

## ANALYSIS OF THE TRAGEDY

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## **BLOODY TRAGEDY**

The illegal deployment of Soviet troops in the capital and some regions of the Republic of Azerbaijan on January 20, 1990, extirpation of peaceful people became an extremely bloody act, perpetrated by a totalitarian regime, which was an outrage against humanity. Investigation of the similar crimes, revelation of their reasons, outcomes, promulgation of their initiators' names haven't a statute of limitations and all these actions ought to be a caution against the recurrence of vandalism and genocide.

It is well known, that in virtue of the decision of the International Tribunal (Nuremberg, 1945-46) - being famous in the history as Nuremberg trial, supreme statesmen and the military of Germany were accused of the organization and realization of a plot against the world and humanity (extirpation of the civilians and maltreatment, plunder of communal ownership and public domain etc.). That is why Nazi criminals of all ranks are still revealed and prosecuted by state bodies and public movements throughout the world. The Nuremberg process is the first international court, which recognized genocide as a very grave felony. Actions of the leadership of USSR and Azerbaijan and of Soviet military contingent, which invaded Azerbaijan in January 1990, have all signs, deplored by the Nuremberg process. That is why all the culprits of the January 20 tragedy must pay for their deeds.

The aggression of the Soviet military units against Azerbaijan and massive inhuman shooting of civilians became not only a symptom of the collapse of the finally rotten Soviet regime, but also evidence of the implementation of the old purposeful policy (left by tsarism) of expulsion of Azeris from their historical residences.

It was a policy, which was thoroughly concealed by the USSR leadership under the guise of internationalism. The public situation in Azerbaijan, requirements of the people didn't serve as a pretext for such cruelty and vandalism. The people required stopping of slaughter and forcible expulsion of Azeris from Armenia, where they lived from time immemorial and not let subordination of the Nagorny Karabakh to Armenia. Moscow reacted to this faithful requirement with an incredible perfidy and frenzy.

It should be noted that by the beginning of the 1990s the Soviet regime fully dissipated its life potential, though M. Gorbachov and his team were intensively seeking means to extend a regime. The policy of "Perestroika" which too quickly failed became a blatant display of these endeavors. Those, who hold, that Gorbachov was deliberately destroying the USSR with the support of the West, are mistaken. These talks are nothing but gossip.

So - called reformists had a task to preserve USSR within its previous borders, attaching to the Soviet sociopolitical and economic system more attractive features for the West. They had to vitalize a system, removing its odious principles and administration forms. In other words, vest socialism with a "human face". Coming from this main postulate, one can assert that the January 20th tragedy has many reasons and it has deep sources. Perestroika only accelerated their development and brought nearer the final of inevitable tragedy. Thus, what are these reasons in general outline? First, the center's aspiration to keep the Soviet empire and

communist system at any price. Second - the consolidation of power and puppet regimes in the national republics. Third - the biased policy of the Soviet leadership with regard to Azeri people, an effort to rehash the boundaries under the cover of demagogic slogans of "Perestroika" and in particular, to violate the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. Fourth, Armenian separatism and aggression based on moral, political, financial and military - economic support of the former center. Fifth, traitorous activity of the Azerbaijan's leadership. Sixth, dilettantism and intrigue of those, who took control of the risen people, displaying irresponsibility.

But one shouldn't limit oneself to the list of the above stated sources (which are basically Soviet) and factors led to the January tragedy. We reiterate that it has much deeper historical roots. Black January - it is just a link (hopefully, the last one!) of the chain of criminal actions, which were perpetrated against Azeri people since beginning of the 19th century. The biased, unjust attitude to Azerbaijan is based on far - going geopolitical plans, implemented by the Soviet leadership for many years under the ideological cover of the establishment of " the international fraternity".

While considering events in Alma-Ata (1986), Tbilisi (1989), Vilnius (1991), the following questions arise: why weren't these actions so bloody and massive? Why did Gorbachov regret and apologize to the Georgian and Lithuanian peoples for events in Tbilisi and Vilnius, but didn't do so in connection with affairs in Azerbaijan? In our opinion, there were 3 decisive factors in January tragedy. From a historical and logical point of view they are more substantiated, than references to the desires of the center to teach and punish obstinate Azeris.

## THE RELIGIOUS FACTOR

First, it is a religious factor. Though USSR leadership tried to justify themselves, they failed to deceive the world community. It is the confession of Islam by Azeris which is one of the main reasons of M. Gorbachov's support to Armenians in their territorial claims. Numerous publications of the Russian press could confirm our point of view. The notorious Zori Balayan used to talk in his interviews and publications about it. Gorbachov appeared on the eve of Baku carnage with provocative statements about the efforts of establishment of Islamic State in Azerbaijan.

The use of the religious factor for provocative and destructive purposes was always a tool of the Soviet system and communist ideology. While occupying the leading party post for a long time, I became a witness of the intention of the CPSU Central Committee to impose upon us an opinion as if Islamic fundamentalism was exported to Azerbaijan from neighboring Iran and that is why the leadership of the republic was accused of inaction.

High - ranking functionaries from the CPSU Central Committee used to expound the case so, that Iran exerted an active influence upon the sociopolitical life of Azerbaijan, where Islam forced out communist principles from the life and consciousness of the population.

Of course, Moscow couldn't endure the "Moslem danger" (nevertheless, today it steadily tries to become close friends to "fundamentalist Iran"). In spite of the real state of affairs, unfounded political accusations against our republic were expressed in resolutions of the secretariat and Political Bureau of the CPSU Central Committee and all-union conferences. Some leaders of the republic were labeled "nationalists". The Central Committee gave shelter to and took care of obedient people and disgraced the suspects.

Actually, the crux of the problem wasn't the imaginary penetration of Islamic fundamentalism into Azerbaijan. The problem was the struggle of the Christian religion with Islam, what was traditional for Russia, and old mistrust to Moslems and non-Russians. It is not accidental, that in the USSR, as it was under the tsarist regime, great power chauvinism, brought up on the ground of orthodoxy and opposing of different religions, used to be glorified. Authorities were cultivating it instead of fighting it. The whole national policy was based on discrimination of the population, confessed Islam, and was to retard social - economic and cultural development of the republics, populated with ethnic Moslems, and not to allow their representatives to supreme authorities. Even if any Moslem was advanced to the prestige post in the central ministries or departments, it wasn't a rule, it was just exception.

In short, religious belonging of Azeris determined Moscow's position to the national movement in Azerbaijan and caused an unprecedented atrocity of its suppression.

## THE CAUCASIAN FACTOR

The second factor is caused by the historical interests of Russia in the region - the Caucasian factor.

Catherine the Great continued to pursue expansionist policy of Peter the First in order to move forward to south and gain an access to southern seas. She advanced a plan to create in the Caucasus two more Christian states (except orthodox Georgia), politically oriented to Russia. This plan implied the re-birth of the Albanian State on the territory from the river Arax till Derbend and creation of the Armenian province in the area İrevan. In this case persistent appeal of the Crimean Armenians with a request to create an Armenian state with the capital in İrevan was taken into account. But, after conclusion of the Turkmanchay peace treaty, Russia gave up these intentions and decided to build only an Armenian state on the Azeri territories, annexed to the empire.

Since the beginning of the XIX century the tragic history of Azeri people started.

Fundamental scientific research proved that the territory of modern Armenia historically belonged to Azerbaijan. The truth is that Armenians lived here in small groups, dispersed, but they were alien people and penetrated into this area from the territory of the modern Iran, Iraq, Syria and Turkey.

Let's scrutinize this issue.

The motherland of the initial Armenian tribes was the Balkan Peninsula. The Armenian researchers themselves wrote about it. Thus, Armenian scholar Y. A. Manandyan agrees with the opinion of the authoritative historians and holds that initial Armenian tribes lived in the Balkan Peninsula as far back as at the first half of the second millennium B.C. To Asia Minor they came approximately at the half of the 13th century B. C. After long - term wandering and mixing with different tribes they found themselves on the Armenian plateau at the half of the first millennium B. C.

The great historian I. M. Dyakonov writes in his famous work "The pre - history of Armenian people" (Yerevan, 1968) the following: "we can draw only one conclusion, namely, that initial native speakers of Armenian language came to the Armenian plateau as nomadic tribes with personal holdings, who didn't experience class society. They became familiar with plateau nature and social conditions of the early class society by autochthons (at that time autochthons didn't speak Armenian)".

Armenians created their state in the VI century B.C. This state covered some regions of the Armenian plateau, located mainly in the middle stream of Tigris and Euphrates. In 387 A. D. Armenia was divided between İran and Byzantium. In the XIV century A.D. Armenians managed to create a dwarf state in the south - east of the Mediterranean Sea - Kilikia, ruled by Rubenides. This state existed just a century.

In the XV century the Armenian Church was moved to Etchmiadzin in order to create an Armenian state in the South Caucasus. Since that time, the history of the Armenian people was called the "Etchmiadzin period". When the question is about the Armenian history of the XVI-XX centuries, it is expounded as a history of so - called "Eastern Armenia", which is the actual history of Nakhchivan, İrevan and Zangezur lands.

Armenians restored their statehood in 1918 on the ruins of the Tsarist Empire. With assistance of England in the South Caucasus, on the territory of İrevan Khanate of Azerbaijan arose the Armenian Republic. Further

her territory was extended by the strong-willed decision of the Bolshevik Moscow at the expense of Azerbaijan.

Lacking national statehood, the Armenian Church assumed a role of uniting of all Armenians, dispersed all over the world. In other words, it settled to some extent political and state issues.

Monophysite persuasion (the denial of human hypostasis of God) to which sticks Armenian Gregorian Church was declared heresy as far back as at the Khalkidon Assembly (451 A.D.). At Dvin Assembly (506 A.D.) the Armenian Church was excommunicated from other churches and became auto-cephalous.

Famous political scientist Dmitry Furmanov holds that just monophysitism promoted the rise and development of the sense of abandonment, declassé persons, the very "suffering" in virtue of which Armenian people opposes themselves almost to the whole world. Armenian political figure Suren Zolyan wrote: "To see everyone as an enemy - to become an enemy for everyone. This is not a path, this is abyss".

For the Russian Empire such state of Armenians was more than sufficient. It isn't accidental that Peter the First called out Armenians as useful fellow citizens to settlement in Russia and assured them of patronage and protection as co-religionists (see Sergey Glinka. "Description of the resettlement of Azerbaijani Armenians within Russia", 1831 edition).

Objective and subjective conditions: lacking of their own state, indoctrination of ideas of "abandonment" and "suffering" by church pastors in the consciousness of Armenians, forming images of an enemy out of Turks and generally Moslems etc. - were conducive to coinciding the age-old aspirations of Armenian church to establish a national state with colonial interests of the Russian empire. The crux of the political deal was the following: Russia assists re-settlement of Armenians from Turkey and Iran to the South Caucasus and then creates a state for Armenians at the expense of ousting of local population. Armenians, in turn, pledge themselves to be loyal ally of Russia in Caucasus, her outpost in the region. Armenians were befallen a long-expected chance to realize an age-old dream to create a state under the protection of great power.

The "Great resettlement" of Armenians by tsarist Russia to Caucasus, particularly to Nakhchivan, Irevan and Karabakh Khanates, where Azeris had been leaving for ages, started after conclusion of Gulistan (1813) and Turkmanchay (1828) peace treaties between Russia and Iran. Though this truth can be a "discovery" for many people in the modern Russia and West, but in pre-Revolutionary Russia much was written about it. These processes are described in details in the famous book by M. Shavrov "The new threat to the Russian matter in Trans-Caucasus. The sale of Mugan to no Russians".

The Russian ambassador to Persia Alexander Griboyedov was zealous in the re-settlement of Armenians to Azerbaijan. In his reports to the tsarist government he wrote: "Moslems (i.e. Azeris - R.M.) worry that Armenians being re-settled "for a while" will remain in Karabakh forever".

Resettlement of tens of thousands of Armenian families to Azerbaijan (basically, occupation) by the tsarist government and granting them more wider rights and privileges (on the ground of religious community) comparing with the local populations soon led to ousting of Azeris from many regions of the South Caucasus. Afterwards this process became a gradual deportation.

These processes also affected Azeris, living in Georgia. The policy of cleansing of Georgia from Azeris, pursued by the tsarist government, continued till 1917. There are numerous facts about it. People had to resort to

various tricks to protect their families from repression and forcible deportation. They used to change their surnames and ethnic belonging. At present, in Georgia there are many people, whose surnames are of Turkic origin (Tatarashvili, Mamedashvili, Aslanisshvili, Amirejibi etc.). Policy of Azeris' extrusion from Georgia was pursued in 1990s by the former president of Georgia - "democrat" Zviad Gamsakhurdia as well.

In the years of the Soviet authorities deportation of Azeri population from the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic became an official state policy. This policy consisted of two constituent parts: first - eviction of Azeris from historical residencies, second - the annexation of the part of Azerbaijani territory to the Armenian SSR. Till May 1920 the territory of the Northern Azerbaijan made up more than 114 thousand square meters. However, as a result of passing part of its territory to Armenia and Russia, now it amounts to 86 600 square meters, i.e. the territory was cut off up to 28 thousand square meters (area of the Armenian Republic - 29, 8 thousand square meters).

The process of Armenian expansion, accompanied by deportation of Azeri population from its historical lands, lasted for the space of almost two centuries. This process is marked by the policy of genocide on ethnic grounds - massacre, arsons, destruction and devastation of localities, national monuments etc. Only in the XX century more than 2 million Azeris experienced genocide policy, pursued by official circles of Armenia and their patrons.

At the end of the XX century Gorbachov together with his surroundings did everything to satisfy territorial claims of Armenians and continue policy of narrowing the territory, where Azeris lived, in order to further oust them. That is why, when the Supreme Council of Armenian SSR adopted a Constitutional Act on "reunification" of Armenian SSR and Nagorny Karabakh Autonomous Oblast (area) of Azerbaijan, on December 1, 1989 Moscow in no way reacted to it.

## THE NATIONAL FACTOR

The heart of the third factor, caused the tragedy, consists in a fear of Turks as policy and mode of thinking of the leaders of the Soviet State. It has deep historical roots and is connected, first of all, with centuries - old confrontation of two empires - Ottoman and Russia. The Soviet regime, in its turn, was always afraid of the ethnic closeness between Azeris and Turks. That is why in the 1920s and 1930s many outstanding figures of Azerbaijan were accused of Pan - Turkism and were subjected to repressions. The Soviets did everything to tear contacts and ties between two peoples. To this effect, at the end of 30s the Latin alphabet was replaced with Cyrillic.

In the Soviet years, a secret ban was placed on Azeris making business trips to Turkey.

The Turkic bugaboo was always a constituent part of the Soviet ideology and geo-policy what was promoted by Armenian lobby and pro - Armenian circles in Moscow. To foment suspicions of the USSR leaders, they spread fabrications that Azeris shouldn't be trusted, in all sincerity they are with Turkey.

In the years of so-called Perestroika the professional instigator Zori Balayan spoke at the Headquarters of the USSR and stated Azerbaijan to be the very bridgehead, from which Turkey was preparing to strike southern borders of the country.

January tragedy of 1990 made clear many ulterior sides of the policy of the USSR leadership with regard to Turkic republics. During the Second World War Stalin deported Turkic Karachais, Balkars, Crimean Tatars, Meskhet Turks along with Vainakhs, Kalmyks and Germans from the Volga region. In time of Perestroika slaughter of the Meskhet Turks in the Middle Asia was provoked. Let's remember events in Alma - Ata, when there was an intention to impose upon Kazakhs a Russian leader, so-called "Uzbek affairs", what enabled T. Gdlyan to defame, humiliate and use violence against the whole people. M. Gorbachov differed from his precursors in his open actions against the Turkic republics. That time he threw away all legal acts and constitutional provisions. Replacing authoritative leaders of these republics, he essentially beheaded their peoples.

Thus, historical and sociopolitical reasons and deep roots of the unfair, tendentious attitude of the Bolshevik Russia and the USSR leadership to Azerbaijan lie in the fact that all three factors (Moslem, Caucasian and Turk) converged in this republic and caused the imperial policy of Moscow. This is a ground of policy of genocide, deportation of Azeris, tearing territory away from Azerbaijan and giving it to Armenia.



## THE GEOPOLITICAL ASPECT OF JANUARY

Considering the sources of the 20 January events, it is impossible not to take into account the position of the Western states either. Let's mark right away, it wasn't in favor of Azerbaijan. Central press of USSR played a great negative role in forming the false image of events in Azerbaijan in the West. Soviet press, ruled by the CPSU CC conducted open ideological indoctrination of the public consciousness with support of Armenian Church and ideologists of the "Dashnaksutyun" Party. They introduced separatism of Karabakh Armenians as a forced act of protest against humiliation and discrimination by the Azeri government during Soviet period.

Emissaries of the «Armenian - Anschluss» ideology upholders conducted wide anti-Azerbaijani campaign in the West as well. The fact that just the day after the Sumgait events (February 1988) the Paris TV showed a film dedicated to massacre (clearly staged and realized by special service bodies!) is a witness to the scale of ideological and information war against Azerbaijan.

Formation of a «negative stereotype of Azerbaijanis» by the Soviet and West mass media pursued an ominous object: to prepare the world public opinion to appropriateness and validity of ethnic cleansing policy against Turkic language population in the Nagorny Karabakh Autonomous region of Azerbaijan and Armenia. This was explained as a forced measure of the center. That's why somewhat the wide-ranging tragedy of the Azeri people was accompanied with listless silence in the USSR.

At that time the leading Western countries didn't even try to ascertain the truth, see into backbone of the problem. Broadly speaking, they didn't even need it. On the contrary, they supported M. Gorbachov in all his destructive actions. It was reckoned that because he was supporting Armenian separatism, even though indirectly, the truth is on the Armenian's part. Moreover, the West knew perfectly well, that such interethnic conflicts were destroying the USSR from within. This matches the interests and strategic goals of USSR's adversaries in the Cold War. At that time they weren't geo-politically interested in a separate Azerbaijan.

According to the ex-adviser to the US President on National Security Affairs, Zbignev Bzhezinski, in early 90s US made an error. They didn't include the Caucasian region, Caucasian republics into their sphere of interests ignoring their main strategic importance. He emphasized: «We should stress, strategic change in the US political course and opinion started in 1994. Till that time the US was establishing its important, central strategic ties with Russia only, new independent states were considered of the lowest level from the strategic point of view. That was wrong policy» (see the «Azerbaijan» paper from February 22, 2000).

US geopolitical doctrine of those tragic days for Azerbaijan was quite different.

Margaret Tatwayler, the representative of the US State Department, made a statement on behalf of the US government, saying the US didn't support Azerbaijan and that's why they didn't find it expedient to comment on January events. The State Department openly backed M. Gorbachov, believing that his efforts would lead to closing down military clashes between Armenians and Azeris.

The British Ministry of Foreign Affairs made a statement declaring the situation in Azerbaijan as «the internal affair of the USSR».

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The Italian Foreign minister D. Mikels stated the Baku events as USSR's domestic affair. The USSR government, in his words, had to protect its own national interests and to defend itself against radical-nationalists from the People's Front of Azerbaijan.

So, it is evident, that USSR was able to prepare the West to certain perception of the events and prevent imposing any sanctions or condemnations of different states and international organizations in regard with the unconstitutional actions against Azerbaijan.

Being fully assured of impunity, M. Gorbachov sent troops to Azerbaijan in 1990 punishing harmless civilians.

## **THE NAGORNY KARABAKH PROBLEM AS THE FORERUNNER OF TRAGEDY OF JANUARY**

Since the first day of appearance the "Nagorny Karabakh conflict" artificially created by USSR in 1987 was accepted by the Azeri nation as an attempt against Azerbaijan's territorial integrity, outrage on Azeri citizens' constitutional rights. All measures taken by the USSR government and the Soviet Union Communist Party Central Committee, including the bloody Baku events, testify that there was a specific logic of this lunacy. The Nagorny Karabakh conflict is a well-elaborated operation.

The USSR Council of Ministers and the Soviet Union Communist Party Central Committee's special decision from March 1988 on social growth acceleration of the Nagorny Karabakh Autonomous Region were unique in the history of USSR. It testifies about collusion between the center and Armenian leadership. In fact, this resolution laid social and economic foundations to tear Nagorny Karabakh from the Azerbaijan Soviet Socialistic Republic's jurisdiction.

The center's next step towards the Nagorny Karabakh's withdrawal from Azerbaijan's jurisdiction was the USSR Supreme Council Presidium's decree dated January 12, 1989 on establishment of special form of management in the autonomous region. Nagorny Karabakh's administration was entrusted to the Committee of special government chaired by A. I. Volski, representative of the center. Actually, this meant tearing Nagorny Karabakh from Azerbaijan.

Further, the USSR leadership chose the way of open massacre over the nation dared to appear for the sake of territorial integrity protection and declare disagreement with unfaithful national policy.

Invasion into Baku of large contingent of the Soviet army, special destination units and internal troops of the USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs was accompanied with particular brutality and unseen atrocity.

The Baku slaughter, perpetrated in order to break the nation's will and its aspiration to establish the truth and to abase its dignity and demonstrate power of the Soviet punitive machine, was a real military aggression.

This is one of the bloodiest acts of terrorism, committed by the totalitarian Communist regime in the XX century, horrible crime against the Azeri nation, against humanity and humanism. The people who committed this crime haven't been punished yet. But some time or other guilty persons will answer before the Azeri nation and the history.

Certainly, both the former leadership of the republic as well as Moscow is responsible for the engagement of troops and murder of peaceful population. According to evidences of investigating bodies, the authorities deliberately acted against the nation's will, blindly fulfilling instructions from the center and not realizing what unpredictable results they would cause.

Every day they were passing to Moscow biased information about current situation in the republic and executing relevant instructions received from the center under strict control of emissaries of the center instead of maintaining interests of the nation and republic.

Under the critical circumstances for the republic its leadership displayed full inability and acted as an

obedient puppet in conformity with a screenplay, made by the State Security Committee (SSC) and USSR's Head Intelligence Service. Witnesses testify that activities of those bodies was directed to maximal complication of the situation in the republic, arranging provocations and diversion (for example, 13-15 January pogroms in Baku, seizure of the Party Committees, destruction of the engineering structures on the state borders, dropping out of enterprises and organizations from subordination to state bodies etc). All these had one purpose to destabilize the situation and substantiate implementation of "establishment of constitutional order in Azerbaijan".

Pursuant to order of the chairman of the Republican State Security Committee, Vagif Husseinov, on October 7, 1987, the so - called "Crisis group" was established consisting of 12 officers from different committee subdivisions under the head of Vladimir Mirzoyev, chief of the 5th Department. Officially, the group aimed at arrangement of purposeful work on "revealing, preventing and neutralizing inimical actions of opponents I, preparation of preventing information for different departments and USSR SSC". It is impossible not to perceive the stereotyped character of such a formulation usually used by security services as a code. Investigative evidences over the "Crisis group" prove, in fact, its activity sphere was far beyond the limits determined by the order.

Provocation, explosions, arsons, murderous assaults are the imperfect list of actions the group was engaged in.

An analysis of investigation returns shows, that the first secretary of the Communist Party of Azerbaijan Central Committee A. Vezirov, implicitly executing all instructions from Moscow, was the first - hand organizer and accomplice of the grave crime perpetrated against his nation. The second secretary of the Communist Party of Azerbaijan Central Committee V. Polyanitchko, head of the government A. Mutallibov, and chief of the State Security Committee V. Husseinov were direct accessories to the crime.

M. Mamedov, secretary of the Party Baku city Committee, is politically responsible for not taking urgent measures to prevent entrance of troops to Baku and not providing population's security. Other members of the CPA Central Committee Bureau and heads of law - enforcement bodies carry moral and political responsibility for such a situation.

Researching the main reasons of the January events, some authors try to put most of the blames of the January events on those who managed demonstrations of many thousands people or stood in opposition to the A. Vezirov's regime, but not on implicit organizers and performers of that wild action. Of course, we can't entirely deny their culpability.

However, we should take up behavior of the so - called «square leaders» in flatness; their responsibility has quite a different character and motive.

The opposition was in embryo stage, had no clear organizational structure and programme on the eve of January events.

Representatives of scientific and educational institutions, ideological institutions and bodies that is people unsophisticated in policy headed the demonstrations. Some of them took part in all-national acts of protest in all sincerity and others - in accordance with considerations of the moment.

So, what kind of role and place took the opposition in perpetration of the January events?

Since mid-88 the wide masses were realizing that Azeri leadership didn't display resoluteness for suppression of encroachment on the republic's territorial integrity and, in fact, took part in carrying out of collusive treacherous plans against citizens of the country, and, moreover, they would not stop at anything to stifle the popular uprising. Under hopeless situation the people stood up for protection of the republic's honor and dignity themselves, against tearing away its territory, against beating and violent eviction of Azerbaijanis, living in Armenia.

Unfortunately, the national liberation movement couldn't remain too long without common leading kernel. That's why, just at that time before the masses appeared impostors, whose role wasn't indifferent in further events. Documents and materials over the opposition groups' and different person's activities during the pre-January tragedy as well as at the night to the 20th of January testify: on the whole, the opposition carries political and moral responsibility for this bloody tragedy. Nevertheless, we should take into account the fact that those groups included instigators, different carpet - baggers, ambitious persons not realizing sharpness of artificial situation and seriousness of Moscow's intentions, challenged people to go into the streets to put up resistance to Soviet troops. They have blood of innocent people on their conscience. After all, there were examples of ruthless annihilation of peaceful population in other republics, to which Moscow was more loyal than to Azerbaijan.

Abulfaz Aliyev, İsa Gambarov, Etibar Mammadov, Neymat Panakhov, Rahim Gaziyev and others are responsible politicaly and moraly for 20th January tragedy. Having a desire to be the leaders of the national liberation movement they had to realize the possible tragic results of sending unarmed people against troops as well as the responsibility for the people's destinies and lives. Unfortunately, the course of events showed, they weren't able to forecast further development of the situation.

Evaluating degree of responsibility of pro - opposition groups for the January tragedy, we should take into account their goals and programs, level and character of organizational structure, intellectual potential, overall level of political training of peoples embodied in those groups, their world outlook, activity experience at state establishments and life experience on the whole. Alas! Populism, political immaturity, ambitions, unreasonable self-sufficiency, changed into embarrassment led to the fact that people were once again terribly deceived.

## IN THE FACE OF THE HISTORICAL REALITY

So, what is the summary conclusion of ten year's events?

First of all, it should be noted that the history of Azerbaijan in XIX-XX centuries demands a thorough knowledge of the past, a profound recognition of the cause and effect relationship of clashes into the tragedy, knowledge of laws of public evolution, and periodicity of stages of people's struggle for liberty.

Azerbaijan has never seen such a wide - ranging people's movement like one which took place at the end of 80s, on the eve of the January tragedy. This was a really massive national movement. Restoration of violated constitutional rights of the people, maintenance of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan made up ideological basis and slogans of the movement. Soon after the January tragedy, when the people lost their hope for faithful settlement of the Nagorny Karabakh conflict as well as their belief in the Central power in the face of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU), when it was assured that the Azerbaijanis' genocide was carried out with Moscow's assistance, namely by M. Gorbachov and his team, this movement transferred into the national liberation one. The people realized their historical destination. It was the decree of the fate for them to settle the national problems by themselves.

January 1990 is a burst abscess, testifying about incurable pain covered all sections of the Soviet society. This was a premonition of collapse of the Soviet political and economic system, full failure of rebuilding (Perestroika) policy directed to resuscitation of the socialism under new conditions.

The January events discovered the whole precipice between people and government of Azerbaijan, unmasked treacherous essence of A. Vezirov's, A. Mutallibov's and V. Husseinov's activities. Appeals of A. Vezirov, A. Mutallibov and chair of the republican SSC V. Husseynov to Moscow, made since the end of 1989 till the January tragedy with request to send troops to Azerbaijan for keeping order and protecting the state institutions are confirmation of the above stated opinion.

We should realize that misfortunes in the history of Azeri people were always caused by the political elite's aspiration to arrange society's life and establish an independent state without having clear fixed conception on national priorities.

Very often all-national notions were substituted for false patriotism, subjective reasons and personal ambitions. Graphic demonstration of that are the bloody 1990 January and other dramatic events of the modern history, namely Gandja rebellion of 1993 that nearly led to civil war in the republic, coupe d'etate attempts in October 1994 and March 1995, prepared acts of terrorism against the head of the state etc.

January 1990 revealed jeopardy of a policy pursued by the radical opposition wing led that time by the People's Front as well as amorphous character of the opposition's democratic wing which should carry constructive principles. At present it becomes quite clear, at that time there wasn't any unbroken political force able to head the national movement in the republic.

There wasn't even any national leader, whose government skills, political perspicacity and wisdom could direct the vigor of national movement into the necessary turn and allow reaching goals without victims and

bloodshed. Heydar Aliyev possesses all these virtues in full measures. People always perceive him as a skilled and reliable leader. Unfortunately, he was under the union leadership's control and pursued by secret services in Moscow. All his actions were blocked. In addition, A. Vezirov and his surroundings together with Mafia groups in Azerbaijan went all length, including any kind of provocation and insinuation, to bar Heydar Aliyev's returning to the republic.

In that way, populism and irresponsibility of self - styled leaders, political inexperience of persons, promoted to historical proscenia by circumstances, played an ominous role in the upcoming tragedy. Their in consequence and flirt with authorities and secret services predetermined tragic fate of the national movement as well as its destiny on the whole.

The most ambitious part of the arising opposition, without calculating the force of their influence, spurned competent representatives of the scientific and creative intelligentsia and political elite from the movement at the key moment. That was the fatal error adversely affecting further political destiny of opposition. Substitution of democratic values with Bolshevistic slogans and methods of struggle, duplicity and intrigue, intolerance and recurrences of totalitarian mentality, intellectual poverty and lack of modern ideas matching the time are the moral and political environment of arising of the opposition. That is typical for the irreconcilable opposition of today's political life. Impulse of possessing at any price the power over the people, obtained at the beginning of the national movement, still defined activity of the radical opposition. It doesn't want to accept that not all methods of struggle formed in the 1980s and early 1990s were justified by real processes taking place in the country today. Confrontational methods are anachronism and they evidence about lack of political foresight and immaturity, lack of information about real interests of the people under conditions of creating independent, democratic state, when stability has been established, when the law, parliament and press are regulating state's activity.

## **THE HISTORICAL LESSONS OF JANUARY**

The January tragedy went down in our memories as a mournful event, but at the same time as a peak of selflessness and heroism of the Azeri people. Though it suffered irreplaceable losses at the end of the century, the Azeri nation can be proud that in those days of ordeal it showed exclusive will, firmness, courage and staunchness of the national spirit. It proved to the world that it could go all length to ascertain justice and protect its dignity. Our people morally raised higher and added new glorious pages to its heroic history.

The January tragedy became a turning point on the way to obtaining independence of Azerbaijan. Passing it the people realized with the past life, semi - colonial subsistence was done away with forever.

The national - liberation movement turned into a political reality and found an irreversible character.

Deep comprehension and research of different aspects of the January tragedy is of a great significance for development of state-making processes. This tragedy should be known and kept in mind in details in order to be able to get over the thorny path of establishing and developing of the independent and sovereign Azerbaijan. Everybody should realize the truth that state policy must meet the interests of the nation and rest on its support. Only under such conditions we will avoid new victims.

Historical experience of those tragic days shows: stability in the country, consolidation of people, unity of citizens under a common national idea are necessary for prevention of provocations and incitements directed against independence and establishment of a legal democratic state. Political struggle must be conducted in conformity with constitutional requirements within the framework of legal regulations.

The end of 80-s and beginning of 90-s demonstrated that historical forgetfulness is fraught with serious consequences, creates insuperable bars to resolution of a matter of life and death. The lessons of Azerbaijan's history should be taken into account in order not to repeat errors that often causes tragedy. This will more effectively bring up the rising generation in the spirit of patriotism and citizenship, endow them with capability to take into account real demands and reckon with peculiarities of the concrete political moment.

Another important lesson elicited from the January tragedy is the fact that we are assured of the fact that the world society is uninformed about Azerbaijan. Unfortunately, we yet have not been able to create quite a powerful organized Diaspora abroad to form a strong lobby, national communities which can stand up our interests in CIS, Eastern and Western countries. This is All - national task to be settled and is still actual. Using the wide possibilities of mass media, state bodies and public organizations, we have to operatively, and the most important, professionally spread information about Azerbaijan through out the world telling the truth about our republic, forming objective and unprejudiced public opinion about processes taking place here. This is a great importance so as to avoid a repetition of "Black January".

**Mehdiyev Ramiz. The reality of the genocide of Azerbaijani people.**

**– Baku, 2000. – p. 143-175.**