

SCTCMG 2019

International Scientific Conference Social and Cultural Transformations in the Context of Modern Globalism

POLITICAL REPRESSION OF SOVIET STATE TOWARDS DEPORTED NATIONS SOLDIERS

Sapiyat Tsutsulaeva (a)*

*Corresponding author

(a) Chechen State University, 2, Sheripova str., Grozny, 3640213, Russia
sapiyat_univ@mail.ru, +79280859009

Abstract

The article presents a tragic chapter in the history of the Chechen and Kalmyk nations in the period of the Great Patriotic War. In particular, after the deportation of these nations to the eastern regions of the country, the decision was taken to withdraw from the army the soldiers from among the Chechen and Kalmyk under varying pretexts. The soldiers, recalled from the lines of the Great Patriotic War, were sent to work in logging, mines, and the construction of the Shirokovskaya hydroelectric power station (HPS). Of course, their work was tiring. Adverse forms of labor, harsh living conditions that differed just a little from those of special settlers led to diseases and premature death. The soldiers mobilized into labor troops and battalions experienced the effect of special commandant's offices. Many of them were assigned the status of special settlers who lived in labor camps, and did not even have the right to be with their family. There was that part of the soldiers, though, who managed to remain in the line of the Great Patriotic War. Showing courage and heroism, they fought against the fascists, marched to the western borders of the USSR, struggled to liberate European countries and to storm the fascist stronghold – Berlin. Many of the soldiers were highly decorated for their participation in the fight against the fascist invaders.

© 2019 Published by Future Academy www.FutureAcademy.org.UK

Keywords: Great Patriotic War, soldiers, deportation, Chechen, Kalmyk.



1. Introduction

It has been 75 years since the Karachay, Kalmyk, Chechen, Ingush and Balkarian were deported to Siberia, Central Asia and Kazakhstan with their national statehood to be eliminated. Without exception, all the above-mentioned nations, from infants to senile men, were subjected to eviction, on the basis of one sign – nationality! This illegitimate act was completely contrary to the Constitution of the USSR, international laws on human rights and the principles of humanism. This act of forced expelling of nations took place at a time when almost all adult men were fighting at the front.

The warfare with Nazi Germany turned into the Great Patriotic War of all nations of the USSR. The combat cohesion and friendship of the multinational active Soviet army was manifested during the war in all fields and sectors of the Soviet-German confrontation. This friendship resided in partisan detachments that, acting in the rear of the fighting forces, spoiled enemy communication lines, disrupted ammunition and food supply, destroyed enemy personnel and equipment, and obtained valuable intelligence information. The residents of the Republics of Kalmykia and Checheno-Ingush, like the entire population of the country, spared no effort, working day and night, supplying everything required to the front. Despite this, the republics were put an end to, whilst the Kalmyk and Chechen were deported to the eastern regions of the country.

2. Problem Statement

It was not only the above nations that experienced deportation, but the direct participants of the Great Patriotic War, as well. The possibility for researchers to gain access to secret archival documents of the NKVD-KGB and other confidential funds in the 1990s made it possible to uncover many “blank pages” in the history of the deported nations. One of them is the fact of transforming the front-line soldiers of the deported nations into labor soldiers – workers of NKVD columns at the final stage of the Great Patriotic War. The paper aims to reveal this previously closed topic in general terms.

One of the first to study the topic relating to the deportation of direct participants in the warfare was Doctor of Historical Sciences, Professor of Kalmyk State University, Ivanov (1993, 1994). This problem was considered in the monograph of Maximov (2004, 2014), as well as in a series of joint monographs. Of particular note is a collection of memoirs of Kalmyk warriors, participants in the construction of the Shirokovskaya HPS. A number of papers on the topic of research were published by Tsutsulaeva (2006, 2017) and Matagova (2016). Unfortunately, there is no comprehensive research on the issue under study.

3. Research Questions

The subject of study is the story of deported soldiers who made their own contribution to the Great Victory, both at the front and in the rear, being removed from the active army. Each republic, region, all nations living in the USSR, made their invaluable contribution to the victory in the Great Patriotic War. This equally refers to the deported nations – the Kalmyk and Chechen who withstood all the difficulties of one of the bloodiest wars in history, showed heroism and courage in the lines of the Great Patriotic War, patience and sticking power in the rear.

4. Purpose of the Study

The author is geared to show that an integral part of the expelling of nations to the eastern regions of the country was the action to recall the Kalmyk and Chechen from the fronts, from the active military units, their demobilization and transfer to the NKVD.

5. Research Methods

The methodological basis encompasses the principles of objectivity, science and historicism, involving the study of facts and phenomena in all their diversity, in definite historical conditions of their origin and development and highlighting both the positive and negative dimensions of the issue under study. The work relies on an integrated approach.

6. Findings

After the deportation of the Kalmyk and Chechen, the decision was taken to withdraw from the army the soldiers from among the Chechen and Kalmyk under varying pretexts. Thereby, the Kalmyk and Chechen incurred double punishment. Initially, the Kalmyk and Chechen were deported to Siberia, Central Asia and Kazakhstan, and then the most mature, efficient, active part of the male population was transformed from the defenders of their homeland into a mere, labour force. The recall of the Kalmyk and Chechen from the active army followed the victories in the Battle of Stalingrad and the Battle of Kursk, when it became clear that the war had come to a tipping point, inter alia, achieved through their efforts. The question arises as to what motives and rationale drove the Stalinist entourage to take the decision to recall the soldiers at the very height of the warfare and send them to the home front and what specific document this operation was complied with.

First of all, this entails the Decrees of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR On the liquidation of the Kalmyk ASSR and the Chechen-Ingush ASSR. They refer not only to the unfounded accusations of the Kalmyk and Chechen of treason against the motherland, of opposing Soviet authorities, of cooperation with the fascist invaders, but also to the uprooting of all Kalmyk and Chechen nations living in the territories of the republics. It turns out that both the Kalmyk and Chechen who left this territory to defend their homeland fell within this category. Thus, it was not only about indiscriminate evictions of the civilian population and the elimination of autonomies, but also about the cruel punishment of all representatives of the Kalmyk and Chechen nations, wherever they were, including those at the front.

It should be noted that the evictions of the Kalmyk and Chechen from their ancestral territory were conducted by the NKVD of the USSR. In particular, the order signed by the head of the NKVD troops of the 3rd Ukrainian Front I. Pavlov and addressing the chairmen of the filtration commissions, proposed "... all Karachai, Chechen, Ingush and Balkarian soldiers to be put under the command of the NKVD special settlements of the Kazakh SSR, Alma-Ata". Being recalled from the front, they were further sent to logging plants, coal mines, and other hard work, where they died from intolerable living and working conditions. Starting from the specific archive data, as an example, the author provides information on the position of Chechen ex servicemen in the logging industry of the Kostroma region. As evidenced by the documents,

1,183 Chechen, Ingush and Karachai special settlers, 995 of them being demobilized from the Red Army, worked at Buysky and Galichsky timber industry enterprises.

They lived in barracks and slept on triple-bunk beds. At the Kostromskoy logging site 380 people were lodged in a barrack designed for 150-200 people. There can be no talk about bedding items like mattresses, pillows, blankets. Most of them were forced to sleep on bare plank beds, except for those who used their outerwear instead of blankets.

Here is what the deputy chief of the Special Settlements Department of the NKVD of the USSR, Colonel Maltsev (1943) wrote about this: “The position of special settlers is dire. There is mud, bugs, incredible crowding in the living rooms. The food is unsatisfactory. Special settlers are not provided with clothes and shoes, they look like the ragged, and yet many of them wear orders and medals on their chests ...” (p. 79).

The greatest difficulty, though, as evidenced by the documents, appears to have been malnutrition that could not even be compared with that in the active army. Catering service for special settlers was completely unsatisfactory. They should have drawn allowances according to the norms of the core workers, but these norms were not met, they were understated and the food was non-nutritious. According to Maltsev (1943, p. 109), there were even days when the settlers had for a meal exclusively a nettle soup with a small amount of oatmeal and the cost of this soup was 6 kopecks. Thus, in the first half of September 1944, at the Romantsevsky logging site, the working special settlers were not supplied against the norm of 674 kg of meat, 160 kg of cereals and 6 kg of fat.

The special settlers had a meal twice a day at 6 am and at 6 pm. They worked virtually without lunch. There was no tea in the diet. The bread was rye with various impurities, but it was not enough. There were shortages of bread for 2-3 days. There was not even tableware and the food was delivered in their army pots and cans. People often got sick and died from such nourishment, harsh working and unsuitable living conditions. Thus, at the Loparevsky logging site of the Galichsky timber industry enterprise out of a total of 190 people of special settlers, 60 people suffered from typhus, 15 of them died. The administration occasionally conducted medical check-ups. The medical board usually diagnosed dystrophy of I and II degrees, edema, double pneumonia, pleurisy, pulmonary tuberculosis, chronic bronchitis, etc.

Only within January 1945 alone, in the above-mentioned timber site, 8 special settlers died of I and II degree dystrophy.

Among the Chechen ex servicemen there were quite a lot who protested against such life, ideology, and against the very fact of withdrawing from the front lines. Their protests were expressed, as a rule, in reports and statements with a request to send them to the front. Some managed to escape. According to the same source from Romantsevsky logging site, in July, August and September 1944, as a result of poor material and living conditions and poor nutrition, 90 people of special settlers fled. They mostly found jobs in the nearest collective and state farms. However, 62 Chechen special settlers were returned to the logging site.

The majority of those employed in the main types of work fulfilled and got over the daily production norms. Thus, a team of 14 ex soldiers whose foreman was Bugaev repeatedly did over the production norms.

Yet, they did not receive any payment for their work, except for poor nutrition. They worked without regard for the mortal fatigue, longing for home, forgetting about their unenviable position. Such an attitude

of former soldiers to work was not fortuitous. It was associated with the idea of contributing to the achievement of the common victory over fascism, after which they vaguely hoped to change their position for the better. However, there were also cases of neglecting the special settlers. In particular, one of these cases was from the administration of the Kostromskoy logging site and the authorized of Orekhovskoy District Executive Committee Shestokov, who called the special settlers “traitors to the Motherland and told them that if they all died, it would be good”.

This is what Abazov (1952) remembers: “It was a hot summer of 1944. Our regiment was leading the battle on the territory of Poland, on the outskirts of Warsaw. At that time, we – the Chechen, Ingush, Balkarian, Karachai, and Kalmyk – were asked to gather together. We did not know why and under what order this was done. Finally, when everyone had already been gathered, they gave us a new uniform and underwear. We were lined up in front of the train carriages. Brass music was played. One of us, who knew Russian well, asked the colonel to explain what was happening. He replied with a grin: “You fought well, and for that you are being led to meet Stalin.” The soldiers believed and began rubbing their orders and medals. Our two trains stopped in the city of Murom. We landed, lined up. Then one colonel, addressing us, said: “As traitors to the Motherland, you will now fight in the forest!” We were very surprised because we did not realize the tragedy that had befallen our peoples. Having taken away all our documents, they distributed us among Yaroslavl and Kostroma forestry enterprises. We were forced to work without sleep and rest. This continued until 1947. After that, we were loaded into wagons and sent to special settlers in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan ...”.

On January 8, 1944, signed by the head of the department, Lieutenant-General I.V. Smorodinov, the Order of the 8th Division of the General Staff of the Red Army was adopted with regard to the Kalmyk soldiers. It referred to the recall of the officers and soldiers of Kalmyk nationality from all fronts, rear units, military schools and courses, hospitals, etc. and their early demobilization. However, instead of the demobilization promised, they were put under the command of the internal affairs agencies of the USSR that during the first half of 1944 sent them by separate teams to the address: Perm (Molotov) region, Polovinka station, the Shirokovskaya hydroelectric power station. During the first half of 1944, about 4 thousand of common soldiers and sergeants arrived at Polovinka station (Ivanov, 1993). In the two construction battalions organized upon the arrival of the Kalmyk, the commanders were appointed by the officers of the NKVD. Former front-line soldiers from among the Kalmyk were appointed commanders of companies and platoons.

At first, after arriving in the Urals, the Kalmyk soldiers, due to the lack of necessary qualifications and experience in building a hydropower station, were used for auxiliary work – logging areas, construction of the 25 km auto-lane road Polovinka station – hydroelectric power station, for loading and unloading of building material and equipment at railway stations and at the station of the hydroelectric station, quarries, and narrow-gauge railway. Only after preliminary training and instruction on safety, since the summer of 1944, the former front-line soldiers were allowed to work in the trench of the future stone-filled platinum hydroelectric station (Ivanov, 1994).

However, the severe climatic conditions, along with starvation diet, were the main causes of colds and dystrophy of the builders of the hydro power station, which in many cases were fatal. Of the 4 thousand common soldiers and sergeants, about half remained lying on the Urals (Ivanov, 1994).

Despite everything, some soldiers of the deported nations managed to remain in the Red Army and take part in combat operations at the final stage of the Great Patriotic War. Those extremely decent and brave commanders, at the risk of being convicted, did their best to keep in their regiments the best, bravest, most reliable and trusted fighters of Kalmyk, Chechen and other nationalities, as they needed the trusted, strong fighting soldiers who were not so many left by the end of the warfare. Among them were Major General B. B. Gorodovikov, Movladi Visaitov, Hansolt Dachiev, Lidzhi Mandzhiyev, Magomed Nunuev and many others who came a long combat way from Smolensk to Koenigsberg, met the Victory Day 30 kilometers from Berlin, around the city of Hidzeu, and took part in the battles against militaristic Japan.

From the first days of the war, Lieutenant-Colonel M.T. Bimbaev, U. Etenov, H. Taysumov fought with enemies. It was the Yusupov brothers, Lechi, Muchar and Uizur Heroic, who performed feats of arms in the fight against the fascist invaders.

Half a century after the Victory, the Motherland did justice to the feats of the soldiers of the deported nations. Thus, in 1990 L. Badmaev was awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union, and in 1996 I. Ismailov, M. Umarov, M. Uzuyev and K. Abdurakhmanov were awarded the title of Hero of Russia.

7. Conclusion

The deportation of soldiers during the Great Patriotic War is a tragic, but an integral part of the history of the Chechen and Kalmyk nations, as well as other deported nations. It is the duty of scholars and historians of the republics to know it in its entirety and to evaluate it in an objective and truthful manner. To do this, it is necessary to initiate an intensive identification of documentary sources, gathering of information about the soldiers recalled from the fronts of the Great Patriotic War in 1943-1944 and sent to logging sites, mines, and the construction of the Shirokovskaya hydroelectric power station. A thorough study is needed on the use of military representatives of deported nations not only at Shirokovskaya station, but also in the GULAG system as a whole.

References

- Abazov, U. (1952). *Great war*. Moscow: THi-SH.
- Ivanov, M. P. (1993). Repressive Measures against the KALMYK Front-Line Soldiers at the Final Stage of the Great Patriotic War. In *Repressed Peoples: the Abolition of their Statehood and the Problems of Rehabilitation. Abstracts of reports and communications of the Russian Scientific-Practical Conference, December 26–27* (pp. 97–99). Elista: APP Dzhangar.
- Ivanov, M. P. (1994). On the Issue of Deportation of the Kalmyk Front-Line Soldiers. In *Repressed Peoples: History and Modernity. Proceedings of the 2nd All-Russian Scientific Conference* (pp. 44–50). Karachaevsk: KSPU.
- Maltsev, V. I. (1943). *KSPU*. Yalta: STKo.
- Matagova, Kh. A. (2016). Higher Education of the Chechen: Experience under Deportation (1944–1957). *Bulletin of the Academy of Sciences of the Chechen Republic*, 1(30), 78–83.
- Maximov, K. N. (2004). *The tragedy of the People: Repression in Kalmykia. 1918–1940s*. Moscow: Nauka.
- Maximov, K. N., & Lidzhieva, I. V. (2014). Repressive Policy of the Soviet Government During World War II. *Old Times. Russian historical journal*, 34(4), 681–685.
- Tsutsulaeva, S. S. (2006). Repressive Measures against the Chechen – the Front-Line Soldiers of the Red Army at the Final Stage of the Great Patriotic War. In *Perspective – 2006: Proceedings of the All-Russian Scientific Conference of Students, Postgraduate Students and Young Scientists* (pp. 112–116). Nalchik: Kabardino-Balkar University

Tsutsulaeva, S. S. (2018). On the Issue of Deportation of Front-Line Soldiers at the Final Stage of the Great Patriotic War (on the example of the Chechen and Kalmyk. In *The Caucasus World: Issues of Education, Language, Literature, History and Religion: International Scientific-Practical Conference The Caucasus World: Issues of Education, Language, Literature, History and Religions, September 25–26* (pp. 392–396). Makhachkala: ALEF.