Litvin (1892-1938), Mikhail Iossifovich

Born in the lake Baikal region, Litvin was one of Ezhov's closest collaborators.

Previously a typography-worker, he became a member of the Social Democratic Party in 1917 and entered the Cheka in 1920, for one year. He was then active in the trade unions and met Ezhov when working in Kazakhstan and almost never left him. He was brought to Moscow by Ezhov in 1931 and was one of the first nominees for the new post of People’s Commissar for Internal Affairs in 1936. Ezhov gave his protégé responsibility for the cadre resources of the Commissariat (until May 1937), a very important sector. At this time he was also elected a member of the First Supreme Soviet of the USSR, December 1937. Litvin went on to head the Secret Political Department of the NKVD (the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs), and was then nominated head of the Leningrad regional NKVD on January 20, 1938. By November 12, 1938, as Ezhov's star was fading, he was ordered to come back to Moscow. However, after a morning telephone call to his boss, he understood only too well what was waiting for him and committed suicide on the evening of the same day (Jansen Petrov, 2008: 179).

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