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INTRODUCTION TO SELECTED IMPROVEMENTS IN THE TRANSPORT ADMINISTRATION OF THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE BEFORE 1840

Summary. The paper deals with an introduction to and examination of selected issues relating to Tsarist transportation administration structures, since their establishment in 1809, practically their governance was ended by Count Carl von Toll at the beginning of the 1840s. The main topics analysed here concern matters of the internal division of the whole of the administrative transportation network and its changes made by the main ministry, as well as some control and budgetary (or rather accounting problems) associated with transportation laws.

Keywords: Tsarist transportation; Russian Empire; administration structures; 19th century

1. OBJECTIVES AND CONDITIONS FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF RUSSIAN TRANSPORT SERVICES IN THE PERIOD UP TO THE 1840S

In an introductory manifesto to the Law on the Board of Road and Water Communications of 20 November/2 December 1809, Tsar Alexander I of Russia announced that, since his very accession to the throne, he solemnly intended to create a government agency that would effectively deal with the matters of “land and water transport”. Thus, the Tsar’s desire was to

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allow his subjects to develop their own well-being and increase the national wealth of Russia. The monarch's striving to "increase the fame" of his empire also had a significant impact on his decision.

Finally, having found the insufficient state of the process of communications (including land and water) in Russia at that time, the Tsar decided to establish once and for all one of the most important concerns of the national administration, the transport agenda, emphasizing the importance of transport to the proper development of agriculture and industry, while taking into account the existing steady increase in the scope of internal and external trade. Probably the most important cause of the Muscovite monarch's new endeavour - especially in a period of growing political tension in Europe, with its background in slowly evolving crisis and hostile actions between two of the largest continental powers in Europe: Russia and France - the military aspect of the proper development of the transport network was nevertheless met with silence².

In these circumstances it is worth noting that, after receiving (in coordinated with the emperor) specific instructions from the German-born Prince Peter Friedrich Georg Golstein-Oldenburg³, Franz-Pavel Devolant (Sainte-de-Wollant) from Antwerp⁴ and the Spanish-born Agustín José Pedro de Betancourt y Molina (Betankur)⁵ specifically prepared some new solutions as early as August of 1809⁶. As a consequence, on 20 November 1809, Alexander I was able to sign the above-mentioned manifesto and - what was far more important - formally established the Board of Water and Land Communication. In turn, the persons directly responsible for the introduction of a completely new law on Russian transportation structures were Tsar Alexander I himself and previously stated German, Dutch and Spaniard. One can easily admit that the introduction of these legal regulations was to be considered purely international in its origins.

One way or another, in the manifesto of the Law of 2 December 1809, Tsar Alexander I officially delegated the supervision of the further development of basic principles for the operation of the agenda dealing with transport matters in Russia (i.e., a new act) to the German prince, Golstein-Oldenburg. While accepting the already presented general "frames" of the new law (which were considered by Alexander I as "sufficient" to achieve the intended goal), the Muscovite monarch, Alexander I, made Golstein-Oldenburg the Chief Director of the new government agenda. The Tsar also ordering, at the earliest opportunity, new regulations (along with related provisions and budgets) to be brought into force. The opening of a scientific institute dealing with the training of transport personnel in the country was additionally announced in 1809⁷.

² *Full Digest of Laws of the Russian Empire Since 1649*. 1830, Vol. 30, 1808-1809: 1305. St Petersburg: Tipografia Vtorogo Otdelenja Sovstvennoj Jego Imperatorskago Velicestva Kancelarii.

³ B. Glasko. 1905. *Oldenburgskij prinz Georgij Petrovic (Pietrr - Fridrih - Georg)*. Russkij Biograficeskij Slovar. Vol. 12: 248-251. St Petersburg: Tipografia Glavnogo Upravnienja Udelov.

⁴ A.J. Rieber 2017. *The Imperial Russian Project. Autocratic Politics, Economic Development, and Social Fragmentation*: 130. Toronto-Buffalo-London: University of Toronto Press.

⁵ La Orotava Sostenible. "Don Augustin de Betancourt Y Molina". Available at: <https://hydro-orotava.com/2018/01/20/cv-de-don-agustin-de-betancourt/>.

⁶ V.E. Pavlov. 2017. *Imperator Aleksandr I i Institut Korpusa Inzynierov Putej Soobszenia*. Vol. 2010/4: 287. St Petersburg: Izvestia Peterburskogo Universiteta Putej Soobszenja.

⁷ *Full Digest of Laws of the Russian Empire Since 1649*. Vol. 30: 1305.



Fig. 1. Peter Friedrich Georg Golstein-Oldenburg⁸

Regardless of the open explications and hidden intentions of the highest authorities of Tsarist Russia, which hovered in the background at the very beginning of the creation of St Petersburg's Board of Land and Water Communication, the question of shaping its territorial-administrative structure would then gradually develop, involving - of course - a number of significant changes over the course of the following 30 years. Among the most important of these re-evaluations (except the founding act itself) was the introduction of several bills, dating from 1836 to 1840, which not only significantly changed the principles and scope of the functioning of the transport services themselves, but also strengthened Russian state control over their diverse activities, especially of a financial nature.

2. THE BASIC TERRITORIAL DIVISION OF 1809 OF TSARIST REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRUCTURES AND ITS RE-EVALUATION IN 1836

2.1. The Law on the Board of Road and Water Communications of 1809 and its original establishment of 10 Districts of Communications in the Russian Empire

Importantly enough, the new law introduced, in some of its commencing chapters, 10 Districts of Communication of the Tsarist Empire⁹. These are presented in brief as follows. The First District of Communications included three gubernias, i.e., those of St Petersburg, Novgorod and Tver. The Second District of Communications stretched across area of the Governorate of Oloneck and parts of the Gubernias of Yaroslavl, Tver, Novgorod and St

⁸ *Oldenburskij Georgii Petrovic*, Socjalnaja set goroda Puskin. Available at: <https://tsarselo.ru/photos/photo8323.html>.

⁹ *Full Digest of Laws of the Russian Empire Since 1649*. Vol. 30: 1306.

Petersburg. The Third District of Communications included the Governorates of Moscow, Yaroslavl, Kostroma, Vladimir, Ryazan, and Kaluga, as well as part of the Gubernias of Tver, Tambov, Penza and Orel. In turn, the Fourth District of Communications contained the Governorates of Voronezh and the Land of Don River Cossacks, the Gubernia of Caucasus and Tauride “with the entire Caucasian line”, and the Georgian Governorate. In addition, the Fourth District included part of the Governorates of Tula, Kursk, Tambov, Saratov, Kharkiv and Yekaterinoslav. In turn, the Fifth District of Communications covered by its jurisdiction the Governorates of Chernihiv (Polish: Czernihów Siewierski), Kiev, Poltava, Kherson and Podole, as well as parts of the Gubernias of Smolensk, Mogilev on the Dnieper River (Polish: Mohylew), Orel and Kursk, as well as Yekaterinoslav and Kharkiv.

The Sixth District of Communications occupied the lands of the Governorates of Vilnius (then: Wilno), Minsk, and Grodno, including some parts of the Kiev region. It should be admitted here that, although the Article No. 456 of the 1809 Act, describing the exact boundaries of this organizational unit of the Tsarist Transport Administration, did not mention the recently acquired the Bialystok (Polish: Białystok) District, on the basis of Treaties of Tilsit, as part of this District of Communications, nevertheless, the confirmation of the above-mentioned case was placed in the following article (No. 457) of the same law. Moreover, Article No. 458 pointed to the Wilno (Vilnius) Route, passing through Grodno to Bialystok, as one of the roads for which this district was solely responsible.

The Seventh District of Communications included within its borders the Governorates of Vitebsk (Polish: Witebsk), Kurland, Lifland (Livonia) and Estland (Estonia), as well as parts of the Gubernias of Minsk and Vilnius (then: Wilno). The Eighth District of Communications stretched across the “whole of Finland, including the newly acquired country”. Next, the Ninth District of Communications included the Governorates of Vologda and Arkhangelsk, as well as parts of the Gubernias of Perm, Vyatka and Oloneck. Lastly, the 10th District of Communications of the Russian Empire occupied the areas of the Governorates of Tobolsk, Tomsk and Irkutsk, and part of the Perm Gubernia. The newly introduced law did not mention anything about Russian Alaska at that time¹⁰.

It was obvious that the Law of 20 November/2 December 1809 regulated the scope of works and the structure of individual districts in a very detailed way, describing the above issues in its Articles No. 205-594¹¹. Equally important was information on the rights and obligations of people undertaking the most important transportation decisions locally - namely, the so-called District Chief Directors - as contained in Articles No. 65-85 of this act¹².

It seems that the arrangement for the borders of the Tsarist transportation districts, as proposed and introduced in 1809, was meant to be strictly arbitrary, which was particularly noticeable in the area of the completely artificially divided so-called Western Territories (i.e., lands belonging formerly to the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth), while Alaska was completely omitted from this list. The reason for such behaviour was likely to have been purely political/military reasons, which, in turn, undermines the assumption about the mostly economical motives behind the introduction of transportation services legislation in 1809.

¹⁰ *Full Digest of Laws of the Russian Empire Since 1649*. Vol. 30: 1316, 1323, 1325-1326, 1328, 1330-1332, 1334-1335.

¹¹ *Full Digest of Laws of the Russian Empire Since 1649*. Vol. 30: 1316-1337.

¹² *Full Digest of Laws of the Russian Empire Since 1649*. Vol. 30: 1309-1310.

2.2. Changes in the number and the territorial scope of the Russian Districts of Communications, based on Tsar Nicholas' law from 1836

In a very short time after the implementation of the Law on the Building and Maintenance of Roads” (April 1833), and formal opinions in this regard given by St Petersburg’s Ruling Senate (February 1834), on 26 March/18 April 1836, the successor of Alexander I, Tsar Nicholas I, referred to the same Ruling Senate the draft of new legal regulations, radically changing (we omit here some previous minor reappraisals) the territorial scope and the number of Districts of Communications that were subordinate to his vast empire. This law was in line with the decision developed in this respect by the Chief Director of the Board of Roads of Communication and Public Buildings (the name of this institution appeared in this form), an Estonian German by the name of Count Carl Wilhelm von Toll. The monarch decided to pursue these transformations “considering that it was suitable to transform some of the offices subordinate to the Main Board of Roads of Communications and Public Buildings, as well as specific gubernatorial establishments”.

The very purposes of these changes were: a) to consolidate the “intricate” functioning of the branches responsible for the craftsmanship, economics and administration of transport; b) to reduce the procedures in writing, as well as the sending and receiving of official notes and letters, in turn providing a more regular and effective course of public administration in this matter; c) to ensure the number of officials was sufficient to meet the real need, while achieving a relative increase in their means of subsistence.

Thus, it seems that, during the early spring months of 1836, Nicholas I was especially haunted by important and far-sighted visions of the future development of transportation administration (and, in particular, actual road construction processes) in his dominion. In other words, first of all, it was about the possible consolidation of individual branches of this specific type of state administration (corresponding in a way to craftsmanship and the economy at a national level, and generally understood as an administration in itself). Secondly, it corresponded to reducing the scope of unnecessary bureaucracy, thus leading to a more resilient operation of the road board system. Thirdly, the Tsar was minded to limit excessive administrative growth and, subsequently, increased salary levels for other (not dismissed) employees¹³. The last solution was rather typical of the rule of Nicholas I and practised in many other branches of the Russian administration of the time.

When one turns to the territorial changes, the most specific - in the opinion of the author of this article - was the decision was made in relation to Finland. Namely, according to the Act of 7 April 1836, the Eighth District of Communications of the Russian Empire was liquidated from among the nine main transportation local authorities existing at the time. This was the territory of the Grand Duchy of Finland, which until that year was wholly included in the general Russian transportation structure. The official reason for this exclusion was the admittance of the relatively “low importance of local waterways” (including some small artificial channels). In reality, though, as one might reasonably expect, it was all about the liberalization of formal relations between Moscow and Finland, a country that proved loyal to Russia during the Polish War of 1831.

¹³ *Petersburg Weekly. Official Gazette of the Kingdom of Poland.* 20 May 1836, No. 35: 207.



Fig. 2. Count Carl Wilhelm von Toll¹⁴

Finally, Tsar Nicholas I decided to create only five out of the remaining eight Districts of Communications. The new territorial and organizational solutions introduced in April of 1836 were as follows: a) while the existing territory of the First District of Communications was left intact as a whole, part of the Third District was attached to it, i.e., mainly areas around the Volga on the section stretching from Tver to Rybinsk, including so-called Rybinsk Bay; b) the Second District of Communications now had to comprise the whole of the former Second and Ninth Districts, meaning that it was significantly increased; c) in the Third District of Communications, its former part was disconnected and transferred to the jurisdiction of the First District (as mentioned above), while the rest remained “within its present borders”, which in turn meant a significant reduction in its territory; d) the Fourth District of Communications now had to consist of its former areas, but excluding Georgia from its territory, as well as the Caucasus Province and the areas on the southern side of the Caucasus Mountains, which “in view of the routes of communication were to be managed by local civil administration authorities”. However, to this district was now added the whole of the existing Fifth District of Communications and part of the Sixth District, which included the area through which the so-called Royal Canal (built during the rule of King Stanislas August Poniatowski) passed, along with all that flowed into this canal, namely, the adjacent “rivers of Volhynia and the upper part of the Western Bug River”. The new Fifth District of Communications was created in 1836 from the former Seventh District and the remaining part of the Sixth District, including the Neman River, the Oginski Canal, and the Jasiolda and Western Bug Rivers (in the last case starting from the area around the city of Brest-Litovsk, in Polish: Brześć Litewski)¹⁵.

¹⁴ *Kratkii istoriceskii ocerk razvitsia i deiatelnosti Vedomstva Putej Sooscenia za sto let jego soscestvovabia (1798-1898 g.)*. 1898. St Petersburg: Tipografia Vedomstva Putej Sooscenia. The picture is found between pp. 66 and 67. *Genealogisches Handbuch der baltischen Ritterschaften*. 1930: 434. Teil Estland, Band 1. Verlag für Sippenforschung und Mappenfunde. Görlitz: G.U. Starte.

¹⁵ *Petersburg Weekly. Official Gazette of the Kingdom of Poland*. 20 May 1836, No. 35: 207.

Thus, on 7 April 1836, highly significant changes in the territorial range and number of the Districts of Communications of the Russian Empire were made, where - as it would seem from the official statements - the existing structure and future development of the water network (rivers and artificial canals) had a major impact on the above changes. This is, however, somewhat doubtful, especially in relation to the practically effective cessation of works on some canals and rivers at the time, such as in the case of the vital Windawa (Latvian: Ventspils) Canal. Such a conclusion, moreover, coincides strangely with the simultaneous exclusion of Finland, which was loyal to the Tsar, by the Muscovite system of the Districts of Communication.

The implemented territorial revisions had, of course, a profound impact on the structure of provincial and district (in the formal language of Russian administration names: uiezd) "Builders and Building Commissions". At that time, they were assigned to particular Districts of Communication in the way as presented below. Five Building Commissions were assigned to the First District of Communications, namely, those of Yaroslav, Kostroma, Novgorod, Pskov and Tver. Under the jurisdiction of the Second District of Communications, Building Commissions were set up in Arkhangelsk, Oleneck, Perm, Vyatka and Vologda. Thirteen Building Commissions were assigned to the Third District of Communications, which were as follows: Astrakhan, Kharkiv, Chernihiv (Polish: Czernihów Siewierski), Kaluga, Kazan, Nizhny Novgorod, Orenburg, Orel, Penza, Ryazan, Saratov, Simbirsk, Tambov and Tula. There were another 12 Building Commissions in the Fourth District of Communications, namely, those of Bessarabia, Cherson, Yekaterinoslav, Kiev, Kursk, Tauride, Podole, Poltava, Vladimir, Volhynia and Voronezh. Finally, further Building Commissions were assigned to the Fifth District of Communications, with their location placed in Bialystok District, Estland (Estonia), Grodno, Kurland, Lifland (Livonia), Minsk, Vitebsk (Polish: Witebsk), Mogilev on Dnieper river (Polish: Mohylew), Smolensk and Vilnius (then: Wilno).

Another event of great importance was that the Act of 7 April 1836 created completely new administrative bodies to manage individual Districts of Communication of the Russian Empire. As matter of fact, for the purpose of "administering each of the newly emerging districts", the legislator called for establishing so-called "separate regional governments". Initially, they were to operate on the basis of temporary budgets, formally attached as a specific additional part to the analysed main formal legal resolution. These separate regional governments, moreover, gained very wide powers for themselves, because they were destined to control and manage "all specific orders and solutions on the matter of building roads and hydraulic constructions".

What was even more striking, as the new law of April 1836 stated openly, was that, alongside the gradual establishment and "strengthening"/"consolidation" of a considerable number of these newly appointed transport district administrative governments, the liquidation of some old administrative agencies - which had so far served the development of the Russian communication network - would also take place. Therefore, it was decided to finally and unconditionally close completely: a) the nine chambers currently operating at the headquarters of particular Districts of Communications for the sake of serving the local directors there; b) nine of the Technical Departments that had been previously working to support the Chief Directors of the individual Districts of Communication; c) three Economic Committees, which existed in Moscow, Riga and Wytegra. In addition, the St Petersburg Economic Committee, which was active in the service of the general transport administration, was now renamed as the Economic Committee of the Central Board of Roads of Communication and Public Buildings.

The following cities and towns were designated as the seats of the newly formed regional communication centres: a) for the First District: Novgorod; b) for the Second District: Wytegra/Wyatiegra (a locality close to Onega Lake, situated on the Mariinsk or Wytegra Canal System, currently named as the Volga-Baltic Waterway¹⁶); c) for the Third District: Moscow; d) for the Fourth District: Kiev; e) for the Fifth District: Riga. These choices were not meant to be permanent, simply because the Article No. 4 of the new law of April 1836 allowed the Main Board of Roads of Communication and Public Buildings to freely relocate the seats of regional transport governments, based on ministerial common sense, as well as on “circumstances and current needs”. Furthermore, Count Carl von Toll (and his eventual chief successors) gained the right to, at least, partially change the boundaries of the Districts of Communications, which also entailed the possibility to undertake some future change in the areas of the superior jurisdiction of individual Building Commissions. Such alterations, however, had to be brought by the actively managing Highest Authority of the Russian Empire’s transport services to the attention of the St Petersburg Ruling Senate, mainly for the purpose of making them publicly available in a terms of official publications.

Having established, in April 1836, new basic organizational regulations for Russian transport services, Tsar Nicholas I ordered for them to be implemented gradually, carefully and thoughtfully, i.e., in separate stages. According to the Russian Tsar, the same applied to new financial proposals (budgets), prepared in April of 1836, for individual Districts of Communications. The Chief Director of the Board of Roads of Communication and Public Buildings was personally responsible for deciding on the above-mentioned matters, who, at that particular time, was the Estonian German aristocrat active in Russian public service, Count von Toll.

The clue to the new solutions was hidden in the statement that the provisions referring to general administrative and structural issues were actually introduced only “on a test basis, until the general and final establishment of the entire Board of Roads of Communication and Public Buildings”. Thus, it was not surprising that the new budget was also introduced in a provisory way, being treated “as a temporary measure, pending the issue of general, financial schedules for all branches and departments of [the] national management” of transport¹⁷.

3. CHANGES IN THE INTERNAL ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND THE BUDGET OF TRANSPORT SERVICES OF THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE IN ACCORDANCE WITH PROVISIONS OF THE NEW LAW OF THE DISTRICTS OF COMMUNICATIONS, DATED 26 MARCH/7 APRIL 1836

There is no doubt that, among the most important issues raised on account of the new legal solutions for the Districts of Communications of the Russian Empire (included in the formal legal act approved finally by Tsar Nicholas I on 26 March/7 April 1836) was the establishment in each of these transportation districts, a so-called “Central Power”, i.e., a “District Board” or “District Authority”. This type of administrative power would act in the interests of “managing all parts of the administration subject to the Board of Roads of Communication and Public Buildings” in Russian gubernias or governorates.

Each local District Board for transport acted under the direction (in the original: “under the presidency”) of the Chief/President of the given administrative body of the District of

¹⁶ *Istoriya, dostoprimechatelnosti i muzei Vytegrы i jejo okrestnostej*. Available at: <https://anashina.com/istoriya-dostoprimechatelnosti-i-muzei-vytegry/>.

¹⁷ *Petersburg Weekly. Official Gazette of the Kingdom of Poland*. 20 May 1836, No. 35: 207-208.

Communications. In his absence, or in the case of extraordinary circumstances, he was to be replaced by his Deputy or "Supporter". This "Supporter", while being next in line, was still an ordinary member of the board when the Chief was still actively performing his duties. Besides these two individuals, there were three more persons who were considered as permanent members of the governing District Board: a) an officer of a higher rank, elected from the members of the Corps of Roads of Communication, responsible for craftsmanship-related matters; b) a civil servant, responsible for economic tasks; c) a military or civilian officer, responsible for matters of an administrative nature. Each of these persons, as a member of the District Board, had a duty to directly and constantly watch "over a decent and hurried course of business in the parts [of each district's local transportation administration] entrusted to him".

Every official, copyist, conductor or craftsman working in a given department was subjected - according to office rules and circulars - only to the relevant members of the District Board. For their own work, the managers of each three branches of the local transportation administration responded personally.

Each of the three departments of the District Board (i.e., of craftsmanship, economics and administration) dealt, of course, with different tasks. Thus, the Department of Crafts of the District Board of Communication was involved in: a) laying out, analysing and implementing transport projects and cost estimates; b) conducting technical accounting; c) supervising the progress of transport works; d) keeping work diaries, ledgers and accounting books for (raw) materials; e) supervision and management of working tools and maintaining them in good condition; f) keeping lists of buildings (owned by transportation authorities); g) drawing "on the subjects of all projects".

The Economic Department was in turn responsible for the following activities: a) distribution of state funds; b) preparing and running of public auctions "for all undertakings and deliveries in the district"; c) all forms of economic activity; d) implementation of agreements concluded between the State Treasury and possible suppliers, entrepreneurs and other persons signing relevant agreements; e) calculation and control of amounts for individual projects undertaken within the limits of the respective District of Communications; f) widely understood "monetary accounting", i.e., general financing; g) handling cases for private owners' remuneration for expropriation or temporary losses related to the operation of transport services; h) handling disputes with entrepreneurs and workers, but only before the referral of individual cases to court for consideration; i) keeping correspondence regarding the appointment of (army) soldiers for road-related works.

The Administrative Department of the District Board was to deal with: a) the appointment, dismissal and appropriate dislocation of transport officers, as well as working for soldiers attached to the Board of Roads of Communication; b) rewarding them with bonuses and punishing them with penalties; c) conducting investigative enquiries, in other words, criminal and civil investigations; d) issuing all possible shipping regulations; e) disposing of state and "prescribed" steersmen (the latter were considered as individuals who were formally subject to the local owner of a given territory/town, serving him with their craftsmanship); f) providing illumination (candles) and fuel (wood) for transport authorities' own buildings; g) paying salaries and "table money", i.e., diets, altogether with providing provisions, forage and ammunition.

The District Boards were obviously obliged to act in compliance with the applicable laws and regulations. Such a rule had to be applied in the process of the consideration of absolutely all matters by the so-called District Council, that is, a General Assembly of all three departments of a particular District Board. Conducting individual proceedings always had to

take place “while maintaining the collegial code of conduct”. The rank of each District Board for road administration was equal to the administrative and legal position occupied by the Gubernia Governments and the Judicial Chambers of Governorates.

One important issue was to determine the scope of matters and duties carried out by the Council (that is, the General Assembly) of the Regional Roads Authority. During the session of such a General Assembly (the Council), the issues considered were related to: a) all financial inflows and expenses of a specific District of Communications; b) financial and “technical” settlements; c) conducting public tenders and dealing with their possible (unexpected) consequences; d) preparing “by economic measures” (namely, using its own administrative and manpower resources) all the tools necessary to carry out transport fieldwork, as well as providing the required (raw) materials, as well as building material stocks.

The General Assembly also analysed: e) disputable issues and court/legal cases; f) individual cases of employees of the Board of Communications in terms of which investigations were conducted (except for cases involving military personnel with non-commissioned ranks, while their investigative matters were mandatorily transferred directly from the Administrative Department of the District Board of Communications to its General Director/Head of the District, who was only able to make a decision), g) cases of specific significance, including criminal ones; and h) all other matters recognized by the Head of the District as indispensable for consideration by the General Assembly (Council)¹⁸.

Regardless of whether the given task was undertaken in the form of public tender contracts, “resulting from bids conducted usually in the Council”, or in the framework of its own work adopted by the District Board (literally “in the economic manner”), the performance of works of a transportation nature and the delivery of the necessary raw materials were only carried out in one of two ways. The first was the confirmation of the whole transaction/task by the Head of the District, provided that the total cost of the project did not exceed the sum of 25,000 (silver) roubles. The second way was to wait for confirmation of the actions taken by the St Petersburg Board of Roads of Communication and Public Buildings, which was the case whenever the sum of the project exceeded 25,000 roubles¹⁹.

Altogether, with the Act of 7 April 1836, Nicholas I approved a new budget for the above-described newly organized Districts of Communications. This mostly resulted in the simple fact that, in each District Board, its Director/Chief (in other words: the Head of the District) had to remain at the rank of Major General. An annual “table salary” (diet), valued at 3,000 roubles, was assigned to this position, which was financed from the budget of the Corps of Engineers of the Roads of Transportation. The Deputy (“Supporter” was the formal name attached to this position) of the Head of the District was always a Colonel in the Corps of Engineers of the Roads of Transportation, who received his annual “table salary” from the same Corps of Engineers, equal to 2,000 roubles. Among the District of Communications’ strict authorities, one could also count the adjutant of the Head of the District (a different person to the “Supporter” or “Deputy”), who in principle was a lower-ranked officer of the Corps of Engineers, but eventually came from “a group of builders”. However, he always collected a salary issued from the Corps of Engineers fund. It is worth noting that the main act of April 1836 did not refer to the basic wages of such an employee.

In turn, the members of the board - the Chairmen of the individual departments constituted, of course, a group of three people. They were: a): in the Department of Crafts - a senior

¹⁸ *Petersburg Weekly. Official Gazette of the Kingdom of Poland*. 4 June 1834, No. 38: 226.

¹⁹ *Petersburg Weekly. Official Gazette of the Kingdom of Poland*. June 4, 1834, No. 38: 226-227.

officer of the Corps of Engineers of the Roads of Communication, who also managed the so-called “Bureau of Hand Drawing” and collected his salary from the Corps of Engineers’ funds; b) in the Economic Department - a civil servant (formally classified in the rank of clerical classes up to Class 5 or in the rank of uniforms up to Class 6, but, in the classification of salary, up to Category 3), who collected a yearly ordinary/basic salary of 5,000 roubles; c) in the Administrative Department - a civil servant (classified in terms of clerical rank, uniform and salary based on the same class as his predecessor), who received the same regular salary of 5,000 roubles. Furthermore, two civil servants, who were “destined to execute special orders”, were counted among the authorities of the District Board of Communications. They were assigned to the ninth grade of the clerical class, the eighth uniformed category and the seventh category of emoluments. Their annual basic salary was calculated at 1,500 roubles, while they additionally received a further 700 roubles per year to cover travel expenses. In contrast to the first group of persons from the “strict government”, there was no mention of any “table money” for the individuals enlisted as above.

The composition (of the lower-level staff working) in three separate departments of the District Board was as follows. In the Department of Crafts, there were employed: a) two officers of the Corps of Engineers, who collected a salary from the funds of that corps; b) the Secretary of the Department, who worked as a civil servant (counted in the rank of clerical classes up to the ninth category, in the uniform classification to the ninth grade, and in terms of salary up to the eighth category) and normally collected an annual salary of 1,500 roubles; c) the Secretary’s Assistant, who also worked as a civil servant (classified in the rank of clerical classes up to the 12th category, in the uniform classification as a person having the right to wear a nine-tier class coat, and up to the ninth category in terms of salary), with a regular salary of 1,000 roubles a year; d) two conductors, who received their salary from the Corps of Engineers; e) three cartoonists, who received their regular monthly wage from the same corps; f) four copyists, chosen from the so-called “cantonists” (i.e., graduates of lower-level military schools, usually orphans) of the first class. The latter received their equipment “according to military laws”. Once again, in all these cases, there was no mention of any additional “table money”.

In the Economic Department, the following persons were employed: a) the Secretary, who was responsible for conducting public tenders and strict implementing any economic regulations in force (calculated in the classification of clerical classes as belonging to the ninth grade, in the classification of uniforms to the ninth grade, and in the eighth category of salary), receiving 1,500 roubles per year; b) the Senior Deputy of the Secretary (classified in the rank of clerical classes up to the 10th category, in the uniform classification up to the 10th grade, and in the category of wages up to the ninth category), with a salary of 1,200 roubles a year; c) the Younger Deputy of the Secretary (counted in the official clerical classification up to the 12th category, in uniformed positions as a person having the right to wear a tailcoat, and in the category of salary up to the ninth category), with a remuneration of 1,000 roubles a year; d) the Accounting Secretary (“included in the same classification as other secretaries”), with an annual salary of 2,000 roubles; e) the Assistant Secretary for Accounting Matters (counted among “those classes to which the previously described Secretary had been appointed”), with a remuneration of 1,500 roubles a year; f) six first-class copyists, receiving a payment from the funds of the Corps of Engineers of the Roads of Communication.

In the Administrative Department, the following persons were employed: a) the Secretary (classified in the clerical, uniform and salary ranking “equal to other secretaries”), with an annual payment of 1,500 roubles; b) two Assistants of the Secretary of the Department (situated in all three types of classifications “at the same level as a Senior Deputy in the

Economic Department”), with a remuneration of 1,200 roubles a year; c) six first-class copyists, collecting their wages from the funds of the Corps of Engineers.

Added to this composition were “general posts”, such as: a) the Cashier of the District Board of Communication, acting simultaneously as an Executor/Bailiff (included in the rank of clerical classes up to the 10th category, in the uniform classification up to the 12th grade, and, in terms of salary, belonging to the eighth category), with an annual wage totalling 1,500 roubles; b) a “Journalist or Registrar” (holding the 12th level of classification in official clerical rankings, the 10th grade of uniform classification, and the ninth level of financial classification), with an annual remuneration of 1,000 roubles; c) three Couriers remunerated from the funds of the Corps of Engineers; d) four Watchmen, who received their wages from the same financial source as in the case of Couriers. It is quite easy to observe that some of the people employed in the District Boards of Communication were remunerated by the State Treasury, while others were remunerated by funds belonging directly to the Corps of Engineers of the Roads of Communication. Finally, Tsar Nicholas I approved the Transport Administration budget, allocated to each District Board, worth 5,000 roubles a year, with the purpose of “office” and “drawing” expenditures.

Finally, it should be noted that, in accordance with the realities occurring after the introduction of the act from April 1836, the total of those employed by five (new) administrative units, managing individual Districts of Transportation, amounted to 250 persons. The complete budget of each of the local District Transport Administrations - statistically, employing 50 people each - equated to 36,500 roubles to be spent every 12 months. Thus, the total cost of maintaining the staff of all Russian Regional Branches of the Main Board of Communications amounted to 182,500 roubles. Combined with the expenses for renting premises, as well as the payment for “illumination”, this resulted in the sum of 196,500 roubles a year in the whole of Tsarist Russia²⁰.

It is more than hard to say whether a cohort of 250 persons and a sum of less than 200,000 roubles to be spent each year for all local district transportation authorities would prove to be sufficient for such a vast empire, as Tsarist Russia was at that time. What was however beyond any doubt is that the administrative structures of the new Districts of Communications were seemingly well thought out.

4. CHANGES IN THE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE SAINT PETERSBURG BOARD OF ROADS OF COMMUNICATION – ITS DIVISION INTO TWO SEPARATE DEPARTMENTS IN 1839/1840

Due to diverse difficulties in the practical and reasonable operation of this branch of the main Russian administration, in 1839, Count Carl Wilhelm von Toll approached Tsar Nicholas I with his proposal to divide the Main Board of Roads of Communication and Public Buildings into two separate departments. As a result, on 29 October/10 November 1839, the Tsar acceded to his request, signing a “personal order” directed at the St Petersburg Ruling Senate on this matter. The order at stake established the First and Second Departments of this specific ministry. Nicholas also approved the temporary status of these two newly established departments.

²⁰ *Petersburg Weekly. Official Gazette of the Kingdom of Poland.* 4 June 1834, No 38: 227.

The second point (not: an article) of this newly approved ruling by the Tsar ordered that the First Department should now comprise four branches, managing all the works carried out on both roads and watercourses, as well as in relation to public edifices.

The third point of the order described in detail the composition of the Second Department. On the basis of the new regulation in this department, the following administrative organizations were to be found: a) the Chancellery, currently changing its formal name into a sort of simple “branch” or “division”; b) a new branch dealing with public buildings (which, until 1833, were owned by the Ministry of the Interior); c) a branch focusing its activities on traffic on state waterways; d) a branch dealing with billing (bookkeeping), generally concerning the management of transportation routes and public buildings. The Treasury and the Archive of the Main Board of Roads of Communications were now also assigned to this Second Department.

Later on, these new legal solutions (given in a form of a Tsar’s decree) were published on the basis of the official order of the Ruling Senate of 16/28 November 1839. Completing these proceedings and following another application by Count von Toll on 8 December 1839, the Tsar issued another decision addressed to the Ruling Senate, this time appointing two directors for the freshly established departments. Thus, Nicholas I appointed General Rokasovski of the Corps of Engineers as the Director of the First Department. Duties of the Director of the Second Department were imposed on State Counsellor Vladimirov.

Having received the Tsar’s clarification on this matter, the Director of the Main Board of Communications, for his part, tried to fulfil the remit he had been given as soon as possible, which resulted in the fact that both departments rapidly commenced their actual activities as early as 2/15 January 1840. Finally, on 17/29 January 1840, the First Department of the Ruling Senate issued a decree, informing the public about all the procedures aimed at establishing and commencing the work of these two departments in the Main Board of Roads of Communication and Public Buildings. The Ruling Senate also ordered the publication of this information in the periodical *Senatskije Vedomosti* and to hand it over to the Heroldia Office²¹.

As obvious as it was, the commencement in January of 1840 of the actual division of the Main Board of Roads of Communication and Public Buildings was complementing the general conception of improving the quality of administrative procedures in the Transport Administration of Tsarist Russia.

5. INCREASE IN THE SPAN OF CONTROL OF THE BOARD OF ROADS OF COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC BUILDINGS BY THE RUSSIAN IMPERIAL STATE: ESTABLISHMENT OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE AND NEW ACCOUNT SETTLEMENT RULES FROM 1840

Soon after the administrative division began in January 1840, and encountering some (previous) disorders in this area of his supervision duties, Count Carl von Toll brought to the Russian Council of State, on 10/22 April 1840, a draft of new provisions regarding the accounts of the Main Board of Roads of Communication, which was subordinate to him. This was accompanied by the presentation of a draft budget for the Special Commission (Audit Committee), to be appointed for the revision of all current accounts of this board.

²¹ *Petersburg Weekly. Official Gazette of the Kingdom of Poland.* 28 February 1840, No 13: 63. *Full Digest of Laws of the Russian Empire, 1840.* Oddelenie pervoje, 1841: 25-26. St Petersburg: Tipografia Vtorogo Otdelenja Sovstvennoj Jego Imperatorskago Velicestva Kancelarii.

Around the same time, Count von Toll asked Tsar Nicholas I to approve the implementation of the budget he had presented to the Special Commission. This budget was to be in force by the second half of 1840. According to the Director of the Tsarist Transport Administration, the new main transportation authority budget law itself would have entered into force on 1 January 1841.

The whole matter was carefully considered and examined by the Department of Economy of the State Council in St Petersburg, and then discussed at the General Assembly of the same council. The final outcome was positive, as - after consultation with the State Controller - Russian legislators were not able to find anything to reject the acceptance of new legal solutions. As a result, it was decided to accept both drafts concerning the Audit Committee and the rules of accounting and, consequently, to approach the Tsar himself for their final approval.

To much surprise, it was decided to implement the bill for new accounting methods - based on precedents for similar situations that took place in other main government offices, while referring to opinions of the State Council expressed in 1830 - at the earliest opportunity, even without presenting it to the Tsar himself for his signature. This opinion of the Ruling Senate, together with the budget of the Audit Committee, was, in one way or another, later submitted to Tsar Nicholas I for approval.

Finally, on 20 June/3 July 1840, Nicholas I accepted the opinion of the Council of State regarding the Audit Commission's function to manage the accounts of the main transportation authorities, as well as the rules for submitting such types of financial reports by the Main Board of Public Roads of Communication and Public Buildings. Next, Count von Toll informed St Petersburg's Ruling Senate about the new law, which also formally had a hearing on this matter, where the minister presented his report. These laws (on the budget of the Audit Committee and on the rules of keeping accounts related to the Main Board of Public Roads of Communication and Public Buildings), pursuant to the order of the First Department of the Ruling Senate of 9/22 July 1840, were sent for public announcement²². The new "budgetary law" - containing 100 articles - was subsequently published on 8/20 August 1840²³.

Thus, the control of transportation finances in Tsarist Russia - subject as always to the temptation of widespread corruption - at least seemed to have been tightened considerably. This achievement on the part of Count von Toll could be considered as one of the biggest formal steps forward in the allegedly proper development of Russian transportation administrative structures.

6. CONCLUSIONS

It is fair to admit that almost all the data presented here somehow point to significant progress in the development of the Transport Administration of Tsarist Russia in the first half of the 19th century (the information given in this article basically commenced with a short description of this very establishment, by focusing on territorial and organizational transformations, up to dealing with endeavours to improve transportation administration control, mainly in the financial field). This material allows us to present these whereby, in principle, one could observe a favourable and well-thought-out course of this process. This

²² *Full Digest of Laws of the Russian Empire*. 1840, Vol. 15: 416-417; *Petersburg Weekly. Official Gazette of the Kingdom of Poland*. 18 September 1840, No. 69: 374.

²³ *Full Digest of Laws of the Russian Empire*. 1840, Vol. 15: 417-434.

fully deserved positive opinion, however, must be confronted with a few exceptions, some of which are of considerable importance.

Firstly, and as simple as it was, the Tsarist authorities were lacking an abundance of suitably qualified persons engaged in their transportation processes. Thus, it should be remembered that - which is extremely important and paradoxically indicative of the strongly pro-development intentions of the highest members of Nicholas' transportation administration on the matter of the communication network in Russia - as late as 1834, legislators were desperately crying out for new staff to join the road-building efforts. At that time, it was publicly announced that there was a pressing need to admit into the ranks of employees of the Main Board of Roads of Communication and Public Buildings (into the Corps of Engineers of Roads) an unlimited number of lieutenants (with a salary of 690 roubles and 250 roubles of a diet yearly) and second lieutenants (with a salary of 600 roubles per year), as well as warrant officers (with a salary of 510 roubles a year). The only restriction was obviously to complete academic courses in "appropriate sciences"²⁴.

This quest for an unlimited increase in the number of medium-level technical staff (lieutenants, second lieutenants and warrant officers) of the Corps of Road Transport Engineers was apparently not the only visible sign of a deep concern among the Tsarist authorities about an increase in the numbers of acting staff in this part of Russian administration. On 16/28 January 1837, the First Department of the Ruling Senate issued a significant order, giving lower-ranking officers, belonging to the Corps of Road Transport/Building Engineers, the extraordinary specific right to employ their private servants at the expense of the State Treasury²⁵. The above facts only confirmed the existence, in the mid-1830s (and therefore almost 30 years after the initial creation of the Transport Administration in Tsarist Russia), of the urgent need to supplement the personal composition of the Russian communications services.

The other obstacle to the proper undertaking of diverse activities by the Tsarist transportation authorities was - on several occasions - mentioned in this text from the perspective of the political nature of their decisions. These sometimes strongly shadowed economic principles, as well as suggested simple common sense.

However, this does not diminish in any way or under any circumstances the significant organizational effort put into the creation and further development of such an important branch of the national administrative structure as the Russian transport structure was.

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²⁴ *Petersburg Weekly. Official Gazette of the Kingdom of Poland*. 26 January 1835, No. 1: 5.

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