

ON SOME OF THE REASONS FOR THE REPRESSION OF PARTY AND STATE WORKERS IN UZBEKISTAN DURING THE GREAT TERROR.

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Abstract.

The article deals with the peculiarities of repressions that were carried out against Soviet and party workers and military personnel in Uzbekistan during the Great Terror. In particular, the problems of causes and political consequences of the Big Terror, as well as bureaucratic peculiarities of organization of repressive processes are touched upon.

Keywords: Great Terror, Uzbekistan, repressions, Soviet party, party workers, Soviet workers, military personnel

Despite the variety of works in modern historical literature (V.N. Zemkovⁱ, D.Y. Lyskovⁱⁱ, K.V. Skorkinⁱⁱⁱ, R.T. Shamsuddinov^{iv}, B. Khasanov^v, F. Ishankhodjaeva^{vi}, K. Rajabov^{vii}, E.Y. Yusupov^{viii}, etc.) devoted to the period of the Great Terror, including in Uzbekistan, there is a growing effort to study the problem in greater depth, including repression of party, Soviet and military personnel in the UzSSR. Meanwhile, the study of this issue is important for understanding not only the specifics of the manifestation of terror at the regional level against the dominant social strata and political classes, but also for determining the general administrative and bureaucratic mechanisms of the Great Terror, which will have a positive methodological impact on the study of the general processes of political-institutional transformation of post-Soviet societies^{ix}.

Chronologically, the beginning of the Great Terror is associated with the appointment of N.I. Yezhov as head of the NKVD and his issuance of the order of the NKVD of the USSR № 00447 "On the operation to repress former kulaks, criminals and other anti-Soviet elements"^x. It is believed that the period of the Great Terror ended with the appointment of L.P. Beria as head of the NKVD, the decree of the USSR SNK and the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks^{xi} on the prohibition of arrest and eviction operations, as well as the liquidation of the "troika" created by N.I. Yezhov.

The repressive policy was not so much a consequence of the party system as a political tool that led to transformations within the party itself. Before applying repressive policies to party and leadership cadres, the Soviet leadership transformed the central apparatus and power structures.

Institutional structures emerged on which the authorities could rely to carry out a program of renewal of the party leadership, party purges and repression of Soviet and military cadres:

1. In 1933, after the announcement of the beginning of the party purge, the Central Purge Commission was formed (composed of: N.I. Yezhov and M.F. Shkiryatov).

2. At the same time, a "special sector" of the Party Central Committee was formed under the leadership of A.N. Poskrebyshev. This body operated under the personal control of Stalin.

3. Around the same period, the State Security Committee, associated with the "special sector" was organized (it consisted of AN Poskrebyshev, MF Shkiryatov, Ya.S. Agranov, N.I. Yezhov).

4. The regional network of the NKVD was developing: the NKVD of the Uzbek SSR was established on July 13, 1934 by NKVD Order No. 001^{xii}.

Legalization of repressions against party, Soviet and military workers was promoted by the February-March Plenum of the Central Committee in 1937, where, under the leadership of Stalin, it was decided to eradicate "the remnants of Bukharin-Trotskyist spies, saboteurs, traitors to the motherland", and it was announced that "the main measures necessary to neutralize and eliminate subversive and sabotage and espionage-terrorist sorties of Trotskyist-Fascist agents of foreign intelligence agencies" were planned^{xiii}.

In Uzbekistan, the period of the Great Terror is associated with V. Tsesarsky and I. Shapiro, who signed the lists approved by Stalin for execution and imprisonment. Also for the policy of the repressive period, as a member of the special troika of the NKVD of the UzSSR, the first persons of the republic U. Yusupov was to some extent responsible, before whom this "mission" was performed for only two months by A. Ikramov (accused of counter-revolutionary activity and shot), also the deputies and chairmen of the SNK of the UzSSR - Baltabaev, D. Tyurebekov, S. Segizbaev (all three were repressed), P. Yakovlev, B. Sheydrin. "Troikas" of the UzSSR tried largely party members (60% of those convicted). Most of them were sentenced by the Troikas to be shot or imprisoned in camps.

Party members were especially often accused of counter-revolutionary articles. A landmark case in Uzbekistan against military and party workers was the case of the Osoaviakhim of the UzSSR, whose leaders and workers were repressed. The NKVD of the Uzbek SSR decided (Decision on the measure of restraint of December 26, 1937) to arrest and bring to criminal responsibility the Chairman of the Central Committee of Osoaviakhim of the UzSSR Merkulov D.V. on the grounds of the crimes provided by Art. 63 and 67 of the Criminal Code of the UzSSR^{xiv}.

In the interrogation report of January 14, 1938 D.V. Merkulov admits himself "guilty" and says that he really was a participant of the Trotskyist military conspiracy, he was "recruited" by the Chairman of the Central Council of Osoaviakhim of the USSR Eydeman in 1935^{xv}. The testimony indicates that Eydeman instructed Merkulov, upon his arrival in Uzbekistan, to carry out sabotage work aimed at the collapse of the country's defense capability by: a) underestimating the norms in the training of Voroshilov riflemen, discrediting this type of training before the population; b) disrupting the combat and political training of the pre-conscription contingent so that untrained conscripts would enter the army; c) restraining the unfolding of work on the paramilitaryization of the population; d) consolidating and retaining in the system of Osoaviakhim Trotskyist and other anti-Soviet elements, which could be counted on in the interests of the counter-revolutionary organization.

On October 9, 1938, a preliminary hearing was held in Tashkent, and the next day, that is, on October 10, 1938, the court of the visiting session of the All-Union Supreme Soviet of the USSR found D.V. Merkulov guilty under the above-mentioned articles and sentenced him to capital punishment^{xvi}.



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These documents show, on the one hand, the really deplorable state of the Soviet Army in general and the system of conscript training in the pre-war period, in particular, the existence of dissatisfaction with the higher command among at least some officers for objective reasons of the low quality of the organization of military affairs, and, on the other hand, that the real problems were used to find those on whom the blame for their existence could be pinned and, thus, to absolve the higher command from responsibility for the failure, in particular, of pre-conscription training

The reason for the majority of criminal cases against the military in Uzbekistan was the dissatisfaction of the central authorities with the state of affairs on the ground: failures in the pre-war training of conscripts, low rates of militarization, etc. Of course, there were many reasons for such situations, both objective and subjective. However, the party organs needed to explain the shortcomings somehow, to blame someone.

The accusation transformed both objective shortcomings and the dissatisfaction of individual Soviet, party and military workers with the situation in the country into charges under heavy criminal articles: espionage, terrorism, sabotage, high treason, membership in a terrorist organization or anti-Soviet propaganda. On the one hand, this made it possible to mimic the disappointing reality on the ground and claim that all problems were due to the activities of "enemies of the people."

On the other hand, in virtually any Soviet, party or military organization, it was always easy to find dissatisfied people, on whom, with appropriate methods of investigation, it was easy to hang "heavy" articles. Therefore, entire local party organs and Soviet organizations (in particular, Osoaviakhim of the Uzbek SSR) fell under the repression of the central apparatus. The broad scale of repression also made law enforcement institutions vulnerable: NKVD and prosecutors, as well as the party regional leadership, could be accused of local abuses. Therefore, from time to time, the accusers became the accused: members of the "troikas" and "dvoikas" were exposed and convicted using the same methods and procedural scenario that they had used before. They were accused not only of violating the rules and norms of investigation and legal proceedings, but were also charged with "anti-Sovietism," "espionage," and other crimes for which they had sentenced millions of people "only yesterday."

To summarize the study, we can conclude that the Great Terror was a brutal political campaign to eliminate dissenting members of the Communist Party, security forces, military personnel, and anyone else who was considered a threat. Repressions against individual representatives of the administrative-command system were largely facilitated by the fact that the party was isolated from the masses, it substituted itself for the Soviets, and interfered unreasonably in economic life.

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^{xv} *Ibid.* P-26223, vol. 2, fol. 140, 143.

^{xvi} See in detail: Shamsutdinov R.R.. Archival documents on repressions in the Osoaviakhim of the Uzbek SSR (1937-1939). Volume 19, April 2023. - P. 78-87.