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THE PRESS OF THE SOCIALIST-FEDERALIST PARTY ON THE SETTLEMENT OF THE RUSSIANS IN GEORGIA

At the beginning of the 20th c. Russian Tsarism paid special attention to the colonization of Transcaucasia. The specially established Administration for Settlement began to seek lots for Russian colonists.

The Socialist-Federalist Party opposed the settlement of Russians in Georgia. The Party managed to voice fully its protest in the press.

In 1904-1905, when the idea of Russification of Georgia became dominant in the top circles, the local administration started to oppress the Georgians in Abkhazia. In Russia's view, many Russians could be settled there and therefore it was not advisable to allow the increase of the number of the Georgians there.

The Russian press was also interested in the settlement of the Russians in Georgia. The newspaper the "*Chernov Vestnik*" wrote: "The Russians must have been settled on the Black Sea coast, otherwise, the Megreles would have spoilt these sacred lands."

In my opinion, the colonization served special purposes - introduction of the Russian culture, spreading of the Russian language, etc. The Russians would have been a good support for the Russian Empire at the time of disturbances.

Although the Federalist Party supported the unity of the democratic forces of Georgia and Russia, it denounced the domination of the Russian Empire in Georgia.