



## **POLITICAL ACTIVITY OF USMON HOJA POLATHOJAEV IN THE YEARS OF BPSR (1920-1924)**

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### **ANNOTATION**

*In this article some opinions (ideas), gained through the empirical historical sources, on the social-political activity of a progressive fighter for independence from Bukhara Usmon Hoja Polathojaev in the years of BPSR are expressed.*

**KEY WORDS:** *progressive, government, minister, financial minister, nationalist(ic), chairman of the republic (jumhurrais), treasure of the emirate, emigrant, Western Bukhara*

### **DISCUSSION**

Due to the Independence gained in Uzbekistan the historical truth about hundreds of our countrymen who came of our nation and were unjustly insulted and humiliated during the years of the Soviet power has been restored. And such good tendencies in this direction are still going on. One of such historical people is Usmon Hoja Polathojaev (1878-1968) and his life embraces the events full of complicated and contradictory things.

Usmon Hoja Polathojaev was the frontman of the Jadid movement. After the Bukhara emirate order had been abolished(overturned), he worked(1920-1922) at the responsible posts in the government of the Bukhara People's Republic formed under the leadership of Fayzulla Hojaev(1896-1938).

This article throws light on the activity of Usmon Hoja Polathojaev in Bukhara during the mentioned years.

Usmon Hoja Polathojaev's social-political activity may be divided into two periods and several phases. In the first period Usmon Hoja Polathojaev lived and worked in Bukhara – his ancestors' country. He took part in the first Movement for progress. In the second period he became one of the activists of the movement “the Bukhara Youth”. In the years of BPSR government(1920-1924) till he emigrated he had occupied the high responsible posts. He had to live (1918-1920) in Tashkent and Samarkand of Turkestan because of the abrupt political situation in the Emirate. It is known that on October 6-8 in Mohi-Hossa( the summer headquarters of the Bukhara emirs – A.M.) there was held the first Qurultoy of the Bukhara toilers and the

Bukhara People's Republic, the new government and the shuro(cabinet) of the People's Ministers were formed. Usmon Hoja Polathojaev who had a political authoritativeness in the government of F.Hojaev held the post of the minister of finance.

In 1920-1921 he launched a number of decrees(orders) to put the financial problems in order, to withdraw the money without the seal and the faked money in cash from circulation. On October 19 of 1920 as to order №3 of the financial minister of the Bukhara government it was obligatory that the money in cash without the seal should be categorically withdrawn from the circulation[1].

In those years the BPSR government had already faced many financial problems, and in the emirate period during which the agriculture and the industry had been derailed and the inflation had reached its peak because of the military clashes within the Republican territory, the circulation of the new government currency was introduced and the Turkestan ASSR bank was founded[2].

In order to create the treasury of the BPSR government he worked actively in the commission organized to dig out the former Emir's gold and the silver buried into the earth in the huts as to various reasons during the occupation by the Red Army. He was for the treasure to be spent on the prosperity of the Bukhara people. As to the reminiscences of Fayzulla Hoja Muhammadiev who was the treasure man of the period under the reign of Emir Abdulahat, Usmon Hoja as the minister of finance invited him to his office 2-3 times and gave him the following opinion: “If there are the gold remains still left, it is not useful for us to show the Russians



those places, you have to mislead them. We need the Bukhara gold ourselves[3]”.

As to the information of the scholar-historian Sotimjon Holboev from the two treasuries hidden from the Red Army invaders the 200 food of gold(3 tons and 200 kg), the 9600 food of silver(153 tons and 600 kg) treasure was dug out. During 15 days these treasures had been counted up by the commission including 5-6 members of the government( Muhiddin Mansurov, Abduqodir Muhiddinov, Usmon Hoja, Nosir Hakimov, etc. – A.M). In reserving this treasure the main role was played by the following instruction of Usmon Hoja to the treasure man Fayzulla Hoja: “You should not show them( the Red Army members- A.M.) those places( of treasure), you should mislead them, you must show them the old places from where the treasure had been confiscated and tell them that the gold used to be kept only in one place[4]”.

Due to the initiative of Usmon Hoja Polathojaev and Fayzulla Hojaev owing to the treasure preserved in Bukhara the people of the Bukhara People’s Soviet Republic were remitted of their tax and the Bukhara pupils and students were sent to Germany, Turkey and other Eastern countries to get educated there, and the basis for their provisions were created.

Usmon Hoja Polathojaev was well aware of the world financial changes because besides his mother tongue he knew the Persian and Turkish languages and he was constantly reading the newspapers and magazines[5].

Usmon Hoja Polathojaev worked at the Fayzulla Hojaev’s government as the minister of state inspection(1921), as the chairman of the Central executive committee of the BPSR (1921, August , the beginning of 1922)[6]. In the periodicals of that time it became known that at the same time Usmon Hoja was working as the 1-st vice minister of the military affairs. The message given in the “ Bukhara ahbor”, issued on November 14, “ After many discussions by unanimous decision Yusuf Ibrohimov’s candidacy was nominated for the post of the minister of the military affairs and the candidacy of Usmon Hoja Polathojaev was recommended for the post of the vice minister of the military affairs. These candidacies had been approved at the revcom”[7] confirms our opinion.

The BPSR government established the diplomatic relations with such Eastern countries as Turkey, Iran and Afghanistan. As early as January of 1920 the Turkish Parliament(National Meeting) had adopted the declaration “ National consensus”. In 1920, on April 23 the chairman of the Turkish Great National Meeting(TGNM) M.Kamol Otaturk asked for material assistance from Russia. Later on in 1920 the Bukhara representatives were sent to the

“Provisional Ankara Government” and M. Kamol was presented with a gold handled saber by them.

By that time in 1921 on March 16, Turkey had signed the diplomatic treaties with the RSFSR, in 1921, on October 13, with the Transcaucasian Republics, and in 1922, on January 2 , with the Ukrainian SSR. In the literature of the Soviet period it is said that “ the Soviet Government assisted Turkey with 10 million sums’ worth of weapons and ammunition in gold”[8]. In reality at that time in 1920-1921 the Soviet government ringed in the fronts was not able to render Turkey a material and military assistance. V.I. Lenin and M.I.Kalinin had already given a negative answer to the request of the Turkish representative in Moscow Bekir Samibey on the very issue. And Usmon Hoja Polathojaev transferred to the Moscow bank 100 mln sums in gold to send it to Turkey. And this fact was evidenced by the Turkish historian Mehmet Saray based on the historical facts[9]. Mehmet Saray stressed that the question of the military assistance had been discussed at the meeting of the Presidium of the revolutionary committee of the BPSR, that the BCP leader Najib Husainov was against the assistance to Turkey by the Bukhara Republic.

The Soviet government was an intermediary between the two countries and it strengthened its military position by 10/9 of the means and succeeded in transferring Usmon Hoja and the BPSR’s material assistance to Turkey into its own account. In Turkish people’s gaining of independence and in its victory over the strong enemy in the fierce fights it is important that Usmon Hoja Polathojaev made his worthy contribution.

While working in the structure of the BPSR government Usmon Hoja Polathojaev fought for solving such problems as taking the arable lands into strict account and their being orderly used, restoring the ruined Bukhara, opening the cultural and spiritual institutions, reconstructing the architectural monuments, driving the 30 thousand Red army soldiers out of Bukhara, founding the national army, gaining independence in the international affairs without any orders from the “Centre”, strengthening the borders of the country, giving Uzbek the status of an official state language and implementing it into life, etc[10]. 1921-1922 Moscow’s interference in the internal affairs of the Bukhara Republic was intensified. The Bukhara National army was subordinated to the RSFSR revolutionary military council headquarters. It’s known that in 1921-1922 there was strengthened the basmachi( independence )movement in Eastern Bukhara. Though for a while the Soviet leaders used such well-known members of the Bukhara government as Usmon Hoja Polathojaev in the appeasement of the freedom fighters. In 1921, on March 10, there was formed the all Bukhara CEC’s extraordinary affairs mission in Eastern



Bukhara and its chairman was Usmon Hoja Polathojaev and Mirzoanvar Azimov and Abdulhakim Qulmuhammedov were its members. In 1921, on August 12 Usmon Hoja Polathojaev met with Davlatmandbiy in Boljuvon and through the negotiations succeeded in signing a treaty. The two sides were seeking their own benefit from the authoritative position of Usmon Hoja Polathojaev.” Anvar Poshsho sent an ultimatum letter to the RSFSR consul Nagorniy demanding that the Russian troops should be withdrawn from Turkestan and Bukhara”[11]. And the Red entrusted the chairman of the republic with a responsible task of gathering food from the people, providing the army with it and of appeasing the people.

Sayyid Mansur Olimiy wrote that “in by 1922 the party of the “Bukara Youth” also had become weak. Having known their such intentions some of the “Bukhara Youth” left the party and joined Anvar poshsho and Ibrohimbek. Usmon Hoja was one of them”[12]. In 1922, on January 22, in Bukhara after the formation of the “Extraordinary dictatorship commission” and the declaration of martial law (military situation) on February 1, the situation got aggravated and it was authorized that in Bukhara without any obstacles any suspected person should be arrested or driven out of the country. It is necessary to stress that one of those persons who realized the urgent need for an ally between the government and the members of the “Independence movement” was Usmon Hoja Polathojaev.

”When the muslim warriors under the leadership of Abdukahhor came to the Mehtar Kosim bridge and circled Bukhara from all sides, the Bukhara military minister Abdulhamid afandi, with the 20 Bukhara and the turkish people accompanied by Usmon Hoja came out to welcome general Abdukahhor. They gave the muhojids 6 thousand pounds of sterling and military weapons, and expressed their desire to go to Anvar poshsho who had been fighting in Eastern Bukhara and join the detachment of the mujojids”[13].

In the historical literature it is stated that “Usmon Hoja Polathojaev had left the Bukhara Republic and joined Anvar poshsho. But one of his future intentions was to cross the border of Afganistan and to form a national army and restore the independence at the expence of the military assistance from the English. In 1922 after F.Hojaev’s such an instruction as: ” The situation is bad, don’t return!” Usmon Hoja had to remain abroad for good”[14].

About Usmon Hoja’s deserting to the side of those who had been leading an armed struggle against the soviet regime and after that his emigration abroad professor H.Sh. Inoyatov wrote: “ In October of 1921 Anvar poshsho - Turkey’s former military minister, who had links with the English

intelligence service came to the Old Bukhara, in order to hold negotiations with such traitors as Usmon Hoja and Ali Rizo.... Usmon Hoja, Doniyor afandi and Ali Rizo came to Dushanbe with a detachment consisting of 800 members(out of that 600 members were the militia) in order to put an end to the basmachi movement. He passed on to the side of Anvar poshsho”[15]. From this information written in the pattern of the soviet ideology it might be assumed that Usmon Hoja had been a traitor and under Anvar poshsho’s propaganda and influence he had deserted to the side of the basmachi(independence) movement.

Historician scholar Q. Rajabov wrote that ”when Usmon Hoja was on his service trip in Eastern Bukhara as an extraordinary representative of the BPSR, on December 9, 1921, by the help of his assistants – the vice Ministry of the Military affairs Ali Rizobek, commander of Termez Harrison Hasanbek and Doniyorbek, he unarmed the Red army soldiers in Dushanbe. At that time the Turkish military commander Anvar poshsho, who was staying at the headquarters of Ibrohimbek basmachi, sent his assistants Hoji Somiy and Usmon afandi together with a group of soldiers in order to help him( Usmon Hoja). But having found no common language with Ibrohimbek, Usmon Hoja retreated to the Bobotog side, and at the beginning of January of 1922, came to Behbudiy(the now Karshi) together with the military unit under him. When he was staying there he made up his firm decision to sever relations with the Soviets and pass on to the side of the independence movement”[16].

Professor Q.Rajabov confirmed that Usmon Hoja had had a negotiation on the formation and armament of the national army, but all his attempts had been in vain, and Fayzulla Hodjaev’s warning letter made him remain abroad. The very opinion was moved by the historian scholar Sh.A.Hayitov.

## CONCLUSION

In 1922-1924 when serving in the structure of the BPSR Usmon Hoja Polathojaev was a true fighter for independence in the deepest sense of the word. Because of the policy of the force and superpower pursued by the Centre our countryman Usmon Hoja had to emigrate abroad from our country.

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