was about universalizing punishment. It was about winning the battle against hooliganism by punishing every hooligan from the trivial to the terrible. With the decree on petty hooliganism, the state declared war on minor misbehavior and announced a new era of post-Stalinist social discipline and control focused on the mundane, the ordinary and the everyday. By unveiling a new zero tolerance policy towards the slightest signs of anti-social behavior, the state signaled its new willingness to combat the embarrassing everyday incivilities that spoiled Soviet *byt* and generated negative publicity in the Cold War era clash of civilizations.<sup>11</sup>

The petty hooligan decree created a new type of hooliganism. It also created new types of hooligans. It made it possible for a growing number of people to be made into deviants, fitted with outsider identities and stigmatized. The petty hooligan decree, by watering down the definition of hooliganism, transformed the commonplace borderline behaviors of the everyday into imprisoning offenses. By defining deviance downward, it made millions of ordinary citizens, whose behaviors would earlier have escaped punishment, into accidental hooligans; exposed them to police power that was often arbitrary and unregulated; and dragged them through a degrading and demeaning detention process.

In the 1956 RSFSR Supreme Soviet decree, petty hooliganism was defined as a “violation of public order and peace, insolent (*oskorbitel'noe*) disrespect to citizens, the use of obscenity (*skvernoslovie*) and other indecent acts.”<sup>12</sup> In ambiguous and open language, the decree signaled the state’s intent to punish anything it interpreted as incorrect conduct. The open-ended tag phrase (“and other indecent acts”) hinted at the program’s potential for unchecked expansion and abuse. It set the stage for petty hooliganism to grow from an ambitious anti-deviancy program into a mass persecutory process that would envelop millions of Soviet citizens annually.<sup>13</sup>

### Creating an avalanche of new offenders

In their efforts to fight hooliganism, the state unleashed a petty hooligan program that inflated hooligan-related arrests to unprecedented proportions. In the mid-

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11. On 7 December 1956 (less than two weeks before the RSFSR petty hooligan decree was released), an official at the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MID) sent Central Committee Secretary P. N. Pospelov a note on a September 1956 article about the Soviet Union published in the *Observer* entitled “Speculators and Hooligans.” By concentrating on such negative phenomena as *stiliagi* and “cases of public, unpunished hooliganism,” the article, the MID official argued, gave a bad impression of the USSR. He demanded that something be done about deviancy in the run-up to the arrival of the foreign delegations for the 1957 International Youth Festival. The official closed his note by suggesting that the government “turn its attention [...] to possible measures that would stop similar phenomena in the future.” Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi arkhiv noveishei istorii (RGANI), f. 5, Apparat TsK KPSS, op. 30, d. 179, l. 87.

12. “Ob otvetstvennosti za melkoe khuliganstvo,” *Pravda*, 21 (December, 1956): 5.

13. GARF, f. r-7523, op. 45, d. 333, l. 68.

1950s, hooligan conviction rates in the USSR had increased rapidly, but had risen above the level of 200,000 convictions per year only once, in 1958. By contrast, the petty hooligan program resulted in the detention of over 1.4 million people annually during the first few years of its enforcement and the numbers of yearly arrests thereafter only fell below the million mark once, in 1960 (see Table 1). Before the petty hooligan decree, hooliganism was a common crime. After it, it became a mass crime involving the administrative arrest of millions.

**Table 1: Number of persons convicted of criminal hooliganism and detained for petty hooliganism in the USSR, 1957-1963**

| Years | Number of persons convicted of simple and malicious hooliganism in the USSR | Number of persons detained for petty hooliganism in the USSR |
|-------|---|--|
| 1957  | 185,035   | 1,449,303  |
| 1958  | 207,587   | 1,415,855  |
| 1959  | 152,612   | 1,168,829  |
| 1960  | 82,430  | 775,010  |
| 1961  | 181,318   | 1,284,268  |
| 1962  | 173,659   | 1,509,792  |
| 1963  | 115,678   | 1,277,471  |

Source: GARF, f. r-9474, op. 16, d. 645, l. 50 and op. 1, d. 418, l. 82. Unfortunately, numbers of arrests and other petty hooligan punishments vary. An alternative 1957 USSR total, including arrests carried out by the transport police, was given by the USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs as 1,524,855. For this number, see GARF, f. r-9401, op. 2, d. 505, l. 398. The USSR Supreme Court gave a third estimate of union-wide 1957 petty hooligan punishments as 1,537,689. For this number, see GARF, f. r-9474, op. 16, d. 644, l. 58.

The steep rise in petty hooligan-related administrative arrests was not offset by a similarly sharp decrease in criminal hooliganism. In the first full year of the petty hooligan program, the Union's hooligan conviction rate fell only 6 percent from its 1956 level. In 1958, the rate of criminal hooliganism, instead of falling farther, actually rose 12 percent to its highest level of the Khrushchev period. On the whole, the decree did not decrease criminal hooliganism. Instead, it reweighed the distribution between petty hooliganism, simple hooliganism and malicious hooliganism by making crimes of the second category into administrative offenses of the first. As local police and judges turned simple hooliganism into petty hooliganism in an effort to cut workloads and speed up case turnover, they made a time consuming and ambiguous class of hooligan cases disappear from crime statistics and reappear as an administrative offense punishable under the expedited processes of the petty hooligan program. In this manner, officials did not reduce hooliganism. They recategorized it. Seeing through the statistics, the USSR Supreme Court argued that the 1956-1957 reduction in hooliganism "took place not as a consequence of a decrease in the amount of hooligan activities, but because a significant number of citizens were brought to administrative responsibility under

the petty hooligan decree for actions that had the signs of criminal offenses like simple hooliganism.”<sup>14</sup>

The campaign against petty hooliganism increased hooliganism by making the police and the courts into manufacturers of deviancy on a mass scale.<sup>15</sup> On the up side, it allowed police officers, prosecutors and judges to speed up turnover times in petty cases and conserve resources for serious crimes. On the down side, the petty hooligan campaign made millions of Soviet citizens who had no prior arrest records into deviants, stigmatized them with an outsider identity, introduced them to the criminal subculture of the Soviet penal system and launched some of them onto a new career in crime.

This was especially true of the repeat petty hooligan offenders who made up a sizable minority of the detainees.<sup>16</sup> For persons arrested multiple times, the petty hooligan program disrupted the world of work and family and turned life into a rotating round of short-term incarcerations. These repeat offenders were at particular risk for falling into petty thievery and more serious types of hooliganism upon release. Instead of being reformed into better workers, they were remade into bigger and better offenders. The fact that 30-50 percent of the hooligans convicted in criminal courts in the mid-1960s were *alumni* of the petty hooligan program

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14. GARF, f. r-9474, op. 16, d. 644, l. 60-61. Moreover, the union-wide decreases seen in the statistics were also achieved through mechanisms that had little to do with the petty hooligan decree. For instance, the amnesty declared for the fortieth anniversary of the 1917 Revolution took many simple hooligan cases out of the courts, depressed conviction rates, and contributed to the decrease noted in union crime statistics. The amnesty decreed that cases be dismissed for all crimes whose punishments were less than three years imprisonment. This included simple hooliganism which had a maximum punishment of one year's imprisonment. For a text of the 1957 amnesty, see *Sbornik dokumentov po istorii ugolovnogo zakonodatel'stva SSSR i RSFSR: 1953-1991* (Kazan: Izdatel'stvo Kazanskogo universiteta, 1992), 35-36. For the amnesty's effects on rates of criminal hooliganism, see GARF, f. r-9474, op. 16, d. 645, l. 52-53. Nor did the deceptive decree reduce the amount of personal accusation cases clogging up the court system. These cases were on the rise as well. In the first half of 1957 the amount of personal accusation cases increased from 145,797 (in the first half of 1956) to 153,164. See *ibid.*, 2. The more pronounced drop in the hooligan conviction rate in 1959 and 1960 was also not due to the petty hooligan program. This drop was caused, instead, by a widespread campaign to ship hooligans out of the criminal justice system and send them to their work collectives for reform and reeducation (*perevospitanie*): a campaign that was set off by Khrushchev's landmark 1959 speech to the Third Congress of Soviet Writers. For Khrushchev's speech, see *Tretii s'ezd pisatelei SSSR: stenograficheskii otchet* (M.: Sovetskii pisatel', 1959), 225.

15. GARF, f. r-9474, op. 16, d. 617, l. 137.

16. Recidivism was a pressing problem in the petty hooligan program. Deviants could only be arrested for petty hooliganism three times in one year. Offenses past the three-strike per year limit would be tried as simple hooliganism and merit criminal rather than administrative punishment. However, the three strikes rule was often difficult to enforce and many petty hooligans became chronic repeat offenders who were constantly circulating through the petty hooligan system. The satirical journal *Krokodil* told the story of a petty hooligan who had been arrested eight times for petty hooliganism in a single year and spent a total of one quarter of that year (95 days) under administrative arrest. It joked that "when [he] enters the prison the police greet him like an old acquaintance (*znakomogo*).” V. Titov and Z. Iur'ev, "100 interv'iu s khuliganami," *Krokodil*, no. 34 (1961): 5.

showed the success of the new system in creating the very type of crime that it was designed to stop.<sup>17</sup>

### **Making the innocuous into the imprisoning and vice versa**

Those arrested for petty hooliganism were, like their criminal counterparts, generally drunk, urban male workers over the age of twenty-five with an incomplete secondary-level education and no prior criminal record.<sup>18</sup> Instead of being marginals existing at the outskirts of civilized society, petty hooligans, in terms of their demographic and occupational profile, were fairly typical representatives of the dynamic industrializing and urbanizing society of the Khrushchev period. It was not their identity that set them apart from civilized society. It was their actions and the way others interpreted and applied deviant labels to them that made these people into petty hooligans.

Most petty hooligans were arrested for obscenity on the streets and in other public places.<sup>19</sup> Yet even obscene speech in the home could result in petty hooligan prosecution as in the case of a 42-year-old bookkeeper from Moscow who was imprisoned for five days for cursing “in the presence of his wife and children.”<sup>20</sup> Insults (*oskorbleniia*) also resulted in a wide range of petty hooligan prosecutions: insults that ran the gamut from the standard ugly epithets of arguing husbands and wives to trivial everyday exchanges in which a man called his neighbor a “witch” and a collective farmer remarked that the livestock specialist was “standing around like a stone.”<sup>21</sup>

After obscene and insulting speech, “pestering” (*pristavanie*) was another common form of petty hooligan behavior. Pestering could take many forms including propositioning women, exposing oneself in a public place, pushing pedestrians urinating in public, and harassing bystanders.<sup>22</sup> It could also take more obscure forms as in the case of a fifty-one year old unemployed man who was given fifteen days for pestering customers at a store to drink vodka with him and a sixteen year old boy who was given fifteen days for throwing snowballs “with mischievous

17. For information on the proportion of former petty hooligans in the sample of convicts for criminal hooliganism, see Kuznetsova, “Izuchenie i preduprezhdenie...,” 441.

18. GARF, f. A-428, Verkhovnyi sud RSFSR, op. 3, d. 498, l. 4. Of the petty hooligans tried in the first half of 1966, 70 percent were workers, 75 percent were over the age of twenty-five and 75 percent had an education up to the seventh level (*klass*).

19. In Stalino, the majority of petty hooligans (659 out of 806) who were arrested in the beginning of 1957 were detained for cursing. Of the 1,403 petty hooligans arrested in Latvia during the first few months of the decree’s operation, more than 30 percent (552) were detained for “using foul language in a public place.” GARF, f. r-9474, op. 16, d. 645, l. 53.

20. GARF, f. r-8131, op. 32, d. 4676, l. 96.

21. The bad neighbor got fifteen days and the collective farmer five. GARF, f. r-8131, op. 32, d. 5318, l. 38, 106.

22. A 43-year-old Muscovite was given fifteen days for exposing himself in a store. For this case, see GARF, f. r-8131, op. 32, d. 4676, l. 99.

intent.”<sup>23</sup> Often, petty hooligan-related pestering took the form of “making noise.” This often applied to shouting on the streets at late hours but could also be utilized for domestic noisemaking and loud arguments, as in the case of a 40-year-old unemployed woman who was given ten days for banging on her apartment table with her fists at 1 a.m. and shouting obscenities.<sup>24</sup>

Like its criminal cousin, a great deal of petty hooligan behavior took place in apartments and was directed against the offender’s wife, relatives or neighbors. A Chuvash man, for example, was given fifteen days for beating his parents, chasing them out onto the street, breaking all the dishes and windows, and trying to set fire to their house.<sup>25</sup> Less spectacularly, petty hooligan punishments were frequently given to those who, often while intoxicated, argued loudly with their spouses or children both at home and in public. Minor cases of verbal and physical assault against neighbors also was a common source of petty hooligan prosecutions as exemplified in extreme form by the case of a man who invited his neighbor to drink with him in the communal kitchen, got into an argument with her, ripped off her dress and grabbed her breast.<sup>26</sup> As with criminal hooliganism, the family feud was one of the most prevalent forms of petty hooliganism and the kitchen rivaled the street corner as a common place of deviant disturbance.<sup>27</sup>

The movement of petty hooliganism to the home bred familiar debates over the boundaries between private matters and public affairs.<sup>28</sup> But it also led to anger and astonishment that daily forms of urban incivility that were once considered insignificant were now being treated as imprisoning offenses. The writer Iurii Dombrovskii, who was imprisoned for petty hooliganism in the mid-1960s, asked his cellmates why they had been arrested for petty hooliganism and, in the account he left of his prison experience, he wrote of his amazement over their answers.

Almost all the crimes here are identical: a quarrel (*ssora*) with the neighbor, a quarrel with the wife, apartment squabbles (*skolki*). Not a single one of these cases falls under the meaning of hooliganism. Instead, they all fall under the category that used to be called “cases of private suit (*dela chastnogo iska*).” One resident quarreled with another. A wife swore at a husband. Something happened in the kitchen above the gas stove. You could engage in these little fights as much as you wanted until now. But now, one of the more informed

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23. For the snowball and drinking buddy cases, see *ibid*, 1. 98, 323.

24. *Ibid*, 1. 97.

25. *Ibid*, 1. 246.

26. *Ibid*, 1. 70.

27. For the increasing use of hooliganism against abusive husbands and the growth of domestic hooliganism (*bytovoe khuliganstvo*) during this period, see Brian LaPierre, “Private Matters or Public Crimes: The Emergence of Domestic Hooligan in the Soviet Union, 1939-1966,” in Lewis Siegelbaum, ed., *Borders of Socialism: Private Spheres of the Soviet Union* (New York: Palgrave, 2006).

28. See for instance, Tsentral’nyi munitsipal’nyi arkhiv g. Moskvy (TsMAM), f. 901, Leningradskii g. Moskvyy raionnyi narodnyi sud, op. 1, d. 637, l. 74; GARF, f. r-8131, op. 32, d. 5290, l. 80-82 and d. 4676, l. 45, 113, 335.

troublemakers or neighbors understands that a campaign is going on and that the police are interested in entering as many cases of petty hooliganism into their books as possible (before they were interested in doing the reverse). So he calls the police. The policeman arrives. He walks off with one of the people and tells the other person what he needs to write in the case report [...] And the next thing you know, you are sitting in prison for fifteen days.<sup>29</sup>

The petty hooligans Dombrovskii writes about were victims of an expansive vision of deviancy run amok. Instead of being rebels raging against the system, they were accidental deviants. They stumbled unwittingly into hooliganism as their everyday incivilities (such as arguing, cursing and carousing) and their ways of socializing (such as binge drinking) were absorbed into the expanding boundaries of a broadened category of deviance. By walking unknowingly into somebody else's enlarged and elastic definition of deviancy, the argumentative, uncultured, uncouth and eccentric became hooligans and were reborn as outcasts of the Soviet system. They became hooligan not by lashing out at the Soviet state, but by engaging in the rough masculine rituals of drinking, cursing and fighting: working class displays of machismo that were an everyday occurrence in the entertainment-free world of the Soviet factory town.

Through the relaxed standards and processing machinery of the petty hooligan program, the ugly actions of the Soviet everyday were remade into imprisoning offenses. This process of pushing hooliganism outwards into the ordinary can be seen in relation to public drunkenness. In a massive expansion of an already outsized administrative punishment program, an April 1961 RSFSR Supreme Soviet decree made drunkenness ("in the streets or in other public places") into a type of petty hooliganism punishable by a reduced three to five ruble fine imposed by the local executive committee.<sup>30</sup> As a result many people were made into hooligans by the regular binge drinking that they engaged in as a way to escape the bleakness, boredom and blur of life under Soviet industrialism.<sup>31</sup> Designed to cut down on alcohol-related crime and raise revenue, the decree made a common leisure-time phenomenon of the Soviet street deviant and enlarged the sweep of the hooligan label to encompass new mass forms of misbehavior that were previously non-prosecutable under this elastic criminal category.

The process of reading deviancy into the uncultured everyday and the innocuous was aggravated by the ambiguity of petty hooliganism and the interpretative freedom it gave local police and judges. In introducing the concept of petty hooliganism, the state expanded the domain of deviance at the expense of clarifying and standardizing its meaning. They responded to emerging crime problems by

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29. Iurii Dombrovskii, "Zapiski melkogo khuligana," in *Iurii Dombrovskii: roman, pis'ma, esse* (Yekaterinburg: U factoriia, 2000), 636.

30. "O dopolnenii ukaza Prezidiuma Verkhovnogo Soveta RSFSR ot 19 dekabria 1956 'ob otvetstvennosti za melkoe khuliganstvo,'" *Vedomosti Verkhovnogo Soveta RSFSR*, no. 16 (1961): 248.

31. A. Radontsev, "Pravil'no primeniati' ukaz ob otvetstvennosti za melkoe khuliganstvo," *Sovetskaia iustitsiia*, no. 20 (1964): 29.

making new hooliganisms without first solving the interpretive problems associated with the existing hooligan labels (simple and malicious). Continually differentiating hooliganism's definitions did not make it easier to apply or to understand. Instead, it multiplied the opportunities for mislabeling and elicited growing category confusion as local legal workers struggled to define, in practice, the ill-defined borders between hooliganism's multiple meanings.<sup>32</sup> With the creation of petty hooliganism, the state inserted an additional layer of ambiguity into what was an already inscrutable criminal category.

This ambiguity enabled local police officers and judges to see hooliganism in novel ways. In their everyday practice of applying crimes to new cases and contexts, these local agents invested petty hooliganism with new meanings and opened up the domain of deviancy to new acts and actors. Armed with their own vision of deviance, local police officers and judges hijacked the state's petty hooligan campaign and aggravated the avalanche of incarceration by pushing the boundaries of hooliganism outward. Empowered by the petty hooligan decree and the campaign fashioned around it, they pursued their own meaning of petty hooliganism and, in the process, used (and abused) a fast-track system of administrative punishment to make both innocuous actors and serious criminals into a new class of lightweight lawbreakers.

Obscene and abusive speech provides an example of how local police and judges used the agency and interpretive power that the petty hooligan decree gave them in order to expand a newly minted and ambiguous category of deviance to new practices and people. Obscenity was one of the principle targets of the petty hooligan campaign. Immediately following the passage of the decree, the majority of petty hooligans were punished for "cursing on the streets and in other public places."<sup>33</sup> However, police and judges twisted the decree's anti-obscenity platform in order to make borderline non-obscene speech hooligan. In the process, they remade the ill-spoken and the loose-lipped into the deviant.

Expressions and phrases foreign to the linguistic and ideological world of official Soviet speech were reread as forms of anti-social deviancy punishable under the petty hooligan decree. For example, a woman was turned into a petty hooligan not for cursing in public, but for using a metaphor religiously while on the phone with the deputy chair of the local executive committee.<sup>34</sup> In another example of interpreting an alien expression as hooligan speech, a man was arrested under the petty hooligan decree for addressing one of the workers at the local housing agency

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32. Judges had constant difficulties understanding the practical difference between petty and simple hooliganism. One of the justices declared at the July 1958 Plenum of the RSFSR Supreme Court: "The USSR Supreme Court does not give us any concrete suggestions on how to differentiate petty hooliganism from hooliganism [...] and it's very hard to do this." The Ukrainian Supreme Court requested that a ruling be issued that would make "a clear cut distinction between petty and simple hooliganism," arguing that "in practice it is difficult to establish this border [between petty and simple hooliganism]." See GARF, f. A-428, op. 3, d. 295, l. 2 and GARF, f. r-9474, op. 16, d. 618, l. 97.

33. GARF, f. r-9474, op. 16, d. 645, l. 53.

34. GARF, f. r-9474, op. 1, d. 462, l. 62-63.

as “Mrs.” (*missis*).<sup>35</sup> The interpretive agency and authority that the decree instilled in police personnel gave them the ability to transform any insulting expression or gesture, even an imagined one, into an offense punishable under the relaxed standards of petty hooliganism.<sup>36</sup>

Empowered by the ambiguity and fast-track punishment process of the petty hooligan decree, the police transformed the innocuous rule breakers of the everyday into hooligan threats to society. By enforcing the partition of parks and streets into restricted areas and no-go zones with the decree, they were able to make a school child who ran in a flower garden and a Novosibirsk man who crossed the street at an unmarked place into petty hooligans.<sup>37</sup> The commonplace uncivil occurrences of life in an urban economy of shortage were reread under the expansive petty hooliganism decree as new forms of deviancy. A man, for instance, who butted in line at a furniture store found himself labeled as a hooligan and sentenced to five days in prison.<sup>38</sup> Minor forms of property theft and defacement were turned into anti-social offenses warranting high-cost incarceration regimes. For instance, two Alma-Ata residents were given ten-day sentences for picking flowers for their girlfriends from the roadside. Even the destruction of one’s own property could land one amongst the petty hooligans. In Odessa, a man who accidentally locked himself out of his home was sentenced to ten days for breaking the lock of his own door in order to gain reentry.<sup>39</sup> Petty hooliganism acted as a convenient vehicle for policing social space and maintaining orderliness. However, it also made the public hostage to the police’s tacit and personal vision of petty hooliganism: a vision that often turned unheeded steps into administrative offenses and placed the unmindful onto the path of imprisonment.<sup>40</sup>

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35. GARF, f. r-9474, op. 16, d. 645, l. 30.

36. GARF f. r-8131, op. 32, d. 4676, l. 337. The decree’s ambiguity also allowed authorities to use it in order to muzzle those attempting to speak out against poor bureaucratic, especially police, service. For example, a man was sentenced to ten days for his “persistent request” that the police search for the people who robbed him. In Lithuania, a man, who was called to the local police station as a witness, was charged with petty hooliganism after he complained about being made to wait eight hours at the station (*ibid.*). Other everyday linguistic markers such as volume drew the attention of zealous police and transformed careless speakers into deviants. Hooliganism was discovered in the behavior of a man who conversed in a loud voice at his friend’s home (the sentence also noted that he put his dirty boots on his friend’s couch, see GARF, f. r-9474, op. 10, d. 197a, l. 93). Noisemaking in general could be read as petty hooliganism regardless of content, especially during nighttime hours. Two men, for example, were arrested for simply making noise after midnight, though the judge refused to press charges against the two (GARF, f. r-8131, op. 32, d. 4676, l. 126). In Voronezh, two restaurant goers were sentenced to five days for slamming their plates on the table (*ibid.*, d. 5199, l. 18).

37. GARF, f. r-9474, op. 10, d. 197a, l. 94. and op. 1, d. 469, l. 105.

38. GARF, f. r-9474, op. 16, d. 644, l. 59.

39. GARF, f. r-9474, op. 1, d. 469, l. 106-107.

40. Behaviors that did not violate public order but were frowned upon or were unorthodox were reread through the lens of petty hooliganism as imprisoning offenses. One man, for example, was charged with petty hooliganism for attempting suicide (GARF, f. r-9474, op. 1, d. 469, l. 9-10). The same court sentenced a drunken man who asked the police to take him to a sobering up station to three days (GARF, f. r-8131, op. 32, d. 5318, l. 107). A man, who laid on

Petty hooliganism was not only used to make debatable and borderline behaviors deviant. It could also be used to transform major crimes into minor offenses. After public obscenity, fighting and various forms of physical assault were the second most common form of petty hooliganism.<sup>41</sup> Although it was frowned upon by watchdogs, petty hooliganism was often applied to violent assaults such as in the case of a man who beat a woman (“until she bled”) for refusing to dance with him and in the case an intoxicated Leningrader who inflicted two knife wounds on a bystander.<sup>42</sup> Despite the public’s disapproval of “liberal” approaches to violent offenders, the petty hooligan program gave local officials incentives to offload violent crime onto the fast-track system of administrative punishment. Making stabbings and assaults petty hooliganism coddled violent offenders and allowed them to slip through the criminal justice system. But it also allowed local police officers, prosecutors and judges to accelerate their case turnover and conserve scarce investigative and judicial resources.<sup>43</sup> By taking cases out of the criminal courts and putting them in administrative venues, these officials deflated conviction rates, lowered local crime statistics, created virtual victories over crime and, at the same time, conformed to campaign pressures to press the petty hooligan program forward.<sup>44</sup> In the process though, they stretched the meaning of petty hooliganism to encompass actions and actors that were far from minor or mundane.

Yet, police officers were far from the only agents involved in reinventing petty hooliganism. Citizens, in the denunciations they wrote to the police on the alleged petty hooliganism of their neighbors and relatives, were also actively rethinking to what concerns and contexts petty hooliganism could be applied. Battered wives, for example, often sent denunciations to the police asking that their abusive or drunken husbands be arrested for petty hooliganism.<sup>45</sup> Using the decree as a way to draft public agencies into their private affairs, they attempted, with increasing success, to expand the application of petty hooliganism from public misdeeds to the seemingly

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a couch in the lobby and declared he was an American spy after he was refused a room at the hotel “Donbass,” received a ten-day sentence (GARF, f. r-9474, op. 16, d. 644, l. 59). In all of these cases, eccentric, odd and self-destructive behaviors were made into petty hooliganism by an ambiguous decree and the disciplinary system it set into motion.

41. For instance, physical assault (*izbienie*) accounted for 374 of the 1,403 cases of petty hooliganism in Riga in 1957. In Stalino, the infliction of knife wounds accounted for 102 of the 806 petty hooligan cases studied in the same year. GARF, f. r-9474, op. 16, d. 645, l. 53.

42. *Ibid.*, l. 54.

43. GARF, f. r-9474, op. 10, d. 197a, l. 58.

44. See GARF, f. A-461, Prokuratura RSFSR, op. 11, d. 465, l. 38 and d. 457, l. 35.

45. At a January 1957 meeting, the head of the USSR Procuracy, R. A. Rudenko, defended the right of battered wives to hooliganize their abusers by emphatically resisting the attempts of his subordinates to limit the use of petty hooliganism in domestic matters: “The position [...] that it is impossible to apply the decree on petty hooliganism to persons committing hooliganism in private apartments (*chastnye kvartiry*) is incorrect. In December 1920, V. I. Lenin wrote ‘persons who keep their living quarters in a state of filth and violate the rules of public order must be sentenced to one month of imprisonment.’ Even in these cases, Lenin thought it necessary to make convictions. Is spousal abuse in a private home (*chastnyi dom*) really not a public concern? Even here the decree must be active.” GARF, f. r-8131, op. 32, d. 5290, l. 80-82.

private behaviors of the domestic sphere which, the wives argued, was not really private at all. In the process, battered wives projected their own meanings of deviance onto petty hooliganism and expanded its application to unforeseen areas and ends. Rather than being simply objects of the petty hooligan program, Soviet citizens adopted the state's new deviancy decree for their own purposes and, in the process, shaped its evolving implementation. A German teacher, for instance, used the decree to discipline classroom troublemakers by sending a denunciation to the local police about a student who did not prepare his lessons, was rude with his teachers and cursed in school. The student was sentenced to five days.<sup>46</sup> By using the petty hooligan decree as a way to enforce discipline within their disordered workplaces and private lives, activist citizens reinvented its meaning, opened new spaces for its application and fueled the avalanche of incarceration it inspired.

Campaign pressures, idiosyncratic local applications and ambiguity spilled petty hooliganism from legitimate targets over to illegitimate applications. Noting the drift of petty hooliganism into misapplication, watchdogs constantly complained that the decree "was being applied in the localities in an excessively broad manner."<sup>47</sup> A 1957 report on the implementation of the petty hooligan decree declared: "The police send a great number of petty hooligan cases to the courts groundlessly that lack any sign of this violation."<sup>48</sup> As a result, fast-track arrests, limited investigations and the lack of appeals made illegal detention a frequent occurrence in the petty hooligan campaign.<sup>49</sup>

Instead of safeguarding procedural norms and ending arbitrary arrest, the petty hooligan program dismantled the former and extended the latter in an effort to expedite the punishment process and end the persistent hooligan problem. In this way, the petty hooligan decree seemed to contradict the socialist legality language that the regime used as its principle discourse of de-Stalinization. The Deputy Chair of the USSR Supreme Court openly expressed his worry at a 1964 plenum that the program increased, rather than curtailed, the operation of punitive police power and made citizens more, not less, liable to arbitrary incarceration.

Before the promulgation of the decree on petty hooliganism, the reasons for the detention of citizens and their delivery to the police were very narrow. According to the Criminal Procedural Code, there had to be serious grounds for doing so. But now the reasons for detaining a citizen are in essence limitless. Any kind of trivial misbehavior (*nepravil'noe povedenie*) by a citizen in a public place or in an apartment can be interpreted as petty hooliganism and lead to that person being delivered to the police, brought before the court, and detained [...] We talk a lot about [...] safeguarding citizens from groundless arrest and, therefore, the courts and the procuracy should all give the question [of how to apply the petty hooligan decree] more attention.<sup>50</sup>

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46. GARF, f. r-9474, op. 16, d. 644, l. 59.

47. *Ibid.*, l. 58.

48. GARF, f. r-8131, op. 32, d. 4676, l. 341.

49. *Ibid.*, d. 5095, l. 158.

50. GARF, f. r-9474, op. 1, d. 418, l. 83.

Rather than safeguarding socialist legality, the petty hooligan program threatened to sacrifice it by producing a large amount of groundless prosecutions and illegal arrests. The combination of empowerment and elasticity that the petty hooligan decree brought to local anti-deviance efforts was one cause of the large amount of groundless prosecutions and arrests. However, the large caseloads generated by the petty hooligan campaign were another contributing factor to the prevalence of illegal arrest. Boggled down in petty hooligan cases, local police and judges used short-cut strategies to speed up turnovers: strategies that increased the likelihood that unwarranted cases would sail through the fast-track system unchecked.

### **Coping with an avalanche of offenders**

Originally, police officers, prosecutors and judges welcomed the petty hooligan decree as a way to cut red tape, reduce workloads and speed the turnover of time-consuming cases of non-serious hooliganism.<sup>51</sup> Instead of relying on prolonged investigations and trials that often took months and ate up excessive resources and man-hours, the decree set up a fast-track system for trying non-serious cases of hooliganism. Upon arresting a suspected petty hooligan, the police officer drew up a short case report. This report would be reviewed by superiors at precinct headquarters who would then make the decision on whether or not to send the case to court. The suspect and the case report would then, if warranted, be forwarded to a judge for an immediate hearing. The decree's method of trying petty cases based on instant investigations and telescoped trials promised to boost the power of the police and streamline the hooligan punishment process. However, the campaign against petty hooliganism did little to reduce workloads and case volumes. Instead, it created a flood of new deviants that tied down personnel in paperwork and processing demands.

The decree required that petty hooligan cases be brought to a judge for sentencing within twenty-four hours of the initial arrest. Such tight time limits had a deleterious affect on the quality of case materials. Beat cops and organizational understaffers, under pressure to increase turnover and with little training on proper case formatting, produced case reports "on the fly" by cutting out particulars and omitting the information necessary for proper processing. Many case materials lacked names, contact information and did not state what petty hooligan actions the accused was supposed to have committed. Reports often complained that case filers described the alleged petty hooligan actions committed in an "imprecise and superficial" language that overused general phrases like "he committed hooligan acts," or "the accused caused a ruckus (*skandal*) and etc." The use of generalizations and vague abstractions cut down on paperwork time, but it complicated sentencing and oversight by concealing case specifics in a homogenizing language. The lack of detailed information on action and situational

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51. GARF, f. r-9474, op. 10, d. 197a, l. 58.

context hampered the court in making fair sentencing decisions and often meant they were passing sentence blindly on ambiguous case materials.<sup>52</sup>

The police also cut down on petty hooligan work and aggravated the avalanche of incarceration by letting others find the petty hooligans for them. The police were the only agents empowered to draw up reports on suspected petty hooligan activity. However, apartment residents, club directors, wives and other private citizens bypassed this restriction by informing on petty hooligans and sending case reports to the authorities without police participation.<sup>53</sup> The police accepted these denunciations/case reports with little fact checking these denunciations/case reports and forwarded them to the courts verbatim for sentencing. By subcontracting out the composition of petty hooligan case reports to third parties, the police allowed citizens to co-opt the state's anti-deviancy program, made it dependent on the questionable testimony of self-interested parties and increased the amount of false case reports filtering through the system. For example, a man was arrested for petty hooliganism on the basis of a case report written up by the man's live in father-in-law and mother-in-law claiming that he used foul language in the apartment. No neighbors corroborated the charge and it was discovered that the in-laws had fabricated it in order to evict their son-in-law from the apartment and augment their tight living space.<sup>54</sup>

In order to expedite the turnover of petty hooligan cases, free up their work schedules and, at the same time, process petty hooligan cases ahead of time limits, judges also adopted short-cut strategies. Rushing through low priority petty hooligan cases was a common time saving strategy that judges used in order to move petty hooligan cases through the system quickly. Dombrovskii described the quickness of petty hooligan hearings among his sentencing cohort as a quasi-military operation that mixed speed with superficiality: "One-two, one-two! The door [of the judge's chamber] opened and closed. Next, next, next! A man flew out with ten to fifteen days every three minutes."<sup>55</sup> The behavior of Dombrovskii's judge, who was on the telephone holding a personal conversation during most of his hearing, showed how hard-up judges saved time in petty hooligan cases by cutting corners in examinations, rubber-stamping police materials and passing sentence with little analysis.

Kochetova [the judge in Dombrovskii's case] turned to the first page of the case file and looked at the last line [...] With a habitual movement she took out a blank sheet of paper [on which to write the verdict] and grabbed her pen. "So you committed hooliganism and used uncensored language?" she asked. I answered [...] that I neither fought with anyone nor committed hooliganism, but was simply trying to protect a woman who was beaten. She again read to me the

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52. Radontsev, "Pravil'no primeniat' ukaz...", 29-30.

53. GARF, f. r-9474, op. 32, d. 645, l. 34.

54. GARF, f. r-8131, op. 32, d. 4676, l. 110.

55. Dombrovskii, "Zapiski melkogo khuligana...", 624.

last words of the police report. My words had no impact on her whatsoever. She was not interested [...] She listened and she did not listen. She looked at me and she did not look at me [...] She grabbed a blank sheet of paper. "Well that's it. Ten days. Try to draw the right lessons from this."<sup>56</sup>

The high caseloads, low priority and tight deadlining of petty hooligan work prompted judges to adopt questionable trial methods that ignored time-consuming formalities like calling witnesses, examining case materials for evidentiary gaps and allowing the accused to defend themselves.<sup>57</sup> For example, a man was arrested for petty hooliganism on the basis of a case report, which was composed by his former wife and her friend, accusing him of having called his ex-wife a speculator. Even though the man professed his innocence, the judge refused to call witnesses in the case, dismissed the man's complaint that the police report was drafted by interested persons and sentenced the man to ten days.<sup>58</sup> Such tactics saved schedules from over-swamping, but they also violated the regime's socialist legality rhetoric by exposing citizens to arbitrary power with little hope of appeal or oversight and by causing unwarranted detention.

### Putting up the petty hooligan

The heavy case volume generated by the campaign against petty hooliganism complicated the task of finding holding spaces for petty hooligan detainees. Prisons were often reluctant to house low priority, short-term administrative detainees and, at times, refused to open their doors to the stream of petty hooligan arrestees.<sup>59</sup> Since the decree mandated imprisonment, local governments were forced to find and improvise storage spaces for petty hooligans outside the prison system.

Many localities used the police stations' preliminary detention cells (*kamery predvaritel'nykh zakliuchenii*, KPZ) as petty hooligan storage centers. However, most KPZs were relatively small area, low capacity spaces that were not designed to handle the high traffic of the petty hooligan system. Overstuffing and overtaxing the local KPZ network meant that crowding was a common part of petty hooligan detention. Reports noted numerous holding arrangements of one square meter per detainee. In the Moscow oblast town of Khimki, nineteen petty hooligan detainees were held in a twenty square meter room.<sup>60</sup> In Moscow's

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56. *Ibid.*, 1. 625.

57. GARF, f. r-8131, op. 32, d. 5290, l. 80. A procuracy official noted: "Even when the accused denies his guilt there has been not a single case in which the judge has checked the correctness of what is written in that case report." See Radontsev, "Pravil'no primeniat' ukaz...", 30.

58. GARF, f. r-8131, op. 32, d. 4676, l. 110.

59. *Ibid.*, d. 5682, l. 13.

60. *Ibid.*, d. 5318, l. 26 and d. 4676, l. 32, 112.

Butyrka prison, petty hooligans were forced to sleep two to a bunk in order to maximize occupancy.<sup>61</sup>

Local officials had to develop creative policies to counteract KPZ overcrowding: policies that eroded the punitive power of the petty hooligan decree. Practices such as early release and house arrest were reluctantly used to free up detention space. In Ivanovo oblast, female detainees were allowed to go home at night because of a lack of space at the KPZ.<sup>62</sup> In Leningrad, “a significant number” of petty hooligans were released home because of lack of space in the KPZ. When space became available, they were rearrested in order to serve out their sentence.<sup>63</sup>

Overcrowding, in some instances, contributed to the inadvertent criminalization of the petty hooligan population. The RSFSR Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD) required that male, female, adult and juvenile petty hooligan detainees be held in separate cells and that petty hooligans as a whole be segregated from more serious criminals.<sup>64</sup> By taking minor offenders out of the ordinary prison population, the MVD hoped to peel petty hooligans away from the corrupting influence of the hardened hooligans and criminals they were often lumped together with under the previous system. In reality, spatial limitations constrained the MVD’s policy of segregated detention and, at times, forced petty hooligan detainees and general offenders to be held in common rooms regardless of differences in age and criminal background.<sup>65</sup> In these mixed detention spaces, petty hooligan detainees often fell under the spell of criminal elements who used the detainees’ relative freedom of movement (during the time they traveled to and from their work assignments) in order to smuggle information, instructions and contraband into and out of holding cells and prisons.<sup>66</sup> Because of infrastructure constraints, the punishment process turned from a time of correction into a time of corruption in which some petty hooligan detainees were exposed and absorbed into criminal subcultures.<sup>67</sup>

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61. GARF, f. r-8131, op. 32, d. 5290, l. 80. Doubling up on bunks may also have been due to a lack of bedding materials: a shortage that required many petty hooligans across the country to sleep on plank beds or to bring their own bedding with them. For more on this, see *ibid.*, d. 5318, l. 26.

62. *Ibid.*, l. 43.

63. RGANI, f. 5, op. 30, d. 232, l. 59.

64. GARF, f. r-8131, op. 32, d. 4676, l. 3.

65. *Ibid.*, l. 32, 40, 112.

66. RGANI, f. 5, op. 30, d. 232, l. 59 and GARF, f. r-8131, op. 32, d. 5682, l. 13. Petty hooligans’ access to outside stores and foodstuffs (through their travel to off-prison worksites as well as through the care packages they were allowed to receive from relatives) made them valuable prison trading partners and back door suppliers of coveted commodities like alcohol. Their mobility (their ability to travel in and out of prison regularly) also made petty hooligan detainees vital communication links for ferrying information between criminals in the prisons and their relatives and criminal colleagues in the outside world.

67. Following the 31 August 1966 decree of the RSFSR Council of Ministers “On Measures for Strengthening the Fight Against Crime,” the RSFSR MVD/MOOP began to address infrastructure constraints by setting up special holding centers (*spetspriemniki*) for petty hooligan detainees in regional capitals and large industrial cities. See V. M. Suslov, “Deiatel’nost’ organov vnutrennikh del s serediny 50-kh do nachala 80-kh godov,” in A. V. Vladimirovich, A. N. Dugin, and A. Ia. Malygin, eds., *Politsiia i militsiia Rossii: stranitsy istorii* (M.: Nauka, 1995), 282.

### Punishing the petty hooligan

Through the campaign against petty hooliganism, the Khrushchev regime decided to get tough with hooligans by, paradoxically, getting more lenient. Lengthy incarceration was no longer the punitive policy for non-serious hooliganism. The petty hooligan decree reduced prison sentences to short three-to fifteen-day stays. The central punishment for petty hooliganism was the mandatory physical labor that the detainee had to perform during each day of his incarceration. Echoing the re forging philosophy of the 1930s, the architects of the petty hooligan policy believed in the power of physical labor to remake broken men.<sup>68</sup> Physical labor was a reformatory instrument through which detainees could mold themselves into useful Soviet subjects and re find their place in the Soviet system. Moreover, manual labor would reinforce a work ethic in a deviant subculture popularly associated with sloth and shirking.

The compulsory labor requirement also seconded as a public system of shaming, status reversal and exposure designed to make hooligans loose face before their collectives and communities. Ideally (though rarely in reality), officials tried to set labor projects in high traffic areas in order to display petty hooligan detainees and maximize their exposure to the public gaze. Overseers ratcheted up the humiliation by assigning detainees to “feminine” work duties that crossed gendered notions of sex-appropriate labor. Exposing detainees to demeaning tasks associated with a feminized domestic sphere, such as cleaning toilets or sweeping floors, challenged the self-image of a group infamous for its association with rituals of rough masculinity like drinking and fighting.<sup>69</sup>

In this manner, mandatory public labor acted as a spectacle designed to embarrass the hooligan and inform (if not entertain) his collective. The logic of such shame labor spectacles was vividly described in a 1958 *Izvestiia* article:

Now the [detainees] are carrying brooms and shovels. The “heroes” of yesterday are marching along sadly, hiding their faces beneath their coat collars. As they sweep the street, they try to keep their backs to the sidewalk. And from that corner one hears sarcastic jokes and laughter [...] No matter how the heroes hide their eyes, the shame of fifteen days of public scorn will be remembered all their lives.<sup>70</sup>

Public clean-up projects, like street sweeping or snow removal, provided an ideal vehicle for exposing petty hooligans to visible and audible public scorn.<sup>71</sup> Through public works projects, the hooligans’ habitat would be reclaimed and turned into

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68. On the re forging rhetoric of the first five-year plan period, see Katerina Clark, “Little Heroes and Big Deeds: Literature Responds to the First Five-Year Plan,” in Sheila Fitzpatrick, ed., *Cultural Revolution in Russia, 1928-1931* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1978).

69. GARF, f. r-8131, op. 32, d. 5095, l. 154-155, *ibid.* d. 5318, l. 28 and d. 4676, l. 40.

70. A. Galkin, “Eto ne kompaniia,” *Komsomolskaia pravda*, (2 November, 1958): 3.

71. GARF, f. r-8131, op. 32, d. 4676, l. 31.

the stage on which they were displayed before the public eye. The shame of being paraded before their neighbors and colleagues would, it was hoped, stay with the petty hooligan forever and speed his reintegration into the collective.

In addition, local economic imperatives and interests shaped the petty hooligan labor system and dictated where detainees were sent to work. Petty hooligan detainees were frequently farmed out to local enterprises for temporary work assignments as a government-subsidized, on-loan labor force. In this way, petty hooligan detainees, through their labor, were not only serving out their sentences and (it was hoped) rededicating themselves to the task of constructing Communism. They were adding value to the local economy by filling gaps in the local job market, especially in such low-status or labor intensive sectors as sanitation or construction.<sup>72</sup>

However, the compulsory labor system ran into multiple administrative and supervisory difficulties that contracted the make-work empire and freed detainees from their labor responsibilities. In particular, administrative negligence on the local level subverted the petty hooligan work program. Police in Stalingrad, for example, sent lists of detainees to the local executive committee, but local officials made no effort to create make-work assignments for them.<sup>73</sup> Similarly, detainees in Moscow's Krasnogvardeiskii raion were not put to work because the raion had failed to organize any work projects.<sup>74</sup> Local institutions, often ignorant of decree specifics, passed the buck on creating public works projects for petty hooligan detainees and shirked their labor assignment responsibilities.<sup>75</sup>

The negligence of local governments in creating make-work for petty hooligan detainees was reflected in the large percentage of detainees who did little or no labor at all during their incarceration. The USSR Procuracy estimated that only 20-30 percent of detainees were being put to work in required labor projects.<sup>76</sup> In one raion in Gorki oblast, only one out of seventy-four detainees was sent to work on each day of his sentence as required by the decree. Most of the other detainees worked only 10-25 percent of their sentence days.<sup>77</sup>

Detainee inactivity undermined the utopian program of reformation through labor and turned detention into what many critics described as a period of "idle rest."<sup>78</sup> Vacation, relaxation and leisure rather than status reversal, shaming and manual labor became the unintentional leitmotifs of a forced labor system on the skids. The inability to match detainees with physical labor projects prompted

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72. *Ibid.*, l. 113.

73. GARF, f. r-8131, op. 32, d. 5318, l. 45.

74. *Ibid.*, d. 4676, l. 47.

75. *Ibid.*, d. 5318, l. 45.

76. *Ibid.*, d. 5290, l. 80 and d. 5302, l. 194-195.

77. *Ibid.*, d. 5318, l. 30. In 1965, *Izvestiia* reported that only one third of petty hooligan detainees were actually used in the labor projects the decree required. See V. Baskov, "Porok istseiat' trudom," *Izvestiia*, (1 April, 1965): 3.

78. Galkin, "Eto ne kompaniia," 3.

complaints that petty hooligan detainees “eat free bread and do not suffer.”<sup>79</sup> Without compulsory labor, prison lost its bite and its transformative power to remold detainees into model Soviet workers. “Ten or fifteen days is not a reform measure,” a Leningrad woman wrote in dismay, “it is a time of amusement.”<sup>80</sup> Prison for idle petty hooligans had, according to critics, become a “holiday hotel” (*pansionat*) in which they spent “vacation.”<sup>81</sup> Inadequate work creation and usage transformed the idle and unrepentant petty hooligan into the popular punch line of such mass media vehicles as Leonid Gaidai’s film “Operatsiia “y” i drugie prikliucheniiia Shurika” (1965) or the satirical journal *Krokodil*. Parodying the laborless detention, a cartoon in *Krokodil*, entitled “A New Place of Rest,” depicted two petty hooligans leaving a police station at the end of their detention period and comparing how much weight they had gained during their incarceration.<sup>82</sup>

Bureaucratic neglect at the administrative level endangered the compulsory labor system. By depriving detainees of public labor projects, administrative inaction kept inmates unreformed and idle in their cells. Local inattention to make-work projects kept detainees from laboring in the local economy and transformed them into an expensive drain on penal resources. Not for the first time and not for the last time, the inaction and ignorance of little people and local actors threatened to torpedo the grand strategies of the Soviet state. However, the petty hooligan program’s primary saboteurs were not the bureaucrats who ignored the system from the outside. They were the petty hooligan prisoners who wrecked it from within. Not surprisingly, they had their own thoughts about being pawns in the state’s shame labor game and proved reluctant to play by its rules. Getting local authorities to run a small-scale empire of unfree labor against their wishes was a constant challenge to the petty hooligan project. Making poorly supervised and completely unmotivated unfree laborers work, stay onsite and not misbehave – that was the real challenge for the Soviet state.

Work was at the top of the state’s petty hooligan agenda. But for those petty hooligans who found themselves at the center of the compulsory labor system, it was often the farthest thing from their minds. Through various tactics of work avoidance, petty hooligan detainees sidestepped the shame labor system. By refusing to work, by running away and by dragging their feet, petty hooligans did their best to avoid the labor the Soviet state sought to impose on them.

Flight was one of the most frequent work avoidance tactics adopted by petty hooligan detainees. The unwillingness or inability of police departments to waste personnel on escort duties meant that petty hooligan detainees were often sent to worksites without police escort or in underguarded convoys. Detainees escaped the compulsory labor system by simply running away while en route to work projects. In Alma-Ata, the prison sent detainees to work without any guard or escort on the

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79. *Ibid.*

80. GARF, f. r-7523, op. 45, d. 350, l. 17.

81. GARF, f. A-577, Iuridicheskaiia komissiiia pri Sovete Ministrov RSFSR, op. 1, d. 882, l. 46.

82. *Krokodil*, 36 (1957): 5.

condition that they return to the prison “around 6-7 p.m.” A spot check found that only 33 percent of detainees reported to their assigned worksites.<sup>83</sup> Persistent staffing problems turned the escort process into a constant cycle of release and recapture that tied down police manpower in tracking down and collecting runaway detainees.<sup>84</sup> In addition, the MVD inadvertently encouraged detainee flight by depriving escort guards of the right to use weapons against escapees.<sup>85</sup> No deterrent existed to prevent escape attempts and guards in understaffed escort parties could ill afford to risk mass flights by engaging in foot-races with run-away detainees. Persistent flight bled the make-work system of a steady labor corps and caused supply problems that short-circuited working arrangements. In addition, high rates of flight encouraged the lockdown of detainees in order to break the cycle of release, runaway and recapture and contributed to the high number of detainees who were not sent to work.

When they arrived at their worksite, detainees needed constant onsite supervision to prevent shirking, work stoppages, disciplinary infractions and escape attempts. This added another layer of costs onto a system that demanded expensive oversight at every phase of its operation. Frequently, police passed supervisory functions off onto enterprise managers that often took little or no interest in diverting manpower to the task of detainee babysitting. Piling the task of guarding detainees onto the institutions making use of their labor meant that, as one report declared, “there was really no guard duty provided at all.”<sup>86</sup> Many detainees were unsupervised during workhours and did whatever they pleased.<sup>87</sup>

As a result, many detainees did no work and left the worksite in order to wander around the city. One petty hooligan detainee in Tiumen oblast left his worksite, which was supposedly under police guard, went downtown, got drunk and committed another act of petty hooliganism for which he was sentenced to an additional fifteen days. In the same oblast, six detainees held a drinking party at their unsupervised worksite and one ran away.<sup>88</sup> Some detainees left the worksites and returned to their homes.<sup>89</sup> One detainee in Moscow, for example, left his worksite, went home to celebrate New Year’s Eve and then returned to the KPZ following the holiday celebration.<sup>90</sup> Some detainees took advantage of their freedom of movement and lack of supervision in order to acquire contraband and smuggle it back into detention centers. In Gorki oblast, four detainees returned to the KPZ from their worksite drunk and one tried to bring a bottle of vodka back to

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83. GARF, f. r-8131, op. 32, d. 5318, l. 117.

84. *Ibid.*, d. 4676, l. 8.

85. *Ibid.*, l. 4.

86. TsMAM, f. 2842, Prokuratura g. Moskvyy, op. 1, d. 65, l. 18.

87. *Ibid.*, l. 113.

88. GARF, f. r-8131, op. 32, d. 4676, l. 323.

89. *Ibid.*, l. 112.

90. *Ibid.*, l. 8.

his cell (the police mounted a contraband search and found several more empty bottles).<sup>91</sup>

The unsupervised detainees who did stay onsite at work assignments exerted their own control over the work process through a repertoire of shirking and foot dragging. Work tempi were attenuated and workdays contracted in order to limit exertion.<sup>92</sup> Stoppages disrupted production routines. Without oversight, no incentive existed for petty hooligans to work. The Secretary of the Komsomol Central Committee described the working patterns of petty hooligans: “Those who want to work, they do a little bit of work. Those that don’t want to work, they play dominos.”<sup>93</sup>

Hooligans, local employers discovered, were bad workers who added little value to the production process.<sup>94</sup> Medically and physically, many petty hooligan detainees were ill-suited for physical labor. Some detainees were alcoholics who suffered from the side effects of alcohol detoxification and withdrawal during their incarceration and were physically unable to work.<sup>95</sup> Unskilled detainee labor presented a hazard in dangerous worksites, especially in the construction sector, that multiplied the costs and concerns of using petty hooligan labor. Safety regulations, for instance, were often ignored or violated by untrained and unskilled detainee laborers exposing workplaces to increased safety risks and liabilities.<sup>96</sup> Facing an unenviable calculus of high supervisory costs and low benefits, many enterprises refused to take petty hooligan labor. Local enterprises in Kaluga informed oblast officials that they did not want detainee workers because they “just sit around all day, drink and run off to their homes.”<sup>97</sup> In Sverdlovsk oblast, local officials refused to create work assignments for the detainees because they argued that detainees “worked badly and did nothing.”<sup>98</sup> The low quality of petty hooligan workers was a persistent problem that subverted the shame system by undermining the demand for detainee labor.

The law inadvertently encouraged shirking by failing to give overseers disciplinary powers over underperforming detainees.<sup>99</sup> Localities experimented with various strategies to compel detainees to work and regain control over the labor process. In Leningrad oblast, the police informed the detainees’ workplace about work refusals so that they could punish the detainee for violating labor

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91. GARF, f. r-8131, op. 32, d. 5318, l. 31.

92. TsMAM, f. 2842, op. 1, d. 65, l. 18.

93. Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi arkhiv sotsial’no-politicheskoi istorii (RGASPI), f. M-1, Vsesoiuznyi Leninskii kommunisticheskii soiuz molodezhi, op. 2, d. 391, l. 79.

94. GARF, f. r-8131, op. 32, d. 4676, l. 8.

95. Baskov, “Porok istseliat’...,” 3.

96. GARF, f. A-577, op. 1, d. 63, l. 5-6.

97. GARF, f. r-8131, op. 32, d. 5682, l. 13.

98. *Ibid.*, d. 5318, l. 45.

99. GARF, f. r-9401, Ministerstvo vnutrennykh del SSSR, op. 2, d. 505, l. 400.

discipline or for absenteeism.<sup>100</sup> Officials in Kaluga oblast tried to punish detainees who refused to work by adding a day onto their sentence for each day they refused to attend their work assignment.<sup>101</sup>

Other localities tried to encourage detainees to work through positive incentives, such as early release and monetary rewards. However, such incentive packages directly violated the petty hooligan decree and took the sting out of the compulsory labor system. In Novosibirsk, oblast officials experimented with giving police chiefs and prison wardens the right to release detainees early “who relate conscientiously to the work assigned to them.”<sup>102</sup> In Gorki oblast, petty hooligan prisoners were released early for “good work.”<sup>103</sup> Although such compensatory arrangements were forbidden by the decree, detainees were sometimes paid for their labor giving them a monetary incentive not to engage in shirking and work stoppages.<sup>104</sup> These moves blunted the punitive power of forced labor and reinforced public concern over the incarceration regime’s insufficient severity.<sup>105</sup>

The expense of the incarceration and make-work programs cost the state budget half a billion rubles annually during the first two full years of the campaign (1957 and 1958) and caused persistent imbalances between the large inputs required to run the compulsory labor system and the limited and low quality output it generated.<sup>106</sup> Basic program expenses, like feeding costs, outstripped the value that detainee labor added to the local economy.<sup>107</sup> Commenting on the shame labor system’s input/output imbalance, the Secretary of the Komsomol Central Committee noted at a February 1960 plenum that: “120,000 rubles are wasted on workers whose labor is worth only 70,000 rubles.”<sup>108</sup>

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100. GARF, f. r-8131, op. 32, d. 4676, l. 124.

101. *Ibid.*, d. 5682, l. 6. Following July 1966, the state used food as an incentive to increase the productivity of petty hooligan detainees. According to regulations, detainees were to be given hot food only every other day. On the days when no hot food was distributed, detainees received only their bread ration plus salt and water. However, detainees who exhibited a “conscientious attitude to their work” were to be given hot food everyday. In order to increase the sting of the food weapon, petty hooligan detainees were stripped of the opportunity to receive care packages from relatives or to purchase additional food to supplement the required prison diet. See the decree “O poriadke primeneniia Ukaza Verkhovnogo Soveta SSSR ot 26 iulia 1966 goda ‘Ob usilenii otvetstvennosti za khuliganstvo,’” *Vedomosti Verkhovnogo Soveta SSSR*, 30 (1966): 587.

102. GARF, f. A-428, op. 3, d. 281, l. 1-2.

103. GARF, f. r-8131, op. 32, d. 5318, l. 26.

104. *Ibid.*, d. 5682, l. 62.

105. Only in 1966 would the USSR Supreme Soviet give all localities the disciplinary authority to punish uncooperative detainees with additional prison sentences (of up to thirty days), G. S. Sarkisov, *Preduprezhdenie narushenii obshchestvennogo poriadka* (Erevan: Aiastan, 1972), 24.

106. In 1957, the USSR MVD spent 438 million rubles on administrative arrest programs for various petty crimes, including petty hooliganism. In 1958, it spent 485 million rubles. GARF, f. r-9401, op. 2, d. 505, l. 399.

107. GARF, f. r-8131, op. 32, d. 5682, l. 2.

108. RGASPI, f. M-1, op. 2, d. 391, l. 79.

In order to cut expenses, some localities forced detainees themselves to cover their own incarceration costs.<sup>109</sup> Others sought to trim costs by requiring detainees to supply their own food and bedding during detention.<sup>110</sup> Aside from levying side charges on detainees, state bodies attempted to recoup costs and address input/output imbalances by charging workplaces for the petty hooligan labor that they used. However, they often priced petty hooligan labor out of the market by making it too expensive relative to its limited quality. For example, an order of the Azerbaijani MVD required workplaces to pay twenty-five rubles into the state budget for every day a petty hooligan detainee worked at their enterprise. As a result, a procuracy report observed that enterprises in Baku refused to accept detainee labor.<sup>111</sup> Inadvertently, the state's cost sharing program, which was instituted union-wide by an August 1957 joint order of the USSR MVD and the USSR Ministry of Finance, lowered workplace demand for petty hooligan labor and jeopardized the work system that was at the heart of the decree's reformative program.<sup>112</sup>

In an effort to curb program expenses further, the state tried other cost cutting strategies like passing program costs entirely onto local governments and instituting alternative punishment practices (like fining or wage garnishments) that did not involve incarceration or compulsory labor. Yet by passing the costs of the petty hooligan program to the localities that were already doing a poor job running the make-work system, the state ensured the program's continued problems.<sup>113</sup> Disciplining petty hooligans through wage garnishments, fines or by outsourcing cases to comrades' courts (the last two instituted in the RSFSR by an April 1961 decree of the republic's Supreme Soviet) created its own set of problems by decreasing the number of petty hooligans sent to compulsory work programs and undermining the utopian project of reform through labor.<sup>114</sup> By allowing some hooligans to slip through the system easy, it returned to the ineffective and deviance-promoting days of mixed punishment for minor misbehavior. With the 1961 decree, petty hooligan punishments traveled full

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109. These petty hooligan detainees were charged one ruble per day to cover food costs. GARF, f. r-8131, op. 32, d. 6612, l. 70.

110. GARF, f. r-9401, op. 2, d. 506, l. 34-35.

111. GARF, f. r-8131, op. 32, d. 5682, l. 61.

112. Galkin, "Eto ne kompaniia," 3. For the USSR MVD and USSR MinFin order, see Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi arkhiv ekonomiki (RGAE), f. 7733, Ministerstvo finansov SSSR, op. 46, d. 13, l. 123.

113. GARF, f. r-9401, op. 2, d. 505, l. 399. The 8 December 1958 decree of the USSR Council of Ministers shifted the costs of incarceration for both petty hooliganism and petty speculation onto local budgets starting from 1 January 1959.

114. The 19 April 1961 RSFSR Supreme Soviet decree introduced a 10-30 ruble fine for petty hooliganism that could be given in lieu of the three to fifteen day imprisonment standard. The new decree also sought to cut down on caseloads and reduce pressure on the judiciary by making certain cases ("taking into account the personality of the violator and the nature of the act committed") available to be outsourced to comrades' courts and work collectives. "O dopolnenii ukaza Prezidiuma Verkhovnogo Soveta RSFSR ot 19 dekabria 1956 'ob otvetstvennosti za melkoe khuliganstvo,'" 248.

circle away from an expensive forced labor regime and back to the low cost and low impact repertoire of fines and noncustodial punishments that the program was, in part, designed to replace.

### **Conclusion: Putting petty hooliganism in perspective**

The petty hooligan program expanded the domain of deviance to encompass everything from the egregious to the eccentric and turned millions of the male urban working class into hooligans. By creating new deviancies out of the small offenses of everyday life, it extended the regime's disciplinary reach into the most minor aspects and intimate areas of its citizens' lives.<sup>115</sup> With the promulgation of petty hooliganism, the regime advertised its intent to enforce correct conduct and improve *byt* at all levels of Soviet society and created an expansive instrument with the catchall quality to accomplish it. As a flexible instrument of easy incarceration and intimidation, the Khrushchev-era category of petty hooliganism became (and has remained) an entrenched part of the Soviet and post-Soviet anti-deviancy arsenal – one that the Soviet state and its successors have used to hooliganize and harass an open array of stigmatized social groups ranging from the usual rowdy drunks to, in today's illiberal democracies, the embattled political protesters and independent journalists of post-Soviet civil society.<sup>116</sup>

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115. For the growing intrusiveness of the Khrushchev period, see Deborah Field, "Irreconcilable Differences: Divorce and Conceptions of Private Life in the Khrushchev Era," *Russian Review* (1998): 600-603 and Oleg Kharkhordin, *The Collective and the Individual in Russia: A Study of Practices* (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 1999), 279-283.

116. In Belarus, petty hooliganism has been used to detain a political protestor who ripped apart a picture of Belarusian dictator Aleksandr Lukashenko and to arrest the hundreds of demonstrators who publicly protested the March 2006 presidential elections. In September 2004, Andrei Babitskii, the much-persecuted reporter for Radio Liberty, was arrested at a Moscow airport, on a police provocation, for petty hooliganism. He was detained for five days in order to prevent him from traveling to the scene of the then unfolding Beslan hostage crisis. In July 2000, a Vladivostok judge gave Irina Grebneva, editor of the newspaper *Arsenevskie vesti*, five days for petty hooliganism. Her misdeed was that she had published, in her paper, transcripts of telephone conversations of regional politicians (including then Primorskii krai governor Evgenii Nazdratenko) conspiring to rig local elections. For information on the man who received petty hooliganism for ripping up a picture of Lukashenko at an anniversary of the Chernobyl disaster, see United States' Department of State, "Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2000: Belarus," [http://minsk.usembassy.gov/html/hrr\\_2000.html](http://minsk.usembassy.gov/html/hrr_2000.html). For information on the use of petty hooliganism to detain demonstrators protesting the 2006 presidential elections, see Vince Crawley, "US, Europe Call for Release of Jailed Belarus Protestors," *Washington File*, 23 March 2006, <http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-english&y=2006&m=March&x=20060323144709MVyelwarC0.1266138&t=livefeeds/wf-latest.html>. For information on the Babitskii incident, see V. Maksimov, "Ban on a Profession?" *Novyie Izvestiia*, (3 September 2004), in *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press*, 35 (2004): 8. Also, see the report of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe reprinted online at <https://www.ecoi.net/doc/en/RU/content/5/1257#s278/>. For more on the Grebneva case, see "Far East Governor Turns the Screws on Another Journalist," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Newline, 28 July 2000, <http://www.rferl.org/newline/2000/07/280700.asp/>.

When placed in perspective, the history of petty hooliganism presents a nonstandard narrative of legal reform during the Thaw period. The plot does not involve reformers replacing an arbitrary Stalinist system of punitive power with a structure of socialist legality that respected legal and procedural norms. Instead, it is a story of how reformers, in order to punish minor misbehavior, created a pared down punishment process that often ran rough shod over both the former and the latter: a punishment process modeled, in part, on a fast-track system of instant investigations and truncated trials that was first used in the pre-War Stalin period.<sup>117</sup> Rather than shoring up socialist legality, the petty hooligan decree sacrificed it in order to realize a project of intrusive behavioral engineering based on expanding the authority of the state into the trivia of everyday life.

In this way, the story of petty hooliganism complicates our picture of the Thaw by underlining the interplay of liberalization and repression, legality and arbitrary authority and past programs and present reforms that went on within it. The foundational year of Khrushchev's Thaw, 1956, began with one of the most well-known events of the Khrushchev era, the Secret Speech to the Twentieth Party Congress, and ended with one of the least, the RSFSR decree on petty hooliganism. These two acts provide two very different visions of this pivotal year. Read from the perspective of the Secret Speech, the year 1956 appears as a period of liberalization associated with the challenging of old orthodoxies and authorities.<sup>118</sup> Yet seen through the prism of petty hooliganism, it also appears as a time of repressive social discipline in which the state sought to expand its policing power to the most mundane aspects of everyday life. Like the anti-gypsy legislation of the same year, the petty hooligan decree shows us that 1956 was more than a year of

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117. In August 1940, the USSR Supreme Soviet, seeking to reduce hooliganism in the workplace, imposed a one-year sentence on simple hooliganism. This measure kicked off a campaign that ensnared a broad range of Soviet citizens both inside and outside the workplace and marked a major escalation in the fight against hooliganism. It also marked a small revolution in how hooligan cases were processed. Anticipating campaign-related case increases, the People's Commissariat of Justice of the USSR, the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs of the USSR and the USSR Procuracy issued a joint order that simplified and speeded up the processing of cases of simple hooliganism. The *Narkomiust*, NKVD and Procuracy order ended the extensive investigation and trial of simple hooligan cases. In lieu of formal investigation, the police would cut processing times by drawing up a short report on the incident. The trial, based on this pared down protocol, would be drastically telescoped through tight deadlining. In order to speed up turnover times, hooligan cases would be required to be heard by judges immediately within 48 hours. Special facilities were set aside for telescoped trials in special court chambers (*dezurnye sudebnye kamery pri narodnykh sudakh*). Out of the 1940 decree, a fast-track system of hooligan processing was born aimed at cutting hooligan-associated workloads and punishing hooligans "on the fly." For more on the 1940 campaign, see Solomon, *Soviet Criminal Justice Under Stalin*, 311, 328. For the growing interest in reviving the 1940 system among mid-1950s legal workers, see RGANI, f. 5, op. 30, d. 36, l. 31-32, GARF, f. r-8131, op. 32, d. 4013, l. 184 and d. 4032, l. 6, 47.

118. On the Secret Speech, see William Taubman, *Khrushchev: The Man and his Era* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 2003), 270-277; William Tompson, *Khrushchev: A Political Life* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), 153-161. For an English translation of the full speech, see Bertram D. Wolfe, *Khrushchev and Stalin's Ghost: Text, Background and Meaning of Khrushchev's Secret Speech* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1957).

liberalizing political reform.<sup>119</sup> It was also a year of increased prosecution, coercive refashioning and aggressive state action against an expanding array of outsider identities. By showing the limits of liberalization and socialist legality, the petty hooligan campaign reminds us that a de-Stalinizing society co-existed in an uneasy equilibrium during the late 1950s with a society of overreaching and increasingly intimate intrusion, intolerance and the mass incarceration of undesirables.

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119. In October 1956, the USSR Supreme Soviet ruled that gypsies should cease their vagrant lifestyle (*brodiazhnichestvo*) and adopt a life of settled wage labor. Those gypsies who persisted in leading a vagrant lifestyle would be sentenced to five years exile and corrective labor. For the 5 October 1956 Decree of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet "O Priobshchenii k trudu tsygan, zanimaiushchikhsia brodiazhnichestvom," see *Sbornik dokumentov po istorii ugolovnogo zakonodatel'stva SSSR i RSFSR*, 31. For more on the 1956 gypsy decree see Alaina Lemon, *Between Two Fires: Gypsy Performance and Romani Memory from Pushkin to Postsocialism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000), 103, 135.