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## *Nationalities Policy in the Brezhnev Era: The Case of Deported Nations*

### Introduction

The purpose in this paper is to give the reader a better understanding of nationality issues in the Brezhnev era by focusing on the case of deported nations. Generally speaking, the Brezhnev era remains the least-studied period in the history of the USSR. It is only recently, some twenty years since Brezhnev's death, that posthumous research on this era began to be published.<sup>1</sup> Among this research, Ben Fowkes made the first attempt to comprehensively describe the nationalities policy under Brezhnev.<sup>2</sup> He provides a useful starting point for discussing Brezhnev's nationalities policy by defining it as "corporatist compromise, ethnic equalization, and masterly inactivity." In contrast to Nahaylo and Swoboda,<sup>3</sup> who attach more importance to a dynamic of Russification

1 Edwin Bacon and Mark Sandle, eds., *Brezhnev Reconsidered* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002); William Tompson, *The Soviet Union under Brezhnev* (Harlow: Pearson, 2003). It is worthy of attention that many popular books on Brezhnev and his era have been published in Russia in the last few years. see B. V. Sokolov, *Leonid Brezhnev: Zolotaia epokha* (Moscow, 2004), etc.

2 Ben Fowkes, "The National Question in the Soviet Union under Leonid Brezhnev: Policy and Response," in Bacon and Sandle, *Brezhnev Reconsidered*, pp. 68-89.

3 Bohdan Nahaylo and Victor Swoboda, *Soviet Disunion: A History of the Nationalities Problem in the USSR* (New York: Free Press, 1990).

pressure from above and tireless resistance from below, Fowkes appreciates Brezhnev's approach to national questions, concluding that it was effective enough to preserve the USSR for a couple of decades, although it contained the seeds of its own destruction.<sup>4</sup>

Fowkes' description of nationalities policy under Brezhnev rightly focuses on nationalities which enjoyed official autonomy status (especially union republics). His approach is justifiable in light of the following considerations. First of all, it is difficult to find a nationalities policy in a concrete form, because in those days, it was officially declared that national problems had already been completely solved in the USSR. However, by focusing attention on those nationalities with autonomous territories, Fowkes can interpret local politics within union republics or center-local relations as nationalities policy.

Nonetheless, it is clear that more research is necessary to establish a comprehensive understanding of nationality politics under Brezhnev because, besides those cases treated by Fowkes, there were many ethnic groups without territorial autonomy. Moreover, the USSR was such a vast space that there are considerable differences among various nationalities or regions. Thus, we might not be satisfied with Fowkes' tentative generalizations and wish to try to elaborate on his thesis in the light of additional concrete case studies. In this paper, taking the point of view above, I shall consider the nationalities policy of the Brezhnev era for those nationalities without autonomy, an important group neglected by Fowkes' study. In particular, I will focus on three deported nations, the Germans, Crimean Tatars, and Meskhetian Turks.<sup>5</sup> They compose a kind of group with a relatively common destiny, and provide an important case through which to examine national politics under Brezhnev.<sup>6</sup>

4 Fowkes, "The National Question," pp. 81-83.

5 There are different views in defining what are Meskhetian Turks. In this paper I will follow that of Osipov, claiming that Muslim peoples without determined modern ethnic consciousness have forged their own identity through common destiny as deportation. See Osipov in annotation 7 below.

6 In this paper we are not concerned with Koreans, because they were in a different situation from other deported nations. In the eye of the law, Koreans no longer suffered any limitations on choosing a place of residence after 1953, although return to the Far East was not recommended by authorities. See G. V. Kan, *Istoriia koreitsev Kazakhstana* (Almaty, 1995); B. D. Pak and N. F. Bugai, *140 let v Rossii: Ocherki istorii rossiiskikh koreitsev* (Moscow,

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There is a substantial literature on the deportation and rehabilitation of Germans, Crimean Tatars, and Meskhetian Turks.<sup>7</sup> Even better, many related collections of documents have been published.<sup>8</sup> However, as far as the Brezhnev period is concerned, few attempts have been made at systematic comparison, and, no persuasive research has been undertaken to understand the common links underlying official nationality policy. The deported nations, I believe, are a key case for constructing a full picture of the nationalities issue under Brezhnev.

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2004); HANYA Shiro, "Furushichofu himitsu hokoku to minzoku kyosei iju: Kurimia-Tataru jin, Doitsu jin, Chosen jin no mondai tsuminokoshi" [The Secret Report of Khrushchev and Deportation of Nations: Unresolved Problems of Crimean Tatars, Germans and Koreans], *Rosiashi kenkyu* 75 (2004), pp. 85–100 (especially pp. 93–96).

7 Classic research on deportation of nations is Aleksandr Nekrich, *The Punished Peoples: The Deportation and Fate of Soviet Minorities at the End of the Second World War* (New York: Norton, 1978), while the latest literature on the basis of archival materials is N. F. Bugai, *L. Beria – I. Stalinu: "Soglasno Vashemu ukazaniyu . . ."* (Moscow, 1995). Excellent research by dissidents at that time about the rehabilitation movement after the Stalin's death is from Ludmilla Alexeyeva, *Soviet Dissent: Contemporary Movements for National, Religious, and Human Rights* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1985), pp. 137–174. For the latest literature on each nationality separately, see the following: Germans: V. A. Bauer and T. S. Ilarionova, *Rossiiskie nemtsy: pravo na nadezhdu* (Moscow, 1995); Alfred Eisfeld, *Die Russlanddeutschen* (Munich, 1999); HAN'IA Siro [HANYA Shiro], "Tselinograd, iun' 1979 g.: k voprosu o nesostoiavsheisia nemetskoi avtonomii v Kazakhstane," *Acta Slavica Iaponica* 20 (2003), pp. 230–236; Crimean Tatars: Brian G. Williams, *The Crimean Tatars: The Diaspora Experience and the Forging of a Nation* (Leiden: Brill, 2001); Greta Lynn Uehling, *Beyond Memory: The Crimean Tatars' Deportation and Return* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004); Meskhetian Turks: A. G. Osipov, "Vliianie gosudarstvennoi ideologii na samoznanie i aktivnost' men'shinstv (na primere meskhetinskikh turok)," *Etnograficheskoe obozrenie* 2 (1994), pp. 35–40; A. G. Osipov., "Dvizhenie meskhetintsev za repatriatsiiu (1956–1988 gg.)," *Etnograficheskoe obozrenie* 5 (1998), pp. 95–108.

8 On documents in general, see A. N. Artizov et al., eds., *Reabilitatsiia: kak eto bylo*, vol. 2 (Moscow, 2003); N. F. Bugai and A. M. Gonov, eds., "Po resheniiu pravitel'stva Soyuz SSSR . . ." (Nal'chik, 2003). On each nationality separately, see the following. Germans: V. A. Auman and V. G. Chebotareva, eds., *Istoriia rossiiskikh nemtsev v dokumentakh (1763–1992 gg.)* (Moscow, 1993); V. A. Auman and V. G. Chebotareva, eds., *Istoriia rossiiskikh nemtsev v dokumentakh, vol. 2, Obshchestvenno-politicheskoe dvizhenie za vosstanovlenie natsional'noi gosudarstvennosti (1965–1992 gg.)* (Moscow, 1994); G. A. Karpykova, ed., *Iz istorii nemtsev Kazakhstana (1921–1975 gg.)* (Almaty, 1997); A. Aisfel'd [Eisfeld], ed., *Iz istorii nemtsev Kyrgyzstana: 1917–1999 gg.* (Bishkek, 2000); Crimean Tatars: N. F. Bugai, ed., *Deportatsiia narodov Kryma* (Moscow, 2002); Meskhetian Turks: N. F. Bugai, ed., *Turki iz Meskhetii: dolgii put' k reabilitatsii* (Moscow, 1994).

For the sake of convenience, I have divided the Brezhnev era into two periods. The first runs from 1964 until 1972 and focuses on security measures, illustrated by examples of the rehabilitation decrees on Germans, Crimean Tatars, and Meskhetian Turks. The second section, running up to Brezhnev's death in 1982, examines the plan to give autonomous territories to Germans and Crimean Tatars and its relationship to the unexpected mass emigration of Germans and to popular resistance in Kazakhstan. As chairman of the State Security Committee (KGB), Yuri Andropov played a key role at the heart of nationality issues under Brezhnev.

## **Nationalities Policy in the Form of Security Measures (1964–1972)**

### *Three Demands of Rehabilitation*

As is well known, Stalin ordered the forcible resettlement of some ethnic groups from their native lands to Central Asia and Siberia during World War II (Germans in August 1941 from the Volga region, Crimean Tatars in May 1944 from Crimea, and Meskhetian Turks in July 1944 from Meskheta, an area lying along the Georgia-Turkey border). In the process of de-Stalinization, Khrushchev relabeled Stalin's deportation and accusation of high treason "a rude violation of the basic Leninist principles of Soviet national politics."<sup>9</sup> As a result, several deported nations, including the Chechens, were permitted return to their homelands, while their autonomous territories, abolished at the time of deportation, were also restored.<sup>10</sup> Rehabilitation during Khrushchev's "thaw," however, did not reach as far as the Germans, Crimean Tatars, and Meskhetian Turks. They were released from a state of "special settlement" in 1955–1956, but continued to be tied to their place of exile.

9 K. Aimermakher [Eimermacher], ed., *Doklad N. S. Khrushcheva o kul'te lichnosti Stalina na XX s'ezde KPSS: Dokumenty* (Moscow, 2002), pp. 93–94.

10 For a more detailed account of the return and restoration of autonomies of North Caucasian peoples in 1957, see HANYA Siro [HANYA Shiro], "Sekretnyi doklad N. S. Khrushcheva i vosstanovlenie avtonomnykh territorii v 1957 godu," *Acta Slavica Iaponica* 22 (2005), pp. 141–164.

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Full rehabilitation for these three nationalities consisted of the following three points: (1) official recognition that the wartime accusation of mass treason was groundless, (2) permission to return to the homeland, and (3) restoration of the pre-war autonomous territory. Certainly, Meskhetian Turks are somewhat exceptional with regard to this final stipulation, for they had never possessed autonomy within the Georgian SSR. For them, the first point is also less relevant for at the time of deportation they were not officially declared to be betrayers. Many of them even considered departure a rescue measure against possible Turkish invasion.<sup>11</sup> However, generally speaking, these three points represent an agenda recognized by the three nations concerned, as well as Soviet authorities.

### *Decrees on Germans, Crimean Tatars, and Meskhetian Turks*

Let us begin by reviewing the decrees on Germans, Crimean Tatars, and Meskhetian Turks, issued in this period. The vanguard is *Germans*: on August 29, 1964, the Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR on them was issued.<sup>12</sup> Strictly speaking, this decree might be classified into the Khrushchev era (Khrushchev was removed from power during a Presidium meeting on October 14, 1964). Nevertheless, it is worth our attention, because it has direct effects on the situation at the beginning of the Brezhnev era. The next is *Crimean Tatars* with both a decree (*ukaz*) and a resolution (*postanovlenie*) of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR issued on September 5, 1967.<sup>13</sup> Almost a year later, a decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR on *Meskhetian Turks* came out on May 30, 1968.<sup>14</sup> Finally, on November 3, 1972, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR finished off the cycle of rehabilitation decrees towards the deported nations with an additional decree regarding the Germans.<sup>15</sup>

11 Bugai, *Turki iz Meskhetii*, p. 16.

12 Bugai and Gonov, "*Po resheniiu pravitel'stva*," pp. 784–785. In the following source, there is omission of several words: Auman and Chebotareva, *Istoriia rossiiskikh nemtsev* (1993), pp. 178–179.

13 Artizov et al., *Reabilitatsiya*, vol. 2, pp. 517–518.

14 *Ibid.*, pp. 520–521.

15 *Ibid.*, p. 530; Bugai and Gonov, "*Po resheniiu pravitel'stva*," pp. 798–799; Bugai, *Turki*

The 1964 decree on Germans was prepared as part of a planned improvement in diplomatic relations between the USSR and West Germany, as shown by the low regard for Germans in the USSR in the period immediately preceding. Although the 1964 decree on Germans was issued on August 29, party officials continued to reject Germans' petitions for additional rehabilitation measures until the middle of June 1964.<sup>16</sup> It was early in July that the party authorities suddenly changed their attitude, following a CPSU (Communist Party of the Soviet Union) Secretariat discussion on July 3, report on July 25, and August 13 Presidium decision approving the draft decree.<sup>17</sup> This abrupt change in attitude towards Germans completely corresponds to that in diplomatic policy: it might be symbolic that on July 29, A. I. Adzhubei, to pave the way for an official visit by Khrushchev (his father-in-law), met Chancellor Ludwig Erhard in Bonn, and allegedly submitted daring proposals for improving bilateral relations.<sup>18</sup> In other words, the 1964 decree was prepared as a "gift" to West Germany by Khrushchev's own initiative. Although Khrushchev would be deposed two months later without making his trip and Adzhubei's visit to West Germany has even been suggested as a cause (among many) of Khrushchev's downfall,<sup>19</sup> the decree itself was not annulled.

The 1964 decree on Germans reversed the "groundless accusation" that all Germans were traitors during the war, but still left untouched a ban on return to the homeland, citing the reason that the Germans had

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iz *Meskhettii*, p. 99. In the following source, there is an error in the text: Auman and Chebotareva, *Istoriia rossiiskikh nemtsev* (1993), p. 179: In addition to Germans, the 1972 decree deals with the other small in number nationalities with foreign origins, and Bugai assumes that it is also concerned with the Meskhetian Turks. However, I could hardly agree with him. Meskhetian Turks were released from "special settlement" by the two Decrees of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet (on April 28, 1956, and October 31, 1957); that is evident from the 1968 decree on them. On the other hand, Turks concerned in the 1972 decree are those who were naturalized as Soviet citizens or stateless persons, and were released from special settlement by the other Decree on September 22, 1956. See Osipov, "Dvizhenie meskhetintsev za repatriatsiiu," pp. 96-97; Artizov et al., *Reabilitatsiia*, vol. 2, pp. 79-80, 185-186, 293, 520-521.

16 Artizov et al., *Reabilitatsiia*, vol. 2, pp. 467-470.

17 Ibid., p. 818.

18 Eisfeld, *Die Russlanddeutschen*, pp. 139-140.

19 R. G. Pikhov, *Sovetskii Soiuz: istoriia vlasti 1945-1991* (Novosibirsk, 2000), p. 231.

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“put down roots” in their new places of residence. In other words, using the above-mentioned three demands of the deported nations, this decree corresponded merely to the first point, while ignoring the other two points. Nevertheless, it made a profound impact on the Soviet Germans themselves, giving new life to the German national movement. Starting in 1965, they tried to get in contact with high-ranking officials of the party and government, asking for a further explanation as to why the decree discredited the accusation, but did not reverse the punishment, forbidding return to the homeland and the restoration of the Autonomous Republic of Volga Germans abolished during World War II (remarkably, the German national movement is characterized by its passiveness, especially compared with the Crimean Tatars and Meskhetian Turks that will be mentioned below).<sup>20</sup>

The decrees from 1967 to 1972 follow the 1964 text closely, even repeating the language regarding transplanted roots, but then go further to declare that Crimeans and Meskhetians “enjoy the same rights as all Soviet citizens” to reside anywhere in the USSR, if sanctioned by “the law on employment and passport procedure.” We are probably safe in thinking that these new concessions and additional restraints were issued to meet the growing national movements.

This applies most of all to the Crimean Tatars, whose activities date back to 1957.<sup>21</sup> Under the direction of a younger generation, represented by a well-known activist Mustafa Dzhemilev, they abandoned the old politics of imploring authorities for “mercy” and instead tried confrontation. This new strategy gained widespread acceptance among ordinary Crimean Tatars. For instance, over 130,000 Crimean Tatars (almost the entire adult population) signed an appeal to the 23rd CPSU Congress in March 1966, a feat of organization not repeated in the Brezhnev era.<sup>22</sup> In this manner, authorities at that time had need of an effective measure to

20 Bauer and Ilarionova, *Rossiiskie nemtsy*, pp. 40–52; Eisfeld, *Die Russlanddeutschen*, pp. 140–142; For a memoir about Germans’ delegations to Moscow in 1965, see G. G. Vormsbekher, “Protuberantsy muzhestva i nadezhd (1-ia i 2-ia delegatsiia sovetskikh nemtsev v 1965 g.),” *Nemetskoe naselenie v poststalinskom SSSR, v stranakh SNG i Baltii (1956–2000 gg.)* (Moscow, 2003), pp. 75–138.

21 On the early period of the Crimean Tatars’ national movement, see Hanya, “Furushichofu himitsu hokoku,” pp. 88–91.

22 Alexeyeva, *Soviet Dissent*, pp. 141–142.

control the Crimean Tatars' national movement. A draft of the decree was approved by the Politburo on August 17, 1967.<sup>23</sup>

Likewise, Meskhetian Turks also fit the case. Their national movement also intensified its activity in the middle of the 1960s. The so-called "Temporary organizational committee of liberation," established in 1961 by Enver Odabashev, played a central role in their national movement. Recent research revealed that until 1968 they sent at least twenty-four delegations to Moscow and Tbilisi, the biggest of which numbered about 200 people in the summer of 1964.<sup>24</sup> The Meskhetian Turks' movement was not as aggressive as that of the Crimean Tatars, but it attracted the authorities' attention nonetheless.<sup>25</sup> This might explain why the Politburo adopted a draft of the Meskhetian Turks' decree less than a year after the Crimean Tatars' on May 23, 1968.<sup>26</sup>

The last to come is the 1972 decree on Germans. The reason for four year's interruption between the Meskhetian Turks' decree and the one for Germans requires an explanation. Again, foreign factors (especially West Germany's *Ostpolitik* from 1969 by chancellor Willy Brandt) might have played a role,<sup>27</sup> but a more decisive factor is that the 1964 decree already had removed the stigma from Germans. Certainly, activists continued a movement demanding for the right to return to the Volga and restoration of the autonomous republic of Volga Germans, but, exposed to intensifying suppression by the authorities, German activists could not play the leading role to intensify the national movement like those of the Crimean Tatars and Meskhetian Turks. Why, then, was the 1972 decree issued permitting Germans' return to the Volga region?

The key to solving this puzzle is the meeting of the Politburo of CC (Central Committee) CPSU on October 26, 1972, where the 1972 decree on Germans was approved.<sup>28</sup> Attracting our attention is that at this meeting, though the decree was concerned only with the issue of Ger-

23 Artizov et al., *Reabilitatsiia*, vol. 2, p. 820.

24 Osipov, "Dvizhenie meskhetintsev za repatriatsiiu," pp. 97-100.

25 Artizov et al., *Reabilitatsiia: kak eto bylo*, vol. 2, pp. 471-472, 481.

26 *Ibid.*, pp. 820.

27 Han'ia, "Tselinograd, iiun' 1979g.," pp. 231-232.

28 Bugai and Gonov, "Po resheniiu pravitel'stva," pp. 796-797; Bugai, *Turki iz Meskhetii*, pp. 97-98; Artizov et al., *Reabilitatsiia*, vol. 2, p. 821.

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mans, mention was made of all three deported nations. The Politburo, repeating familiar wording that Germans, Crimean Tatars and Meskhetian Turks had “put down roots” in their new places of residence, obliged regional party organizations not only to take the necessary steps for restricting them to present places of residence, but also to keep strict and hostile watch against “autonomists” calling for mass return to the homeland. Furthermore, the Politburo asked regional party officials of Ukraine, Georgia, and the Volga region (Saratov and Volgograd) to accept those who desire to return, in accordance with “the law on employment and passport procedure.” In other words, the 1972 decree was needed to apply a measure common to all three deported nations to Germans as well. The 1964 decree on Germans is not enough to follow this line, because it only abolished groundless accusation as mass treason and did not intend to establish conditional permission to return.

As a whole, from what has been discussed above, it is quite probable that the decrees from 1967 to 1972 were formulated as one set. It is not simply because they have almost the same wording. As has been revealed by the meeting of the Politburo of CC CPSU on October 26, 1972, Germans, Crimean Tatars and Meskhetian Turks were considered to be a fixed group in need of common policy measures. Therefore, we can conclude the following: the 1964 decree began the process, but for foreign policy reasons. The decrees between 1967 and 1972 extended even broader rehabilitation to two additional deported nationalities with the 1967 decree on Crimean Tatars acting as a model, and the 1968 decree on Meskhetian Turks following it. Finally, the 1972 decree brought Germans the same status as the Turks and Tatars, although the possibility of a link to the culminating phases of *Ostpolitik* cannot be excluded.

In this manner, it is obvious that there was a policy changeover in the Politburo towards the deported nations between the 1964 decree and 1967 decree. It is Yuri Andropov that played a key role in this political change.

#### *Andropov's New Approach to the Deported Nations*

After his appointment as KGB Chairman in May 1967, Yuri Andropov played a leading role in the establishment of a new approach towards the deported nations. Its essence lies in using carrots and sticks at the

same time: on the one hand repression against activists of national movements was intensified, on the other hand it became possible to return to the homeland under limited conditions. The authorities intended to control the situation, lessening the influence of activists in this way. They also pursued the appearance of an orderly and fair process. This approach is suggestive of measures employed against dissident movements. This is quite natural, because both concerns were handled by the Fifth Department of the KGB, created as one of Andropov's first initiatives in July 1967 for struggle against "ideologically subversive activities."<sup>29</sup>

Let us now examine Andropov's approach, with Crimean Tatars as the main example.

The intensifying of repression against national movements under Andropov is widely known: the arrest of activists in the Chirchik affair of April 1968 is typical.<sup>30</sup> Much literature, mainly taken from the viewpoints of the activists and dissidents, emphasizes the stick side of Andropov's policy. However, the carrot of his policy attracts little attention, following uncritically the judgment of the repressed. I assume that the viewpoint of the oppressors might be reexamined without prejudice.

The carrot that I mean here is the 1967 decree on Crimean Tatars, permitting return to their homeland under the condition that it corresponds with "the law on employment and passport procedure." This is intended mainly for the masses, not activists. As mentioned above, activists enjoyed broad-based support from the masses. For this reason, the 1967 decrees are designed to drive a wedge into the harmonious relationship between national masses and nationalist activists.

All this corresponds to Andropov's political style: pursuit of the legitimating appearance of due process. In this light, a conviction for mass treason and prohibition of return are clearly legal discrimination against specific nationalities, and incapable of rational explanation. The Germans' decree in 1964 set a precedent for clearing accusations of mass treason and there was no "wronged party" to protest. On the other hand,

29 A. I. Kokurin and N. V. Petrov, eds., *Lubianka: Organy VChK-OGPU-NKVD-MGB-KGB, 1917-1991: Spravochnik* (Moscow, 2003), pp. 711-714; R. Medvedev, *Neizvestnyi Andropov* (Rostov-na-Donu, 1999), pp. 117-118. See also Zhores Medvedev, *Andropov* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983).

30 Alexeyeva, *Soviet Dissent*, pp. 148-149.

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it is less simple to lift the ban on return, let alone reestablishing autonomy. First of all, the authorities feared local economic turmoil stemming from the mass migration of the labor force. Resettlement and restoring autonomy were also potentially expensive.<sup>31</sup> To prevent the worst possible scenario, like the case of Chechens and other North Caucasian nationalities in 1956–1957 (in spite of a ban on return, they tried to go back to the homeland *en masse* and, as a result, compelled the authorities to restore their autonomies), the authorities worked out an alternative mechanism for controlling possible spontaneous migration, while avoiding any clear national discrimination. This was the requirement that all returnees be in compliance with “the law on employment and passport procedure.” Here, a prohibition on return has been switched from overtones of national discrimination to that of the more general, even universal, issue of securing a job and lodging. In this manner, the authorities could demonstrate the carrot of policy, while resisting more persuasively criticism from the deported nations.

Judging from the official sources, conditional return as the carrot achieved definite success, at least in 1967. Mass gatherings in Kyrgyzstan to explain the 1967 decrees might serve as an example. They were held at every place of Crimean Tatars’ residence, soon after the decrees’ issuance. The party officials took complete control of proceeding, taking the initiative from the activists, and tried to create the conventional wisdom that it was not necessary to hurry the return, now that it was conditionally permitted. It was also reported that the activists “were isolated and at first in confusion” at the meeting. In fact, there were some critical attacks. One Crimean Tatar expressed dissatisfaction with the decree, comparing it to the emancipation from serfdom without land. Likewise, contrary to the authorities’ hope, there was a rumor that the decrees were issued thanks to the activists. However, at least for the case of Kyrgyzstan, conditional permission for returning was in general received in a favorable light, and the authorities might have succeeded in isolating national movements from the masses and paralyzing them.<sup>32</sup>

31 Such an opinion was clearly declared at a meeting between the German delegation and Mikoyan in July 1965. See Auman and Chebotareva, *Istoriia rossiiskikh nemtsev*, vol. 2, p. 36.

32 RGANI (Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi arkhiv noveishei istorii), f. 5 (Apparat TsK

Nevertheless, in spite of Andropov's intents, the carrot of the policy showed its defects in less than a year. In order to make the carrot policy a success, the Fifth Department of the KGB, long before the issuance of the decrees, asked the local authorities to accept a certain amount of returnees. However, their response was rather evasive. As a result, only the stick turned out to be spotlighted.

As far as Crimean Tatars were concerned, the Ukrainian authorities bowed to the pressure of the KGB just before the issue of the decrees and agreed to accept 200–300 returnees per annum by the officially sanctioned route.<sup>33</sup> However, official return to Crimea continued for only a few years. According to the official data, in 1968, 1,447 Tatars arrived, including 1,188 people by the official route, but, after that, the numbers diminished quickly: in 1969—1,041 (679 by the official route), in 1970—515 (277), in 1971—526 (391), and in 1972—only 86 Tatars, with no returnees by the official route. Summing up the number of returnees from 1967 to 1972, 3,418 Crimean Tatars (including 2,403 Tatars by the official route) had returned to the homeland.<sup>34</sup> Dissident sources claim smaller figures, but document the same general tendency.<sup>35</sup> These facts might be explained as follows: Crimean Tatar activists, thanks to contact with Moscow civil rights activists, made their activities more powerful and called for mass illegal return to Crimea,<sup>36</sup> whereas the local authorities in Crimea, originally not welcoming their arrival, had little patience to keep their agreement with the KGB, once confronted with the growing mass arrival of Crimean Tatars. As a result, the official resettlement was aborted and many “provocateurs” for mass return were arrested.<sup>37</sup>

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KPSS), op. 59, d. 22, ll. 32–41.

33 F. D. Bobkov, *KGB i vlast'* (Moscow, 1995), pp. 301–302: I assume that Andropov's KGB succeeded in persuading Ukraine to accept returnees thanks to Brezhnev. In order to grab power, Brezhnev might have given support not to the First Secretary of the Ukrainian Party Shelest, who could become a rival in the regime, but to Andropov, who was appointed recently by Brezhnev himself.

34 RGANI, f. 5, op. 66, d. 107, l. 26.

35 Alexeyeva, *Soviet Dissent*, p. 145; Alan W. Fisher, *The Crimean Tatars* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1978), p. 183.

36 Alexeyeva, *Soviet Dissent*, pp. 146–147.

37 According to the materials of the Supervision Department of the USSR Prosecutor-General's Office during the period from 1953 to 1991, arrests of Crimean Tatar activists

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The case of the Meskhetian Turks was even worse. The objection of Mzhavanadze, the First Secretary of the Communist Party of Georgia, made their return *de facto* impossible. Because he was under the patronage of Brezhnev, the KGB could not compel Georgia to accept returnees on the model of the Crimean Tatars.<sup>38</sup> Certainly, following the decree of Moscow, the Bureau of the CC of the Communist Party of Georgia on May 31, 1968 decided to create in the Georgian CC a commission for the Meskhetian Turks issue, and in the beginning of July there was a meeting of regional party and Soviet representatives. However, what actually occurred was that some Meskhetian Turks, who appeared in Georgia during June and July, were re-deported from the Republic on the pretext of passport regulations.<sup>39</sup>

In this manner, the carrot of the Andropov approach had become a dead letter. However, the authorities did not try to bring it back to life, because the stick effectively worked on calming the national movements and, from the viewpoint of security measures, Andropov achieved his goal for a while. Accordingly, he continued to rely on a shell of the carrot, while executing the stick intensively.

As an aside, during 1972 to 1973 the Crimean party organization, annoyed with radical Crimean Tatar activists, repeatedly proposed to Moscow restricting immigration by invoking passport procedures, but the Central Committee in Moscow rejected this proposal in February 1974. It is assumed that here Uzbek opinion also played a definite role. On August 1973, Uzbek party authorities, also confronted with the intensified national movements of Crimean Tatars and Meskhetian Turks within their own republic, demanded the resumption of return by the official route. This is in some sense a conflict of regions trying to dump unreliable elements on each other. However, it is significant that Moscow, supporting the Uzbek side, gave a ruling that in order to neutralize

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rose rapidly at the end of the 1960s. See V. A. Kozlov and S. V. Mironenko, eds., *58<sup>10</sup>: nadzornye proizvodstva Prokuratury SSSR po delam ob antisovetskoj agitatsii i propagande, mart 1953–1991* (Moscow, 1999), pp. 23, 287, 569, 600, 678–679, 687, 692, 697, 701, 769, 802, 809, 813, 821.

<sup>38</sup> Bobkov, *KGB i vlast'*, pp. 309–310.

<sup>39</sup> RGANI, f. 5, op. 60, d. 5, ll. 22–25; Osipov, "Dvizhenie meskhetintsev za repatriatsiiu," p. 100.

the situation, residence permission under the established order is of great importance.<sup>40</sup> In other words, this event clearly demonstrated that the Andropov approach permitting return under specific conditions continued to be a basic policy for solving the problem of the deported nations. The carrot was required as a matter of form, even if it hardly functioned practically.

As just described, Andropov's policy was to take on the deported nations *en bloc* and implement the common measure of allowing return to the homeland by official sanction. It was executed mainly by the KGB as a security measure. The policy consisted of the carrot and the stick, but the former performed quite insufficiently owing to the objection of local authorities. Nevertheless, from the viewpoint of a security measure, the Andropov approach achieved acceptable success, especially among Crimean Tatars and Meskhetian Turks.

## **Attempt to Create New Autonomies for Deported Nations (1973–1982)**

### *Germans' Mass Emigration to West Germany*

Andropov's approach was finally applied to the Germans in November 1972. This must have been the last stage in his original plan to calm the claims of the deported nations. Indeed, Germans' return to the Volga region went smoothly. According to the official 1973 report of Saratov *oblast*, returnees were limited to no fewer than 200 Germans in that year. Despite the fact that an attempt to create a national organization by two German students was uncovered, the return migration was in general uneventful.<sup>41</sup> The 1974 report was no less peaceful, although the number of German arrivals in Saratov *oblast* during that year reached 700, including natural increase in population.<sup>42</sup> In this way, Germans' spontaneous migration to the Volga region did not occur. Measures against the

40 RGANI, f. 5, op. 64, d. 52, l. 50–53; op. 66, d. 107, ll. 22–30.

41 TsDNISO (Tsentr dokumentatsii noveishei istorii Saratovskoi oblasti), f. 594 (Saratovskii obkom KPSS), op. 14, d. 84, ll. 66–67.

42 TsDNISO, f. 594, op. 14, d. 98, ll. 85–87.

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deported nations seemed to be approaching a successful end.

Behind the scenes, however, Germans initiated an unexpected action: they rushed to emigrate *en masse* to West Germany. The authorities of Kazakhstan were aware of a sharp increase of German emigration at the end of 1972, and the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan discussed this problem in September 1973,<sup>43</sup> but it was only in October 1973 that the Moscow KGB sounded the alarm. According to the KGB report, the interior channel had received 1,809 German applications for migration to West Germany in 1970, and from that time on, it continued to increase rapidly: 2,617—in 1971, and 4,911—in 1972. In 1973, only in the first half of the year, it recorded 3,803 emigration applications from Germans. In addition to this, in June of that year, the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet received a mass petition with 35,000 German signatures, all asking for permission to leave the USSR.<sup>44</sup>

The KGB assumed that the rapid growth of those who wished to emigrate must be the result of agitprop maneuvers, both domestic and foreign. In West Germany, especially after the first successes of *Ostpolitik*, various organizations intensified assistance for Soviet Germans' emigration. Following this lead, in various regions of the USSR, activists began to demonstrate for permission to exit. For example, the so-called "Initiative Committee" was organized in Estonia. In contact with church groups in Kazakhstan, it was secretly engaged in making a list of emigration applicants and collecting contributions. Meanwhile, in Karaganda of the Kazakh Republic, an attempt to establish an organization committee for assistance in emigration was prevented by the authorities. In general, their public demonstrations were spreading in the USSR.<sup>45</sup>

In fact, emigration to West Germany was observed also in the 1960s. However, it was so limited a stream as to be regarded as an exceptional phenomenon, mainly concerned with those seeking religious asylum. Besides, among those who emigrated, some Germans, disillusioned with

43 Karpykova, *Iz istorii nemtsev Kazakhstana*, pp. 263–264.

44 RGANI, f. 5, op. 66, d. 105, ll. 4–5.

45 RGANI, f. 5, op. 66, d. 105, ll. 9, 28; See also Alexeyeva, *Soviet Dissent*, pp. 171–172; Eisfeld, *Die Russlanddeutschen*, p. 145; V. Brul', "Assotsiatsiia nemtsev, zhelaiushchikh vyekhat' iz SSSR," in V. Karev et al., eds., *Nemtsy Rossii: entsiklopediia*, vol. 1 (Moscow, 1999), pp. 85–86.

the harsh realities of capitalistic society, later returned to the USSR. Accordingly, the authorities could still deal with Germans' emigration calmly, considering that it was enough to take the countermeasure of propagandizing the cases of those who returned to the USSR.<sup>46</sup>

The emigration in the 1970s, however, was different from that of the 1960s in various respects. Aside from diplomatic pressure from West Germany, there were appreciable changes in domestic factors. Firstly, emigration in the 1970s was on a broader scale: there was almost ten times the number of those who left for West Germany (its annual scale changed from hundreds at the end of the 1960s to thousands in the 1970s).<sup>47</sup> Secondly, although religion still played an important role in attracting Soviet Germans to their historical homeland (cooperation between the emigration committee and religious groups was mentioned above), other factors contributed to their decision: many Germans left the USSR in despair, complaining that they were discriminated against and their national rights were not satisfied. "We do not feel at home here" was a typical statement of departing Germans.<sup>48</sup>

What confused the authorities was the fact that successful experiences in the 1960s had no effect on restraining the growing mass emigration of Germans. Propaganda articles in the national newspaper about the miserable life of West Germany, that had achieved some success until the end of the 1960s, showed no more results in the 1970s.<sup>49</sup> In fact, the authorities were ill-prepared for this situation and activists' maneuvers: the authorities only prepared measures common to Crimean Tatars and Meskhetian Turks, offering limited return to the Volga region.

Unlike the issue of Crimean Tatars and Meskhetian Turks that was practically a domestic matter, German emigration was all the more complicated because it involved foreign relations. The authorities worked out measures only on the assumption that after lifting prohibition on return Germans would go back to the Volga region from which they had been displaced. However, Germans by birth had another homeland—their historical homeland abroad from which their ancestors had settled

46 RGANI, f. 5, op. 61, d. 32, ll. 11–13.

47 Sidney Heitman, "Soviet Germans," *Central Asian Survey* 12, no. 1 (1993), p. 78.

48 Karpukova, *Iz istorii nemtsevo Kazakhstana*, pp. 268–270.

49 Karpukova, *Iz istorii nemtsevo Kazakhstana*, pp. 270, 274.

over two centuries before. Germans in the 1970s rushed to migrate to this old homeland – West Germany (they refused East Germany almost completely because of the similar regime to that of the USSR).

Clearly, new measures were needed to deal with the emerging unexpected situation.

### ***German Autonomy Plan and Tselinograd Incident***

The Politburo of CC CPSU, at the meeting on August 6, 1976, decided to create a special commission, discussing measures against an unexpected growth of Germans emigrating.<sup>50</sup> Yuri Andropov was appointed chairman of the commission. Soon after the appointment as KGB chairman in May 1967, Andropov tackled problems of the deported nations and, taking the 1967 decrees on Crimean Tatars as a model, established an approach common to the deported nations. However, compelled to reconsider it because of Germans' mass emigration to West Germany, he once again took an initiative to work out a new approach.

On August 1978, after two years of discussion, the Andropov commission submitted a report: its core was to grant Germans national-territorial autonomy. It was determined that the German autonomous oblast must be established in northeastern Kazakhstan on the basis of five *raions*, belonging to the Karaganda, Kokchetav, Pavlodar and Tselinograd oblasts, and its administrative center would be located in the city of Ermentau. The new autonomy was to have a territory with 46,000 square kilometers and a population of 202,000 (among them about 30,000 Germans, approximately 15 percent of the population). It was hoped that the German autonomy would play a decisive role in keeping Germans in the USSR, especially in Kazakhstan, where they were regarded as indispensable agricultural workers. As far as the possibility of creating autonomy in the Volga region was concerned, to the contrary, it was simply rejected on the grounds that Germans did not live and had no historical roots in this region.

On May 31, 1979, the Politburo meeting approved the commission's proposal to create the German autonomous oblast.<sup>51</sup> In Proceedings of

50 Auman and Chebotareva, *Istoriia rossiiskikh nemtsev* (1993), pp. 190–192.

51 RGANI, f. 89 (Kolleksiia rassekrechennykh dokumentov), op. 25, d. 3, ll. 1–2.

this meeting there can be found no serious discussion: it proceeded in a matter-of-fact way, only confirming that the autonomy plan was also supported by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan, five seats in the Supreme Soviet of the USSR might be distributed for the new autonomy, and its establishment must precede the forthcoming local Soviet election.

However, it should be noted that the German autonomy plan was not prepared independently. According to the words of the meeting, after the establishment of the German autonomous oblast the Politburo also intended to grant Crimean Tatars territorial autonomy in Uzbekistan as an autonomous *okrug*. Unfortunately, I have no more detailed information about the Crimean Tatars' autonomy. Once it was assumed that the autonomous region would be located in Dzhizak oblast (the center-north of Uzbekistan), inferring from the fact that a Crimean Tatar communist was appointed as the first secretary of the party *obkom* in 1974.<sup>52</sup> Nowadays, as a result of interviews from Crimean Tatars, an opinion that the "Mubarek republic" was intended to be established at the city of Mubarek (in the center-south Uzbekistan) in Kashkadoria *oblast* prevails.<sup>53</sup> In any case, further research on this plan is needed.

Suffering from the authorities' insidious repression, the Crimean Tatars' national movement in the 1970s went into a gradual decline: many active and influential activists were convicted, and the national movement was unable to present a vision for return to Crimea. However, the authorities could still not ignore it, because desperate individual attempts to return to Crimea did not cease: in 1978 repeated suicides of Crimean Tatars occurred, protesting against their forcible expulsion from Crimea. Taking countermeasures against returnees, the Council of Ministers of the USSR issued a resolution on August 1978, strengthening passport regulations in Crimea.<sup>54</sup> That is why the authorities found it necessary to take additional measures against Crimean Tatars (although with less priority than Germans).

52 Alexeyeva, *Soviet Dissent*, p. 158.

53 Williams, *The Crimean Tatars*, pp. 430-432; Uehling, *Beyond Memory*, p. 161.

54 Alexeyeva, *Soviet Dissent*, pp. 150-155. On the resolution on August 1978, see Bugai and Gonov, "Po resheniiu pravitel'stva," pp. 799-800; Bugai, *Deportatsiia narodov Kryma*, p. 196.

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In order to deal with situations unexpected by security measures in the second half of the 1960s, Andropov set about constructing a revised approach and decided to modify the state apparatus. That is, to give autonomous territory to the deported nations, not at the place of previous residence but at the place of exile. In other words, in order to relieve their thirst for autonomous territory, without which, the deported nations believed, they could not enjoy their full rights in the USSR, the KGB chairman intended to establish for them a new homeland at the place of exile that enabled them to resist the attraction of their old homeland (for Germans – West Germany, for Crimean Tatars – Crimea). For this new approach guaranteeing a membership of the Soviet regime by granting territorial autonomy, German autonomy was the first attempt, and, after its success, it must have been followed by that of the Crimean Tatars.

Meskhetian Turks were not considered for autonomy, nor for minimal national rights. Their national movement in the 1970s suffered from an identity crisis: confronted with deadlock when the Georgian authorities strongly rejected their return, their national movement was divided into three groups.<sup>55</sup> On the other hand, those who saw a ray of hope from the authorities, in October 1974, presented a petition to the USSR Prime Minister Kosygin. They implored Moscow to authorize them to be one of the nationalities in the USSR, deserving of some national rights (their own newspaper, TV-radio programming and folkdance ensemble). However, their demand was rejected simply because they were so small in number.<sup>56</sup>

Moscow's approval for creating the German autonomous oblast was conveyed to the Kazakh side soon after the Politburo meeting on May 31. The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan, after field investigation by the preparatory committee for German autonomy,

55 Osipov, "Vliianie gosudarstvennoi ideologii," p. 38; Osipov, "Dvizhenie meskhetintsev za repatriatsiiu," pp. 101, 104.

56 RGANI, f. 5, op. 67, d. 112, ll. 92–101. Their small number in official statistics is mainly caused by disorder of nationality registration on passports soon after their "evacuation" to Central Asia in 1944: they were classified into two nationalities on their passports: the majority was registered on their passports as Azerbaijani, minority – Turks. See Osipov, "Vliianie gosudarstvennoi ideologii," p. 37.

offered Moscow concrete suggestions about the autonomous area's boundary on June 15. A ceremony commemorating the establishment of the German autonomous oblast was scheduled for June 18. It was decided unofficially to appoint Andrei Braun, a German who served as the first secretary of a *raion* party organization in Tselinograd oblast, to head the German autonomous oblast.<sup>57</sup>

In Kazakhstan, all was made ready for the creation of the German autonomous oblast, but, it was all in vain because of the Tselinograd incident.<sup>58</sup> On June 16, Kazakh students in the city of Tselinograd organized a demonstration against German autonomy. The second meeting on June 19, joined by ordinary citizens from areas around Tselinograd, swelled to more than several thousand participants. Confronted with a mass protest of such scale, the local authorities had to cancel the plan. The Tselinograd incident, as a result, led to the abortion of Andropov's new approach towards the deported nations: it was officially withdrawn by CC CPSU of Moscow on February 1980.<sup>59</sup>

Granting territorial autonomy to the deported nations was not completely abandoned by Andropov. At the beginning of the 1980s, the possibility of creating German autonomy in the Volga region was explored by Moscow.<sup>60</sup> However, there was not enough time for this to be realized during Andropov's life. It was not until Gorbachev's era that the next noticeable action would be taken. On the other hand, according to interviews from Crimean Tatars, an attempt to put the "Mubarek Republic"

57 Auman and Chebotareva, *Istoriia rossiiskikh nemtsev* (1993), p. 196; M. Sh. Omarov and A. G. Kaken, *Poznanie sebja: k voprosu nesostoiavsheisia nemetskoj avtonomii v Kazakhstane* (Almaty, 1998), pp. 44-47; A. Bosch, "Erinnerung an den kurzen Traum vom 'Sowjet-deutschen Jermentau'," *Volk auf dem Weg* 38, no. 5 (1988), p. 21.

58 On more detailed account of Tselinograd incident, see Han'ia, "Tselinograd, iun' 1979g." See also K. Erlikh, "Sud'ba i liudi," *Sobesednik* (prilozhenie k *Komsomol'skoi pravde*) 52 (1989), p. 13; V. Vladimirov, "Kremlevskaia karusel'," *Feniks* 1 (1993), pp. 287-309 (especially, pp. 299-300); Omarov and Kaken, *Poznanie sebja*, pp. 53-70; O. Dik, "Iun'skii urok 1979 goda," *Vostochnyi Ekspres* 11 (2000) p. 32.

59 Auman and Chebotareva, *Istoriia rossiiskikh nemtsev* (1993), p. 199.

60 HAN'IA Siro [HANYA Shiro], "Ot sozdaniu k vosstanovleniiu: nemetskaia avtonomiia v planakh v 1980-kh godakh," in *Kliuchevye problemy istorii rossiiskikh nemtsev* (Moscow, 2004), pp. 134-148 (especially, pp. 135-136); HANYA Shiro, "1980 nendai Voruga chiho no Doitsu jichiryō keikaku" [Plans of German autonomy in the Volga region in the 1980s], *Nenpo chiiki kenkyū* 8 (2004) pp. 153-171 (especially, pp. 154-155).

into practice also continued during the 1980s.<sup>61</sup>

### *Images of Enemy Nations and Growing National Consciousness*

As described above, Andropov's new attempt to create national-territorial autonomy for Germans failed completely. In contrast to his first attempt from the second half of the 1960s—security measures under the charge of the KGB, this time involved large-scale planning, extending to reforming the state apparatus. In this sense, resolving the conflict of interests within the authorities was far more complicated than the previous attempt, and failure might have been inevitable. However, I strongly suspect that creating a new autonomous area failed because it kindled sensitive aspects of the nationalities issue. I would like to pay special attention to the following two points. The first is the image of the deported nations as the enemy. This was a holdover from wartime and never vanished, even following the official rehabilitation decrees. The second is the growing national consciousness of the titular nation within their autonomy. Collision between these two factors, I venture to think, caused the Tselinograd incident.

Let us start with the concept of enemy nations.

As described above, accusation against the deported nations as mass treason had already been withdrawn (for Germans—by the 1964 decree, for Crimean Tatars—by the 1967 decree). However, according to a field report written by Moscow officials after the incident, some participants in the Tselinograd incident abused Germans, saying “We don't give ancestral lands to fascists.”<sup>62</sup> “Fascist” is a word of abuse in Russian, but it is obvious that in this context Soviet Germans were identified with Nazi Germany. Although over 30 years had passed since the end of the war, the incident demonstrated that wartime memories about Germans as the enemy were still deep-rooted.

As an aside, the same can also be said for Crimean Tatars. In 1977, the first secretary of the Dzhizak *obkom* in Uzbekistan S. Tairov (Crimean Tatar by nationality) asked for Moscow's help to publish memoirs about Crimean Tatars' partisan activity during the war. It was written by an

61 Williams, *The Crimean Tatars*, pp. 430–432.

62 Auman and Chebotareva, *Istoriia rossiiskikh nemtsev* (1993), p. 196.

old Crimean Tatar partisan, and in 1971 had already been published in Crimean Tatar. However, when the memoirs' author tried to publish a Russian version in 1975, the Crimean *obkom*, who was asked to read its copy for consultation, opposed it: the Crimean party officials took the memoirs as a dangerous attempt to rehabilitate accomplices of Nazi Germany. As a result, Tairov was accused of haste and his proposal was withdrawn.<sup>63</sup> This example suggests that the image of Crimean Tatars as traitors was burned into brains of party officials in Crimea, although accusation of mass treason had been removed long before by official decrees.

It is not unreasonable to assume that preserving the image of enemy nations might be caused by the political significance of the Great Patriotic War (World War II) in the USSR. As is well known, the Great Patriotic War played an important role to unify postwar Soviet society. The authorities made active use of it, becoming aware of its influence on the population, no less than the 1917 Revolution. Since war and enemy are inseparably related by nature, it might be inevitable that more attention would be given to the Great Patriotic War, the more often the image of enemy nations during the war were brought to the fore.

Nevertheless, we may misunderstand the essence of the incident if we only give an eye to the image of the enemy nation. I think that a more decisive factor contributing to the incident lies with Kazakhs rather than Germans. At the meeting in Tselinograd, as is evident from photographs at the time, demonstrators carried banners with the following slogans: "The Republic of Kazakhstan is great, but it is single for all," "Long live the single and indivisible Kazakhstan." "No German autonomy, long live the Kazakh SSR."<sup>64</sup> From these slogans, we can easily see a national consciousness of Kazakhs.

In order to examine this point, I would like to present an interesting survey about the interethnic relations in the USSR. These interviews were undertaken with 200 Soviet Germans who emigrated to West Germany between February and September 1979 (among them, Germans who lived in Kazakhstan amount to about one-third of all interview-

63 RGANI, f. 5, op. 73, d. 191, ll. 1-17.

64 Omarov and Kaken, *Poznание sebja*, p. 53 and photo-appendix with no page number (between page 64 and 65). See also Auman and Chebotareva, *Istoriia rossiiskikh nemtsev* (1993), p. 196.

ees).<sup>65</sup>

According to responses from Germans, in the 1970s Kazakhs increased powers in all aspects of life (67 percent of all respondents) and tended to regard their republic as the place where they should have a right to preferential treatment. For example, Germans responded that in the case of everyday troubles Kazakhs frequently added the justification “this is our land” or “we are the masters of this land” to their demands. Further given as evidence by the Germans, in 1978 there was a controversy at Alma-Ata University on the grounds of priority admission. The clash was triggered by Kazakh claims that too few of their own were admitted to the university, but finally escalated to physical violence with the slogan “Russians should leave Kazakhstan.” The happenings illustrate that controversy over national issues can easily escalate into a broader conflict. Germans also observed that Kazakhs were occupying more and higher positions than ever, and acting with growing confidence that they were the masters of Kazakhstan.<sup>66</sup> On the other hand, Germans accepted this trend with resignation. It is said that many Germans described the preferential treatment of Kazakh, sighing “it is their republic.”<sup>67</sup>

Kazakhs’ behavior shown in the interviews reminds us of that of the Tselinograd incident. Especially, the events at Alma-Ata University in 1978 foreshadow the Tselinograd incident. It is difficult to assume that a similarity like this might be repeated accidentally: obviously, this was not an accident, but rather inevitable. In other words, the Tselinograd incident was certainly triggered by the German autonomy plan, but it was the national consciousness among Kazakhs that played a more decisive role in the incident.

This trend, it could be said, also contributed to Germans’ choice of mass emigration in the 1970s. As described above, German emigrants in the 1960s were a quite limited group consisting of those who sought re-

65 Rasma Karklins, *Ethnic Relations in the USSR: The Perspective from Below* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1986). There was no reference in this monograph to the Tselinograd incident.

66 Karklins, *Ethnic Relations in the USSR*, pp. 52–53, 65, 80–84. The same trend can be observed in an incident on January 1973 in which Kazakh students in Alma-Ata handed out handbills with the slogan “Kazakhstan for Kazakhs.” See Kozlov and Mironenko, 58<sup>10</sup>, p. 774.

67 Karklins, *Ethnic Relations in the USSR*, p. 66.

ligious asylum, whereas in the 1970s they had more wide-ranging reasons for departure, and their number increased almost tenfold. As well, I also mentioned that many emigrants in the 1970s left the USSR in despair, saying "We do not feel at home here." This distinctive change between the 1960s and the 1970s could be understood persuasively, if reminded of the growing national consciousness of Kazakhs in the 1970s. That is, the more Kazakhs acted as the masters of Kazakhstan, the more Germans tended to choose emigration to West Germany, seeking the place where Germans could act just like Kazakhs in Kazakhstan. Consequently, it is safe to assume that Germans' mass emigration in the 1970s, as well as the Tselinograd incident, was affected by the rise of Kazakhs' national consciousness. In short, the authorities had misread the growing national consciousness of Kazakhs that resulted in mass emigration of Germans and the Tselinograd incident.

The authorities had different views from the general populace about what autonomy really was. For Moscow it was only a final trump card to solve the problem of the deported nations. There is much evidence supporting this claim. The Andropov committee rejected the possibility of creating an autonomous area in the Volga region simply on the grounds that Germans have no historical roots in this region. However, the fact is that Germans had settled around Saratov in the middle of the eighteenth century, whereas they had "put down roots" in Kazakhstan only for the last several decades after deportation in 1941. It is nothing but expedient interpretation about historical roots, attaching more importance to the function that autonomy might play in keeping them in Kazakhstan. This is also true for the republican authorities. It was an extension of republican interests that the local authorities of Kazakhstan paid more attention to. For example, the first secretary of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan Kunaev expressed to a colleague his opinion welcoming German autonomy, because "we can gain additional seats in the Supreme Soviet."<sup>68</sup> In each case there was no consideration about the sensitive side of the autonomy affecting Kazakhs, and rather functional and utilitarian interpretations about autonomy dominated. This trend even goes back to the Khrushchev era. In order to stop spontaneous migration of

68 M. Isinaliev, "Kak nemtsam avtonomiiu sozdavali," *Novoe pokolenie* 45 (November 15-21, 1996), p. 4.

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Chechens to the North Caucasus in 1956, the central authorities explored the possibility of creating a Chechen-Ingush autonomy in Central Asia. A Kalmyk autonomy plan in Siberia was also presented by the Altai local authorities.<sup>69</sup>

On the other hand, Kazakhs in the 1970s tended more and more to regard autonomy as a vested right. The German autonomy plan was unacceptable for them, because it harmed their vested interests as a titular nation. Nevertheless, the authorities dared to carry the German autonomy plan into action and confronted unexpectedly strong objections from the Kazakh people. That was the Tselinograd incident.

To sum up the Andropov's attempt to create new autonomies for the deported nations, it could be concluded as following. Concerning the German problem, the authorities had a will to implement a reform of the state apparatus and in fact tried to put it in action. However, confronted with unexpectedly strong objections from the Kazakh public, they were forced to withdraw the plan. In this sense, I can agree with one of Fowkes' estimations of Brezhnev's nationalities policy as "corporatist compromise," calling to mind Kazakhs' strong consciousness to regard their autonomy as a vested right. However, as far as the deported nations are concerned, his estimations of Brezhnev's nationalities policy as "masterly inactivity" certainly needs a revision. The authorities did not prefer unvarying policy as argued by Fowkes. They indeed prepared to reform in order to meet new situations, but they were *incapable* of accomplishing reform while controlling mass movements.<sup>70</sup>

## **Conclusion**

This paper examined the nationalities policy of the Brezhnev era, especially focusing on the case of three deported nations, the Germans, Crimean Tatars, and Meskhetian Turks. All three national movements, as they evolved in the Khrushchev and Brezhnev eras, demanded retraction of the wartime mass treason charge, the right of return to their homelands, and the restoration of the abolished autonomous territory

69 Han'ia, "Sekretnyi doklad N. S. Khrushcheva," pp. 150, 155.

70 Fowkes, "The National Question," pp. 68-70, 77.

(this last did not apply to Meskhetian Turks). At first the authorities were at a loss, but with the appointment of Yuri Andropov as KGB Chairman in May 1967, a decision was made to take the deported nations *en bloc* and implement common measures that allowed return by an official and well-regulated route. It was executed mainly by the KGB as a security measure. The policy consisted of the carrot and the stick, but the former performed quite insufficiently owing to objections from local authorities. Nevertheless, from the viewpoint of a security measure, Andropov's approach achieved an acceptable success, especially towards Crimean Tatars and Meskhetian Turks.

In the 1970s, unexpectedly for the authorities, Germans began to emigrate to West Germany. The authorities were confused by this situation, because successful experiences in the 1960s had no effect of restraining growing mass emigration of Germans. In order to deal with this situation, the authorities (Andropov acting as leader) decided to work out a new approach, namely, the creation of the German autonomous oblast in Kazakhstan. Following the Germans' example, it was intended to grant Crimean Tatars territorial autonomy in Uzbekistan at an administrative rank of an autonomous *okrug*. Among the deported nations, only Meskhetian Turks were not the subject of creating an autonomous area, nor of minimum national rights, because of their small numbers.

However, it was all in vain because of the Tselinograd incident on June 1979. There are several causes of the incident. Preserving an image of enemy nations certainly might have played a role, but a more decisive factor contributing to the incident lies in the growing national consciousness of the Kazakhs. The incident occurred because there were different views of autonomy between the authorities and the Kazakhs. The former considered autonomy only as a final trump card to solve the problem of the deported nations, whereas Kazakhs, regarding their republic as the locus of preferential treatment, opposed the German autonomy plan as an attempt to infringe on their vested rights.