

dossier had been sent to Moscow where a Special Council of three was going to examine it and decide my fate, without my presence, without a lawyer to defend my case, without a chance to say my last words. How unfortunate! “Free and thriving” Armenia was deprived of the right to try, pass judgment and punish an Armenian who had committed a “crime” against her. What was the difference then between the Armenian *gubernia* of Tsarist Russia and today’s Soviet Socialist Republic of Armenia? This was an insult to my national pride and dignity, but these things count for nothing for the tyrannical colonialist that Soviet Russia was.

Months passed, until one day the prison guard informed me that the Special Council in Moscow had sentenced me to ten years of forced labor in prison labor camps. I was kept waiting again.

On April 15, 1945, sixteen months after my imprisonment, the iron door to my cell opened for the last time and the Alexandrapoltsi prison guard yelled, “*Saberay sveshchami*,” that is “Collect your things.” I had nothing to collect so I walked out. He took me to his office and said, “You protested against the verdict and the sentence. Now we are sending you to Moscow. Go there and tell them what you want.”

That was a big lie, no doubt, a cover for the decision that had already been handed down from above. They took me to the railway station and put me in a prison wagon. There was a Georgian NCO [non-commissioned officer] and two soldiers in the compartment next to mine. They were in charge of escorting me to Rostov.