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The Policy of the Soviet Authorities on the Organization of Labor in World War II (On the Basis of Press Materials)

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Abstract: *This article examines the Soviet government's labor policy in Uzbekistan during World War II, focusing on how labor relations were reorganized under extreme wartime demands. While prior scholarship has largely concentrated on military strategies and battlefield outcomes, this study addresses the knowledge gap concerning civilian labor mobilization and its socio-economic impacts within the Uzbek SSR. The research applies a historical-analytical method, drawing on press archives, official decrees, and labor mobilization records to assess how labor shortages were managed by recruiting women, adolescents, and the elderly, alongside the reintegration of disabled war veterans into the workforce. Key findings reveal that wartime labor policy was marked by forced overtime, the establishment of factory training schools, and strict discipline measures, including criminal penalties for unauthorized work absences. Despite harsh conditions, some protective measures, such as maternity rights and war invalids' benefits, were gradually introduced. The results highlight that Uzbekistan's labor system during the war functioned under a dual pressure: meeting military production demands while managing severe human resource deficits. The study implies that the Soviet approach to labor reorganization in Uzbekistan was both a critical survival mechanism and a reflection of broader state control tactics, shaping postwar socio-economic structures.*

Keywords: *World War II, Uzbek fighters, combat medals, workers in the war years, Factory-factory training schools, war disabled people.*

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Introduction

The Second World War was one of the deadliest and most important events in the history of mankind, a world-class fierce struggle for the preservation of peace and independence of the peoples of the world. While the military and economic power of the Soviet Union played an important role in this war, it is necessary to note that the people of Uzbekistan, which is part of it, also made a significant contribution to the victory [1]. With the beginning of World War II, Uzbekistan not only became an area behind the front supplying material and labor resources, but thousands of Uzbek Youth were mobilized to the front. During the war years, nearly 1,950,700 civilians from the Republic of Uzbekistan were conscripted, of whom 538,366 gave their lives on the battlefields. 158,036 were missing. 870,942 fighters returned with disabilities. Many Uzbek soldiers performed heroic feats and were awarded Orders and medals. In particular, 301 Uzbeks received the title of Hero of the Soviet Union, 70 received the Order of Fame at all three levels [2]**.** Fighters at the front became famous not only for their combat skills, but also for their courage and

dedication. They took an active part in the most difficult stages of the war, especially in such famous battles as Stalingrad, Kursk, the siege of Leningrad. In these battles, the soldiers of Uzbekistan became an example of combat spirit, perseverance and patriotism [3]. During World War II, 1,753 Uzbeks received the medal “for the defense of Moscow”, 1,382 received the Medal “for the defense of Leningrad”, 2,738 received the Medal “for the defense of Stalingrad”, 2,974 received the Medal “for the defense of the Caucasus”, 109,208 received the medal “for the victory over Germany”, 1,707 received the Medal “for the capture of Berlin”, 124 received the Medal “for the defense of Sevastopol”, 84 with the medal “for defense”, 75 people were awarded the medal “partisan of the Patriotic War”. As a result of the growing demands of the Front and front rear, the Soviet government established strict procedures for the use of labor resources [4]. As early as June 1941, one to three hours of mandatory overtime work per day was introduced, and postcards were abolished. On June 26, 1941, by the decision of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR “on the regime of working hours of workers and servants in wartime”, the heads of enterprises and other institutions were given the right to forcibly use workers and servants in one day for 1 hour to 3 hours, in addition to working hours. The resolution prohibited the entry of pregnant women into forced labor for six months outside work, starting from the sixth month [5].

Methodology

The decree of July 8, 1944, “on increasing state aid for pregnant wives, wives with many children and wives with unmarried children, and on strengthening maternal and Child Protection,”forbade pregnant women from taking off-hours at enterprises from the fourth month of pregnancy. Women who had a wet nurse were not used at night until the baby was weaned. In addition, the day of pregnancy and childbirth leave is extended from 63 calendar days to 77 calendar days [6]. With this decree, the harsh attitude towards wartime pregnant women in labor relations was relaxed, albeit somewhat.

A third contribution to improving the use of industrial enterprises ' production capacities was achieved without increasing the number of workers and servants. In order to provide personnel to the defense networks, the working-age population was mobilized in 1942. In addition to industry, construction and Transport for ten months, 733 thousand people were sent to work [7]. Only during the second half of 1941, 500 thousand housewives were involved in production. If the women's contribution to the total number of workers and servants in Uzbekistan was 39% in 1940, then in 1942 it reached 53%. In the labor post, adults were replaced by adolescents. By the second half of 1941, 360,000 students from Grades 8-10 were employed, with the industry contribution of workers and servants under the age of 18 increasing 2.5 times by 1942 compared to 1939, accounting for 15% of total workers. [7]

Result and Discussion

Factory-factory training schools were established to prepare young people for vocational training. many of the graduates took up new professions well. They received practical training in enterprises [8]. Young men aged 16-17 and girls aged 16-18 were admitted from the city, kolkhoz youth and other young people in the village. In accordance with the decision of the government, from January 15 to February 1, 1942 alone, 200,000 people will be received by the call to factory-factory education schools (mobilization) and at a voluntary pace. At least 100,000 of these young people were trained in metalsmithing-tokar, slesar, milling and similar professions [9]. The period of study in factory-factory education schools was initially 6 months, then the preparatory period was set at 4-5 months, depending on the severity and relief of the profession [10].

In addition to filling the place of workers mobilized for war during the Second World War at the expense of women, teenage youth and the elderly, they were also required to fulfill the established norm by 2-3 times. On the exaggerated execution of the plan established during the war years, it is

said: “If you have fulfilled the plan by 100 procedures – you have had the opportunity to fulfill it by 150 procedures – then you will have worked badly” [11]. On the second hand, the Soviet government kept control over the continuous increase in production levels. In this regard, the frontline established discipline and pursued a strict policy. For example, the article” in the prosecutor's Office of the USSR“, given in the January 22, 1942 issue of the newspaper” Stalin's truth", covered the activities of the Union prosecutor's office against unrest in industrial plants [12]. Judging by the information given in the article, on December 26, 1941, in Mahal, where the battles for the same Moscow were raging, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR issued a decree “on the responsibility of workers and servants of military industrial enterprises for arbitrary departures from the enterprise.” In accordance with the decree, arbitrary absences of workers and servants in military enterprises are considered desertion (Latin: desertor – refugee), and the guilty are sentenced to 5 to 8 years in prison [13]. Again, this article also covers several workers and leaders who have been convicted of this crime. Through this, factory-factory managers and workers were called upon to take the matter very seriously. During the years of World War II, the number of people returning from the front with disabilities was also increasing. Returning to his homeland, the disabled-warrior received free tuition, scholarships and other benefits in higher educational institutions [14]. Many fighters did not re-take jobs they had previously worked for due to physical limitations. Therefore, the issue of adapting such fighters to social life, involving them in labor arose [15]. They were trained in craft associations as well as in short-term courses organized under local hospitals in telegrapher, photographer, draftsman, constructor, accountant, collective farm accountant, proofreader, tokar, slesar and other similar jobs that did not require much physical effort [16]. The Soviet of people's commissars of the USSR issued a decree in 1943 on the payment of pensions to war invalids working in enterprises and institutions and collective farms, regardless of how much wages or income they received. According to him, it is also allowed to go on Labor leave with the opinion of the medical-labor expert commission [17]. In the context of shortages of labor resources during the war years, the co-granting of wage disability benefits also encouraged War Invalids to be more involved in labor activities.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the research carried out, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- Uzbek fighters took part in all the battles of the Second World War and were awarded various medals and orders of the Soviet government;
- The replacement of workers and servants mobilized for the war was carried out by mobilizing women, teenage youth and the elderly to work in the Republic;
- Training of young adolescents mobilized for labor in vocational training is suspended through short-term factory-factory training schools;
- In the conditions of a shortage of personnel during the war years, fighters returning from the front with disabilities were also involved in labor.

In general terms, during the years of World War II, all resources were employed on the way to victory over the enemy. Work done over months and weeks was done over days and hours.

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