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Stalin camps in the territory of Kazakhstan

Today the question of political repressions in the Soviet Union is investigated by historians of the whole world. Now ripened need for deeper disclosure of pages of history of the totalitarian state. For this purpose, first of all, it is necessary to study comprehensively the historical sources connected with political repressions. Already there are numerous historical works, but more in-depth study of sources on this subject will give the chance to open it even more deeply.

In the territory of Kazakhstan was placed the most part of labor camps of Head Department of Camps. On number of the federal republics of labor camps created in territories Kazakhstan is on the third place after Russia and Ukraine. The Karaganda labor camp was the branch of GULAG which was almost independent department in the huge territory of Kazakhstan. In Kazakhstan, the Soviet labor camps have become the epicenter of the punishment of the politically repressed people from all over the Soviet Union. In the years of political repression Kazakhstan became a place of exile for many thousands of people. Throughout the country there were a lot of camps, notorious of them - ALJIR, Karlag, Steplag. They served a conclusion and many representatives of the Kazakh public.

Karaganda labor camp (Karlag) was established December 19, 1931, the center of the camp was located in the village of Dolinka 45 km from the city of Karaganda. Karaganda labor camp was a branch of the Gulag and was considered in the vast territory of Kazakhstan sort of authority.

In early 1938, in Akmola opened a special department, which is part of the Karaganda labor camp. Throughout the Soviet Union had 4 major women's camps, the largest located in Akmola region. In Akmola branch KarLag were more than 18 000 women convicted of special meeting of the NKVD. It kept the wife of party leaders, government officials, military leaders, prominent academics and writers. January 6, 1938 in Akmola camp received the first batch of women with children between one and three years. Women brought to ALJIR from all over the country: from Moscow, Leningrad, the Ukraine, Belarus, Georgia, Armenia, Central Asia.

September 20, 1941 a number of functions of the Office of the Chief Camp moved to a special department of the NKVD [1]. In their competence included the release of prisoners in accordance with the decisions of the investigating authorities, the search for the escaped criminals, the definition of further residence prisoners re-examination of cases, preparation of letters of rehabilitation.

1940 to 1943 in Central Kazakhstan Jezkazgan there was a forced labor camp. The prisoners worked in this camp run by the People's Commissariat of the USSR ferrous metal smelting of copper and copper ores in the Main Department of State Jezkazgan mine («GlavMed») at the smelter and coal was mined for the operation of the plant, worked in the copper mine Karsakpay smelter at the management of the mine at the station Jezdy mined manganese, were building a railway from station Jezkazgan to Jezdy [2]. During the war, the transmission of information on
the state of the union was a constant object of the economy, as can be judged orders signed by the Deputy People's Commissar of Internal Affairs of the USSR on the verification of the two divisions of the camp of Jezkazgan February 28, 1941 [3], the act of commission of the NKVD, who worked in the period 23 to 30 April 1943 on the state of Jezkazgan camp [4], the materials of construction of Jezkazgan plant and other similar information [5]. Referred to our camp then was separated from KarLag.

In 1943, the territory under consideration camp was established Jezkazgan camp district of KarLag. Condition of detainees there were extremely difficult. Only in the first four months of the year in the camp were died 1,100 people in the camp were many sick and disabled people. In view of these circumstances, General Directorate of Camps paid particular attention to attracting people to the daily work, increasing productivity and creating conditions for implementation of the plans. Among these events - better nutrition, health care, preventive work [6].

Jezkazgan state copper smelter was built during the war, so here as laborers brought prisoners [7]. Some sources indicate that by casting ore Jezkazgan copper smelters have participated 3000 people [8]. This company was founded in 1941 by the People's Commissariat of Heavy Industry of the USSR in the General Directorate of nonferrous metals («Glavtsvetmed»), in 1943 was named Jezkazgan copper smelter [9]. In the systematic documentation for the construction of the plant has the following information about Jezkazgan camp: the agreement with the management, disposal of assigning work to the prisoners, the data on their number. For example, in the first two months after the war in a memorandum to the Chief of the Main Department of the NKVD camps Nasedkin head of management KarLag provide full details of how to provide a labor force during the war Karaganda labor camp work Jezkazgan copper plant of the Ministry of ferrous metallurgy of the Kazakh SSR [10]. Prisoners signed contracts.

Working Jezkazgan camp, which was part of KarLag, took part in the construction of «Petro», Bureau of Mines number 31/32, during the opening of a career, «Holy Cross Centre». In 1944, the work of most plant mines of the camp and provide 80% of the camp to work on the extraction of ore. General Directorate of Camps directed to the People's Commissariat of Metallurgy of the USSR information about non-execution of agreements on Jezkazgan copper smelting plant on improving the lives and living conditions of prisoners, the rational use of labor in production. This is the Commissioner notified the Director Jezkazgan plant official letter [11].

During the war, the forced labor camps to be of importance. Primarily they were significant in economic terms. In the 1942-1943 years, important sectors of the economy, the military equivalent status category were coal mining, textile, chemical and gas industry [12]. About the repressive policy of the essence of labor camps historian VN Zemskov wrote the following: «Originating as a tool and place of isolation and counter-revolutionary criminals in order to protect and strengthen the dictatorship of the proletariat», the Gulag thanks to» fix forced labor» (in principle, in our opinion, more hypocrisy than utopia) quickly turned in fact, an independent branch of the economy, availability of cheap labor in the face of the
prisoners. Without this «industry» industrialization solution of many problems in the eastern and northern regions has become virtually impossible. This implies another important reason for the constancy of the repressive policies, namely the interest of the state in the unrelenting pace of obtaining cheap labor force is used primarily in the extreme conditions of the North and East»[13].

Who worked in industrial enterprises, the camp inmates have made a significant contribution to the economy of the war. Therefore, during the war, the population of labor camps in Karaganda tirelessly was multiplied. Here from different glubinok USSR convicted of various crimes. There were several reasons. The most important: a significant distance from the front of Kazakhstan was the determining factor in the development of the industry here. As a cheap labor used prisoners. The prison population has been formed from a variety of categories: among them as victims of political persecution, as well as local residents.

Order of the NKVD was organized Karaganda builder NKVD. It was opened for the execution of the decision of the State Defense Committee, number 3013 of 9 March 1943 «On the development and production of coal open pit in the Karaganda coal basin». Construction of coal mine has been provided by the prisoners camp, as well as immigrants, German prisoners, labor army [14]. Coal mine management and corrective-labor camps of the NKVD of the USSR began its operations April 25, 1943. Management has used prison labor army and the construction of coal mine, railway, residential houses. In the first months of 3000 the prisoners were tried and convicted: for counter-revolutionary crimes - 374, rescued from prison to carry out the investigation - 115, -105 for war crimes, criminal acts - 488 for other crimes - 1918. Of the labor army 5000, they were held separately from prisoners, but in the camps [15].

In the monthly and annually submit a memorandum to the chief of the Karaganda labor camp number 4 and the construction of Uspensky in the name of Chief Executive Officer of the Camps NKVD of the USSR V. Nasedkin can detect a number of problems for the continued relevance of the considered topics. First of all, the fact that the memos went directly to high ranks and leaders of the National Defense Commission, focus on them during the war and in a situation of emergency allows us to characterize the labor camps as one of the main sectors of production. If to analyze the information contained in the information war period, and compared with similar documents created in a different period, you can set a number of important facts. At first put forward by the physical capabilities of prisoners, the productivity of labor involved in the work. In the camps resist and women, and the composition was different crimes and heterogeneous. Among them are both sentenced by a military court for counter-revolutionary crimes and convicted prisoners repeatedly simple. As can be seen from the statistics memoranda of letters in the camp there was a large number of deaths and escapes from captivity [16]. The cause of death was the severity of the work, the reason is the proximity of the shoots can be considered the front line. Leadership camps to submit detailed reports of prisoner escape the aforementioned parties [17]. For example, in a report in August 1943 letter refers to the frequent cases of deaths
among workers. Their numerically: prisoners - 39 people from the labor army - 2 persons, German resettlers - 41 people.

Along with this there was separation of the Karaganda labor camp NKVD USSR in Zhartas (1940-1960) [18], Koturskiy correctional labor camps of the NKVD of the USSR (1940-1962). [19] Sarentskaya correctional labor colony (1941-1961). [20] 1943-1945 years acted Shokayskaya correctional labor colony. [21] The activities of these labor camps provide agricultural. Unfortunately, the documentation of these camps are few and give a summary. Must at the same time pay attention to the fact that some of the documents preserved in the camps that have opened in the facilities industry, the same can not be mentioned in relation to the agricultural sector. Archival holdings include control orders in the Karaganda region, where offices have been opened corrective labor colonies - camp item number 17 (1943-1950) [22] camp item number 19 (1942-194) [23]. It is important to note that very few preserved archives, some information can be found generalized plan, or not at all a vital role. So make themselves the outcome of the expert committees that have destroyed many sources after the war.

In 1945, the plant operated at Jezkazgan many prisoners from the Karaganda labor camp. Their conditions of life watched the Head Office of the camp. The situation of prisoners Jezkazgan camp was getting worse. Plant management could not provide full safety, heat problems, the normal condition of life. Failure to follow the safety prisoners received severe injuries [24]. February 6, 1945 Zhdanov, cutting off power in the chamber of the mine number 31, fell into a manhole and broke his right rib cage. February 9 in the same mine fell into a pit where waste is stockpiled ore, and died a prisoner Torah Osharov. March 12 at the mine number 1 derailed wagon broke risen back up the prisoner E. Vinogradov. March 24 in the mine number 33 derailed trolley crushed ribs prisoner Makarova, breaking his left rib. April 3 at the mine number 1 derailed another truck, rolled over the body, breaking his right leg prisoner Islamova. After three days in the mine «Petro-Center» was repeated a similar situation, were scattered ore shattered leg prisoner I. Levitsky, and in a career, «Chrysostom» stuck between the rails and broken legs prisoner V. Lukyanov. Along with this because of falling debris from the tops of ore killed several prisoners working: in the mine number 7 - V.Goloschanov, mine number 32 - I. Rechetov, mine number 31 - F. Metster.

The main sources of the history of the forced labor camps in the years 1930-1950 are filed KarLag, or rather the Karaganda branch of the Committee on Legal Statistics and Special Records of the General Prosecutor of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Unfortunately, the vast database of sources and Kazakh camp system, accounting for one-third of the gulag, continues to be at the disposal of the departmental archives. And in connection with the ongoing scientific and technical processing of archival documents relating to the mass political repression, the admission of researchers suspended.

To date, processed archival personal affairs convicted, were in custody in Karlag NKVD-MVD of the USSR in the period from 1929 to 1942 inclusive, in the amount of 22 768 cases and declassified. However, more fully characterize the period of mass political repression and represent the greatest interest to researchers.
archival materials management documents are not in order. Looking through the cases of convicts, we found that among the prisoners were not only Soviet citizens and foreigners.

Now, we proceed to the analysis of declassified personnel files of prisoners. In the individual case are the following documents: 1) A certificate on a personal matter, and 2) payslip, and 3) an extract from the minutes, and 4) the documents for examination, 5) profile of arrested 6) handprints 7) personal documents; 8) Regulation (on remand), 9) report of medical examination, 10) to form a personal matter.

The fund of the Prosecutor's Office of the Karaganda labor camp have personal files of victims of political repressions of 1941-1945 who have served their time in the Karaganda labor camp. Turning to the figures, in 1941, it opened 13 cases, among them Article 58-10 - convicted 10 people, 58-14 - 1 16-58 - 1, 59-3, 150, 153 - 1, in 1942, was filed 14 cases under Articles 58-3 and 58-10 - 10, 58-2 - 2, 58-14 - 2, in 1943, was filed 68 cases, including those under Articles 58-14 - 39 people, 58-10 - 22 persons, 58-8 - 2 persons, 58-1 - 2 persons, in 1944, it opened 29 cases, including those under Articles 58-14 - 12 people, 58-10 - 13 people in 1945 - 257 cases under Articles 58-14 - 121 people, 58-10 - 106 people, 58-3 - 1 person 58-1 «bo» - 1 person [25]. If we consider the personal files of prisoners to be found among these different categories of people: among them foreigners and residents of the Soviet Union.

However, not all convicted for political reasons, has been convicted of criminal acts. We believe that due to the need of industrial enterprises of the war years in a cheap labor force, people were jailed even for minor offenses. Fund, called «Old Jezkazgan» reflects a pattern: in the years 1930-1947 the majority of prisoners in Soviet prisons were either locals or prosecuted for minor offenses. Especially many were planted Kazakhs living in Central Kazakhstan. In individual cases the period of the war prisoners KarLag there are many foreigners. They were not all military prisoners, among them were ordinary people. They were accused of crossing the border, carrying out propaganda campaign. Especially it is necessary to distinguish among them private affairs of Chinese citizens.

In the postwar years intensified the process of creating camps for prisoners of war in the territory of Kazakhstan. In our opinion, this was due to the need to resolve the issue of dislocation of war, the number of which has increased with the end of the war.

It is known that most of the labor camps formed on the territory of Kazakhstan, located in central Kazakhstan. Among them, first of all, should be called Karlag and Akmola and Jezkazgan camps, in some years, were part of the Karlag and then become self-reliant. Shortage of workers in the mining and processing enterprises of Karaganda, Akmola and Jezkazgan prompted the Soviet state on the transformation of the region instead of serving a sentence of political prisoners.

As it has been stated above, the death rate among war prisoners was still a problem in old and new-formed camps. According to the obituary in № 99 Karaganda war prisoners camp there were: 346 people dead in October, 141- in November, 76 - in December. Total number is 563 people. The convicts died of
dystrophy – 397, pneumonia – 17, cardiovascular diseases – 19, tuberculosis – 20, cholera – 9 people [26]. These years the majority of arrived convicts had problems with the health, they were ill. Japanese were suffering from the absence of accustomed food, for example, the exchange of rise for another type of grains. The increasing of the number of war prisoners among war convicts put a new problem in front of the administration.

In 1945-1948 on the territory of Jezkazgan there functioned two camps for war prisoners MIA USSR: № 37 Balkhash camp and № 39 Jezkazgan camp. Based on information dated 24th of December, 1947 there were 1083 war prisoners in Balkhash camp including 1067 Japanese, 12 Korean, 3 German and 1 Australian person. They worked in the building process of the complex of enterprises «Pribalkhashstroy» of the Ministry of Heavy Industry and at Balkhash copper-smelting plant [27]. In contradiction to № 37 Balkhash camp the main contingent of № 39 Zheskazgan camp prisoners was composed by Germans. Since the end of 1946 till the mid of 1947 6750 war prisoners had arrived at the camp. They were set special regime. But according to the Decree of MIA USSR the number of prisoners was constantly varied. Since stated period 3917 people had been displaced. The war prisoners were involved into the labour at brick factories, hydrometallurgy factories, sandpits, building the railroads, dams and etc [28].

Increasing the number of prisoners demanded rapid creating new camps. There are some consequences data concerning the boosted construction of camps kept in the record-offices. For instance, Akmola camp for war prisoners was founded by local authority. This fact is reflected in the protocol of meeting Atnbasar regional committee Central Committee of the Communist Party Bolshevik (CC CPb) of Kazakhstan dated 23th of November, 1945 [29]. During this meeting while discussing the problem on the camps for war prisoners’ conditions a great many drawbacks were noticed. In barracks – originally designed for 200 people – there were 400 including 120 sick people. Sanitarian department, kitchen room and dining room were not ready for the winter time. Undoubtedly, the local authorities were anxious not about the war prisoners’ conditions, but intended to finish constructions on their territories as soon as possible.

The Ministry of war prisoners’ camps № 330 MIA of Kazakh SSR in 1945-1947 was located on the territory of Akmolinsk oblast. The war prisoners located on this territory were working on the construction of Akmolinsk-Kartaly railroad as well as at the factories of «Kazzoloto» trust and «Zhetikaragold» concern [30]. In comparison of the funds of Karaganda state record-office there are few materials concerning Akmola camp. There are some reasons for that. The № 99 war prisoners’ camp had existed for approx. 10 years, but № 330 camp – nearly 3 years. Moreover, the first one was under the MIA USSR whilst the other was under MIA Kazakh SSR.

In 1949 the war prisoners were only in № 99 Karaganda camp. The medical service of the camp was strictly controlled. In July 10 people died in the central dispensary, 4 people died in the departments [31]. Every death case was explained, the reasons were presented, diagnoses put.
Till 1950 the war prisoners were released on the base of agreement and sent back to the Motherland. The war prisoners convicted in criminal offence were left in Kazakhstan. They were convicted in criminal cases.

In 1949-1951 in Karaganda oblast there was a department of correction colonies being under the Ministry of Internal Affairs. In the system of correction colonies the departments in Saran, Temirtau, Karaganda, Shahtinsk were included [32]. Beside that in this institution the special departments of managing with prisoners functioned [33].

In 1941-1950 connected with № 99 war prisoners’ camp breakup the rest convicts were derived into the colonies. Mainly, they were convicted in criminal offence. The questions of their release were decided by MIA USSR and General Prosecutor’s Office. Following the order from above the necessary quantitative information was prepared [34].

These references contained information on convicts of all the colonies on the territory of Karaganda oblast. This information mainly included national and age-sex aspects, duration of penalty, the list of foreigners sorted into original countries, data on convicted on Criminal Code. The camp authority regularly presented to the Administration office of MIA the lists of arrived war prisoners [35]. Information to be headed to the administration of MIA of Karaganda contained concrete data about each of the foreigner including the convict article. Among German and Japanese war prisoners and internees 477 people were convicted. 398 German people were convicted according to following offences: diversion participation, theft, sabotage, self-maiming, espionage, disturbance of camp regime, disobedience to the camp staff, disturbance of the discipline; 29 Japanese people were convicted in terrorism and carrying terroristic plans, theft, sabotage, self-maiming, disturbance of camp regime; 75 Romanian were convicted because of diversion participation, sabotage, self-maiming, theft; 37 Hungarian were convicted for diversion participation, theft, sabotage, self-maiming, disturbance of camp regime.

After World War II, a new type of labor camps - the special camp.

The problem of bringing to forcible labor and brutal exploitation of Soviet prisoners has long attracted international attention, most trade union institutions. The largest company, which gathered a large number of documents on the exploitation of labor in the USSR in 1947 was the American Federation of Labor. On the basis of secret judgments of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR in 1948, the USSR Council of Ministers decrees and orders of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the USSR in the punitive practices of the Soviet state were introduced important changes as a result of a screen defending General Administration camps with hundreds of thousands of prisoners from the position of slavery, hunger and injustice, alienated him not only from international observers, but the whole of Soviet society [36]. That is, there are special camps and prisons, «particularly dangerous prisoners» after serving a term referred to the far corners of the country, and fled sent to twenty years of hard labor.

In Kazakhstan, a special camp was Steppe Camp (Steplag, Special Camp number 4). February 28, 1948, he was educated in Spassk at the former military
camp inmates [37]. In one of the documents of the camp entitled «top secret» there is information on national aspect of convicted in 1954. according to these data among them there were 9596 Ukrainian, 2690 Lithuanian, 2660 Russian, 1074 Latvian, 290 Kazakh, 55 Chinese, 30 Japanese and other. After the war the convicts line was increased by Soviet soldiers and officers who were in fascist captivity. The convicts were concentrated in 9 camp places: Rudnik – Jezkazgan, Kengir village, Spassk, Ekibastuz, Balkhash. The camp departments also were located in rural areas [38]. The labour of convicts was used in workshops of copper-smelting plants of Jezkazgan, Balkhash, Baikonur, Kengir, Jezdinsk, and the work was used in mines and pits.

In Jezkazgan city record-office there is no separate fund on the history of Steppe camp, and the private documents of camp workers located in The Record-Office of the President of Republic of Kazakhstan are still closed for study. Steppe camp gained the popularity because of the prisoners’ rebellion the duration of that is from 16th of May till 25th of June, 1954. This even occupies a special place in the history of protest of camp prisoners USSR. In other camps the convicts demanded freedom, and the prisoners of Kengir gained it, even for 40 days [39]. In the process of rebellion the Minister of State Security Serov, The Minister of Home affairs Kruglov, General Prosecutor Rudenko, The head of the camp managing Dolgih and other noblemen had arrived. Exactly because of Kengir rebellion the governmental commission was created for singling out the reasons for protest. The decision concerning the destinies of the participants was accepted on the level of Central Committee and political bureau CC of Comminist Party of Kazakhstan [40]. July 5, number 1 camp office of general regime in paragraph number 1 in a labor camp in Kazakhstan Sandy has also been reported to refuse to work out 540 prisoners. They do not come to work, requiring care to work for his rudeness and failure to normal living conditions of the camp commander and other officers. After the adoption of measures of Karaganda Regional Department of Internal Affairs and Management of Sandy camp uprising instigators were arrested. July 9, all prisoners went to work, restored order in the camp village. During operation no casualties [41].

Soviet citizens who saved completely from the Stalinist terror was held 14-25 February 1956 XX Congress of the CPSU. There February 25 hear the report of the first secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU, N.S. Khrushchev on «The Cult of Personality and Its Consequences». The report determined the fate of the representatives of entire peoples and individuals. Therefore, a study of the speech as a historical source of help in discovering the history of political repression. Proceedings of the Twentieth Congress - the historical source of Soviet totalitarianism, the document reveals the suppression of human rights.

General Directorate of the camps were closed until after 1956. After the Twentieth Congress of the state began to take measures for the rehabilitation and restoration of the rights of victims of political repression. Many of the prisoners were later in Kazakhstan. Although they were released from prison, the work carried out under the supervision of the investigating authorities. To this day, unknown and unpublished number - the exact number of prisoners KarLag.
However, do not become the object of study, and many of the documents. This is all evidence of incomplete stories KarLag.

The task of the future in Kazakhstan - to identify the role of the Soviet labor camps in the fate of victims of Stalinist repression in the twentieth century. To do this, remove the secrecy of sources, organize and publish collections of documents. It is time to reveal the results of the effect of obscurantism Stalinism. New sources of archival documents make it possible to reveal all the terrible truth of crimes of the totalitarian state in human rights abuses for their subsequent rehabilitation. For this you need the materials in the scientific revolution, direct Kazakhstan Archeograf in the right direction, to declassify sources, to provide researchers access to restricted content.

1. State record-office of Astana town, p. 406, b. 1, c. 1, l. 91
2. State record-office of Russian Federation (further – SRORF), p. 9414, b. 1, c. 62, l. 2-16
3. SRORF, p. 9414, b. 1, c. 32,12
4. SRORF, p. 9414, b. 1, c. 62, l. 2-16
5. SRORF, p. 9414, b. 1, c. 28, 30
6. State record-office of Zheskazgan town (further - SROZT), p. 381, b. 1, c. 24, l. 181
7. SROZT, p. 381, b. 1, c. 121
9. SROZT, p. 381, b. 1, c. 1
10. SROZT, p. 381, b. 1, c. 24, l. 171-181
11. SROZT, p. 381, b. 1, c. 24, l. 68
14. SROKO, p.1108, b.1, c.14, l.7
15. SROKO, p.1108, b.1, c.14, l.8
16. SROKO, p.1108, b.1, c.14, l. 1-6, 20-27, 7-11
17. SROKO, p.1108, b.1, c.14, l. 68-70
18. SROKO, p.1075, b.1, c.1
19. SROKO, p.1143, b.1, c.1; p.1143, b.1, c.1
20. SROKO, p.1181, b.1, c.1
21. SROKO, p.110, b.1, c.53
22. SROKO, p.454, b.1, c.1
23. SROKO, p.458, b.1, c.1
24. State record-office of Zheskazgan town (further - SROZT), p. 381, b. 1, c. 24, l. 181
25. SROKO, p.732, b.1, c.1-3
26. SROKO, p.410, b.5, c.11, l.145.
27. SROZT, p. 458, b. 2, c. 264, l. 1.
28. SROZT, p.380, b.2, c.23, l. 33, 45 (28)
29. State Record-office of Akmolinsk oblast (further - SROAO), p.282, b.1, c.1, l.7-8, (29)
30. SROAO, p.282, b.1, c.2, l.18-19.
31. SROKO, p.410, b.5, c.40, l.l.142-146.
32. SROKO, p.425, b.70, c.2, l.l.1-46.
33. SROKO, p.425, b.70, c.37, l.l.104-108
34. SROKO, p.425, b.70, c.14, l.l. 44-54.
35. SROKO, p.425, b.70, c.38, l.l. 2-10.
38. SROZT, p.498, b.1, c.1, l.l. 1-2.