

## THE AFTERMATH OF COLLECTIVISATION

The laws and regulations are not applicable to us. We as farmers have the say over our agriculture.<sup>1</sup>

(Farmer, Mosbach, Kreis Eisenach reported by the police in September 1960.)

The massive deployment of agitation brigades in the countryside and a number of tactics ranging from genuine persuasion through to public humiliation, intimidation and incarceration succeeded in moving the vast majority of farmers in the GDR to sign up to a collective farm. Beyond the paperwork, however, the situation was by no means so clear-cut. It was one thing for farmers to be brought to sign up to participation in a collective farm, it was quite another for these farms to get up and running in practice. The farmer quoted above was by no means alone in his sentiments and the apparatus of communication and control available to the SED leadership in the countryside proved itself inadequate to take concerted action against farmers who insisted upon their independence.

The model statutes according to which LPGs were supposed to be organised – established first in 1952 and modified in 1959 – were not entirely unfamiliar to most of the newly collectivised farmers. Most had some knowledge of a nearby LPG and discussion of the content of the three types of model statute had been part of the agitation campaign. Nonetheless, the assumption of the roles and responsibilities laid out in the model statutes was no simple matter and represented considerable changes not only to farmers' daily routines, but also to their relationship with their fellows, their land and, in the LPG Type III, to their livestock. It changed above all their sense of their own status. Relinquishing individual control over property was considered tantamount to expropriation, and participation in a collective brigade under another's authority was tantamount to becoming a farm labourer.<sup>2</sup> Rural communities were thus fraught with discord and many farmers continued to reject the agricultural collectives, refusing to take part in collective work and in some cases abandoning their farms and fleeing the GDR altogether. The speed and aggression with which the collectivisation campaign had been completed, and the inadequacies of the

regime's apparatus for governing agriculture and rural society at a local level limited further the prospects for swift acceptance of collective farming practices. Nevertheless, amid all the conflict, disruption and uncertainty at this time, both older and new LPGs did begin a slow, by no means immediately successful, process of consolidation. New parameters were officially set to the relationship between the individual farmer, his community and the state, and the longer the LPGs survived the more necessary it became to assert one's interests within rather than against them.

### **The Conditions of Collectivised Agriculture**

These new parameters – the conditions in which farming was now to take place – were defined in part by the 1959 LPG Law and the three different types of model statute which provided the basis for the rights and responsibilities of collective farmers and dictated the basic administrative and financial structure of collective farms.<sup>3</sup>

The LPG Type I was aimed clearly at those who wished to retain as much independent control over their property as possible. The only aspect of farming which had to be managed collectively was the arable land brought in by each farmer. It was therefore an obvious choice for the majority of those who formed an LPG, reluctantly, during 'the Socialist Spring'. Of central importance to Type I farmers was their continued private use and ownership of their own livestock and the stipulation that at least 40 per cent of the profits of the LPG had to be shared among the members according to the amount of land each one had contributed to the collective farm. With these embellishments, the bitter pill of collectivisation and the sense of expropriation and loss of independence were at least to some extent mitigated. Nonetheless, the model statute's aim was to commit the farmers who had agreed to it (albeit in most cases under some sort of duress) to developing real forms of collective practice, at least as far as the arable land was concerned: clause II.4 unambiguously required the removal of any border markers and divisions between field plots, the amalgamation of fields and the use of a crop rotation in accordance with state plans.

Although the members continued to own privately their own machinery, they were required to put these at the disposal of the LPG in return for a suitable rent should the majority of the members' assembly vote for it. The concessions to the will of farmers to retain their independence were not insignificant; however, the formation of the LPG as an institution was nonetheless a radical and symbolic step. The establish-

ment of an administrative structure – comprising ideally a hierarchy of a chairman and managing board, brigades and brigade leaders, as well as an accountant and various commissions – provided the means for the SED state to gain more consistent and more comprehensive control over farmers and all aspects of agricultural production. Moreover, the LPG Type I, as the first of three types, was recognisably a stepping stone on the way to much greater degrees of collectivisation of property: those who formed the LPG Type I realised it was unlikely that their children would be able to inherit as much individual control over land, livestock and machinery.

The model statute of the LPG Type II entailed an immediate commitment to progressively reducing private ownership of livestock in the interests of developing collective herds. Here the arable land, machinery, equipment and draft animals – as far as they were not necessary for farming independently kept land and livestock – were held by the collective and only 30 per cent of profits were shared according to the amount of land contributed. Only very few new farmers chose to form an LPG Type II, seeing little benefit in adopting a statute which was explicitly geared towards transition to greater collective control sooner rather than later.

The Type II statute's significance lies largely in its use as a legal tool for shifting the terms on which farmers 'agreed' to participate in the LPG. As of 1962, the right of farmers to withdraw from the collective was redefined in an altered Type II statute as being valid only if so doing was 'for the benefit of society'. This was a suitably vague term giving the state apparatus the explicit sanction of the law in its long-running battle to prevent LPGs – of all types – haemorrhaging much-needed manpower and expertise. In being prevented from withdrawing from the LPG or taking up other careers unless they had the full agreement of the *Rat des Kreises*, the individual LPG management and a majority of their fellow LPG members, farmers had increasingly to face up to the prospect of earning their livelihood only under the conditions of collective farming. The incentive for making the best of an inescapable situation (given that fleeing the country for most was not a realistic option even before the Berlin Wall had been constructed) became increasingly apparent. For some formerly independent farmers, confident in the permanence of the SED regime, the lack of alternatives to collective farming encouraged them to embrace it fully by taking up the statute of the LPG Type III, rather than cling on to what vestiges of the old system were available to them.

In contrast to the LPG Type I, the model statute of the LPG Type III entailed comprehensive acceptance of the collective farming idea – it

committed farmers to building up collective livestock, placed grazing land in collective use alongside the arable land and presupposed the most active participation in the life of the collective farm, placing minimal emphasis on property and maximum on labour. In all types of LPGs, members had the right to retain private use of a certain amount of arable land as well as a garden plot. The amount of individual land according to the model statute was not to exceed half a hectare for each household in the LPG – the idea being in theory to prevent a family with several LPG members accumulating a private plot of several hectares.

While farmers in other types of LPGs were able to retain their own livestock, farmers in Type III were restricted to a small, set number of animals that might be kept for private use, thereby limiting the distinction in incomes between members and ensuring everyone continued to devote themselves to work for the collective.<sup>4</sup> Eighty per cent of the profits of the Type III LPGs were to be shared among the members according to the amount of labour they contributed.<sup>5</sup> Only 20 per cent was shared on the basis of land contributions. As such the LPG Type III was the preferred choice of all those who had little more than their labour to contribute to the farm. With such a balance, it was necessary for all members to devote most of their time to work for the collective in order to earn sufficient income.

On entry into an LPG Type III, a minimum contribution had to be made to the basic material and financial capital of the collective farm. This was paid either in cash, often in instalments, or in the form of livestock, equipment and buildings required by the collective. Most of the Type III LPGs in Bezirk Erfurt were founded before the 'Socialist Spring', taking over abandoned land and relying on the manpower of workers recruited from industry, landless farm labourers and smallholders. While having the most state backing, they rarely were in possession of the best land and livestock or the most expert workforce. The completion of collectivisation changed this to some extent by compelling some independent farmers to join existing Type IIIs, transferring in the process their land, livestock and machinery to collective control. In theory, contributions to the wealth of the LPG in excess of the minimum (set generally at 500 Marks) were to be eventually repaid: the inconsistency with which this was done, however, became a lasting source of anger among LPG members, who continued to call for payment of money owed them by the state since 1960 right up to 1990.<sup>6</sup>

Although there was some choice in the type of LPG farmers joined – as long as they joined one – it was certainly constrained in some cases by practical considerations (i.e., ensuring an LPG's financial stability or the adjacency of members' lands) as well as the degree to which col-

lectivisation was pursued as a means of social engineering. Most often more than one LPG existed in a single community but the constellation of farms in each one did not necessarily reflect a harmonious balance between the interests of each of the members.

## The Roots of Conflict in the LPG

The administrative collectivisation of agriculture represented a considerable step in the social reconfiguration of rural society in the GDR. It rarely gave rise, however, to newly harmonious social relations within the village. Rather, old conflicts were given new form and new vigour. Between 1945 and 1960 the social structure of villages in Bezirk Erfurt had been shaped by the influx of refugees from the East and the expansion of industry as well as the gradual erosion of the local authority of the traditional village elites. The collectivisation process during the 1950s, the exodus of people to the West, the development of the MTS and the influx of industrial workers to work in the LPGs as part of a state-sponsored programme, as well as consistent efforts to limit the influence of the local pastors over the rural population, among other things, complicated the network of social relations and loyalties in many villages. Beneath the blanket of administrative full collectivisation in 1960 a tangled set of antagonisms continued thus to exist within and between the various LPGs based on politics, religion, class and the rights of new and old settlers.<sup>7</sup>

While one has to be wary of simply accepting the designations of socialist rhetoric as corresponding to the real roots of conflict within rural communities, it is reasonable to accept that in some LPGs those who saw themselves as victims or opponents and those who were beneficiaries and supporters of socialist agricultural policy were perforce brought together within the collective farms. The wealthiest farmers and traditionally dominant figures of rural communities (so-called *Großbauern*) had now to work together with those whom they had once considered their social inferiors and accept not only the common use of their property but also their newly non-elite status. Although compelled to be part of the LPGs, some wealthier farmers sought where possible to continue to assert themselves, threatening non-cooperation when attempts were made to reduce their share of the LPG's income on the basis of the land they had contributed.<sup>8</sup>

Attempts to implement the statutory right of the members' assembly to set limits on the proportion of land and number of animals which were deemed to belong to any individual member also provoked con-

siderable resistance. By October 1960 the restriction of wealthier farmers' property had not been completed in any of the districts in Bezirk Erfurt. In Kreis Weimar only eight out of a possible eighty individual farmers and in Kreis Heiligenstadt not a single farmer had had his property curtailed. Großbauern in the LPG Pfiffelbach, Kreis Apolda, sought for example to undermine attempts to reduce the number of livestock they owned privately by agreeing that the LPG could take their animals but refusing absolutely to agree to contract the use of their livestock sheds to the LPG even though these buildings would then stand empty.<sup>9</sup> In the long run Großbauern did have to accept that their buildings and animals were for the most part at the disposal of the collective; actually carrying out this transferral of control, however, provoked confrontation which few LPG leaders relished.

In a few cases, faced with what they saw as blatant invasion of private property and daylight robbery, individual farmers put up some last-ditch resistance: a farmer in the LPG Type III Hardisleben, faced with the prospect of the LPG converting his sheep pen into cattle stalls, was reported to have tried to prevent it, saying: 'You aren't coming into my stables. That's my property, you just want to expropriate it. Anyway this LPG isn't going to last much longer.'<sup>10</sup> Even in late 1961, a farmer in the village of Daasdorf was so angered by the transference of his animals from his sheds to collective livestock holdings that he was reportedly moved to threaten the livestock brigadier, saying, 'Just you wait, when things are different, it'll be your turn.'<sup>11</sup>

Even where the questions of lost property and status were not writ large, social divides between successful private farmers and the *Neubauern*, small farmers and agricultural labourers who had founded the LPG, could be enough cause for conflict.<sup>12</sup> Antagonism came not simply from those who were unwilling to collectivise. Indeed even assessments by SED functionaries appear as quick to highlight and condemn instances of sectarianism by long-standing LPG members and small farmers almost as often as they condemn the machinations of the 'class enemy'. Long-standing LPG members were not necessarily willing to share what they had achieved with those who until recently had looked down on their efforts and who (initially at least) certainly did not share their politics or their interests in the success of the LPG. Furthermore, smaller farmers who until March 1960 had nonetheless managed to run a successful farm had no desire now to be under the command of either their richer neighbours in the LPG Type I or what they regarded as inferior farmers in the LPG Type III.<sup>13</sup>

A major source of conflict between members in the LPGs was the balance between the manpower supplied by each household and the

amount of land brought in. As long as one member of the household joined the LPG along with the farm, the whole household had the benefit of the half hectare of individual land while other relations were free to tend privately kept livestock or pursue careers outside farming. In the first year after the 'Socialist Spring' it was a regular source of antagonism in some LPGs that the wives and children of farmers who had contributed a large amount of land could nevertheless not be made to take part in helping to cultivate it. Small farmers thus found themselves farming the lands of their wealthier neighbours (who still received a share of the profits according to the land they had contributed) and yet unable to achieve nearly as good an income. In the LPG Type II in Nöda, Kreis Erfurt, complaints were made by former *Kleinbauern* (small-scale farmers) against two *Großbauern* whose wives and children had avoided joining the LPG. The daughters of one of these farmers had found lucrative office jobs instead of farm work and thus appeared, it was argued, to be enriching themselves on the backs of their poorer neighbours.<sup>14</sup>

In particular, that some farmers' wives were able to hold themselves aloof from the women who went to work in the LPG seemed to highlight the failure of collectivisation to change the social inequalities of the village. With regard to the LPG Rudisleben it was reported, for example, that the LPG members were minded not to let their wives work in the fields, as the wives of the former *Großbauer* did no such thing either. Their complaint was given greater force by their wives' objections to the dictatorial manner of the deputising field brigadier who happened also to be the son of one of the ex-*Großbauer*.<sup>15</sup>

Given these tensions, those members of the LPG who were chosen for, or persuaded to take up, leading functions often soon found themselves unable to organise the collective farm efficiently. In the months after the completion of the collectivisation campaign several newly appointed chairmen and brigadiers chose to resign, claiming a lack of confidence in their own abilities to carry out the tasks required of them.<sup>16</sup> Certainly, running an LPG was a considerable burden with very little material reward being offered in return. The work was not made more attractive by the potential for antagonism and social exclusion at the hands of one's colleagues and neighbours, nor by having to face the wrath of the district agricultural functionaries, especially if the LPGs were failing economically or the members were openly failing to adhere to the statute. LPG functionaries understandably found their unaccustomed leadership duties, caught between their responsibilities and obligations to those above and beneath them in the new hierarchy, difficult to bear. For example, a field brigadier resigned from his post in the LPG Type III Windeberg Kreis Mühlhausen reportedly on the grounds

that he regularly had difficulties assigning work to the members who often did not obey his instructions.<sup>17</sup> In May 1960 the aggrieved chairman of an LPG in Kreis Nordhausen sent a letter of resignation to the local mayor on the basis that he could not continue unless he had the confidence of the members.<sup>18</sup> Particularly after the harvest in autumn 1960, the boards of newly formed LPGs in Worbis, Heiligenstadt and Mühlhausen districts lapsed entirely. The main reason given for board members to resign from their positions as functionaries was the desire to 'live peacefully' like the other members.<sup>19</sup>

Ideally, the SED leadership hoped to be able to consolidate the LPGs rapidly, implement the model statutes and achieve the leap forward in agricultural production which had been a strong motivation for the hasty completion of the collectivisation campaign. The actual state of affairs in most new LPGs and many older ones in April 1960 made the realisation of these goals highly unlikely. In the long term, the collectivisation campaign and its aftermath were useful to the SED regime in the extent to which it identified those individuals on whom it could rely and exposed those aspects of its administration of agriculture and rural communities that were ineffective, inefficient or unreliable. The zeal with which some agitators had advanced the cause of collectivisation was a sign that the regime could call upon some loyal and obedient proponents of socialist transformation. Particularly those who lived or worked in rural communities and thus had campaigned and supported the formation of LPGs at the risk of lasting opprobrium from their neighbours and colleagues had demonstrated the existence of a base for support for socialist agricultural policy on which more secure foundations might be built. Those anxious to see that collectivisation worked well were, however, few in number compared to the majority of LPG members, who regarded a future in the collective farm without enthusiasm, if not with varying degrees of resistance and in some cases open opposition.

The means at the SED's disposal for overcoming such negative responses to the LPG (provoked in part by the speed and aggressiveness with which the campaign had been conducted) were greatly limited. Implementing collective practices and suppressing dissent had to be carried out if the collectivisation were to have any positive benefit in the long term. For the time being, however, the apparatus available on the ground for achieving these goals was manifestly insufficient given the size of the task. Moreover, the subversion of collective practices or resistance to their implementation in the first place remained particularly strong in the light of widespread uncertainty over the future of collective farming and indeed the GDR itself.



## The Insufficiency of the SED State's Apparatus in Rural Communities

In the previous chapter detailing the course of the collectivisation process in Bezirk Erfurt, it became clear that the local apparatus of the regime was able to achieve only a limited degree of success in persuading farmers to join or form an LPG. In order for the rapid completion of full collectivisation to be achieved (albeit on paper only), a massive effort had been necessary in which large numbers of agitators from outside farming or the immediate community were deployed. LPGs had thus been formed (or expanded) often without the absolute backing of large sections of the local state administration and the politically organised population in the village. The campaign for full collectivisation had, too, been marked in its last months primarily by the prioritisation of speed rather than thoroughness. The aggressive tactics employed during the collectivisation had succeeded in 'persuading' farmers to sign up to an LPG, but local administrations and the LPGs themselves remained largely lacking in suitable (politically loyal and technically expert) staff and resources to ensure the collective farms functioned in practice. Attempts to consolidate the newly formed collective farms and stabilise agriculture in the aftermath of collectivisation were thus compromised both by the widespread dissent among farmers with regard to the LPGs and by an apparatus of local administration and control ill-equipped either to assuage or control this dissent and ineffective at establishing and sustaining collective farming in accordance with the statutes.

As early as April 1960 a brigade of investigators was organised by the SED *Bezirksleitung* to assess the effectiveness of the local party and state apparatus in Kreis Apolda. Its main task was to 'put the work of the party and leadership by the *SED Kreisleitung* and by the state apparatus in order and mobilise all forces in the inclusion of large sections of the population in the socialist development of the district'. It found much to criticise. The SED *Kreisleitung*, in lacking an overview of the situation in the district, had not only failed to practise its leading role with regard to the state apparatus and the mass organisations but had also been negligent in giving suitable guidance to the SED party organisations in the villages and LPGs. As far as the state apparatus was concerned the brigade also found evidence of serious ideological weakness, particularly among those functionaries belonging to the CDU and LDPD (Liberal Democratic Party) who did not always appear to recognise the leading role of the SED. Leading functionaries in the Rat des Kreises were deemed to have an 'unclear' attitude towards collectivisation. Their 'lazy liberalism', it was suggested, had allowed mayors un-

necessarily to lower the plan targets due from farmers in the Bezirk. Moreover, fifteen out of forty-seven village mayors were considered in need of replacement by cadres better equipped to cope with the sorts of political and technical matters which now faced local functionaries since the completion of collectivisation.<sup>20</sup> Although this state of affairs was recognised, there were limits to what could be done to rectify the situation. In Kreis Apolda, for example, it was ultimately pointed out that fifteen suitable replacements for mayor simply did not exist.<sup>21</sup>

The lack of personnel was a serious problem throughout the agricultural and rural administration. Immediately following the establishment of a fully collectivised village, the SED Bezirksleitung had directed the operative committees for collectivisation to delegate groups of specialists, agronomic experts as well as experienced farmers from the VEGs and long-established LPGs, in order to ensure that 'the organisation of work is taken properly into hand in collective farms'.<sup>22</sup> Following the announcement of full collectivisation, a number of local brigades of specialists were thus deployed in some LPGs. These, however, were clearly not sufficient in number to monitor the progress of all the LPGs all of the time. Investigations at the end of June into the cultivation plans for the upcoming harvest revealed not only rejection of the state directives on the planting of certain crops but also widespread breakdown in collective work. As a consequence, calls were made for the immediate redeployment of large numbers of troubleshooting brigades throughout the Bezirk.<sup>23</sup>

A report on the state of the LPGs compiled by the Rat des Bezirks in July 1960 summarised the situation in Bezirk Erfurt just after collectivisation. Out of the 1,390 LPGs then officially registered in the Bezirk, over 40 per cent were Type I LPGs, which had been formed over the last three months. Somewhat optimistically attributing most of the problems within the collectives to a lack of clarity on political questions – which it asserted simple explanation could resolve – the report suggested that serious difficulties existed in only seventy Type I LPGs, where the transition to collective farming had not been 'entirely completed'.<sup>24</sup> This was, however, something of an understatement – opposition to collective farming was much deeper and much more widespread and the structures in place to control it much weaker than the report gave credit.

In July the SED Bezirksleitung drew up plans for the organisation of brigades to assess developments in the sixty-eight villages of Kreis Nordhausen. It planned for the deployment of two to three people in each village. The Rat des Kreises was required to provide one person for each of these groups while the rest were to come from various departments of the Rat des Bezirks, the MTS, VEGs and the technical colleges

in Erfurt and Eisenach. Among their main tasks was analysis of the constitution and working style of local government and the effectiveness of relations between the LPGs and the district and village state apparatus.<sup>25</sup> In the reports of these groups, there was damning criticism of the way in which the staff in the Rat des Kreises and the village mayors treated the LPGs in the district. The charge of 'liberalism' was directed at state functionaries who had clearly done little to prevent farmers from abandoning collective practices and farming individually.

The closing report on the activities of the investigating brigade in Kreis Nordhausen from the end of September 1960 paints a picture of incompetence or at least inactivity from a surprisingly large number of local functionaries. Most seriously in the villages of Ilfeld and Niedersachswerfen, newly formed LPGs had been left entirely to their own devices. 'Liberalism' was considered to be widespread in the district apparatus, infecting leading SED members in the village as well as infecting the state village councils through to the MTS and the agricultural office of the SED Kreisleitung. The brigade's remedy for the situation in the village of Ilfeld, where it was thought an anti-collectivisation and an anti-regime sentiment was particularly virulent, demonstrated how far it thought the district authorities had allowed things to slip.

The brigade intervened forcefully. It altered the management of the LPG, removing the chairman from his post, and making an example of him in the newspaper as 'an enemy of the people'. The LPG Type I was then merged together with the Type II – with no suggestion here of any consideration given to a ballot of the members, as demanded in theory by the stipulations of 'collective democracy'.

In the district at large 120 instructors were deployed by the Rat des Bezirkes in the villages to put a stop to the inefficiency of MTS functionaries and village mayors, a small number of whom had to be sacked. Given the lack of suitable replacements, however, the majority were upbraided and given instructions to be more assertive.<sup>26</sup> In October 1960 all the state administrations in the districts – but especially in Kreise Apolda, Sömmerda, Heiligenstadt and Sondershausen – were highlighted in a report for having failed to have a direct influence on the new Type I and Type II LPGs. Along with the lack of suitable mayors, in some (MTS) regions in the districts it was noted for example that there was no one available to instruct the LPGs on how to organise their finances. In one MTS area the instructor was left with the impossible task of overseeing the work done in forty-six LPGs.<sup>27</sup>

Although troubleshooting brigades continued to operate in LPGs around the Bezirk, with the departure in early summer of the majority of the agitators for collectivisation, rejection of collective farming reas-

serted itself in villages across the Bezirk. Open discussion of the intention to harvest individually was liable, if reported, to result in some form of investigation. However, there were limits to the ability or desire of local state functionaries to penetrate sufficiently what was taking place in the many small, new LPGs which had just been formed. In the Bezirk as a whole it was estimated that approximately 50 per cent of the newly founded Type I or Type II LPGs had failed to adhere to the model LPG statute during the harvest.<sup>28</sup> It is likely, however, that the actual proportion was somewhat higher. Unless subjected to repeated close investigation, it could not necessarily be established whether farmers nominally in an LPG were continuing to farm independently of one another or not. Documentary evidence of the collective administration of the LPG – such as the fulfilment of plan requirements, division of profits according to work units and proportions of land – could be supplied to the relevant officials at local and district level without necessarily changing anything in practice. One LPG in Kreis Arnstadt managed to work in this way successfully for two years before being discovered.<sup>29</sup>

In some parts of the Bezirk, failure to adhere to the model statutes was the rule rather than the exception – illustrating clearly the impotence of the local outposts of regime authority. In 1960 almost all farmers in Type I LPGs in the districts of Heiligenstadt and Worbis, were reported to have harvested individually.<sup>30</sup> It was clear that above all in these strictly Catholic rural areas, local village functionaries, including members of both the SED and CDU, were not able themselves to enforce the implementation of regime policy alone. Certainly in Kreis Heiligenstadt in early 1961, it was noted that even SED members still acted too much under the influence of priests and members of the church boards and were unwilling to destroy their relationships with family and friends by openly advocating the party line.<sup>31</sup>

Despite the shortage of ideologically and technically suitable local functionaries willing or able to enforce adherence to the statutes, the attempt was made to ensure that the size of the harvest would not be damaged and that LPG functionaries would be held to account for any severe drop in yields. Party members from rural SED organisations along with tractor drivers from the MTS were given the task of attending board meetings and members' assemblies of the LPGs throughout the harvest period. Wherever they reported an element of conflict or uncertainty about how (or rather according to whose rules) the harvest was to be brought in, representatives of the local party, the state apparatus, as well as leading figures from the MTS and factories which had been given responsibility for the political and material wellbeing of certain LPGs, were to intervene. They were to provide sufficient labour (bands of so-

called 'harvest helpers') and agree a definite plan to ensure crops were harvested as quickly as possible regardless of LPG members' attitudes.<sup>32</sup>

Throughout the harvest season, operative committees based in the MTS as well as in the district administration oversaw the deployment of groups of several hundred auxiliary harvest workers and pressed mayors and LPG chairmen for progress reports. The impact of these operative committees varied from district to district, depending on the competence of the local and district functionaries themselves and on the reception their measures received from LPG members on the ground. These in turn were contingent to some extent upon the proximity of centres of SED authority and in part on the suitability of collective farming for local conditions. The agricultural authorities in Kreis Erfurt-Land in particular were praised by the Bezirk for having succeeded in organising on-site troubleshooting brigades in almost every village as early as the beginning of August 1960. Kreis Bad Langensalza was also reported to have been successful at organising the harvest through the operative committees. Further away from the Bezirk's arable heartland and the Bezirk's capital, however, the picture worsened. In Kreis Gotha it was noted that MTS functionaries were not forceful enough in persuading LPG members to adhere to deadlines and in Kreis Mühlhausen the harvest had only been brought in 'on time' thanks to the deployment of Soviet and East German Army (*Nationale Volksarmee* or NVA) troops as farm labourers.<sup>33</sup>

The stability of the supply of food was (particularly since the uprising of June 1953) felt at all levels of the SED to be tied directly to the stability of the GDR as a whole. This fact was precisely the reason for strict police control and for deep suspicion of, and potentially severe punishments for, serious drops in production levels. However, it was also the basis for a more limited repressive response to resistance to collective farming practices, where this did not immediately undermine production. The manner in which the campaign for full collectivisation had occurred undoubtedly cowed many of those who had opposed it – farmers and functionaries alike. But farmers were not in an entirely powerless position. Not only was their active participation in collective practices necessary to the survival of the LPGs in the long term; in the short term farmers, along with the rest of the population, were in a position to vote with their feet and abandon the GDR.

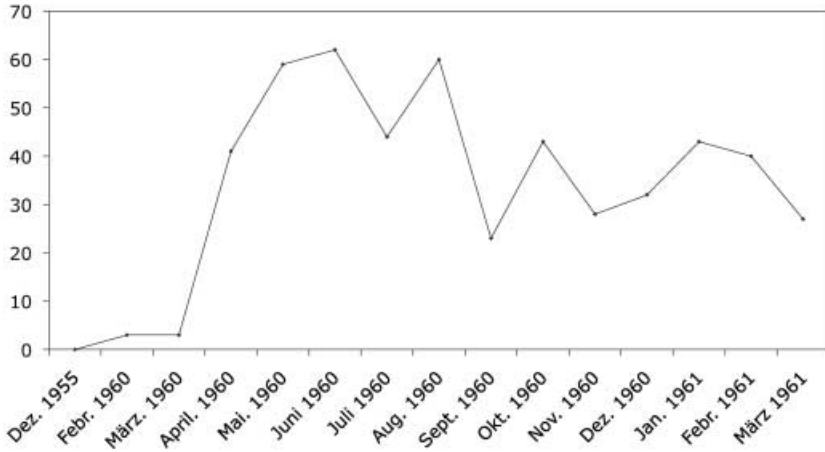
## Flight to the West

Up to the construction of the Berlin Wall, fleeing to the West, while still considered risky, was nonetheless an option chosen by a large number

of farmers who felt that they had little to lose in abandoning the farm once collectivisation seemed inevitable. In addition, large numbers of young people saw no future in agriculture and hoped for better working conditions in the West.<sup>34</sup> Month after month following collectivisation, LPG members constituted a significant proportion of those fleeing the GDR. In April and May 1960 seventy-eight LPG members, twenty-seven employees of the MTS and the VdgB along with fifty-nine women and eighty-three children were recorded to have fled the Bezirk. In July and August 1960 a further 104 farmers are recorded as having fled the republic from Bezirk Erfurt.<sup>35</sup>

In the border areas of the Bezirk, especially in the northern Catholic Eichsfeld, whole villages that had close links with the population just across the border absented themselves.<sup>36</sup> In one village in Kreis Apolda, three farmers fled with their families during the collectivisation campaign after having been denied the chance to set up an LPG on their own, separate to the one already established.<sup>37</sup> As statistics on the numbers of people working in agriculture in Bezirk Erfurt who successfully fled to the West show, the culmination of the collectivisation process resulted in a sustained increase in flights during the summer months – despite some small decline during the high point of the harvest season, when it might be assumed fewer dared to go unaccounted for. As in the rest of the GDR, numbers of people abandoning agriculture in the Bezirk to flee to the West did decline slightly during the autumn and winter of 1960. However, throughout the first half of 1961 the number of flights by LPG members in Bezirk Erfurt each month remained high. See Figure 2.1.

In the opinion of the SED Central Committee's Agriculture Department the reason for the rapid increase in flights was the basic neglect of the politics of the village by the district authorities following the conclusion of the collectivisation campaign. Even the Kreisleitungen of the SED were considered to be wholly incompetent on the question of illegal flights to the West. Sporadic attempts to investigate and analyse cases were made, but, the ZK department claimed, no systematic approach had been developed to deal with this growing problem. The situation was necessarily compounded by the relative inactivity of village functionaries. Notably mayors and local SED party secretaries failed to act on their own initiative, keeping track of and responding to cases of illegal flight to the West.<sup>38</sup> Only, it seems, in cases where leading LPG functionaries had fled were major investigations launched. The flight of accountants from LPGs in Kreis Gotha and Kreis Erfurt-Land and of an LPG chairman in Kreis Sondershausen in January 1961 were taken very seriously on the grounds that they represented supposedly deliberate



**Figure 2.1** Illegal flights from the GDR by LPG members in *Bezirk Erfurt*, February 1960 to March 1961.

Source: SAPMO B-Arch DY30/J IV 2/3 J/190 ZK der SED – Sekretariat, Information der Abteilung Landwirtschaft beim ZK, Einschätzung der Republikflucht auf dem Gebiet der Landwirtschaft. April? 1961.

ploy to demoralise and arouse further discord amongst the remaining members of LPGs.<sup>39</sup>

The effect on agriculture of this steady exodus was certainly severe in some localities, with the task of managing abandoned farms falling to the often undermanned and underfunded LPGs. The parlous state of the buildings and land left behind, and the insufficiency of machinery and labour to farm such abandoned fields and look after livestock meant they were more of a burden than a boon to the LPGs. The threat to leave for the West and the potential to do so as long as security measures along the border were still relatively lax no doubt influenced how the collectives were seen by the LPG members and how they were treated by the hierarchy of state and party functionaries. On the one hand, while it was still possible to get out of the GDR, farmers did not necessarily think of abandoning their property for as long as they could still hope that changes would occur in international politics to reverse the situation. On the other hand, so long as the flow of farmers to the West could not be dammed by careful surveillance alone, it appears limits were set to the level of repressive action which could be taken against recalcitrant LPG members.

The *Bezirk* police authority (*Bezirksbehörde der Deutschen Volkspolizei* or BDVP) worked according to the supposition that there was massive 'hostile activity' in the LPGs in the aftermath of collectivisation; it was

just a question of whether their officers were competent enough to recognise it. The range of potentially serious crimes for which individuals could be charged was sufficiently broad to intimidate most dissenting farmers into avoiding any virulent or public demonstrations of opposition. However, despite the guidelines, there was at times a clear gulf between the desired attitude of local police and what they were willing to do or capable of in practice. The local police constable (*Abschnittsbevollmächtigte* or ABV) had considerable responsibilities for overseeing the consolidation of the LPGs, in exposing and reporting any actions by LPG members which could be construed as detrimental to the collective farm or indeed the state. Policemen at district and village level, however, had to be repeatedly criticised for failing to take 'class conflict' into account when investigating the situation in agriculture and rural communities.

The chief of the department for criminal matters in the district police office (*Volkspolizeikreisamt* or VPKA) for Kreis Arnstadt in November 1960 was criticised for attributing findings of livestock mortality, bad practice by state functionaries and problems in the LPGs to 'organisational' and 'objective' causes. The investigating brigade from the Bezirk police authorities (BDVP) pointed out that in so doing he had entirely neglected the question of class conflict. The brigade also reported that other officers in the department appeared too to have misunderstood the meaning of class conflict.

With a certain degree of logic, policemen argued that the completion of the collectivisation campaign had put an end to the existence of hostile classes in countryside. From this point of view, there was no longer a need to pursue class conflict as such in the countryside.<sup>40</sup> A report by instructors on the work of the VPKA Eisenach in September 1960 commented, with what seems like sarcastic understatement, on the spectacular failures of police operations in the countryside:

Although in many villages in *Kreis* Eisenach collective work has not been implemented and the people themselves suggest that farmers are being influenced ideologically by western television and western radio; although livestock mortality is continuing to increase and the number of illegal flights from the Republic by people of interest to us has increased, there has so far been no success at uncovering hostile activity.<sup>41</sup>

A set of guidelines issued in April 1960 by the Interior Ministry to local police constables indicated which crimes they should expect and prepare to prevent in the newly fully collectivised villages and LPGs. Above all, production levels were to be maintained through careful vigilance against any form of sabotage, while young people were to be prevented from succumbing to hostile influences (presumably in a



bid to prevent their flight to the West).<sup>42</sup> Combating livestock mortality in particular was to be seen in the context of a class struggle in which almost any premature death could be construed as a deliberate act masquerading as neglect or incompetence from a member of an LPG.

Despite the suspicion with which instances of damage to crops and livestock were treated, it is debatable how much was deliberate sabotage. Potentially opponents of collectivisation might have wished to demonstrate the non-viability of an LPG by aggravating any negative consequences for agricultural production levels that had arisen. Potentially, too, farmers planning to flee the country might have had an interest in destroying their property before it was 'taken over by the state'. However, in the majority of cases which received serious investigation in Bezirk Erfurt, supposed acts of wanton destruction of crops or livestock could not be proven to have been the result of hostile intentions.<sup>43</sup>

Arguably the intention behind the scrutiny of instances of severe production losses was as much concerned with providing LPG members with an additional incentive – based on fear of arrest – to maintain production levels. Nonetheless acts of petty sabotage did occur in the LPGs, alongside less subtle demonstrations of hostility towards the LPG and the SED dictatorship in general, including threats and acts of violence against those who had supported collectivisation. In an extreme case, in a village in Kreis Eisenach in September 1960, it was reported that a loudspeaker car containing agitators was set upon by twenty-five to thirty people, one of whom threatened to set it on fire.<sup>44</sup>

While such acts were no doubt borne of frustration and despair, less extreme demonstrations of public opposition were arguably prompted too by some expectation that something might really be gained by them. Given the sense of uncertainty about the future status of Germany or doubts as to the permanence of collective farming, actions that undermined the LPG or demonstrated farmers' dissatisfaction were not necessarily considered to be vain gestures. In May 1960 a village mayor was reportedly asked whether 'he wasn't afraid if things were to change since what he has done to the farmers in recent weeks can't be made good and he is now hated by everyone'.<sup>45</sup> At an assembly in the LPG Type III Wasserthaleben in Kreis Sondershausen in May 1960 calls were made for the introduction of free elections, arguing that at least then farmers would not have to be in the LPG.<sup>46</sup> Similarly, in an assembly of the LPG 'Fortschritt' ('Progress') in May 1960 in Kindelbrück, two farmers were cheered when they announced to representatives of the Rat des Kreises Sömmerda that they had been forced into the LPG.<sup>47</sup>

The first year after the end of the collectivisation campaign thus saw a tangle of recrimination, repression and conciliation, as farmers, LPG

functionaries and local, district and regional representatives of the regime attempted to assert or protect their often all-too-divergent interests. While there was enough uncertainty with regard to the permanence of the collective farm and indeed the GDR itself, those who sought to limit the impact of the proclaimed collectivisation on the conditions in which they lived and worked were well provided with motivation and opportunity to do so.

## **The Strength of Popular Dissent**

It was clear that the apparatus of agricultural administration from the (often reluctant) LPG functionaries and the (liberal) local and district state authorities right up to the SED leadership in Berlin was neither consistently able nor always willing in the first year after full collectivisation to take repressive action to control widespread disregard for collective farming. At the same time throughout 1960 rumours spread regularly throughout the countryside in Bezirk Erfurt that collectivisation might soon be abandoned, that the Americans might return to Thuringia or, more vaguely, that 'things will be different soon'.<sup>48</sup> In Gierstädt, Kreis Erfurt-Land, some farmers reportedly even raised the spectre of the 17 June 1953 uprising, stating that on this date in 1960 something would happen which would help farmers get their land back.<sup>49</sup> Against this background of uncertainty and instability, the potential benefits of resisting collectivisation, whether by openly rejecting it or more carefully subverting it, outweighed the potential repercussions.

In the initial weeks and months after the completion of the collectivisation campaign, a wave of withdrawals from the LPGs came from those farmers who had recently been pressured into joining.<sup>50</sup> The right to withdraw from the collective had been initially allowed for in the statutes of all types of LPGs. In theory any departure had to be voted on by the membership and entailed the return of only an equivalent-sized piece of land on the edge of the LPG. Nevertheless LPG members made use of this right to withdraw, reclaiming their own land in spite of the statute. The lack of an explicit law making refusal to participate in an LPG illegal had added to the grievances of private farmers required to sign declarations of 'voluntary' entry. In this context withdrawal was an equally 'voluntary' refusal to participate in the LPG any longer.

The reports detailing the flow of withdrawals indicate that in the vast majority of cases, sufficient pressure and persuasion could be brought to bear to induce membership to be taken up again. However, conflicts were not always quickly resolved. During the first year after the comple-

tion of the collectivisation campaign new instances of withdrawal from the LPG were registered periodically in different parts of the Bezirk, amounting to as many as 640 in 1960 – of which only 200 had been persuaded to take up membership again by the following year.<sup>51</sup> Two reports – one from the beginning and one from the end of July 1961 – demonstrate the ongoing struggle faced by district functionaries. At the start of the month fifty-seven withdrawals were recorded from LPGs in the Bezirk, in addition to forty-seven withdrawals from gardening collectives in the area of Erfurt-Stadt alone. At the end of the month 199 withdrawals are recorded, with outbreaks in districts which had previously registered none. In only ninety-four cases had members been successfully persuaded to return to the LPG by the end of the month.<sup>52</sup> Rumours that in the autumn of 1961 the LPGs would be dissolved were clearly motivation enough for farmers to take the initiative to withdraw again in early 1961 and, in the Type I LPGs, to terminate contracts on the use of privately owned machinery.<sup>53</sup> In Kreis Worbis in at least nine villages, LPGs appeared to be on the verge of disbanding in July 1961.<sup>54</sup>

A less confrontational means of protest against and subversion of collectivisation was to limit the extent of one's active participation. Given that the LPGs relied upon the manpower of formerly independent farmers as well as use of their land, tools, machinery and livestock, it was possible to undermine their economic stability very effectively by contributing as little as was possible – within the bounds of the law. Farmers would not allow their barns to be used by the LPG, and were slow to make their machinery available, amid suggestions that they might need them themselves soon.<sup>55</sup> In the LPG 'Aufbau' ('Construction') in Torba, Kreis Sondershausen, whose chairman had noted that 70 per cent of the members opposed the collectivisation, the police reported: 'a poor work ethic currently predominates here – this is to be seen in the fact that some members have been sick for a fortnight already and no sick notes have been handed in'.<sup>56</sup> It was also common to refuse to work overtime or on weekends.<sup>57</sup>

Particularly prevalent in police reports too is the deliberate neglect of collective land, while conversely great lengths were taken to look after household plots and livestock. Owing to circumstances in Poland where some collective farms had been allowed to dissolve because they had proved too much of an economic burden for the state, in spring 1961 rumours spread that the same measures might be taken in the GDR if the situation became bad enough. On the basis of this some farmers devoted more effort to strengthening their household farms while allowing the LPG's land to go untended.<sup>58</sup> During the 1961 spring cultivation period in Kreis Sondershausen, farmers were found to have

abandoned planting on collective land in a number of LPGs owing to the poor weather. They had instead either gone straight to the local pub or off to tend their private land.<sup>59</sup>

In other LPGs, members simply stayed away from work or worked half-heartedly, expectant of change in the not-too-distant future. Shortly before the building of the Berlin Wall in the summer of 1961 rumours were rife in parts of the Bezirk that something momentous was about to change the entire political situation in Germany. In Tiefthal, Kreis Erfurt-Land, the CDU mayor reacted to plans to build a communal laundry with the words: 'What's the point of that when everyone is going to get all his stuff back anyway?' In the village of Witterda in Kreis Erfurt-Land a large number of LPG members had stopped going to work at the end of July 1961, responding to the rumoured instruction: 'Work slow, it will be different soon.'<sup>60</sup>

More directly in contravention of the statutes, no action was taken to reorganise or amalgamate fields or transfer livestock into collective sheds. In the upland districts of the Bezirk in particular, farmers resisted moves to amalgamate fields – a state of affairs which local state functionaries reportedly did little about.<sup>61</sup> LPG members failed to divert a proportion of the profits into a common fund – a fundamental requirement for the LPG's future investment in the tools of industrial production as foreseen by socialist agricultural policy. In other areas, adherence to the statute was not enforced within the LPG, compromises being reached in members' assemblies over aspects of pay and work organisation and the allocation of land for members' gardens and private plots. In the LPG Type I in Wechmar, Kreis Gotha the members decided to share profits simply according to the amount of land contributed to the LPG, with each member receiving the same wage. This was done on the basis that each member would work 'normally' and that there was no need therefore to differentiate.<sup>62</sup>

Without the participation of the LPG members in record keeping, the value of the LPG as a means of forcing improved labour productivity and of integrating agricultural production more efficiently into the planned economy was considerably reduced. In several LPGs there were simply no records kept of the numbers of livestock kept in the LPG, or indeed the numbers which had died or been slaughtered.<sup>63</sup> Members of Type I LPGs, too, reportedly sought to prevent outside interference in the way they distributed profits by failing to keep records of the work done by members or of the amount of produce they had received as payment in kind. Thus it was difficult to work out a system of performance-related pay or assess exactly what had already been paid out to the members and thus what should be accumulated as capital by the collective. Equally, without effective records of production levels

and turnover, it was difficult for the members to commit to raising their plan targets for the coming year.<sup>64</sup>

The strength of dissent was considerable, and remained so while neither collectivisation nor the GDR's future seemed certain. Nevertheless, as an institution the LPG could not be discounted. Farmers were confronted constantly by the existence of the LPG as the administrative body within which they were organised – indeed through which they were now defined as citizens – even in those parts of the country where the collective farm existed in name only. The longer LPGs survived, so the gradual (and often inconsistent and uncomprehensive) application of administrative pressure made them an unavoidable part of the reality of farming in the GDR.

### **The Seeds of Consolidation in the LPG**

During September 1960, the SED Bezirksleitung sent further brigades into the Type I LPGs within the Bezirk. The tasks set them were considerable: 'implementation of the statute and the establishment of internal work ordinances; the introduction of socialist principles of work and performance; realisation of collective democracy; the formation of commissions to establish work norms and performance related pay; creation of the preconditions necessary for collective livestock holdings; and guidance in the creation of a production and finance plan for 1961.'<sup>65</sup> Given the small amount of time (three weeks) and the enormity of the tasks facing these brigades, it is not surprising that there continued in 1961 to be many Type I LPGs in which aspects of collective farming failed to be adopted.

Nevertheless the passing of the harvest and the relative quiet of the winter months in agricultural terms provided opportunities for farmers and LPG functionaries to take stock of the situation. The desire to rebel against collectivisation certainly continued to exist; however, the LPG as an institution, though hugely flawed, continued to survive too and in so doing grew slowly in stature and permanence. Farmers were certainly still fleeing to the West, but the majority who remained increasingly had to reconcile themselves to the fact they only had a status within the LPG. In order to sell their produce, earn an income and improve the conditions in which they lived and worked, there was no alternative other than participating in the structures of the collective farm.

The beginning of the new year saw the holding of the main yearly assemblies in the LPGs. These assemblies – being held for the first time in approximately half of the Bezirk's LPGs – were a crucial test of how far attitudes of LPG members, particularly new ones, had changed over

the year. That LPG members were willing to attend the assembly and at least listen to discussions was some sign that the LPGs were recognised as the institution through which action might be taken and their interests articulated. Reports on the discussions held during the assemblies of the LPGs of Types I and II, especially those of the new LPGs, referred to the concentration of the discussions on resolving local problems affecting the community, and avoidance of any ideological or political commentary on the merits of collective farming. In an LPG in Bad Tennstedt Kreis Bad Langensalza in March 1961, farmers walked out of the members' assembly during the political speeches of leading Bezirk functionaries who had attended as guests, reportedly commenting: 'When that fellow in there has finished babbling, we'll go back in to the assembly.'<sup>66</sup>

Nevertheless, advocates of collective farming – whether LPG functionaries or local representatives of party and state – were also clearly winning (or enforcing) some acceptance of, if not support for, the statutes of the LPGs. There were reports of discussions in LPG Type I on whether to change the ratio of income from 60:40 to 70:30 in favour of work units over land contribution for the coming year. The question of whether meadows and grazing land would be better tended collectively was also raised. Furthermore it was reported that almost all LPGs of Types I and II in Bezirk Erfurt had diverted 15 per cent of the farm's profits into an investment fund.<sup>67</sup> Perhaps still more significantly, LPG members in a proportion of Type I LPGs were reported to be backing the restriction of the number of animals and land granted to the wealthier farmers. In other words, LPG members themselves were acting to redistribute the sources of income in their collective more evenly. This suggests if not ideological acceptance of the LPG then at least some practical acceptance of its existence and a willingness to use its structures in their own interests. With the new year came further impetus for the consolidation of LPGs – at least administratively speaking: reluctant members could no longer reasonably claim the right to harvest individually and it was increasingly difficult for LPG members to separate their interests from those of the LPG as an institution. The allocation of unjust plan targets to the LPG by the Rat des Kreises in early 1961 was now a matter of concern for *all*, even reluctant, members of the collective farms.<sup>68</sup>

## Conclusion

In the first year after full collectivisation major initial steps were taken in the reorganisation of agricultural production. The LPG had been intro-

duced and no longer remained a distant possibility but rather increasingly appeared to be a permanent feature of agriculture in the GDR as long as the current regime remained. Despite the numerous setbacks and failures of the first year after full collectivisation, with farmers resistant and functionaries incapable or unwilling to implement collective practices, limited success had been achieved in consolidating the LPG as a lasting, potentially stable institution.<sup>69</sup> It was clear, however, that whatever successes had been achieved in reconciling farmers to the LPG, the future development of agriculture in the GDR was by no means certain.

## Notes

1. ThHStAW BDVP 20/044 Politabteilung, VPKA Eisenach Einschätzung der Feindtätigkeit im Kreis Eisenach, 9.9.1960.
2. ThHStAW BDVP 20/065 BDVP Stab/Operativstab, Information 17/60 Argumente und Gerüchte, 23.3.1960: 'Eintritt in die LPG bedeutet Enteignung und Aufgabe des freien Bauern, man wird kommandiert.'
3. Gesetz über die Landwirtschaftlichen Produktionsgenossenschaften, Gesetzblatt der DDR I/36, 3.6.1959; Musterstatut für Landwirtschaftliche Produktionsgenossenschaften Typ I & Typ III, *Gesetzblatt der DDR I/26*, 9.4.1959.
4. Officially the quota was as follows: up to 2 cows with calves, 2 sows with offspring, 5 sheep with 5 lambs and an unlimited amount of goats, poultry, rabbits and other small animals, as well as 10 beehives.
5. This was measured in work units (Arbeitseinheiten or AE), calculated according to norms which reflected the expertise, time and effort required to do various jobs around the farm.
6. See for example the anonymous threat by farmers to Werner Felde, the Politburo member responsible for agriculture in 1982: 'for approximately thirty years we have been waiting for the payment of the additional inventory contribution brought into the LPG. So now you as a powerful man get moving on this. This is what the farmers of not just the northern Bezirke expect.' SAPMO BArch DY 30/294 Büro Werner Felde, Anonyme Eingabe an Herrn Felde: 'Wie man uns sagte ...' 14.5.1982.
7. ThHStAW Bezirksparteiarchiv der SED Erfurt, Bezirksleitung der SED Erfurt BIV/2/4-103 BPKK, Aktennotiz – Betr: Lage im Kr. Sömmerda, Bezug: Mitteilung der staatlichen Kontrolle über Feindtätigkeit im Kr. Sömmerda, 6.10.1960: 'Es herrscht das Argument vor: "Das fremde Zieg (Zeug) muss raus!'"
8. ThHStAW BDVP 20.1/352 BDVP Operativstab, Information 53/61, 8.6.1961, p. 30.
9. ThHStAW RdB Erfurt L562 Rat des Bezirkes Erfurt, Abt. Landwirtschaft, Unterabteilung LPG, Einschätzung der politischen und ökonomischen Entwicklung der LPG des Bezirkes Erfurt, 5.10.1962.

10. ThHStAW Bezirksparteiarchiv der SED Erfurt, Bezirksleitung der SED Erfurt BIV/2/4-58 SED Kreisleitung Sömmerda an die BPKK, Erfurt, Feindarbeit im I. Quartal 1961, 17.4.1961, p. 169.
11. BStU Aussenstelle Erfurt, Kreisdienststelle Weimar 379, Abschrift Analyse Gemeinde Daasdorf am Berg, 11.10.1961, p. 70.
12. ThHStAW BDVP 20/065 BDVP Stab/Operativstab, Information 25/60, Auswertung der Vorkommnisse in der Landwirtschaft zur Beurteilung der Lage, 20.5.1960.
13. ThHStAW RdB Erfurt L590 Rat des Bezirkes Erfurt, Abt. Landwirtschaft, Einschätzung der Entwicklung der LPG des Typ I im Bezirk Erfurt, 6.7.1960.
14. ThHStAW BDVP 20/247 VPKA Erfurt Operativstab, Berichterstattung an die BDVP über die polizeiliche Lage bei der soz. Umgestaltung der Landwirtschaft, 18.7.1960.
15. ThHStAW BDVP 20/065 BDVP Stab/Operativstab, Information über Vorkommnisse in der Landwirtschaft 19/60, 4.5.1960.
16. ThHStAW BDVP 20/065 BDVP Stab/Operativstab, Information 36/60, Einschätzung der Lage in der Landwirtschaft, 20.7.1960; Information über vorkommnisse in der Landwirtschaft 19/60, 4.5.1960.
17. ThHStAW BDVP 20.1/352 BDVP Operativstab, Information 62/61 Landwirtschaft, 5.8.1961, p. 43.
18. ThHStAW BDVP 20/065 BDVP Stab/Operativstab, Auswertung der Vorkommnisse in der Landwirtschaft 20/60.
19. ThHStAW RdB Erfurt L562 Rat des Bezirkes Erfurt, Abt. Landwirtschaft Unterabteilung LPG, Einschätzung der politischen und ökonomischen Entwicklung der LPG des Bezirkes Erfurt, 5.10.1962.
20. ThHStAW Bezirksparteiarchiv der SED Erfurt, Bezirksleitung der SED Erfurt IV/2/3-328 Sekretariat der Bezirksleitung, Vorlage, An das Büro der Bezirksleitung: Bericht über den Einsatz der Brigade der Bezirksleitung im Kreis Apolda, 2.5.1960, pp. 6–16.
21. ThHStAW Bezirksparteiarchiv der SED Erfurt, Bezirksleitung der SED Erfurt IV/2/3-328 Sekretariat der Bezirksleitung, Beschluss Protokoll, Beitrag Genosse Asmus, pp. 17–19.
22. ThHStAW Bezirksparteiarchiv der SED Erfurt, Bezirksleitung der SED Erfurt IV/2/2-322 Sekretariat der Bezirksleitung, Beschluss-Protokoll Nr. 10/60 der Sekretariatssitzung, Fernschreiben von der SED Bezirksleitung an alle 1. Kreissekretäre, 21.3.1960, p. 140.
23. ThHStAW Bezirksparteiarchiv der SED Erfurt, Bezirksleitung der SED Erfurt IV/2/3-338 Sekretariat der Bezirksleitung, RdB Erfurt Abt. Land, Erf u. Forst: Bericht über die Durchführung des Maisanbaukontrolle vom 25–30.6.60 im Bezirk Erfurt, 13.7.1960, pp. 115–17.
24. ThHStAW RdB Erfurt L590 Rat des Bezirkes Erfurt, Abt. Landwirtschaft Einschätzung der Entwicklung der LPG des Typ I im Bezirk Erfurt, 6.7.1960.
25. ThHStAW Bezirksparteiarchiv der SED Erfurt, Bezirksleitung der SED Erfurt IV/2/3-335 Sekretariat der Bezirksleitung Konzeption für den Einsatz der Brigade zur Verbesserung der staatlichen Leitungstätigkeit auf dem Gebiete der Landwirtschaft, 4.7.1960, pp. 57–58.



26. ThHStAW Bezirksparteiarchiv der SED Erfurt, Bezirksleitung der SED Erfurt IV/2/3-338 Sekretariat der Bezirksleitung, Protokollauszug – Sekretariats-sitzung – Brigade in Nordhausen, 18.7.1960, p. 22; Bezirksparteiarchiv der SED Erfurt, Bezirksleitung der SED Erfurt IV/2/3-348 Sekretariat der Bezirksleitung, Brigade Nordhausen der Bezirksleitung Abschlussbericht über den Brigadeeinsatz im Kreis Nordhausen, 28.9.1960, pp. 77–87.
27. ThHStAW RdB Erfurt L562 Rat des Bezirkes Erfurt, Abt. Landwirtschaft, Unterabteilung LPG, Einschätzung der politischen und ökonomischen Entwicklung der LPG des Bezirkes Erfurt, 5.10.1962.
28. ThHStAW RdB Erfurt L562 Rat des Bezirkes Erfurt, Abt. Landwirtschaft Unterabteilung LPG, Einschätzung der politischen und ökonomischen Entwicklung der LPG des Bezirkes Erfurt, 5.10.1960.
29. ThHStAW RdB Erfurt L590 Rat des Bezirkes Erfurt, Abt. Landwirtschaft, Einschätzung der Entwicklung der LPG des Typ I im Bezirk Erfurt, 6.7.1960.
30. ThHStAW RdB Erfurt L562 Rat des Bezirkes Erfurt, Abt. Landwirtschaft Unterabteilung LPG, Einschätzung der politischen und ökonomischen Entwicklung der LPG des Bezirkes Erfurt, 5.10.1962.
31. ThHStAW Bezirksparteiarchiv der SED Erfurt, Bezirksleitung der SED Erfurt BIV/2/4-59 SED Kreisleitung Heiligenstadt an die BPKK, Einschätzung über die Feindarbeit im Kreis im 2. Quartal 1961, 30.6.1961, p. 455.
32. ThHStAW Bezirksparteiarchiv der SED Erfurt, Bezirksleitung der SED Erfurt IV/2/3-335 SED Bezirksleitung Abt. Landwirtschaft an das Sekretariat, Informatorischer Bericht über den Tag der Erntebereitschaft, 4.7.1960, p. 5.
33. ThHStAW Bezirksparteiarchiv der SED Erfurt, Bezirksleitung der SED Erfurt IV/2/3-345 SED Bezirksleitung Abt. Org/Kader, Einschätzung der Bürositzungen vom 2.9.1960 und Ablauf der Halmfruchternte, 13.9.1960, p. 86.
34. ThHStAW Bezirksparteiarchiv der SED Erfurt, Bezirksleitung der SED Erfurt BIV/2/4-58 SED Kreisleitung Sondershausen an die BPKK, Erfurt, Bericht 15.4.1961, p. 160.
35. ThHStAW BDVP 20/065 BDVP Stab/Operativstab, Information über Vorkommnisse in der Landwirtschaft 28/60, 21.6.1960; ThHStAW Bezirksparteiarchiv der SED Erfurt, Bezirksleitung der SED Erfurt IV/2/3-345 Sekretariat der Bezirksleitung, Abt. f. Sicherheitsfragen: Bericht über die Republikflüchte, Rückkehrer, Erstzuziehenden und die legalen Verzüge im Monat August 1960 in Gegenüberstellung zum Vormonat, 13.9.1960, p. 133.
36. BArch DP 1, Nr. 1134 Ministerium des Innern an den Minister der Justiz, Information zur Lage bei der soz. Umgestaltung der Landwirtschaft in Auswertung des Massnahmeplans zum VIII Plenums des ZK der SED für die Zeit vom 19.6. bis zum 11.6.1960, p. 10.
37. ThHStAW BDVP 20.1/361 VPKA Apolda, Abt. S. Analyse über die Klassenkampf-situation der Gemeinde Stobra, ?4.1961, p. 161.
38. SAPMO BArch DY30/J IV 2/3 J/190 ZK der SED – Sekretariat, Information der Abteilung Landwirtschaft beim ZK, Einschätzung der Republikflucht auf dem Gebiet der Landwirtschaft, April? 1961.

39. ThHStAW RdB Erfurt L591 Rat des Bezirkes Erfurt, Abt. Landwirtschaft Bericht an die Bezirksleitung der SED, Sekretariat, Stand der Jahresabrechnungen, Rechenschaftslegungen und Neuwahlen in den LPG Stichtag, 1.2.61, 3.2.1961.
40. ThHStAW BDVP 20/044 BDVP Politabteilung, Bericht über den Brigadeeinsatz im VPKA Arnstadt in der Zeit vom 8.11.–12.11.1960, 26.11.1960.
41. ThHStAW BDVP 20/044 BDVP Politabteilung, Bericht über den Instrukteureinsatz im VPKA Eisenach vom 14.9.–23.9.1960, 30.9.1960.
42. ThHStAW BDVP 20/081 BDVP Stab/Operativstab Arbeitshinweise zu den Aufgaben der Volkspolizei in den vollgenossenschaftlichen Dörfern auf der Grundlage der Direktive des Ministers des Innern Nr. 4/60, 19.4.1960.
43. ThHStAW BDVP 20/065 BDVP Stab/Operativstab, Information 39/60, 26.7.1960.
44. ThHStAW BDVP 20/044 Politabteilung, VPKA Eisenach, Einschätzung der Feindtätigkeit im Kreis Eisenach, 9.9.1960.
45. ThHStAW BDVP 20/065 BDVP Stab/Operativstab, Information über Vorkommnisse in der Landwirtschaft 19/60, 4.5.1960.
46. ThHStAW BDVP 20/044 Politabteilung, VPKA Eisenach, Einschätzung der Feindtätigkeit im Kreis Eisenach, 9.9.1960.
47. ThHStAW BDVP 20/065 BDVP Stab/Operativstab, Information über Vorkommnisse in der Landwirtschaft 24/60, 20.5.1960.
48. ThHStAW BDVP 20/065 BDVP Stab/Operativstab, Information 36/60, Einschätzung der Lage in der Landwirtschaft, 20.7.1960.
49. ThHStAW BDVP 20/065 BDVP Stab/Operativstab, Information 32/60, 6.7.1960.
50. ThHStAW BDVP 20/065 BDVP Stab/Operativstab, Information 41/60, Vorkommnisse in der Landwirtschaft, 26.7.1960.
51. ThHStAW RdB Erfurt L591 Rat des Bezirkes Erfurt, Abt. Landwirtschaft, Bericht an die Bezirksleitung der SED Sekretariat, Stand der Jahresabrechnungen, Rechenschaftslegungen und Neuwahlen in den LPG Stichtag, 1.2.61, 3.2.1961.
52. ThHStAW RdB Erfurt L591 Rat des Bezirkes Erfurt, Abt. Landwirtschaft, Unterabteilung LPG, Informatorischer Bericht über Austritte aus den LPG und GPG, 5.7.1961; Abt. Landwirtschaft, Erfassung und Forstwirtschaft, Unterabteilung LPG, Einschätzung der Austrittserklärungen aus den LPG und GPG im Bezirk Erfurt, 31.7.1961.
53. ThHStAW BDVP 20.1/352 BDVP Operativstab, Information 51/61 Austrittserklärungen und Funktionsniederlegungen, 25.7.1961, p. 27.
54. ThHStAW BDVP 20.1/352 BDVP Operativstab, Information 58/61 Landwirtschaft, 28.07.1961, p. 38.
55. ThHStAW BDVP 20/065 BDVP Stab/Operativstab, Information 44/60 Vorkommnisse in der Landwirtschaft, 8.8.1960.
56. ThHStAW BDVP 20/065 BDVP Stab/Operativstab, Information 68/60 Vorkommnisse in der Landwirtschaft, 9.11.1960.
57. T. Bauer, *Blockpartei und Agrarrevolution von Oben: Die DBD, 1948–1963*, Munich, 2003, pp. 506–7.

58. ThHStAW Bezirksparteiarchiv der SED Erfurt, Bezirksleitung der SED Erfurt BIV/2/4-58 SED Kreisleitung Sondershausen an die BPKK, Bericht 15.4.1961, p. 160.
59. ThHStAW BDVP 20.1/352 BDVP Operativstab, Information 51/61, 1.6.1961, p. 25.
60. ThHStAW BDVP 20.1/352 BDVP Operativstab, Information 59/61, 29.07.1961, p. 40.
61. ThHStAW BDVP 20/081 BDVP Stab/Operativstab, Information 59/60 Vorkommnisse in der Landwirtschaft, 12.10.1960; BDVP, Lagebesprechung am 14.10.1960 zur Einschätzung der Feindtätigkeit auf dem Lande, 17.10.1960.
62. ThHStAW RdB Erfurt L590 Rat des Bezirkes Erfurt, Abt. Landwirtschaft, Einschätzung der Entwicklung der LPG des Typ I im Bezirk Erfurt, 6.7.1960.
63. BArch DE 1, Nr. 12164 Zentrale Kommission für Staatliche Kontrolle – Der Vorsitzende, Informationsbericht Nr.7, 1.3.1961, p. 87; Zentrale Kommission für Staatliche Kontrolle – Der Vorsitzende, Bericht: Bezirk Erfurt – Unrealer Nachweis über Rinderverluste durch die Organe der Zentralverwaltung für Statistik, 1.3.1961, p. 103.
64. ThHStAW Bezirksparteiarchiv der SED Erfurt, Bezirksleitung der SED Erfurt IV/2/3-362 Sekretariat der Bezirksleitung Abt. Landwirtschaft: Informativischer Bericht über den Stand der Plandiskussion mit dem Stand vom 3.2.1961, 4.2.1961, pp. 8–13; BDVP 20/247 VPKA Erfurt, Abt. K – Komm.SE: Bericht über Verbrechen in den Ortsschaften an der Fernverkehrsstrasse IV, 5.8.1960.
65. ThHStAW Bezirksparteiarchiv der SED Erfurt, Bezirksleitung der SED Erfurt IV/2/3-345 SED Bezirksleitung Abt. Landwirtschaft an das Sekretariat, Einsatz von Studenten und Fachschülern zur Unterstützung der LPG besonders des Typ I im Bezirk Erfurt, p. 46.
66. ThHStAW Bezirksparteiarchiv der SED Erfurt, Bezirksleitung der SED Erfurt BIV/2/5-10 SED Bezirksleitung Abt. Org./Kader, Zwischenbericht über die Arbeit der Brigade in Bad Tennstedt, pp. 267–73.
67. ThHStAW Bezirksparteiarchiv der SED Erfurt, Bezirksleitung der SED Erfurt IV/2/3-362 Rat des Bezirkes Erfurt, Abt. Landwirtschaft an die SED Bezirksleitung, Stand der Jahresendabrechnungen, Rechenschaftslegungen und Neuwahlen in den LPG – Stichtag, 1.2.1961, 3.2.1961, pp. 32–39.
68. ThHStAW NF 275 Kreissekretariat Erfurt-Land, Betr. Tel. Durchsage vom 7.2.1961, 8.2.1961, p. 9.
69. The transfer of some heavy machinery from the MTS to Type III LPGs in the fertile flatlands of the Bezirk, above all in Kreis Bad Langensalza, Weimar and Sömmerda, had proved beneficial in considerably improving the profitability of a number of collective farms – for example, ThHStAW RdB Erfurt L615 Rat des Bezirkes Erfurt, Abt. Landwirtschaft, Erfassung und Forstwirtschaft, Ergebnisse der bisher an die LPG Typ III leihweise übergebenen Technik und Schlussfolgerungen für die weitere Übergabe, 22.6.1961.