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Repressive Policy of the Soviet Government During World War II

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Abstract. The article features wide range of sources dealing with deportation of a number of Nations in the years of the great Patriotic war. The authors note that the repressive policy of the Soviet state, as well as the reason for the deportation of the peoples in the first half of XX century are rooted in the nature of the totalitarian mode.

Keywords: the Great Patriotic war; Repressive policies; repression; deportation; collaboration; Soviet power.

Introduction. In November, 1936 the Eighth All-Russia Congress of Soviets adopted a new Constitution that proclaimed beginning of socialism establishing in the USSR. The set of fundamental principles added universal direct suffrage and recognized personal and political freedoms: freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly including the holding of mass meetings, freedom of street processions and demonstrations. The right to unite in public organizations was also protected by law. Inviolability of the person and the home of citizens were guaranteed as well.

Unfortunately, proclaimed rights and freedoms failed to forestall the repressive policy. The Soviet policy of large-scale deportation was class-based in the sense that it targeted specific economic and political categories; but it was also ethnically motivated. It started in the pre-war period when ethnic groups were charged with espionage, spying for potential enemies, and occurred in the time of the World War II when they were deported for collaboration with the German invaders.

The decree stated that: 'Under the circumstances of wartime the Soviet government has to take reprisals against the Volga German population' and ordered Russian-Germans' massive deportation in August, 12 1941 for the reason of belonging to the same ethnic group with the Nazi invaders. The total number of deportees was 949829 people, including 5965 people from Kalmyk Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic according to the decree № 84-кс on November, 2 1941 'Deportation of Germans from Kalmyk ASSR' of Council of People's Commissars [1].

Materials and methods. The article considers the repressive policy of the Soviet government in the time of the World War II on the basis of a large number of resources such as published materials and documental ones of State archive of Russian Federation. The historical-systematic method allowed the author to consider facts of massive deportation as a complex process. Besides the mentioned method, the historical-typological, historical-comparative and systematic ones were applied.

Discussion. One of the main targets of the large scale deportation in the beginning of 1940s to sparsely-populated areas was political and economical problems solution. Facing the need of speedy building industrial enterprises, canals, electricity generating plants, coal mines the Soviet government turned out to be unable to establish a suitable infrastructure for employees in advance. A fast and effective way to provide labour resources for un- or sparsely-populated territories of Siberia, Ural, Far East, Sakhalin and Magadan was expelling a great number of people by force and dispatching them to labour camps. Mobilizing labour resources by force seemed to the Soviet government to be an effective means of political and social problems solution. It should be mentioned that the forced labour played a crucial part in socialism establishing.

The expulsion by force had an impact on ethnic composition of the population in both regions from which deportees were expelled and ones to which they were relocated.

Soviet regime paid a special attention to the people who kept up resistance to it or suffered from collectivization and considered them to be ready to assist potential enemies. The false consideration was deflated by the war. A small part of people under consideration delivered assistance to the Nazi. Among them were those who lost belief in the victory of the Red Army or had commercial interests in the period of the successful Nazi offensives on the Soviet territory in 1941-1942. There were cases when inhabitants in the occupied by the Nazi territories or war prisoners went over to the enemy. It is known that as the result of hard battles the number of war prisoners among Soviet soldiers was 2285500 people in 1941-1942. According to the

estimations of Russian historians, the total number of war prisoners among Soviet soldiers was 40696000 people, according to the data of foreign ones, it was approximately from 5246000 to 5744000 people [2].

It should be underlined that desertion the army and evasion of military service took place in the war time. According to the data of Division of fight against banditry of People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs of the USSR dated from August, 30 1944, in the period of three years (from 1941 till 1944) the number of deserters was 1210224, the number of military service evaders was 456667, the total number was 1666891 (that is 0.86 % of the whole population of the USSR before the World War II). For instance, the total number of deserters and evaders was 26500 (0.8 %) in Krasnodar region, 14493 (0.8 %) in Stavropol region, 5228 (1.28 %) in Northern Ossetiya, 21326 (0.6 %) in Georgia. In the same period there were 99 (0.04 %) cases of desertion and evasion in Kalmykia among representatives of different ethnic groups [3].

The phenomenon of banditry should be paid a special attention as it caused much trouble to the liberated from the Nazi territories. According to the data of Division of fight against banditry of People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs of the USSR dated from August, 30 1944, in the period of three years (from 1941 till 1944) 8856 bandit groups comprised of 205111 members were liquidated. The number of bandit groups in Northern Caucasus was 1982, 541 in Stavropol region, 499 in Krasnodar region. 23 bandit groups comprising of 786 members were liquidated on the territory of Kalmykia (341 people were released from imprisonment). According to the data of People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs by the end of 1943 there were 4 bandit groups comprising 17 members on the territory of the USSR [4].

The mentioned social phenomena being negative from moral and political point of view appeared in the Soviet society during the World War II and now need a close and detailed interpretation. Josef Stalin's subordinates being aware of his psychological features and trying to please him implemented one and the same scheme. It worked in the following way: in case of any mismanagement in order to conceal true reasons of failures the responsibility was conferred on any person, then he was falsely accused and executed. That's why the heads of the state and the All-Union Communist Party contributed to the repressive policy towards numerous ethnic groups for collaboration, desertion and banditry in the war time, as it absolved them from all personal responsibility for mismanagement followed by catastrophic consequences in 1941-1942. Moreover, the mentioned measure was considered an effective means to keep in fear the rest part of the population.

The mentioned measure also contributed to solution of a large number of problems such as recovering the economic system destroyed by the war and replenishment of labour resources of sparsely-populated areas that dwindled because of mobilization of employable population during the war. By November of 1945 the number of population in special settlements was 2 342 506 people.

The government of the USSR accusing many ethnic groups of collaboration with enemies, threw doubts upon the built-up concept of 'moral and political unity of the Soviet people'. The contradiction laid bare in Josef Stalin's speech that was delivered at the meeting on November, 1943 dedicated to the twenty sixth anniversary of the October revolution. Stalin had to say that 'all peoples of the Soviet Union unanimously rose in defense of their Motherland and took part in the Great Patriotic war irrespective their ethnic origin and religion. Thus, now the Nazi politicians' expectations to provoke a split among peoples of the Soviet Union fell short. The unity of our country peoples overcame all difficulties and went through all hardships of the war and became stronger in the struggle of all Soviet peoples against the fascist invaders' [5].

Taking into the account the decree of State Defense Committee № 1074-cc dated from December, 27 1941 by the middle of August of 1943 People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs of the USSR had limited intentions towards the struggle against collaborators and their families. The report of People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs of the USSR № 685/Б dated from August, 16 1943 addressed to State Defense Committee and adopted by L.P.Beria and V.N.Merkulov offered to deport collaborators and their families from the territory of the Northern Caucasus (Karachai and Adygei autonomous regions, Kabardino-Balkaria and Chechen-Ingush Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republics) and Kalmyk Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic to Kazakhstan and Siberia.

People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs of the USSR offered to form commissions consisting of three members to organize and rule the deportation. It offered to appoint Deputy Commissar of People's Commissariat for State Security of the USSR Kobulov to be a chairperson, Secretary of Chechen-Ingush Regional Committee of the All-Union Communist Party Ivanov and Chairman of Chechen-Ingush Council of People's Commissars Molaev to be members of a commission in Chechen-Ingush Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic; Deputy Commissar for Internal Affairs of the USSR in Kabardino-Balkaria Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic to be a chairperson, Secretary of Kabardino-Balkaria Regional Committee of the All-Union Communist Party Kumekhov and Chairman of Council of People's Commissars of Kabardino-Balkaria Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republics Akhokhov to be members of a commission in Kabardino-Balkaria Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic; Deputy Commissar for Internal Affairs of the USSR Serov to be a chairman, Secretary of Stavropol Regional Committee of the All-Union Communist Party Suslov and Chairman of Karachai Regional Executive Committee Temirov to be members of a commission in Karachai autonomous region; Head of Militia Chief Directorate of People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs of the USSR Galkin to be a chairperson; Secretary of Krasnodar Regional Committee of the All-Union Communist Party Seleznev P.I. and Chairman of Adygei Regional Executive Committee Dzhaste to be members of a commission in Adygei autonomous region; Head of Division of fight against banditry of People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs of the USSR Drozdov to be a chairperson, Secretary of Kalmyk Regional Committee of the All-Union Communist Party Likomidov and

Chairman of Council of People's Commissars of Kalmyk Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic to be members of a commission in Kalmyk Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic [6]. From my point of view, the offer seems to be constructive as collaborators could be of different ethnic origin and a commission staff of three persons could make just decisions.

However, the government of the USSR and Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party didn't go into details of the social phenomena in the country. It rejected the offer of People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs of the USSR and started deporting whole ethnic groups of the mentioned autonomous republics and regions, but Adygei autonomous region. The ethnic groups of the Crimean Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic were deported as well. 70000 Karachai people were the first who were relocated by force in October 1943. If we take into account documents of People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs of the USSR and Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party it is impossible to agree with the opinion of some historians that 'the final decision on the deportation from Kalmyk Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic was taken by the country government in the middle of December in 1943' [7].

Currently available documents bear evidence that the preparations for the deportation of the Kalmyks was started in October, 1943 with adopting a by-law by People's Commissariat of Husbandry dated from October, 18 1943. The mentioned fact enables us to conclude that the decision on the deportation of the Kalmyks had been made well before December, 1943. It had been made in August, 1943. It should be added that the decree № 901 "About urgent measures to recover the husbandry in the regions liberated from the enemy" dated from August, 1943 that was adopted by People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs of the USSR and Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party didn't include Kalmyk Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic into the recovering programme. It allows to state that the government had already made the decision on the deportation of the Kalmyk population and that's why didn't mention it.

The Kalmyks were unaware of the forthcoming deportation and the liquidation of their republic, but at that time special committees were making preparations to accommodate special settlers and use a new wave of labour resources in the target regions. On November, 20 1943 People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs and local authorities of the target regions laid a scheme of relocation of the Kalmyks. It was addressed to Head of GULAG (that is Main administration of forced labour camps) ordering to use special settlers 'mainly, in husbandry, cattle-breeding and fishing' [8].

In October and November, 1943 People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs began mobilizing trains and vehicles, soldiers and policemen to deport the Kalmyks. On December, 1 People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs adopted the instruction of carrying out the operation 'Ulusy'. On December, 10 schemes of the Kalmyks' removal in all settlements were laid.

Having done deliberate preparations the government of the USSR tried to observe formality. The Political Bureau of Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party pursued the issue 'About the liquidation of Kalmyk Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic and establishing Astrakhan region in Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic and assigned the Presidium of the Supreme Council of the USSR to adopt a decree. The decree № 115/144 was adopted on the same day.

The decree № 1432-425-cc was adopted by the Government of the USSR on December, 28 1943. It seems that its adoption was a sheer formality to give legitimacy to the actions of the punitive organs such as People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs and People's Commissariat for State Security in the eyes of the people, as on the same day at 4 or 5 o'clock Kalmyks began to be loaded into vehicles. Council of Peoples' Commissars of the USSR adopted the decree for the executive organs in that time when the latter had already started to fulfill the will of the dictatorial regime. People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs and People's Commissariat for State Security being aware of a formal character of the decree adopted on December, 1 1943 started the operation on December, 1 1943. It should be highlighted that the adopted decree assigning the responsibility to deport the Kalmyks to People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs was received from the of the USSR Government on December, 29 when the major part of the Kalmyks had been loaded into cattle cars and sent to the target regions. On December, 29 the decree was received by Deputy People's Commissar of People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs of the USSR Chernyshev V.V., then it was given to Nasedkin V.G.. On December, 30 Head of the Forth Division of Main administration of forced labour camps Ostapov took it for the further actions [9].

Shortly after that the executive organs began to report about concluding the operation. For instance, on December, 30 senior authorized agent Corokin in Khuchin settlement reported 'We entered houses, conducted home and personal searches, announced the decree of the Committee for Defence [10] about the Kalmyks' deportation, filled in cards of the targeted family and offered to get ready for the leave. It was silent in the settlement, there was no cry, onle dog barking could be sometimes heard. 143 persons were loaded into cattle cars. Then we searched farm houses, shepherd corrals, sick bays for animals and horse farms. There were no Kalmyks there. Report s of the successful taking out of the Kalmyks were sent from one executive body to another. The used word "taking out" underlines the attitude of the regime to the people as to an unnecessary thing. In the period from December, 1943 to May, 1944 102355 Kalmyks were deported and relocated in 113 districts of 5 regions, 2 kraiss and one Soviet republic.

One of the main executer of the Kalmyks' deportation was Head of internal forces of People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs of the USSR Major General Sheredega I.S. having loaded deportees into cattle cars reported about concluding the operation to Serov I.A. that the order of People's Commissar of Internal affairs of the USSR Beria L.P. was successfully fulfilled. Being aware of the illegal character of the operation

towards old people, women and children Sherenga made the order 'About final actions and goals of internal forces' on December, 31 in Divnoe settlement that the military staff must keep the operation in Kalmyk ASSR in secret and conceal its belonging to the forces of People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs. He also banned the military staff to bear shoulder loops, collar patches and service caps [11].

In the first part of 1944 Chechen-Ingush, Kabardino-Balkarian and Crimean ASSRs were liquidated. Their population of 721 866 people consisting of 36 2282 Chechens, 134 178 Ingushes, 37 406 Balkarians, 188 000 Crimean Tatars were sent to special settlements. In the period from 1941 till 1944 in the Soviet state 1 843 317 people were falsely accused and deported, 6 autonomous republics and regions were liquidated.

In the period of World War II the Soviet government abiding the repressive policy towards ethnic groups threw doubts upon the built-up concept of 'moral and political unity of the Soviet people'. It brought false accusations against innocent peoples, deported them and liquidated their republics and regions.

The peoples in exile had to adapt to new sociocultural conditions and manage to preserve their historical heritage and cultural and ethnic identity.

Conclusion. It can be concluded that the reasons of the repressive policy in the Soviet state as well as the deportation of peoples in the first part of the twentieth century can be found in the nature of the dictatorial regime. Deliberate preparations for the deportations by executive organs of People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs were done long before the issue of official documents. The plenary session of the Central committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in September, 1953 denoted changes in the policy in the country. Having overcome fear in next two years the government of the Soviet state gave up promoting the personality cult of Stalin. On February, 1 1954 General Prosecutor of the USSR Rudenko R., Minister of Ministry for Internal Affairs of the USSR and Minister of Justice Ministry of the USSR Gorshenin K. made a report to First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party Khrushchev N.S.. The report announced the true number of prisoners in forced labour camps and prisons who were accused for anti-revolutionary crimes. It stated that according to the data of Ministry for Internal Affairs of the USSR in the period from 1921 till that moment 3 777 380 people had been convicted, including 642 980 people who had been sentenced to death, 2 900 000 people who had been kept in forced labour camps and prisons for the period of 25 years or less, 765 180 people who had been deported. The mentioned number of victims had been convicted by Joint State Political Directorate of People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs, special committees of People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs, Military Division, military courts and tribunals. The report underlined that there were numerous cases of accusations with no foundations and violations of law. The authors of the report offered to find falsely accused people and rehabilitate them [12].

Though a year had passed before partial amnesties were begun to be given to deported citizens. It demanded one more year to start a gradual rehabilitation of falsely accused and deported citizens and peoples of the USSR.

In the current moment Constitution of the Russian Federation provides a guarantee of well-being and prosperity of the Russian people. It put the end to the dictatorial regime. It is the symbol of the unity of the Russian state, freedom, democratization and the society where the rights of a person are of the supreme value.

In December, 2012 President of the Russian Federation Putin V.V. passed the Strategy of state national policy of the Russian Federation that states that 'interethnic relations are closely interrelated with other social relations, it allows to create necessary conditions for the unity of Russian peoples, well-being of citizens of the Russian Federation and the further development of the Russian state'. It provides opportunities for developing institutions of democracy, provides stability, true federalism, economic freedom and society prosperity. It is crucial to give up law nihilism that was a character feature of the political system in the first part of the twentieth century and resulted in justice violation in the state towards a person and an ethnic group.

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Репрессивная политика советской власти в период Великой Отечественной войны

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Аннотация. В статье на основе широкого круга источников рассматриваются вопросы депортации ряда народов в годы Великой Отечественной войны. Авторы отмечают, что репрессивная политика Советского государства, так же как и причина депортации народов в первой половине XX в. коренятся в природе тоталитарного режима

Ключевые слова: Великая Отечественная война; репрессивная политика; репрессии; депортация; коллаборационизм; советская власть.