



[DOI: 10.35549/HR.2026.2026.59.009](https://doi.org/10.35549/HR.2026.2026.59.009)

Original paper



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**“Here It Is Not the Authorities
Who Rule over Individuals,
but Individuals Who Rule over
the Authorities”: Two Memoranda
by Lieutenant Colonel F.I. Bek
of the Corps of Gendarmes on Officials
of Volhynia Governorate in the 1830s**

Abstract

This article publishes two reports by Lieutenant Colonel Fyodor I. Bek, the gendarmerie staff officer assigned to Volhynia Governorate. The first memorandum, *On Persons Whose Personal Qualities Exert Either a Harmful or a Beneficial Influence on Society*, is dated 11 July 1836 and was addressed to the Chief of Gendarmes, Alexander Kh. Benckendorff. The second memorandum, *On Volhynia Governorate*, addressed to the Inspector of the Settled Cavalry, Ivan O. Witt, may be dated tentatively to early 1838. The introductory study reconstructs the principal stages of Bek's official career and examines the semiannual reports as the principal form of reporting employed by gendarmerie officers in carrying



out their supervisory duties. Written in vivid and expressive language, the documents present a gallery of the leading figures of the provincial administration, including three governors – Alexander P. Rimsky-Korsakov, Nikolai V. Zhukovsky, and Alexander I. Zvegintsov – as well as the presidents of the provincial chambers, the provincial prosecutor, the marshal of the nobility, and the chief of police. Of particular interest are Bek's observations on the family and personal connections among officials and on the informal conflicts within the provincial administration. The documents vividly illustrate the distinctive regional character of Volhynia Governorate and the Western Krai more generally. Whereas gendarmerie officers serving in the interior governorates rarely commented on the political views or reliability of officials, Bek considered it necessary to evaluate their loyalty to the government, distinguishing in particular between supporters of the Russian and Polish “principles”. In the second memorandum, he also offered his assessment of the overall condition of the Governorate under his supervision and proposed a series of immediate measures aimed at strengthening its administrative and legal integration into the empire. These documents constitute an important source for the study of provincial administration and broaden our understanding of the activities of gendarmerie officers during the 1830s. At the same time, the article emphasizes the need to take into account the inherently subjective character of these reports, which inevitably reflect the author's personal sympathies as well as the lingering effects of his official conflicts with the provincial authorities.

Keywords:

Russian Empire; Corps of Gendarmes; Provincial administration; High/higher/secret/political police; Volhynia Governorate; Officialdom; Bureaucracy; Fyodor Ivanovich Bek.

For citation:

Grigory N. Bibikov. “Here It Is Not the Authorities Who Rule over Individuals, but Individuals Who Rule over the Authorities”: Two

Memoranda by Lieutenant Colonel F.I. Bek of the Corps of Gendarmes on Officials of Volhynia Governorate in the 1830s. The Historical Reporter. 2026. Vol. 59. P. 232–259. DOI: [10.35549/HR.2026.2026.59.009](https://doi.org/10.35549/HR.2026.2026.59.009)

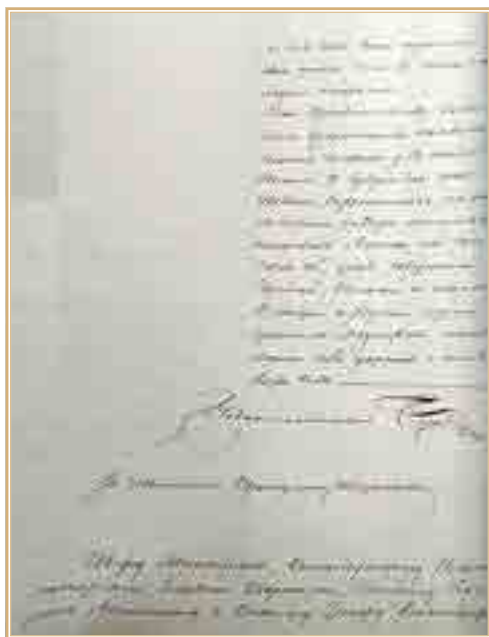


With the establishment of the Third Section of His Imperial Majesty's Chancellery, monitoring the state of affairs in local administration became one of the Section's primary activities. By the early 1830s, when gendarmerie staff officer offices were established in all governorates within the districts of the Gendarme Corps, oversight of provincial officials became systematic. A reflection of this process was contained in the secret circular of the Chief of Gendarmes, A.Kh. Benckendorff, dated February 8, 1832, which ordered staff officers to submit reports to St. Petersburg twice a year with characteristics on "those of the officials, landowners, merchants and other classes who, by virtue of their rank, wealth, connections, intelligence, education, or other virtues, have a good or bad influence on those around them and even on high-ranking officials"¹.

In the 1830s, semi-annual reports were the primary form of reporting for gendarme officers on surveillance matters. These documents focused exclusively on the composition of the provincial administration, emphasizing the professional qualities, moral character, lifestyle, property status, and public reputation of employees. They serve as an important source for studying the composition of the provincial administration during the Nicholas era and have recently attracted the attention of researchers more and more frequently².

¹ Государственный архив Российской Федерации (ГА РФ). Ф. 109. Оп. 7. Д. 434. Л. 3.

² This source was first used extensively for the study of the highest provincial administration by P.A. Zaionchkovsky: *Зайончиковский П.А. Губернская администрация накануне Крымской войны // Вопросы истории. 1975. № 9. С. 33–51.* See also: *Бикташева А.Н. Кадровый контроль политической полиции над региональным чиновничеством: практики Казанской губернии 1826–1861 гг. // Известия Саратовского университета. Серия «История. Международные отношения». 2014. № 4. С. 110–114; Румянцев П.П.*



Notes by F.I. Bek "On Persons Who, by Their Qualities, Have a Bad or Good Influence in Society," July 11, 1836. The last sheet with the author's signature.

State Archive of the Russian Federation. Fund 109. Inventory 11.

File 320, letter E. Sheet 76 verso

In St. Petersburg, the reports were read by A.N. Mordvinov, Director of the Third Section. More substantial texts were reported to the Chief of Gendarmes, and some were placed on the Emperor's desk. While reviewing the reports, Director made notes next to individual characteristics, after which the corresponding extracts, in the form of a note signed by the Chief of Gendarmes, were transmitted to the minister under whose jurisdiction the official served. The source of the information was usually concealed ("obtained privately"). As Benckendorff wrote, "I pass on these descriptions to the ministers in charge, who, and especially the Minister of Finance, always accept them with gratitude"³. Subsequently, the reports for one year were filed into a single

Взгляд жандармских штаб-офицеров на аппарат управления в Сибири в дореформенный период // Вестник Российского университета дружбы народов. Серия: История России. 2024. Т. 23. № 2. С. 167–178. See also: Биби́ков Г.Н. Полугодовые донесения губернских жандармских штаб-офицеров как источник по истории местного управления Российской империи 1830-х гг. // Новое прошлое / The new past. 2021. № 1. С. 34–57.

³ Оржеховский И.В. Самодержавие против революционной России (1826–1880 гг.). М.: Мысль, 1982. С. 52.



Count Ivan Osipovich Witt. Artist: George Dawe.
From open sources

file, and an alphabetical list of the persons mentioned was compiled, which served as a card index for reference.

The 1832 circular contained no form or other requirements for reports, which varied significantly not only in content and length but also in formatting and headings. Some included brief memos of one or two pages, while some were lengthy reports containing evaluative assessments of dozens of provincial employees – such papers attracted the primary attention of superiors. The gendarmes' opinions directly or indirectly reflected their personal preferences, and at times they hinted at conflicts with governors and other officials. Furthermore, the reports were not required to present evidence, much less documentary evidence. Unconstrained by strict formal requirements, some officers, like Lieutenant Colonel F.I. Bek, wrote semi-annual reports in a style far removed from official norms.

According to his professional file, Fyodor Ivanovich was born in 1793, baptized into the Orthodox faith, and registered with the noble society of Olonetsk Governorate, but owned no estates. Having entered service as a sub-ensign in the Uglich Infantry Regiment in 1809, Bek served as a staff captain in the 6th Carabineer Regiment from 1819. In 1824, after being promoted to major, he was assigned to the Astrakhan Grenadier Regiment, where he was soon appointed brigade commander. In October 1830, Bek was promoted to lieutenant colonel, and



Andrei Petrovich Rimsky-Korsakov. Unknown artist, 1821.

From open sources

soon his regiment marched to suppress the Polish Uprising. At Ostrołęka, the officer was wounded by a bullet in the shoulder and was later awarded the Order of St. Anne, 2nd degree, for this battle⁴.

In April 1833, Bek addressed a request to Benckendorff for a transfer to the gendarmes, which gives a certain idea of the author's professional and personal ups and downs, as well as his skills with the pen: “Upon the return of the Grenadier Corps from the Kingdom of Poland to the right bank of the Western Dvina, being no longer able to carry out front-line training service, last year 1832, in the month of July, I submitted a request to be released to the Caucasian mineral waters to heal my wound. Meanwhile, as my request passed from one authority to another, Providence saw fit to deprive me of my wife, who, having died an orphan in the city of Narva, left me with two young children, a son and a daughter – the eldest of whom is 5 years old... As a loyal subject of my Sovereign – feeling without the temptation of partiality the full importance of the duty of a father responsible for his children – to God, the Sovereign and the Fatherland – I must confess... that, having absolutely no one to whom I could entrust my children, I will not be able to continue my 24 years of service in the

⁴ For F.I. Bek's service record for 1841, see.: ГА РФ. Ф. 110. Оп. 2. Д. 914. Л. 2–13.

field any longer: but at 39 years of age, to refuse to serve the Sovereign, from whose generosity I have been blessed — is painful — grievous to my heart”⁵!

The attached service record contained a note that in the first half of 1814 the officer “was not certified because of carelessness and failure to perform duties”, and in the conduct section for the same time: “In the column: *how he behaves at work*, it is noted: careless with negligence in performance”. Typically, such omissions would have been an insurmountable obstacle to joining the gendarmes, but Benckendorff considered it possible to petition for Bek to be assigned to the Corps Headquarters for a preliminary examination. In his report of July 17, 1833, Chief of Gendarmes emphasized that “the mentioned disapproving assessment was made by the former commander of the 1st Brigade of the 23rd Infantry Division, Major General [P.B.] Nilus I, who was expelled from service in 1818 for actions inappropriate to his rank”⁶. Nicholas I took a pause, but after two months finally consented.

While in St. Petersburg, Bek married a second time — to the daughter of Major General D.P. Primo, with whom he subsequently had three children. In January 1834, Chief of Gendarmes assured the Emperor that Fyodor Ivanovich had turned out to be “truly of good moral character and, according to his abilities, can be useful in the Corps of Gendarmes”, offering to send him as a provincial staff officer to Vyatka. Nicholas I agreed, but with one caveat: “From now on, no officers will be taken from the Grenadier Corps”⁷.

In April 1835, Bek was transferred to Volhynia Governorate, which was part of the fifth (Vilna) district of the Gendarme Corps, uniting the western edge of the empire. On July 11, 1836, Fyodor Ivanovich sent to St. Petersburg the report for the first half of the year, published below, entitled *On Persons Whose Personal Qualities Exert Either a Harmful or a Beneficial Influence on Society*⁸. In this memo, Bek presented a gallery of officials in the highest provincial administration, including two civil

⁵ Ibid. A. 397. A. 1–2.

⁶ Ibid. A. 15.

⁷ Ibid. A. 23.

⁸ Apparently, this was Bek's first semiannual report from Volhynia Governorate.



Zhytomyr. 19th-century engraving.
From open sources

governors – A.P. Rimsky-Korsakov, dismissed in 1835, and his successor, N.V. Zhukovsky, as well as vice governor, chairmen of the court chambers, marshal of the nobility, chief of police, and others. Without hiding his personal biases, Bek gave a number of officials negative or downright derogatory characterizations, which, as a rule, were more detailed and vivid than positive ones. Of particular interest are the details of the officials' family and friendship ties and unspoken conflicts within the administration. The note reflected the specificity of Volhynia Governorate as part of the Western Territory: the officers serving in the internal governorates hardly touched upon the social views and political “reliability” of officials, whereas Bek considered it necessary to evaluate their loyalty to the government, including by highlighting the adherents of the Russian and Polish “principle”: thus, Governor Rimsky-Korsakov was distinguished by “his extraordinary partiality and connections with the Polish landowners,” and the principal of the Zhitomir (also *Zhytomyr*. – Ed.) gymnasium, on the contrary, was presented as “a most useful intermediary between the government and the new generation of citizens”⁹.

Bek's report attracted the attention of A.N. Mordvinov, who ordered that a number of extracts be sent for the information of the Ministers of Internal Affairs, Justice, and Public Education, as well as the Chief Prosecutor of the Holy Synod and the Kyiv Governor-General¹⁰. The accompanying report bears a pencil note from the Chief of Gendarmes indicating that the report was also conveyed to Nicholas I.

⁹ ГА РФ. Ф. 109. Оп. 11. Д. 320, лит. Е. Л. 63 об., 71 об.

¹⁰ In total, on 1 August 1836, the Third Section issued seven outgoing documents on this matter.

Meanwhile, in 1836, a number of the empire's southern governorates were placed under the police supervision of the Inspector of the Reserve Cavalry, General of Cavalry Count I.O. Witt, who was entrusted with the secret command of the provincial staff officers. This decision does not seem accidental, given that after the suppression of the Polish Uprising in 1831, Witt, as the military Governor-General of Warsaw, supervised the organization of the secret police in the Kingdom of Poland on behalf of Field Marshal I.F. Paskevich, and subsequently maintained close contact with Benckendorff, sending a large volume of diverse information to the Third Section¹¹ The idea of the transformation, as the Chief of Gendarmes confidentially informed Witt, was to, “without destroying the staff of the Corps of Gendarmes in its present form, but maintaining strict confidentiality between you and me, with the permission of the Sovereign Emperor, accept under your immediate and direct command staff officers <...> possessing perfect knowledge of the localities of the region entrusted to your supervision; you also have every opportunity to give direct direction to their actions”¹². In his instructions to the gendarme officers, Benckendorff specifically stipulated that “semi-annual reports on officials and prominent persons in the governorates, who have been submitted to me up to now by Third Section”¹³, were now to be sent to Witt's discretion. In accordance with this instruction, Bek sent the report for the second half of 1836 to Odessa¹⁴.

¹¹ See: ГА РФ. Ф. 109. Оп. 2а. Д. 165, and others.

¹² In the same letter from Benckendorff to Witt of 18 November 1835, it was specified which provincial officers were to come under Witt's authority: “I would propose placing under the immediate supervision of Your Excellency the governorates of Kherson, Yekaterinoslav, and Sloboda Ukraine, where the military-settlement cavalry entrusted to Your command is stationed; the city of Odessa, as the permanent place of Your Excellency's residence; and the governorates of Kiev, Podolia, and Volhynia, returned from Poland, where military settlements may in time be established” (ГА РФ. Ф. 109. Оп. 13. Д. 62. Л. 3–3 об.). Witt later insisted that “Taurida Governorate also be attached, where reserve battalions of the 5th Infantry Corps, forming part of the troops entrusted to me, are frequently stationed” (ГА РФ. Ф. 109. Оп. 13. Д. 62. Л. 11).

¹³ ГА РФ. Ф. 109. Оп. 13. Д. 62. Л. 15.

¹⁴ This document could not be located among the records of the Third Section.



On October 18, 1837, Witt ordered the gendarme staff officers under his command to submit, instead of the next six-month report, “by the 15th of next December, in the form of an annual report for the current year 1837, a memorandum”, in which to pay “particular attention to three main subjects, namely:

- a) the actions of officials, whose power to a greater or lesser extent relates to their person according to the positions they hold;
- b) what kind of (political) attitude there is among the landowners and other classes of residents;
- c) what influence landowners have on peasants in relation to their rights and morality.”

In addition, any comments could be included in the report ‘regarding the governorate and those other matters of improvement which, according to your observations, would require a change, improvement or some new institution, with a detailed explanation of both the reasons that require all this, and the benefits that may arise from it’¹⁵. As can be seen, the intended subject matter of these papers was broader than the content of the semi-annual reports.

However, already at the beginning of 1838 in St. Petersburg, it was decided to refuse Witt’s services in the command of the gendarmes. On February 15, 1838, Benckendorff notified the Count: “Two years of experience has shown me that with the present division of activities between us, it is impossible to hope that the benefit I had in mind could occur”¹⁶. Having collected the annual reports of the staff officers, on March 7, 1838, Witt sent the originals to the Third Section with a summary note *Subjects of the jurisdiction of the higher military police, consisting of the duties of gendarme staff officers*. Among the attached texts, under the letter “E”, was Bek’s memo, *On Volhynia Governorate*¹⁷, published below. Following Witt’s instructions, he briefly characterizes the general situation in the governorate under his supervision and mentions certain local circumstances that, in his opinion, deserved the government’s attention – the construction of Orthodox

¹⁵ ГА РФ. Ф. 109. Оп. 13. Д. 62. Л. 46–46 об.

¹⁶ Ibid. Л. 35.

¹⁷ Tentatively dated to early 1838.



Volhynia Governorate.

A card from a set of geographical cards of the Russian Empire.

From open sources

churches, the arrangement of the daily life of the Jewish population of the governorate, etc.¹⁸ The focus is on the changes that occurred in the provincial administration over the past eighteen months, with particular criticism of the civil governor, A.I. Zvegintzov. However, this official had been dismissed back in September 1837, and Bek's position was hardly a revelation to the leadership of the high police, who were well aware of the personal and professional clashes between the two officials, which began almost from the moment Zvegintzov arrived in Zhitomir¹⁹. As a result, all three governors described by Bek, although dissimilar in personal and professional qualities, seemed to him unsuitable for Volhynia Governorate.

¹⁸ Bek had previously devoted a separate memorandum to these issues, which, together with the observations and comments of the Minister of Internal Affairs DN. Bludov, was submitted in November 1837, by order of Nicholas I, to the Committee for the Western Governorates. (For Bek's memorandum, see: Российский государственный исторический архив (РГИА). Ф. 1266. Оп. 1. Д. 23. Л. 27–35 об.; Bludov's thoughts on the matter published in: Журналы Комитета Западных губерний. Изд. подгот. Т.В. Андреева, И.Н. Вибе, Б.П. Миловидов, Д.Н. Шилов. Т. 2: 1836–1840 гг. СПб.: Дмитрий Буланин, 2021. С. 240–247).

¹⁹ See: ГА РФ. Ф. 110. Оп. 2. Д. 706.



In April 1839, with the promotion to colonel, Bek was transferred to Kyiv Governorate, and in September 1840 to Podolsk Governorate, where he died on March 31, 1841.

The notes published below paint a vivid portrait of the Volhynia Governorate's high administration in the mid-1830s, while expanding existing understanding of the activities of gendarme officers of that era. Both papers were deposited in the files of the 1st Records Division of the Third Section of His Imperial Majesty's Own Chancellery of the State Archives of the Russian Federation. The documents are original, written in a clerical handwriting and certified by the author's signature. They are reproduced in accordance with modern spelling rules, preserving certain stylistic features of the original²⁰. The document titles are the author's own; abbreviations are given in square brackets; author underlinings are given in italics. Information about some individuals could not be established.

**Memorandum from the gendarme staff officer
in Volhynia Governorate, Lieutenant Colonel F.I. Bek,
“On Persons Whose Personal Qualities Exert Either a Harmful
or a Beneficial Influence on Society”**

ГА РФ. Ф. 109. Оп. 11. Д. 320, лит. Е. Л. 63–76 об.

July 11, 1836

Zhitomyr

№ 156²¹

Centuries have proven how contagious the illegal actions of elders are for their subordinates, and therefore I considered it necessary, first

²⁰ В In accordance with *Методические рекомендации по публикации архивных документов в печатном виде*, 2022.

²¹ At the top of the folio appears the notation “Secret”. In the text of the memorandum, the surnames of all officials mentioned are additionally underlined in ink and numbered in the margins (apparently by a clerk of the Third Section). A.N. Mordvinov, Director of the Third Section, left several pencil annotations in the margins (see the notes below).

of all, to turn to the person of the *former civil governor*, actual state councillor *Rimsky-Korsakov*²².

The general opinions of the best and most worthy officials about His Excellency's relations with the Polish landowners and everything Russian are so terrible that I do not dare to convey them in detail to my superiors, since these opinions more or less always arise from the egoism and personal gain of each; but the consequences of the governance by Governor Korsakov, the affairs completed and begun under him, have mathematically proven to me that His Excellency did much harm to the government with his extraordinary partiality and connections with the Polish landowners; under such governance, the Russian and loyal government officials were left either to act in a general spirit of cold hostility towards the government or to abandon service in Volhynia Governorate. His Excellency's spouse²³ also behaved reprehensibly and to the detriment of the government. She not only imitated in many ways the local ladies, the so-called patriotic dames, but also allowed rich youngsters to treat her freely and friendly. Instead of uniting the Russians with the Poles and elevating everything Russian²⁴, Mr. Korsakov and his wife settled between the former a long-lasting antipathy, and sowed disdain toward the latter.

Honor and glory to the wise government that did not tolerate such harmful management in all respects in this region! I am happy that I do not serve with Mr. Korsakov!!

The current Volhynia civilian *governor*, actual state councillor *Zhukovsky*²⁵. The spiritual and intellectual qualities of this governor fully

²² *Andrei Petrovich Rimsky-Korsakov* (1784–1862), the illegitimate son of Lieutenant General P.V. Rimsky-Korsakov, served in the 1820s as an Official for Special Assignments under the Minister of Internal Affairs; from 1827, he was Vice Governor of Novgorod; from 1829, Director of the State Commercial Bank; and from 1831 Civil Governor of Volhynia. He was dismissed in April 1835 and did not return to government service thereafter. He was the father of the composer N.A. Rimsky-Korsakov.

²³ *Sofya Vasilyevna Rimskaya-Korsakova* (née Skaryatina, 1802–1890), wife of A.P. Rimsky-Korsakov since 1821.

²⁴ So in the original text (here and throughout).

²⁵ *Nikolai Vasilyevich Zhukovsky* (1793–1852) served in the 1820s as Chairman of the Tobolsk Provincial Administration. In December 1832, with the rank of actual state councillor, he was appointed Civil Governor of Orenburg. He served as Civil Governor of Volhynia from April 1835. In March 1837, he was



correspond to the importance of the position he occupies. Governor Zhukovsky's selflessness has eluded even a trace of suspicion in the eyes of honest people; and his clerical work has earned universal recognition. One cannot help but regret that this man is not cut out for the practical work of a Governor.

He is unable to command fear and respect, and his kind and gentle nature is so trusting that an experienced and inquisitive rogue can gain his favor at the expense of his service; and therefore, in Governor Zhukovsky, our government may have an excellent department director, but not a Governor for Volhynia Governorate.

Here it is necessary, so to speak, to regenerate things and give them a new direction, in accordance with the wishes of the government, for which such a governor is needed who is not only well-intentioned, selfless and active, but a person with a strong, decisive character who, not limiting himself to actions in his office, would be able to make the places and persons under his jurisdiction fear and respect him.

His Excellency, being a prudent man, feels his own inadequacy and expects, as the first favor from the government, a transfer to one of the interior governorates; therefore, while excelling at paperwork, he leaves everything else to its former course. Perhaps he would act more forcefully and urgently on these latter matters, but, on the one hand, he fears objections and comments from the military governor-general's office²⁶, and on the other hand, the machinations of local wealthy magnates who have strong connections in our capitals.

Our venerable governor is also remarkable for his domestic life. He supports a mother-in-law, a sister-in-law, a niece, and another poor girl; this blessed family, exuding domestic happiness, has earned the special respect of all the prudent people of this region. The virtues of the

appointed Governor of Kaluga; from 1843 to 1851, he was Civil Governor of St. Petersburg. He was promoted to the rank of privy councillor in 1843.

²⁶ *Alexander Dmitrievich Guryev* (1785–1865), Count, son of the Minister of Finance D.A. Guryev. Promoted to Lieutenant General in 1827 and appointed senator in 1828. In January 1835, he became Military Governor of Poltava and Chernigov, and in June of the same year Military Governor of Kiev, Civil Administrator and Governor-General of Podolia and Volhynia Governorates. In November 1837, he was dismissed from office and promoted to the rank of actual privy councillor. From 1839, he was a member of the State Council, and from 1848 Chairman of its Department of State Economy.

governor's wife²⁷, having called the local public out of its dangerous seclusion, have befriended them with Russian officials and introduced our language into the drawing rooms.

Officials on Special Assignments of the civil governor:

Collegiate Counselor *Romanovsky*²⁸. With ordinary mental abilities, selfish and lazy.

Titular Counselor *Manikovsky*.²⁹ The mental abilities are the most ordinary; he knows the business from long-term practice; his spiritual qualities are black and he is self-serving by virtue of his position.

The titular councillor acting as Zhitomyr Chief of Police *Chulkov*³⁰. This man was an auditor in the army, and then became an Official on Special Assignments for Governor Rimsky-Korsakov. He was especially favored by His Excellency, appointed officials, rectified rebellious affairs, and amassed considerable wealth. This scoundrel first managed to establish a special friendship with a relative of the current governor and the head of his chancery, Mr. *Tobias*³¹, and then, with his help, managed to charm the governor himself. His Excellency, although warned about Mr. Chulkov, nevertheless secured him a position as Chief of Police and even nominated him as Councillor to the Provincial Government.

Aide-de-Camp to His Imperial Majesty, Count Vasilchikov³², having spent some time in Volhynia Governorate, received much information about Mr. Chulkov's extortion, and out of goodwill towards the governor, asked me to report this to His Excellency, which I did with the utmost delicacy. But the governor, seemingly agreeing with Count Vasilchikov's opinion, after some time petitioned for Mr. Chulkov to

²⁷ *Elizaveta Nikolaevna Zhukovskaya* (1803–1856), wife of N.V. Zhukovsky.

²⁸ *Matvei Osipovich Romanovsky*.

²⁹ *Ivan Ivanovich Manikovsky*.

³⁰ *Konstantin Sergeevich Chulkov*.

³¹ *Karl Solomonovich Tobias*, Provincial Secretary.

³² *Count Illarion Illarionovich Vasilchikov* (1805–1862), son of General of Cavalry Count I.V. Vasilchikov, was promoted to captain of cavalry in 1831 and appointed aide-de-camp in 1833. In February 1836, he was sent to the town of Slavuta in Zaslav Uyezd, Volhynia Governorate, to conduct an official investigation (Шулов Д.Н., Кузьмин Ю.А. Члены Государственного совета Российской империи. 1801–1906: биобиблиографический справочник. СПб.: Дмитрий Буланин, 2007. С. 113–114). He later became a lieutenant general and Governor-General of Kiev.



be decorated. This is not all! Mr. Chulkov struck up a friendship with the nobleman Zhiromsky in the governor's antechamber after a soiree, and Mr. Chulkov got away with all this without losing His Excellency's favor; in a word, I do not know a man as dark-hearted as Mr. Chulkov and who, like him, could insinuate himself into the heart of the governor. Anyone who loves Governor Zhukovsky and respects the common good wishes that Mr. Chulkov were no longer in Volhynia Governorate. Recently he managed to secure the position of Police Inspector of Lutsk for his brother-in-law Astafyev³³, who, for dishonest acts in the service, had been ousted by Vice Governor Afendik³⁴ from the position of Official on Special Assignments of the local Treasury Chamber.

Volhynia *Vice Governor* State Councillor *Afendik*. This man is in his right place and is useful to the Fatherland in every way. He is intelligent, selfless, and active, knows his duty, and knows how to conduct himself in such a way that his subordinates fear and respect him.

Of all the government offices in Volhynia Governorate, the local Treasury Chamber is in the best position in terms of the purity and flow of affairs, despite the fact that Vice Governor Afendik does not have excellent officials in all of his subordinates.

Provincial marshal of the nobility, Chamberlain of the Court of His Imperial Majesty *Lenkevich* (*Lenkiewicz*)³⁵. This civil and most kind man, unfortunately, does not fulfill his duties at all and resides but little in the provincial capital. His gentle nature is such that he always sides with the majority.

Chairman of the Criminal Chamber, state councillor Schastny³⁶. This man, with his ordinary intelligence and 35 years of experience,

³³ *Pyotr Nikolaevich Astafyev*, titular councillor.

³⁴ *Ivan Kornilovich Afendik* (1776–1851) was appointed Vice Governor of Volhynia (Chairman of the Treasury Chamber) in February 1832 and promoted to actual state councillor in 1836. In February 1837, he was transferred as Vice Governor of Pskov, where he served until his death.

³⁵ *Gratsian Stanislavovich Inogorsky-Lenkevich*, marshal of the nobility of Volhynia Governorate from 1829 to 1838; Chamberlain from 1832.

³⁶ *Nikolai Lukyanovich Schastny* (*Shchastny*), collegiate councillor. In the margin A.N. Mordvinov noted: “NB”, “To the Min[ister] of Justice”; in another hand: “Executed”. In October 1837 Bek reported to Witt: “Head of Provincial Justice, Chairman of the Criminal Chamber, state councillor Shchastny, who rose in Zhitomyr from the rank of copyist, is the greatest bribe-taker and protector of

knows his business quite well; but he is not renowned for his selflessness, even though, in addition to his usual salary, he receives a pension of two thousand rubles a year for his service under the late Grand Duke Konstantin Pavlovich; and, having been born and raised in Zhitomir, he has connections that he respects more than justice itself, and therefore, for the good of the Fatherland, it would be very useful to transfer him to another governorate.

Provincial *prosecutor*, collegiate councillor *Kamensky*³⁷. This man is now considered a kind old man. But there was a time when he acquired up to 600 male souls through civil service, but now he only serves to achieve the rank of state councillor. But the Volhynia provincial prosecutor must be a man of ardent zeal for service, with a solid knowledge of his profession and a tenacious character. His example should awaken the district attorneys and force them to take up their work, and thanks to their activity and honesty, the district courts and the Civil Chamber would inevitably adopt a course of action consistent with the will of the government and be cleansed of the grave abuses that are currently plaguing them³⁸.

Of *Zhitomir* and other uyezds of this governorate *landowner*, actual state councillor, Knight of the Order of Stanislav 1st degree *Korzhenevsky*. This elder has already bent under the weight of years and lost his independence of character, but despite all this, he is remarkable in this region for his devotion to the throne and the wealth of his property, which is why many gentlemen landowners do not favor him for the former.

all the corrupt district courts and magistracies. He sells even the most sacred truth for money and, for his own security, has placed his nephew Gordeenko as Councillor of the Provincial Administration, his son as Assessor of the Civil Chamber, and another son as chief clerk in the office of the provincial marshal of the nobility" (РГИА. Ф. 1266. Оп. 1. Д. 23. Л. 30).

³⁷ *Vasily Afanasyevich Kamensky*, collegiate councillor, served as Provincial Prosecutor of Volhynia from 1832; previously he had held the same office in Kiev.

³⁸ In October 1837, Bek wrote to Witt that "according to the unanimous testimony of long-standing local residents, not a single provincial prosecutor could be described as possessing the intellectual and moral qualities required by his important office. As for the district solicitors, they are, without exception, old, infirm, ignorant, and notorious extortionists" (РГИА. Ф. 1266. Оп. 1. Д. 23. Л. 30).



A *judge of the Court of Conscience*, former marshal of the nobility of Starokonstantinovsky Uyezd, *Knol*³⁹. This man has recently been mentioned in the story of Miss Oyzhinskaya (Ożyńska), known for her outrageous correspondence and insulting song about the sacred person of the Emperor. He is distinguished by his hostility toward the government and his hatred of everything Russian. This truth will be confirmed by anyone who knows Mr. Knol and dares to be sincere.

*Principal of Zhitomir Gymnasium Bokshanin*⁴⁰. Honor and glory to the government, which entrusted this man with the education of the local youth, infected from childhood with a spirit of hostility toward the government! But whatever parental advice there might be, Mr. Bokshanin is in any case a most useful intermediary between the government and the new generation of citizens. He possesses all the qualities necessary for a person, a leader, and a mentor. The heart of a Russian rejoices at Mr. Bokshanin's service to the Fatherland. His appointment as Principal of the local gymnasium was as well-considered given local circumstances, which were important to the government, as the appointments of many other officials in Volhynia Governorate were made without regard for local circumstances.

*Provincial Postmaster Ventsevich (Wienciewicz)*⁴¹. This official is kind and has excellent behavior, but due to his stinginess and the poor maintenance of the correspondent section and its officials, he is dangerous in Volhynia Governorate.

*Head of the local Medical Department, State Councillor von Schildknecht*⁴². Not through medicine, but through contracts and his trade as a leading money lender, did he acquire a considerable fortune. It's a shame to see this official's hands tremble so much that he can't reach into his snuffbox; this man is distinguished throughout the entire governorate for his stinginess.

³⁹ *Kazimir Gavrilovich Knol (Knoll)* had previously been elected Marshal of the Nobility of Starokonstantinov Uyezd.

⁴⁰ *Osip Mikhailovich Rab-Bokshchanin*, court councillor, graduated from the St. Petersburg Pedagogical Institute in 1815. From 1824, he served as Prefect of the Volhynian Lyceum, and in 1833 was confirmed as Director of Schools of Volhynia Governorate. He was dismissed in 1839. In the margin A.N. Mordvinov noted: “To the Min[ister] of Public Education”; in another hand: “Executed”.

⁴¹ *Pyotr Petrovich Ventsevich*.

⁴² *Fyodor Ivanovich Schildknecht*, Doctor of Medicine.

Provincial Government *Councillor Gordeenko*⁴³. This man is a great extortionist and extremely limited in mind; however, having risen from clerk to his current rank in the Provincial Government, he has acquired a knack for business. Being of a sycophantic nature, he has friends in the military governor-general's office and therefore maintains his position. The governor is also burdened by him, but dares not take any action against him.

Councillor of the Criminal Chamber *Gubarev*⁴⁴. Mr. Councillor Gubarev proves how essential it is for a superior to know his subordinates. It's hard to believe how stupid, suspicious, and ignorant this man is of even the basics of his duties. They say his closest relative, Mr. Kartsov⁴⁵, Head Clerk of the Military Governor, interceded for him for this position. However, Mr. Gubarev is of high integrity.

Criminal *lawyer Danilchenko*⁴⁶. This official is one of the best among all the Ministry of Justice officials serving in Volhynia Governorate. Despite all this, he is poor and burdened with a large family. It would be desirable for the government, having distinguished this worthy official as an example to others, to reward him for his continued service.

Marshal of the nobility of Kovelsky Uyezd, Knight of the Order of St. Vladimir, 4th degree, *Yanishevsky*⁴⁷ (*Janiszewski*). This man, despite the fact that his only son is serving a prison term in Vyatka Governorate, is remarkable among all the uyezd leaders for his devotion to the throne and his hospitality to the Russians.

⁴³ *Nikita Vasilyevich Gordeenko*, collegiate assessor, later served as Provincial Prosecutor of Voronezh (1840–1847), Deputy Chairman of the Kovno Criminal Chamber (1847–1850), and the first Provincial Prosecutor of Samara (1850–1854). In the margin A.N. Mordvinov noted: “To Count Guryev”; in another hand: “Executed”.

⁴⁴ *Fyodor Kuzmich Gubarev*, collegiate assessor.

⁴⁵ *Nikolai Stepanovich Kartsov*, collegiate councillor and Chief of the Chancellery of the Kiev Governor-General, later actual state councillor and Legal Adviser at the Ministry of Justice.

⁴⁶ *Osip Mikhailovich Danilchenko*, titular councillor. Opposite his name, A.N. Mordvinov noted in the margin: “To the Min.[ister] of Justice”; in another hand: “Executed”.

⁴⁷ *Konstantin Frantsevich Yanishevsky*. In the margin A.N. Mordvinov noted: “What is his son in Vyatka for?”



Archpriest of Cathedral Church of Zhitomir *Solsky*⁴⁸. This servant of the Altar of God rightly, with his zeal for the faith, brings great honor to the uneducated and humbled clergy here. The outward appearance of this priest is majestic and comely. The qualities of his heart are noble and modest, and his enlightened mind is visible both in the Church of God and in the drawing room; but it is painful for every loyal subject of the Russian Tsar that Canon Golovinsky⁴⁹ of the local Roman Catholic Church, a young man, received the Order of St. Stanislav, 4th degree, while Solsky, revered not only by Russians but also by Catholics, remained undecorated.

Zhitomir zemstvo police official, lieutenant colonel *Volyansky* (*Woliański*)⁵⁰. This official is remarkable for his ardent dedication to his duties and his selflessness in service. However, he has not yet received any decoration for his excellent service in the civilian field.

Starokonstantinov police inspector collegiate assessor *Kilchevsky* (*Kielczewski*)⁵¹. This official attracts attention with his educated mind, zeal for his duties, and selflessness in service; but meanwhile he is poor and finds it difficult to support his pious family.

Executor Popov. This official distinguishes himself by exemplary moral behavior, diligence, and selflessness in his service; but, having a large family of relatives, he lives in great poverty.

Secretary of Temporary Liquidation Commission *Opotsky*⁵². This man is remarkable both in his position and in his personal life; one can confidently say that he is the most honest of all the secretaries of

⁴⁸ *Pyotr Dmitrievich Solsky*. In the margin A.N. Mordvinov noted: “To Count Protasov”; in another hand: “Executed”. Count Nikolai Alexandrovich Protasov (1798–1855) was confirmed as Ober-Procurator of the Most Holy Synod in June 1836.

⁴⁹ *Ignatii Petrovich Golovinsky* (1807–1855), Catholic bishop and religious writer. From 1835, he was cathedral canon in Zhitomyr; from 1837 professor of theology and chaplain of Kiev University; from 1842 until his death Rector of the Imperial Roman Catholic Theological Academy in St. Petersburg; from 1851 also Archbishop of Mogilev.

⁵⁰ *Grigorii Vasilyevich Volyansky*.

⁵¹ According to the *The Menologion and General Register of the Russian Empire for the Year 1836*, the official's name was *Andrei Karlovich Kolchevsky*. In the margin A.N. Mordvinov noted: “To the Min.[ister] of Internal Affairs”; in another hand: “Executed”.

⁵² *Terentii Yakovlevich Opotsky*, titular councillor.

Volhynia Governorate. His heart is as filled with feelings of kindness as his mind is familiar with government regulations; Volhynia Governorate would be fortunate if Mr. Opotsky were appointed to replace Dobelevsky as Secretary of the Civil Chamber.

Provincial architect Provincial Secretary *Mlodzyanovsky* (Młodzianowski)⁵³. Judging by the fact that sooner or later the government will need to build state-owned buildings in the decrepit Volhynia Governorate, this lazy official, ignorant of his duties, cannot be tolerated here.

Civil Chamber *Secretary Dobelevsky* ⁵⁴(without rank). This man is remarkable for his attachment to all things Polish; and secondly, for his use of force and illegal manipulation of the Chamber's affairs, as a result of which he has amassed a considerable fortune. Despite all this, he is quite secure in his position, for the local magnates highly value his national sentiments.

In April of this year, when the Governor-General Count Guryev was inspecting the chamber, Dobelevsky, not wanting to part with his kuntush, sash and saber, claimed to be ill and was not present in the Chamber.

Medical specialist, *a certain Lips*⁵⁵, *a converted Jew*. In this man, as his mind developed, two strong feelings were born: antipathy toward all Jews and a desire to become known to the government through his zeal, in order to receive some degree of honor, and he even spends his own money to make a useful discovery some day. If the government ever needs a man for the secret police in the provinces reclaimed from Poland, it can make great use of Lips, for this man, with a perfect knowledge of Hebrew, Polish, German, and Russian, and a knowledge of medicine, can conceal himself well and have access everywhere⁵⁶.

⁵³ *Foma Ivanovich Mlodzyanovsky*.

⁵⁴ *Ignatii Mikhailovich Dobelevsky*. In the margin A.N. Mordvinov noted: "To Count Guryev"; in another hand: "Executed".

⁵⁵ In the margin A.N. Mordvinov noted: "Copy this section separately for me".

⁵⁶ In the accompanying report addressed to the Chief of Gendarmes, Bek additionally requested that "gracious attention be paid to the exceptionally zealous service and honorable conduct of the officials listed in memorandum no. 156: the gymnasium Director Bokshanin, solicitor for criminal cases Danilchenko, Chief of Police of Starokonstantinov Kilchevsky, the Executor of the Provincial Administration Popov, and the Archpriest of Zhitomyr Cathedral Church, Solsky"



Lieutenant Colonel Bek
 for the aide-de-camp, countersigned by ensign Sharamovich⁵⁷

**Memorandum by the gendarme staff officer
 in Volhynia Governorate, Lieutenant Colonel F.I. Bek,
 “On Volhynia Governorate.”**

GA RF. F. 109. Op. 13. D. 245, lit. D. L. 67–71 rev.

Beginning 1838⁵⁸

Zhitomyr

Following the report I submitted to Your Excellency in my report of January 28, 1837, No. 33⁵⁹, there have been major changes in the provincial leadership.

Instead of the Chairman of the Criminal Chamber *Schastny*, known for his extortion, state councillor *Karpilovich*⁶⁰ was transferred to his place from Grodno from the same position; a very selfless person, but unfortunately of such a soft and weak character that with connections and requests you can coax from him the same thing that could be bought for money from Mr. Shchastny⁶¹.

(ГА РФ. Ф. 109. Оп. 11. Д. 320, л. 62 об.). On this covering letter Benckendorff wrote: “His Majesty has ordered that this be communicated to M.M. Speransky, so that he may send it immediately to the governorate, and that Guryev be informed to keep him under strict supervision and select another reliable person as his replacement” (Ibid. л. 62). From the context of the memorandum, it is unclear to which official the Chief of Gendarmes was referring.

⁵⁷ The document is counter-signed by Bek's aide-de-camp (*Konstantin Ivanovich Sharamovich*), a nobleman of Kiev Governorate and a Roman Catholic by confession. He was educated in the Noble Regiment, entered the Corps of Gendarmes in 1835 with the rank of ensign, and was assigned as aide-de-camp to the staff officer in Volhynia Governorate. He later served as aide-de-camp to provincial gendarme staff officers in Stavropol, Voronezh, and Kaluga. In 1840 he left the Corps of Gendarmes with the rank of collegiate secretary.

⁵⁸ Dated on the basis of its contents. At the top of the folio, in ink: “Letter E” and “Secret”.

⁵⁹ This document could not be located among the records of the Third Section.

⁶⁰ *Porfirii Ivanovich Karpilovich*.

⁶¹ In March 1838, state councillor *N.L. Schastny* was appointed Vice Governor of Chernigov, serving in that position until 1841.

Instead of the weak and incompetent prosecutor who retired (*Kamensky*), prosecutor *Alferov*⁶² came from Podolsk Governorate, who knows his business and acts in his official capacity honestly and persistently: but with the decrepit and self-serving district attorneys, his noble actions do not bring any benefit to the Governorate.

Instead of the Vice Governor *Afendik*, transferred to Pskov after his unfriendly treatment of two foreign travelers⁶³, for whom the English Ambassador Lord Durham⁶⁴ stood up – an actual state councillor *Smirnov*⁶⁵ was appointed from Novgorod as Vice Governor, a man with

⁶² *Nikifor Ivanovich Alferov* (1798–1880) later served as Chairman of the Criminal Court Chamber of Voronezh Governorate (1851–1859) and Chairman of the Civil Court Chamber of Volhynia Governorate (1860–1865).

⁶³ In mid-October 1836, the British subject George Ferguson submitted a written complaint to the British Envoy in St. Petersburg, Count Durham, alleging that on 25 September, while crossing the border into the Kingdom of Poland, he had been detained at the customs post in the town of Ustilug, Volhynia Governorate, and escorted with his companions to Zhitomyr. The Acting Governor, Vice Governor *Afendik*, together with police officials, examined the papers confiscated from the foreigners, after which they were granted permission to cross the border. Ferguson complained that the customs officials had disregarded an open letter signed by the Kiev Military Governor A.D. Guryev, that he had not been reimbursed for his travel expenses, and that the Vice Governor had refused to receive him personally. Nicholas I forwarded the complaint to Benckendorff with instructions to clarify the circumstances. On 23 October, Colonel N.M. Panov, attached for special assignments to the Chief of Gendarmes, was dispatched to Volhynia Governorate. He established that the foreigners had been detained pursuant to a secret directive of the Third Section dated 20 May 1833, which listed a Pole named Narciss(us) Ferguson. In his final report Panov concluded that he had found no criminal intent on the part of the customs officials but believed that “their coarse and extremely imprudent conduct in this affair could not be overlooked”. According to Panov, the Vice Governor “refused to show them any courtesy whatsoever and ignored all of their requests, which may have irritated them even more than the conduct of the customs officials”. Following the Chief of Gendarmes’ report to the Emperor, Nicholas I ordered “that Vice Governor *Afendik* receive the strictest reprimand and be transferred to another post, and that the customs office at Ustilug receive a severe reprimand for disregarding the open order of the Governor-General” ((ГА РФ. Ф. 109. Оп. 11. Д. 243. Л. 57, 63).

⁶⁴ *John George Lambton, Earl of Durham* (1792–1840), British politician and diplomat. He served as British Ambassador to Russia from 1835 to 1837 and later as High Commissioner and Governor General of British North America.

⁶⁵ *Vladimir Savvich Smirnov* (1784–1865) was appointed Vice Governor of Volhynia in February 1837 and served until February 1838. He had previously been Vice Governor of Astrakhan (1824–1828), Vladimir (1828–1835), and



information and great experience, but prone to senseless shouting at his subordinates and claims to other people's property, which is why he does not enjoy respect and the affairs of the Chamber are going worse than before.

Instead of the weak, but noble and knowledgeable governor *Zhukovsky*, transferred with his rank to Kaluga Governorate, at the request of the Governor General Count Guryev, Mr. *Zvegintsev*⁶⁶ was appointed (from the rank of colonel but re-ranked as an actual state councillor), a man with a considerable fortune and good information, but at the same time a great egoist, a shallow soul without understanding of his business, which is why things in the governorate have become worse than before.

Mr. *Zvegintsev*, however, knew from hearsay that the Provincial Government, ruling in the name of the Sovereign, if it commands quickly, correctly and persistently, then all places and persons subordinate to it will sooner or later fulfill their duties at least with legal justice, and for this reason he shook up the Provincial Government with ardor, which (the Government) perhaps he would have managed to improve – but unfortunately for him and the entire governorate, Councillor *Gordeenko* enjoys a special favor with him through the most base slavery, a man of the blackest principles, and this preference, offensive to the other two most honest councillors, forced them to leave the service, and therefore Mr. *Zvegintsev*, without in the least improving the Provincial Government, left it to his predecessor, General Maslov⁶⁷,

Novgorod (1835–1837). He later headed the Main Treasury (1839–1861) and was promoted to the rank of privy councillor in 1853.

⁶⁶ *Alexander Ilyich Zvegintsov* (spelled *Zvegintsev* by Bek) graduated from the Corps of Pages and served in the Life Guards Preobrazhensky Regiment. He was Vice Governor of Kazan from 1835 to 1837 and, in March 1837, with the rank of actual state councillor, was appointed Governor of Volhynia. He was dismissed in September of the same year and thereafter lived in retirement on his estate of Petrovskoye in Borisoglebsk Uyezd, Voronezh Governorate. From 1847 to 1850 he served as Marshal of the Nobility of Shatsk Uyezd.

⁶⁷ *Alexander Petrovich Maslov* entered government service in 1806. He participated in the Patriotic War of 1812 and the campaigns abroad of 1813–1814 as an officer of the Life Guards Grenadier Regiment. From 1827 he served as a staff officer in the Corps of Gendarmes. Between 1830 and 1833, he acted as Commander of the Fifth (Simbirsk; from 1832, Kazan) District of the Corps of Gendarmes; from 1833 to 1836, he was the first Commander of the Seventh (Siberian) District of the Corps of Gendarmes; and from 1837 to 1839, he served as Governor of Volhynia with the rank of major general.

if not in a worse, then in the same unfortunate situation in which it had been for a long time⁶⁸.

One cannot, however, disagree that the affairs of the Volhynia Government are so extensive and so badly neglected that any knowledgeable and well-intentioned governor, even with good councillors, will find it completely impossible to put it in a proper position, unless the High Government, following the examples already present in other governorates, establishes an extraordinary office to the Provincial Government to examine and complete its old affairs.

Speaking about the current situation in Volhynia Governorate, it can be said without a doubt that *here it is not the authorities who rule over individuals, but individuals who rule over the authorities*.

Volhynia Governorate is inhabited by three peoples: Poles, Jews and the *so-called Russians*. The first, influencing the government through connections and hating it, have not yet abandoned hope for the unification of the Polish Kingdom; the second, through gold, manage to exert influence in the highest governmental positions over the affairs of the Israeli people; and the third, through immorality, ignorance, and harsh slavery, constitute a people only in numbers, but lack the spirit and character that we notice in the farmers of the Great Russian provinces.

In a region where government authority is weak and not held in high esteem, the rights of landowners in relation to their peasants are usually either too unlimited or too limited, depending on circumstances; but for the most part, due to differences in faith and language, landowners and possessors of state-owned estates, considering their peasants to be some kind of work animals and not caring in the least about their morality or the benefits of home life, burden them with heavy labor.

The peasants of the Lutsk Uyezd landowner *Zakashevskaya* (Zakaszewska) had been disobeying their landowners for several years, seeking freedom. The Senate and State Council ruled that they were condemned to serfdom. However, for three years, local authorities have

⁶⁸ At the bottom of the folio, another hand added the following note to this paragraph: "A cursory inspection of the records of the Provincial Administration by the Acting Governor, Smirnov, chairman of the Treasury Chamber, revealed more than 20,000 unresolved cases and over 10,000 documents awaiting consideration dating back to 1830".



been unable to compel them to obey their landowner's authority. These hesitant measures were the reason they refused to fulfill their state service in 1837, requiring their community to provide recruits.

From my report for the 1836 past year, Your Excellency is already aware of the state of other parts of Volhynia Governorate and my opinion on improving and strengthening them for the benefit of the people and the government. But, guided by the conclusion of Your Excellency's order No. 90⁶⁹ I have the honor to most respectfully report:

1. Since the integrity of religion is the basis of everything the government cares about, then if the state no longer has the means to place the diocesan administration together with the provincial one and to give a better appearance to church things in the entire province, at least in 10 district towns it is needed to build beautiful and warm churches, supplying them with decent sacristies and utensils; then both soldiers and citizens will go to pray in their Church, but now both of them, on the very Imperial days, go to the Catholic Church and imperceptibly fall away from everything that is national;

2. It's incomprehensible why the Ministry of Internal Affairs is so careless – that for 40 years it hasn't bothered to determine where the provincial capital of Volhynia Governorate should be. This results in thousands of inconveniences, harmful both to the government and its subjects⁷⁰;

3. The confiscated estates of the Kyiv and Kamenets-Podolsk governorates have already come under the control of Your Excellency: but in Volhynia Governorate they are under the jurisdiction of the Treasury Chamber and are becoming more and more ruined every day. Last

⁶⁹ This refers to Witt's directive of 18 October 1837, discussed in greater detail in the introductory article.

⁷⁰ Zhitomyr was granted the status of a provincial capital in 1804, but during the 1830s the government considered transferring the provincial center to Novograd-Volynsky, Lutsk, or Dubno (Карлина О. Организация городского самоуправления в Волынской губернии в первой половине XIX в. // *Studia z historii społeczno-gospodarczej XIX i XX wieku*. 2011. № 9. С. 140). In October 1837, Bek proposed that “the provincial capital be transferred from the remote edge of the governorate (where it is now situated), to the town of Dubno, from which the provincial authorities could, so to speak, embrace all parts of their administration” (РГИА. Ф. 1266. Оп. 1. Д. 23. Л. 33 об.). In 1840 Nicholas I confirmed Zhitomyr's status as the provincial capital.

summer, a Jew *Filkenstein*, having made a denunciation directly to the Sovereign Emperor, undertook to prove abuses in the confiscated estates of Volhynia Governorate in the amount of up to a million rubles;

4) The Jewish people, on the one hand, due to their large numbers, religious fanaticism, roguery and the annual impoverishment of many families, and on the other hand, due to the incompleteness and incorrectness of the measures outlined in the charter and regulations specifically concerning the Jews⁷¹, – demand urgently that the government change their internal and immediate management as quickly as possible. *Their kabals are the beginning and end of all evil!*

Experienced friends of our Fatherland quite rightly conclude that if the Jews are given control of our uyezd peasants, with some changes, then they will be more useful to themselves and to the state: but if they are left under the present control, then, besides the non-payment of taxes in those places where there is no tax collection or there is but an insignificant one, the government will not receive from them even recruits.

Lieutenant Colonel Bek

Conflict of interests

The author declares no relevant conflict of interests.



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⁷¹ This refers to the *Statute on the Jews*, approved by Nicholas I on 13 April 1835.



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Received
16.03.2026

Revised
16.04.2026

Accepted
18.05.2026