

1825 yr.

125. -- June 30th. From the Senate, according to the Highest Approved Proposition of the Committee of Ministers. --

About banning the Jews from settling in the Astrakhan Province and the Caucasus Region.

The Governing Senate listened to the presentation of the Minister of Finance, in which he presented copies of the notes submitted by him, the Minister, to the Committee of Messrs. Ministers on May 26th, 1824 as well as from the notes of this Committee's Journals, issued on the 31st of December and April 11th of this year [of 1825], about banning Jews from settling in the Astrakhan Province and the Caucasus Region. In the attached copies it was explained: 1) in the notes by the Minister of Finance: **on the occasion of a petition** by Essel Rezakov, a Jewish burger/tradesman [*mieszczanin*] from the city of Orsha - to transfer him together with his family in the Caucasus Gubernia into the Georgiyevsk burgers [bourgeoisie], **arose out a question**: weather Jews in general can be allowed to establish themselves in the Caucasus Gubernia/Region with registration into local social estates? Prior to the accession of the new regions from Poland by the Russian Empire, Jews were not only forbidden to permanently establish themselves within its borders, but even strict procedures/measures were deployed to expel abroad those of them, who were settling for temporary domicile under pretenses of trade business, or marketing deals. Within many legalizations on this subject, there was a decree of 1742 *) prohibiting Jews to come even to trade-fairs for merchant industries, so that they would not be allowed to enter under any circumstances into either Great Russia's nor Little Russia's [Velikorossiya and Malorossiya] Gubernias. Afterwards, with the gradual expansion of the Russian Empire, the Jews though were allowed to stay where they had established their settlements by regulations of the previous Governments, however, the Great Russia's Gubernias still remained closed for them; though, in the years of 1794 and 1799 **) they were granted rights to register themselves into the merchants and burgers societies, and according to these positions operate industries in the Gubernias of Minsk, Mogilev, Kiev, Chernigov, Ekaterinoslav, Iziaslav, Bratslav, Polotsk, Novgorod-Siverskyi and Courland, and in Taurida Oblast/Region. In 1804, a new Provision was issued regarding Jews ***) , in which it was decided in paragraphs: 13-th: farmers [Zemledeltsy] of Jewish origin, as well as manufacturers, artisans, merchants and burgers in the Gubernias of: Lithuania, Belorussia, Malorossiya, Kiev, Minsk, Volhynia, Podolsk, Astrakhan, Caucasus, Ekaterinoslav, Kherson and Taurida Oblast, can get into their possession through purchase the non-inhabited/vacant lands, sell them, pledge, gift/donate and bequeath as inheritance - in all areas mentioned in the decree of December 12th, 1802 ****). 17-th: those of the Jews, who won't be capable either to obtain their own lands, nor rent/lease from the landlords, can move to the state lands in Gubernias of: Lithuania, Minsk, Volhynia, Podolsk,

Astrakhan, Caucasus, Ekaterinoslav, Kherson and Taurida Oblast; for those who have withdrawn from these Provincial provinces, for this purpose, in some of these Gubernias for all interested, for the first time there should be set aside/allotted up to 30.0 Dessiatins of landⁱ.

139

20-th: In the Gubernias, where they are permitted to settle, Jews are allowed to establish all kinds of factories on the same basis and with the same freedom as given to all citizens of Russia. 21-st: In the case of starting the factories which are needed the most, such as manufacturing: cloth, linen, leather and other goods of this kind, the Government, after an appropriate verification/certification, can provide to Jews a special encouragement by lending them the necessary sum of money and allotting the land. For this purpose, in each of the Gubernias, annexed from Poland, there will be annually assigned a capital of up to 20,000 rubles, in order that from this capital the loans would be made, at the discretion of the Governor of a Gubernia and by his co-operation with the Minister of Internal Affairs and to those Jews, who would like to start the most useful and necessary factories, these loans would be issued without demanding a collateral for such loan, but confining only to the guarantees from other trustworthy Jews. Also, for a special encouragement of Jews to start factories, those of them who will be engaged in factory productions, would have to pay the same duty/fee since the time, when accurate reports of such factorial works will be collected in each city. It is allowed for Jews to start factories on the lands of the landlords, according to voluntary conditions. 23-rd: In all aforesaid Gubernias, artisans from the Jews are allowed to exercise in all trades, which are not prohibited by law, and no craft-management or guild Administration under any pretense should impede them from doing so; Wherein, they are given the freedom to register into guilds, if that does not go against special privileges granted to certain cities. 25-th: If the [Jewish] artisans in any of these Gubernias cannot find enough work and means to support themselves, they should send an appeal to the Governor who will refer it to the Minister of the Interior Affairs. In addition, there will be assigned ways for them to establish their industries in the sparsely populated Gubernias of: Ekaterinoslav, Kherson, Taurida, Astrakhan and Caucasus. 26-th: Any kind of internal and external trade is allowed for the Jews in the aforementioned provinces, on the exact basis of the City Regulations and subsequent laws. 28-th: For their commercial affairs, for improvement in the arts, or for the display of special skills in craftsmanship and factories, the [Jewish] manufacturers, craftsmen, artists and merchants will be allowed to come for a certain period of time into the inner Gubernias, and even into the capital-cities, but in no other way as according to the Governors' passports, and monthly registrations of them should be delivered to the Minister of Internal Affairs. These Jews, arriving on temporary basis, as well as their wives and their children must wear German clothes without any distinction from others [townsfolk]; in the event that they use their [traditional] clothes, they should not be tolerated and they must immediately be sent away by the Police. Thus, with the issuance of this ruling, the Jews were granted a new right to acquire farm-lands in the Gubernias of Astrakhan and of the Caucasus, although mainly for settling there as agricultural workers on the properties of landlords and state lands, but for the philistine and merchant industries there were mainly opened for them those Gubernias annexed from Poland, where from the treasury special money was assigned for the help of them in the establishment of new factories; although in the Governorates of Astrakhan

and the Caucasus, the right to establish production industries was given to them only when there was a shortage of funds for basic maintenance needs in the other Gubernias, and in no other way as by permission in each particular case from the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

140

From this, one may see that by impeding the movement of the Jews into these Gubernias the Government never intended to foster their permanent settlement there and if they were allowed to reside there for the arable farming: then probably only because these Gubernias, having been significantly less populated than others, had no other means of cultivating their lands; meanwhile, it is impossible not to take into consideration here that the Jews, as it is known by experience, alienated themselves from farming and therein could not bring much benefit to these regions; on the other hand, the settlement of these people, who are avoiding whenever possible to comply with the State regulations, if those do not correspond with their advantage, into those Gubernias which by their location are open for foreign trade, without a doubt, would cause detriment to the Customs' fees collections and communal/public credits, and would lead to the undermining of the local merchants. Respecting the fact that the Government had taken the strongest measures to eradicate Jews from the Gubernias of Great Russia, and that as seen from the Ministries' intelligence, in present time in the Caucasus and Astrakhan regions, there is not a single Jew on a payroll, -the Minister of Finance considers as the most useful: to completely forbid them [Jews] any permanent settlement in these regions, revoking even a grant to their rights to buy lands there, or settle on landlords' and state lands, so that henceforth the Jews would be allowed for temporary residence in Gubernias of Astrakhan and Caucasus in no other way but by the same regulations commonly accepted throughout the Great Russia, that is, on the exact basis of paragraph 28 of the Provision [Polozheniye] of the year of 1804. 2) In the note/extract from the Journal of the Committee of Ministers: at the session on January 31st, there was heard out the note by the Minister of Finance from the 28th of May, 1824, №. 3,616 (according to the Department of Taxation and Collections/Duties), which was entered into the Journal of the Committee under the issued №. 190, about the prohibition for Jews to settle in the Astrakhan Gubernia and Caucasus Region. Taking under consideration the fact that in the Caucasus Region and the Astrakhan Governorate, till the present time, there is not a single Jew registered on a payroll, and that their [Jews] settlement in this region can be harmful in particular, considering expansion of the Asiatic trade, the Committee supposes that, according to the report presented by the Minister of Finance, it would be necessary to forbid a permanent settlement of the Jews in that region, though since this right was granted to them by the Highest Approved Provision of the year of 1804 and at the present time there is a special Committee [of Jewish Affairs] established for the purpose of compiling general regulations about Jews, then the presented circumstance should be redirected to this Committee for review; and until the publication of the new Provision about Jews, the movement of the Jews there for permanent settlement should be stopped, after requesting for that, the Highest Approval. On the session of the 11th of April, it was announced to the Committee that the Sovereign Emperor gave His

Approval of the proposition to the Committee. The Committee has determined: to report with an excerpt from the Journal about that [decision] to the Minister of Finance for its execution. **It was ordered:** due to this, the Highest Approved Provision of the Committee of Messrs. Ministers, to prescribe by decrees for its proper execution to the Astrakhan Provincial Government and the Treasury Chamber, to the Caucasus Regional Government and the Treasury Chamber there, as well as to other Provincial Governments and Treasury Chambers in all those Gubernias in which a permanent residence is permitted for the Jews and by such decrees to inform the Chief Governor of Astrakhan Gubernia and the Caucasus Region, the Chief Governor of the Spiritual Affairs of the Foreign Confessions, the Head of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Minister of Finance; and send the information to all Departments of the Governing Senate. (*P.P.S.Z., vol. XL, № 30,404*)

*) See № 23, p. 17.

***) See №№ 43 and 55, pp. 37 and 46.

****) See № 59, p. 53.

*****) See Attachment. № 13

i. A Dessiatin or Desyatina (Russian: десятина) is an archaic land measurement used in tsarist Russia. A *dessiatin* is equal to 2400 square *sazhens* and is approximately equivalent to 2.702 English acres or 10,926.512 square meters. – from Wikipedia

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