

ASAD GURBANLI

**The deportation of Azerbaijani
Turks from the Armenian SSR
(the years 1947-1953)**

“Elm ve təhsil”
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Mr. Ilham Aliyev, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, has recommended public organizations to convey the truth about the history of our ancient regions, Irevan, Zangazur, and Goycha, to future generations. Emphasizing these issues at the VI Congress of the New Azerbaijan Party, the President stated that our occupied lands had become the hostages and victims of the aggression of Armenian policy, and called the attention of the world to the fact that Nagorno-Karabakh had been under occupation for the last 25 years and Azerbaijan would not tolerate this aggressive policy. The aim of this project is to contribute to the resolution of this problem. A scientific research work entitled "The deportation of Azerbaijani Turks from the Armenian SSR (the years 1947-1953)" by Asad Gurbanli, which consists of an introduction, 4 chapters, result, appendix and list of literature, provides a profound analysis of the historical facts. The research work is an effective means to enlighten the world community about this injustice.

Project Leader
Adila Nazarova

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There have been dark ages in the history of our people who gained independence in the late 20th century. One of such ages, which had been forbidden to speak about for a long time, is the deportation of Azerbaijani Turks from their historical and ethnic lands, the Armenian SSR, in the years following the Second World War.

These tragic events, which are "white spots" in our history, had long been one of the "frozen" pages of our history. The "total" ban of the Soviet era did not allow us to cast a clear view on our history. Only after gaining independence upon the collapse of the Soviet Empire, we had the opportunity to create an objective picture of the hidden and distorted history of our country.

**Decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan
on the mass deportation of Azerbaijanis from their historical
and ethnic lands in the territory of the Armenian SSR in
1948-1953**

Ethnic cleansing and genocide committed against Azerbaijanis in the Caucasus in the last two centuries exposed our people to severe deprivations, national tragedy and troubles. As a result of such an inhuman policy implemented gradually, Azerbaijanis were expelled from their native historical and ethnic lands, which is currently called Armenia, and were exposed to mass killings and massacres. Besides, thousands of historical and cultural monuments and settlements belonging to our people have been destroyed.

Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, dated December 23, 1947, No. 4083, and Resolution dated March 10, 1948, No. 754, were historical crimes against the Azerbaijani people. Based on these resolutions, more than one hundred and fifty thousand Azerbaijanis were violently expelled from their homeland by the Armenian SSR in 1948-1953. During the implementation of these resolutions, which were against

ordinary legal norms, repressive rules of the authoritarian and totalitarian regime were widely applied, and thousands of people, including the elderly and infants, died because of a severe environment, acute climate change, physical tension, and moral genocide. Along with the criminal policy of the Armenian chauvinist circles and the administration of the USSR, it was also Azerbaijani administration at that time to blame for the organization and implementation of crimes against our compatriots.

Unfortunately, the fact of deportation of Azerbaijanis from the territory of the Armenian SSR in 1948-1953 has not been investigated properly over the past 50 years, and this accident has not been assessed legally and politically.

Taking the above-mentioned fact into consideration, I hereby order:

1. To establish a state commission to thoroughly investigate the mass deportation of Azerbaijanis from their historical and ethnic lands in the territory of the Armenian SSR in 1948-1953, to legally and politically assess this historical crime against the Azerbaijani people, and bring this fact to the attention of international community:

Chairman of the State Commission:

Heydar Aliyev - President of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Deputy Chairman of the State Commission

Artur Rasizade - Prime Minister of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Members of the State Commission:

Ramiz Mehdiyev - Head of the Executive Office of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Vasif Talibov - Chairman of the Supreme Assembly of the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic

Izzat Rustamov - Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Elchin Afandiyev - Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Hasan Hasanov - Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Namig Abbasov - Minister of National Security of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Ramil Usubov - Minister of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Eldar Hasanov - Prosecutor General of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Sudabe Hasanova - First Deputy Minister of Justice of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Khanlar Hajiyev - Chairman of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Sirus Tabrizli - Minister of Press and Information of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Vafa Guluzade - State Advisor on Foreign Policy Issues of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Hidayat Orujov - State Advisor on National Policy Issues of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Fatma Abdullazade - Head of the Department for Humanitarian Policy of the Executive Office of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Shahin Aliyev - Head of the Department for Legislation and Legal Expertise of the Executive Office of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Fuad Alasgarov - Head of the Department for State and Law of the Executive Office of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Yusif Humbatov - Head of the Department for Work with Territorial Administration Bodies of the Executive Office of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Ali Hasanov - Head of the Public and Political Department of the Executive Office of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Rafael Allahverdiyev - Head of Baku City Executive Power

Nizami Khudiyev - Chairman of the State Television and Radio Broadcasting Company of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Faramaz Magsudov - President of the Azerbaijan Academy of Sciences

Anar Rzayev - Chairman of Azerbaijan Writers Union

Jamil Guliyev - Substitute for Academician-secretary of the Department for Social Sciences of the Azerbaijan Academy of Sciences

Igrar Aliyev - Director of the Institute of History of the Azerbaijan Academy of Sciences

Budag Budagov - Director of the Institute of Geography of the Azerbaijan Academy of Sciences

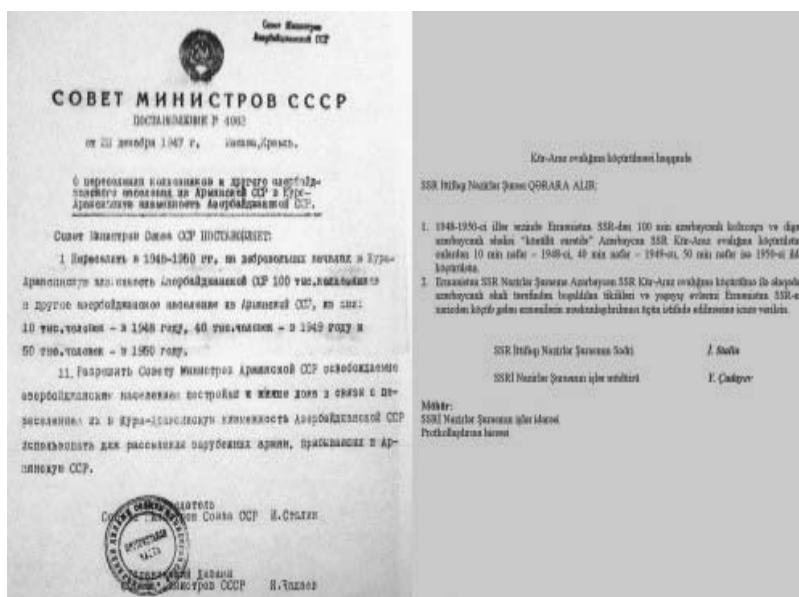
Atakhan Pashayev - Head of the Department for Archives under the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Yusif Yusifov - Head of the Department for General History of Azerbaijan State Pedagogical University named after N.Tusi

2. The Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan shall solve the issues related to the execution of Decree.

H.A.Aliyev
President of the Republic of Azerbaijan
Baku city,
December 18, 1997

In the course of socialism building in the USSR, not only various groups and political parties but the whole peoples were exposed to Soviet deportation policy. They were forced to leave their homelands based on various "reasons". The Turkic peoples as well as Azeri Turks were among those peoples that experienced deportation. Based on Decree by J.V.Stalin, dated December 23, 1947, they were resettled from the Armenian SSR in 1948-1953, and Christian Armenians settled in ancient Azerbaijani lands instead of Azeris. Although it was basically the result of an imperial policy, Armenians benefited from a suitable situation and succeeded in deporting Azerbaijanis from their historical lands.



As a result of the purposefully implemented ethnic cleansing policy against Azerbaijani Turks, our compatriots were subjected to national tragedy and torture. Our compatriots, who were resettled to the Kura-Aras lowland, died of various diseases being intolerant of warm climate and were exposed to a

real genocide. Unfortunately, this crafty policy against our compatriots has not been evaluated properly in terms of politics, history and science, and the ethnic cleansing policy has not been adequately analyzed and explained. After J.V.Stalin's death the deported people were granted "rehabilitation", which was of historical public and political importance. However, this acquittal was not applied to more than a 100 thousand Azerbaijanis who experienced deportation.

Although the practice of forced resettlement of the peoples at the level of the State of Soviet Union was criticized during the period of reconstruction, the attitude towards the deportation of Azerbaijani Turks did not change, and this problem was left unresolved.

Historic justice was restored only thanks to the determination of Heydar Aliyev, Nationwide Leader, and this incident received its political and legal value at the state level. In Decree "On the mass deportation of Azerbaijanis from their historical and ethnic territory in the Armenian SSR in 1948-1953", dated December 18, 1997, by H.A.Aliyev, the ethnic cleansing policy and the inhuman attitude towards Azerbaijanis were denounced, and the research of this problem was set as a task for the historians. Hence, the correct and objective writing of the pages of this historically important tragedy become a historic necessity. The investigation of the deportation of Azerbaijani Turks from their historical lands, the Armenian SSR, as well as the analysis of criminal acts and attitudes of the administrations of the USSR and the Armenian SSR within this context, is an important step towards not only elimination of the historical injustice against our compatriots but also restoration of historical justice.

At the beginning of the 1990s, along with the collapse of the Soviet Empire, severe Soviet censorship also come to an end. "Confidentiality status" on archives was removed with a cessation of censorship and formation of a new political environment in society. Several issues, on which censorship was

imposed, including the deportation of Azerbaijani Turks from their historical and ethnic lands, Armenian SSR, in the years 1947-1953, become a subject matter of the investigation of historians.

The Bolsheviks, who overthrew the bourgeois-democratic government established on the ruins of the Tsarist monarchy in Russia in 1917 and seized power by force of arms, included repressions and deportation in the political lexicon, along with concepts such as "socialism" and "communism".

In the course of construction of socialism in the Soviet Union, not only various groups, organizations, and political parties, but also the entire peoples resisting the totalitarian regime were subjected to brutal persecution and destruction, and experienced repression and deportation. It was an unprecedented practice of forced resettlement of peoples in the history of the world. According to approximate statistics, in the 30s and 40s of the XX century, 3,226,340 people were subjected to Soviet deportation policy in the USSR and were expelled from their settlements by force.

In those years, the Azerbaijani people were among those peoples that were exposed to the Soviet deportation policy. The first deportation was applied to our compatriots who came from South Azerbaijan to settle in North Azerbaijan. Part of the citizens indicating Iranian Azerbaijan as a place of birth were expelled to Iran by force during the process of passport issuance policy.

In 1937 and 1938, the Azerbaijani population of Irevan, Jalaloghlu (Stepanavan), Gyumri (former Leninakan), Allahverdi, and other regions of Armenia was officially expelled from the country being labelled as Iranian. According to some sources, Azerbaijani Turks were forcefully resettled from the territory around Tbilisi in 1934-1941. As it is obvious from the facts, in the 1930s and 1940s Azerbaijani Turks were partly exposed to the Soviet deportation policy. The above-mentioned

source does not provide information on the number of Azerbaijani population exposed to deportation policy.

The fact that Azerbaijani Turks were not subjected to large-scale deportation policy in those years was determined by three main factors: first, the Azerbaijani Turks were exposed to partial deportation in the 30s and 40s; second, the USSR's policy on Iran and the important role of Azerbaijan in this policy; third, Turkey's non-involvement in the war.

One of the most important issues of the Soviet deportation history is the reasons which led to deportation. The "round-table" talks in the journal "Voprosy İstorii" ("History Issues") are noteworthy for the discussions held by historians and linguists about the emergence of the deportation policy against Soviet peoples and its reasons. Although opinions are closer to reality and convincing, in general, there is no single and unanimous idea about the reasons for the deportation.

In the "round-table" talks entitled "The Soviet Union in the 20s", T.Y.Krasovitskaya states that the reason for the deportation was the necessity for the creation of "a homogeneous linguistic environment" in the Soviet Union, and tries to justify this argument based on the fact that the vast majority of the deported peoples was Turkish-speaking peoples.

In his article entitled "K istorii Sovetskoqo yazıkoznaniya: Marr i Stalin" sent to the journal "Voprosy İstorii", V.M.Alpatov points out that T. Y. Krasovitskaya's remarks are inaccurate and groundless. He suggests an alternative view stating that J.V.Stalin's sympathy and antipathy for the peoples of the Caucasus, which he nourished during his visit to the Caucasus, played a certain role in the deportation of peoples.

Researcher N.F. Bugay argues that V.M.Alpatov's remark is much closer to the truth, and this remark is noteworthy of consideration along with the others. Referring to some documents, he states that the followings are the reasons for the deportation of the whole peoples of the Soviet Union in the

1930s and 1940s: first, punishment which was imposed because of certain persons and groups of those peoples during the occupation; second, as a precautionary measure against possible betrayal during deportation. In his opinion, all these measures were taken on the supposition that in case of a war, members of the deported people may collaborate with their compatriots living abroad.

Researcher L. Hasanova believes that the Soviet deportation has specific reasons for both general and concrete cases. It is important that both of them are taken into consideration. For the first time, L.Hasanova reveals characteristics of the Soviet deportation policy and compares it with the deportation of Azerbaijani Turks from the Armenian SSR. It turns out that the deportation of Azeris was a logical continuation of the Soviet deportation policy.

As for the Armenian historians, they consider the joint letter by M.J.Baghirov, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Azerbaijan Communist (b) Party, and G.Harutyunov addressed to J.V.Stalin as the main reason for the deportation of Azerbaijani Turks from Armenia. They think that the resettlement of Azerbaijanis was related to economic reasons and they were resettled for the purpose of developing of the Kura-Aras lowland. This is nothing but another Armenian lie and is too far from the historical truth.

Such a question can be addressed to Armenian historians who distort history?! If the resettlement was really related to economic reasons, then why were the most important resolutions and orders on resettlement were realised under confidentiality status and were kept secret from the public?

The Soviet Union's territorial claims to Turkey as well as Armenia's territorial claims to Azerbaijan and the mass deportation of Azerbaijani Turks from their historical and ethnic lands during the Second World War and in the subsequent years are closely interconnected issues. The forced resettlement of

Azerbaijani Turks from their historical and ethnic lands was related to political reasons but not to economic reasons.

Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the USSR "On the resettlement of collective farmers and other Azerbaijani population from the Armenian SSR to the Kura-Aras lowland of the Azerbaijan SSR", dated December 23, 1947, supported Armenia's traditional ethnic cleansing policy towards aboriginal Turks and made way for the realization of Armenian's aggressive plans. Political interpretation of resolutions of the Central Government on the resettlement of Azerbaijani Turks indicates that these resolutions provided Armenian officials and chauvinist circles with all kinds of freedom to drive Turks out of Armenia in any form and method they wanted.

Archive materials related to the forced resettlement and the study of the deportation of Azerbaijanis from Armenia confirm that the deportation process was carried out on the basis of Armenians' historical and ethnic hostility against the Turkish population and it was a continuation of the ethnic cleansing policy in a new form.

According to our rough estimates, on the eve of the deportation, over 170,000 Azerbaijanis lived in Armenia, "They constituted the vast majority of the population in Azizbayov, Vedi, Garabaghar, Gukasyan, Basarkechar, Gafan and other districts." In 24 districts of the Armenian SSR, the Azerbaijani Turks lived in 220 collective farms as a single population and shared 63 collective farms with other ethnic groups.

Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the USSR "On resettlement of collective farmers and other Azerbaijani population from the Armenian SSR to the Kura-Aras lowland of the Azerbaijan SSR", dated December 23, 1947, No. 4083, was sudden and unexpected for local Turkish population who had lived in this land for centuries. This resolution was met with great grief by the Turkish population the vast majority of which

related this resolution to Armenia's historical and ethnic hostility against Azerbaijani Turks.

The Armenian population warmly welcomed Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the USSR as a historical and natural event. According to the information given by Khoren Grigoryan, Minister of Internal Affairs of the Armenian SSR, the Armenian population of Yerevan and Leninakan as well as other cities, districts, and villages also expressed various views, which were of nationalist characteristics, about the resettlement of Azerbaijanis.

It is also obvious from the opinion of Yervand Mesropyan, a resident of Yerevan city who says: "Azerbaijanis should be deported not only from Armenia but also from the Nakhchivan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic which should be annexed to Armenia." Although his view was of individual characteristics, it had its root in common Armenian idea and was an expression of the national desires of all Armenians. Of course, it also had historical, political, and ideological roots. From the 80s and 90s of the XIX century, chauvinist Armenian parties and organizations, led by "Dashnaktsutyun", attained practical application of racial and theoretical ideology about the killing and deportation of "alien Turk-Tatars". The slogan "Death for Turks" was a part of the national mentality of every Armenian regardless of social, political or class position.

Dashnaks were proud of it. They say: "It should be stated without hesitation that today all Armenians in the Armenian SSR and the USSR think as Armenian Revolutionary Federation (Dashnaktsutyun) do."

Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the USSR "On resettlement of collective farmers and other Azerbaijani population from the Armenian SSR to the Kura-Aras lowland of the Azerbaijan SSR", dated December 23, 1947, envisaged the deportation of 10 thousand Azeris in 1948, 40 thousand Azeris in 1949, and 50 thousand Azeris in 1950.

On March 10, 1948, the second Resolution, No. 754, "On measures related to the resettlement of collective farmers and other Azerbaijani population from the Armenian SSR to the Kura-Aras lowland of the Azerbaijan SSR" was approved by the signatures of J.V.Stalin, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, and Chaadeyev, Chief of the Department of Affairs.



Resolution, dated March 10, 1948, dealt with concrete measures about the resettlement of Azerbaijanis to the Kura-Aras lowland. Moreover, in Resolution, it was noted that this Resolution was a supplement to Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, dated December 23, 1947. The measures to be implemented during the resettlement were imposed on the administrations of the Azerbaijan SSR and the Armenian SSR. Resolution required that the Councils of Ministers of the Azerbaijan SSR and the Armenian SSR should inform the

people about the terms of resettlement and concessions rendered by the government to the resettled people.

The Azerbaijani population resettled from Armenia was provided with several "concessions". Resolution of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR and the Council of People's Commissars "On concessions related to the resettlement issues in agriculture", dated November 17, 1937, was also applied to the Azerbaijani population that was resettled in the Kura-Aras lowland. What was interesting was that this Resolution was related to the people resettled in Siberia, Kazakhstan and the Far East in 1937. According to that Resolution, all the Azerbaijanis were supposed to be provided with resettlement tickets, and on this purpose 5,000 copies of resettlement tickets were issued and sent to the Armenian SSR.

Since the destination for the deportation was designated as the Kura-Aras lowland, the Azerbaijan SSR assumed more responsibility for the resettlement process. The Central Committee of the Azerbaijan Communist (b) Party approved a special Resolution on March 19, 1948, in order to implement the tasks arising from Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, dated March 10, 1948, No. 754. In the report prepared by T.Guliyev, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Azerbaijan SSR, and H.Seyidov, Secretary of the Central Committee of the Azerbaijan Communist (b) Party, addressed to M.J.Baghirov, it was considered relevant to reorganize the Department for Resettlement under the Council of Ministers of the Azerbaijan SSR.

Based on Resolution of the Central Committee of the Azerbaijan Communist (b) Party, dated March 19, 1948, Special Representative Office of the Council of Ministers of the Azerbaijan SSR was established in Irevan city for the purpose of prompt resolution of problems related to the process of resettlement of collective farmers and other Azerbaijani population to the Kura-Aras lowland, and Mursal Najaf oghlu Mammadov was appointed as Head of Office.

By imposing crucial decision-making process on the government of Azerbaijan SSR, the administration of the USSR "ensured" its innocence, and tried to expose the government of Azerbaijan SSR to the blame of Azerbaijanis in the future. By pursuing such a subtle policy, in fact, the communist administration of the USSR tried to hide the real essence of the deportation.

On April 13, 1948, the Central Committee of the Azerbaijan Communist (b) Party approved Resolution "On a massive propaganda campaign on resettlement of collective farmers and other Azerbaijani population from the Armenian SSR to the Kura-Aras lowland of the Azerbaijan SSR". As a part of the implementation of Resolution, in January 1948, the representatives of the Council of Ministers of the Azerbaijan SSR and the Central Committee of the Azerbaijan Communist (b) Party, paid an official visit to the Armenian SSR. Together with the Council of Ministers of the Armenian SSR, they were supposed to work out an action plan on the resettlement and inform Azerbaijanis about the resettlement process.

The resettlement office was established in the country in connection with the resettlement of the Azerbaijani population from Armenia. During the period of resettlement, Karapetyan, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Armenian SSR, was appointed as Head of Resettlement Office. Then Agaronyan, B.Astvachaturyan and K.Mutafyan were appointed to this post in succession.

Although official deportation of Azerbaijani Turks from the Armenian SSR started in 1948, the number of unauthorized migrants resettled from the Armenian SSR to the Azerbaijan SSR was much higher during the period from December 1947 to January 1948. Being conscious of the fact that it was impossible to live together with Armenians, hundreds of Azerbaijani families immediately moved to the Azerbaijan SSR, abandoning their properties compulsorily, without waiting until the start of the official resettlement. This issue was broadly covered in the

report, dated March 15, 1948, sent by N.A.Brutens, Head of Resettlement Office under the Council of Ministers of the Azerbaijan SSR, to T.Guliyev, Chairman of the Council of Ministers. In his report delivered to the government, it was mentioned that more than 200 Azerbaijani families had moved to the Kirovabad (Ganja), and they wanted to settle in the western region of the country, Samukh, Shamkhor (Shamkir), Tovuz, Gazakh and Akstafa.

According to the initial resettlement plan of the Council of Ministers of the Armenian SSR, 2,378 households consisting of 11,244 people from 53 settlements were supposed to be resettled. According to the initial plan, 1,159 households consisting of 6,360 people were supposed to be resettled in the spring of 1948, and 1,119 households consisting of 4,884 people were supposed to be resettled in the autumn of 1948. This figure was more than 10 thousands people, envisaged in Resolution of the Council of Ministers of USSR, dated December 23, 1947. Obviously, the communist administration of Armenia wanted to resettle more Azerbaijanis at the early stage of the resettlement.

Initially, Armenians tried to resettle people from villages, mostly large Azerbaijani villages, which were inhabited together by Azerbaijanis and Armenians. One of them was Lambali village of Noyemberyan district, which had 245 households (1,179 people). The other one was Mehmandar village of Zangibasar district, which had 238 households (1,410 people).

The resettlement measures covered 22 districts, particularly Zangibasar, Artashat, Vedi, Garabaghar, Basarkechar, Noyemberyan, Mikoyan, Dilijan, Kirovakan, and other districts which were inhabited by Azerbaijanis. First of all, Armenian nationalists tried to resettle the Turkish people from the districts where they lived as a compact community.

According to the resettlement plan, dated April 12, 1948, submitted by M.N.Mammadov, the representative of the Department for Resettlement under the Council of Ministers of the Azerbaijan SSR in Yerevan city, to M.J.Baghirov, First

Secretary of the Central Committee of the Azerbaijan Communist (b) Party, and Teymur Guliyev, Chairman of the Council of Ministers, such a large resettlement process caused too many questions among the Azerbaijani population, and for the purpose of getting answers, people from different backgrounds of various districts and villages of Armenia came to Representative Office of the Council of Ministers of the Azerbaijan SSR located in Irevan. Part of the population moved to the Azerbaijan SSR without waiting until the end of the case.

There were contradictory articles in the two Resolutions issued by the Council of Ministers of the USSR, dated December 23, 1947, and March 10, 1948, which were related to the resettlement. This contradiction caused problems in the process of the resettlement. In the Article 11 of Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, dated December 23, 1947, it was envisaged that Armenians emigrating to Armenia should settle in the buildings and houses which were abandoned by people resettled to the Kura-Aras lowland of the Azerbaijan SSR. However, in Item 4 of Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, dated March 10, 1948, the administration of the Armenian SSR was ordered to help in purchasing and selling houses in connection with the resettlement of collective farmers, workers, and servants.

This item enabled the Armenian administration to resettle Azerbaijanis in a short time. At the meeting of chairmen of executive committees of districts, Karapetyan, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Armenian SSR, noted that the administrations of the villages, especially the chairmen of collective farms, caused problems for Azerbaijanis in selling their houses, despite the order which required to support them. Armenian officials obstructed Azerbaijanis and forced them to abandon their properties in Armenia. Although the Azerbaijani population of Zovashen and Barsrashen villages of Artashat (Gamarli) district, and Goygumbaz village of Zangibasar

district, agreed with the buyers on the sale of their houses, Armenian chairmen of collective farms of these villages forbade Azerbaijanis to sell their houses to Armenian residents of other villages.

In the Item 3 of Resolution the Council of Ministers of the USSR "On measures related to resettlement of collective farmers and other Azerbaijani population from the Armenian SSR to the Kura-Aras lowland of the Azerbaijan SSR", dated March 10, 1948, it is envisaged: "The administrations of ministers, institutions and enterprises are ordered to immediately dismiss people from jobs, who were resettled from the Armenian SSR to the Kura-Aras lowland of the Azerbaijan SSR." The Armenian administrations of institutions and enterprises took the advantage of this order and started to massively dismiss Azerbaijani collective farmers, workers and servants.

The information given by M.N.Mammadov, the special representative of the Council of Ministers of the Azerbaijan SSR in Yerevan, confirmed this fact. Many Azerbaijanis asked him for being resettled to Azerbaijan as soon as possible. It is clear from the information given by M.N.Mammadov that most of the people appealing for resettlement were unemployed. Armenian officials dismissed Azerbaijanis massively on the pretext of employing Armenians who repatriated to the Armenian SSR. Unemployed and desperate Azerbaijanis preferred to resettle.

In this regard, Prof. B.Najafov writes quite rightly: "What kind of voluntary initiative can we talk about if employees were compulsorily dismissed based on Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, but not on initiatives of administrations of workplaces."

Most of the Armenian repatriates who moved to Armenia from abroad were members of chauvinist and nationalist parties such as "Hentchak", "Ramgavar", and "Dashnaktsutyun". The main purpose of their repatriation was to act for the sake of "Armenian issue". The ultimate promises of the Soviet propaganda persuaded them to move to Armenia. The Armenian

repatriates provoked the local Armenians into brutal treatment with Azerbaijanis. Due to Armenians' pressure and indifference of local authorities, Azerbaijanis, who did not wish to resettle, had to decide to leave as well.

In order to accelerate the process of deportation of Azerbaijani Turks, the local Armenian party leaders got passport numbers of Azerbaijanis and addressed letters to both the Central Government and Azerbaijani government on behalf of them appealing for quick resettlement.

Azerbaijani residents of various categories of Irevan city were also included in the current plan for the resettlement of Azerbaijanis from Armenia. M.N.Mammadov was well aware of the fact that 230 city residents had nothing to do with the Kura-Aras lowland and it was unacceptable to resettle them to such a geographical area. Therefore, he asked M.J.Baghirov to help them resettle to Absheron district, a region near Baku city.

The communist leaders of Azerbaijan were Azerbaijanis and they could not be inconsiderate to the horrible fate of their compatriots. Some of those leaders dared to express their thoughts directly or indirectly even under a strict regime. Defending national interest, Teymur Guliyev, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Azerbaijan SSR, in his letter addressed to V.Molotov, Vice-chairman of the Council of Ministers the USSR, noted that since most of the resettled people lived in the mountainous areas of Armenia, they could not adapt to the climate of the Kura-Aras lowland. T.Guliyev requested the Central Government to allow Azerbaijanis to settle in the north-eastern mountainous area, Shaki, Gakh, Balakan, and Zagatala districts.

Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the USSR "On resettlement of collective farmers and other Azerbaijani population from the Armenian SSR to the Kura-Aras lowland of the Azerbaijan SSR", dated December 23, 1947, envisaged the principle of "a voluntary agreement" in the process of

resettlement of Azerbaijanis from Armenia. Resolution states: "100 thousand collective farmers and other Azerbaijani population should be resettled to the Kura-Aras lowland of the Azerbaijan SSR on a voluntary basis."

Bakhtiyar Najafov writes: "...if the resettlement was based on a voluntary basis, then the order "should be resettled" seems totally irrelevant, but if the resettlement was compulsory, then the word "voluntary" seems to be a mockery, and the phrase "should be resettled" sounds as an order." Thus, the concept of "order" is in relation to compulsoriness but not to voluntariness.

In many official documents kept in archives, the resettlement was described as a voluntary process. Was the resettlement really based on a voluntary basis? What was the attitude of the Azerbaijani population to the resettlement and how did they meet this policy?

Recently, some Armenian authors have also claimed that the resettlement was based on a voluntary basis. They allege that Azerbaijanis were resettled on the basis of the appeal by M.J.Baghirov, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Azerbaijan Communist (b) Party, addressed to the Council of Ministers of the USSR, in connection with the reconstruction of the Kura-Aras lowland. They also noted that Azerbaijanis were resettled not only from Armenia but also from Georgia and the counties of Central Asian. Of course, their groundless argument does not reflect the historical reality and is nothing but another Armenian lie.

The documents of Archive for Political Documents of Administrative Department of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan are valuable sources to reveal historical truths, especially in terms of clarifying the attitude of the Turkish population to this ruthless and terrible process. Moreover, these documents are also evidence of the filthy and criminal acts of the USSR administration headed by V. Stalin as well as the Armenian's communist but, in fact, the Dashnak political circles.

It is clear from the archive document that the resettlement, in fact, was mandatory but not voluntary as it was indicated in Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the USSR "On resettlement of collective farmers and other Azerbaijani population from the Armenian SSR to the Kura-Aras lowland of the Azerbaijan SSR", dated December 23, 1947.

Major-general Khoren Grigoryan, who previously served as a high-ranking official in the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Azerbaijan SSR, played an active role in repression against Azerbaijanis in the 1930s. Khoren Grigoryan was Minister of Internal Affairs of the Armenian SSR during the period of resettlement. He addressed a report, with "top confidential" status, "On the spirit among Azerbaijani population of Armenia in relation to their expected resettlement to the Azerbaijan SSR", dated May 3, 1948, to M.J.Baghirov, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Azerbaijan Communist (b) Party. In the report, he notes: "As people were informed about the resettlement and the purpose of this event was announced at the general meeting of the collective farmers, people unanimously welcomed this resolution, however in private conversations they expressed their objections."

On the eve of the resettlement, intelligence agencies of Armenia investigated people's attitude towards the resettlement and delivered information to relevant state authorities. Hearings and public opinion surveys revealed that, in contrast to statements of the official authorities, people's attitude towards the resettlement was not unanimous. Khoren Grigoryan, Minister of Internal Affairs of the Armenian SSR, related bad mood of Azerbaijanis to a poor explanation of the resettlement, but, in fact, Azerbaijani Turks were reluctant to leave their historical lands where they had lived for thousands of years.

Kh.Grigoryan, who confirmed this fact, notes in the report addressed to the Azerbaijani administration: "We have gathered many facts which indicate that Azerbaijanis do not want to leave

their lands. They visit the graves of their family members and say elegies which means that they are unwilling to leave..."

There was a negative attitude in almost all districts inhabited by Turks, which manifests itself illegally and half-legally, although secretly, against Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the USSR on the resettlement. The negative attitude towards resettlement was obviously noticeable in Zangibasar, Amasya, Noyemberyan, Basarkechar, Sisyan, Vedi, Garabaghar, Artashat, Hoktemberyan, Gafan, Meghri, and other districts.



The majority of the population of Chivinly village of Amasiya district and Shishgaya village of Basarkechar district decisively refused to move to Azerbaijan. Furthermore, the Azerbaijani population of Akhund Bozavand and Darghali villages of Artashat (Gamarli) district resolutely opposed the resettlement. "Let them kill us immediately!" they say. Talking on behalf of his fellow villagers, Bashir Taghiyev, chairman of a collective farm of Siznak village of Gafan district, says: "We prefer dying in our native village to moving to a new land."

After the announcement of the resettlement of Azerbaijani Turks, the people become disheartened and were in low spirits. They lost enthusiasm for work and became careless of their homestead and household issues which they had created thanks to hard work. Everyone was "looking forward to" being resettled, and it seemed as though it was the end of everything.

The Azerbaijani population was completely sure that they would be resettled, and their properties would be owned by the Armenian repatriates. Poor people were thoroughly unaware of the fact that the official resolution on settlement of the Armenian repatriates in Azerbaijanis' properties was nothing but a pretext for their resettlement. Later on, they themselves witnessed the reality and believed that it was a pure pretext. The notes of the resettled Azerbaijanis confirm that not a single Armenian repatriate dwelled in the villages of Azerbaijanis.

Some residents of Zangilar and Khirda Damirchi villages of Zangibasar district as well as the residents of Bakhchalar village of Hoktemberyan district, Namazov Sultanali Rahim oghlu, Yusubova Gullu Abbas gizi, Mirzayev Mashadi Teymur oghlu, Mammadov Ali, Hasanov Abdulali, Kerimov Gulam and others considered arrival of the Armenian repatriates as a reason for resettlement of Azerbaijanis. In their opinions, the Armenian repatriates would settle in their houses. A group of tractor drivers of Amasiya Machine Tractor Station came to the conclusion that spring planting would be unproductive that year. Because Armenians would harvest the crop instead of Azerbaijanis.

Some residents of Chivinli, Ibish, and Dashkorpu villages of Amasiya district, Shurakand, Zangilar, Kolanli and Aghahamzali villages of Zangibasar district, and Boyuk Vedi, Taytan, Shirazli villages of Vedi district dismantled their houses and sold pieces as construction materials, and cut down fruit trees so that nothing was left to Armenians.

The Azerbaijani population working for collective farms refused to work in the fields and pay taxes as a sign of protest against resettlement. Collective farmers of Bakhchalar village of Hoktemberyan district, Davudov Gubish, Mammadov Alish, Abdullayev Abdulla, Hasanov Hasan, Aliyev Yusup, Mammadov Abbas as well as collective farmers of Zangilar, Kolanli and Aghahamzali villages of Zangibasar district, Charikhli village of Basarkechar district, and Chivanli village of Amasiya district massively refused to work. When they were asked the reason for refusal of work, their response was that there was no point in working since they would leave their lands.

The collective farmers of Sarijalar village of Zangibasar district evaded payment of taxes assuming that they would be resettled anyway and paying taxes would be in vain. In the conversation with fellow collective farmers, Aliyev Abbas and Rahimov Ismayil, the collective farmers of Goygumbaz village, mentioned that working for collective farms was useless because the fruits of their labour seemed destined to be appropriated by Armenians. Moreover, they added that it was difficult to coexist with Armenians because they oppressed Azerbaijanis and did not assign them to appropriate tasks in collective farms.

It is clear from the hearings that most of the Azerbaijani population considered Armenians' historical and ethnic hostility against Turks as the main reason for the resettlement of Azerbaijanis. Nothing happened accidentally. Elderly and younger generations of Azerbaijanis witnessed the bloody tragedies that Armenians had occasionally inflicted upon them. Turks still remembered atrocious tragedies committed by Armenians in 1905-07 as well as in 1918-20, the times during which Turks were exposed to mass killings and displacement.

During the Soviet era, Azerbaijani Turks experienced nationalist policy, pursued by A. Khanjyan, First Secretary of Armenia, in their socio-economic and cultural life. A. Khanjyan renamed hundreds of places of Turkish origin and laid the foundations of discrimination against Turks. From this point of

view, Azerbaijani Turks were quite right to consider Armenian hostility as the reason for resettlement. To a certain extent, Azerbaijanis were right in their judgment. They were well conscious of the socio-political processes and were able to assess them adequately.

The opinion of a group of residents of Shorkand and Zangilar villages of Zangibasar district were not specific to them and represented views of all the Azerbaijani population. They say: "According to the idea of A. Khanjyan, former Secretary of the Central Committee of Communist (b) Party of Armenia, all the Armenians from all over the world were supposed to resettle in Armenia. Nakhchivan was planned to be annexed to Armenia, and all Azerbaijanis were supposed to be resettled. This is it! A. Khanjyan's dream is about to come true. Can Armenians and Azerbaijanis coexist in peace?! There has been hostility between Armenians and Azerbaijanis throughout history and there will always be hostility between them..."

During the period of Dashnak Armenia (1918-1920), a genocide policy was implemented against Azeri population due to which thousands of Azerbaijanis were expelled from their historical lands. After the collapse of the Tsarist Russia, the newly established the Soviet Russia proclaimed equality of peoples and nations before the state and society and forbade all kinds of national and racial discrimination. After the establishment of the Soviet power in Armenia, tens of thousands of Azerbaijani Turks, who were forced to leave their lands, believing in the national policy of the Soviet Union, returned to their homelands and restored the previous rhythm of their life.

The Turkish population lived in a period of relative stability in Soviet Armenia but after the Soviet-German war of 1941-1945, they faced another horrible policy without recovering from physical and moral wounds of the war. Thus, "fair and humanistic" Soviet government decided to resettle them from their historical lands. The overwhelming majority of

the Azeri population did not trust the Soviet government and its national policy any more. They say: "The Bolsheviks' policy is based on deception."

Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the USSR on the resettlement of Azerbaijani Turks was not delivered to the public by mass media and kept secret. This, in its turn, raised doubts and rumours about the new lands that the Azeri population was to be resettled. Azeris knew how terrible the resettlement would be.

They were aware of the deportation of Crimean Tatars from Crimea as well as the deportation of Ahiska Turks from Mekhsetiyya. The lack of confidence in the Soviet state was the reason for doubts about the destination for the resettlement of Azeris. The Turkish population of Guzukand and Tepekoy villages of Amasiya district and Sarijalar village of Zangibasar district thought that the resettlement was not going to be on a voluntary basis, and they would be taken to Kazakhstan in railway wagons as the people in Akhalkalak.



The most daring protest was staged by Azeris living along the Arpachay (the Akhurian) and the Aras rivers. They thought of going to Turkey and Iran instead of being resettled, and some of them openly expressed their regrets about not leaving the country much earlier.

Since the Azerbaijani population primarily lived in foothills and mountainous areas of Armenia, one of the issues of concern for them was the climate of the Kura-Aras lowland of the Azerbaijan SSR. Most of them experienced the sufferings of refugee life in the years 1905-1907 and 1918-1920 and witnessed disasters of a warm climate. In the talk with his fellow villagers, Gurbanov Jalal, a resident of Jomardli village of Sisian district, who encountered tortures and tragedy of refugee life, notes: "Most of the people have no idea how hot Azerbaijan is. Azerbaijanis fled from Armenia to Nakhchivan in 1918-1920. We were fourteen then, and only two years later we were just three. 11 people died of heat and illness. Mingachevir is much worse than Nakhchivan. We will make many sacrifices."

The population to be resettled did not conceal their concern about climate at all, and requested the government to be resettled in foothills and mountainous areas. According to M.Mammadov, people wanted to settle around Kirovabad (currently Ganja), Shamkhor (currently Shamkir), Tovuz, Aghstafa, Gazakh and Kirovabad.

The hearings indicate that the Soviet government's distrust of Turks manifested itself in the judgment and opinions of both the Azeri and Armenian population. The residents of Khirda Demirchi and Ranjbar villages of Zangibasar district assumed that the Soviet government did not want Azeris to live along the border with Turkey. Because in case of a war between the USSR and Turkey, Azerbaijanis could flee to Turkey. That was the chief reason for resettlement.

There was nothing biased in Azeris' judgement. Thousands of Azerbaijanis were shot dead and sent into exile accused of

being pan-Turkists and Turkish spy. Crimean Tatars and Ahiska Turks were resettled from border regions with Turkey since they were of the same origin with the Turkish people of Turkey.

Referring to the Soviet government's negative attitude towards the peoples of Turkish origin, Armenians slandered Azeris and claimed that Azeris were definitely to be resettled from Armenia. Initially, Azeris living along the Arpachay (the Akhurian) and the Aras rivers were to be resettled, and later Azeris residing in Irevan city were supposed to be resettled. It is obvious that the primary plan was to resettle Azeris living in villages of border districts on the assumption that they often violated the state border, and Turkey made use of them as spies.

Some Armenians also related the forced resettlement of Azeris to a possible war between the USSR and Turkey. Tense relations between the USSR and Turkey has an impact on Armenians state of mind which was acutely noticeable in the local and repatriated Armenians. What Shura Arutyunovna Ordian, a Yerevan resident, told repatriated Armenians living in her neighbourhood also verifies this fact. She advised her repatriated Armenian neighbours: "You should write letters to your relatives living abroad and tell them not to move to the Armenian SSR hurriedly because soon there will be a war between the USSR and Turkey."

It was not accidental that both the Armenian and Azeri populations of Armenia similarly evaluate and perceived the cause of resettlement of Azerbaijani Turks from the Armenian SSR. During this period, due to the Soviet Union, the relations between the USSR and the Republic of Turkey were at the point of a war. The reason for the intense relations between the USSR and the Republic of Turkey was the Soviet Union's territorial claims to Turkey. Both Azeris and Armenians related the resettlement to the military tension in the region which was also one of the factors facilitating the resettlement of Azeris.

The Armenian repatriates did not hide their real aims and publicly engaged in emissary activities and propaganda. Smbat

Kirovakanda, a former dashnak khmbabet (a group leader) who migrated from France, disseminated dashnak ideas among Armenians stating that: "Once, Dashnaks made an attempt to annex the Nakhichevan ASSR to the Armenian SSR but they failed. Now it is time to raise the issue again because the territory of Armenia is small." These territorial claims were not voiced only within the country.

Through its press agencies, "Dashnaktsutyun" party, which functioned abroad during the deportation of Azerbaijani Turks, made territorial claims more frequently for expansion of Armenian territory. It is also obvious from the documents reflecting the political activity of "Dashnaktsutyun" party in those years.



The article entitled "Nakhchivan is important for Armenia" by Dashnak columnist Saak Ztchyan, published in "Alik" ("Wave"), issues 190-191, dated August 25-26, 1948, a newspaper published in the Armenian language in Tehran, attracts special

attention. A dashnak author writes: “At long last after political intrigue of 27 years, in a time period when the treaty made with the Republic of Turkey in 1925 is considered invalidated, the USSR should also invalidate the treaty envisaging the annexation of Nakhchivan to Azerbaijan and annex it to Armenia.” The author also refers to fictitious historical facts and claims that Nakhchivan is a historical and geographical part of Armenia, and it is the best place for Armenians who return to Armenia from Iran.

The tense relations between the USSR and Turkey, the USSR's territorial claims to Turkey as well as the deportation of Azeri Turks from their historical lands incited Armenians' territorial requirements. They felt an overwhelming desire to gain more lands.

The Azerbaijani population protesting against resettlement sent telegrams to the USSR government and the Azerbaijani government to notify them of their objection. They plainly expressed their displeasure in the telegrams. The telegrams sent to the central government were strictly controlled by Armenian post offices, and only after examination of the texts, the telegrams were allowed to send. In some cases, responses to the telegrams were not delivered to the addressees.

It was not only ordinary people who protested the resettlement. High-ranking officials of the party, councils and collective farms of the districts inhabited by Azerbaijanis joined protests directly or indirectly. Mirza Bashirov, Gasham Shahbazov, Ibish Abbasov, Yagub Garibov, Rahim Allahverdiyev, Yusif Abbasov and T. Musayev were dismissed from their posts on the basis of a special order of the Central Committee of Communist (b) Party of Armenia because they were opposed to the mass deportation. In order to escape from the persecution of Armenian officials, some of them moved to the Azerbaijan SSR and worked for government agencies there. Jafar Valibayov, First Secretary of Party Committee of Garabaghlar district, also faced strict persecution of state

agencies of Armenia because of serious criticism of the deportation.

The residents of Nuvadi village of Meghri district of the Armenian SSR were supposed to be resettled in Mingachevir city but they were reluctant to leave their land. The workers of "Red Border" collective farm of Nuvadi village addressed a letter to J.V.Stalin on April 23, 1948, regarding the annexation of Nuvadi village to Zangilan district of the Azerbaijan SSR. The letter says: "In April of this year, we were informed that we were going to be resettled in the Azerbaijan SSR. Nuvadi village is situated on the border between of both republics. Until 1920 (until 1929 - A.G) Nuvadi village belonged to Zangilan district of the Azerbaijan SSR but later it was annexed to Meghri district of the Armenian SSS. The railway links the two republics. Taking the above-mentioned into consideration, we request you, instead of resettling us, to annex Nuvadi village to Zangilan district of the Azerbaijan SSR as it was before."

The residents of Lambali village of Noyemberyan district, who massively opposed resettlement and evaded deportation policy, were on the list of people to be resettled in 1948. According to Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, dated September 29, 1948, No. 140848, the Council of Ministers of the Armenian SSR approved special Resolution on the establishment of Lambali state farm as well as subtropical state farm in neighbouring Karkila village. In this regard, the residents of these villages were supposed to be resettled in the Kura-Aras lowland of the Azerbaijan SSR, and their properties and lands should be given to Armenians.

This issue was widely covered in the letter, dated October 18, 1948, about the acceleration of the resettlement of residents of Lambali and Korpulu villages as well as Haji Elyas village of Zangibasara district, sent by A. Piruzyan, Vice-chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Armenian SSR, to T.Guliyev, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Azerbaijan SSR. It

is obvious from the letter that the Armenian government established subtropical and vegetable state farms in these villages and the resettlement of the village population was considered to be "necessary".

The government of the Armenian SSR tried to resettle the residents of this village first and alleged that the resettlement was important in terms of the national economy. It was just an excuse. Azeris could stay and work for the same state farm as well. Could Azeris cause the national economy any harm by working for the same state farm?

The residents of Haji Elyas village of Zangibasar district, where vegetable state farm was planned to be established, sought way out. They wanted to reside in Nakhchivan ASSR which was more suitable for them. They requested permission to settle 150 households with 220 members of the village collective farm in Nakhchivan ASSR. The letter of request of the collective farmers says: "We have a wealthy collective farm which should be preserved. It is more appropriate that the collective farm is completely resettled in a certain place so that it is possible to keep it in order. The climate of Norashen district (Sharur - A.G.) is suitable for us. We request to be resettled in Shangiley and Darakand villages of Norashen district."

The process of resettlement of the residents of Lambali village was assigned to A.Grigoryan, Deputy Minister of Agriculture of Armenia, but the residents decisively refused to move to Salyan district of Azerbaijan and demonstratively disobeyed the government's resolution. In his letter, dated October 26, 1948, addressed to T.Guliyev, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Azerbaijan SSR, A.Gozelov, Head of Department of Resettlement of the Azerbaijan SSR, notified that the residents of Lambali village consisting of 245 households (1,192 people) were against moving to Salyan district of Azerbaijan.

The letter sent from Sadakhli station, Georgia, by Seyidov Ali, a Lambali village resident, to M.J.Baghirov, First Secretary

of the Central Committee of the Azerbaijan Communist (b) Party, sheds light on the process of resettlement from not only Lambali village but also from all Armenia. It is clear from the letter that although the resettlement of Azeris from the Armenian SSR to the Kura-Aras lowland of the Azerbaijan SSR was based on a voluntary basis, the resettlement was implemented forcibly in all Azeri inhabited villages including Lambali.

The district administration failed to persuade Lambali residents into resettlement. Therefore, they prepared a fake protocol and urged 25% of the collective farmers under pressure to agree to resettlement. In the protocol, 450 people were recorded as participants, whereas only 150 participants were present at the meeting. The district party committee forced B.Insanov, Chairman of Lambali collective farm, to put pressure on people for resettlement. Nevertheless, relying on fellow villagers, B. Insanov defied the demand.

Becoming acutely conscious of the seriousness of the resettlement, B.Insanov took all possible precautionary measures and asked Azerbaijani intellectuals to be helpful in this issue. He appealed to Samad Vurghun to help them notify higher authorities that the inhabitants of Lambali village did not want to leave their lands but in case of movement, they needed to be resettled in regions with suitable climate such as Gazakh, Akstafa, and Tovuz. The manuscript of the appeal is still preserved in Institute of Manuscripts, Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences.

By S.Karapetyan's order, Lambali residents were moved, with the help of the police, to Georgian villages inhabited by Azeris. Georgian authorities, in their turn, sent the people back in wagons. In this regard, J.Valibayov and B.Insanov visited the Central Committee of the Armenian Communist (b) Party and succeeded in obtaining permission to resettle Lambali villagers in Zod and Aghkilsa villages of Basarkechar.

When in Armenia, M.Poladov, Deputy Minister of Agriculture of the Azerbaijan SSR, prepared a report in which he noted that the houses of Lambali villagers were owned by Armenians who settled there. Moreover, Armenians destroyed headstone of Azeris and used them as building stones.

Due to consecutive complaints made by the residents, the Central Government sent a special commission, headed by Chairman of the Main Resettlement Office affiliated with the Ministry of Agriculture of the USSR, to Lambali. S.Tovmasyan, the newly appointed First Secretary of the Central Committee of Communist (b) Party of Armenia, was informed about the investigation and the revealed facts.

In the mid-1950s the Central Committee of Communist (b) Party of Armenia approved Resolution on "Returning the houses to their previous owners in Lambali and employ them in state farms". When the Azerbaijani residents of Lambali village returned, they had conflicts with Armenians, who had appropriated their houses, and consequently two Azeri women were killed by them.

For the purpose of accelerating the resettlement process, Armenian communist leaders and law enforcement agencies pressured local party, council, and farm leaders and urged them to move together with the people. Yusif Abbasov, Chairman of Azizbayov District Executive Committee, and Aziz Jafarov, Second Secretary of the District Party Committee, were summoned to the Central Committee of Communist (b) Party of Armenia and were dismissed from their posts. Following this fact, Azeri residents of the village as well as the residents of Herher and Garmrashen villages, where Aziz Jafarov's relatives lived, had to move as well.

Armenian leaders used much stricter methods to resettle Azeri Turks from Vedi district. As it was envisaged in the resettlement plan, 500 people were supposed to be resettled from Vedi district in the first year of the resettlement. However, 9,915 people had submitted applications for resettlement until

April 28, 1948, whereas, in fact, Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, dated December 23, 1947, envisaged the resettlement of 10,000 people from Armenia during 1948. The resettlement of 9,915 people from Vedi district during 1948 was certainly a huge number. Nevertheless, for the purpose of resettling more Azeris, relevant organizations of the districts, in accordance with the special order of the Central Committee of Communist (b) Party of Armenia, received applications from several villages for the resettlement of 628 households. This process was implemented compulsorily.

The telegram sent, on November 3, 1949, by A.Mammadov, Chairman of Vedi District Executive Committee, to Charchoghlyan, Vice-chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Armenian SSR, sheds light on the fact that the majority of the resettled Azeris had sold their houses and livestock, and some of them ran out of food.

Chairman of District Executive Committee warned of the upcoming snow, which was going to cover the roads and hinder the movement, but Armenian leaders tolerated a miserable life of people. Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, dated October 7, 1949, No. 117, envisaged the resettlement of 628 households from October 29 to November 6, 1949, but Resolution remained unfulfilled.

Even though the residents of Golchigh, Manguk, Armik, Garagoyunlu, and Sunbul villages had already sold their houses, winter fuel, fodder, and household goods and gathered on the highway, the resettlement process was postponed. People had stayed on the highway for more than a month and faced a scarcity of bread. The drought in the district made it impossible for the district administration to provide them with bread.

In those years, the drought broke out not only in Vedi district but also all over the Armenian SSR and therefore, the whole country encountered a shortage of food. In such a situation, Azerbaijan seemed "rich" in comparison with

Armenia. This factor was one of the reasons for Azeri Turks to leave their homelands and move to the Azerbaijan SSR.

In his letter sent to Karapetyan, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Armenian SSR, A.Mammadov, Chairman of Vedi District Executive Committee, notes: "After the last response letter of the Azerbaijani representative, in which there is a promise of "not to resettle" people, 75 households have been resettled, and this number is increasing constantly. I, as Chairman of the District Executive Committee, insistently assure you that if an organized resettlement process is delayed, at least 80-85 per cent of households will move illegally within a few days. This situation endangers 8,000 sheep and 3,500 twenty head of cattle, and can possibly lead to human casualties. District Executive Committee asks you to deal with this issue personally because lives of 3,200 people should not be regarded carelessly. In case of the persistence of the same situation, worse consequences are inevitable."

As for the the reason why Aliyev, Commissioner of the Council of Ministers of the Azerbaijan SSR for Armenia, was against resettlement of those households, his letter sent to Karapetyan, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Armenian SSR, and Piruzyan, Vice-chairman of the Council of Ministers, clarifies all the above-mentioned facts.

The letter says: "Recently, various organizations of Amasiya, Spitak, Vedi, and other districts have taken fast preparatory measures for the resettlement without waiting for complete documentation and agreement of collective farms for resettlement. These organizations share properties of the households, force the collective farms to sell animal feed and urge them to promise a certain date for departure. They do not care whether the collective farmers wanted to move to other districts. In fact, according to the government's resettlement regulations, the representatives of the collective farms should choose relevant destinations themselves prior to the resettlement. As a result of the breach of regulations, the

collective farmers have to appeal to higher authorities to complain about the situation and notify them of their reluctance to move.”

Obviously, owing to Armenian communist leaders, this problem remained unresolved, and consequently Azeri residents of mountain villages of Vedi district suffered from a scarcity of food. The indifference of the Armenian government and fear of famine compelled Azeris to move to the Azerbaijan SSR ignoring resettlement regulations.

In this regard, the letter, dated November 23, 1949, sent by A.Mammadov, Chairman of Vedi District Executive Committee of the Armenian SSR, to Karapetyan, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Armenian SSR, noted that more than 700 households moved from Vedi district to Azerbaijan without permission in 1948-1950. He also added that the number of people leaving the district increased day by day.

The report of the Department for Resettlement under the Council of Ministers of the Azerbaijan SSR stated that the Nakhchivan Provincial Committee and the Council of Ministers accepted 500 Azeri households that came from Garabaghlar, Vedi, and Gamarli (Artashat) districts without permission. The report also mentioned that some of them had tickets for resettlement in the Kura-Aras lowland. The Department for Resettlement under the Council of Ministers of the Azerbaijan SSR warned Nakhchivan administration not to act similarly again.

One of the issues that worried Azeris was a hot climate of the destination for resettlement. According to the information of the Ministry of Agriculture of the Armenian SSR in 1948, the census of the Azerbaijani population, who was supposed to be resettled, taken in 1939 in the Armenian SSR indicated that 110,000 Azerbaijanis (25,000 families) lived in the Armenian SSR. Only 9,000 (35,000 people) of them lived in the plains, and the remaining 75,000 people lived in mountainous areas.

Therefore, many people left their homelands for Azerbaijan breaking the law and tried to settle in foothills and mountainous areas of Azerbaijan. In his report sent on December 13, 1948, to G.M.Malenkov, Vice-chairman of the Council of Ministers the USSR, T.Guliyev, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Azerbaijan SSR, noted that 7,747 people (1,799 households) had been resettled from the Armenian SSR to the Azerbaijan SSR by November 1, 1948 [2, p.71-74]. According to incomplete information of the Department for Resettlement under the Council of Ministers of the Azerbaijan SSR, 856 families consisting of 4,396 people moved from the Armenian SSR to the Azerbaijan SSR without permission in 1949.

One of the reasons of why Azeris left their homelands and lived refugee life ignoring "resettlement" regulations was that they feared that, as their fellow countrymen, they would also be resettled in the Kura-Aras lowland with unsuitable climate, however, the main reason was that Azeri Turks had already become well aware of the fact that there were no prospects of a peaceful coexistence with Armenians. The deportation of Azeri Turks from their historical lands disclosed this serious factor.

Armenia's law enforcement agencies intimidated Azeris within the administrative procedure in order to force them to move. Such situations happened in Sarijalar village as well as Jul, Gomur, and Safoylu villages of Azizbayov district. 35 families, who were coerced by Armenians into moving, were stuck in snow near Zar-Zaylik village (Kalbajar district), and consequently 16 people, including men, women, and children died.

Azerbaijani population of Basarkechar district was planned to be resettled in 1951-1953. Azeri population of Yarpizli, Gizilvang, Yukhari Zaghalli, Karkibash, and Ganli villages, who lived together with Armenians, was partly resettled in 1948.

The confidential report sent by Kh.Grigoryan, Minister of Internal Affairs of the Armenian SSR, to M.J.Baghirov also

stated that Azeri residents of Basarkechar district had a negative attitude towards resettlement and had no desire to move. The report also noted that Bala Hajiyev, Chairman of the Council of Zod village of Basarkechar district, visited the Azerbaijan SSR, on behalf of his fellow villagers, for the purpose of finding a proper place for resettlement. B.Hajiyev met with M.J.Baghirov at the Central Committee of Azerbaijan and succeeded in finding a solution to the problem by getting permission for resettling more than 100 residents of Zod village in Khanlar district (Goygol).

In order to resettle Turkish people, who densely populated in this district, high-ranking officials of Armenia, headed by Charchoghlyan, Vice-chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Armenian SSR, came to this district with trucks and required 600 families to move.

By the order given by Talib Musayev, First Secretary of District Party Committee, Y.Rzayev, T.Amiraslanov, G.Mammadov, and others encouraged Azeris to put up resistance to resettlement, and consequently the commission returned with 150 empty trucks after staying three days in the district. [36, p. 200] T.Musayev, First Secretary of District Party Committee, was dismissed from his posts at the Central Committee of Communist (b) Party of Armenia and Kirovakan District Committee Bureau due to his serious mistakes and "faults" in the resettlement process.

One of the issues of interest is the departure of Azerbaijanis from Armenia. The Item 7 of Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the USSR "On resettlement of collective farmers and other Azerbaijani population from the Armenian SSR to the Kura-Aras lowland of the Azerbaijan SSR", dated December 23, 1947, the Ministry of Transport was tasked, based on the orders of the Council of Ministers of the Armenian SSR, to ensure that Azeri population, their properties, and livestock were transported to the Azerbaijan SSR in well equipped and disinfected wagons of specially organized trains.

Based on this Resolution, the residents of Vedi, Garabaghar, Echmiazzin, Zangibasar, Gamarli, and Azizbayov districts went on board of trains at Irevan, Gamarli, Shirazli, and Davali stations, while the residents of Basarkechar, Nor-Bayazet, and Akhta residents went on board of trains at Ulukhanli (Zangibasar) station, and set off for Iravan-Nakhchivan-Minjivan-Horadiz-Saatli direction. In order to avoid a negative impact on the resettlement process, the trains passed railway stations at night. People were massively moved to Ujar, Zardab, Ali-Bayramli, Salyan, Saatli, Sabirabad, Yevlakh, Kurdamir, Mirbashir (currently Tartar) districts located in the Kura-Aras lowland.

The lack of houses, public buildings, drinking water, etc. in the districts for resettlement, obliged the administration of those districts to refuse Azeri newcomers by using all means. The trains coming from the Armenian SSR had to stay at the stations for several days. However, the pressure of higher authorities made district administrations accept newcomers.

Similar cases also happened in Yevlakh, Sabirabad, Ujar, and other districts. The telegram from Garadonlu in 1950, said that 11 wagons with resettled Azeris had not been disembarked for 3 days. Moreover, 52 families, who arrived at Ujar station to be resettled in Zardab district, had been staying at the station for more than a month.

In parallel with the forced resettlement of Turks from Armenia, the settlements were renamed, educational institutions and cultural centres were closed, and the districts were unified. More than 60 Azeri settlements were renamed in 1947-1953. Furthermore, by Decree of the Council of Ministers of the Armenian SSR, dated September 19, 1950, the railway stations were renamed as followings: Kolagiran-Tumanyan, Hamamli--Spitak, Ortakilsa-Maisyanyan, Tomardash-Vapdakar, Arpachay--Akhuryan, Bughdashash-Bagravan, Garagula-Gedan, Alayaz--Aragats, Boghudlu-Armeni, Garaburun-Garmrashen, Gamishli-Sovetashen, Ulukhanli-Masis, Imanshahli-Mkhchian, Gamarli-Artashat, Shirazli-Aychavan.

By Decree of the Council of Ministers of the Armenian SSR, dated March 19, 1951, Dilijan was unified with Ijevan, Azizbayov was unified with Mikoyan, Alayaz was unified with Vedi, and Gukasyan was unified with Amasiya. After the reduction of Azeri staff, these districts were separated again and became independent districts.

Before the resettlement, Azeri settlements in Armenia had close relations and were situated in a close neighbourhood with each other. Due to the resettlement plan drawn up by Armenians, the historical relations among the districts were cut off. As a result of the resettlement of Turks living along the right shore of Lake Goycha (Kamo and Martouni districts), Darachichek, Garnibasar, and Daralayaz districts lost relation with the left shore of Lake Goycha. Similarly, as a result of resettlement of the Gamarli residents, Zangibasar lost relations with Vedibasar. Besides, due to the resettlement of Gyumri residents, Aghbaba, Pambak, and mountainous Borchali completely lost relations with each other. The last Azerbaijanis living in Talin, Artik, Ashtarak, Hoktemberyan, and Kotayk districts were completely removed from these districts.

It was not only the Azeri population that underwent deportation. Several social and cultural facilities, including four Azerbaijani-language faculties of the Iravan Pedagogical Institute, were transferred to Baku. This issue was widely covered by special Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the Azerbaijan SSR, dated July 1, 1948, №700.

The process of resettlement of Azeris in the Kura-Aras lowland had been discussed for three times in the board meetings of Main Department for Resettlement under the Council of Ministers of the USSR. Resolution of the Board of Main Department for Resettlement, dated January 31, 1951, noticed that 4,787 families out of 8,110, who were resettled in 1948-1950, had not been provided with housing.

According to A.Pashayev, there was a certain reason for why Main Department for Resettlement showed interest in the resettlement. Thus, as of 1951 some of Azeris, who settled in the Kura-Aras lowland of the Azerbaijan SSR, returned to their homelands. According to information by Karapetyan, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Armenian SSR, 376 families had returned to their lands. Moreover, Chairman of Akhta District Executive Committee also reported that 117 Azeri families had returned. Obviously, what scared Armenian leaders most was that the people who had come back could possibly engage in counterpropaganda among their compatriots. In this regard, Karapetyan, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Armenian SSR, stated via telegram that the Armenian government could not accept those people since they violated the regulations of resettlement.

N.Allehverdiyev, Head of the Department for Resettlement of Azerbaijan, in accordance with Resolution, dated June 7, of the Council of Ministers of the Azerbaijan SSR, visited Armenia in order to investigate the facts on the spot. The investigation revealed that 217 households had returned to their previous settlements by June 1, 1951.

The report sent by N.D.Allehverdiyev, Head of the Department for Resettlement under the Council of Ministers of the Azerbaijan SSR, on March 28, 1952, to S.D.Cheremushkin, Vice-chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR and Head of Main Department for Resettlement, remarked that the returnees were mainly residents of Akhta, Basarkechar, Azizbayov, Kirovakan, Vedi, and Kotayk districts. They turned out to be 247 households (872 people).

According to the investigation, the cause of the return was the violation of resettlement regulations, but in fact, the real cause was that those people had a strong attachment to their motherlands. This fact also reaffirmed that the resettlement was compulsory.

After J.V.Stalin's death, Azeris returned to their lands more intensively. In connection with the protests of the Armenian leaders against the Azerbaijani government, a delegation headed by Mohsun Poladov, Deputy Minister of Agriculture of the Azerbaijan SSR, visited Armenia and prepared a report. The report noticed that 1,155 households (6,930 people) had returned to their previous settlements by April 1954.

Azerbaijani collective farmers, who resettled from the Armenian SSR to the Azerbaijan SSR in 1949-1950, moved back to their previous lands without permission as of spring of 1950. The letter sent by S.M.Martirosyan, Vice-head of the Department for Resettlement under the Council of Ministers of the Armenian SSR, to T.Guliyev, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Azerbaijan SSR, and S.D.Cheremushkin, Head of Main Department for Resettlement, covered this issue. The letter, dated May 24, 1951, noticed that 360 families had already returned to the Armenian SSR, and they had distributed propaganda among their fellow countrymen against resettlement. The letter also noted that it was necessary the Azerbaijan government take relevant measures.

The leaders of the Armenian SSR openly expressed their concern for the return of Azeris and notified the Central Government and the government of the Azerbaijan SSR of this fact. In his letter sent to M.F.Amiraslanov, Vice-chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Azerbaijan SSR, on January 19, 1952, Charchoghlyan, Vice-chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Armenian SSR, remarked that he decisively refused to resettle 3,800 Azerbaijani households in 1953-1954. In the letter, he also added that 500 Azerbaijani households, which willingly resettled in Azerbaijan by 1952, had already returned to their previous settlements. Referring to this fact, the Council of Ministers of the Armenian SSR could not issue a

permit for resettlement of 3,800 families in 1953-1954. Thus, the process of resettlement officially ceased in Armenia.

On May 12, 1952, K.Mutafyan, Head of the Department for Resettlement under the Council of Ministers the Armenian SSR, sent a confidential letter to S.K.Karapetyan, Chairman of the Council of Ministers the Armenian SSR, G.A.Harutyunov, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Armenian Communist Party, and S.D.Cheremushkin, Head of Main Department for Resettlement of the USSR. The letter was about the return of Azerbaijanis to their previous settlements. In the letter, he stated that the main reason for the return was inappropriate living conditions in the Kura-Aras lowland.

A number of measures were taken by the government of the Armenian SSR to prevent the return of Azeris. It was prohibited to accept and officially register the returnees in the Armenian SSR. Moreover, they were deprived of the right to build houses and establish farms. These are obvious facts which demonstrate that basic human rights and the constitutional rights of Azerbaijanis were violated within the totalitarian regime.

One of the issues in connection with forced resettlement of Azeris was about the number of livestock with which private and public households had to be provided. The resettled people brought 4,502 head of cattle, 12,720 sheep, 206 horses, and 66 pigs, which belonged to public households, to the Azerbaijan SSR with themselves. Moreover, they brought 2,607 head of cattle, 4,168 sheep, and 64 horses which belonged to private households. But according to the report prepared by N.Allahverdiyev when in Armenia, more than 1,000 resettled Azeri families left Armenia leaving their public properties behind.

As a result of the deportation policy of the USSR and the Armenian SSR implemented against Azerbaijani Turks in 1947-1950, Turkish population living in foothills and mountainous areas of Armenia was moved to the Kura-Aras lowland which lacked basic living conditions, and consequently

more than a half of the deportees died of diseases such as malaria. Unfortunately, the facts of mass deaths and documents certifying illness have not been kept in the Department of Archive.

Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the USSR "On resettlement of collective farmers and other Azerbaijani population from the Armenian SSR to the Kura-Aras lowland of the Azerbaijan SSR", dated December 23, 1947, tasked the Ministry of Health of the USSR to ensure that medical personnel were provided with necessary medical supplies in order to involve all the resettled people in a medical check-up, and deliver medical and sanitary service to them. But it turned out that there were not even ordinary sanitary-prophylactic dispensaries in the Kura-Aras lowland.



The telegram sent on August 13, 1951, by Amir Ismailov, a resident of Rahimabad (Chobankara) village of Zangibasar district of the Armenian SSR, to J.V.Stalin, Chairman of

the Council of Ministers of the USSR, confirms the above-mentioned facts. The telegram states: "Our dear father, Stalin! I inform you that we were resettled from the Armenian SSR to the Azerbaijan SSR in 1950. But we had to return to Armenia again. Because there is not a suitable condition in Azerbaijan for us to live. The climate of Azerbaijan is not appropriate for us. Our children died there, and we are still sick... Dear father! We ask for your permission to live in the Armenian SSR again."

The report by N.Allahverdiyev, the Department for Resettlement under the Council of Ministers of the Azerbaijan SSR, notes: "Medical and sanitary service was not established properly in many districts. Such cases occurred more frequently in Aghjabadi and Safaraliyev districts where district health departments were negligent to the medical care of the migrants which caused mass dissatisfaction among them. Moreover, some of the migrants who settled in the collective farm named after Chaparidze in Safaraliyev district died. "

N.Allahverdiyev, the Department for Resettlement under the Council of Ministers of the Azerbaijan SSR, sent a confidential report to M.F.Amiraslanov, Vice-chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Azerbaijan SSR, and S.D.Cheremushkin, Head of Main Department for Resettlement of the USSR. The report was about the reasons for Azeris' return and noted that malaria was widespread among the migrants. The report also added that there was a struggle against malaria, thus, effective measure had been taken for the last 3-4 months, and malaria had been eradicated among the resettled people in Alibayramli, Sabirabad, Saatli, Imishli, and other districts.

The report "On the results of inspections of condition of the resettled collective farmers in some districts of the Kura-Aras lowland" prepared by I.K.Abdullayev, Minister of Agriculture and Supply of the Azerbaijan SSR, which was sent to the Council of Ministers of the Azerbaijan SSR and the Central Committee of the Azerbaijan Communist Party on October 15, 1953, mentioned that 11,914 households (52,956

people) were resettled to Azerbaijan in 1948-1953, and 1,795 households out of 11,914 left Armenia spontaneously against resettlement regulations.

M.M.Poladov, Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Supply of the Azerbaijan SSR, and G.K.Kazimli, Head of the Division of Organization of the Department for Resettlement, sent a report "On the results of inspections of the return of the collective farmers and other Azerbaijani population, resettled from the Armenian SSR to the Azerbaijan SSR" to S.G.Rahimov, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Azerbaijan SSR, and I.D.Mustafayev, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Azerbaijan Communist Party, on April 15, 1954. The report remarked that 9,875 households had been resettled from the Armenian SSR to the Azerbaijan SSR since the beginning of 1948. The report also added that, according to the information given by the Department for Resettlement of the Armenian SSR, 1,555 households had returned to Armenia by April 10, 1954, whereas the Department for Resettlement of Azerbaijan reported the return of 1,500 households.

In September 1954, S.G.Rahimov, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Azerbaijan SSR, and I.D.Mustafayev, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Azerbaijan Communist Party, ordered Chairmen of the District Executive Committees and Secretaries of the District Party Committees to prevent the resettled people, by all means, from moving to other districts or to their previous settlements.

Various and controversial figures have been reported about the number of Azeri Turks resettled from the Armenian SSR to the Kura-Aras lowland of the Azerbaijan SSR. Some sources reported this number as 53,000 which does not reflect the reality. Because the number of people, who had to leave their lands for Azerbaijan of their own free will, was not less than those who were officially resettled in the Kura-Aras lowland of Azerbaijan.

The figures indicated in the official sources of those years have caused some confusion. We know the definite number of those who were officially resettled or had tickets for resettlement, however, we are not sure about the number of those who moved of their own free will. We agree with A.Pashayev on the fact that people who moved from Armenia of their own free will were more than those who were officially resettled. According to the author, while the number of the resettled head of cattle was precisely registered, there were no accurate records of the Azerbaijani population moved from the Armenian SSR in 1948-1953. The reports of the Department for Resettlement under the Council of Ministers of the Azerbaijan SSR indicate various numbers for the resettled people. The Department for Resettlement kept a record of only those who resettled in the Kura-Aras lowland but not the total number of those who moved to Azerbaijan.

The Armenian press did not mention anything about this issue. Armenian sources reported the number of the resettled people as 58,500.

It is strange that Armenian sources referred to Azerbaijani ones for this information. Nevertheless, they claimed that the vast majority of Azeris came back to Armenia again.

In the former Soviet Union, according to the rules of All-Union census, one family was considered to consist of five people on average. This approach cannot be considered fair. The facts indicate that in the Armenian SSR, unlike Christian people, Muslims, particularly Azeri families, were considered "large families". Each Azeri family had 6-12 children. The findings of the research in the demographics of the Armenian SSR underpin our opinion once more. V.I.Kozlov, historian and demographer, argues that in those years the birth rate in rural areas inhabited by Armenians was significantly lower. On the contrary, the birth rate among Azeris was higher.

Apparently, a natural population increase of Azeris was higher than Armenians. Based on this fact, we can identify the

number of people resettled from the Armenian SSR to the Azerbaijan SSR. The last report of the Department for Resettlement under the Council of Ministers of the Azerbaijan SSR prepared in 1956, indicated that 58,847 people (13,230 households) were resettled from the Armenian SSR to the Azerbaijan SSR. If we consider Azeri families to consist of 7 or 8 persons, but not 5 persons, and multiply each household by 7 or 8, the result will approximately be 100,000 people, but not 58,847, who moved or were forced to move.

So, we argue that more than 100,000 Azeri Turks were resettled, or forced to resettle from Armenia to Azerbaijan in 1947-1953. The number of the resettled Azeris was more than 100,000, whereas the number of the returnees was about 10,00-12,000.

The accuracy of this figure is also confirmed by the government figures. Thus, Resolution "On immediate elimination of serious faults and shortcomings in the process of creating relevant condition for farming and working for the resettled people, and preventing the resettled people from returning once and for all", dated September 1954, signed by S.G.Rahimov, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Azerbaijan SSR, and I.D.Mustafayev, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Azerbaijan Communist Party, concerning the order for Chairmen of District Executive Committees and District Party Committees, remarked that due to shortcomings 3,734 households left the planned farming, and 2,141 households (10,705 people) returned to Armenia.

One of the matters of concern for us is the fate of people who came back to Armenia. The Armenian authorities and local authorities were averse to accepting the returnees. Furthermore, the Armenian authorities hindered the returned Azeris from being re-employed by the collective farms. The houses in the villages, where Azeris used to live, were destroyed, and their farms were unified with Armenian ones. Azeris were not allowed to settle in their previous villages. The order given by

Gazaryan, Minister of Agriculture and Supply of the Armenian SSR, dated October 31, 1953, for Chairmen of District Executive Committees and Directors of Machine Tractor Stations, remarked that the returned Azerbaijanis, who once left Armenia selling their houses, could become members of the collective farms provided that they were deprived of the right to claim a house.

There are many facts which show that Azeri returnees had not been able to go through passport registration for a long time. Similar cases happened in Amasiya district as well as Garagala and Ulashik villages of Akhta district. The people that could not tolerate severe living conditions went to Azerbaijan once again...

Although Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, dated December 23, 1947, envisaged giving the houses of Azeris to the Armenian repatriates, these houses had not been used accordingly. The majority of Armenian repatriates, who came to Armenia believing in Soviet propaganda, felt deceived and did not want at all to live in Azeri villages which were in a bad condition in terms of social, economic and cultural development.

30 Armenian families coming from foreign countries settled in Girkhbulag and Godakli villages of Basarkechar district. Some of them also settled in Boyuk Vedi, Shirazli, Garalar, Tayfan, and Afshar villages of Vedi district. The vast majority of them settled in Zeytun, Nor-Aresh, Kilikiya, Malatya, and Kirza settlement around Irevan city as well as in Leninakan, Kirovakan, Hoktemberyan cities.

To sum up, the followings are the results of the deportation of Azerbaijanis from their historical and ethnic lands:

- Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, dated December 23, 1947, on the resettlement of Azerbaijanis was a criminal political act of the administrations of the USSR and the Armenian SSR against Turks.
- Although Resolution, dated December 23, 1947, envisaged realization of the resettlement on a "voluntary" basis, it was implemented forcefully. It was a real deportation.

- As a result of resettlement, more than 197 villages were ruined, and many social, cultural and educational institutions were closed. More than 60 settlements of Turkish origin were "Armenianized".
 - The resettlement of Azerbaijani Turks from their historical and ethnic lands led to serious deterioration of specific traditions of Turks who had lived in these lands for thousands of years.
- Finally, it should be noted that the deportation of Azerbaijani Turks from Western Azerbaijan was implemented at state level. This policy disclosed the quintessence of anti-Turk policy of Armenians, and further strengthened chauvinist and nationalist tendencies in Armenian society.

After such a deportation policy Azerbaijani Turks incurred total discrimination, created by Armenian nationalists, in all spheres. Besides, this deportation led to the compulsory movement of Azeris to the Azerbaijan SSR in the 50-80s.

Armenian nationalists, who had malicious intention to occupy the lands of Azerbaijan, struggled, either implicitly or explicitly, for "Turk-free Armenia", pursued genocide policy against Azeri Turks, and committed unprecedented crimes, atrocities, massacres and vandalism in order to realize their cunning and malevolent intention. Because of such a policy pursued by Armenian nationalist, Azerbaijanis lived a life in exile and were filled with longing for the motherland. By employing inhuman struggling methods, Armenian nationalists adopted different tactics and did their best to carry out their evil intentions. In particular, as a result of the ethnic cleansing, deportation and genocide policy pursued in the 20th century, Western Azerbaijani Turks were subjected to deprivation, national tragedies, and suffering. Being supported by anti-Azerbaijani circles, this malicious policy was implemented with exceptional brutality either through explicit sabotage or the wholesale slaughter of Azeris. As H.A.Aliyev, Nationwide Leader, remarked, as a result of this inhuman policy implemented gradually, Azerbaijanis were expelled from their

native historical and ethnic lands, and were subjected to massive killings. Besides, thousands of historical monuments and settlements belonging to our people were destroyed.

The deportation policy against Azerbaijanis was pursued throughout the 20th century and took the form of genocide which had been unique in the world history. The Soviet Union adopted new methods of deportation through its existence. In the years following the Second World War, the deportation policy was cruelly realized.

Historical facts demonstrate that the deportation policy and genocide committed by Armenians against Azerbaijani Turks have become more widespread throughout history. Armenians adopted a more organized and a more merciless deportation policy. The current research has led to the following general conclusions:



1. The history of Azeri people had been "illuminated" from the perspective of scientific communist ideology for many years and therefore, historical researches had been biased, historical facts had been deliberately falsified, and the deportation of Azerbaijanis had not been studied at all. A policy of oppression against Azeri Turks and the deportation and genocide committed by Armenians during the Soviet era were covered up.

2. The Armenian nationalist circles tried to realize their insidious and adventurist intentions in all historical conditions. By taking advantage of a favourable historical condition, Armenian nationalists could benefit from the opportunities provided by the totalitarian regime to realize the plan of "ethnic cleansing". Finally, they attained the issuance of Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the USSR "On resettlement of collective farmers and other Azerbaijani population from the Armenian SSR to the Kura-Aras lowland of the Azerbaijan SSR", dated December 23, 1947, and Resolution "On measures related to resettlement of collective farmers and other Azerbaijani population from the Armenian SSR to the Kura-Aras lowland of the Azerbaijan SSR", dated March 10, 1948. These treacherous resolutions issued against Azeri Turks were logical consequences of the agreement between J.V.Stalin and Armenian nationalist circles. Based on resolutions signed by J.V.Stalin, the Central Government acted in favour of Armenians' interests which led to the exodus and death of Azerbaijanis. An unbiased study of those crafty resolutions as well as painful consequences of the violent deportation of tens of thousands of Azerbaijani population and, in general, the study of the essence of historical events occurred in 1947-1953 is of huge scientific, political and practical importance.

3. The Soviet Union's territorial claims to Turkey as well as Armenia's territorial claims to Turkey and Azerbaijan, and the deportation of Azerbaijani Turks from their historical and ethnic lands shed light on the identity of those who acted as authors,

organizers and implementers of the idea of deportation in the years 1947-1953.

4. The process of repatriation of Armenians ultimately led to the process of deportation of Azerbaijanis. Under J.V.Stalin's leadership, the Soviet administration decided to move Azeris on the pretext of improving the socio-economic conditions of the repatriated Armenians.

5. Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the USSR "On resettlement of collective farmers and other Azerbaijani population from the Armenian SSR to the Kura-Aras lowland of the Azerbaijan SSR", dated December 23, 1947, had a political essence. All the resolutions, decrees, orders and regulations relating to the deportation of Azeri Turks were carried out under "confidentiality status". The purpose of confidentiality was to hide forced movement and violence and to cover up the real essence of the deportation of Azerbaijanis.

6. Although Resolution stated that the resettlement would be implemented on a voluntary basis, it was implemented coercively. Documents show that the Azerbaijani population was forced to move under the pressure of state and law enforcement agencies of Armenia. Not getting expected help from the Central Government and Azerbaijani government, the Azeri population felt compelled to move to the Kura-Araz lowland of Azerbaijan SSR. Feeling lonely, tens of thousands of Azerbaijanis had to move under difficult circumstances, and consequently were exposed to catastrophe. The Azerbaijani population, which was resettled under the principle of "a voluntary agreement", underwent severe deprivations and tortures, since they could not adapt to the climate of the destination for resettlement. Due to poor quality rendered to the resettled people, diseases spread rapidly leading to inevitable deaths in some cases. Consequently, the Azerbaijani population was exposed to genocide.

7. The historical and ethnic hostility of Armenians towards Azerbaijanis lay at the bottom of the deportation of Azerbaijani

Turks. Forced resettlement was accompanied by the resistance of Azeri Turks, either secretly or publicly. The confidential report "On the spirit among Azerbaijani population of Armenia in relation to their expected move to Azerbaijan SSR", dated May 3, 1948, sent by Kh.Grigoryan, Minister of Internal Affairs of the Armenian SSR, to M.J.Baghirov confirms this fact. The latent and open resistance of the Azerbaijani population manifested itself in the following forms: 1) Refusing to leave their historical and ethnic lands, referring to the fact that the resettlement was optional; 2) Refusing to work for the public sector; 3) Damaging and destroying personal property; 4) Resisting resettlement openly (like Lambali residents); 5) Making attempt to settle in foothills and mountainous areas of Azerbaijan but not in the Kura-Araz lowland with hot climate; 6) Movement of tens of thousands of Azerbaijanis massively and spontaneously ignoring resettlement regulations; 7) Resistance of Azerbaijani leaders to the resettlement; 8) The return of Azerbaijanis to their previous settlements. All of these are proven by facts and documents in this book.

8. The Armenian lobby and other organizations actively participated in the deportation of Azerbaijani Turks from their historical and ethnic land. The close cooperation of these organizations with the Soviet leaders and the Committee for State Security played a decisive role in the implementation of the criminal policy against the Turks.

9. The deportation policy against Azerbaijani Turks was carried out at the state level. The deportation revealed the anti-Turk policy of Armenians. This policy manifested itself in the discrimination created by Armenians in all spheres against Azeris in the following years which consequently led to another influx of Azeris to the Azerbaijan SSR.

**The deportation of Azerbaijani Turks from
the Armenian SSR
(the years 1947-1953)**

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