

Unexposed pages of the history of Azerbaijan's Caspian oil in the second half of the 20th century (September 1950-1994)

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World War II is considered to be the worst war in human history because of its scale and the catastrophes it caused. The war, which was waged in 61 countries with a total population of 1.7 billion people, was perished 60 million people. The population of these countries comprised 75% of the world population. An important difference between World War II and the wars in human history is that 67% of the population killed in this war was civilians and 33% were military men. The country that suffered the most losses in this war was the USSR. The number of casualties in the USSR was 29 million, 17 million out of which were civilians and 12 million were servicemen [1, p.5].

Among these losses, 626.000 people were Azerbaijanis. In fact, The Azerbaijani people had the decisive role and exceptional service in the victory in this war over Baku oil. During 1941-1945, 709.503 people were mobilized from the Azerbaijan SSR, only 83.5 thousand of which returned [2, pp.330-336]. It should be noted that at the beginning of the war the total population of the Azerbaijan SSR was 3.331.800, of which 709.503 were mobilized from June 22, 1941 to December 25, 1946 [3, p.37]. According the information from June 1, 1941, 100.183 out of these 3.331.800 people worked in the Azerbaijani oil industry. By October 1, 1943, 30.396 of them had been mobilized to the front, and 10.695 had been sent to the eastern regions of the country to discover new oil fields and create industries [4, p.2]. Oil workers mobilized to the front were replaced by Azerbaijani women at work. If before the war the total share of women working in the oil industry was 23.2%, during the years of war this figure was more than 50% [5, p.2].

World War II not only inflicted terrible losses on the former USSR, but also completely destroyed its economic infrastructure in the western territories of the RSFSR, the Ukrainian SSR, Belarusian SSR, Moldavian SSR, Latvian SSR and Estonian SSR. In the areas where military operations were going 1.700 cities, 73.000 villages and settlements, 65.000 km railway lines were destroyed. Thirty-five million people were left homeless. The total damage caused by the war to the USSR amounted to 679 billion rubles [6, p.2].

Therefore, as in the war years, large amounts of energy resources were required to eliminate the damage and restore the destroyed economic infrastructure. It is also known that after the war, the Azerbaijani Oil Industry was considered the main energy resource base of the former USSR. Thus, 85-90% of the country's energy needs were met by the Azerbaijani Oil Industry. Another fact is that the discovery of oil reserves on the Absheron Peninsula and rich oil fields on the western shores of the Caspian Sea was known to the former USSR leadership. It was reflected in the letter addressed to the Chairman of the USSR State Defense Committee, I.V. Stalin, in November 1943 by the head of the republic M.J. Bagirov. In this letter, M.J. Bagirov shows that the Baku oil region is very rich and economically profitable compared to the Eastern regions of the USSR and demands to pay more attention to the Azerbaijani Oil Industry [7, p.2]. After that, in 1944, the USSR leadership instructed the government of the Azerbaijan SSR, the USSR Academy of Sciences and the Azerbaijan Academy of Sciences (now ANAS) to establish an oil expedition to explore oil fields on the western shores of the Caspian Sea. Based on the results of geological examinations obtained in 1946, it was decided to accelerate work in this area – that is, to put into operation offshore oil fields [8, p.9].

The author of the idea of scientifically proving the existence of rich oil fields in the Caspian Sea and achieving it is a selfless oil geologist-scientist, Aga Qurban Aliyev. The discovery of the world-famous “Oil Rocks” field in the Caspian Sea for more than seventy years is associated with his name. It should be noted that in order to accurately determine the variability of the Caspian Sea level during the exploration of offshore oil fields in 1946-1955, under the leadership of Professor B.A. Apollov, the scientists of the Institute of Oceanology of the USSR

Academy of Sciences conducted many branched research [9, p.9]. Before and after the war until 1948, the Caspian Sea first had already been studied from the theoretical and scientific aspect by geologists and scientists of Azerbaijan, the results obtained scientifically proved the extraction of oil from the seabed. However, when examining the archival documents on the history of Azerbaijan's Caspian oil, we see that this field has not been created. We are witnessing that instead of creating new branches of the national oil industry, which was the backbone of its economy, the nationalist-chauvinist circles rooted in the highest power structure of the empire, in order to inflict another crushing blow on the Azerbaijani people after World War II, on the contrary, probably used the activities of Dashnak-Nazi Armenians. Documents revealed in the Archives of Political Documents of the Office of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Funds of the State Archives of the National Archives of Azerbaijan, newly published scientific literature and monographs, magazines, facts published in the official media give grounds to express such an opinion. Analyzing the facts reflected in these documents and new publications, we come across the facts that many heinous crimes were been committed against the Azerbaijani people to prevent their territory's development.

As mentioned above, already in 1948, as a result of the efforts of the leadership of the Azerbaijan SSR and the scientists of the republic, the extraction of oil from the bottom of the Caspian Sea was scientifically and practically proven. On November 7, 1949, after the well No. 1 with high flow rate gushed daily 100tons of oil, based on all these on December 11, 1949 the Soviet of Ministers of the USSR adopted a special decree "On the Improvement of measures for the discovery and use of the offshore oil fields in the Azerbaijan SSR" [10, p.43]. However, the interesting thing is that despite the fact that the possibility of oil production on the western shores of the Caspian Sea at a depth of 4 to 40 meters has been scientifically proven, on the eve of its implementation, or rather in 1948, Baba Babazadeh, Chief Geologist of "Azerdenizneftkeshfiyyat" Association, Hero of Socialist Labor, Corresponding Member of ANAS Baba Babazadeh, while on a business trip to the USSR Ministry of Oil Industry in Moscow, meets with Minister N.K. Baybakov's assistant August Germanovich Helkerst. In

fact, the initiator of the meeting was A.G. Helkvist himself [9, p.103]. Who was this person, August Germanovich Helkvist?

In the second half of the 19th century German Helkvist, the father of August – of Swedish origin – came to Baku with the Nobel brothers. He works in the oil fields of the Nobels in Balakhany and gets married here. August Helkvist was born in 1894, in Balakhany in the Helkvist family. In 1919, August went to Tomsk, and in 1923 he graduated from the mining faculty of the Tomsk Institute of Technology. He returned Baku in 1924. Until 1936, August Helkvist worked in various fields of the oil industry of Azerbaijan. In 1930-1931, he was on a business trip to the United States. During the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945 and after the war, until 1949, he worked as a chief geologist at the Ministry of Oil Industry of the USSR and as the minister's assistant in 1949-1950. August Helkvist died in 1968 and was buried in Moscow.

If we overview the biography of A.G. Helkvist, we can find that he was not so closely connected with the Azerbaijan Oil Industry. However, it should be noted that A.G. Helkvist had close, friendly relations with N.K. Baybakov who was born in Sabunchy settlement of Baku, Minister of Oil Industry of the USSR from 1943 to 1955, and later Chairman of the USSR State Planning Committee. It was A.G. Helkvist, a close friend of N.K. Baybakov who was appointed by him the Chief Geologist of the USSR Oil Industry, and in 1948, while on a business trip to Moscow, Baba Babazadeh, the chief geologist of the Azerdenizneftkeshfiyyat Association, was invited by him to his office. B. Babazadeh noted that A. Helkvist told him: "Let's write to the Minister comrade Baybakov that the work at sea should be stopped. Because I said it a long time ago that there is nothing there", he suggested. "I told him that I couldn't do it because I really believed there was oil in the sea". In response, Helkvist told me that the oil is in the Kirovabad (now Ganja) and Shamakhy regions" [11, p.5]. Baba Babazadeh said this on July 29, 1954 in Baku at a meeting of oil industry activists with the participation of the USSR Minister of Oil Industry N.K. Baybakov. Upon learning of this conversation in 1948, the head of the republic, M.J. Bagirov, called on N.K. Baybakov and sharply warned him: "... Kolya, do not interfere in the oil affairs of Azerbaijan". However, one of the interesting aspects of the issue is that af-

ter the well No. 1 drilled in the Oil Rocks field on November 7, 1949, gushed 100 tons of oil per day, the Soviet of Ministers of the USSR on December 11 of 1949 adopted a decree “On the Improvement of measures for the discovery and use of the offshore oil fields in the Azerbaijan SSR” and – on the basis of this decision – the General Directorate for the Development of Offshore Oil Fields under the USSR Ministry of Oil Industry and the Azerbaijan Offshore Oil Association were established. Extraction of oil from the Caspian Sea was entrusted to this organization [12, p.145].

A detailed acquaintance with the new archival documents revealed by the author confirms that N.K. Baybakov’s assistant A.G. Helkvist did not abandon from his position. Strange to say, why August Helkvist did not want to accept this scientific truth, which was accepted by everyone, first of all by the top leadership of the USSR? In order to find the answer to this question, the author decided to turn to the past – the period of activity of the Nobel brothers in Baku oil region in the ’70-80s of the 19th century.

Before addressing the events of the second half of the 19th century, I would like to draw your attention to another event that took place in 1950. As a result of very serious and continuous research conducted by the author, the fact emerged that I.V. Stalin invited Sergei Yakovlevich Zhuk, chairman of the USSR Hydroproject Committee, and ordered him to come with the map of the Caspian Sea. S.Y. Zhuk returning from Stalin’s cabinet at 2 o’clock at night, said that he had been ordered to make calculations on the drying up of the Caspian Sea and to prepare and submit proposals in a very short time. S.Y. Zhuk says that Anastas Mikoyan also participated at the meeting and when he said to Stalin: “When the Caspian Sea dries up, it will be deprived of black caviar, which brings a lot of currency to the country’s treasury”, Stalin abruptly interrupted Mikoyan, saying: “...you always think like a trader, but we need oil”. I said to Stalin, “... it is possible, but I have to calculate it”. After that, I.V. Stalin instructed me: “The Volga River should be diverted to the deserts of Kazakhstan, and ponds should be created on the way of the Kura River by building dams”, and demanded the proposals to be prepared and submitted within two weeks. Two weeks later I was at Stalin and presented my proposals to him. I said that this work will be very expensive for the country. It will

cause an environmental disaster, will cost at least 10 billion rubles, and will take 16-17 years. Stalin listened to me attentively and said, “I think there is no need for that anymore”. I was so happy and thought: “Thank God they didn’t dare to dry it. Indeed, if a decision was made to drain the Caspian Sea, it would lead to a large-scale environmental disaster” [14, pp.399-400]. All these facts are taken from the book *Ivan Serov. Notes from the suitcase. Secret diaries found 25 years after the death of the first KGB (State Security Committee) chairman. Alexander Khinsein’s Project* (Moscow: Proveshenie 2016).

The most important point that attracts attention is that in the discussion of the proposal, which could cause catastrophes of unprecedented scale, the inveterate enemies of the Azerbaijani people I.V. Stalin and A. Mikoyan were participating, and no doubt S.Y. Zhuk’s convincing scientific predictions forced these predators to refrain from their savage plans. As already mentioned above, in order to understand this intention of A.G. Helkvist, as an author, I noted the need to return to the events that took place in Baku oil region in the second half of the 19th – early 20th centuries. Today there is a lot of literature on the activities of the Nobels. It is known that the Nobel brothers of Swedish origin became citizens of the Russian Empire in 1831 and until 1873 were engaged in the production and sale of weapons in Russia. It is also known that the Nobels provided the army of tsarist Russia with weapons during the Crimean War of 1853-1856. Robert Nobel, a member of the Nobel family who came to Baku in 1873, had managed to buy 168 dessiatina (measure of land = 10,900 sq. meters or 2.7 acres) oil fields for 25.000 rubles. His investment in the Baku oil industry in 1875 amounted to 3 million rubles. In 1885, the volume of this capital increased five times and reached 15 million [15, p.282].

The interesting thing is that Alfred Nobel, who heard about the visit of the world-famous Russian scientist Dmitry Mendeleev to Baku, got acquainted with him. The scientific advice given by the scientist, especially the idea of laying oil pipelines from oil fields to refineries, was appropriated by the Nobel brothers. The looting of Baku oil by the Nobel brothers without expecting any environmental safety regulations enrages D.I. Mendeleev. He accuses Ludych Nobel of his plunderer attitude towards Baku oil and exposes the false idea “...

Oil has already run out in Absheron”, the Nobels deliberately spread this rumor in order to maintain their monopoly on the oil industry. By saying “Baku oil will be enough for the whole world”, Mendeleev proves that their deliberate opinion is false [16, p.4]. However, this position of the scientist later cost him dearly. Thus, three times after the establishment and presentation of the Nobel Prize by Alfred Nobel: in 1905, 1906 and 1907, his name was nominated to the Nobel Prize Committee, but his candidacy was repeatedly rejected by members of the Imperial Academy of Sciences [17, p.5].

The rejection of D.I. Mendeleev’s candidacy by the Nobel family is not surprising, because it would seem illogical to award the Nobel Prize to a scientist who exposed the ugly and predatory nature of the Nobels. As for the study of the Nobel brothers’ activities in the oil industry of Azerbaijan until 1920, together with their Armenian millionaires P.Gukasov, S.Lianozov, A.Montasov, the Mirzoyev brothers that they included in the organization of the “Oil Industrialists Congress”, they made billions by plundering the wealth of the Azerbaijani people. The slander of the Nobel brothers against H.Z. Tagiyev, A.M. Nagiyev, Isabey Hajinski, the criminal activities of the Noble brothers together with the Armenian Dashnaks to seize the oil lands in the villages around Baku, including their activities with the Rockefellers, the Rothschild family and Armenian millionaires to prevent the *de jure* recognition of the Republic of Azerbaijan (1918-1920) as an independent state are the subject of a separate study. This is because the close cooperation of the Nobels with jointly established companies “Montasov Friendship”, “Mirzoyev brothers’ Friendship”, “Aramazd”, “Alkhan-Yurt Oil-Industrial Society”, “Anglo-Russian Makashol Society” established in London and “G.M.Lionozov and his sons”, “Caspian friendship Nobels” “Montasov Friendship”, “Friendship of Mirzoyev Brothers”, “Aramazd”, “Alkhan-Yurt Oil-Industrial Society”, “Anglo-Russian Makashol Society” and “G.M.Lionozov and Sons” founded in London, “Caspian Friendship”, belonging to Armenian millionaires allows to reveal the essence of their anti-Azerbaijani activities [18, pp.25-26]. After all this, the purpose of A.G. Helkvist’s vicious claim that there is no oil in Absheron or in the Caspian Sea becomes clear.

Despite the harsh response of M.J. Bagirov to him and to N.K. Baybakov in 1948, A.G. Helkvist did not give up his vicious intentions. Of course, his position was not accidental. Because the attitude to the Azerbaijani people, to its natural resources of a man, whose way of life formed in the environment of the Nobels and Armenian-Dashnaks, should not give rise to doubt. The hostile attitude of the Nobels to the Azerbaijani people is reflected in the chapter IX of Brita Osbrinkin's book *The Nobel Empire: A History of Famous Swedes, Baku Oil and the Revolution in Russia*, published in 2003 in Moscow. An interesting point is that from 1920 to 1942, none of the heads of the Azerbaijani Oil Industry were Azerbaijanis. Only in 1942, in the hardest year of the war, M.J. Bagirov broke the resistance of the central government and appointed Suleyman Vezirov as the head of "Azerneftkombinat". After that, the Azerbaijani began to lead this important sector, which is considered the backbone of the Azerbaijani economy. It should be noted that after being appointed Minister of Oil Industry of the USSR, N.K. Baybakov invited Vartan Kalamkarov to the ministry along with A.G. Helkvist, who worked in Moscow, and appointed both of them to the highest positions. A.G. Helkvist in 1948 and 1950, and V.Kalamkarov, using his official powers in 1957, openly expressed their vicious intentions against the Azerbaijani people. Thus, on January 6, 1950, the former USSR Ministry of Oil Industry N.K. Baybakov signed classified order No. 8-0 – "On measures to increase oil production in offshore oil fields in the Azerbaijan SSR" [19, p.21]. This 17-page order was issued in accordance with the resolution No. 5951-2240-c adopted by the USSR Soviet of Ministers on December 11, 1949 [20, pp.441-446]. This order instructed all the ministries within the USSR Soviet of Ministers, their subordinate committees, Associations, departments and related organizations to implement the decisions taken to establish this new branch of the Azerbaijan Oil Industry. Then, on February 17, 1950, the USSR Minister of Oil Industry signed Order No. 70-c entitled "Plan of geological exploration works to be carried out in the Azerbaijan SSR in 1950". In 1950, on the basis of this order and the scientific results given by oil geologists and scientists, the republic leadership determined the main directions of geological exploration works to be carried out in the Azerbaijan SSR. Upon learning of the signing of such an order, A.G.

Helkvist wrote a 5.5-page critical review to the order from March 31, 1950 and sent to Minister N.K. Baybakov [21, pp.438-440]. After getting acquainted with their view of A.G. Helkvist, Minister N.K. Baybakov presented it to the chief geologist of the ministry M.F. Mirchnik for comment. After getting acquainted with the review of A.G. Helkvist, M.F. Mirchnik was horrified and wrote a letter regarding the nature of the issue to the first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Azerbaijan M.J. Bagirov on April 20, 1950 [22, p.441]. The review-presentation written by A.G. Helkvist on the order of the Minister N.K. Baybakov was called so: "On the plan of exploration boring in Azerbaijan in 1950" [23, pp.425-436].

A letter registered by the head of the Special Sector of the Central Committee of the C (b) Party of Azerbaijan Novikova on May 27, 1950 under No. 557 (classified) was submitted to M.J. Bagirov. After getting acquainted with M.F. Mirchnik's letter, M.J. Bagirov sent it to the President of the Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan M.M. Aliyev. The review of A.G. Helkvist was also attached to the letter sent to the President of the Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan. Members of the commission getting acquainted with the review of A.G. Helkvist, on May 26, 1950, an 11-page response-reference signed by M.M. Aliyev, President of the Academy of Sciences of the Azerbaijan SSR, E.Kh. Mehdiyev, Secretary of the Baku City Party Committee of the Azerbaijan Communist Party, A.A. Yagubov, Chief of the Azerdenizneft Association, V. Malik-Pashayev, Chief Geologist of the Association geologist B.K. Babazadeh and Deputy Chief Geologist of Azneft Association A.M. Ahmadov was prepared and sent to the Central Committee to M.J. Bagirov [24, p.239]. After getting acquainted with this reference, M.J. Bagirov sent it to the USSR Ministry of Oil Industry. Thus, it was decided to continue the considered exploration and boring works provided in the order on Azerbaijan. I wonder, what was the reason for this courage and such hostility by his deputy towards Minister N.K. Baybakov's order signed in 1950 in connection with the geological exploration works on the Azerbaijan Oil Industry? Taking such a step, A.G. Helkvist knew that he would not be punished by Minister N.K. Baybakov, and he did not forget that in 1948 his proposal to Baba Babazadeh was rejected. Baba Babazadeh's rejection to August Helkvist's offer troubled him very much.

After this event, the C (b) Party Central Committee of the Azerbaijan received confidential information from the “Azerneftkeshfiyyat” Association, where Baba Babazadeh occupied the chief geologist’s post, saying that that he was engaged in his doctoral dissertation during his working hours. In the reference prepared on the results of inspections carried out in connection with the confidential information received by the Politburo of the Central Committee under the chairmanship of M.J. Bagirov, First Secretary of the Central Committee on July 12-13, 1950 classified as “top secret” No. 128/5 on the preparation of the doctoral dissertation of Baba Babazadeh, the chief geologist of the “Azerdenizneftkeshfiyyat” Association, it was claimed that on the basis of a secret inquiry conducted without the knowledge of Baba Babazadeh the information received was true. This reference indicated the use of the apparatus of the geological bureau of the Association and the fact that the geologist Ushakov and the employee of “Azertechneshriyyat” Udaliy corrected the proofs of the dissertation work [25, p.235]. The reference further states that Baba Babazadeh inviting employees of the Association to his office continued to work on this dissertation for three months after his transfer from “Azneft” to “Azerneftkeshfiyyat”. After these words, the information received in the reference is confirmed to be true. The statement further states that Baba Babazadeh allegedly did not behave as a real party member at the meeting of the Politburo of the Central Committee and did not provide accurate information about the dissertation. However, the reference stated that the dissertation is devoted to the scientific solution of a very important problem and was sent for publication in the present-day city of St. Petersburg (former Leningrad) [24, pp.236-237]. After all this, it was stated that Baba Babazadeh was called to the Central Committee, and as a stern punishment was warned [25, p.239].

After getting acquainted with the case, Baba Babazadeh denies all slanders against him and reveals the truth in a two-page reference to paragraph 19 of the decision made by the Politburo of the Central Committee (12-13 VII 1950 No. 64128 / 5) [27, p.239]. In his reference, he states that he has been engaged in this dissertation work since 1941 and defended it in 1949 to obtain the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The title of B. Babazadeh’s scientific work was: “A new stage in the search for oil fields in Absheron”. In his reference to the Cen-

tral Committee, B. Babazadeh stated that the Minister of Oil Industry of the USSR up to 1943 M.A. Yevseyenko after getting acquainted with the content of this work recommended to include it in the publication plan of the Leningrad branch of “Goskomtekhizdat” for 1950 and to publish it as “top secret”. Moreover, Baba Babazadeh in this reference noted that this work was dedicated in the memory of prominent Russian scientists I.M. Gubkin and D.V. Golubiyatnikov. In the end, he stated that the person who wrote this “information” probably when saw how I spent my time on my personal affairs rouse hatred in him. He did not know that I had spent only 5 days correcting mistakes by fulfilling my 18 hours of service. As for my doctoral dissertation, I have no time for it. Also, I do not consider myself ready to write a doctoral dissertation yet” [27, pp.239-240].

One of the most interesting points here is that the commission, which does not want to thoroughly investigate the case, does not accept the truth and tries to find Babazadeh guilty. Another interesting point is who the person that provided the “information” was and what purpose did he do it for? The reference prepared on this issue and submitted to the Central Committee contains the signatures of the members of the Bureau of the Central Committee T. Allahverdiyev and S. Yemelyanov. The signatures were put on September 2, 1950. An in-depth analysis of the issue reveals that Baba Babazadeh was chosen as a target in early 1948-1950, as he resolutely rejected August Helkvist’s proposals and was a responsible person in the field of geological exploration. Enemies of the Azerbaijani people organized an inspection of the “Azerneftkeshfiyyat” Association headed by Baba Babazadeh, and in June 1950 the Minister of State Security of the Azerbaijan SSR S. Yemetyako prepared a 3-page report entitled “On a number of shortcomings in the work of the ‘Azerneftkeshfiyyat’ Association and presented to M.J. Bagirov [28, p.258]. On June 29, 1950, M.J. Bagirov appended instructions on that reference: “...Comrade Yemelyanova, please meet with all informants and check how convincing their statements are. Ask Babazadeh for an explanation, because this is of special importance for the future of the oil industry of the republic” [29, pp.258-259].

From the first acquaintance with the reference it appears that the facts presented there are fabricated. This is confirmed by the acquaint-

tance with the 5-page reference on the state of geological exploration work prepared by “Azerneftkeshfiyyat”. This reference reflects the work done by the Association only during the first 9 months of 1950 [30, p.254]. The prepared reference was discussed in the party organization of the Association, the fabricated facts were confirmed and as a result Baba Babazadeh was warned and reprimanded [31, pp.255-257]. Such a step by A.G. Helkvist, who spent his childhood, adolescence and youth in the environment of the Nobels and the Armenian-Dashnak-Bolsheviks, indicates his close relationship with the Minister N.K. Baybakov. This is because the steps taken by N.K. Baybakov in connection with the Azerbaijani Oil Industry under the influence of the Armenian-Dashnaks until 1957 also confirm this opinion. Another important reason is the creation of new sectors of the economy of the Azerbaijan SSR – chemistry, petrochemistry, non-ferrous and ferrous metallurgy, electricity – on the initiative of the head of the Republic since 1946; the construction of Sumgait, Dashkasan, Shirvan, Mingachevir cities and, most importantly, the creation of a new branch of the Azerbaijani oil industry – the offshore oil industry worried the Kremlin owners, who always supported the imperialist, nationalist-chauvinist and Armenian-Dashnak elements. Another interesting aspect of the issue is that all this work took place against the background of the restoration of the entire economic infrastructure destroyed during the war of 1941-1945 and the territorial claims of the Armenian-Dashnak elements against the Azerbaijani SSR. After the removal of M.J. Bagirov from the leadership of the Azerbaijan SSR in July 1953, these circles became active again. In this regard, the speeches made at the meeting of the oil industry leaders held in Baku on July 29, 1954 with the participation of the Minister of Oil Industry of the USSR N.K. Baybakov, especially the speech of the Minister, draws attention. The main reason for the meeting was the decision of the USSR Council of Ministers from July 9, 1954 “On measures to further development of the oil industry”. It should be noted that speaking at the meeting Minister N.K. Baybakov accused the former head of the republic M.J. Bagirov and trying to prove that 10.2 billion rubles were allocated in 1948-1953 for the capital construction of the Azerbaijani oil industry unreasonably and shows that the allocation of so much financial resources was the result of “friendship” of M.J. Ba-

girov, who headed the republic for many years, with I.V. Stalin [32, p.239]. According to claims of N.K. Baybakov, M.C. Bagirov repeatedly used these funds to achieve his “careerist” goals under the guise of accelerating oil production in the country. He succeeded the allocation of funds by I.V.Stalin, and by this he “acted against the state and thus inflicted great damage on it” [33, p.239]. It is illogical to accuse M.J. Bagirov, who headed the Azerbaijan SSR for 31 years, of careerism and spending public funds for his “purposes”, and there is no factual basis for this. This opinion is also confirmed by the analysis of archival documents.

One of the main reasons for unfounded accusations of M.J. Bagirov by N.K. Baybakov was his uncompromising relationship with A.I. Mikoyan, the supporter of the Armenian-Dashnak elements in the central government. After the death of I.V. Stalin, it was an opportunity for A.I. Mikoyan, N.K. Baybakov and the Armenian-Dashnak elements around them to accuse M.J. Bagirov of all kinds of crimes, who was removed from the leadership of the republic for “friendly” relations with L.P. Beria, arrested as an “enemy of the people”. Because, in the same meeting and in the period after that, that is, before the collapse of the Soviet empire, attempts were made to make provocative decisions against the Azerbaijani people. One of the pretexts raised during the meeting was allegedly the cost of oil production in Azerbaijan, both on land and offshore, was high. However, this claim had no scientific basis. Thus, the oil produced by the Azerbaijani Oil Industry is considered to be the highest quality in the world; three types of it are known and they have no analogues in the world. Due to its productivity and the quality of its products, Azerbaijani oil differs significantly in its chemical composition from oil produced in different regions of Russia, Kazakhstan, Iran, Mexico, Venezuela and Arab countries. Thus, the main indicator of the high quality of Azerbaijani oil is that it contains light oil products and oils, as well as sulfur content of 0.1-0.3%. The content of sulfur in the oil produced in the above-mentioned countries is 2-5%. Another difference of Baku and Caspian oil from other oils is that it is very cheap to process and does not damage the environment and the population [34, p.96].

Despite all these indisputable arguments, in order to prevent the development of the Azerbaijani Oil Industry, the USSR Soviet of Minis-

ters adopted a resolution on July 9, 1954, entitled “On the further development of the oil industry”, the name of which does not correspond to its content. Although it was called ‘the development of the oil industry’, in this decision half of 1 billion 545 million 800.000 rubles (700 million rubles) allocated for the Oil Industry of Azerbaijan in 1954 was allocated in 1955. As a result, the volume of exploration and boring in the Azerbaijani Oil Industry fell by 4.5 times, and oil production by 22 times. However, the state oil production plan for the republic was maintained in 1955 as in 1954 [35, pp.17-21]. As a whole, the adoption of such a decision was a clear manifestation of the colonial policy pursued against the Azerbaijani people. As a continuation of this attitude, provocations against the Azerbaijani people and the oil industry, which is the backbone of its economy, continue at the highest level.

In 1955, N.K. Baybakov was appointed chairman of the USSR State Planning Committee, and he invited some Armenians working with him – V. Kalamkarov, Mikirtichyan and others here. In early 1957, when the USSR State Planning Committee, chaired by N.K. Baybakov, was preparing the economic development plan of the USSR for that year, on behalf of Mikoyan’s deputy, head of the Oil and Gas Industry Department Vartan Kalamkarov and employee of that department Mkrtichyan enters to Chairman of the Party Control Committee under the Central Committee of the CPSU N.M. Schwernik the package of proposals on the economic unprofitability of investments in the Azerbaijani oil industry, especially in offshore oil fields. These proposals were grounded by the idea that the quality of oil produced from the Caspian Sea was much lower than that of oil produced in other regions of the USSR. After reviewing the proposal, N.M. Schwernik understands that this will be a severe blow not only to the economy of the Azerbaijan SSR, but also to the economy of the entire USSR and immediately phones the first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Azerbaijan I.D. Mustafayev noting that the Party Control Committee of the Soviet Communist Party received a package of written proposals on economic provocation prepared by the USSR State Planning Committee against the Azerbaijan Oil Industry and if the necessary measures are not taken to prevent it, grave consequences wait for the economy, first of all, the oil industry of the republic.

Realizing that the issue is very serious, I.D. Mustafayev prepares within three days a 13-page scientifically substantiated reference proving the economic prospects of the Azerbaijan Oil Industry, including its new branch – the Caspian Sea Oil Industry – and goes to Moscow to the reception of the head of the USSR N.S. Khrushchev. When I.D. Mustafayev went to the reception of N.S. Khrushchev after the meeting with N.M. Schwernik, and took a provocative document called “package of proposals” signed by Kalamkarov and Mkrtichyan. It should be noted that the reference prepared by I.D. Mustafayev and for N.M. Schwernik, chairman of the PCC under the Central Committee of the CPSU, is currently kept in the Archive of Political Documents of the Office of the President of Azerbaijan [37, pp.95-108]. N.S. Khrushchev, who had strained relations with I.D. Mustafayev, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Azerbaijan, after the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, was alarmed by the uninvited visit of the first secretary. Explaining the reason for such an emergency to N.S. Khrushchev, I.D. Mustafayev handed him the provocative “package of proposals” received from the SPC of the USSR and the response prepared in this regard, saying that it was a provocation not only against the Azerbaijani oil industry, but against the USSR economy as a whole. Understanding the essence of the issue, N.S. Khrushchev gets furious, takes the receiver of special government phone and calls on N.K. Baybakov. During the telephone conversation, N.S. Khrushchev, who was swearing N.K. Baybakov with the harshest words: “...how can we win the war against fascism at the expense of Baku oil, restore the economy of our destroyed territories after the war at its expense, then it was qualitative and economically profitable, but now according to the provocateurs hiding at you it has become low-quality and unprofitable”, demanded to take the “package of proposals” back [38, p.115].

This step taken by Head of the Republic I.D. Mustafayev in time prevented the planned provocation. However, with the help of imperialist nationalist-chauvinist circles, the Armenian Dashnak elements managed to realize one of the enemy intentions – to stop 10 rubles, additionally allocated from the USSR state budget to the republican budget for each ton of oil produced in the Azerbaijani oil industry before 1957 [39, p.115].

Another interesting page in the history of the problem under study is that Azerbaijani oil scientists, geologists, engineers, technicians and workers were awarded Stalin Prize in 1947-1951, and in 1961 were awarded the Lenin Prize for their selfless work in the discovery, development and operation of the Caspian Sea oil fields. In this case, what were the real intentions of those who, in 1948, 1954 and 1957, with the consent of the USSR government, resorted to economic provocations against the entire oil industry, while not allowing the creation of a new branch of the Azerbaijani oil industry – the Caspian Sea oil industry? A comprehensive study of the problem, the reveal of new archival documents, the publication of new, very serious scientific literature, as well as the inclusion of information considered confidential at the time in the scientific literature suggest that the Armenian-Dashnak elements rooted in various high state structures of the Soviet Empire, along with their territorial claims against the Azerbaijani people, they have never given up their desire to strike at various sectors of its economy, especially the oil industry that forms its basis. When studying archival documents of the '60s, '70s and '80s of the 20th century, at every step one can come across such facts of hostility carried out purposefully (see . *Selfless peoples are needed* authored by Shamil Gasim oglu Suleymanov, 2017).

Beginning from the second half of the 19th century, foreign companies that knew the true value of Azerbaijani “black gold” began negotiations with the government in 1990 on the joint development of rich oil fields in the Caspian Sea. There is a need to touch on an issue that is very important today. Thus, although the chauvinist aggressor circles of the USSR, knowing that Western companies showed serious interest in Azerbaijan’s Caspian oil, formally agreed to hold talks, but in February 1988, they had openly encouraged the rise of Armenian separatism in the Nagorno-Karabakh Region of Azerbaijan. The main goal here was to prevent the impending state independence and prevent the use of its natural resources, primarily oil and other strategic products, for the benefit of the Azerbaijani people. Another important reason was the existence of an infrastructure built by Heydar Aliyev in the '70s and '80s of the 20th century in the Azerbaijani Oil Industry on the basis of new technologies that meet modern requirements, as well as being very attractive to foreign oil companies.

An attempt made on the life of Heydar Aliyev, the author of this infrastructure, in his office on May 11, 1987, and his removal from the leadership of the USSR in October of that year, was not accidental.

On the eve of the Soviet empire's collapse, negotiations with BP after the return to the UK of S. Ramp, President of the Scottish company Remco, who visited Baku in 1989, played a major role in increasing the interest of foreign oil companies in Azerbaijani oil [41, p.565]. Still in the winter of 1991, concrete work was done to create favorable conditions for oil production on the Absheron Peninsula. On January 18, the USSR government and the Council of Ministers of the Azerbaijan SSR decided to hold a tender for the establishment of a joint venture with the participation of the Caspian Sea Oil and Gas Association and foreign oil companies to jointly explore and develop the “Azeri” field in the Azerbaijani sector of the Caspian Sea. In June 1991, the famous American company Amoco was announced the winner of the competition. After that, also BP/Statoil Alliance, Unocal, McDermott and Remco companies were involved in the project [42, p.235]. But the “Amoco”, which has a 45% stake in the project, maintained its leadership: 85% of the total shares as defined had to belong to the Republic of Azerbaijan, and the remaining 15% to the Western companies. However, in the first half of 1992 began the struggle for power and coming to power of the Popular Front – Musavat postponed intended signing of contracts with foreign companies. The Popular Front – Musavat government also put the issue of its economic plan to the fore. By Decree of the President of Azerbaijan Republic on September 9, 1992, the State Oil Company of Azerbaijan (SOCAR) was created and given the authority to negotiate with foreign companies. By the end of 1992, five protocols of intent were signed on joint exploration and other work in the four largest oil fields in the Caspian sector of the Republic of Azerbaijan – “Azeri”, “Shah Deniz”, “Chirag” and “Gunashli”. Along with the “Amoco”, “Pennzoil” and “BP” companies, the “TPAO” company of the Republic of Turkey was also involved in the project. The participation of Russian “Lukoil” company, and companies of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the project were objected [43, p.238]. This led to an increase in pressure on the Republic of Azerbaijan, which was already in a very difficult political situation at that time, by neighboring countries – the Russian Federa-

tion and the Islamic Republic of Iran. The Armenian state, with the military assistance of the Russian Federation, expanded its aggression and in May 1992 occupied the Shusha and Lachin regions which were of great military-strategic importance for the Republic of Azerbaijan, and in April 1993, the Kalbajar region. This was an open military threat to the Azerbaijani people. The terms of the agreement, considered to be signed in June 1993, did not fully meet the interests of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Under the terms of the agreement, the share of SOCAR was 70%, and the share of foreign companies was 30%. In May 1993, SOCAR and foreign companies signed the 6th memorandum on joint activities on the “Azeri”, “Guneshli” and “Chirag” fields, and on June 4 of the same year, the Board of Directors of SOCAR adopted a declaration on joint activities [44, p.239].

Grave blunders of the APF-Musavat leadership in domestic and foreign policy, incompetence, inexperience in public administration and betrayal led to a serious political, social and military crisis in the country in June 1993. Seeing the growing threat of civil war in the country, prominent intellectuals invited the experienced statesman Heydar Aliyev to Baku. Elected Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Republic of Azerbaijan on July 15, 1993, Heydar Aliyev undertook very grave and difficult issues from the very first days. From this period, the country gradually finds a way out from the political and military crisis. In the second half of 1993, in the context of the political, economic and military crisis in the republic, he postponed the signing of the oil contract prepared by the APF-Musavat government [45, p.240]. During the one-year long talks, President Heydar Aliyev, despite all the pressure, did not sign any cooperation that could harm the interests of the Azerbaijani people, held the control over the preparation of a new agreement and involved highly qualified specialists. Besides, he set up a commission, which included experts from abroad, to examine the new agreement with great precision. By the order of the President, experienced specialists were involved in the management of SOCAR. Unlike the previous ones, the talks focused on not three, but two oil fields – “Azeri” and “Chirag” – and the share of the Republic of Azerbaijan in the distribution was 80%. The amount of the bonus to be paid by foreign companies was \$500 million. It was determined that half of this amount was to be paid imme-

diately after ratification by the parliaments of the signatory countries [46, p.240].

Knowing for certain that Azerbaijan would pursue an independent foreign and domestic policy, the Russian armed forces intensified military assistance to the Armenian state and created conditions for the occupation of Aghdam, Fuzuli, Jabrail, Gubadly and Zangilan regions of the republic in the summer and autumn of 1993. After the collapse of the USSR in 1991, the aggressive circles of the Russian Federation did not want to lose their military and strategic position, although they lost political control in the newly independent former Soviet republics. In this regard, the document entitled "Conceptual rules of resistance strategy to major external threats to the national security of the Russian Federation" prepared at the Institute of Defense Research under the Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation at that time draws attention. The document clearly states: "The important task is to prevent the current implementation of the Caspian Oil Contract". For this purpose, it is expedient to implement the following complex measures:

- I. To refuse to officially recognize the Azerbaijani part of the Caspian Sea;
- II. To take a number of practical measures, if necessary, to use force to prevent the activities of foreign oil companies in the former Soviet part of the Caspian Sea until its status is determined;
- III. Not to allow the establishment of a direct connection between the main territorial part of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the territory of the Republic of Turkey;
- IV. By intensifying the Armenian military attack in the direction of Ganja and Yevlakh to put pressure on the regime in Baku [47, p.28].

As can be seen, the occupation of the Nagorno-Karabakh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the adjacent areas was part of the measures outlined in the document. Because it was clear that if they were not implemented, the authority of the Republic of Azerbaijan in the South Caucasus region would increase and soon the Armenian-Azerbaijani Nagorno-Karabakh conflict would be resolved in its favor. On the other hand, the government of the Republic of Turkey at that time demanded to reduce the number of oil tankers passing through the

Bosphorus and Dardanelles, stating that the city of Istanbul and other settlements were in danger as a result of frequent accidents. In March 1994, the government of the Republic of Turkey drew up a new schedule for the passage of ships through the straits, submitted it to the International Maritime Organization and succeeded in its adoption. This reduced the possibility of exporting Central Asian and Azerbaijani oil through Novorossiysk to zero.

President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev achieved a ceasefire in the war with Armenia on May 12, 1994. This was a confirmation of the fact that the Republic of Azerbaijan is beginning to drop out from a severe socio-economic crisis. Negotiations with Western oil companies in May 1994 in Istanbul, Turkey, were going very slowly. The restoration of internal socio-political stability as a result of President Heydar Aliyev's intense political and diplomatic efforts has accelerated the negotiation process for the signing of an agreement that could ensure the country's national interests. In order to make the negotiations more effective, by the decree of President Heydar Aliyev, Ilham Aliyev was appointed First Vice President of SOCAR on March 1, 1994. Later Ilham Aliyev in an interview with *Caspian Energy* magazine said: "At that time, we had several main tasks: first, to reach an agreement. Secondly, the most favorable terms for Azerbaijan in the agreement – to create both a legal and economic basis. And the third is to make the contract work" [48, p.245].

It was not easy for the Republic of Azerbaijan, which was in a very difficult situation at that time, to fulfill these tasks. At the last stage of the talks, the representatives of foreign companies said that they would accept the agreement after coming into force not after its signing and ratification by the country's parliament, but only after the status of the Caspian Sea is resolved. Naturally, the government of the Republic of Azerbaijan could not agree with this. Because the acceptance of this condition meant that the contract would remain on paper. Therefore, on the instructions of President Heydar Aliyev, First Vice President of SOCAR Ilham Aliyev went to Washington to hold talks with US government officials, and the talks yielded positive results.

As mentioned above, the aggressive circles of the Russian Federation did not want to allow Azerbaijan to sign an agreement with forei-

gn companies on oil production in the Caspian Sea. In the spring of 1993, some progress was made in the signing of an agreement on the joint development of oil fields in the sector of the Republic of Azerbaijan by foreign oil companies. Seeing such a change in the situation, Moscow made provocative proposals stating that Azerbaijan's economic interests would be limited to the 12-mile zone of the sea, which could undermine the state independence of the Republic of Azerbaijan in the settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, which he created by provoking the Armenians. This meant that the Republic of Azerbaijan lost control over the "Azeri", "Chirag" and "Guneshli" oil fields in its sector. In the spring of 1994, the Russian Federation began to take very active diplomatic steps on this issue. On April 27 of the same year, the Russian Foreign Ministry sent a note to the British Foreign Office stating that the Republic of Azerbaijan did not have the right to independently sign any agreement on oil fields in the Caspian Sea.

In the spring of 1994, on the recommendation of the Russian Foreign Ministry, B.N. Yeltsin, signed Decree No. 396 RPS imposing sanctions on the Republic of Azerbaijan [49, p.611]. Therefore, raising the issue of the status of the Caspian Sea, the Government of the Russian Federation stated that it did not accept the use of the term "Azerbaijani sector of the Caspian Sea" in the Memorandum on Energy Cooperation signed between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the United Kingdom in 1994. The note to British Ambassador Brian Foll also said that any agreement on the development of oil fields in the Caspian Sea will not be recognized by the government of the Russian Federation. After negotiations with the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the leadership of SOCAR during the British Minister of Energy Tim Eggar's visit to Baku, it was decided to "ignore the note of the Russian Foreign Ministry" and continue cooperation [50, p.304].

As a result of the far-sighted policy of President Heydar Aliyev, intensive negotiations with oil companies of Great Britain, the United States, the Republic of Turkey, the Russian Federation and other countries ended on September 20, 1994 with an important event in the economic and political life of Azerbaijan. first contract was signed for thirty years between SOCAR and the United States, the United

Kingdom, the Russian Federation, Norway, the Republic of Turkey and Saudi Arabia (Amoco, Pennzoil, Unocal, Exxon, Remco, McDermott, Lukoil), British-Petroleum, Statoil, Turkish Petrolleri AO, Delta, which have extensive experience in oil production. Under the terms of this agreement called the “Contract of the Century”, in order to realize it was planned to invest \$ 7.4 billion for extraction of 511 mln. ton of oil in the course of thirty years [51].

As mentioned above, the aggressive circles of the Russian Federation continued to put pressure on the Azerbaijan state through both diplomatic and military-political means to prevent the Azerbaijani people from using their natural resources. To confirm this opinion, let's view the opinions of a number of Russian statesmen and politicians:

President of the Russian Federation Boris Yeltsin: “No one can sign any agreement until the status of the Caspian Sea is determined”;

Vice-President of the Russian Federation Alexander Rutskoy: “... Azerbaijan considers in vain that the Caspian oil fields belong to it. Without Russia, no one can pry the into it”;

Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev: “If Baku starts developing the Caspian oil fields, economic and other sanctions should be imposed on it”;

Pavel Grachev, Minister of Defense of the Russian Federation: “Heydar Aliyevich, the situation is complicated, if there is a problem with the signing of the contract, Armenian tanks can reach Baku in less than a day”.

Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, a member of the State Duma of the Russian Federation and head of the RLDP: “Baku should know that if he and the Americans start digging in the Caspian Sea, we will bomb and burn those fields. The Caspian Sea is our, this is the sea of Russian Khval. It is necessary to close the door of the Caspian Sea to Baku – not to let the equipment for oil production there, to sink it and burn everything directly”;

President of the Republic of Armenia Robert Kocharyan: “Not a single barrel of Azerbaijani oil will enter international markets – we will not allow it”.

All this is a clear manifestation of the hostile attitude of the Russian Federation rulers and the kocharyans, the instrument of death

in their hands, towards the people of Azerbaijan [52, pp.210-211]. These pressures continue today, as the total value of weapons provided by Russia to Armenia free of charge is more than \$ 3 billion, and the volume of the last military aid provided by the Russian Federation to Armenia from July 17 to August 12, 2020 is 400 tons.

However, it is also true that all the attempts made by these aggressive circles are already known to the whole world and have been in vain. The National Oil Strategy of Azerbaijan today serves to preserve the national interests of the Azerbaijani people and serves to perpetuate its national statehood.

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