

THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA IN THE CONFLICT BETWEEN THE SOUTH RUSSIAN VOLUNTEER ARMY, BRITISH AND AZERI INTELLIGENCE SERVICES IN TRANSCAUCASIA IN 1918-1920

Vanik Virabyan

Doctor in History

Khachatur Abovyan Armenian

State Pedagogical University

Abstract

The breakthrough processes that took place in Russia led to the collapse and split of the Russian Empire, and as a result of that, the unpredictable development of historical and political processes led to the emergence of independent national statehoods in Transcaucasia. In each of them, ambiguous and contradictory functions of state system formation occurred, including, first of all, the processes of creation of armed forces and intelligence services, for which there were neither sufficient human resources, nor experience and material-and-financial means. Similar processes took place throughout the whole territory of the former Russian Empire. The first Republic of Armenia (1918-1920) appeared on the crossroads of different intelligence services (the Russian Volunteer army, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Turkey).

Keywords: First Republic of Armenia, General Denikin, Azerbaijan, Georgia, intelligence service

There has been no reference to this topic in historiography at all. That is why we set the aim of revealing to some extent the military and political relations between the South Russian Volunteer Army led by General A. Denikin and the Republic of Armenia in the domain of intelligence and political conflict with Azerbaijan in 1918-1920, in particular to study the conflict of intelligence services around Transcaucasia and in Armenia, based on very important archival facts and other documents.

As a result of the Battle of Sardarapat against the Turks in May 1918, the Armenian people re-established their statehood, but found themselves at the center of geopolitical events and border conflicts and territorial disputes between Azerbaijan, Georgia and particularly Turkey. The intelligence services of the South Russian Volunteer Army led by General A. Denikin were carrying out activities in this regard and the Republic of Armenia was not neglected, since Armenia was given a prominent place in the programs of the restoration of the Russian Empire. As a result, the Republic of Armenia, its young, newly emerging intelligence agencies appeared at the center of an unyielding conflict.

The breakthrough processes that took place in Russia led to the collapse and split of the Russian Empire, and as a result of that, the unpredictable development of historical and political processes led to the emergence of independent national

statehoods in Transcaucasia. In each of them, ambiguous and contradictory functions of state system formation occurred, including, first of all, the processes of creation of armed forces and intelligence services, for which there were neither sufficient human resources, nor experience and material-and-financial means. Similar processes took place throughout the whole territory of the former Russian Empire.

Leaving the national regions, however, neither the Red Guards, nor especially the White South of Russia reconciled with the situation, and they took steps to restore the former positions, the integrity of a united Russia. In this respect the newly established Transcaucasian republics and the North Caucasus became the center of their attention. The attention of the special services formed by the command of the Russian White Guard's armed forces was focused on these very issues, and the various newly emerging Transcaucasian states had their own attitude towards these realities.

Taking advantage of the passive position of the British in the region, Azerbaijan and Georgia accepted White Russia from the position of almost open hostility or so-called hostile neutrality. They were alarmed by the imperial ambitions of Volunteer Russia; sometimes they even were ready to form an alliance with the Bolsheviks with certain reservations. However, their desires were moderated by the British who practically did not need a united and powerful Russia in any way. In this situation, the Republic of Armenia, proceeding from its geopolitical interests, showed readiness to cooperate not only with the south of Russia and other new state formations, but also did not neglect or remove from the agenda the issue of having relations with the Red Russia.

Taking all this into consideration, the South Russian Volunteer Army, which had become an influential military and political force thanks to Denikin, turned the attention of its newly forming special services to those republics, trying to be aware of the events taking place there and thus influence them as much as possible, using its officers in the national armies. They also wanted to take out the military property left over from the old army, which those republics needed as well, because they simply did not have their own. This is what prompted the activation of the intelligence services of the Volunteer Army in Transcaucasia and in the Caucasus in general.

In 1918-1920 the Republic of Armenia maintained relatively stable military and political relations with various Russian state formations. The intelligence services of those republics as a whole were in the embryonic stage, striving to become professional, involving the special services of both the White Guards and Britain and others.

Due to the victory in the First World War, from the end of 1918 till the middle of 1919 the British military representation and those of other countries played a decisive role in the military and political life of the Transcaucasian republics with their presence, significantly influencing solutions of regional significance and in particular, delimitation issues. The English played a negative role in the events of the beginning of 1918 and later, keeping under their control the incomparably strategically more important Baku, where allied police was established, as well as the no less important Tbilisi and

Yerevan, considered secondary, without reckoning with the Azerbaijani, Georgian or Armenian government, which was considered an ally. They made openly gainful decisions for British interests, some Azerbaijani-related details of which were reviewed by Volkhonsky and Mukhanov¹. At the same time, after the forced departure from Transcaucasia, a part of the Russian military remained in those republics, where they were much needed and in fact, some of them served those countries honestly and professionally. Nonetheless, in the new conditions, in order to restore its lost positions, the Russian Empire, in this case Voluntary Russia placed much importance on the intelligence and political work in the Caucasus and in Transcaucasian republics.

In this respect, the position of White Russia contributed to the stabilization of the Republic of Armenia at certain moments. The disruption of the position of Volunteer Russia at that historic moment could destabilize the situation in the Caucasus even more and contribute to the strengthening of the position of Musavat Azerbaijan and Menshevik Georgia in conditions of alienation of Russia itself; especially since the British policy was not particularly pro-Armenian. The Republic of Armenia was intently watching the events in the North Caucasus, where the Azerbaijani authorities were looking for support in the fight against the supporters of Denikin. The latter in their turn regarded Azerbaijan as a somewhat non-friendly force. Naturally, the intelligence services of the armed forces of South Russia noticed Azerbaijan's dangerous activation in the North Caucasus and tried to neutralize it, preventing the spread of separatist and anti-Russian sentiments among the population. For Armenia it was important also because significant forces of Armenian officers were concentrated in the North Caucasus, particularly the Armenians of the Black Sea coast, some of whom, in the form of armed detachments, supported the Volunteer Army in the fight against the Georgians. The latter changed their position only after Denikin's defeat and ended their participation in the battles fought by the Volunteers. Anyway, South Russia was of strategic importance to the Republic of Armenia. From there, although with difficulty, weapons, ammunition and food were procured for the Armenian army. A. Denikin openly supported the supply, also contributing to the transportation of Armenian troops to the Republic of Armenia through transit routes of Georgia, with the government of Georgia making significant obstacles for this. In this respect, the Georgian-Azerbaijani military and political alliance of June 16 and September 1919 was alarming, since the Georgian-Azerbaijani rapprochement was directed against Denikin and his ally, the Republic of Armenia². And Azerbaijan did not hesitate and even brought its troops closer to the borders of Dagestan. In Armenia this was received with alarm. Armenia did not even think about joining the Georgian-Azerbaijani alliance, in spite of the concerns to remain completely isolated in the region³.

¹ See Volkhonsky, Mukhanov 2007: 151–156.

² See Petrosyan 2011: 323.

³ It should be noted that the Georgian-Azerbaijani alliance was quite stable and it was completed by the Turkish-Azerbaijani secret agreement signed on April 15, 1920. The document was obtained by the RA Intelligence service and was published in N.20 summary of July 6, 1920 (signed by Hovhannes Khan-Kotursky, Chief of the Intelligence and

The intelligence of the Volunteer Army, which had its representation in the Republic of Armenia in the person of Colonel M. Zinkevich, who was particularly friendly towards the Republic of Armenia, naturally noticed Azerbaijan's activation. The latter took advantage of the alliance with Turkey and the passive position of the British which needed neither a strong White Russia nor, clearly, Red Russia. Highly covert destructive espionage activities were carried out throughout Russia.

The steps aimed at alienation from Russia became targeted, in response to which Volunteer Russia took appropriate countermeasures. The intelligence services of the Volunteer Army showed some aspiration to prevent anti-Denikin steps and actions. For that purpose real intelligence and political actions were taken to operatively be informed about the moods of the republics of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia as well and even to have their network of agents in the armed forces, other law enforcement institutions and state establishments of those countries.

At that moment, the British military and political representation was also trying to secure its presence in the region and entered into an ambiguous game. On the one hand, as mentioned by the advisor of the RA diplomatic mission in Tbilisi, prince M. Tumanyan "Not only did the British not support the agents of the Volunteer Army, but also forbade others"⁴ to support them. On the other hand, in order to fight against Soviet Russia, which generally fitted into the goals of the British Empire, they wanted to pit the Bolshevik Russia, created by German emperor's agent V. I. Lenin against the South and generally White Guard Russia, to impair both sides, and as a result to have a torn up, dismembered Russia with a lot of small state formations, which would no longer pose a threat to the British Empire and which would be deprived of a global role. Denikin's representatives were allowed to recruit personnel in Batumi to replenish the Army and create an agency⁵, which, however, did not become a reality due to the ambiguous and multi-layered policy of the British. Azerbaijan, as well as Georgia and the Republic of Armenia, became the scene of conflicting special services, where the vital interests of many countries clashed. And the Republic of Armenia was in the most difficult situation of all.

The fact that the command of Denikin's Volunteer Army had such intentions is evidenced by the fact that on November 1918 the so-called "Special Consultation" sent Colonel G. Leslie with a mission to Yerevan. He and other high-ranking officers started to serve in the General Staff of the Armenian army and in the secret Russian intelligence group, aiming to establish strong ties between the RA and the Volunteer Army, making the Armenian republic their stronghold in the fight against Bolshevism.

Counterintelligence Department of the General Staff of the Republic of Armenia, Lieutenant of the Admiralty, and his assistant Mikayel Dodokhyan). This was referred to by historian VI. Ghazakhetsyan as well. See Virabyan 2015: 568-575, See also Ghazakhecyan, 1-3 p. See <http://www.academhistory.am/imagesdownloadfiles/KAZACHECYAN%20rus.pdf> ghazakhec.

⁴ See Denikin 2005: 209.

⁵ Idem.

They also sought to make it their ally in the plans to occupy Georgia, etc.; the events and developments around the 1918 Georgian-Armenian war served as an occasion for that. However, the Armenian side did not take the bait, especially since the RA intelligence services and the Ministry of Internal Affairs had considerable insights into the secret aspects of the activities of Denikin's officers⁶.

This was more evidently demonstrated in the events that took place in the Kars province. The fact that the Armenian government was relatively well informed about the events taking place in the Kars province (June-July 1919), including Colonel G. D. Leslie's⁷ (representing Denikin's Volunteer Army) espionage and political activities in connection with strengthening Russian Volunteer Army's influence in the region, indeed clearly testifies to the satisfactory activity of the General Staff's intelligence and counterintelligence division and its relevant unit on the ground, even though Leslie acted in a disguised manner and as a military spy kept the rules of secrecy. It was clear to the Armenian side that on the recommendation of the so-called "Special Consultation" attached to the Volunteer Army, Leslie, the military and political representative of the "Special Consultation" in the Armenian government, was negotiating with Muslim representatives and the command of the Turkish 12th Army in Kars. The goal was that after the Turks left, the region should be handed over to the Russians. The Armenian side had facts that Leslie was interested in the relations between the Armenians, the British and the Russians⁸. We believe this should not be taken too seriously, because it was obvious that Bolshevik Russia, like the Volunteer Army, Wrangel and all together were not able to deal with such issues at that time. However, Colonel Leslie's meeting with "Shura" and the Turkish command in mid-January, 1919, of which the RA military authorities, the government and the intelligence bodies were informed as well, aroused the dissatisfaction of Armenian social and political circles. In this connection, on January 21, in a letter to Colonel Leslie, S. Tigranyan demanded an explanation concerning the negotiations with C. Temperley, English Governor of Kars, whether there was an intention to "establish Muslim and not Armenian governance headed by the Russian governor"⁹. On January 22, Leslie responded by saying: "I did not have an official conversation about political issues in Kars, however, I advised Colonel C. Temperley, the English military governor that in order to get out of this difficult situation, it is necessary to appoint a Russian governor who would be in direct contact with the Armenian government. There has never been a demand on my side that Muslim governance be established in the province"¹⁰. All this, however, deepened the dissatisfaction with Leslie's activities, and in 1919, in its N10

⁶ See Petrosyan 2005a: 87-88.

⁷ Leslie George [Yuri] Dmitriyev [01.04.1887-02.02.1957] - 01.12.1917 -1920 – Volunteer Army]. See Ganin 2009: 266, 481, 537, 595, 730.

⁸ See Petrosyan 2005a: 156.

⁹ See NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 164, p. 4, 10.

¹⁰ NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 164, p. 5, 11.

issue the “Zhoghovurd” newspaper of Yerevan simply wrote: “Colonel Leslie, General Denikin’s representative, has entered into negotiations with English Colonel C. Temperley on his own, he has conducted anti-Armenian propaganda in Yerevan and Echmiatsin and is trying to turn the British against us. His goal is to establish a Russian-Tatar administration in the Kars province”¹¹. Thus, the people’s faction of the RA Parliament demanded the presidency of the RA Council ask the Foreign and Military ministers whether they knew that “Colonel Leslie, the representative of the Volunteer Army was totally agitating against the Armenian people and the Republic of Armenia and whether it was true that Col. Leslie received 1000 rubles a month from the Military Ministry, and if so, from what money”¹². Naturally, the February 11, 1919 session of the RA Parliament addressed the issue and expressed its attitude, bringing facts, trying to find out who Leslie was, who he represented, what position he held¹³, but many issues were not made public. It was obvious that the RA government, the military department and the relevant structures, including the intelligence service, were trying to keep secret ties with other non-Soviet state and other formations in South Russia and this could give rise to various parliamentary and political speculations and misunderstandings. Based on this, the heads of the RA Foreign and Military Ministries assured that the Colonel of the Volunteer Army had not abused his position and had not carried out any anti-Armenian activity. Hence, the fact of cooperation between the special services of the two sides is obvious, but it is another matter to find out by what negligence this important information spread to the press and into the sphere of parliamentary gossip, inflaming passions and creating new complexes around Armenia which was undergoing a process of establishment.

However, there was a sense of uncertainty. Some representatives of the RA Intelligence Service, some high-ranking commanding officers and party-and-political circles were more cautious in giving preference to this or that country. There were even vague doubts as to who was really stronger - Bolshevik Russia, Kolchak or Denikin (which became obvious during the cold reception given to Colonel Leslie sent to Yerevan by the Volunteer Army in mid-1919)¹⁴, the British, the Americans or other forces. In the secret report from Tbilisi on January 20, 1919 addressed to S. Tigranyan, General G. Ghorghanyan warned about it: “Our foreign policy must be extremely cautious. We cannot, should not pursue an exclusively pro-British or pro-Russian policy. We had linked our destiny with the Entente countries since the very beginning of the war and did not give it up until the last day. We must now make it clear to everyone that we are waiting for a solution to our problems not from England, France, Russia or the United States separately, but from the Entente countries. Our fate must be decided by the Allies’ Conference in Paris. Until that decision is made, it would be wrong to link our

¹¹ NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 164, p. 6, 14.

¹² NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 164, p. 17.

¹³ NAA, f. 198, l. 1, f. 15, p. 133.

¹⁴ See Petrosyan 2005a: 88.

welfare with this or that Entente country, as it is impossible to predict the position of that country in the future conference. We may have temporary success, but we may lose a lot”¹⁵. However, those hopes later turned out to be baseless, leading to the inevitable isolation of the Republic of Armenia and its inevitable decline.

A. Manukyan’s article and the comprehensive study of the documents of the October 20, 1927 session of the Transcaucasian Territorial Control Committee of the Russian Communist (Bolshevik) Party reveal that one of the co-authors of the idea of establishing the General Staff in the Armenian Army was Colonel Mikhail Zinkevich, a staff officer of the Russian army (by the way, in some documents he is referred to not as a colonel, but as a general)¹⁶. He intended to create an autonomous structure of Denikin’s Volunteer Army in order to carry out the instructions and direct orders of the top leadership of that army at any time (he was originally the unofficial representative of that army). It is also necessary to refer to G. Petrosyan’s point of view about a not fully disclosed page of M. Zinkevich’s activity. According to a scientifically substantiated point of view, to prove which G. Petrosyan refers to interesting, practically reliable archival and other facts, Colonel M. Zinkevich, the Chief of the General Staff of the Armenian Army, with the active support of the Russian National Council of Yerevan, set up a secret intelligence group in Yerevan with his agents. The group was in direct contact with the “Special Consultation”¹⁷ attached to the Volunteer Army and with the Russian National Council for Transcaucasia in Tbilisi. This group provided regular information to the Volunteer Army and the “Special Consultation” attached to it about the Armenian Army, about various issues of the domestic and foreign policy of the Republic of Armenia, and the policy of Great Britain in Transcaucasia. The Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic had concrete facts about the existence and activity of the Russian intelligence group. However, the Armenian government showed restraint, firstly because on the one hand it did not pose a threat to the country’s independence and on the other hand in order not to disrupt the Armenian-Russian relations that were in the process of formation. The role of Denikin’s representation was to recruit Russian army staff officers living and operating in Armenia, deploy them to other various structures of the Armenian army and thus use them to solve far-reaching strategic problems, such as perhaps establishing the power of Denikin in the Republic of Armenia and jointly fighting the threat of Bolshevism. M. Zinkevich was one of the people given relevant tasks. It should also be noted that Zinkevich was one of the immediate witnesses of the involuntary birth of the First Republic of Armenia and one of the co-authors of the active creators and organizers of the power structures of the new state (with the above reservations).

¹⁵ NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 193, part I, p. 35- 36.

¹⁶ NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 412, p. 35, see also Hovhannisian 1982: 470, 474, 516 -517, 524.

¹⁷ It played the role of a government. See Petrosyan 2005a: 15, 17, 22; Petrosyan 2005b: 20, 80, 83-84, 132, 137, 138-139, 189; Petrosyan 2011: 90, 72-101, etc.

According to the order of the Military Minister dated April 28, 1919, M. Zinkevich, the head of the headquarters of the Armenian division was appointed acting Chief of General Staff¹⁸. Already on August 28, 1919 (3703/oc), on behalf of the Commander-in-Chief of the RA Military Ministry a telegram was received from Lieutenant General Lukomsky¹⁹ from Rostov. It said that Colonel M. Zinkevich was sent with a mission to Armenia as a military representative of the Commander-in-Chief of the South Russian Armed Forces under the Government of the Republic of Armenia. This is also referred to by the RA diplomatic representative in Tbilisi in his September 24, 1919 (N 3080) telegram addressed to the Military Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs. And on October 3, 1919 (N 3219) he already recorded the fact that the operation was in process and that Zinkevich had arrived²⁰. On September 27, 1919, hearing Prime Minister Al. Khatisyan's report on the appointment of Colonel Zinkevich as the RA Military Representative in the Volunteer Army, the session of the Council of Ministers gave its agreement²¹. For his skilful activity Zinkevich was repeatedly awarded letters of gratitude by the government for his impeccable performance, especially during his tenure as Chief of General Staff, when he was in close cooperation with RA Military Minister Major General Hakhverdyan²². After the multifaceted military and reconnaissance activity in Armenia, since the beginning of 1920 Zinkevich started beneficial activity in the structures of the South Russian Volunteer Army, often for the benefit of the Republic of Armenia. In a letter to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs dated June 27, 1920 (N° 5205), the Head of the Office of the Council of Ministers informed that in the June 25, 1920 session the Council of Ministers decided to appoint Colonel M. Zinkevich as its representative in South Russia²³. And in the letter dated June 29, 1920 (N° 3922), Hakob Ter-Hakobyan, the Secretary General of the RA Ministry of Foreign Affairs informed Zinkevich that the RA Government had recognized him as the representative of the South Russian Government attached to the Government of Armenia²⁴. And in his official letter to the government dated June 14, 1920 (N° 3642) RA Minister of Foreign Affairs H. Ohanjanyan stated that Zinkevich's mission ceased to function with the victorious advancement of the Bolsheviks, considering that by negotiating with the Bolsheviks the Armenian government had not contradicted itself, that they had received and would receive the representatives of different divided parts of Russia, especially since both P. Wrangel and Denikin supported Armenia by giving ammunition and food and promising support in the future as well²⁵. In this new position

¹⁸ NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 131, p. 24.

¹⁹ Alexander Sergey Lukomsky [10.07.1868-25.02.1939]- from November 24, 1917 to 1920 he was in the Volunteer Army. He died in exile. See Ganin 2009: 269,406, 428, 535-536, 584.

²⁰ NAA, f. 275, l. 5, f. 131, p. 1-3.

²¹ NAA, f. 199, l. 1, f. 100 (85), p. 215.

²² NAA, f. 204, l. 1, f. 91, p. 65, etc.

²³ NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 412, p. 33.

²⁴ NAA, p. 33-34.

²⁵ NAA, f. 199, l. 1, f. 111, part II, p. 176.

Zinkevich was trying to be useful to the Republic of Armenia. In his letter back on April 11, 1920 (N° 2313) addressed to Colonel Zinkevich Al. Khatisyan informed that according to the information obtained by them, as well judging from the conversation of M. Harutyunyan, the diplomatic representative of Armenia with General D. P. Dratsenko²⁶, it became clear that Major General D. P. Dratsenko, the representative of the Commander-in-Chief of the Volunteer Army had voluntarily handed over to the Azerbaijani government in Baku more than 100 cannons, 200 machine guns, 40,000 three-barrel rifles, a huge number of land mines and bullets, 2 armored vehicles, a warship, etc., as well as other military engineering equipment. Khatisyan believed that the military property should either have been given a different purpose or should have been sunk in the sea. He considered any other solution as hostile act against Armenia and strongly protested against it, emphasizing that it was especially unacceptable because Armenia's attitude towards Russia had always been friendly²⁷. It was obvious that the Armenian side was expecting real support, an explanation for what had happened from Colonel Zinkevich, as an old friend. In his reply letter to the RA minister-president dated April 20, 1920 (N° 2219) Colonel Zinkevich emphasized that the fact of handing over weapons and equipment to Azerbaijan was true, although he had no direct evidence for that. However, he did not deny that he could only have a pronounced negative attitude towards it and that those guilty would be punished. Zinkevich emphasized that his attitude towards Azerbaijan was unchanged, adding that it was formed after the events of 1917. At the same time he explained his reasons for leaving the RA. At the end of his message Zinkevich emphasized that he was very happy to be able to continue his work for Armenia tested through hardships, and to strengthen the friendly ties between Armenian and Russian peoples. He added that at that time he was participating in the work of providing assistance to Armenian refugees organized by the Armenian government²⁸.

The RA intelligence apparatus studied the military and political situation in Armenia, and on the other hand, through its approved residents, representative-agents it provided information at the level of the Transcaucasian republics on the situation and military sentiments in Denikin's Volunteer Army and in particular in the Red Army. That intelligence unit also conducted intelligence operations against Turkey and Iran regarding the condition of the Turkish army, its location, number, plans, and other regional geopolitical issues. By the way, it should especially be noted that the initial stage of the intelligence and counter-intelligence activities of the Republic of Armenia is characterized by the dominance of the White Guard Volunteer Army. And it was so tangible and significant that later the Armenian government even took steps to isolate

²⁶ Dani[i]l Pavel Dratsenko [08.12.1876 - 1945] - General of the Russian Army, during 1915-1918 he was in Transcaucasia; from November 15, 1918 till 1920 he had close relations with the Volunteer Army, being a representative of its high-ranking officer staff. See Ganin 2009: 213, 458, 587, 725.

²⁷ NAA f. 200, l.1, f. 412, p. 22.

²⁸ NAA f. 200, l.1, f. 412, p. 23.

White Guard officers from their direct role in intelligence activities, which they deliberately carried out mainly in the interests of Denikin's Volunteer Army. In connection with this latest matter the government appointed Captain Vahagn Galust Muradyan head of the intelligence department and deputy chief of the General Staff, instructing him to possibly neutralize this tendency of the White Guards. Thus, Denikin's intelligence services covered not only the North Caucasus and its adjoining territories, but also each of the Transcaucasian republics.

According to A. V. Ganin, who referred to the conflict between the White Guard intelligence and the Azerbaijani intelligence and the role of Armenians in it, as well as to the activities of the British special services in Azerbaijan in the first half of 1919, Armenia was one of the major stages of the conflict between the intelligence services of different countries, and the forces led by Denikin sought to revive the Russian Empire. This did not fit into the British plans, which carried out divisive intelligence and political work, guided by the principle "Divide and rule". They demonstrated their impartial position, but did everything possible to prevent Russia from being reborn, to make it remain in a collapsed state and be expelled from the Transcaucasian region. Currently similar processes take place as well and this harms the vital and security interests of the Republic of Armenia. Thus, according to A. Ganin, White Guard scout Captain A. S. Chernishev pursued exactly those goals²⁹. Around March 20, 1919, he penetrated into Azerbaijan and was able to infiltrate into the newly-opened Investigative and intelligence political department of Baku, which had a staff of 10 people³⁰. The department also recruited A. A. Okoyev or Akayev, Hakobyants, of Armenian origin, known to the Armenian intelligence³¹. Since the department's activities included the detection and declassification of Bolsheviks, counter-revolutionaries and particularly officers of the Volunteer Army, as well as the discovery of their counterintelligence, naturally, it was

²⁹ According to A. Ganin, Captain *Alexander Sergey Chernishev*, born in 1886, had been a member of the General Staff since March 23, 1918 and then was sent to serve in the armed forces of South Russia. He was a brave combat officer who had taken part in the battles of the Caucasian front and the capture of Erzurum as a member of the 5th Caucasian Rifle Regiment and was severely wounded. As of May 1918 he was at the disposal of the headquarters of the Caucasian Front. By the order of the Transcaucasian government, from May 10, 1918 he was transferred to the General Staff. From 1919 he started serving in the armed forces of South Russia. His future fate is unknown. His political views are echoed in the draft text he wrote on the aims of the "Russian Order of Partisans", in which he set himself the task of uniting all the spiritual and physical forces for an active struggle for the revival of United Russia based on federative principles. See Ganin 2009: 375; Ganin 2016: 100, 108. See

<https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/razvedchiki-epohi-diletantov>:

http://istmat.info/files/uploads/58797/azerb_1919.pdf 08.08.2021:

³⁰ Ganin 2016: 98-100.

³¹ Ganin 2016: 98-100; see also NAA, f. 275, l. 5, f. 75, p. 35, f. 26, p. 203, f. 184, p. 52, f. 75, p. 35, f. 26, p. 203, f. 204, l. 1, f. 131, p. 24, f. 275, l. 5: During those days RA resident in Baku was *Arshak Sargisyan* (Arshak Sargisov), a member of the diplomatic mission, was deported from Baku for allegedly destructive intelligence activities, when *Khan-Tekinsky* was the Deputy Foreign Minister of Azerbaijan; and this was reported to Foreign Minister *Mustafa Vekilov* on February 20, 1920. See Nazim 2018: 80, 99, 110, 158 and etc.

important for the White Guards to have an agent in such a structure in Azerbaijan. It should also be mentioned that according to Ganin, Captain Chernishev expected to influence the activities of the department and obtain valuable information for the Volunteer Army³². According to Ganin, Chernishev was a bearer of imperial ideas and did not admit the existence of independent Transcaucasian states outside the united Russia, only allowing for the possibility of broad autonomy. Thus, he headed the White Guards intelligence network in Azerbaijan, but in April 1919 his activities ended with arrest³³.

However, during this time, in connection with the appointment of the representative of Kuban in Azerbaijan, Chernishev was trying to find out who would be the representative of Kuban in Azerbaijan, which was important in connection with the network of agents. It should be added that according to Ganin, the armed forces of the South did not have a diplomatic representative in Azerbaijan at that time. This complicated the work of the intelligence service, preventing them from using the diplomatic shelter and carrying out activities³⁴, provided for by the principles of organizing the intelligence service under the General Staff of the Caucasus Army. These principles should have been the base for the establishment of the intelligence service of the Volunteer army in the Caucasian region and for the organization of its further activities, a similar variant of which was realized in the Republic of Armenia³⁵. Ganin emphasized that General L. F. Bicherakhov's intelligence unit was referred to. Its principles became a basis for Chernishev in creating an agent network, which included the acquisition of information about the local population, gathering the necessary information about the enemies and opponents of the revival of united Russia - the Bolsheviks, separatists, nationalists, as well as collecting data about the neighboring nations and states. All this had to be realized through a network of agents and spies and by questioning the arriving people, by army intelligence, interrogation of prisoners, as well as through information obtained from refugees, using air intelligence as well. In general, the Command of the Volunteer Army planned to organize its reconnaissance as operatively as possible in Tersk province, Dagestan, Astrakhan region, Stavropol, in the Governorate of Elizavetpol, Tbilisi, Yerevan, on the border with Persia and in the Apsheron Peninsula where the main body of the intelligence service was located. Naturally, the Armenians and the Armenian intelligence service did not stay away from this process, as a result of which certain relations were established between the two sides. Thus, according to A. Ganin, three reconnaissance groups were formed: Petrovsky, Tbilisi and Apsheron: this was thoroughly instructed and put on a real basis³⁶.

³² Ganin 2016: 100-101, 107.

³³ Ganin 2016: 101.

³⁴ Ganin 2016: 107.

³⁵ See in detail Virabyan 2015.

³⁶ Ganin 2016: 107-108.

From the archival and other materials circulated by Ganin it becomes clear that through yesaul Samedbek Yusupov who was directly subject to the Chief of General Staff Sulkevich³⁷ (appointed on January 15, 1919)³⁸ Azerbaijani special services and internal affairs bodies managed to track down Captain Chernishev because of the chatty and careless agent Smislova and prevent his reconnaissance activities, arresting him on a former Armenian street. This became the subject of a detailed investigation by the Ganja (Gandzak) district judicial investigator in late April-early May 1919, and the governor of Ganja became involved in this as well.

Shamistun Nazirli, a researcher on the military history of Azerbaijan and a journalist, stated about a secret conversation between Samed Bey Mehmandarov, the Azerbaijani Military Minister and Khosrov Bey Sultanov, governor of Kharabakh, based on the information related to the troops operating on Askeran (Artsakh-Karabakh) and other fronts and on the facts provided by Major General, then Lieutenant General Habib Bey Salimov, the Commander of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic troops in Artsakh as of March 31, 1920, as well as the Chief of the General Staff of the Azerbaijani Armed Forces. The conversation provides important information on the above-mentioned Chernishev and presents Mehmandarov's opinion on the intelligence activities of arrested Smislova: "No more than a week ago, a subversive group led by Smislova was caught in Ganja. And who was among its members? Nelli Fyodorovna Chernisheva, the lover of our General Staff employee; Stanislav Zuber and others. Apparently, our counterintelligence and the security bodies are just asleep. Instead, in Armenia, judging by the facts, the Bolsheviks act differently. They declare with sympathy that the Armenians are under the hostile Muslim blockade by Azerbaijan, Iran and Turkey, and that only the Bolsheviks give them guarantees of state independence, in addition to expanding their territory at the expense of Azerbaijan and Turkey"³⁹.

According to them, the disclosure of Chernishev's agent network was facilitated by the financial documents kept by him, which he did not manage to destroy, in particular, his one-month report from February 20 to March 20, and even more precisely - March 24⁴⁰. The documents testified that one of their main tasks was to expose the Bolshevik underground in Azerbaijan and beyond its borders, including the Caspian region,

³⁷ Sulkevich Mammad Bey – Sulkevich Suleyman [Matvey, Massey, Muhabed Bey. 20.07.1865-15.07.1920] was a Lithuanian Tatar, a Muslim. His father had served in the Alexandrov Hussar Regiment, reaching the rank of lieutenant colonel. General Mammad Bey Sulkevich himself was born into a noble family in Kemeys, Villen province. From June 25, 1918 till November 18, 1918 he was the head of the so-called Crimean regional government. He was named Matsey Bey upon birth, however, for his activities in the Crimea, the local Tatars named him Suleyman Pasha, and in Azerbaijan he voluntarily adopted the name Mammad Bey. See Shamistan Nazirli 2015: 40-41, 47. From March 19, 1919 till April 1920 he served in the army of Musavat Azerbaijan. He was the Chief of the General Staff of the Azerbaijani army, then he was captured by the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army, arrested and detained in the Bailov Prison in Baku, and then executed by shooting.

³⁸ Aslanov, Akhundov, Abdullaeva, Alieva 2018: 51.

³⁹ Shamistan Nazirli 2015: 15, 200.

⁴⁰ Ganin 2016: 105.

cooperating with the British in this matter, also trying to establish contact with Georgia. At the same time, they tried to establish secret contacts with the Georgian military attaché in Baku and the Azerbaijani state officials, attaching importance to parliamentary hearings in the Azerbaijani parliament, significant materials on military and political issues, etc. Without repugnance they resorted to bribery as well, which, according to the Volunteer intelligence, had become so widespread in Azerbaijan that ministers and even the most powerful officials could be bribed with a certain amount of money. They resorted to questioning Armenian refugees as well. The arrest of Chernishev by the Azerbaijani counterintelligence revealed the list of 9 agents he had recruited, indicating the sums paid to them. And so, in addition to Okoyev, the group of agents organized by Chernishev included Aghoyev, Barchikhinyants, Beyer, Igumnov, Orlov, Tsagolov, E. I. Smislova⁴¹, V. A. Chestnokov⁴². One of them - E. I. Smislova drew the attention of the 27-year-old yesaul Samedbek Yusupov (Yusubov), centurion of the 2nd Karabakh Cavalry Regiment. At a hotel she carelessly said that she had been sent to Ganja by General Denikin's army and by the English headquarters to gather information for the English about the Azerbaijani army, the number of Turkish officers in the Azerbaijani military units, as well as information for the Volunteer Army about the number, deployment and discipline of the Azerbaijani army, as well as the location of its arsenal⁴³. Yusupov immediately reported this to the Chief of General Staff, Lieutenant General S. A. Sulkevich, from whom he received instructions to watch Smislova. Ultimately, Yusupov's efforts were successful, as Smislova helped him to get to Chernishev, and a seemingly insignificant piece of paper was handed over by Yusupov to the head of the counterintelligence department on March 29, as a result of which Smislova was searched and arrested.

This fact received exceptional attention from the military and political authorities of Azerbaijan and it is evident from the telegram sent by S. S. Mehmandarov from Ganja to Kh. Khasmamedov, member of the Azerbaijani Parliament, Minister of Justice and Internal Affairs on March 29, 1919. It requested that measures be taken immediately to

⁴¹ Ganin 2016: 101. In a letter to the Judicial Chamber of Azerbaijan, on April 25, 1919 the prosecutor of Ganja reported that Elizaveta Ivanovna Smislova, a 22-year-old resident of Penza, noblewoman, checked into hotel "Centralnaya" in Ganja around March 20: she was a fourth-year student at the Petrograd Faculty of History, specialized in Oriental languages at special courses, and already in 1918-1919 she lived in Baku, working at the Office of the Management of Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan, and after her dismissal in late January, 1919 she worked at a notary.

⁴² Ganin 2016. 105-106, 108-109.

⁴³ Taking this into account, on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the Azerbaijani special services, Aydin Bayram from Azerbaijan unconditionally claimed that in order to destroy the foundations of the young Azerbaijani republic and to undermine socio-political stability in the country, Armenian nationalists carried out intense anti-Azerbaijani, provocative and intelligence activities. A. Bayram concluded that the Armenian spies sent the information they obtained not only to the ARF centers, but also to the Denikinians, to the Bolsheviks, the British, that the majority of those arrested by the authorities of the Azerbaijani Democratic Republic in connection with Denikin's army attack were Armenian *saboteurs*. See Aydin Bayram 2019: 8-9, 12. See www.elibrary.az/docs/jurnal/jrn2019_24.

arrest the members of the disclosed spy organization: "In connection with the irrefutable evidence that information was gathered about the Azerbaijani armed forces in Ganja, citizen Smislova was arrested. She is accused of spying for the Volunteer Army and the Armenian government. Several officers of the Ganja garrison were discovered to be her accomplices. Her other accomplices are in Baku, namely Nelli Feodorovna Chernysheva, who lives at 8 Armenian Street, Music College and is the wife of an officer of the General Staff who served in the Armenian army and currently lives in Baku; and Stanislav Rudolf Zuber who is in the Rilski Merkuriev office. I suppose all the threads of the spy organization are intertwined in Baku ...»⁴⁴.

As a result, he played an important role in the development of Azerbaijani counterintelligence. On March 31, 1919, the Chief of General Staff Sulkevich sent yesaul Yusupov on a business trip to Ganja on the instructions of the Military Minister, and the assistant to the Minister of Internal Affairs was instructed to support him. At the same time, they claimed that the center of the spy agency was in Baku, and it reached out to the troops and the government. Thus, according to the order of the Military Minister, Sulkevich considered it necessary to work in solidarity everywhere, to organize counterintelligence in the military department and in the criminal investigation department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, considering it a very responsible job, entrusting it only to very reliable Muslim officers, finding that the job should not be trusted to somewhat hostile Russians or Armenians and that he could not allow it for the sake of his homeland. Sulkevich believed that the job required a complete devotion to the interests of the republic, which could not be bought with money⁴⁵. In order to solve this problem, Sulkevich personally asked the governor to support Yusupov and to coordinate his actions with G. B. Fatalibekov, the head of the Baku reconnaissance police. Due to these important circumstances, the investigation of the case of Smislova and others, which started on March 29 in Ganja, was personally led by Lieutenant Aghalarov, the chief of the counterintelligence department of the General Staff, and the preliminary investigation was led by I. I. Viktorovich, investigating judge on especially important cases⁴⁶. And in his telegram of March 29, 1919 addressed to the Minister of Internal Affairs, Azerbaijani Military Minister S. B. Mehmandarov stated that Ms. Smislova had been arrested in Ganja on charges of spying for the Volunteer Army and the Armenian government⁴⁷. In this regard, General of the Azerbaijani Army Murad Gyaray Bey Tlekhas⁴⁸ admitted that at that time he was ruthless towards Denikin's spies who had fallen into their hands in Azerbaijan.

⁴⁴ Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan 1998: 88-89.

⁴⁵ Ganin 2016: 101-103.

⁴⁶ Idem.

⁴⁷ Ganin 2016: 103.

⁴⁸ Murad Gyaray Bey Tlekhas (1874, Kuban region - May 29, 1920, Baku), Major General, Circassian. In 1918-1920 he fought for the independence of Azerbaijan. In the autumn of 1918, when the White Guards occupied Kuban and Adygea, Tlekhas went to Azerbaijan. On December 4, 1919, he was appointed Governor-General of the fortified region

A. Ganin stated that on the basis of the confiscated documents, the Azerbaijani intelligence declassified the activity of A. A. Okoyev⁴⁹, the 22-year-old triple intelligence agent of Armenian descent who collaborated with the White Guards and British intelligence, was well known in Armenian intelligence, which we mentioned above.

Thus, according to the facts provided by A. Ganin, Okoyev was tasked by the Volunteer Army intelligence to join the Baku Investigation Department in order to obtain the necessary information and, if possible, to guide the Department's activities. To uncover all the activities Okoyev had carried out against them, the Baku investigators conducted searches also at the house of General Shchetinin, prince, former head of the Tbilisi Railway Gendarmerie Department, head of the intelligence group of the Volunteer Army in Baku, and at the house of General Stanislav Rudolf Zuber. On April 4, on the basis of the facts obtained, charges were brought against Chernishev, his wife, Smislova and Lieutenant A. Okoyev, although they did not accept the charges, except for Smislova. They were imprisoned in the notorious and ominous Bailov prison in Baku. According to the facts brought by Ganin, during the investigation A. Okoyev claimed that he had never acted against Azerbaijan, but he was a secret agent under the Commissar of the Allied States in Baku, and from March 1 until his arrest he was a secret agent of the counterintelligence department of the British headquarters. And according to the testimony of Colonel F. P. Kokerel, Commissar of the Military Police of the Allied States in Baku, from late February 1919 till March 7, he served in the operative unit of General Bicherakhov's headquarters under Captain Chenishev whom he provided information about the local Bolsheviks, and on the instructions of the Police Headquarters of the Allied States he tried to find out whether the rumors were true that through the British headquarters Bicherakhov's army secretly distributed weapons to the workers of Baku. Okoyev kept this secret from Chernishev, although he had received a salary of 780 rubles for 20 days of work, which was not a small amount. The details of the case investigated by the Azerbaijani investigative bodies testified that in early April, 1919, without leaving his service at the British headquarters and his work with Chernishev, Okoyev was admitted to the Baku Intelligence Department, allegedly not on his own initiative but at the suggestion of the Governor of Baku, who had assessed his merits in connection with other matters. By the way, during the interrogation Baku Governor Rashid Bey Akhund Zadeh, for obvious reasons, did not confirm Okoyev's version. Together with Hasan Bey Fatalibekov, the head of the intelligence department, they

of Baku and played an important role in the establishment of the armed forces of that country. He was arrested by the Bolsheviks, accused of killing the famous Bolshevik Ali Bayramov, and was executed. See Shamistan Nazirli 2016: 28, 34-35.

⁴⁹ According to the evidence obtained by Ganin, Okoyev's father was Armenian and his mother was French. He was born in Paris, studied at a lyceum, and then, as a second-class non conscripted soldier he took an exam at a Realni School in Baku. He considered himself a Frenchman and converted from Catholicism to Orthodoxy during his marriage. Okoyev was the agent of the Allies, 22 years old. He lived in Baku since December, 1918. See Ganin 2016: 108.

denied Okoyev's allegations, stating that Okoyev had been accepted by the intelligence department as a secret agent due to his own persistent request, knowing in advance that he was serving in the British counterintelligence, which was not denied by Okoyev either. He had stated that he simultaneously worked in several places. He did not hide the fact that he had introduced himself as an Ossetian and had concealed his Armenian origin which would prevent him from entering the intelligence department⁵⁰.

In his new job Okoyev dealt with the disclosure of Bolsheviks and withdrawal of weapons from the village of Mashtagh, maintaining friendly relations with Chernishev and considering him useful in gathering information for the British⁵¹. It is certainly interesting that Captain Chernishev himself vehemently denied the allegations against him, refusing to testify, and only after being accused of violating international law against Azerbaijan by Russian military intelligence, he tried to defend himself in a special way. Chernishev gave a very original answer to that, and during the interrogation on April 7 he found that the issue as such could be resolved only by the Peace Conference, and before the decision of the conference, the territory in which he had operated, was considered to be Russia, where the activity of Russian military intelligence was quite natural and legal⁵². Such a statement simply showed that Chernishev did not recognize Azerbaijan as an independent state, clarifying: "The revolution, and then anarchy divided the peoples of Russia, proving that the former state system had exhausted its power and was unable to meet the demands of many peoples of Russia in regard to their cultural development and independent position. And in order to find new ways as soon as possible, in order to find common ground for unification on the basis of broad autonomy in which case all the peoples of Russia can express their national privileges, Russian military intelligence has set itself the goal of contributing to that unification. I strongly believe that only in these conditions the small peoples of Russia, which are culturally, historically, geographically, economically and politically connected with it, will not be exploited by any foreign third power, that only in the case of general unification will their voice be heard among the great powers deciding the fate of the world. I believe that only then will there be a common ground in the revolution and anarchy, only then will the principles of unification of all the peoples of Russia on the basis of broad autonomy be finally found, their security will be ensured, and state-building and cultural development will be achieved. The whole main purpose of intelligence, its idea, of sincerity of which there is documentary evidence, run like a red thread through my intelligence activities on the Apsheron Peninsula"⁵³. This is truly the sincere confession of a Russian noble spy, the unwavering, unique devotion of a Russian officer to the state, only in case of which the state could have real security guarantees.

⁵⁰ Ganin 2016: 107, 109.

⁵¹ Idem.

⁵² Idem.

⁵³ Ganin 2016: 110.

Denying the testimony of his agent Smislova, as an excuse for his stay in Baku Chernishsev tried to divert the Azerbaijani special services, saying that he was not sent on a business trip by the White Guard command, but only accidentally stayed in Baku after the withdrawal of General M. A. Przhevalsky's detachment, as he was tasked with liquidating the warehouses of the detachment. He said that he had not given any instructions to Smislova, that the acquaintance with her had been accidental, that they had met only 2-3 times. And his wife testified that she was in no way aware of her husband's activities, that he was engaged only in "counterintelligence" for the Volunteer Army. During an additional interrogation Captain Chernishev himself denied his wife's involvement in intelligence work, noting that the existence of a number of documents had nothing to do with intelligence⁵⁴. On April 2, investigator I. I. Viktorovich conducted a search of Chernishev's house in Baku, during which two maps and several documents were confiscated, which he had not managed to destroy. Among them was in particular one of his important reports on a month-long work spanning the period from February 20 to March 24, which revealed almost the whole picture of White Guard intelligence in Azerbaijan⁵⁵.

However, not satisfied with the obtained facts, the Azerbaijani special services set out to find and arrest all the persons who had something to do with Captain Chernishev, first of all those who had visited his apartment. As a result, the list of those arrested included N. F. Chernisheva, Captain Chernishev's wife (she lived on the Armenian street of Baku at that time and according to Ganin, she was the wife of a former officer of the Armenian army), Lieutenant A. A. Okoyev (Okoyants-Hakobyants), Captains N. D. Zhukov and Petrov, Staff-captain Y. Kalinin, Staff-rotmasters A. A. Kasimov and V. A. Chestnokov, Cornet V. P. Yordanov, Kaptenarmus A. P. Bulankin, Chernysheva's servant, soldier I. S. Tsikhovsky, temporary military official S. Kleshchevsky, sworn trustee I. G. Lutskin, engineer S. M. Remennikov, as well as Remennikova's servant N. Hakobyants. The adjutants were not kept for long, they were soon released. According to Ganin, on April 11, the detainees were transferred to Ganja, except for Petrov, who was being held in the central prison in Baku. After all this Ganja's warden M. Sklyarov wrote to Ganja's District Prosecutor: "On April 11, the head of the intelligence department of the troops of the Republic of Azerbaijan, trusting me, without any documents, brought to the prison Semyon Remennikov, Yevgeny Kalinin, Sergey Kleshchevsky, Iosif Lutskin, Alexey Kasimov, Alexander Okoyev, Vladimir Yordanov, Alexander Chernishev, Nimim Chernishev, Vladimir Chestnokov, Nikolay Zhukov, Iosif Chekhovsky, Nikolay Hakobyants and Anton Bulankin, of whom adjutants Hakobyants and Chekhovsky were released based on a letter on April 13. According to the same letter the rest of them were ordered to remain in custody until the end of the investigation". Warden M. Sklyarov therefore asked him not to delay and send the decisions on the above-mentioned persons, except for Chestnokov, in regard to whom

⁵⁴ Ganin 2016: 109-110, 113.

⁵⁵ Ganin 2016: 104.

there was a decision, but who died of typhus in prison⁵⁶. According to Ganin, the Azerbaijani special services, in particular the counterintelligence bodies considered A. Okoyev's or A. Hakobyants's arrest more important, viewing it one of their successful cases, and the rest, according to them, were indirectly related to that case⁵⁷.

In connection with Chernishev's case, as a result of an external observation of Colonel I. V. Tsvetkov, the head of the motorcade of the Caspian detachment of the Volunteer Army, G. B. Fatalibekov, Baku intelligence police chief found out about his ties with Chernishev and arrested him on April 22, confiscating his documents, notebook, notes, Chernishev's and Colonel Lazarev's notes on receiving a password. Colonels Lazarev and V. V. Makarov came under surveillance. During the search of the latter's apartment, among other items, the correspondence with General I. G. Erdeli, Commander of the Volunteer Army's military units in Terek-Dagestan region, the correspondence with Colonel Lazarev and two other coded telegrams were found. And as it turned out, Tsvetkov had at his disposal a large amount of explosives, ammunition, cars left over from Bicherakhov's detachment (102 cars). The cars were sold to private individuals and Armenian organizations, and the proceeds from the sale were transferred to the Volunteer Army, which was also the result of expulsion by the British from the region, which took place on March 1, 1919, when General V. Thomson, the commander of the Allies' troops that entered Baku, forced the Russian forces to leave Azerbaijan and the territory under the control of the South Russia's armed forces⁵⁸. The counterintelligence of the Azerbaijani army had also found out that in March 1919 there was allegedly an intention to take the cars and other property out of Azerbaijan, but they could not obtain such direct evidence from Tsvetkov. On April 28, Tsvetkov, together with Colonel V. P. Lik arrested with him, were released due to lack of corpus delicti, and the confiscated money and documents were returned to them⁵⁹.

This conflict between the intelligence services had formed in a situation when the Azerbaijani counterintelligence, as well as the intelligence bodies of the Volunteer Army in Azerbaijan were still in the embryonic stage of formation in the spring of 1919, and the intelligence personnel were somewhat amateurish, inexperienced. Moreover, there was no precise line between intelligence and counterintelligence bodies, which was specific to the Republic of Armenia as well, where they were subordinated to the General Staff⁶⁰. Nevertheless, as it turns out from M. Sulkevich's letter (N 1539) of March 31, 1919, addressed to Major General S. Aghabekov, Assistant to the Minister of

⁵⁶ Ganin 2016: 110-111.

⁵⁷ Ganin 2016: 110.

⁵⁸ Ganin 2016: 110, 111-112; Bezugolny 2011: 234-236; Gasanli 2010: 323-324; Puchenkov 2012: 132-133.

⁵⁹ Ganin 2016: 113.

⁶⁰ It should be noted that according to Ganin, the Azerbaijani counterintelligence department, like its Armenian counterpart, had a limited number of personnel. As of March, 1919 it included Ali Kuliyeu, Mossum Ibrahimov, Shikh-Ali Oghli Aziz, Abbas Novruzoglu, Bakhtiyar Saniyev, David Kakhiyev, and the so-called temporary agents - yesaul S. Yusupov, I. Vakhramaibekov, having a very limited amount, about 11.5 thousand rubles for March, as was the case with the Armenian structure. See Ganin 2016: 114, See in detail Virabyan 2015.

Internal Affairs, the task was to organize counterintelligence in Baku. He informed that yesaul Yusupov was being sent for that purpose, adding that only especially trusted Muslim officers should be involved in the case, as it should not be entrusted to Russians or Armenians who were hostile to them. He emphasized that the job required a complete devotion to the interests of the republic, which could not be bought with any money⁶¹. It was clear that the reason for such an approach was the events in Ganja connected with the alleged anti-Azerbaijani espionage activities by Smislova, Chernishev and others.

Chernishev's investigation lasted for 2 months, and on April 28 the latter's wife, Chernisheva was released on a 5000 rubles bail⁶².

It is obvious that in Azerbaijan they were quite worried about the activities of the Volunteer Army spies⁶³. In his dispatch to Colonel M. B. Aliyev, the military attaché of Azerbaijan in Tbilisi, General M. Sulkevich, the Chief of the General Staff, expressed his concern: "During the search at Chernishev's, quite important documents were found, which reveal the entire network of his agency. By the way, one of his agents, an Armenian officer, simultaneously serves the British and in the Baku investigation department. There is reason to believe that the intelligence of the Volunteer Army in Georgia is headed by General V. P. Shatilov⁶⁴. Warn the Chief of the General Staff of Georgia to be careful until suspicious people leave the country, which we should do in Baku and in other cities"⁶⁵. On April 22, Sulkevich sent a special letter about Chernishev to the Prosecutor of the Ganja District Court, and in May he informed the Prime Minister of a radio report confiscated from Chernishev, regarding the activities of the network of agents of the Volunteer Army within Azerbaijan⁶⁶. Its analysis shows that in those and other documents the Azerbaijani special services were also looking for an Armenian

⁶¹ Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan 1998: 90-91.

⁶² Ganin 2016: 114.

⁶³ On March 28, 1919, after the formation of the Azerbaijani army, by the decree of the Military Minister Samed Bey Mehmandarov and Chief of the General Staff Mammad Bey Sulkevich, the Intelligence and Counterintelligence Divisions were established under the General Staff. It was planned to employ 23 agents with a salary of 1000 rubles each, however, there were initially 10 agents who undertook the job of carrying out the operations of the special services of the state. The department was subordinated to the General-quartermaster of the General Staff. It was headed by Cornet, then Lieutenant Aghalarov. And since the Counterintelligence department of the General Staff could not handle its tasks with the Bolshevik propaganda in the army, in October, 1919, at the suggestion of the Military Ministry, a special criminal investigation unit was established under the Ministry of Internal Affairs to carry out political police operations in the army. And already in the autumn of 1919, an attempt was made to organize a military counterintelligence at the Ministry of Internal Affairs under the name "An organization for Struggle against Counter-Revolution", which reminds of the Bolshevik experience. In 1919 the head of the counterintelligence of the Republic of Azerbaijan was Nagi Bey Sheikhzamanli. See Ganin 2009: 131, 351; Aydin Bayram 2019: 8. See Ganin 2016: 113. Shamistan Nazirli 2015: 224; History of Azerbaijan 1963; Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan 1998: 87.

⁶⁴ Shatilov Vladimir Pavel [15.5.1855 - December, 1928] – a General, who was the representative of the General Command of the Volunteer Army in Georgia. He was arrested by the Georgian authorities, and in 1919 he headed the semi-official center of the Volunteer Army in Tbilisi. He was deported to Yugoslavia after the defeat of the White Army. See Zalessky 2003: 666-667.

⁶⁵ Ganin 2016: 114.

⁶⁶ Ganin 2016: 115-116.

trace, which, according to them, was undoubtedly related to the intelligence of the Volunteer Army.

It could be assumed that Azerbaijan was really worried about the intelligence activities of the South Russian Armed Forces, which was also a matter of resources. In this regard, Ganin cited the self-confession of the Azerbaijani Interior Ministry, in which the head of the Ministry stated that they could not counter each of the actions of the agents of the Volunteer Army within Azerbaijan, the recruitment of the network of agents from among mountaineers and in the Caspian region, given the fact that Chernishev had access to the British, to the General Staff of the Republic of Azerbaijan and to the top leadership⁶⁷, and Azerbaijan simply could not counteract this. It was on the basis of this last circumstance that the examination of Azerbaijani officers and officials began in Azerbaijan. They were forced to testify and justify themselves, but as was the case with Chernishev's additional interrogation, the whole further investigation came to a standstill, and extorting new information from the detainees proved ineffective. Finally, on May 27, the Ganja District Prosecutor proposed to replace the preventive measure for Chernishev, Okoyev and Smislova with a non-custodial measure. It was decided to release Chernishev on a 10 thousand rubles bail, and Smislova and Okoyev were put under local police surveillance. And so, Smislova and Okoyev were released on May 28 and Chernishev - on June 2⁶⁸. The latter left for Petrovsk, and the gun confiscated from Okoyev was handed over to the British headquarters. The British pressure on the Azeris is obvious here, otherwise Chernishev, Okoyev or Hakobyants would hardly escape from their clutches.

All this testifies to the conflict between the Voluntary Army, the Azerbaijani and British intelligence services in Azerbaijan and around it, in which the Armenians were not playing a secondary role at all. It should be noted that at that time both the Volunteer Army and the Azerbaijani and Armenian intelligence services were solving similar problems in an attempt to establish themselves and effectively counter the enemy's machinations. The role of the British in that conflict was multi-layered and ambiguous. They were one of the key figures in that secret war, and all the parties to the conflict sought to communicate and cooperate with them: they could not do without it since it was the most experienced special service in the region. According to the analysis, the case of Chernishev and Okoyev aggravated the relations between the Volunteer Army and Azerbaijan, created tensions for the local Russian and Armenian population. Many Russian officers were accused of espionage and were incarcerated in the prisons of Ganja and Baku⁶⁹. It is noteworthy that during the interrogation both Captain Chernishev and A. Okoyev stated that they did not plead guilty because they had worked on their own land, i.e. on the territory of the former Russian Empire, at a time when the existence of independent Azerbaijan was not recognized by anyone. In

⁶⁷ Steklov 1928: 26.

⁶⁸ Ganin 2016: 116.

⁶⁹ Baykov 1923: 177.

this respect, according to Ganin, General A. Denikin's order dated November 9, 1919, was natural. According to it all the Russian officers had to leave the Azerbaijani troops due to the hostile attitude of the Azerbaijani authorities towards the Russian army and the treacherous advance of the Azerbaijani troops into the territory of Armenia⁷⁰.

As a postscript it should be mentioned that one of the last references to Okoyev dates back to 1920. In a telegram (N 468) sent to Tbilisi on May 25, 1920, renowned Armenian spy Tigran Devoyants, one of the leaders of the intelligence and counterintelligence department of the General Staff of the Republic of Armenia, informed about the English translator Okoyev (A. Hakobyants), who had come to them to get a permit, and had had a lengthy conversation with his assistant, Khachatryan, apparently seeking to get hired by the Armenians. Devoyants ordered to arrest Okoyev and send him to Yerevan⁷¹. In a telegram on July 5, Devoyants asked Kishmishyan to send him any letter addressed to Dodokhyan by the English translator Okoyev (or Akoyev)⁷².

In Armenia, they followed up on the information received through Tbilisi from the North Caucasus, particularly from the Volunteer Army, and often, if necessary, in order to verify this or that fact, to clarify issues connected with the personnel they sought the help of the relevant special services or turned to the relevant actions.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

SOURCES

National Archive of Armenia (NAA).

Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan. The Army (Documents and materials), Baku, 1998 (in Russian).

STUDIES

Aslanov E.M., Akhundov A.Ya., Abdullaeva S.F., Alieva F.B. 2018. About the armed forces of the Democratic republic of Azerbaijan (1918-1920), World Science, № 2(30), Vol.5, February 2018, p. 51. <http://ws-conference.com:https://elibrary.ru/item.asp?id=32431357>, viewed in 29.01.2021.

Aydin Bayram 2019. A century on the guard. Special forces of Azerbaijan celebrate 100th anniversary, «Region», Baku, March 15, 2019, p. 8-9, 12. See www.elibrary.az/docs/jurnal/jrn2019_24.

Baykov B.L. 1923. Memories about the revolution in Transcaucasia (1917–1920), The Archive of Russian revolution, Berlin, vol.9 (in Russian).

Bezugolny A.Yu. 2011. General Bicherakhov and his Caucasian army. Unknown pages of the history of Civil wars and intervention in Caucasus, 1917-1919, Moscow (in Russian).

⁷⁰ Ganin 2016: 117.

⁷¹ Ganin 2016: 115-116, NAA, f. 275, l. 5, f. 184, p. 52.

⁷² NAA, f. 275, l. 5, f. 184, p. 61.

Denikin A. 2005. Essays on Russian turmoil, in 3 volumes, Book 3, vol.4, 5, Armed forces of Russian south, Moscow (in Russian).

Ganin A.B. 2009. The corpus of officers of the General headquarters during the Civil war, 1917-1922, Resource materials, Moscow (in Russian).

Ganin A.B. 2016. Spies of the period of amateurs. The Confrontation of special forces in Azerbaijan in the first half of 1919, Proceedings of the Laboratory of ancient technologies, 2016, № 4 (in Russian).

Gasanli D. 2010. History of Diplomacy of the Republic of Azerbaijan (1918-1920), Moscow (in Russian).

Ghazakhecyan V. 2018. New document about the Turkish-Azerbaijani policy of the Armenian genocide, 1-3 p. See <http://www.academhistory.am/imagesdownloadfiles/KAZACHECYAN%20rus.pdf> ghazakhec, viewed in 02.04.2018 . (in Arm.).

History of Azerbaijan 1963. The History of Azerbaijan vol. 3, part 1, Baku (in Russian).

Hovhannisian R. G. 1982. The Republic of Armenia, vol. II, Barkeley, Los Angelos, London.

Nazim M. 2018a. Muhammed khan Tekinskij - the first diplomatic representative of Azerbaijan in Armenia «Azerbaijan», May 27, 2018 (<http://www.azerbaijan-news.az/index.php?mod=3&id=147821>).

Petrosyan G.H. 2005a. Relations of the Republic of Armenia with the non-socialist political formations of Russia (1918-1920), Yerevan (in Arm.).

Petrosyan G.H. 2005b. Relations of the Republic of Armenia with the non-socialist political formations of the former Russian empire (June 1918 – April 1920), PhD dissertation (E. 00.01- «Armenian history»), Yerevan: Institute of History, NAN RA (in Arm.).

Petrosyan G.H. 2011. Relations of the Republic of Armenia with Russia (1918-1920), Yerevan (in Arm.).

Puchenkov A.S. 2012. National policy of the general Denikin (Spring 1918 – Spring 1920), Saint-Petersburg (in Russian).

Shamistan Nazirli 2015. Executed generals of Azerbaijan, Baku (in Russian).

Steklov A. 1928. The army of the Mussavatist Azerbaijan, Baku (in Russian).

Virabyan V. 2015. The creation and activities of the State security system of the Republic of Armenia in 1918-1920 (Intelligence army and the Interior ministry), Yerevan (in Arm.).

Volkhonsky M., Mukhanov V. 2007. On the Trails of the Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan, Moscow (in Russian).

Zalessky K.A. 2003. Who was who in the World war I, Moscow (in Russian).

Translated from the Armenian by Syuzanna Chraghyan