

GANJA GOVERNOR's REPORT 1919

To: Mr. Interior Minister

The difficult situation of the Moslem population in my province, makes me bear the moral responsibility in addition to the service duty, for submitting this report to Your Excellency. The events of the last few days, which resulted in an anarchical movement, completely undermined the financial welfare of the province residents. Vast areas of fertile lands have remained without the ploughmen. Cattle breeding may fall into a complete decay unless extraordinary measures are taken for making the yaylacs (pastures) available for cattle with the coming of warm seasons...

Besides, the cultural life in our province came to a standstill, most of village schools ceased operations, city colleges and gymnasiums are closed due to epidemic diseases, plants and other enterprises are not operating.

The population wishes to enjoy a peace life, while the administration makes every effort to bring life back to normal.

Under such circumstances, one would expect the establishment of order in the country and transition to peace life and the implementation of cultural activities for the sake of prosperity of the young republic.

When I talk in terms of the population of the province which strives for peace, I mean Moslems, Russians and settler Germans, while Armenians have an absolutely different position. They are overwhelmed with the hatred to Moslems, they are mad for blood and do not stop their hostile activities, which find expression in the devastation of Moslem villages, slaughter of peace residents and raping women and children.

Their barbarities do not know a limit and cannot be even compared with the horrors of dark middle ages. One does not wish to believe that in the 20th century there is still a nation, that declared its high cultural level throughout Europe, yet applies the savage methods to helpless peace civilians. It is hard writing these lines under the impression of those horrors, which echo in daily reports and messages from all over the province; women are raped, children are burnt in fires, tongues and ears are cut; tortures, humiliation.

As the head of the province, I always demand my subordinate officials of the province and uyezds administration to perform the republican slogans - everybody is equal before the law and before the Government, there is no difference for the nationalities. But one unwittingly begins thinking if a nation, that does not accept the higher and human laws, deserves such an attitude after what it had done to peace representatives of another nation. Kidnapping of Fagrat Balayantz' robbers rises the whole administration's feet. A predatory attack of several daredevils upon a group of Armenians at Alat station results in an inquiry to the Parliament and crocodile tears before the English commandment, while hundreds of thousands of innocent victims are silently shedding their tears in expectation of support and intercession from the authorities. It seemed that after the English commandment interfered into the Tatar-Armenian relations by means of sending special missions for the settlement of conflicts, should finally put an end to the foregoing developments, but Armenians continue their mobilization and are obviously finding support of the British officers. Attacks upon Moslems were not ended, but became even more fierce and serious.

Please find below a list of impudent barbarities and crimes, committed by the Armenians against Moslems after the coming of the English mission to the Jebrayil uyezd, starting December 1st 1918. These are:

December 3rd, Armenians laid siege on Goga village, killed up to 10 Moslems, old landlord Asad-Aga Jevanshir and slaughtered his family.

On December 2nd, armed Armenians from Arakul and other villages, attacked residents of Halafli, Ashikh Melikli, Tatar and Shikhlar villages, burned down and destroyed 10 houses, injured 2 women, 6 men and killed 10 heads of cattle.

On December 5th, up to 40 sheep owned by Molla Nabi and others, were stolen from the Karakellu village.

On December 7th, Armenians stole 80 sheep from Moslems of Arish village.

On December 10th, 8 heads of cattle were stolen from Doshuli residents Magerram Musa oglu and others.

On December 10th, 12 heads of cattle were stolen from Efendilar residents Mir Yusif Mir Hasan oglu.

On December 15th 100 heads of cattle were stolen from Sirik residents.

On December 18th, Armenians attacked Mazra village, thrust their bayonets into guard Ismaili Mustafa oglu, stole 40 heads of cattle and household belongings worth up to 70,000 roubles.

In January, all economic and other objects, owned by landlords Jamal Bek and Vezirov were burnt, their other properties were devastated and damages exceeding 100,000 roubles were caused.

Despite these facts, the Moslems of the Jebrayil uyezd received the news with a feeling of deep sorrow, but did not take any active actions and occupied a defensive position for protection of themselves and their properties from Armenian attacks.

According to the Uyezd Commander, there were no cases of legal offences by Moslems against Armenians in that uyezd.

Nevertheless, informative sources report that Armenians for no particular reason are continuing to actively arm themselves in Gadrut village, which serves as the headquarter for all Armenian gangs. One may therefore conclude that Armenians are preparing to serious clashes with Moslems on the border and Moslems may suffer heavy casualties due to insufficient amount of arms and cartridges.

The greatest evil in this case is the presence of robber Andranik, who does not recognize any kind of power, and obvious support, even though moral, of Englishmen.

To conclude my report on Armenian barbarities, I would like to add that 105 (one hundred and five) villages were devastated and sacked in the Zangezur uyezd alone. The list of villages is attached to this document. (Besides, Moslems of bordering regions with Persia are subjected to attacks by predatory Persian gangs, who devastate boundary villages, kill peace civilians and steal their cattle).

By reporting on the foregoing, I kindly request Your Excellency to take all possible measures for the rescue of those Moslems, who lost their properties and now languish in poverty, and for the prevention of potential devastation of those, who managed to escape the fate of their compatriots.

I would also like to notify Your Excellency, that I believe the Government shall make a categorical statement addressed to the English Commandment [with the requirement] to take all available measures for the subordination of the nation, whom they used to believe and who they supported until now, and to try to notify the commander of the Allied Army in the Caucasus, about the real state of things.

At the same time, I would like to kindly ask for an intercourse with the Persian Government through the Foreign Ministry, concerning the measures against attacks of Persian robbers into the territory of Azerbaijan.

In the end, I would like to request Your Excellency to consider the settlement of Moslem refugees into their native lands, and assisting them with the supply of livestock and equipment, seeds and financial subsidies, for the restoration of their economies.

Please notify me of future decrees of Your Excellency (particularly concerning the satisfaction of my request for the protect of Moslems in my province).

Governor Vekilov.
Head of the Chancellery (signed)