

ISCKMC 2020**International Scientific Congress «KNOWLEDGE, MAN AND CIVILIZATION»****SETTLING AND EMPLOYMENT OF CHECHEN SPECIAL
SETTLERS DURING FLEDGING YEARS OF DEPORTATION**

S. S. Tsutsulaeva (a)*

*Corresponding author

(a) Chechen State University, 32, Sheripova st., Grozny, 364021, Russia, sapiyat_univ@mail.ru

Abstract

During the Great Patriotic War, the republics of Central Asia were supposed to welcome special settlers from the Chechen-Ingush ASSR and provide them with housing. However, in these republics there had already been many deportees from the country. Providing a great many people with living conditions required atomic effort and painstaking work amidst the ongoing war, when the main direction for party, Soviet, trade union organizations continued to be assisting the army, and especially battlefield. The simultaneous arrival of hundreds of thousands of special settlers in the Kazakh and Kirghiz SSR in the absence of free living space and limited food supplies posed serious difficulties for the local authorities. These difficulties were especially great at the beginning while it was necessary to find material and time resources to settle the special settlers at the expense of the industry and agriculture development. As a rule, special settlers arrived at new places of residence without stocks of food and the necessary clothing and shoes. Many of them suffered from froze. Poor living conditions, exhaustion, a sharp change in climate and the spread of epidemic diseases contributed to the high mortality rate among the Chechen special settlers in the Kazakh and Kirghiz SSR, especially in the first months of resettlement. The highest mortality rate relates to the second half of 1944 and the first half of 1945, i.e. autumn, winter and spring time of the first acclimatization period. Chechens were engaged mainly in agriculture, animal husbandry and a relatively small part in industry.

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1. Introduction

Decree No. 5073 ss dated January 31, 1944 of the State Defense Committee of the USSR on the Chechen-Ingush USSR eviction to the Kazakh and Kyrgyz SSR, and the Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR dated March 7, 1944 incorporated all the provisions underlying this tragic campaign for the people.

The decision had the following arguments: Due to the fact that during the Patriotic War, especially during the war actions of the Nazi troops in the Caucasus, many Chechens and Ingush betrayed their motherland, went over to the side of the Nazi invaders, joined saboteur raiders and reconnoiter thrown into the rear of the Red Army positions, created, by the Germans order, armed gangs to fight against Soviet power, and also taking into account that many Chechens and Ingush participated in military coups against Soviet system for a number of years without being employed, attacked farms of neighboring regions, robbed and killed Soviet people, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR decides to resettle all Chechens and Ingush living in the territory of the Chechen-Ingush ASSR as well as other regions of the USSR adjacent to it and liquidate the Chechen-Ingush ASSR (Patiev, 2004). The decree was signed by M.I. Kalinin being the chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and A. Gorkin being a secretary.

2. Problem Statement

The plan implemented by the department of special settlements of the NKVD of the USSR concerning Chechens deportation implied resettling 310,620 Chechens and 81,100 Ingush during the “period of the first echelons”. Apparently, it applied only to those who lived on the plains and in the relatively accessible mountainous regions of the republic.

The first echelons with the main prisoners being the Chechens arrived to the eastern regions of the USSR in March 1944. The special settlers positioning was the next stage after the forced eviction and transportation of the Chechens to the Kazakh and Kyrgyz ASSR. They were settled according to a directive document previously developed by the party and the government.

Even before the adoption of legislative acts on the Chechens resettlement, the country’s leadership had proposed to the Councils of People’s Commissars and the Central Committee of the Communist Parties of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan to take measures to resettle the repressed peoples. In the difficult conditions of wartime, the two Union republics had to accept and provide housing for more than six hundred thousand people. Moreover, it was the time when these republics already had a larger number of the evacuated population of the western regions of the USSR, Moscow and Leningrad. In Kazakhstan alone, in 1944, there were 42,663 evacuated people, and 121,654 in total (Shabaev, 1994).

3. Research Questions

The Council of People’s Commissars of the Union republics and regional executive committees in accordance with the decisions of the Council of People’s Commissars of the USSR were to ensure economic and labor organization of the Chechen special settlers. The NKVD organs had to assist the special settlers in their household and employment.

The Council of People's Commissars of the Union republics had to work out the measures for employing special settlers together with the NKVD – UNKVD and with the involvement of the enterprises and organizations in concern. The organizations had to provide a list of enterprises and economic-cooperative organizations, the nature of their production and work, the number of special settlers being engaged in work for each enterprise and economic organization, the procedure and technique of employment. In particular, they had to decide whom to entrust with the employment of special settlers for each enterprise, the deadlines for the completion of special settlers employment, their transportation to places of employment, etc.

The control and supervision of the economic and labor organization of the special settlers was laid upon the departments of special settlements of the NKVD – UNKVD, regional and village special commandant's offices of the NKVD.

When writing this article, the works of Russian scientists-researchers Patiev (2004), Shabaev (1994), Sabanchiev (2004), Tsutsulaeva (2006, 2019), Isakieva (2016) and others considering the placement and employment of Chechens in the early years of deportation were used.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this article is to study the issues of settlement and life of Chechen special settlers on the territory of Central Asia in the first years of deportation.

5. Research Methods

In the research, the following principles of historical knowledge were applied: objectivity, scientific nature, historicism, which imply studying phenomena and facts in all their diversity in the historical conditions of their occurrence and enabling to cover all the positive and negative aspects of the problem under consideration. The principle of historicism was the basis for analyzing this problem in a concrete historical setting and in chronological sequence. The author used comparative historical and historiographic analysis methods.

6. Findings

How were echelons with special settlers being Chechens and Ingush welcomed in the Kazakh and Kirghiz SSR, the region of their greatest concentration? Detailed information on this issue is in the Summaries of the Department of Special Settlements of the NKVD of the USSR, prepared by P.I. Maltsev, the head of this department.

As follows from the report addressed to V.V. Chernyshov being the Deputy People's Commissar of Internal Affairs of the USSR and dated March 10, 1944, out of 180 echelons with Chechens and Ingush, 79 echelons with 217,415 people were accepted. Thus, in the Kazakh USSR, 60 trains with 105,989 people were accepted. Detailed information on the resettlement of special settlers in the regions of the Kazakh SSR includes the following: Akmola welcomed 19,097 people; Aktobe – 20,328; Alma-Ata – 19,258; Dzhambul'skaya – 13,360; Karaganda – 11,602; Kyzyl-Ordynskoy – 17,398; Kostanay – 29,573; North Kazakhstan – 19,817; Pavlodar – 10,117; South Kazakhstan – 5,439 people.

The first echelons with Chechen and Ingush special settlers arrived in the Kirghiz SSR. From the above summary, it is clear that in the Kirghiz SSR 19 echelons of 51,426 people were accepted. Frunzenskaya accepted 24589 people, Osh – 18,848; Dzhahal-Abad – 7,989 people.

In the report dated March 11, 1944, P.I. Maltsev, the State Security Colonel reported that 14 echelons (40,317 people) were settled in the Kazakh SSR and 5 echelons (13,709 people) in the Kirghiz SSR during one day from 6 pm, March 10 to 6 pm, March 11. We should note that the geography of settlement by regions expanded. Thus, in the Kazakh SSR, special settlers were then settled in the Semipalatinsk region with a population of 5,848 people .

The next report dated March 13, 1944 stated that 70,421 Chechens and Ingush special settlers (25 echelons) were deployed in the Kazakh SSR and 5,360 in the Kirghiz SSR.

On March 14, 1944, official sources being another report signed by the colonel of state security P.I. Maltsev testified the 15 echelons with 41,784 people deployed. As well as previously, most of the trains arrived at the Kazakh SSR (14 trains), which amounted to 39,049 Chechens and Ingush special settlers. 1 echelon with 2,732 special settlers arrived at the Kyrgyz SSR.

The next day, new trains with special settlers arrived. The Kazakh SSR received 28,742 people, or 11 echelons, the Kyrgyz SSR – 2,614 people, or one echelon⁹. The arrival of the trains continued. Thus, from March 15 to March 17, 19 more echelons, or 52,945 people were deployed. Specifically, the Kazakh SSR welcomed 15 echelons, or 42,084 people and the Kirghiz SSR - 4 echelons, or 10,681 people¹⁰. Reports 22 and 23 informed about the following: 6 trains (14,200 people) arrived on March 18 in the Kazakh SSR and one train (2,886 people) arrived on March 20, while one echelon (2,662 people) arrived at the Kirghiz SSR.

Detailed information about the arrival of echelons with Chechen and Ingush special settlers and their settlement was also given in the Note on the progress of transporting special settlers from the Ordzhonikidze railway on March 17, 1944 organized by Arkadiev being the deputy head of the 3rd Directorate of the NKVD of the USSR. Specifically, 180 trains were sent at this time, 171 trains arrived to their destinations and 9 trains were on the way. During the reporting time, 468,583 people arrived at the destination. They were sent to Jalal-Abad region (2,428 people), Osh region (29,908 people), Frunzenskaya (34,410 people), Dzhambul'skaya (16,665 people), Alma-Atinskaya (29,089 people), East Kazakhstan (34,542) people, Kyzyl-Ordyn'skaya (26,514 people), Kustanayskaya (45,665 people), Aktobe (20,309 people), Semipalatinskaya (31,236 people), Pavlodar (41,230 people), Ak-mola (60,330 people), Karaganda (37,938 people). There were no incidents. The transporting was mostly complete. Out of the 9 echelons remaining in motion, 5 echelons were sent to their destinations that day. The remaining 4 echelons traveling to the East Kazakhstan region were to get to their destinations on March 21, 1944 (Tsutsulaeva, 2006).

Kuznetsov, the Head of the Department of Special Settlements of the NKVD of the USSR on March 21, 1944 reported to V.V. Chernyshov, the Colonel of State Security and Deputy People's Commissar of Internal Affairs of the USSR that the echelons with Chechen and Ingush special settlers arrived at the Kazakh and Kirghiz SSRs. As of March 21, 1944, a total of 180 echelons or 494,456 people arrived at the Kazakh SSR (147 echelons with 405,941 people) and Kirghiz SSR (33 echelons with 88,515 people).

At that time, there was almost complete lack of food, medicine, sanitary and hygienic conditions. Many old people and children could not stand the hardships of the move and died on the way. According to Kuznetsov being the head of the special settlements of the NKVD of the USSR and Colonel of State Security, 1,364 people (0.27 %) died from hunger, tuberculosis, dystrophy, pneumonia and other diseases.

Thus, from March 10 to March 21, the Kazakh and Kyrgyz SSR received 180 railway echelons with 494,456 Chechens and Ingush, who were deployed in 12 regions in the Kazakh SSR (405,941 people) and 3 regions of the Kyrgyz SSR (88,515 people). However, it was originally planned to deploy 400,600 people in the Kazakh SSR and 88,300 people in the Kirghiz SSR (Tsutsulaeva, 2006). Moreover, it was ordered to settle them exclusively in rural areas in order to ensure housing and employment.

The economic and labor organization of the Chechen and Ingush special settlers in the Kazakh and Kirghiz SSRs proceeded in a corresponding way.

On March 8, 1944, the “Rules for creating economic and labor conditions for special settlers being Kalmyks, Karachais, Chechens, Ingush, Balkars and Germans” were introduced and signed by P.I. Maltsev, the head of the special settlements department of the GULAG of the NKVD of the USSR (Patiev, 2004). The main tasks of the economic and labor conditions for the special settlers introduced in “Rules” determined the following: the obligatory involvement of all able-bodied migrants in socially useful work and assistance in acquiring special settlers with livestock, poultry and individual vegetable gardens in order to provide their families with normal material and living conditions. The urgent need for the labor force of the regional economy contributed to the further accumulation of forced labor of special settlers from the North Caucasus. Their labor was actively used in the construction of new mines, coal mining and ore mining, in industrial and civil construction as well as in other sectors of the economy of Kazakhstan. The work allowed them not only to gradually avoid difficult financial situation but was also the best way out of moral and psychological depression (Isakieva, 2015).

Ensuring the life of the deported Chechen people was impossible without solving the food problem. Having discussed the issues of the economic structure of the special settlers, the Council of People’s Commissars of the USSR, on May 29, 1944 adopted a Resolution on providing them with cattle and food grain in exchange for the cattle and grain received from them at the places of eviction (Patiev, 2004). The task to provide special settlers with livestock, food and clothing in the coming year was set.

The following facts evidence the difficulty of the financial situation of the special settlers. The letter written by L. Beria being the USSR People’s Commissar of Internal Affairs and addressed to A. Mikoyan, the Deputy Chairman of the Council of People’s Commissars of the USSR stated that the overwhelming majority of collective farms of the Kirghiz SSR and a significant part of collective farms of the Kazakh SSR were unable to pay the special settlers and collective farmers for the earned workdays neither in grain nor in other types of food. Thus, 215 thousand special settlers remained without food for the winter. L. Beria asked to allocate the following products per person per day: 100 gr. of flour, 50 gr. of cereals, 15 gr. of salt and 5 gr. of sugar for children for the period from December 1, 1944 to July 1, 1945 (Patiev, 2004). However, the Peoples Commissariat of feedstock found it possible to allocate flour and cereals to supply the special settlers due to the lack of resources. If a high official of the USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs considered the food situation of the special settlers to be unsatisfactory, then it is imaginable in what miserable conditions they really lived.

Still, at the request of the governments of the Kazakh and Kirghiz SSRs, the union government dated December 1944 allocated additional funds of flour, cereals, salt and sugar for the neediest special settlers. The food products were sold in accordance with the norms established by the Council of People's Commissars of the Kazakh and Kyrgyz SSR. In the Kazakh SSR, one urgently needed special settler was issued the following products per month: 3 kg of flour, 4.5 kg of food grain, 1.5 kg of cereals, 150 grams of sugar (Sabanchiev, 2004, p. 48). Many of the special settlers had no money to buy even these scanty food.

Lack of food was one of the main reasons for the high mortality rate of Chechens in the Kazakh and Kirghiz SSR. A group of Chechen special settlers driven to despair wrote the following to the Kirovsky regional executive committee of the Frunzensk region: We ask you not to refuse our request, since on February 23, 1944 we were evicted to Kyrgyzstan. Our people are dying, and the rest are exhausted. We ask you to either help us or take us back. If you don't give us help, we ask you to shoot us all together with our families (Shabaev, 1994). 46 families signed this application. In 1944 alone, Chechens, Ingush, Karachais and Balkars lost 23.7 % of the population (NKVD-USSR, 1992).

Poor living conditions, exhaustion, a sharp change in climate, the spread of epidemic diseases, lack of medical and sanitary services contributed to the high mortality rate among the Chechen special settlers in the Kazakh and Kirghiz SSR, especially in the first months of resettlement.

7. Conclusion

Thus, the Chechen people evicted from their homes were scattered over the vast territories of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. Of course, the responsibility for the "shortcomings" in the settling and life maintenance cannot be assigned only to the authorities of the Republics of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. The leaders of the country making decisions on the eviction of peoples did not foresee the tragic consequences, did not assume at what cost the repressed peoples would have to pay for this abhorrent deed. The reports of the preparatory period did not always correspond to reality. It turned out that the local authorities were unable to welcome the special settlers for objective and subjective reasons. Therefore, they failed to provide food supply and normal living conditions with all the ensuing tragic consequences for the repressed peoples.

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