

The Transformation Of Central Asia And Uzbekistan Into The Main Cotton-Growing Republics Of The Ussr And The Establishment Of Cotton Independence

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Abstract: The article analyzes the strategic task of creating a raw material base for the USSR textile industry and ending the Union's dependence on foreign countries in the cotton sector by rapidly restoring and developing the cotton sector in Uzbekistan, and the implementation of appropriate measures, using materials from archival sources.

Key words: Soviet government, Uzbekistan, cotton production, cotton monopoly, cotton raw materials, cotton farms, textile industry.

Introduction

From the first years of its establishment, Soviet power set itself the strategic task of creating a raw material base for the USSR textile industry and ending the Union's dependence on foreign cotton by rapidly restoring and developing the cotton industry in Central Asia, and appropriate measures were taken. As a result, the total amount of cotton harvested in 1928 amounted to 543.7 thousand tons. In total, between 1924 and 1929, Uzbek farmers delivered 1,961.1 thousand tons of cotton to the state, or an average of 392.2 thousand tons per year [1,262]. The main part of the cotton grown in the republic, that is, more than 90 percent, was naturally exported to the center.

Research Methods

The main goal of this was to increase cotton production and provide the textile industry with cotton raw materials grown in the Union, as well as to save money for industrialization policies. At the same time, the central government planned to use the foreign currency saved from the purchase of cotton raw materials from foreign countries to purchase new technologies and to withdraw funds from the country's agriculture, including cotton farms, to accelerate industrialization. To this end, on July 18, 1929, the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) adopted a resolution "On the Work of the Main Cotton Committee" [2.115-116]. This resolution, based on the essence of the colonial policy of the Union government in the agricultural sector, was aimed at providing the textile industry of the center with cotton raw materials from Central Asia, including Uzbekistan, and freeing the USSR from dependence on foreign cotton.

Results And Discussions

The resolution set out a number of measures to expand scientific research in the field of cotton growing, improve experimental work in cotton-growing regions, provide cotton fields with new equipment, mechanize and chemicalize cotton growing, train specialist personnel, and widely disseminate agrotechnical knowledge among cotton growers. At the same time, attention was also paid to the issue of providing the population with industrial and food products. It was also planned to accelerate irrigation construction in order to expand cotton fields. Based on the instructions of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), the growth of cotton fields in Central Asia in 1929/30 was planned to be 50,615 hectares, but these figures were increased, and the increase in cotton fields was set at 101,715 hectares due to the strengthening of the small irrigation network. In particular, if before the decision of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of the Soviet of Communists (Bolsheviks) in Uzbekistan the increase in 1929 was set at 26,040 hectares, then the plan was revised and the increase in cotton area due to the construction of small irrigation was set at 41,200 hectares [3.16]. In the decision of the Council of Labor and Defense on the control figures for cotton in 1929/30, water management organizations

were instructed to increase the cotton area in Central Asia by 130,000 hectares due to the construction of irrigation [4.14]. In order to expand the area of cotton crops, the decision of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of the Soviet of Communists (Bolsheviks) set the task of displacing other crops from irrigated lands suitable for cotton cultivation onto barren lands. To implement this instruction, the Presidium of the Central Asian Economic Council (Sredaz ECOSO) considered the issue of “displacing grain crops from irrigated lands onto barren lands” on August 12, 1929. The adopted resolution set the plan for the 1930 grain crop to be squeezed out of irrigated lands at 120 thousand hectares [5.44].

Since the 1920s, the Communist Party, as the leading ideological leader in the Soviet state, has taken over not only political tasks, but also the management of state and economic affairs. In accordance with the resolution of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of July 18, 1929, as a result of the measures taken by the Main Cotton Committee and other state-economic organizations to expand cotton fields, cotton fields have grown rapidly. Cotton fields in Central Asia amounted to 781.8 thousand hectares in 1928, and in 1929 they reached 1084.2 hectares, that is, an increase of 40 percent or 302,464 hectares. In Central Asia and Kazakhstan, the area of cotton on irrigated lands reached 351.9 thousand hectares in the spring of 1931 [6, 2].

The growth was mainly due to the construction of irrigation and the displacement of grain crops. In order to create favorable conditions for the expansion of cotton fields, in 1929-1932 and subsequent years, cotton farmers were given various privileges on agricultural taxes and water fees, and water fees for cotton fields began to be collected at preferential rates. The water management department, in turn, guaranteed the provision of water to cotton fields first.

Measures such as exempting cotton fields planted on irrigated lands previously planted with grain from taxes, providing tax privileges to farmers who planted grain on fallow lands, and increasing the tax on grain fields planted on irrigated lands and reducing water supply to them displaced grain crops to fallow lands. Irrigated lands, in turn, were freed up for cotton crops. In the early years of the struggle for cotton independence, cotton fields were expanded mainly in this way. The area of irrigated grain crops decreased steadily during the years of the struggle for cotton independence. In 1928, grain crops were planted on 495 thousand hectares of irrigated land in Uzbekistan, but in 1930, only 335 thousand hectares were planted, in 1931 - 282, in 1932 - 204, and in 1933 - 192 thousand hectares of irrigated land. Between 1928 and 1933, more than 300 thousand hectares of irrigated land previously planted with grain crops were freed up for cotton and other crops [1. 302]. Another way to expand cotton cultivation areas was to develop new lands. For this purpose, the state allocated a large amount of capital for irrigation and land reclamation works. In 1929-1932, 235 million rubles were spent on the development of irrigation in Uzbekistan. During this period, large-scale irrigation construction works were carried out, a number of new lands were developed, the level of water supply of existing irrigated lands was improved, and the volume of cotton cultivation areas increased. In those years, 84,725 hectares of new lands were developed in the Mirzachul, Dalvarzin deserts and other land massifs in the Tashkent region, 25,904 hectares in the Uchkurgan, Savai, and Boz deserts in the Fergana region, 21,386 hectares in the Samarkand region, and 15,000 hectares in the Bukhara region [7, 182-183].

As a result of large-scale irrigation and land reclamation works carried out in the republic, the area of irrigated land increased from 1,180,000 hectares to 1,516,000 hectares in 1929-1932. During this period, the area under cotton increased by 70 percent, reaching 1,027,000 hectares in 1932. The gross cotton yield reached 804,000 tons, or 1.5 times more than in 1928 [8.23-24]. Cotton production increased in 1929-1932 mainly due to the expansion of the area under cotton. In turn, the level of cotton yield did not increase. In 1931, cotton yield in Uzbekistan was 7.4 centners per hectare, and in 1932 it was 7.9 centners. In the 1930-1931 agricultural year, the Central Asian Cotton Purchase Commission and local cotton purchase offices were established under the Central Asian Economic Council to manage the cotton purchase company.

Strict measures were also taken against peasant farms that did not fulfill the contracted cotton plan. In December 1930, the Central Asian Economic Council sent a telegram to cotton organizations to implement the following measures in order to ensure the timely harvesting and delivery of contracted cotton to cotton factories. It stated, “First, to immediately identify cotton farms that have not delivered cotton, as well as those that have delivered less than 75 percent, to disclose the reasons, to force them to deliver the contracted cotton by taking administrative measures, and to organize model courts. Secondly, to impose a

fine on the chairmen of the district executive committee and village council in the amount of five times the contracted cotton amount on cotton farmers who have not fulfilled the cotton plan in bad faith. Third, the sale of cotton in the markets and villages should be prohibited, the cotton in the hands of the traders should be confiscated and the price should be paid at the established prices. ... Sixth, the remaining cotton picked by each household and the cotton left in the growing cotton should be checked, they should be forced to hand it over immediately, and poor farmers should be helped to transport their cotton. The responsibility for handing over the accounted cotton should be placed on the village councils, and lists should be sent to the companies within seven days to monitor the handover. Activists and cotton workers in the districts should be involved in implementing these measures, and one responsible employee should be appointed to each company. Seventh, the provision of grain to those who delivered less than 60 percent of the contracted cotton should be stopped, those who delivered up to 75 percent should be given 60 percent of the grain specified in the contract, and those who delivered more than 75 percent of the cotton should be given the full quota," it was emphasized. Upon receiving the telegram from SredazEKOSO, the Main Cotton Committee and the All-Union Bureau of Cotton Cooperation immediately sent an order to all cotton joint-stock companies and republican cotton cooperative associations. The order, along with an explanation of the SredazEKOSO assignment, stated that all forces should be mobilized to fulfill the plan 100 percent and purchase the contracted cotton in full [9. 425].

At the meetings of the poor, a decision was made to hand over all cotton by the kulak farms and to bring to justice those among the rich kulaks who deliberately did not hand over cotton. The Soviet authorities intensified the struggle to free the Union from cotton dependence and used methods of forced cotton cultivation and processing. One of these methods was to assign the task of forced cotton delivery to the "kulak" farms. Such measures were carried out not only to increase cotton production, but, more importantly for the Soviets, to dry up the "kulaks' swill and ultimately eliminate them. This issue, in turn, was raised to the level of state policy. On December 13, 1929, the Central Executive Committee of the Uzbek SSR adopted a resolution "On measures to influence the cultivation of cotton by kulak-rich farms within the established norm." The resolution stated: "The general meetings of rural citizens shall be given the right to determine the amount of the following that rural kulak farms are strictly obliged to perform:

- a) to sow cotton on their irrigated lands;
- b) to remove crops other than cotton from these lands;
- c) to deliver the amount of cotton to be delivered in accordance with the contractual norm of cotton per hectare accepted for this village."

The resolution stated that "the task of the kulaks shall be determined by the meeting of rural citizens," but in practice, the Soviet authorities determined who would be "kulaks" and the amount of cotton to be delivered to them, proposed them, and forcibly approved them at the meeting [10.379].

The amount of raw cotton produced in Central Asia amounted to 719.4 thousand tons in 1928, 765.8 thousand tons in 1929, and 967.8 thousand tons in 1930. The growth compared to 1928 was 6.3 percent in 1929 and 26.4 percent in 1930 [11.25]. Cotton products grown in Central Asia, including Uzbekistan - cotton fiber (all), linters, cotton oil, cottonseed meal, soap - were transported to Russia and, in some quantities, abroad for sale. The shipment of cotton fiber to the center began as soon as the cotton harvest began and it was cleaned at the factories. Usually, wagons loaded with cotton fiber were sent to textile factories from the second half of September. By October 1, 1929, 2,229 tons of cotton fiber were sent to the center from the Andijan district, 598 tons from the Fergana district, 216 tons from the Tashkent district, 154 tons from the Zarafshan district, 390 tons from the Bukhara district, and 3,663 tons from Uzbekistan [12.40].

By December 20, 1929, Central Asian cotton organizations had purchased a total of 674,432 tons of cotton, of which 117,904 tons were supplied to the textile industry of the center, including the Uzbekpakhta organization, which had purchased 489,550 tons of cotton by December 20, 1929, of which 296,304 tons of raw cotton were cleaned in factories and 92,780 tons of cotton fiber were sent to the textile industry. By March 10, 1931, 210,798 tons of cotton fiber were supplied to the center from Central Asia, including 158,426 tons of fiber from Uzbekistan [13.1].

It should be noted that Central Asian cotton was used not only for the central textile industry, but also for export abroad. The income from the sale of cotton from Uzbekistan and other Central Asian republics abroad - foreign currency, combined with the currency saved from the purchase of cotton from

America, which was considered a priority task at that time - was spent on the development of the industry. In 1929 alone, 350 thousand pounds of cotton fiber were sold to England and Germany. In 1930, by the resolution of the Supreme Council of National Economy of the USSR, it was determined to export 2 million pounds of cotton. The secret protocol of the Main Cotton Committee of December 23, 1930 stated: "In accordance with the decision of the directive bodies, the plan for the export of cotton in the amount of 2 million pounds is to be accepted for implementation. The specified amount of cotton is to be shipped by January 10, 1931. It should be noted that 14 factories working on the implementation of the plan... processed 500 thousand pounds of cotton by December 5. The remaining 1,500 thousand pounds should be shipped by January 10... The following factories should be additionally involved in the implementation of the export plan: No. 20, 21, 25, 26, 27, 28, 42, 49, 52, 53, 57, 55, 41, 68, 77 and 109"[14.80].

Not only cotton fiber, but also other cotton products - cotton oil, semolina, soap, linter cotton - were exported. For example, in the first half of 1929/30, that is, from October 1, 1929 to March 31, 1930, a total of 6,623.4 tons of cottonseed oil, 24,833.7 tons of cottonseed meal, 48.6 tons of soap, and 1,432.4 tons of linter cotton were exported [15.1]. Although these products were necessary for the needs of the local population, soap factories, and artisanal soap enterprises, they were also exported to the center in addition to being exported. For example, in the first half of 1929-30, 5,848.1 tons of cottonseed oil and 4,356.4 tons of linter cotton were sent to the center.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it should be said that on the basis of the resolution of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of July 18, 1929 "On the Work of the Main Cotton Committee", the struggle for the acceleration of the development of cotton growing and the independence of the Union cotton began. The Union government spared no expense and resources to develop cotton production at a rapid pace.

By the end of the first five-year plan (1929-1932), that is, in 1932, the Union's cotton independence was practically ensured. If in 1928 the USSR's need for cotton was satisfied by 59 percent at the expense of domestic resources, then by 1932 this figure had reached 94.2 percent. The volume of cotton imported from abroad decreased from 41 percent to 5.2 percent during the same period [16. 139]. In particular, during those years, the sown area in Uzbekistan increased from 530,000 hectares to 928,000 hectares. As a result, the production of raw cotton increased accordingly from 520,000 tons to 753,000 tons [17.129].

By means of such coercive and violent means, which have been repeatedly mentioned above, the Soviet government's plan to turn Central Asia, including Uzbekistan, into the main cotton raw material base of the USSR was being implemented. Based on the resolution of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of July 18, 1929, a raw material base for the textile industry of the center was created during the first five-year period. The Union's dependence on foreign countries in the field of cotton was essentially eliminated. The Soviet state continued to treat the development of cotton as an important link in its domestic policy.

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