

THE
BLACK
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OF THE
KREMLIN
A WHITE
BOOK



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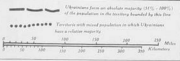
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Ukrainian Association of Victims of Russian Communist
Terror

THE BLACK DEEDS OF THE KREMLIN

A WHITE BOOK

Vol. 1

BOOK OF TESTIMONIES

**UKRAINIAN ASSOCIATION OF VICTIMS OF
RUSSIAN COMMUNIST TERROR**

Toronto

1953

Canada

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S. O. Pidhainy — Editor-in-chief

Translated by Alexander Oreletsky and Olga Prychodko

**with an introduction by
Professor G. W. Simpson**

PREFACE

The present white book on the black deeds of the Kremlin differs from ordinary white books in that it is not an official government publication. Although Ukraine has not one but two governments, one of them, the government of the Ukrainian People's Republic is in exile and is not recognized by other states, while the other government, that of the Ukrainian S.S.R., is a puppet of Moscow, acting against the interests of the Ukrainian people.

Therefore, in their own defense, the people themselves had to write this book. The first volume of this white book is published by the Ukrainian people, or rather by those Ukrainians who, during the Second World War, were fortunate enough to escape from the gloomy realm of the Kremlin tyrants and who are now living in a free world.

Only a few of the one hundred contributors to the present volume are writers by profession. Almost ninety per cent of the testimonies were written by those who never in their lives had anything published. They were or are peasants, farm laborers, workers, or clerks. Now in a free country, they relate their stories of life under the Soviet regime truthfully and simply. They wrote their testimonies so that the world might learn not only about their past experiences, but also about the similar fate meted out to thousands of their fellow countrymen who had remained in the U.S.S.R. They wrote it in order to warn others, farmers and workers like themselves, not to be misled by communist propaganda.

The authors contributing to this book have also provided the funds for its publication. Now working in Canadian industry, farming, and forestry, they have made generous gifts from their own savings in order to make the appearance of this book possible. A list of all those donating \$100 and more is given in the appendix.

It is little wonder that the book itself is motley and

uneven. The editor's aim has been to preserve as much as possible the original ideas and expressions of the contributors.

The sponsors of this book encountered many obstacles in the path leading to publication, but these were overcome by the generous support given by good Ukrainian and Canadian patriots. In particular our thanks are due to Mr. Stephen Pawluk, President of the Ukrainian Branch, Canadian Legion in Toronto, for his unstinted encouragement of our project and his aid in the fund raising drive. We are also greatly indebted to Professor G. W. Simpson of the University of Saskatchewan who kindly consented to write the introduction.

To all organizations and individuals who have helped in the publication of the first volume of the white book I wish, on behalf of the Ukrainian Association of Victims of Russian Communist Terror, to express our sincere gratitude.

S. O. Pidhainy

INTRODUCTION

This book has been written for the use of all those who are seriously interested in the present state of world affairs and who are deeply concerned in re-establishing conditions of approximate justice and stability. It is a collection of narratives by Ukrainians relating their own experiences under the Communist regime. Some of the narrators are men of education and training. Some are humble folk who tell in their own way what they themselves saw and experienced. Most of the stories are related with emotional intensity which only people who have passed through similar experiences can fully appreciate. The people speak for themselves, since they have been fortunate enough to survive and escape to lands where freedom of speech is possible. They speak also for the silent, who will never have the opportunity to voice the agony of mind and body which they are enduring. They speak as well for the dead, those uncounted millions, who were bruised, crushed and annihilated that a revolutionary theory prevail and that a system of domination should be established.

This is not the first such book to appear. Indeed there has been a number of similar accounts already published, told by victims of Soviet oppression. Why should there be another book to compete for the time of busy people who are trying to work out practical solutions to immediate pressing problems? The answer to this question is three-fold.

The first answer lies in the fact that the people who write this book feel a burning obligation to insist that the Western World should realize that what seems so remote and fantastic to the inhabitants of that world has actually happened in the Soviet Union and is still happening. They are shocked by the unawareness which still seems to prevail in spite of previous accounts.

The second answer lies in the deep conviction which they share that the particular Ukrainian aspect of Soviet oppression

has been deliberately minimized or overlooked. The Ukrainians were the first non-Russian people to feel the terror and oppression directed from Moscow. That persecution has never ceased.

The third answer to the question lies in the hope of the writers that they can in some way contribute to the liberation of their beloved Ukraine. How this can be brought about, or what form it should take, are aspects of the exceedingly complex problems of high politics and diplomacy which they themselves cannot know or manage. But they state what they do know. They do not expect impossible crusades or heroic gestures which complicate still further rather than solve. But they do expect that a living, suffering, dynamic people, reflected in their narratives, should not be forgotten by those who think in terms of abstract principles and systems, or by those excessively prudent folk who seek to gain ultimate stability by sacrificing basic principles of humanity and justice.

Thus it will be well worth-while for busy and practical people to re-vivify their memory by reading this direct, human documentation of Soviet horror and persecution.

University of Saskatchewan

Geo. W. SIMPSON.

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Transliteration of Ukrainian used in this book:

а — a	л — l
б — b	м — m
в — v (before vowels) and w (after vowels at the end of syllable or word)	н — n
	о — o
	п — p
г — h	р — r
ґ — g	с — s
д — d	т — t
е — e	у — u
є — ye	ф — f
ж — zh*	х — kh
з — z	ц — ts
и — y**	ч — ch*
й — y (before vowels) and i (after vowels)**	ш — sh*
і — i	щ — shch
ї — yi	ю — yu
к — k	я — ya
	ь — not transliterated

*) Doubling of these consonants in endings “-жжя”, “-шшя”, “-ччя” is omitted.

**) surname endings “-вич”, “-ий” are written “-vich”, “-y”, and all words ending in “-ій” with “-iy”.

Apostrophe is used only to indicate that two adjoining letters should be pronounced separately, e.g. Roz'hin should be read Roz-hin (pronounced nearly Rose-heen) and not Rozh-in.

“Кнів”, “Одеса” are written “Kiev”, “Odessa”. All other place names in Ukraine follow the above rules with their Russian equivalents which are spelled differently given in the index.

Russian names are written in accordance with the rules for the transliteration of Russian. The spelling of Russian place names is that used on the maps published by the National Geographic Society in Washington, U.S.A.

CHAPTER

I.

**CONCENTRATION CAMPS, PRISONS AND JUSTICE
IN COMMUNIST RUSSIA**



Symon Petlyura, head of the government of the Ukrainian People's Republic and commander-in-chief of the Ukrainian army, assassinated by a bolshevik agent on May 25th, 1926, in Paris.



I ACCUSE

I.

Pick up the Small Soviet Encyclopedia, 1940 edition, open it and under the letter "U" read what is written in the article "Ukrainian SSR".

It is a document and there you will see in black and white, although in fine print, that Soviet Ukraine according to the census of 1927 had a population of 32 million and in 1939 (twelve years later) — 28 million.

Only 28 million? What happened to 4 million people after 1927? Where is the natural increase which in 12 years should have been at least 6 - 7 million? That means more than 10 million! What happened to those 10 million of the Ukrainian population? What happened to them in the "land of flourishing socialism?"

I walked over the whole road to Calvary with my people and I was a living witness of what happened to those millions. I cannot tell it in detail in a short article, but at least I want to give a brief account.

I want to emphasize in this that I am the son of a

workman (a proletarian), that is, a member of the ruling class in the USSR, in the name of which Stalin and his party operate their so-called "proletarian dictatorship". But I am the son of a Ukrainian proletarian and my mother is of farmer origin, daughter of the farmer Ivan Kryvusha of the village of Kuzemen in the region of Poltava and that is the reason for my hard life in the ultra-democratic USSR.

I have been not only a witness of what happened to those 10 million of the Ukrainian population but also a part of those other millions who, together with them, were being murdered and impoverished systematically through all the years of bolshevism.

II.

I was a little boy ten years of age, when the bolsheviks, the slayers of my people, penetrated my consciousness like a bloody nightmare. That was in 1920. I was living with my grandfather in the village among the bee-hives. Grandfather was 92 years old and had only one arm, but he still earned his living by looking after the apiary. He reminded me of Saints Zosym and Savatiy whose ikon was hanging on an old linden tree among the hives.

One day, towards evening, a band of armed men appeared, speaking a strange language, and before my eyes and the eyes of my cousins and despite our yells and cries, murdered my grandfather and one of his sons, my uncle. They stabbed them again and again with their bayonets asking some questions, then shot at the bloody bodies on the ground from their pistols and roared with laughter, hurling filthy invective at their victims. Under the old linden tree among the beehives, around the ikon of Saints Zosym and Savatiy, the ground was all drenched with blood. I'll see that blood as long as I live. That was St. Bartholomew's Eve in our village. There had been many such nights in Ukraine and small as I was, I had heard of them but I had never seen them. Then I did. That night all the old farmers and the priest were murdered in our village and the massacre was organized, as were many others, by bolshevism in the form of representatives of the "Cheka"* and a bolshevik "extermination brigade".

I did not know then that this was a prelude to my whole

* Cheka — the "extraordinary commission" for protection against counter-revolution was the bolshevik secret police, later renamed OGPU (NKVD, MVD).

life under the Soviets and a symbol of the fate prepared by bolshevism for my whole nation. They tortured my grandfather to death because he was a well-to-do Ukrainian farmer having 99 acres of land and he was against the "commune", and my uncle, because he had been during the national struggle for independence in 1917 - 1918 a soldier of the national army of the Ukrainian People's Republic, that is, he had fought for the freedom and independence of the Ukrainian people.

My other uncle, who had hidden and escaped death, was later arrested and sent without trial to Solowky, the Soviet Duchau, for ten years, then for an additional ten years and he died there. Later I and my entire family followed the same way.

That is the way I first saw bolshevism from close by. In the early days of my life and in the beginning of the Ukrainian SSR, I saw Ukraine brought to heel by the Soviet régime and colonized by Red Russian imperialism. Later I realized that all this there was as bloody and cruel.

III.

Having subjugated Ukraine, bolshevism set out to denationalize her, destroy her, spiritually and nationally, by trying to make of the multi-national USSR a single Red Empire. Since Ukraine was the richest republic of the USSR and the second in size after Russia, bolshevism decided to hold it at any cost. As the people were not in favour, the Russian bolsheviks resorted to provocation, terror and the physical annihilation of whole ethnic groups, a policy which they have followed during the entire period of their domination and which they are still pursuing. This annihilation was carried out on a grandiose scale, as befits people dominated by the mania of greatness.

In the years 1929 - 1932, that is, during the so-called "collectivization" period, the well-to-do wealthy farmers were wiped out with the slogan of the "annihilation of the kurkul* as a class". In reality this meant the annihilation of a great mass of people, the honest and industrious farmers, and above all the annihilation of the Ukrainian farmers. This liquidation of the "kurkul as a class" was really for us the annihilation of Ukraine as a nation, because 70% of

* Kurkul — Russian "kulak", a derogatory name for a prosperous farmer.

Ukrainians were farmers. By this slogan literally millions of Ukrainian people were destroyed, not only the so-called "kurkuls" but the poor farmers, intellectuals, and workers.

For in Ukraine this policy was carried out, not on the social, but on the political and national plane. The "kurkuls" were destroyed because they were rich, because they were "kurkuls". The poor farmers, the intellectuals and the workers were destroyed because they sympathized with the "kurkuls" and that meant that they were "near-kurkuls". All who opposed the Soviet regime and collectivization were included in this category.

All these masses of people destined for sacrifice, were sent to the snows of Siberia and the far north, there to die of hunger, cold and disease, deprived of all rights, even the most elementary.

They sent them all away, uprooting whole families, old people, young children and babies in their mother's arms. As they drove them throughout the USSR as prisoners, they baited them in every way possible, with the spoken word and in the press; arrived in some grim Pechora or Murmansk, the victims were ordered to shift for themselves. Those who survived this arduous journey, perished there. Mothers were not allowed to bury their children who died on the road and had to throw them out in the snow without coffin or priest, and then, not long after, their own bodies were thrust out in the same way.

With the bones of these Ukrainian children and mothers, Stalin has paved all the roads and wilderness of the "immense motherland".

That is how many of my relatives perished. But these sacrifices made life no easier for anyone in Ukraine.

IV.

In 1933 the bolsheviks organized an artificial famine in Ukraine. Before the eyes of the whole world the Ukrainian village population died out by whole villages and counties. More than five million Ukrainian villagers at that time died a terrible death from famine. Assistance organized in Western Ukraine by Metropolitan Sheptytsky, brotherly help from those of the Ukrainian people who were living outside the boundaries of the USSR in Poland, was rejected by Stalin

and was even kept secret from the dying Ukrainians in the USSR. Why? It was dangerous, for it showed a national solidarity so feared by bolshevism. Stalin condemned the Ukrainian farmers to an inevitable death by famine deliberately to break their spirit and make them become reconciled to the collective farm slavery which he had introduced.

Elevators throughout the USSR were bursting with Ukrainian grain, raised by the Ukrainian people, and with the produce of that people the bolsheviks were depressing world markets by dumping, to support the Chinese revolution, and so on. At that time the dying Ukrainian villagers who went to the capitals to beg for alms on the streets were hunted down by the red police called the "workers' and peasants' militia", and thrown outside the city to perish along the roads.

In that terrible tragedy the Ukrainian people were led to cannibalism, the highest degree of human tragedy. Mothers, insane from hunger, ate their own children.

You mothers all over the world! Can you imagine any circumstances under which you could eat your own children?

No!

It is beyond the pale of your comprehension and belief. But it happened in Ukraine in 1933.

You surely cannot think that our mothers, our wives and our sisters are aboriginal savages?

No, our mothers and sisters are from Eastern Europe and of the same race as the Grand Princess Olha who introduced Christianity at the dawn of European civilization.

Our mothers and sisters are of one of the noblest Slavonic tribes, from Ukraine, and are as kindhearted and gentle as the wives and maidens of Italy, France or England. But . . . they were brought to this tragic situation by bolshevism. It is the highest pitch of human tragedy incomprehensible to the normal mind. They were faced with the ghastly alternative of dying a terrible death by famine, or . . . and this second "or" was the result of the insanity of the dying. And death continued to hover beyond this second "or". It was put there by bolshevism, which became a symbol of it. It is a symbol of the origin and essence of cannibalism. It is possible to collect a whole mass of facts and materials, and to gather together living witnesses who could throw light on this terrible page in our history, if only some one would take it to heart!

But the world is not interested and that is where the

greatest tragedy of us, the Ukrainian people, lies. This artificially planned famine took colossal sacrifices from the people who wished for nothing but freedom and independence. This is why I hate bolshevism.

V.

In the years 1932 - 1939 the bolsheviks exterminated the entire Ukrainian intellectual class: scientists, writers, artists, military men, statesmen and thousands and tens of thousands of people, who were the leaders of their race. Many of them were communists who had fought heroically in the October Revolution, for its slogans of liberty and justice, brotherhood and equality, and who remained true to these slogans.

Having trampled all these slogans underfoot with his anti-national policy, Stalin was also destroying those people who remained true to them. The bolsheviks destroyed them in order to deprive the people of their spiritual élite, which aspired to freedom and social justice. They annihilated them, after first subjecting them to a terrible inquisition and such tortures as were known only in the Middle Ages, and then shot them or sent them to prisons in distant Kolyma, Solowky, Franz Joseph's Land.

Thus perished many of my friends and comrades, thus perished the writers: Hryhoriy Kosynka, D. Falkiwsky, B. Antonenko-Davydovich, Ye. Pluzhnyk, B. Teneta, D. Zahul, M. Yohansen, M. Kulish, S. Pylypenko, O. Slisarenko, Drai-Khmara, Brasyuk, M. Iwchenko, G. Shkurupiy, O. Vlyzko, Y. Shpol, Hryhoriy Epik, Pidmohyl'ny, M. Vorony, M. Zerov, and others. . . Generals: Yakir, Dubovy, Tyutyunnyk. . . Thus perished professors Hermaize, S. Yefremiw, Doroshkevich.

This list is as long and endless as our tragedy. Many prominent Ukrainian communists ended their lives by suicide as for example, the Minister (People's Commissar) of Education Skrypnyk, the communist writer Khvylovy, the Prime Minister (head of the Council of People's Commissars of the Ukrainian SSR) Lyubchenko, and so on.

Among all these tortured leaders in Ukrainian art, literature and science, there were many great names and men of undoubted talents known and honored in Ukraine.

Many of them were my companions and friends and I can assure you that they were not "enemies of the people" but, on the contrary, were ardent patriots, highly intellectual,



Yuriy Tyutyunnyk, general in command of the insurgent army in 1921, captured and executed by the GPU in 1931.

good sons of workers and farmers and faultlessly honest people. That is why they were annihilated.

With them I passed over the thorny path of bolshevik prisons and concentration camps. With many I sat in the same cell, with them I was beaten and tortured.

I would like to point out to Ukrainians in Canada and the United States and, above all, to the Ukrainian communists: thus perished, among others, your well known communist author, M. Irchan, thus perished all the Galician Ukrainian communists who believed that Stalin had come to the USSR to build Soviet Ukraine in a "brotherly union" with Red Russia. They were destroyed because they were Ukrainian communists and believed the hypocritical bolshevik slogans about the right of every nation to freedom, even to "separation", and hoped to put that "right" into practice. Many living witnesses can say where the bones of such men as Hrytsai, Badan, Krushelnytsky and others are laid. And should the Ukrainian communists in Canada and the United States now attack us, fugitives from communism, and demand that we be repatriated, they will be doing the work of Cain.

Let them go themselves to that Stalin "paradise" and live there for a year or two. Then, if they be still alive, let them voice their objections.

Besides the prominent and widely known intellectuals, a great many unknown intellectuals were destroyed during these two years. And the only reason was because they were Ukrainians and, by some word spoken perhaps 20 years previously, they had expressed their dislike of the Russian régime of occupation. That is why they were labelled "enemies of the people" and murdered in such a way that even Hitler could merely envy and copy. The horrors of Dachau and Buchenwald do not surpass the horrors of the countless NKVD torture chambers and concentration camps of those years. As a consequence of all this ill-treatment of the Ukrainian people, even according to Soviet statistics, there perished between the years 1927 and 1939 more than ten million people.

But Soviet statistics are not reliable. The census at the end of the thirties was taken twice. After the census of 1937 had been taken, it was destroyed and a new census planned, but postponed because the results of the first census were too terrible.

After the postponement, hurried measures were taken to try to correct the tragic state shown by the number of the

population in the various republics and in Ukraine. Laws were hurriedly passed forbidding abortions and granting rewards for large families, in order to boost the natural increase of the population.

Then the census of 1939 was taken, in which even people condemned to death were listed, the execution being stayed until the completion of the census. Even so, this would-be census showed a decrease of population amounting to several millions in Ukraine as compared with 1927.

VI.

I travelled through this "rodina"* from Kiev to Chukhotka,** to the Bering Strait and back. I passed through it under the protection of the "oprichnicks"*** of the GPU-NKVD, being ill-treated at every step until I escaped to Europe. This lasted for eight years, that is half of my adult life has been spent in the prisons and concentration camps of the bolsheviks. My youth lies buried there. The rest of my life passed in that great concentration camp, the USSR, where a whole category of people, the category of the politically unreliable, is disfranchised and doomed to a condition of perpetual moral depression, without mentioning the fact that it is often deprived of the right of employment and means of livelihood and constantly threatened with new arrests and imprisonments.

It is no wonder then that this has resulted in a type of human being, prevalent in USSR, intimidated, suspicious, silent and fatalistic.

A European or an American, upon hearing that the author has spent eight years in prison in the land of "socialism" may think that he was at least a confirmed murderer, a raper of young children, or a highwayman, to have deserved such a punishment.

No, the author was a Ukrainian artist with a good education who had never so much as killed a chicken. His whole misfortune has been that in that land of "Russian socialism" and of the "broadest democracy in the world", he dared to say a word of protest, although it was concealed in the form of a fable. This was the "crime" for which he passed his youth in prisons and hard labor envying even the ban-

* Russian for "motherland".

** Chukotski Poluoostrov — on maps.

*** "Bodyguards".

dits, for they received better treatment and had privileges. Artists had no privileges, as "political criminals", because they loved their own people and their native land.

That is the paradox.

VII.

I can not return to my native land because I love it and love for one's native land, for one's people, that is, national patriotism, is the greatest crime in USSR. It has been so for the past twenty-five years, it is so now. This crime is called in bolshevik language, "local nationalism".

Why is it regarded as the greatest crime?

The USSR is known as a federation of republics with equal rights, who "according to Stalin's constitution" have the right to national freedom, even to separation from Russia. That means, a representative of each nationality has the right to his own patriotism and love for his own people. But this is only in theory.

In fact, if any republic wished to leave the federation, it would be crushed with fire and sword by its ally with "equal rights", bolshevik Russia. Each republic in every case has been founded and dominated by terror in this "free" alliance. Bolshevism is concerned with the creation of a unified totalitarian red empire, having a centralized administration, one language, one culture, one ideology and one policy.

Therefore the slightest demonstration of its own will by any of the nations "with equal rights" in the USSR, except Russia, is suppressed by a terrible moral and physical terror.

By the use of that terror Russian red fascism or bolshevism is striving to mould 100 nationalities into the so-called "one Soviet people", that is actually into one Russian people.

This is the reason why local patriotism, that is, the patriotism of each of the 100 nationalities, each striving for national freedom and independence, is regarded as the greatest crime and is accordingly heavily punished.

Therefore love for one's people and one's native land (not for the USSR, the prison of nations, but let us say for Georgia, for Ukraine, for White Ruthenia, etc.) is regarded as the greatest evil. For this reason Ukrainians are not safe even beyond the borders of the USSR, for attempts



Yevhen Konovalts, leader of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists in Western Ukraine, killed by an NKVD agent on May 23rd, 1938, in Rotterdam.

are made by force and provocation to drag them back and destroy them.

And that the world may not become indignant but may rather assist them in their work, the bolsheviks try to prove to everyone that the Ukrainians are war criminals, enemies of democracy.

Yes, the Ukrainians are enemies of the Russian type of "democracy" but they are not war criminals because they fought alike against Hitler and against Stalin. They fought against both before the war and they fought against both during the war.

Many of us, after the prisons and concentration camps of Stalin, passed through the concentration camps of the Gestapo, through Dachau, Belsen, Buchenwald, Auschwitz, and so on. And a still greater number were tortured to death by Stalin, Hitler's ally before 1939. Bolshevism knows it, but it is trying to discredit us in the basest manner so that no one in the world would sympathize with us and protect us.

Why?

Because we are dangerous to it, we are the bearers of that truth, which the world does not know and must learn, that is what bolshevism fears.

VIII.

I never want to see Stalin's "rodina" because the baseness, cynicism and cruelty of the bolsheviks know no bounds. The party clique which follows the slogan expressed by the saying "the end justifies the means" is actually always ready to use any means.

And because the bolsheviks have changed their aims a few times since they came into power, from the goal of building socialism with worship of Karl Marx to the goal of creating a greater Russian empire with worship of tsar Peter the Great or from godlessness to patronage of the Russian Orthodox Church, it is not hard to imagine how many methods excluding one another they have used. At one time they have sought to build something and at another to destroy it, once to uproot religion as "opium of the people" by shooting priests and ruining churches and then to restore the Russian Church by shooting the unbelievers (like Yaroslavsky) and banishing to hard labor representatives of other religious denominations, now punishing for opposition

to Yezhov and his regime and then for support of the same Yezhov and his regime.

All this has been done with open cynicism and calculated cruelty and always on a "grand" scale.

A human being under this régime is deprived of human dignity and the most elementary human rights. When the NKVD arrested a citizen, without regard to his age, status, or services to the people, no one could intercede for him or defend him. The true institution of defenders in court actually did not exist. There were no open trials for political prisoners. Millions of people have been destroyed and nobody knew anything about their fate.

The sins of the father, and this not only when he was a real criminal, but merely upon arrest, were visited at once upon the children and the family, and they were subjected to persecution and terror.

For example:

When first arrested, they broke the prisoner's ribs and twisted his joints out of place at the examination and after that, sometimes two years later, served a warrant for his arrest or laid charges against him dated back to comply with the law, or, as quite often happened, they shot someone and then discovered it was the wrong man who happened to bear the same name. They might arrest the father of a family, and before he was proven guilty, throw all the members of his family out on the street, branding them "enemies of the people", and depriving them of the right to work and earn their living.

That is the way my children perished, as did the children of many of my fellow prisoners.

Or they revenged themselves on the children for their fathers and even their grandfathers, by not admitting them to the higher schools or to work, merely because a grandfather was a kurkul or an officer, or even a private in the army of the Ukrainian People's Republic, or some other.

That is the way of life under the Soviet rule.

That is what I endured for a long while.

Mothers were treated in the same way. A mother could die at the doors of the NKVD, praying for news of her son, but they would tell her nothing, and would not let her see him, but would make the wound in her heart smart with dirty insinuations and threats. They would demand of the unfortunate mother a list of her son's acquaintances. They would terrorize the uneducated, illiterate old woman and

send her to an early grave. My mother perished in this way. Or, after crippling the prisoner during investigation and throwing him in the cell, they would refuse him medical assistance. The NKVD physician would propose to the victim, half insane with torture, "Either you sign everything the examiner requires of you and be treated, or die like a dog". Yet the victim is innocent.

IX.

In the USSR a human being does not even have the value of an insect. In destroying people for nothing, for a trifle, a word spoken, an anecdote, a complaint, and in doing it with open cynicism, the bolsheviks put forward this formula: "In the USSR there are enough people and there is no need to be fussy" and "it is better to break the ribs of one hundred innocent people than to allow one guilty person to escape".

It should surprise no one that there were about eleven million people in the Russian prisons and concentration camps in the years 1936 - 1939. The prisons were so overcrowded that, in individual cells designed for one person there were 25 - 30 who were kept there in this way for ten months and longer "under investigation" — that is before charges were made. Nobody cared that these people were slowly dying. In addition, each of them was tortured during investigation.

All this was being done according to a definite plan and upon instructions from the Kremlin. That was the so-called "five year plan for the reconstruction of man". And he was being "reconstructed!" But when this procedure was carried to absurdity, when there was no family in the USSR which had not suffered from terror in some way, because some member was "an enemy of the people", when a sea of petitions and entreaties from the children and mothers of the imprisoned and sentenced "enemies of the people" flooded the Kremlin and especially N. Krupskaya, Lenin's widow, then Stalin, to calm public opinion, proclaimed at the 18th meeting of the Party that "The enemies of the people had infiltrated the NKVD, had mastered the honest party bolsheviks", that is they controlled them for so many years and on such a gigantic scale . . . and having said this, he ordered Yezhov to be removed and sent into retirement.

Can there be a greater cynicism and mockery of human

beings? Mockery of millions of people. . . And the provocative assassination of Kirov? It was a second Reichstag fire, plotted in order to excuse the launching of a reign of terror against all the opportunists and the dissatisfied. A certain right opportunist, Nikolayev, killed Kirov. But he was merely a second Van der Lubbe.

In revenge for Kirov they shot people of the "right", the "left" and in between, indiscriminately, not only party opportunists but very often those who had no connection with either party or opposition. Thus they shot the Ukrainian artists and writers. The wave of mass executions rolled from Odessa to Vladivostok and the number of those shot was so great that it would have been too high a price for Stalin, let alone Kirov, not including those sent to concentration camps.

Examples of absolutely unjustified mockery, cynicism, subterfuge, provocation, sadism and cruelty mark the whole practice of bolshevism and its nature.

X.

I have been imprisoned with priests of various religious denominations and I have seen how they were beaten and murdered. On Stalin's orders they were destroyed and the churches in the USSR were ruined. For 25 years they were driving the slightest signs of the Christian religion out of human souls, in a brutal, loathsome manner. Then, in 1934, the bolsheviks had a sudden change of heart in regard to religion and began to appear in the role of defenders of the Orthodox Church. Europe and the whole world might have believed that Stalin was actually introducing Christianity, and that his party had sincerely returned to religion. But we will never believe it. The shades of the tortured priests still stand before our eyes, and their bones have not yet turned to dust.

The Biblical King Herod could more easily have embraced Christianity than his successor of the 20th century. Stalin has but made of religion a tool for his political machinations. And religion will still be the object of destruction in the USSR as it has been in the past. The Stalinist "socialistic" USSR is a social concentration camp of enslaved people of 100 nationalities, people without rights, terrorized, frightened, hungry and poor. Living a quarter of a century under bolshevism they have received from it nothing but prisons,

rivers of blood and tears, and they will continue to receive nothing else as long as bolshevism continues to exist. Bolshevism is a coercion of human beings, slave labor, modern serfdom, it is the lawless despotism of a political clique, it is physical and spiritual terror, it is poverty, it is famine, it is war.

XI.

I do not wish to return to my native land as long as bolshevism rules it. Stalin, being Hitler's ally since 1939, ruined my motherland in collaboration with the German fascists. For us, Ukrainians, Stalin was Hitler's ally from long ago. Hitler aimed at our destruction to extend his dominion over our land. Stalin destroyed and continues to destroy us in the name of his party and its "Marxo-Leninist doctrine", but in reality in the name of the Russian red fascism in our country and the whole world.

Stalin helped Hitler and murdered many of us in Siberia and in jail. Hitler helped Stalin and murdered us in Dachau and in imprisonment.

We did not give up the struggle against the aggressors and shall never give up, though many of the 40 million of our people have perished. This is why I and hundreds of thousands of others do not wish to return home to the "land of socialism".

XII.

I will return to my native land with millions of my brothers and sisters, here in Europe or there in concentration camps in Siberia, when the totalitarian, bloody, bolshevik system is wiped out like that of Hitler; when the NKVD goes the way of the Gestapo when we, the Ukrainian people, have the right to freedom and independence restored to us in the name of Christianity and justice.

It is hard for one who has grown up in normal human society to believe all that has happened there in a sixth part of the world, behind a Chinese wall.

The world may not believe us.

Well, let them put us on trial. Let the bolsheviks try us, but in Europe before the eyes of the whole world. Let us be charged with anything, but let our judges be the representatives of the civilized world.

All the hundreds of thousands of us, fugitives from bolshevism, will be the defendants.

Let the court pronounce judgment upon us.

But Stalin will not agree to such a trial.

We do not fear such a trial, but he fears it. He "the sun", "the father of nations", "the wisest of the wise", "the most democratic of democrats" fears such a trial, for it would be a trial of him and all his bolshevism. It would be the most unprecedented and most interesting scandal in history.

Stalin knows it and is hastening to get hold of us as soon as possible sometimes by kidnapping, sometimes by the physical annihilation of individuals in the ruins of the Hitler Reich.

A thief is a thief and such are his methods.

P. S.

In deciding to publish this, I am well aware of the fact that when this letter appears in the press, the bolsheviks will murder the rest of my family, if any still remain, but I ask you to print it and sign it with my full name, since all I had to lose has already been lost.



SOLOWKY CONCENTRATION CAMP

About sixty-five miles from the Soviet mainland, latitude 65 degrees north, in the south western part of the White Sea, lie the Solovetski Islands. This archipelago, popularly known as the "Solowky", comprises the islands Solovetski, Anzerski, Muksalma, Bolshoi and Mali Zayatski.

The Solowky became known with the establishment of the famous Monastery of St. Zosym and St. Savatyi on the islands at the end of the sixteenth century. When Ivan the Terrible came to power the Solovetsky Monastery became the northern outpost of Tsar Ivan's far sighted policy against the West. In 1584 - 1596 it was surrounded by a menacing wall, a project of Archimandrite Tryfon. This bleak and repulsive structure surpassed, as a defence barrier, anything built up to that time, not only in Russia but in all of Europe.

From early times the Solovetsky Monastery was not only

a cloister where Orthodox martyrs sought salvation in prayer and fasting, but also a place where "criminals" repented for their violations of Russian law and beliefs. The prisoners were confined in the silent cells of the cold, desolate towers of the Solovetsky Kremlin. The "incorrigible heretics" were thrown into dungeons and put on bread and water.

In one such hole under Uspensky Cathedral, from 1775 to 1801, Ataman (Commander-in-Chief) of the Zaporozhian Sich, Petro Kalnyshewsky, spent the remainder of his life. Being offered his freedom by Tsar Alexander I, the 110-year-old kozak declined, or perhaps was physically unable, to take advantage of it and return to Ukraine. It is said that his only wish was that the tsar build a new prison because the old one was unbearable. Kalnyshewsky died in 1803 at the age of 112, and was buried beside the Cathedral wall. On the cast iron plaque over his grave is the inscription: "Here lie the remains of God's servant, Petro Kalnyshewsky, Commander-in-Chief of the once powerful Zaporozhian Sich, exiled to this monastery at the order of Her Royal Highness the Empress Catherinell, for repentence. Repented and passed away on July 26 in the year 1803".

All Ukrainians who were Soviet prisoners on the Islands considered it their sacred obligation to bow their heads before this great tomb.

Never, in the five hundred years of existence of the Solovetsky Monastery, were the Solowky as well known to the world as during the Soviet regime. No other prison in Russia, which abounds in prisons, had so many songs, verses and anecdotes composed about it.

Soviet citizens knew the meaning of a ride in the cold train cars to the ill-famed railway station Kem, then on to the Solowky. While still on his way the prisoner already sensed the full impact of the horror of what awaited him on these death islands.

Solowky, Solowky,
Where the road is long,
Pressure weighs the heart,
Fear burdens the soul.

The Solowky Concentration Camps being a lumbering industry center, the prisoners composed many songs about the horror of this work.

From early morning till late at night,
We saw and split the spruce and pine,
We saw and split and pile it neatly,

And curse the GPU.
Oh, why were we born,
Oh, why were we born.

We are doomed and exhausted,
But we believe that time will come
When retribution finds you.

This last was sung by prisoners building the White Sea Canal, where over 100,000 of them perished in its construction.

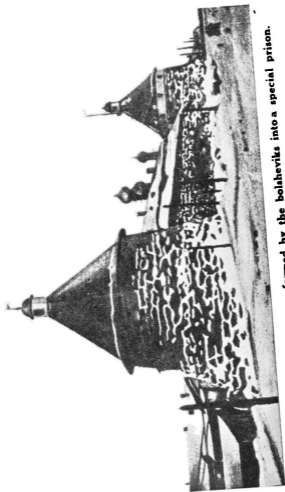
Sleep the unknown, sleep the tortured,
Sleep in the swamps amid the forests,
Let the Solovetsky pines rustle,
Over your bones.

This Solovetsky "hard labor", appropriately called there a "miniature USSR", was the barometer of Soviet internal, and even external, policies. When the wave of terror rose the number of victims on the Solowky grew, and the terror on the Islands gained unheard of, inhuman impetus. When the tide of terror outside fell it also subsided on the Islands. When, for instance, in 1926, the Soviet Minister to Poland, Boykov, was assassinated, one hundred of the most outstanding Solowky prisoners were shot in reprisal.

In 1922 the Solovetsky Monastery received the name "Solovetsky Camp of Special Assignment". The Solowky in 15 years of subsequent existence often changed their name. When the terror in the USSR intensified they were called "Chief Camp of Special Assignment" comprising concentration camps around the White Sea and those farther north, the centre of which was Popov Island. When the terror became still more acute the huge White Sea-Baltic camp was opened with Bear (Medvid) Mountain as an administration centre, and the Solowky included as an eighth sub-division of the camp. In 1937, during Yezhov's reign, Solowky were changed to "Solovetsky Prison of Special Assignment" under the supervision of the Head Administration of the State Security of USSR.

This was the outside facade of the Solovetsky slavery. The changes of names and reforms left the main function of the Solowky unaltered, i.e. to destroy the human being physically and spiritually. The regime, as the social contingent of prisoners varied, was marked into four distinct periods during its existence.

The first era, 1922 - 1927, the Solovetsky concentration camp included only the islands of Anzer, Muksalma, the



The Solowky Monastery, transformed by the bolsheviks into a special prison.

Big and small Zaichyk, the Kond and Voroniy. Its administration was located on the Solovetsky Island. The camp was organized on the pattern of concentration camps for prisoners-of-war of the Civil War, with divisions of platoons. This type of organization continued until 1933. During the first three years of its existence the Solovetsky prisoners worked mainly at their own upkeep and the terror was more or less moderate as compared to that of the second period. Referring to what they call "free will" the old-timers of the Solovetsky usually mean the mass terror of 1928 - 1931 in the USSR. Escapees of that time declare that in 1926 - 1927 Ukrainian prisoners were few and that the severe and galling tortures began with the first five-year plan. This is corroborated by other Solovetskians, testifying that in those two years the bulk of the prisoners consisted of the so-called "top brass" communists.

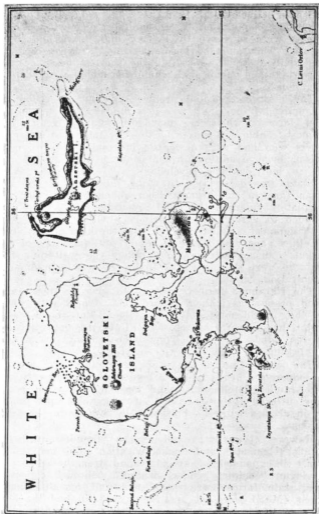
A further examination shows that they were mostly:

1. High officials of the tsarist government and Kerensky's "temporary government" that followed it.
2. Landlords, bourgeois, clergy and the so-called monarchists.
3. Commanders of and participants in the anti-communist partisan movement and political organizations of the Civil War.
4. Criminals.

The Ukrainians who were then on the Solowky were mostly commanders of Generalissimo Petlyura's insurgent troops, Ukrainian clergy and the little known Ukrainian intelligentsia. They made no effort to conceal their resentment against their enemies, and were the first to be purged. Boykov's assassination was one such instance. At that time all our army commanders fell. The rest of the Ukrainian prisoners of this era died during the second period of the Solovetsky slavery.

The terrible second period, 1927 - 1932, was one of savage lawlessness. Those imprisoned at this time suffered cruel, fiendish tortures. Changes in the social structure of the Solovetsky prisoners and the regime on this island of horror and death resulted from changes in the policies of the Soviet government.

As a complete surprise to the majority of the Soviet people, who under NEP (New Economic Policy) had begun to hope for a transformation of bolshevism, came the bad news of the five-year plan, industrialization, liquidation of



A map of the Solowky archipelago — site of the vast Soviet concentration camp.

the "kurkuls", collectivization, etc. Stalin, till then little known to the Soviet people, suddenly became a central figure and launched the first five-year plan, the liquidation of "kurkuls", liquidation of "all capitalist elements". These elements were squeezed by levying high taxes and other pressure. Thousands of businesses and trade shops were closed daily. Stalin wanted, in the shortest possible time, to "overtake and outrun the technique-economy of the capitalist nations".

The most complicated problem in planning social reconstruction of the USSR was presented by the millions of Soviet farmers who were decidedly against communism. The most trouble was caused by the Ukrainian and Georgian farmers who had not known the inherent Muscovite communism, being traditionally independent and enterprising, with an individualistic psychology.

Stalin was determined to wring the necks of the Ukrainian farmers and organized an unheard of terror. He immediately enlarged the GPU apparatus and set up and expanded to gargantuan proportions a GPU army of Special Assignment. He carried out, with the help of this army and other gangsters, the first round of liquidation of the "kurkuls", dispossessing, among others the well-to-do farmers who were shot or exiled to the Solovetsky and other concentration camps.

The Ukrainian farmers refused to give up their hard-earned possessions without a struggle. Armed with whatever they could muster they rebelled. But the Kremlin dictator, having corps of reserve GPU troops, destroyed not only the rebels but every living being on the territory of the uprising.

The village priests, teachers, agriculturalists, doctors and cooperative heads took the lead in this movement. All the Ukrainian intelligentsia and most of the rural population suffered the worst kind of repression and finally died in clashes with the bolshevik lackeys or in the GPU dungeons.

However, the first round of the "liquidation of the capitalist elements" and "collectivization" did not satisfy Stalin. He expanded this operation and strengthened it with the slogan "complete collectivization". Besides collective farms, state farms were established and machine-tractor stations (MTS) were set up. Shortly, Stalin had the keys to the granaries and storehouses where all the Ukrainian grain, sugar, butter, meat and coal was collected and the

life of the Soviet populace in his bloody hands. Even the most ruthless tyrants had never issued such savage rules directed at "pacifying" their subjects as did Stalin. At the same time he began a general attack on Ukrainian culture.

Understandably, during such terror, aimed mainly against Ukraine, the number of prisoners on the Solowky not only increased considerably but the nationality and type of prisoner changed.

"Just before my escape, September 25, 1929, there were very few from the underworld on the Solowky. They were nearly all Ukrainian farmers (as counter-revolutionaries) as well as a great number of Ukrainian clergy and teachers", wrote one refugee.

Another one declared: "Recently, students from Kiev and Katerynoslaw came here. They say that because of the Professor Yefremiw organization (SVU — Union for the Liberation of Ukraine), many were executed. Those shot numbered thousands, all were educated, and those who came to Solowky received ten-year sentences of hard labor".

When I came to the concentration camp I met many prisoners who had been members of underground organizations. The trial of the SVU, a tragi-comedy, was staged by the GPU in order to smash the Ukrainian national movement in that country and to discredit it before the outside world. All "confessions" at the trial were dictated by the GPU. The tens of thousands, or even hundreds of thousands of farmers and intellectuals who were shot and deported are evidence of the immense anti-bolshevik movement in Ukraine. It is an undeniable fact that at this time one third of the workers of the Kremenchuk Makhorka* Factory who belonged to the "Union for the Liberation of Ukraine" were arrested. This is not an isolated incident.

A student of a Pedagogical Technicum, L - ko, in 1928 - 1929 had already served eight months in a special GPU cell in Kharkiw. A member of Komsomol,** he killed the president of the Regional Executive Committee. Why? What for? The youth suffered horrible torture but still refused to say why. He finally confided in a fellow prisoner who had become a close friend of his. The Regional Committee had unexpectedly come upon a meeting of the SVU and, realizing what sort of a meeting it was, he left

* Inferior kind of tobacco.

** Union of Communist Youth.

immediately to report to the GPU. L - ko went after him, and overtaking him at the door of the Regional Executive Committee building, had emptied all seven bullets from his revolver into him. L - ko never confessed his reason for the shooting and due to his tender years and his modest background he was given only a ten-year sentence.

Stalin and his GPU had a good picture of the circumstances in Ukraine and for that reason decided on a complete liquidation of all that had come to life during the NEP (New Economic Policy) period. They began a systematic physical destruction of all active elements of the Ukrainian nation, beginning with the intelligentsia and ending the process with a specially organized artificial famine, 1932 - 1933, which took the lives of millions of Ukrainians.

In order to characterize the conditions of slavery in those years here is the evidence of one Ukrainian farmer, the truth of which I can uphold through my own experience on those God-forsaken islands:

"For the political prisoners they assigned as group commander a cut-throat, Kuhyiko, who, with his aides, tortured us for three days. He was teaching us how to exchange greetings with the administration. After three days they killed about 20 men with rifle butts. On the fourth day we were ferried across to the Solovetsky Island of Filimovska Vitka.

"Here we were met still more elaborately than on Popov Island. As soon as we were unloaded from the ferry we were surrounded by about 30 Cheka men. Each one grabbed about five of us, lined us up, and the Regional Executive Committee secretary, who suddenly appeared, began reading our names. This check-up was done before the cut-throat himself, chief of the island, Zarin. Whenever a surname was called that man quickly had to give his own and his father's Christian names so as to avoid a beating. I listened closely so as not to miss my name when it was called, but I missed. Well, I got it for missing. But that was not the end. The worst was yet to come. A student from Kiev University declared that the Soviet government forbade beating a human being. The cut-throat Zarin, summoned this youth from the line and asked him some questions which I could not hear. Then he led him away and the student never returned. A few days later his body was located with a note attached, saying that 'this was an agitator, and a murderer of Soviet Commissars'. The poor fellow gave up his life on the very first day!

"After the check-up we were taken to barracks and let inside. These were already jammed full of people so that there was not room to squeeze a needle in. There we stayed from 9 o'clock that evening until three the next morning. At three a bell rang; time for breakfast. Being new we did not know the rules. We went to the kitchen for our breakfast and showed the cook our wooden tickets, which had been given to us. He looked at the tickets, grabbed the soup ladle and began pummeling us with it over our heads and backs. With this we were driven to Filimoniwska Vitka to lay the railroad to the forest for transporting lumber for export.

"I worked there in 1928, along with about 12,000 other prisoners who were building the railroad. Because the Cheka men had orders to complete the railroad promptly we worked all winter. During this time 10,000 Ukrainians and Don kozaks died — at the hands of that brute, the bolshevik lackey, Platonov, and his aides, the foremen and group commanders. The gaps were quickly filled with new recruits from Ukraine, but these also soon perished, because by the middle of December severe frosts came. It was impossible to excavate as the earth froze nine feet in depth. One day Platonov, the thug, came to see how we worked. We told him our complaints: that it was impossible to dig the earth and that we were terribly exhausted. We had had to work 12 hours a day.

"Then we were taken off this heavy work and taken to our barracks. We were told where the pantry keeper was and received meal tickets and 300 grams of bread each. In the kitchen we got five tablespoons of soup apiece. We ate our meals and went to sleep. The next day we were called before a commission. There a doctor came and asked us the question: 'Have you all got heads, hands and feet?' and departed. From here we were taken to work. There we were divided into groups of ten, each group supervised by a Cheka man with a rifle. The Chekist ordered us to load ties at the station. We were assigned two men to a carload of ties which we had to carry 70 yards. Here I suffered for about three months. If we completed our assignment we received 800 grams of bread, some rotten fish, and fish soup, but if we failed we were beaten unmercifully and often thrown into jail.

"From there I was sent to cut trees. This was no honey either. We were assigned 34 trees to three slaves. These were to be sawed from the roots, cut into certain lengths

and peeled. The over-tired slaves worked at these assignments, some completing them in 18 to 20 hours, some not at all. If it was not completed in three days, the slaves were taken to be tortured. During this torture there was a continued repetition of — 'Do you think that the less trees you cut the sooner the government will fall?' Well, the torture began. First lighter beatings with canes and rifle butts, or a period in jail on wet sand. The sand was purposely dampened with water to keep the inmate from lying down. Then they wrote a report and sent it to the CO where the cut-throat Ivanov sat. He labelled the slaves and sent them for two or three months to the "Sekirka". This place is high off the ground, without windows, with only a few holes cut in the door.

"Inside they are equipped with railings like a chicken coop, only heavier, to hold five men. The men sit on these from 4 o'clock in the morning until 9 o'clock at night. Four thugs with clubs in their hands walk back and forth watching for one who does not sit properly and correcting him with this instrument. The poor fellow usually lands on the floor. Then the four thugs go at him in such a way that he usually cannot get up for a week, or they may even send his soul to God. For food each slave is given 300 grams of bread and a cup of hot water per day. This 'Sekirka' is called by the Solowky inmates 'building of punishment, death and blood'. In this building the most educated Ukrainians have given up their lives. These buildings have consumed thousands of people. I know, because I spent five days in one. Not only did the small thugs kill people but the chief cut-throat, Zarin, also shot them with his own hand.

"From Filimoniwska Vitka I was taken out for correction. There the group commander was a Russian Chekist, Platonov. The thirteenth unit was located in buildings where once monks used to live, with wall cupboards for books. The Soviet government made many such cupboards and called them 'sacks'. If any slave was guilty of some offence; if he was suspected of planning an escape or of failing to fill his quota or refusing to work, Platonov locked him in this 'sack' and took the keys with him. A habitual drunkard, he often went on a spree, and for days forgot the poor victim who had often died from cold and hunger by the time he returned. Many thousands suffocated in this manner at Platonov's hands. I was there for a month

and a half, became ill with scurvy and was sent to Anzer Island, where the sick were treated.

"And what treatment we received! The chief of the isle, Privalov, shot two or three slaves daily. Once when a fellow slave, Poltavets, a highly educated man was ill, the doctor, who took a liking to him, earnestly tried to cure him. Privalov sensed this and out of rage shot the patient in cold blood.

"I was on Solowky for three years and witnessed all kinds of torture which the slaves underwent. In September, 1928, I was brought to Popov Island. There I gave my occupation as carpenter because I felt I could not last long at ordinary labor. Carpentering was a little easier: at least it was dry. I worked at building barracks and paring ties. Here quotas at tree-cutting were larger than on the Solovetsky Island. Three men were assigned 36 trees. These were to be cut from the root, cut into logs and the bark peeled off so that they would be white and clean for export. These quotas drove many to suicide. Some drowned themselves, some hanged themselves, but mostly they threw themselves under an oncoming train when returning from work. But in most cases, if the quota was not reached, the administration murdered the guilty by standing them out in the frost in winter, or throwing them to the mosquitoes in summer, because the top commander of the 1st division, Nogtev, issued the command not to consider the life of any one who failed to complete his assignment because this counter-revolutionary subversiveness was acting 'to prevent the completion of tree-cutting'. Therefore they were killed in cold blood; the chief thug giving the orders, and the lesser thugs carrying them out.

"What horrible tortures were inflicted on the slaves! They even denied any claim to the money that was sent them because if one day one was notified of receiving money he was sure to be shot the next, and the reason given would be 'attempted escape'. Even if anyone had good clothes on him he was not safe. No one was given clothes or footwear. We were issued a pair of 'lapti'* once a week. These are sandals made from the underbark of a tree. One day those in barrack No. 5 refused to go to work because they had no clothes or shoes and the cold was 60 degrees below Fahrenheit. The Cheka surrounded the barrack, armed with rifles, and set it afire. Those who tried to flee were

* Shoes or sandals made of tree bark.

shot down instantly. The barrack with 400 inmates burned down completely. After this incident a member of the GPU College came for an investigation and in the end declared: 'They wouldn't work, so they had to be burned'. It was Gleb Boki of the GPU College. This tormenting life on Popov Island was typical of all other camps.

"In September, 1929, they brought us to the Mai-Guba where I was given work at building barracks. Here again it was assignment work. Two men were assigned to lay 70 yards of beams, lengthwise, or one man was to make two doors. I worked here for a month and then planed ties. This quota was 10 ties from round logs or 20 from sawed logs in winter; and in summer 15 ties from round logs and 30 from cut ones. The pay was 20 kopeks a week, to 2 kopeks a week, and one week the pay was only one and a half kopeks.

We saw many new slaves brought in, always from Ukraine, the Don, Kuban and the Caucasus. At the end of November about six thousand Caucasians came, and were put in the barn because the barracks were all full. Nearly all of them perished in a month from cold and hunger. Only a small number were left and these were sent away somewhere.

"Here I met a school teacher, a Ukrainian who had taught in a seminary, and was now getting on in years. He was assigned the task of hauling trees from the forest, but he was not able to harness a horse so I did it for him. He wept in gratitude and drove off. It was useless to complain. The chief cut-throat was Prokhorovsky, head of the second division. Once when three slaves were caught trying to escape and were brought before Prokhorovsky he drew his revolver and shot them all. Their bodies were left lying around near the exit for a week.

"In 1930 we were taken to the South for special assignment to the Kapiselgo station. There we were stationed in a village and the communists cautioned the villagers against speaking to us, saying we were thieves, murderers and robbers. But the villagers were soon convinced that the communists lied when they saw them hauling water with priests instead of horses. After this the villagers stopped believing the communists and treated us in a brotherly fashion. We planed skis at Kapiselgo station. We saw the number of slaves that were brought in in two months from Ukraine; men, women and children. We wondered what crimes the

infants were guilty of that these thugs were shipping them to the far north.

"On July 5, 1930, I was brought, along with other slaves, to Moselsk, where they were building a highway to the border. We were put to work building barracks for the slaves who worked on the highway. Work on the ground was very hard. One man's task was to haul away 10½ cubic yards of soil.

"For me it was the last 'komandirovka' (special assignment) in this paradise. On September 10, 1930, I, and S., M. and S. decided to get free from this slavery. We roamed the forest for twenty days and on the 21st reached Finland".

Commentaries on this testimony are hardly necessary. During the second period of the history of Solovetsky slavery the farmers, especially Ukrainian farmers, and the intelligentsia, made up the greater part of the Solovetsky masses.

To characterize these Solovetski conditions properly very interesting material may be found in the records of Karl Albrecht who, in 1929, holding high office in the USSR, visited Solowky as a government official. In vain did the director of the "Usevlag",* Nogtev, and his aides, try to soap his eyes in every conceivable way so as not to divulge the true picture of the Solovetsky slavery. Even a two-day visit to the Island was sufficient for him to perceive its horror. He wrote of hundreds of people suffering from severe frost-bite, lying around and dying in the barracks, about the overworked slaves and about the bad food. He was not informed of the existence of the "Sekirka" mountain, of the notoriously savage, lawless "6th Vzvod" and the 13th corrective unit", of "Zaychyks" and "Valdaychiks". He was shown only the fair "corrective policy" of the Soviet government. He attended the symphony concert and the ballet which was presented by old artists and other intellectuals, in the Solovetsky theatre, which was for the recreation of the local tyrants.

When Albrecht brought the matter of the Solowky before the regime the Moscow communists made the excuse that they knew nothing of conditions on the Islands and promised to "remedy" the situation at once.

And, sure enough, the Solowky were soon visited by Solts, notorious throughout the USSR, because the bad reputation of its slavery had already reached London and

* Upravlenje Severnykh Lagerel, Administration of Northern Labor Camps.

Washington. Solts approached the slaves with a plea for information as to how they were treated by the administration. Not one of those questioned dared to tell the truth. They had all been so frightened and terrorized and so sadistically tortured for the slightest complaint against their treatment and their tyrants.

Only when Solts arrested the administration, and executed five of the worst (as he thought) criminals, aides of Nogtev, did the prisoners believe in the validity of the investigation. Now reassured that it was not just a Nogtev hoax the prisoners began to disclose the true facts. The horrors revealed by their testimony were beyond human imagination. Solts was forced to execute about one hundred of the despicable curs, who, playing up to Nogtev, had abused the prisoners.

Nogtev himself was arrested. On the Solowky it was told that he was executed but actually he spent a few weeks in the GPU Lubyanka prison as an important guest. Soon, however, he was released and his party membership ticket temporarily suspended, and then returned to him. He even received a promotion. He was appointed director of all lumber establishments of the Soviet far North. His Solowky practices were to be perpetuated in other places.

And what of Solovetsky slavery? Were changes made in the system? Naturally there were! After the first two or three months conditions worsened. Besides executions, murders, and other abuses, they now brought into the system the most thorough political terror, endless searches, provocations, fabricated political "cases" which were punished on evidence bought with slices of bread from the provocateurs. The prisoners were shot or given longer terms.

In 1931, when the North of the Soviet Union was overflowing with millions of Ukrainians, kozaks from the Kuban and the Don, Caucasians and other nationalities, when the five-year plan was to be completed in four years at all costs, the idea of building the Baltic-White Sea canal was conceived. Thousands of the Solovetsky exiles had to settle on the mainland to die in the process of its construction. On the Islands, only an insignificant number of prisoners, mortally ill, was left to die and join the thousands who had perished earlier from typhus.

Among this latter number, and among those sent to build the canal we see such names as Slabchenko, member of the Academy of Sciences, Professor Rarhar, Professor Hermaize, M. Pavlushkow, Pavlo Khrystyuk, Ivan Petrenko, H.

Sadowsky, O. Berezowsky, Vitaliy Yurchenko, Klym Polishchuk.

The third period of the Solovetsky slavery began at the time when Stalin after liquidating all free enterprise and all nationalist feeling, decided to settle the account of the rest of the Ukrainian intelligentsia and to exterminate all "unstable elements" of the Communist Party.

He began with the liquidation of all the small elements of differentiation in the USSR. The Ukrainian military district was abolished and two new ones formed: Kharkiw and Kiev districts. With the rapidity of mushrooms after a spring rain the following moves sprouted:

According to the ruling of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, orders were telegraphed on December 15, 1932, to Russify all Ukrainian institutions which existed in the USSR beyond the boundaries of the Ukrainian SSR. P. Postyshev came to Ukraine with a special assignment from Stalin, and so another wave of terror, with the horrible famine of 1933 as background, began. All prisons and basements were jammed with the arrested, who now comprised a substantial number of industrial workers, to add to the farmers and those intellectuals who, until recently, had been loyal to the Soviet regime. In the NKVD dungeons were many communists charged with nationalism. Postyshev came with orders to destroy nationalism at the root which, at that time was represented not by Hrushewsky, S. Yefremiw and A. Nikowsky, but by M. Skrypnyk, O. Shumsky, M. Poloz, Prychodko, Mykhailyk and M. Khvylovy, Ukrainian communists and members of the party. Some of these individuals had defended the slim autonomy of the NEP era and others had fought for an independent socialistic Ukraine.

When Postyshev came, Ukrainian communists who occupied high posts in the Soviet Ukraine decided to protest once more against Stalin's line of unification, but were unsuccessful in their efforts. They either had to submit to the will of the victor or they died.

On July 7, 1933, M. Skrypnyk, Ukrainian communist, member of the Executive Committee, and former Minister of Education in Ukraine, shot himself as a sign of protest against Stalin's line of politics. Mykola Khvylovy also shot himself for the same reason. Shumsky, Prychodko, Poloz, Mykhailyk and others were imprisoned in the GPU dungeons. All Ukrainian communists were caught in the net and doomed to die.

Beginning with the thirties, the GPU-NKVD became an establishment under whose jurisdiction came, not only political affairs and terrorism, but all phases of life in the Soviet Union. From then on the GPU-NKVD became its own state within a state, having a whole string of administrative departments, identical with the Peoples Commissariats (ministries), hydro-technics, highways and railways, coal civilian and military public works, etc. All these administrations and departments had their own offices and institutions. Many projects and important researches were carried out by NKVD prisoners. The White Sea-Baltic canal, "Turksib" (Turkish Siberian Railway), The Moscow-Volga Canal, Baikal-Amur Magistral, the Moscow-Minsk Highway and other important projects, including the "Palace Soviet" in Moscow, were all built by prisoners under NKVD direction.

At this time, besides terrorism, the GPU received additional economic and organizational tasks. This was evident in the changes in the administration of the slave labor camps. The old military style, with divisions into companies and platoons, etc. was changed to "phalanx", "columns", and "brigades". Words like "tempo", "outwork", "social competition", were added to the vocabulary. While political supervision was strengthened, fictitious cases became numerous and provocations blossomed. In short, everything that was characteristic of Soviet "freedom" was intensified.

After 1931, the Solovetsky islands received only the most uncertain prisoners and the unfit, chiefly those in poor health. Lumbering almost came to a stand-still; the brick factory, the smelter and the tannery were closed. Most of the efforts were directed towards the manufacturing of farm machinery.

In May, 1933, after the completion of the White Sea Canal all "doubtful", all old and new prisoners were returned to Solowky and in 1933 and the beginning of 1934 new prisoners were brought to the island; party members, Soviet writers, Soviet intelligentsia, in other words those who from 1919 to 1930 were running the government and those who, if only as puppets, were judges and prosecutors at the show trials.

In 1933 - 1937 the Solovetsky concentration camp was reduced to the size it had been in 1926 - 1927 and was confined to the Popov Island, with one camp only, "Morsplav".

In this period, as in the former one, most of the prisoners were Ukrainian farmers, participants in the farmer up-



Mykola Khvylovy

Mykola Khvylovy, a prominent Ukrainian writer, whose watchword "Away from Moscow" was supported by many of the non-Russian peoples in the USSR. Persecuted by the GPU, Khvylovy committed suicide on May 13th, 1933.

risings of 1929 - 1932, agriculturists, teachers, doctors, writers, poets, scholars, and students from the Soviet Ukraine.

Another group was made up of so-called "other nationalities"; from Kazan and the Crimean Tartars, headed by Sultan Halejev and Halei Halejev; Turkmen, Tadzhiks, Uzbeks headed by Khodzhayev and Usmanov; Armenians, headed by the Lebledbezhan brothers; Georgians, with Colonel Yashvili, Nikodzh and Huhunashvili; Finns, Udmurts, Eastern Finns (Karelians), Germans, with their pastors and German-Soviet workers; White Ruthenians headed by Rak-Mykhailovski, Myatlov, Dvorchaninov; Poles, headed by Wyszniowski; Kabardins, Balkars, Ossetians, Ingushes, Azerbaidzhanians and other nationalities from Caucasus with their Moslem clergy and officials, and finally Russians, with Floretsky, a member of the Academy of Sciences, Pesotsky, Pokhorovnyk and others. In this conglomeration of multiple nationalities were also people who were subjects of foreign nations, from Germans and Frenchmen to Japanese and Americans.

A distinct category was formed by 325 Ukrainians who had turned to cannibalism during the terrible famine of 1932 - 1933. Seventy five of them were men and two hundred and fifty were women.

The Solowky at this time had three "special isolators". Those prisoners who were not in the isolators were divided into a number of categories. Each category had its own rights as to movements on the Solowky territory. One category, for instance, had the right to stay only in the Solovetsky Kremlin; another to stay outside the Kremlin but confined to its grounds within an area of about one mile; another had the right to move about the island or even all the islands, if their work necessitated it, with an escort, of course; another had the right to swim within three miles of the island, also with an escort. All these "rights" were very elusive. One might have the "right" one day and the next, without warning, be thrown into the isolators. The main concern was to be able to avoid being a "target" of the third department of the prison NKVD.

Chief of the Solovetsky slavery was then a well-known member of the Cheka, Ponomaryov. He was a real tyrant and slave-master who wore a perpetual scowl on his face. He never failed to impress upon us at every opportunity that we were only "nedostrelenye" (survivors of an execution).

After Kirov's assassination the Solovetsky regime took a sharp turn for the worse. Many prisoners were put in the isolators and many received extra years added to their terms, so that none had less than ten years. New isolation camps were created, the guards reinforced and food rations cut to a minimum of 300 grams of bread and nothing else. Continued searches were instituted and the guard units strengthened. When, during the second period, foreign lumber barges were allowed to pull in at the Solovetsky to be loaded by the prisoners, all waters within a radius of 15 miles became forbidden to all water-craft, whether big ships, barges, launches or even motor boats and ferries. The whole area was mined. So was the current leading up to the bay of Blagopoluchie. Check-ups twice daily, at which prisoners were to give their names and their fathers' names, and a general weekly check-up where all sorts of questions were asked regarding the prisoners' history, became a common occurrence. The Island Chief of the Third Division NKVD had precise information as to where each prisoner was located, what he was engaged in doing, and who he was. Escape from the island was absolutely impossible. In spite of many attempts, none was successful. When Captain Strelhovskiy, a merchant seaman, took an army motor boat, one of those used for defence purposes, and disappeared with two criminal prisoners, he was searched for, not only by the Solovetsky administration, but also by the Navy and Air Force and in two weeks the three were caught somewhere near Kola peninsula.

A tragic occurrence happened in the winter of 1933 when the so-called Anzer escape took place. A group of prisoners learned that the sea around the Island had frozen right up to Lyetny (Summer) Shore on the mainland, which happens only about once in fifty years. One night they killed the Island Chief, disarmed the guards and, taking some skis, made for the Lyetny Shore. On the Shore however they were met by a whole regiment of NKVD troops with cannon and machine guns. The prisoners with their machine guns and rifles entered into a one-sided battle and nearly all died. They had fled because the "corrective" policy was unbearable to them even though they had not been in the isolation camps, in which horror itself reigned.

Boreisha, a public school teacher, was confined in the second isolator. With incredible daring he tried to escape from the third storey by climbing over the Kremlin wall.

Then he tied himself with a towel to two logs and threw himself into the White Sea as a storm was beginning. After a two weeks search his body, with the two logs, was found over seventy miles away.

The endless upbraidings, searches, solitary confinement, spying, the continual expectation of execution, isolation cell or new tortures often drove many prisoners insane. Suicides were common.

The fourth period of the Solovetsky slavery began when Yezhov was chosen head of the NKVD. The situation for the workers and intellectuals of Ukraine became doubly hard. At the same time the harsh regime in the Solowky became still more bitter.

In 1936 - 1937 the prisoners were deprived of still more "rights". More now were thrown into the isolation cell. "Fascist" trials were held oftener, resulting in longer sentences. In 1937 almost no one was released from slavery. All those whose terms had expired were given an additional five to ten years and their movements confined within the Kremlin gates. A great number of prisoners were concentrated in the Kremlin and because there was not work for all, there was an idle group called those "without assignments", who were therefore allotted meagre food rations.

Finally, one day between the 22nd and 25th of June, 1937, all prisoners were herded into the Kremlin and told that from that day on the Solovetsky Islands, until then known as the third department of the White Sea-Baltic camp, were to be changed to "Solovetsky prison of special assignment of the Head Administration of the State Security of USSR", and the prisoners were to be called "those deprived of freedom".

Because of the shortage of fit labour the farming season was completed with great difficulty. In addition, work on the alteration of the Kremlin into a modern prison was begun. Remodelling was started and a great quantity of bricks and other building materials were brought to the Islands. About a mile from the Kremlin, on the site of the old brick factory a new big prison was to be erected, of the most modern type. Then the problem of manpower arose, but that was soon solved by the Yezhov episode. The Solowky were soon swarming with new prisoners, men from the collective farms with short terms of under two years. The old prisoners were locked up in the Kremlin and in solitary confinement.

Every day now, boats and planes brought from all sections of the USSR prisoners with 10, 15, 20 and 25 year terms. Among the "enemies" were relatives of the executed Yakir, Tukhachevsky, Yagoda and others. There were also young students from Leningrad charged with Trotskyism. They wept and swore that they had never read Trotsky's "The October Lesson". Many of the prisoners wore huge hoods on their heads which completely hid their faces. These had numbers on their chests. Under this number the prisoner was placed in the cell and by this number he was summoned. Under penalty of execution the prisoners were forbidden to reveal their names. Even the prison authorities did not know the identity of the occupants of their "secret isolation cells". This secret was known only to the high officialdom who decreed that these people should be buried alive.

Suddenly, when everything was in proper prison swing, to everyone's surprise, at the end of the year, two long trains were convoyed out of the Solovetsky Islands. The first transport was made up of those who formed the major part of the political prisoner-slaves, the Ukrainians.



THE UKHTA-PECHORA CONCENTRATION CAMP

During my eleven years of imprisonment I had occasion to eat a considerable quantity of black bread, spoiled fish and "balanda"*, first in three Kharkiw prisons and later in Rybinsk, Yaroslavl, Vyatka, Vologda, Volzhsk and the Ukhta-Pechora concentration camps.

All those "providers" who fed me that "socialist bread", "balanda" and rotten fish: Dzierzynski from Cheka, Yagoda and Balytsky from GPU and NKVD, and the iron "People's Commissar" of the USSR, Yezhov, were all ground under Stalin's despotic heel after they had served their abominable purpose. On the other hand I survived, due to a kind fate and the healthy constitution with which my parents endowed me. After release from the Ukhta-Pechora concentration camp in 1941 I also tasted Hitler's turnips but they too failed to choke me. After my strenuous adventures, after travelling from Ukraine to the Arctic Ocean then back to

* Balanda — soup served to prisoners.

Ukraine and across Europe I finally came to the United States.

I am now living in Washington's free land and writing my memoirs. At present I am writing about the Ukhta-Pechora concentration camp, what I saw and heard during the six years of my confinement there. In that time I sampled several kinds of forced slave labor.

I worked with dirt and pushed that cursed-by-man-and-God wheelbarrow along boards and through mud, sometimes up inclines of twenty degrees. I sawed trees with cross-cut and bow saws in deep snow and under water. I was harnessed to a sled with other slaves, 12 to a team, and forced to draw loads of logs for distances of about 300 yards. I worked in a test oil well, the "Akim", and as fireman for a steam boiler.

Finally I worked at my profession as economist for the first oil venture and as chief economist for the building of the Ukhta Heating-Electric plant. Some of the experiences in that concentration camp have left profound impressions in my memory, which are continually with me.

I see, virtually standing before me, those "half-living", from the "Ilag" sub-division. I see those from Vetlos who could not endure the dreadful strain of forced labor and chopped off their hands or feet.

There stands the concentration camp "steam bath" around which the prisoners shivered, nude, with only those birch bark "lapti" (sandals) on their feet.

Visions of the daily check-ups appear and the criminal who drove the sick out for check-ups with a club. Nor can I forget the guards' endless "davai!"* I hear it even here in America.

From my work as economist I remember ciphers as an integral part of the concentration camp calculations, quotas of work done and the wages, which I noted down immediately following my release in 1941.

My work with the oil enterprise which was the chief enterprise of the Ukhta-Pechora concentration camp afforded me an opportunity to acquaint myself with the whole system of GULAG** as well as the camp itself.

For three continuous years, compiling figures of the

* Go on, get to work!

** Glavnoye upravlenie lagerel, Chief Administration of Labor Camps.

costs of the first Ukhta oil venture and making plans for the building of the Ukhta Heating Electric Centre, I always had at my finger tips control figures and directives from GULAG and the general cost estimates as a daily reference for planning and controlling productivity.

I also worked as a foreman on the reconstruction and rebuilding of the central supply base in the town of Chibyu. Therefore the whole Ukhta-Pechora system is well-known to me.

The Ukhta-Pechora Concentration Camp

Concentration camps in the USSR were called "I.T.L." — the corrective labor camps. The Ukhta-Pechora concentration camp was given its name from the two rivers in the far north, in Komi ASSR, Ukhta and Pechora.

Starting at 67 degrees latitude and 57 degrees longitude, from the Kotlas to the Arctic Ocean, for about 800 miles stretched the autonomous republic of Komi. Over the whole area of this "republic", about 600,000 square miles, are camps of the Ukhta-Pechora Administration. The 900,000 of the "free" inhabitants of Komi are of Finnish descent. Nowadays these people are called Komi, earlier the Russians called them Zyryany.

It is more than 1,000 years since the Komi, who came from the Urals, settled mostly along the rivers Vychegda, Vym, Ukhta, Ust Usa, and Pechora. The climatic conditions of this country are severe. In winter the snow lasts for eight months, the temperature stays firmly at about 35 to 45 degrees below Fahrenheit. The winter landscape sees no sun, but is lighted by the Northern Lights, creating a beautiful panorama in the prevailing austerity.

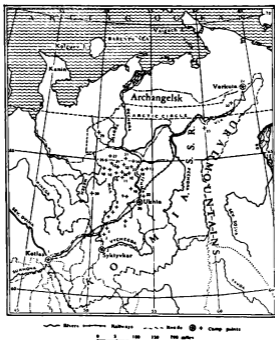
In summer the sun is low over the horizon, giving little heat, so that there are places in Komi where the ground is frozen the whole year round.

Vegetables and fruits will not grow there due to the short growing season. Barley and rye are about the only things that can be cultivated.

The whole territory is covered with a dense virgin forest. The trees are mostly soft wood, spruce, pine and some birch and larch. The most common animals are bear, deer, rabbits and heath grouse.

The mosquitoes are unbearable. At night they descend in immense clouds on the exhausted prisoners to suck their

MAP OF THE UKHTA-PECHORA CONCENTRATION CAMP



Main Centers of the Ukhta-Pechora Concentration Camp in 1936 - 1937

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Kotlas 2. Motorized column 3. Ust-Vym 4. Zagvozdina 5. Kiltovka, a collective farm 6. Serlohovo 7. Kayazh Pogost 8. Rokpas 9. Lumbering center No. 1 10. Polovnyky 11. Ropcha 12. Vesely Kut 13. Hydro plant 14. V. K., a collective farm 15. Chibyu 16. Lumbering center No. 2 17. Brick factory | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 18. Land transport center 19. Lumbering center No. 3 20. Ukhta 21. Center of Oil Industry 22. "Akim" 23. Oil drilling center 24. Vorkuta coal mines 25. Second oil center 26. Chibyu-Kruta 27. Lumbering center No. 4 28. Mezna 29. Tobis 30. Vorkuta lumbering center 31. Vetlosyan 32. Shizo quarry 33. Ukhartarka prison |
|--|--|

blood. They and the bad water often cause malaria. Because of a lack of proper vitamins, scurvy is very prevalent.

In the bowels of Komi, deposits of oil, petroleum, lignite, salt, radioactive clay and natural gas are found.

During the reign of the tsars this country was subordinate to the administration in Arkhangelsk though it was more or less independent. From time to time it was visited by foreign and Russian exploratory expeditions which moved down the rivers. In 1912 an expedition headed by an oil expert discovered oil between Ukhta and Chibyu rivers. They erected an oil derrick and began drilling, but the First World War interrupted further progress and the oil well stood idle until 1928.

In 1919 - 1920 Arkhangelsk was invaded by an expeditionary Russian White Army, under the command of General Miller, which occupied nearly all Komi. The native population, expecting this to help safeguard their independence, actively fought against bolshevism and supported General Miller. Defeating General Miller's army and winning the Civil War, the bolsheviks remembered Komi's transgression. The Moscow government took steps to conquer this territory of impenetrable forests. With this end in view numerous geological expeditions were sent into its depths. Later, under the direction of the GPU, an immense concentration camp was established there called the "Northern Camps of Special Assignment" or "Sevlon".

To aid these expeditions the GPU brought in prisoners from the Solovetsky and Sevlon concentration camps who conducted these explorations in separate phalanges until 1928 - 1929.

With the beginning of collectivization, the communist regime began a mad attack on the working class of Ukraine, Kuban, Don, Caucasus, White Ruthenia, Kazakhstan and other Russian occupied nations, under the slogan of "destroy the kurkuls as a class". From each village in these countries and republics about 20 to 30 per cent of these kurkuls were taken, all their property confiscated, and, without clothing or other provisions, but with their families, including small children, they were loaded into freight trains and, under GPU escort, shipped to the Ukhta-Pechora Concentration Camp of which the main sub-divisions were Kotlas, Ust-Vym, Syktywkar (capital of Komi), and Bogvozdino, Kyshtovka, and Syerogovo which were built later. These victims were the first inhabitants of this camp.

Structure of the Supreme Administration of Ukhta-Pechora Concentration Camp

1. Administrative Department
2. Third Department NKVD (Political Department)
3. Prosecution
4. Military Defence
5. Chief Engineer
6. Technical Department
7. Building Department
8. Planning and Economic Department *
9. Department of Finance
10. Department of Lumber Industry
11. Department of Agriculture
12. Department of Supplies
13. Transportation Department
14. Department of Medical Aid and Distribution of Prisoners

The head of this concentration camp was Jacob Moysevich Moroz. Head of the Third Department NKVD was Chornoivan and the prosecutor was Sedykh, the assistant to the General Prosecutor, Vyshinsky.

Moroz and Chornoivan were seized in 1937, and executed at Yezhov's orders.

The Ukhta-Pechora Administration had its headquarters in the town of Chibyu on the Ust-Vym-Chibyu highway, midway along a 700-mile stretch of the Ukhta-Pechora Concentration Camp.

The head administration carried on its work through specially organized departments: the water industry, oil industry, etc., which directly ran the camp sub-divisions.

The Ukhta-Pechora industries, in which prisoners were employed, were divided in the following manner:

1. The Oil Industry. This entailed drilling for oil and refining it into gasoline and coal oil.
2. The Water Industry. This meant mining radioactive clay used in the production of radium.
3. The Oil Industry. Exploring for petroleum deposits.
4. Coal Mining. Mining lignite, sometimes called brown coal, which was the mainstay of the Ukhta Heating-Electric Centre. This industry later became the independent Vorkuta Concentration Camp.
5. Highways. The Ust-Vym-Chibyu-Kruta highway, about

300 miles. This road was built through mud and impenetrable forests. About 30,000 men died in its construction; that is, one man to every five yards of the road.

6. Railroad Building. The Kotlas-Vorkuta Railway about 750 miles.

7. Lumbering.

8. State Farms. Clearing the land of stumps and draining wet places.

9. Building boats and barges.

10. Building oil derricks.

11. Building the Heating-Electric Centre with a high voltage line which fed all the other industries.

12. Building temporary ice and ski roads for winter transportation.

13. Homebuilding. Houses built for the paid employees who lived in Chibyu, Sangorodok and other towns.

14. Building concentration camps for prisoners — for temporary use.

15. Preparing building materials — brick, rock, gravel, sand, tar, lumber, etc.

16. Geological Explorations — for taming the country.

17. Salt Mining — in Syerogovo.

18. Mechanic shops — repairing instruments, implements and other equipment.

19. Loading and unloading materials and equipment.

20. Transportation — water, trucks and beasts of burden.

21. Accommodation — kitchen, bath, laundry and other services.

All department heads were paid employees hired from among the free population, mostly party members undergoing party discipline. In order to speed up their term of punishment they sadistically, unmercifully abused the prisoners. Professional positions, such as engineers, economists, agriculturalists, geologists and others were filled by prisoners exclusively.

The Camp Guards (commonly referred to as VOKHR)

According to the administrative principle, all prisoners were divided into two main categories. The first category was that of political prisoners sentenced under article 58 of the Criminal Code. The second category was a criminal group sentenced for such crimes as theft, murder, embezzlement of state funds, speculation, failure to possess documents, vagrancy.

Since the Ukhta-Pechora was a concentration camp of special assignment it chiefly contained prisoners of the first category. The guard was strong and escorted all prisoners to and from work. The latter were constantly watched. In addition there was a network of "operation points" in all sub-divisions on all roads, on all rivers and ferries, in every village and throughout Komi. Among the free population of Komi there were "refugee hunters" in every settlement.

The people of Komi eagerly hunted escapees. For every prisoner caught the administration paid 500 rubles in cash and 100 rubles worth of goods. The prisoners, for their rash attempt to escape, received an added sentence of one to six years. In this way the administration kept the people of Komi supplied with goods not only for killing bear or deer but also for catching fleeing prisoners. Hunting for prisoners was a better paying occupation than hunting wild animals.

The sub-divisions, quickly built, consisted of wooden barracks, tents and dug-outs in the ground, all surrounded by a board fence, ten feet high, intertwined with barbed wire. Around this fence, at 55 yard intervals, stood sentry boxes equipped with flood lights from which VOKHR, with the aid of trained police dogs, kept constant vigil over the prisoners.

Twice daily, at 5 A.M. and 7 P.M., VOKHR made routine check-ups, assisted by other branches of the service such as the educational, or by foremen with the overseers, commanders, and medical aides. This was compulsory and the sick were forced to stand outside, sometimes in severe cold, for one and a half to two hours. They were driven out by the camp servants, the criminal prisoners, with clubs. The beatings were accompanied by the most obscene curses in the Russian vocabulary. Sometimes dogs, especially trained for this purpose, were used and they bit and tore at the victims until they died.

At least twice a month in the prisoners' quarters the guards conducted searches. They took away all personal letters in the possession of the prisoners, court verdicts (so that the prisoners would not bother the administration with appeals), copies of complaints and other papers and documents. They also took all the better articles of clothing which some prisoners had brought with them, pieces of bread weighing over 18 ounces, as a precaution against attempted escape, money, (if any prisoner had any sent to him

by relatives outside) and everything which was not the property of the concentration camp. These searches were carried out at night, or on "rest" days or on important communist holidays. They were always events of terror and revenge.

Owners of the confiscated articles were punished in the isolation cells. A man would spend ten or twenty nights in this cold frozen cell without release from work, naked and hungry. In the morning he was taken out and sent back to work as usual and at night, without any food, thrown back in "the sack" again. The author of these memoirs spent 28 nights in these icy "sacks" during the six years of his imprisonment.

The administration made no attempt to protect political prisoners from robbery by the criminals but actually encouraged such practices as well as gambling at cards, in order to inflict greater humiliation and demoralization. This was an added punishment that political prisoners were forced to undergo.

Prisoners' Living Conditions

Step by step, the prisoners conquered the wild territory of Komi-Zyryansk and the rest of the Siberian taiga where no human foot had trodden before. Taking a selected area, they built temporary roads, built make-shift dwellings, then left them all behind and exhausted by overwork, cold, hunger and abuse, they went, under heavy guard, deeper into the tundras to conquer new territory. They built new camps, in the meantime sleeping on the ground, or on tree branches with no roof overhead whether it was summer or winter.

The first to be erected were the isolation cells for the prisoners' use, and the guard house for VOKHR. Next, living accomodation, like the kitchen, laundry and washrooms were built. The prisoners' own living quarters came last; barracks, tents and dugouts. This building process lasted about three to four months.

New prisoners were brought, or the old shifted from one concentration camp to another, in the winter season because in summer tundra and mud forbade movement of large concentrations of prisoners. Usually prisoners moved deep into the tundra in winter making ice roads and sled trails in the process. These roads were used not only for transferring prisoners but also for preparing lumber to build new concentration camps in new, unconquered parts of the country.

Prisoners in the Ukhta-Pechora concentration camp, in all the sub-divisions scattered over all of Komi, lived in dug-outs, tents or wooden barracks. They were identical in all camps, inside and out. Each one was furnished with an old oil drum for a heater which had two holes, one for wood and the other for smoke. Often this "stove" was not connected with a chimney and the smoke filled these quarters, poisoning the air. Beds were simply wide ledges, constructed of round poles attached to the walls, called "nary" (bunks). Some barracks had tiered bunks made of rough lumber.

All these living quarters, barracks, tents or dugouts were more or less standard, 65 by 22 feet, holding around 150 prisoners. In winter the intense cold made the barrack walls crack, the snow blew into the huts through the holes, and every morning the prisoners' "bedding" was covered with snow or frost while the frozen breath coming from under it was the only indication that a living being was there.

During the evening "rest" period, the prisoners crowded around the red hot "stove" pushing in the long logs as they burned at the other end, and drying their wet clothing and footwear made of coarse felt and poor rubber. Others took off their shirts to burn the lice out of them.

The smoke and soot, the stench from the scorched rubber boots, from the old sweat-soaked coarse felt boots, the steaming foot-rags and tattered clothing taken off dead prisoners, the filthy underwear covered with crushed bed bugs and roasted lice, the continuous expulsion of excess stomach gases, from which the prisoners constantly suffered as a result of eating decayed fish, half baked rye bread and the "balanda" made from meat refuse such as intestines, lungs, etc., all this created the most foul and offensive odor imaginable, repulsive and unwholesome.

The Concentration Camp "Steambath"

In every concentration camp sub-division, where several hundred prisoners were concentrated, a washroom was built quickly out of green logs. This was constructed in a primitive fashion leaving wide openings in the wall through which snow blew in in winter. Water was heated in big kettles and kept in wooden barrels. Then rocks, which heat to a very high temperature, were heated in the oven and hot water was poured on them to make steam. The prisoners went in these "steam baths" very reluctantly even though they endured unbelievable sanitary conditions. These baths

took place once a month and at the same time the prisoners' clothing and other personal articles were disinfected.

At the order, "get in the bath" the prisoners quickly gathered up their belongings and bedding and four abreast walked to the steam bath, on the way handing in their clothes at the disinfecting cell. As soon as they entered, a scramble for the wooden buckets began. There were about twenty of these for the 200 prisoners. With great difficulty they finally divided up, ten men to a pail. They had no sooner begun to soap their heads and bodies with the pumice soap than VOKHR thundered "out of the bath"!!! In an instant the prisoners, still covered with soap, rushed outside as if electrified, with nothing on but their "lapti". They waited for their clothing sometimes several hours, not only in summer or fall but in the coldest winter. The disinfected garments came out steaming, almost wet, and the vermin in them still thriving and active.

The Prisoners' Bedding

The prisoners' bedding was very simple. It consisted of one cotton quilt and a slip-cover for stuffing with shavings and sawdust. These "mattresses", like all the other living conditions were breeding places for bed bugs. The prisoners used their clothing to supplement this bedding. Their felt trousers and "lapti" were folded and used as a pillow. The shirt sleeves were drawn over the legs and the other part spread under to lie on. The outer jackets were used as extra covers over the quilts. Prisoners were not allowed to have their own bedding.

The Prisoners' Clothing

The prisoners' clothing was divided into three categories. New, unused garments came in the first category. These were issued to those prisoners who were camp servants, to the heads of different departments, cooks, pantry-keepers; also as a sort of bribe to technical workers, engineers, foremen and crew managers.

In the second category went used clothing still in fair condition, also given out to the privileged only.

Old and badly used clothing taken off dead prisoners made up the third category and was given exclusively to the hard labor prisoners. According to NKVD regulations every prisoner was entitled to a complete new wardrobe of working clothes every two years; a cotton-lined jacket, an under-

jacket and under-trousers, a shirt and trousers and two suits of underwear. Actually, though, the prisoners were forced to wear clothing of the third and second class. The dead were buried in tattered underwear, while the rest of their clothing was stripped off and taken to the storeroom for future use.

Prisoners, who were released after completing their terms, left in the same clothes they worked in.

Deterioration of concentration camp clothing, speedy as it was, was not as quick as the deterioration of the prisoners' human bodies, so that one jacket and one pair of coarse felt trousers outlasted three or four men. There was a great deal of corruption in handling prisoners' clothing, especially new garments. These would be marked in the books as having been distributed to certain prisoners, then they were taken out and sold to the Komi population whose "happy" life was such that they were grateful to get even the clothing made for convicts.

This practice was known among the prisoners, and was referred to as "promot"* and there was hardly a man whose name was not entered in the books as having received new clothing. Often prisoners were punished for the missing new garments, being confined to the isolation block for ten to twenty nights without release from work in the daytime.

"Promot" was practiced only on the working prisoners. The criminal convicts, who were considered "our own people" by the administration, and given lighter tasks as camp servants, were exempted. Actually these thieves were the rulers of camp life. They issued the clothes to the prisoners and made the false records. They were the ones who stole and gambled with the prisoners' belongings. There were cases when some prisoner, in spite of thieves and robbers on the train, brought some valuable article of clothing to camp with him. He had no peace, and sometimes even gave up his life on account of it. The hoodlums, in their victims' presence, wagered on the coveted article, a pair of shoes or an overcoat. According to criminal rules a wager, especially if made before senior criminals as witnesses, must be carried out at all costs. The card game is played in the presence of the older criminals. The losing hoodlum, immediately after the game is finished, goes up to the victim and tries to tear off the coat for which they played. In the

* Russian word meaning to lose for drink, or in a gambling game.

meantime the "commission" of older criminals waits for the final step of the bet to be completed, that is, the moment when the loser hands the coat to the winner. This often caused a free-for-all that ended in many injuries or, sometimes, deaths.

The rule in the concentration camp was that political prisoners were not allowed to keep the clothes they brought with them but were to turn them over for "storage", from where they were never returned. The criminals and the camp servants were able to take advantage of exceptions. Without fear of punishment they plundered these articles and sold them or gambled them away.

The Prisoners' Footwear

The prisoners' footwear, like clothes, were classed into categories; that is, categories of wearability. According to quota, each prisoner was to receive four pairs of birch bark "lapti" per year; two pairs of boots, made from rubber refuse, a year; and a pair of coarse felt boots every two years. However, the prisoners wore "lapti" and the cheap rubber boots the year round, while felt boots for winter use were given to the hoodlums, the administration, and workers in URC and KVC. The working prisoners, for lack of adequate footwear, often suffered frostbites. Rheumatism and arthritis were always prevalent.

Prisoners' Special Clothing

Special clothing included items like mosquito netting, a face veil as protection against mosquitoes in summer or a "chekhol", a covering for the face in the severe seasons. A prisoner was entitled to one of each of these articles, and three pairs of heavy canvas mitts a year. This special wardrobe gave no protection whatever against the cold, or the myriads of mosquitoes.

Prisoners' Food

GULAG had agreements with Head Administrations of different manufacturers as to the sort of clothing, footwear and food prisoners in all concentration camps of the USSR were to receive. Goods for the Ukhta-Pechora concentration camp were, according to agreement, brought to the Kotlas distribution base. From here they were distributed to all Ukhta-Pechora sub-divisions by the camp's available resources. First they were divided between the four main distri-

bution points: Kotlas, Ust-Vym, Knyazhpogost and Chibyu. In summer these products were moved from Kotlas to Ust-Vym, a distance of 215 miles, by ferries on the rivers Dvina and Vychegda, and in winter by truck along roads, frozen rivers and ice roads. From Ust-Vym to Knyazhpogost they were ferried in spring when the river Vym was high and hauled by trucks in the summer when the river was low. Along the route from Ust-Vym to Chibyu, within a radius of 620 miles, and into the tundra these and technical supplies were distributed mostly by truck, launch and sail boat downstream. Against the stream, they were drawn by horses along the river bank.

Distribution centres and transportation of goods in the Ukhta-Pechora were mostly run by the so-called "bytovyky" who were criminal convicts, such as thieves and embezzlers of state property. Habitual thieves whose survival depended on their skill had a perfect opportunity here, working with a friendly administration to improve their qualifications. Then they stole what little was given to the prisoners and sold it. They took cured meat from barrels, tallow and vegetable oils. To the meat barrel they added more salt and water, to the tallow container more salt, and to the oil a mixture of flour, water and salt and so on. A common joke among the men unloading this cargo was that: "the brutto is here but the netto is not".

To cover up the stolen goods the administration resorted to the most diabolical methods. For instance, in Chibyu, in 1939, a prisoner named Dmytro Khokhonin was working as a storehouse attendant. He was a Don Kozak and came from a "kurkul" family. With all the other members of his family he was brought to Kotlas by the GPU in 1929. He was the only survivor when the family perished from hunger, as did 65,000 other deportees, soon after their arrival in Kotlas. Khokhonin, whose youth helped him survive the horrible famine, was sent by the GPU on an exploratory expedition into the wild tundra to conquer the North.

After enduring eight years of imprisonment he was released in 1936 on condition that he would remain in the concentration camp as a guard. An NKVD or GPU proposition is never turned down, and so Khokhonin remained as a free worker.

Guarding a crew of prisoners who worked in the forest, it was discovered one day that he was one man short. Whether the missing prisoner escaped was never established,

but Khokhonin received three years of forced labor for that, in the Ukhta-Pechora.

Becoming a prisoner once more, he made use of what connections he had with the administration and got the job of storehouse keeper. The administration, having their own "attendant" of this storehouse, took out goods without restraint and without going through the proper formalities, for which Khokhonin was responsible. Soon, food shops were selling these concentration camp goods to the Komi population. Through his spies and informers, Komissarov, manager of the main supply depot of the Ukhta-Pechora, learned that a Komi co-operative was selling supplies from the concentration camp. He ordered an investigation.

Investigation of Khokhonin's storehouse was timed for a tour of the central base from Ukhta River to the old Chibyu sub-division. It showed that during the seven months that Khokhonin was in charge 48,000 rubles worth of goods were looted. During the investigation Khokhonin was not locked up and he began to circulate the story that he had incurred these losses in collusion with the prosecution and the Third Division. For this he was arrested and sent, under heavy guard, to the notorious Shorsky solitary confinement prison.

The Shorsky isolation prison was used for punishing prisoners from all over Ukhta-Pechora. This punishment was so severe that very few survived it. If the prisoner was unable to fulfill his production quota, or complained that he was hungry, he was given an additional five or six nights in the ice cell, from which he usually emerged maimed for life. If the administration considered some prisoner superfluous he was taken care of by special killers from among the gangster prisoners who would commit murder for a double ration of bread.

Thus, when Khokhonin was sent to Shorsky, three gangsters assigned by the administration followed him to the quarry brigade. In February, 1940, the gangsters killed Khokhonin as ordered. The official cause of death given by the administration was "accidentally killed in a quarry by a stray rock". After a week the three killers returned to their former jobs, and the bookkeeper received orders from Komissarov that Khokhonin's 48,000 ruble shortage was to be entered in the books as expense for the upkeep of the prisoners. This was also done in the case of all the other shortages and losses.

Apart from these losses, which were an added burden

on the prisoners, there were losses caused by transportation, and together they constituted about 48 per cent of all products assigned to the prisoners.

Food Given to the Prisoners

This was a very poor assortment: rye flour, barley meal, dehydrated potatoes, beets and hardly edible salt fish, salt meat refuse (liver, lungs and intestines), tallow, sugar, vegetable oil and "makhorka" (cheap grade of tobacco) for smoking.

These usually reached the prisoners in a spoiled, unfit condition. As all products were stored out in the open they froze in winter and rotted in summer. They were prepared and given to the prisoners in the following manner: **Breakfast:** One tablespoonful of porridge, or soup made from ground barley, and a mug of hot water; **Dinner:** Balanda (soup made from ground barley or dehydrated potatoes and beets with a little "meat" added) and a small piece of the rotten fish, which was kept in open barrels and swarmed with maggots; **Supper:** Soup from barley flour and a mug of hot water. In preparing these meals tallow or vegetable oil was used, 15 grams per person.

Bread was given according to the amount of work done.

The Daily Norm (production quotas)

A prisoner who did hard labor was entitled to 21 ounces of bread daily (see scale), meat or fish — $1\frac{3}{4}$ ounces; tallow or fish — $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce; dehydrated vegetables — $5\frac{1}{4}$ ounces; barley meal and rye flour — 3 ounces; sugar — a little more than $\frac{1}{4}$ ounce; salt — $\frac{1}{3}$ ounce. Together with such commodities as makhorka, soap, and tea these cost two rubles and amounted to about 1,200 calories. But because of the poor quality of the products the number of calories that the human system utilized was considerably reduced.

The bulk of the prisoners' diet, about 80 per cent, was bread, the remainder was rye and barley flour, rotten fish and meat refuse. That is why the administration concentrated all its attention on the system of rationing this nutriment, since it was the main source of working power.

Like a ritual, the daily ration of bread was given each prisoner every evening when he returned from work, according to the following scale:

1. Prisoners who completed 50 to 70 per cent of the set norm received $10\frac{1}{2}$ ounces.

2. Prisoners who completed 71 to 90 per cent received 14 ounces.

3. Those who completed 91 to 100, per cent received 21 ounces.

4. Those who reached 101 to 120 per cent received over 28 ounces.

5. Those prisoners who reached a high of 121 to 150 per cent of their production quota received 35 ounces.

6. Those who accomplished 151 to 200 per cent received 35 ounces.

7. Prisoners working on jobs not regulated by quota received 17½ ounces.

8. Prisoners who, for different reasons were not working, received 7 ounces.

No one received more than 2 1/5 pounds (a kilogram) of bread whatever the amount of work accomplished.

Bread was baked in the concentration camp bakery from mouldy flour and, according to regulation, only until it was 54 per cent done. As a result it contained 20 per cent more moisture than fully baked bread and was heavy, soggy and mouldy.

Famished and exhausted after a long day of hard labor the prisoners ate their earned rations that same evening and next morning had only the thin mixture of rye or barley flour with water, called "balanda". Even this meagre nourishment was not received without hardship. The kitchen personnel and criminal prisoners doled it out according to the prisoners' "blat" standing, privilege or ability to bribe. Those who had special standing received more, and thicker, soup while others received only water from the top of the kettle. Pleas from prisoners for just a little more were common, but were answered with whacks over the head with a heavy iron ladle and the words "Ask the prosecutor, you son . . . , he'll give you more!"

Everyone knew that the Ukhta-Pechora prosecutor, Syedlykh, added an extra term of punishment instead of soup. Fresh vegetables were never given. Fresh potatoes, onions and garlic were considered precious medicine against scurvy. For a head of garlic the "medical aide" would relieve a prisoner from work for a few days entering him in the records as being "sick". For a potato or an onion a brigadier would give lighter work.

As a result of consuming the salt fish, meat refuse and half-baked bread, the prisoners drank huge amounts of the

bad water which caused "tsynga" (scurvy). Their teeth and gums decayed, their limbs became weak and their bodies broke out in dark blotches.

Ways of Using Slave Labor

GULAG, which had agreements with the NKVD for supplying prisoner manpower, and with the regular "Narkomats" who ordered work to be done, set all the plans for using slave labor. The general plan for the Ukhta-Pechora concentration camp for 1937 was as follows:

1. Group "A": laborers and technical personnel — 85 per cent.
2. Group "B": concentration camp servants — 10 per cent.
3. Group "C": unemployed — 5 per cent.

Those included in group "A" were:

- (a) All laborers in industries, building projects and transportation.
- (b) All technicians in industries, building projects and transportation.

Those included in group "B" were:

- (a) Concentration camp administration, which was made up of prisoners; commanders of URC (medical-distribution branch) and KVC (cultural-educational branch), etc.
- (b) Servants in the kitchen, laundry, steam bath, hospital, store attendants and those working at distribution centres.

The unemployed were:

- (a) All sick prisoners relieved from work by the medical aides.
- (b) Prisoners who were on trains on camp territory, returning from prisons, and those who were being transferred from one concentration camp to another.
- (c) Those prisoners who refused to work, the "objectors" and who were placed permanently in isolation cells.
- (d) Prisoners who were in the camp jails while their cases were being further investigated.

The Fourth Group "D"

Out of the harrowing existence in concentration camps still another group of prisoners emerged, totally unforeseen

by GULAG. It was the group of "invalids" unfit for work who were slowly coming to an end. All the directors of different industries were afraid of these prisoners because they were useless, while the production goal had to be reached. These spectacles were a constant source of fear for the other prisoners for in them they saw their own possible fate.

Their appearance was horrible. With amputated arms, legs or fingers, suffering severe burns or frostbite, with their gums rotted out or permanently afflicted with blindness they lost their usefulness for work and therefore received no medical aid whatever.

They were isolated in a separate camp "Vetlosyan" where they were put to work making "lapti" from birch bark. This work was also on a quota basis and the poor wretches received 7 ounces of bread, some potato soup and a piece of spoiled salt fish. Out of an average of about five or six thousand of these abject victims several dozen died daily. Harnessed to special hearses prisoners daily hauled away three or four coffins filled with their skeletons.

At the order of Peoples' Commissar Yagoda, one day a special hearse, drawn by harnessed prisoners, made its way from Vetlosyan into the forest. Part of its cargo was the skeleton of an old wretch such as has just been described — Yagoda's father. He had been arrested with his daughter, and brought to Ukhta-Pechora after Yagoda's execution.

The Prisoners' Daily Schedule

According to special orders of erstwhile Peoples' Commissar Yagoda, prisoners in the Ukhta-Pechora concentration camp worked six ten-hour days a week. Their daily schedule was as follows:

1. From 5 A.M. to 7 A.M., getting out of bed, check-up and breakfast.
2. Congregation of prisoners at the front gate, and walk to work under guard. This took one and a half hours.
3. Full ten hours of work.
4. Time out for the noonday meal; one or one and a half hours.
5. Walk home from work and check-up at gate; one hour.
6. The evening meal; one hour.

The prisoners' rest day was Sunday, but not very often were they able to take advantage of it. Usually they were ordered outside, nude, for searching. These searches were often more galling than the hard labor.

This sketch illustrates how the prisoners' time was exploited and how the gruelling conditions speeded death. It shows the cruelty, hate and stupidity of the bolshevik regime in dealing with its victims.

The Prisoners' Work Conditions — Their Implements and Tools

Prisoners who did one kind of work only were settled in separate subdivisions, and assigned to work brigades. The size of these brigades depended on the work they did, never numbering less than twenty-five prisoners.

Each brigade had its brigadier, appointed by the administration, who was its supervisor at work and off. He was maintained by the brigade and his pay and bread rations were fixed according to his average prisoner's work. For instance, if a brigade of 24 tree-cutters completed 2,400 per cent of its work, or cut 7,500 cubic feet of trees this total was divided among 25 prisoners, that is each prisoner was credited with 96 per cent.

Trees were felled with axes and saws, cross-cut and bow saws, which were always dull and chipped, demanding from the prisoners double effort and energy. The "tool-men" who repaired tools could occasionally be bribed, according to the prisoner's "blat" standing, into giving him a half-sharp saw. "Blat" was a very complicated affair. It was practiced between the ruling class, the criminals, and the working prisoners. For example, the working prisoner, through "blat", could trade his own trousers or overcoat for a few days lighter work — or to the "medical aide" for a few grams of sugar or butter relief from work altogether for a day or two. With "blat" one could get from the store attendant a first-class wardrobe for a package of cigarettes.

Logs were pulled along ice roads by 10 to 12 trudging prisoners harnessed to a sled. The harness was made of heavy rope strapping criss-crossed at the back, one end held in the hand.

Drivers were usually dogs. They not only watched the prisoners against escape, but saw to it also that they pulled evenly and steadily. If a prisoner's rope slackened the dogs bit his legs instantly. Even when the prisoners wanted to warm their hands by a fire the dogs prevented them from doing so.

Prisoners working with dirt had such tools as a spade, a pick, a crowbar and a heavy wheelbarrow. While building

the Ust-Vym highway the prisoners hauled dirt in boxes on sleds to which they were harnessed in teams of four or six. In winter, the prisoners dug gravel and brought it up to the surface by hand with special containers. In Shori they broke rock with picks and hammers.

"Leading the Bear"

All along the river Ukhta an extensive search for oil deposits is continually under way. The holes are drilled by a rapidly-pounding chisel attached to the end of a shaft. In order that the chisel should not strike repeatedly on one spot, the shaft has to be moved in different directions by a prisoner and this dreaded task is called "leading the bear". It was always given as a penalty, and the threat of this job always brought renewed efforts from prisoners at other work.

The prisoners never had any mechanical devices to aid them in their work. The reason for this, whether to depress them still more or to suck all their strength and finally destroy them, is not known.

When plans and cost estimates for building the Kotlas-Vorkuta Railway were drawn up by the Kharkiw Planning Bureau, or the general plan for TC (Heating-Electric Centre) was drawn up in Leningrad, they included the use of power machinery as excavators, conveyors, scrapers and steam shovels. The concentration camp administration, however, ordered the prisoner engineers to plan on prisoner manpower exclusively. For example, when building TEC on Ukhta River the project included deepening the river bottom and about 180,000 cubic feet of ground were to be brought up. All this the prisoners accomplished without any mechanical aid whatever. Four excavating brigades died in the process.

Prisoners worked in the forests or along the river where there were no roads. To safeguard against escapes, brigades worked close to one another on small areas. Accidents and casualties frequently occurred: several were injured or killed daily. Falling trees from one brigade fell on prisoners in the next, and rock loosened by one brigade would fall on the brigade working just below. Because the guards were not responsible for the prisoners' safety from accidents, they made no effort to protect them from hazards. On the contrary, when some prisoner made an attempt to dodge a falling tree a callous guard would often shoot him, saying that he had prevented an escape. The guards were not responsible for any deaths regardless of how they occurred. They turned

the corpses over for inspection to the Third Division NKVD who certified the cause of deaths.

Very few prisoners could reach the inhuman quota assigned. Brigadiers sometimes exaggerated the work done by their brigades in order to get into the 17½ ounces-of-bread eligibility. This was always discovered during the monthly check-ups, and the whole brigade punished by a reduction in the bread ration, and an increased quota of work. This the prisoners could not bear and while cutting trees would cut off their arms or legs. Usually the mutilation was in the legs, and this had to be done above the knee because the loss of a leg below the knee, or merely the toes or fingers did not exempt the prisoner from hard labor as some discovered through experience.

The Yezhov "Draft"

During my last years of imprisonment I saw, in 1937, many newcomers from the "Yezhov draft". The majority of them were MTS (Machine-Tractor Stations) directors, district party secretaries, state farm directors, members of the Communist Parties of the National Republics and members of the government. This party contingent of labor could not endure the rigorous régime and they also cut off their arms and legs, hanged themselves from bedposts, or jumped in the rivers.

They were extremely indignant over their arrest and protested vehemently. They wrote innumerable applications to the administration and directors asking for lighter work, which ran more or less in the following vein:

"Through some misunderstanding I find myself in the concentration camp and I hope that my petition to Voroshilov, Kalinin and Joseph Vissarionovich will soon be taken into consideration and I shall be freed. I am an old communist since 1918. I took an active part in fighting the White Guard, Petlyura and other bands in southern Russia, and even helped subdue the Kronstadt uprising. After the conclusion of the Civil War I still worked persistently to uproot all banditry. During the five years before my arrest I was president of the political division of . . .sky state farm and then became director of this state farm. In all my life I have never done manual labor, so I beg you to assign me to the office for anything at all. The building chief, an NKVD major had not looked into my case; I presented it before the chief engineer M. A. Bridiknin. . ."

Bridiknin was the chief engineer of the Ukhta TEC project, had once been a colonel in the White Russian Army and had already served a ten-year sentence. In 1938, when his term expired, he stayed on as a paid worker. Due to his high qualifications the NKVD appointed him chief engineer of the important project. He, like all the rest of the old prisoners, regarded these cocksure party members with animosity. They and their kind were responsible for the plight of these blameless victims whose help they were now seeking.

Prisoners' Work Quotas and Wages

Like everywhere else in the USSR a "Stakhanovite tempo of work" was also obligatory in the concentration camp. In the Ukhta-Pechora, work quotas were not the same as those for free citizens. The concentration camp administration set their quotas independently of quotas outside.

1. Daily quota of dirt work for one prisoner:

(a) Digging pits in frozen ground, 13 feet deep, with a spade and pick, and hauling it 28 to 55 yards with a wheelbarrow: quota — $14\frac{1}{2}$ cubic yards at 61 kopeks per cubic yard.

(b) Digging trenches 5 feet deep with a spade and pick and hauling dirt with a wheelbarrow for 28 to 55 yards: quota — 17 cubic yards at 52 kopeks per cubic yard.

(c) Digging dirt with a spade and pick and hauling it with sleighs up inclines of 15 to 20 degrees for distances of 164 to 219 yards for a railroad grade: quota — 12 cubic yards at 74 kopeks per cubic yard.

(d) Prying rock with picks and bare hands (without the use of dynamite or other explosives), hauling with wheelbarrow for 28 to 55 yards and breaking into smaller pieces: quota — 9 cubic yards at 98 kopeks per cubic yard.

(e) Digging gravel and pebbles from the River Vym with a special shovel, bringing it to the bank and there sifting it: quota — 8 cubic yards at 1.05 rubles per cubic yard.

2. Daily amount of work for one prisoner at timbering:

(a) Cutting trees with a bow saw and sawing them into two-yard lengths, cutting off all branches and piling them: quota — 15 cubic yards at 59 kopeks per cubic yard.

(b) Cutting trees with bow or cross-cut saw, peeling the bark off and piling at pick-up points: quota — 21 cubic yards at 42 kopeks per cubic yard.

(c) Dragging logs to the main road for a distance of 328 yards harnessed to a sled: quota — 24 cubic yards at 34 kopeks per cubic yard.

3. Loading and unloading: one prisoner's daily quota:

(a) Loading and unloading small freight from barges and carrying on backs for a distance of 55 yards: quota — 17½ tons at 47 kopeks per ton.

(b) Loading and unloading heavy freight from barges and trucks: quota — 20 tons at 40 kopeks per ton.

All loading and unloading was done without the aid of any mechanical devices.

Prisoners' Maintenance

In order to simplify estimates for different enterprises in the Ukhta-Pechora, GULAG computes the cost of a prisoner's maintenance and this is included in the general estimate.

Plan for the cost of one prisoner's upkeep for one day in the Ukhta-Pechora in 1937:

1. Food: 3 rubles, 32 kopeks -- 47.4 per cent of the total cost.
2. Clothing, footwear and bedding: 63 kopeks — 9 per cent.
3. Accommodation and utilities (fuel, light, etc.): 95 kopeks — 13.6 per cent.

Total: — 4 rubles and 90 kopeks making 70 per cent.

4. Administration and Camp Guards:

(a) Administration expenses — 36 kopeks, 5 per cent.

(b) Camp guards — 98 kopeks, 14 per cent.

Total 1 rouble and 34 kopeks, 14 per cent.

5. Maintenance of unemployed prisoners in group "B":

(a) Maintenance of prisoners in prisons during investigations — 28 kopeks, 4 per cent.

6. Deductions for maintenance of GULAG and NKVD: 14 kopeks — 2 per cent.

Grand total: 7 rubles — 100 per cent.

Cost of one prisoner's food:

(a) Food supplies (see above) — 2 rubles, 3 kopeks, or 60 per cent.

(b) Waste in preparing food — 35 kopeks or 10.6 per cent.

(c) Cost of transporting food supplies — 94 kopeks or 30 per cent.

Out of the designated sum of 3 rubles 32 kopeks per day for one prisoner's food he consumes only 2 rubles and 3 kopeks' worth, 1 ruble and 29 kopeks are accredited to waste.

In the cost of maintaining camp guards, which comes to 98 kopeks per individual prisoner, is included the cost of the upkeep of police dogs which are assigned 10 rubles per day for each dog.

This is sufficient proof that a dog's life in the Ukhta-Pechora was far better than that of a prisoner. The dogs received special training daily to make them crack guards, and for this received 14 ounces of fresh beef. Then they drove the prisoners, harnessed to sleds, pulling loads of 23½ cubic yards on 17½ ounces of half-baked black bread and 1¾ ounces of rotten fish.

Cost of keeping a prisoner in prison during an investigation is later made up by him wherever he may serve his sentence.

Prisoners' Wages

Activities of the concentration camp administration are divided into two branches:

- (a) Administrative, with the maintenance of prisoners and setting them to work.
- (b) Technical, responsible for all concentration camp industries and, in order to run them, responsible for the hiring of prison labor from the administrative branch.

Cost of the prisoners' maintenance is the basis of all camp calculations.

When building TEC, in 1937, wages were paid to the prisoners in the following manner:

All work days were checked with all camp sub-divisions which supplied labor and the sum originally assigned for the project divided by the number of prisoners. The average pay on the TEC project was 8 rubles and 50 kopeks. From these earnings of 8 rubles and 50 kopeks (212 rubles and 50 kopeks per month of 25 days) the Finance department of TEC made a monthly payment to the camp sub-divisions of 7 rubles for each work-day, or 210 rubles per month. This was to cover the cost of the prisoner's upkeep. The re-

mainder of 2 rubles and 50 kopeks was the prisoner's pay. This sum was kept by the administration in his account.

Prisoners' Pay

A prisoner may request the administration to withdraw a sum from his earnings, accumulated in his account. The administration considered it wise occasionally to allow the prisoners small sums from their accounts as an added incentive for harder work. This privilege was granted only to those who worked a full month, full ten hours daily and fulfilled their quotas. Cash might be withdrawn according to the following scale:

1. Prisoners who accomplish a "Stakhanovite norm" of 150 to 200 per cent of their quota could draw 50 per cent of their net earnings, that is from the sum of 2 rubles and 50 kopeks.

2. Prisoners who reached 120 to 150 per cent of their quota could withdraw 25 per cent of their net wages.

3. Prisoners who reached 100 to 120 per cent could withdraw 15 per cent of their net wages.

4. Prisoners who reached 100 per cent could have 10 per cent of their wages.

5. Prisoners who reached only 90 per cent could have 10 per cent of their wages.

6. Prisoners who fulfilled 70 per cent of their quota and less received no cash at all, since they did not even earn their keep, according to the plan.

7. Technical personnel, made up of prisoners whose professions the administration utilizes, such as engineers, agriculturalists, economists, geologists bookkeepers, might also withdraw differentially from their account. Usually it was from 25 to 50 per cent of their net earnings, which range from 10 to 50 rubles per month, so that an average technical worker received from 10 to 15 rubles per month.

8. The concentration camp servants received from 10 to 20 rubles per month.

9. The unemployed prisoners received no cash.

In 1938 the average quota reached by group "A" in the Ukhta-Pechora was 87 per cent. Therefore, according to this scale, only a few brigades were eligible and received a little cash, while the vast majority of the prisoners never did.

Prisoners in concentration camps were doomed to certain death. But before this happened, the last ounce of his

energy was sucked from each prisoner in the slave labor which brought huge profits to the Soviet "classless" state.

It is impossible to compare this prisoner with the American or Canadian worker whose standard of living is at least eight times higher than that of a Russian worker. But it is interesting to compare it with the pitiful free Russian worker's monthly salary of 420 rubles (in 1938), or with the engineers and administrators working on TEC and oil projects who received 1,500 rubles per month, plus 50 per cent for the distant location, plus 50 per cent for the severe climate and a bonus for moving from their former places of work to Chibyu thus earning 3,000 rubles per month gross.

Working an eight-hour day with the prisoners they received a monthly income of 3,250 rubles while, at the same time, the prisoner engineers were given 7 rubles per month, according to the general plan.

The difference in pay between the free worker and slave labor is obvious and it is for this reason that the Russian builders of socialism strive for bigger and better concentration camps. Without their vast slave labor system, their whole structure of socialism, that prison of nations which calls itself the USSR, would crumble.

H. Sova

THE FAR KOLYMA

Several great concentration camps existed in the USSR even at the beginning of the first Five-year Plan. The principal state enterprises and important economic products in different branches of industry were based exclusively on forced labor, which was plentiful. The chief concentration camps were: Solowky, Ukhta-Pechora, Kotlas, Murmansk, Arkhangelsk, Mariinskoe, Karaganda, Bamlat, Sakhalin, Kamchatka. There were many others, less important, of a temporary character, called into existence for such undertakings as the White Sea Canal, Volkhovbud, Moscow Metro, etc.

All these "Institutions for the Re-education of the Unsubmissive" were more or less known to the public, because the inmates who returned home after serving their terms told people about them.

In 1932 one could hear the word "Kolyma", unknown till then. I had the misfortune to live in this special concentration camp during the darkest period of inhuman terror in the Soviet Union, that is the period of 1937 - 1939, during which the "Brother Nationalities"* of the Union lost millions of innocent victims.

There is between the Sea of Okhotsk and the Arctic Ocean a big stretch of land called Chukchi Peninsula. Its exact geographical location is 58 to 70 degrees North and 145 to 170 degrees East. This extensive territory, drained by the river Kolyma and its tributaries, was named after this river. Another great river, Indigirka, parallels Kolyma and flows into the Arctic Ocean. The territory is divided into three main divisions: Upper, Middle and Lower Kolymsk.

* Official Russian term for enslaved nations.

It has a severe continental climate, the mercury hovering at 85 to 94 degrees (F) below in winter, and going up to 104 degrees (F) in summer. Winter begins about the middle of August, when morning temperatures invariably drop to about 22 degrees (F). It lasts till the middle of May. Snowfall may be from 3 to 5 feet. Vegetation is very poor, there are many patches of different kinds of berries. Trees are exclusively coniferous, silver and another type of fir. The terrain consists of mountainous chains ("sopky") without end. The most important mineral is gold, but mining of coal began recently and platinum has been discovered. These valuable minerals made Kolyma very famous throughout the Soviet Union and contributed to its revival. The report of Mr. Khodaryov, Director of "Dalstroy", the institution whose task it is to exploit this territory, gives the following account of work done in 1940:

Gold mining developed very rapidly; in 1937 it was 34% higher than in 1936; in 1938 it rose 35% and in 1939 — 32% compared with previous years. The report states that the total yield of gold in Kolyma territory in 1939 was twice as great as the yields of South Africa and Japan put together. This report of Mr. Khodaryov was published in the camp newspaper.

The technical organizer of all the Kolyma enterprises, is officially the organization called "Dalstroy". Manpower is supplied by the NKVD (People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs)* of the Soviet Union, but all these distinctions are meant only to confuse "foreigners". "Dalstroy", in its turn, engages executives in mining, road building, geological works and other important branches paying very high wages in comparison with the rest of the Soviet Union, the ratio being 1:2. This is why all the responsible administrative positions in Kolyma were in the hands of civilian experts, who also had the additional privilege of not being subject to military service in case of war.

About two miles north from the bay of Nagaevo in the Sea of Okhotsk there was built a big city — Magadan, which, in 1910, boasted of many stone buildings and a population of 30 thousand people. I was there at the time. Where, in 1932, there were the tents of prisoners brought on construction work, in 1940 there was a huge automobile garage doing repair work and employing 700 - 800 men. About 250

* Now changed to MVD (Ministry of Internal Affairs).

miles north of Magadan a big settlement called Palatka was created,* and 75 miles further a second one called Yagodna. I saw these two on this road. How many such settlements are scattered over Kolyma territory nobody really knows, but their number must run into many hundreds. Gold mining settlements in 1940, it was generally believed, were in the hundreds. Some of these had up to 20,000 convict laborers. I worked in the mining area of Nechayany, which consisted of five separate industrial divisions each employing 3 to 5 thousand workers. A conservative estimate, based on all known facts, put the number of convict laborers in Kolyma territory in 1940 at 2 million souls.

Two contrasting periods marked the convicts' lives in Kolyma. The first period, from 1932 to 1937, when the work started; the second period, 1937 onward. The director of Dalstroy up to 1937 was Berzin, who was quite an able organizer and had a humane attitude towards prisoners. He was able to arrange all things so that the convicts were not hungry, and gold was mined. The amount of work each prisoner had to do ("production quotas") was not excessive and anybody who worked consistently, according to his physical abilities, did not go hungry.

Early in 1937, however, Berzin was arrested and the lot of the prisoners became much worse overnight. Moscow issued orders to devalue the gold that was mined. This was intended, from the economic point of view, to increase production quotas, to save on food rations, shoes and clothing, make working hours more rigid and, in general, save on everything possible. These "possible savings" can always be found when illegally applied, and NKVD organs spared neither method nor effort. The first blow was that production quotas for prisoners were so greatly increased that it became impossible for some of them to fulfil them. Working hours also were increased to 12 - 14 a day, even when the cold reached 69 degrees (F) below zero. A day of rest was abolished. I cannot now describe the terror of those sufferers who are digging today that "filthy lucre" for those who wish, by its help, to gain domination over the whole world.

The camp kitchen prepared food three times a day. Breakfast consisted of a single dish of thin soup at 5 o'clock in the morning, but in order to get it on time one had to get up an hour earlier. The food was rationed according to cate-

* By forced resettlement.

gories. The first of these consisted of those who produced more than their quotas. They received $1\frac{3}{4}$ - $2\frac{1}{5}$ lbs. of bread and two dishes for dinner and supper. The second category consisted of individuals who fulfilled 80% - 100% of their production quotas. They received $1\frac{1}{3}$ - $1\frac{3}{4}$ lbs. of bread and one fish for dinner and supper. The third category was undergoing punishment because they did less than 70% of their quota of work. They received less than a pound (.88 lbs.) of bread and only soup for dinner. Those who had the misfortune to fall into this category soon lost their strength, were exhausted or became sick with scurvy. Production quotas were set by a large staff of economists, production engineers, quota experts, planners, statisticians and others. To give an idea of the quotas here is a description of some of them:

Rocky ground. One man's quota 3.9 - 13 cubic yards, to be dug with a pick, loaded on to a wheelbarrow and hauled to a huge pile, 10 - 15 feet high, 55 - 358 yards away. One cubic yard usually weighed a ton (1.15 tons). As a rule 3 men ("a link") worked together. Two of them worked with picks and shoveled the dirt on to the wheelbarrow and the third hauled it away. This was done in turns. Every hour each of us took up to 20 wheelbarrow loads 110 - 165 yards away, the other two managing to load. Working in this intensive manner for 10 hours a normal working day we three fulfilled our quotas 110% - 120%, the quotas in this case being 7.8 cubic yards. Such production was possible only for prisoners possessing physical strength and good build who could, and knew how, to work. Such production achievements were very rare, occurring in only about 5% - 7% of all the cases and not every day, for it depended on the weather and the type of ground to be worked. The greater number of prisoners fulfilled their quotas — 60% - 70%. These data refer to the year 1937 and after, when production quotas were almost doubled.

All these inhuman conditions were made more acute by the natural disadvantages of Kolyma. In summer, the whole terrain, including mountain slopes, is one vast swamp where mosquitoes are so numerous that without a special face covering work is absolutely impossible, although the covering interferes with breathing and complicates one's work. We suffered from mosquito bites in summer almost as much as from NKVD bites.

As to prisoner living quarters the stone buildings I men-

tioned before were for the use of the ruling NKVD caste. The prisoners enjoyed something quite different. In localities where the work had been going on for a few years there were primitive wooden barracks, but where pioneering work was to be done (this happened quite often) tarpaulin tents were spread to accommodate 50 - 60 men and this was their home. Such living quarters were usually heated by discarded metal oil drums and those that slept close to them were comfortable because a fire was kept burning throughout the night, but those who slept away from these heaters or by the door fared badly. There were cases of hair freezing to the tarpaulin, but such places were occupied by those unable to work and therefore "candidates for perpetual freezing" in the cynical words of the camp jargon.

In general, the "officially blessed" cynicism of all prevailing terror led many of us to moral debasement. It happened in this way. According to NKVD ukase (official order) in 1937, all political prisoners, irrespective of their state of health, were forbidden to work in their professions but had to do hard physical labor. Indeed "hpl" (or the Russian "tfp" — meaning hard physical labor) was the official name for this kind of additional punishment. This meant that the professor, the educationist, the engineer, the agriculturist and other professional men were supposed to take a pick and shovel and dig for gold. Even doctors worked in stores and individuals with little education, having taken a hurried "medical preparation" were put in charge of medical services, but the worst aspect was the ill-treatment we received from the common criminals, who were called "recidivists". They had no other name for us only "fascists", "bandits", "people's enemies" and many other similar epithets from the extensive NKVD vocabulary.

The lower ranks of the administrative personnel, such as brigadier, overseer, etc. were recruited exclusively from this criminal element. These criminals systematically beat up camp inmates with approval from "above". Only those who have had anything to do with criminals can imagine how helpless and wretched we were when beings with beastly instincts and impaired nervous systems had the right of life or death over us. The situation became so bad that work brigades made up of these people, pretended to go to work but in fact remained idle. In order to cover this up, the brigadier, who was also a common criminal, put some of the work we did to the credit of these idlers. Anyone who would

dare to report this fact to the higher authorities was a marked man, often paying with his life for such an indiscretion.

Only those whose temperatures reached 100 degrees (F) were considered to be sick, and external injuries and wounds were taken into consideration only when they were very severe. Scurvy and rheumatism, common northern ailments, were widespread among us and because these sicknesses with the exception of a very acute form of rheumatism do not raise the body temperature, sick people were forced to work until their swollen feet could not be squeezed into shoes. Those who refused to go to work in such cases were beaten severely and put into solitary confinement cells which were not heated in winter, and in summer one had to stand in deep mud and endure the bites of clouds of mosquitoes. The medical personnel of middle rank consisted mostly of former criminals and bribes were common. One who could pay the medico was excused from work. Work in sub-zero temperatures resulted in many injuries from freezing. Such prisoners became invalids. Their lot was very bitter indeed, they were not allowed to leave the camp and could not live in it because the NKVD camp had one guiding principle: "If you work to our satisfaction you may live".

In 1938 I became sick with scurvy. My feet swelled, became covered with wounds and tumours, but I had to go to work. The place of work was on a high hill some distance away from our living quarters. My swollen and wounded feet were very tight in boots and one day when I was going to work the wounds began to bleed from exertion and pressure. When I reached the place of work I did not feel any pain but I was extremely tired and had to take a little rest instead of starting work at once. Our brigadier, Nahirny, a thief and bandit from Odessa, noticed this and fell upon me. I could not defend myself in any way and was taken unconscious to the hospital where I spent a few months.

As soon as I began to grow stronger again I was discharged. The camp was about four miles away. Springtime changes roads in this region into pools of mud. I entered the hospital in wintertime in my warm felt boots. I had to return in these felt boots and the road was very bad. When I came to camp I became sick again because my wounds did not heal. My temperature went up. I went to our doctor who was very surprised when he found out that my temperature was 100.4 degrees (F). My protestations that this was caused by the fact that I was not completely cured when

discharged did not convince him. The doctor began to smell my wounds to discover if I had been soaking them in coal oil or garlic juice. Cases when prisoners tried to remain sick and went to extremes to stop a cure were not uncommon. Such efforts however, ended in death or the amputation of limbs. The doctor wrote a note and gave it to the driver who took me back to the hospital. I was back there the same evening. My temperature went up to 102.2 degrees (F). The first words of the doctor were, "What did you do to your feet?" He did not believe my denials that I had done nothing and that I was absolutely innocent, but asked, "How long is your term?" I said, "Three years". Then he became furious: "For this simulation you'll get ten years more". He was right — I got ten years more, but not for this.

Hundreds of thousands found their graves here, sometimes from physical destruction but more often from schemes of the NKVD.

Upon my return to camp after sickness, and even before I started to work again, an order was given to political prisoners on the evening of May 15, 1938, to appear singly in the office. All inmates of the camp were curious to know what was going on, but those that went through the mill kept a mysterious silence and would not answer any questions. My turn came at two o'clock in the morning.

When I entered a young individual introduced himself as an NKVD Commissioner and said that I had to answer some questions. From the first question he asked me I realized that an investigation was being conducted into the well-known deposition I had made when first arrested. At the end of this hearing the examiner (if he may be so called) asked me: "Do you plead guilty that at the mine "Nechayany" you were engaged in anti-Soviet propaganda?" He did not pay the slightest attention to what I had to say in my defence and said: "Say definitely, Yes or No". I said: "No!" Then he added: "A number of witnesses declared that besides this you were sabotaging production". I pulled out my worker identification book in which I was described as a "shock-worker", something that had cost me so dear, and showed it to him. He did not even look at it and shouted: "Say, you bum, yes or no?" Again I said "No!" After this I had to sign the minutes of the examination pledging secrecy.

My curiosity got the better of me and I tried to find out which prisoners were the object of this investigation. It became absolutely clear that they were those whose term

of punishment was approaching its end, and those who had short terms of three to four years, the class to which I belonged. Things began to leak out gradually, and it became apparent that the same kind of illiterate state police pattern was followed in each case.

When gold-washing season began, each overseer from the lowest to the highest could be heard shouting: "Hurry, speed up!" This meant more gold.

Summer passed all too quickly and my fatal day of August 25, 1938, came near. Two years ago on that date I had been arrested at home. Then, suddenly, I and all those who had been examined on May 15th were again called to appear in the same office. A second rank NKVD official arrived from Magadan and, having gone through routine questions such as place of origin, date of birth, etc. read to us: "The decision of the three man NKVD tribunal is that such and such a person be hereby sentenced to ten years imprisonment beginning May 15th, 1938, for the crime of having been engaged in anti-Soviet propaganda and in sabotage of industry".

This happened twelve years ago but even now my blood congeals with terror when I think of it, and I cannot believe such a thing could be possible in this age of civilization, but then I was calm because constant terror led to complete indifference. One felt like those unfortunates who starved to death in 1933, and did not fall upon food stores and rob them though these were right beside them.

Some reacted differently. One White Ruthenian became insane, but there were no suicides. Over twenty of these "new criminals" from my section were formed into a separate brigade, with the addition of political prisoners with terms of 25 years. According to a new law passed in 1938 political prisoners could be sentenced to up to 25 years imprisonment.

But there comes an end even to a plague, though it leaves deep traces of ruin among the people. Peoples' Commissar of Internal Affairs, the sadist Yezhov, was removed and the marks of his regime began to disappear bit by bit even from among us in Kolyma.

Moscow sent one commission after another to find out what had happened to hundreds of thousands of people in the concentration camps but, as usual, a scapegoat is never found among the higher-ups. A Colonel in the State Security Police, Garanin, who was at the head of the Kolyma camps, was declared an "enemy of the people" and charged with

having had connections with the Japanese Secret Service. He was also blamed for the additional sentences which I and many others received. At the beginning of 1939 some prisoners with additional sentences were removed from under surveillance. I began to have hopes too. The things I went through during these years undermined my health, my moral and physical strength, and this was why, early in 1939, I was sent to work at road construction. This was a little better.

Another decisive date of my fate approached. This was August 25, 1939, when my first term of imprisonment ended and I should have become a free man. Nothing happened. I sent a complaint to the public prosecutor Vishinsky, and at the same time asked my wife to urge the matter of my liberation.

This complaint was successful. I was freed on January 8, 1940. I was free, but this did not mean that I could go home. First of all, a passport had to be obtained and then departure was possible provided that the production unit was willing to let me go.

This happy event found me 280 miles from Magadan where passports and permits for departure home were issued. To go such a distance in an open freight car when the outside temperature hovers between 60 to 75 degrees (F) below zero meant to take chances with one's life. I postponed the trip till spring.

From April to June I tried to obtain my passport. The procedure is very complicated. Such a passport is issued to political prisoners for one year's duration only. It is marked DUM. I could not find out what these letters stood for, but the NKVD organs knew it very well and the possessor of such a passport was allowed to remain in a larger city only 24 hours, but passport difficulties are less important than the departure of a political prisoner from Kolyma. The Soviet law that binds workers, especially skilled laborers to industry, was adhered to very strictly in Kolyma. Besides this, local NKVD tradition requires each liberated person to work two to three years as a freely hired worker. Economic conditions were not bad. After liberation I worked as an economist in the road construction headquarters at a salary of 900 rubles per month, which was twice as much as I would have received for the same work at home. At the same time the cost of living for free workers was much lower than at home and things were in fairly abundant supply.

But I was not tempted by all this, because desire to see my native land and family was paramount. Here again were great difficulties. There is also a notorious law in the USSR that political prisoners, after having served their terms, are not allowed to return to the places of their former permanent residence. It was proposed that we Ukrainians should settle in the region of Astrakhan or Kazakhstan. This is also a sample of Soviet justice when an unjustly sentenced person, having served his or her term, and thus entitled to be reinstated in all citizenship rights and privileges, should be allowed to settle only in a foreign land. This is a mortal blow to such a prisoner, because thus he may lose forever his family, his relatives, his home and native land. No matter where I turned for help in this matter I was refused, for various reasons. Finally, I succeeded in obtaining an audience with the public prosecutor of the city of Magadan, who gave me permission to leave Magadan.

Hnat Sokolowsky

MORE ABOUT KOLYMA

After a prolonged inquest, and a travesty of OGPU "justice", I was at last taken from the Dnipropetrowsk prison on February 11, 1936, and sent with others to an unknown destination. There were 48 of us in a 14 ton freight car. Daily rations were: 11 ounces of bread (which hardly amounted to 7 ounces) putrid anchovy* and an insufficient quantity of water. Half starved for many days, the prisoners became exhausted and thirst was undermining their health. When, at Kharkiw railway station we told an OGPU medical commission which was examining the transport that there were sick people among us, the commissioners answered sneeringly: "They'll cure you there!"

After this our freight train rolled on eastward. During the journey the armed guards banged with wooden hammers on the sides and roof of the cars to find out if the boards had been cut to allow of escape. This frightful journey lasted five weeks before we reached Irkutsk. As soon as we arrived there we were taken to a bath. The water was very cold, and our tormentors were forcing us to take a bath. "Davai, davai" ("Get on, go ahead!") they said. We returned from there just as dirty as before, only wet and cold, and in the transport report GPU undoubtedly recorded that we passed through sanitary inspection and received a bath.

The train rolled further east. On April 8, 1936, we arrived at the station Drugaya Ryechnka. There was the great slave labor market of this land of "scientific socialism". It was the main transit camp supplying all the torture places with free manpower. Soon, on April 10, 1936, we were ordered to board the steamship "Dneprostroy" at Churkin Mys

* Small fish related to the herring.

close to Vladivostok. This huge steamship swallowed 4,000 prisoners and sailed to the Bay of Nogaïsk. Then there were long days of roaming over the Sea of Okhotsk and the Bering Sea. Four days before disembarkation our food supplies gave out. Hungry and terribly exhausted by stormy seas, the prisoners could not survive and many of them died. The dead were unceremoniously dumped in the sea.

We reached the Bay of Nogaïsk on May 2, 1936. The place was still very cold at this season. All prisoners were ordered to take a bath. Our clothes were removed and we were issued with dirty and ragged prisoner garb, with rags for wrapping the feet in lieu of socks, and bast shoes. Each prisoner also received 14 ounces of bread which was so sticky that prisoners got stomach cramps after eating it and many of them died at once.

The next day (May 3rd) our group of prisoners, made up of 120 individuals, was sent in the direction of Nizhne Kolymsk 186 miles from the bay of Ambarchik to the gold field called "Partizan". Hungry and cold, we walked and rode for almost 25 days before reaching our destination 620 miles away. Convoying of prisoners is noted for its inhumanity as everybody knows ("Man — it sounds lordly" — Gorky). Upon our arrival at the gold field we were put to work immediately and were not given even an hour of rest after such a long and arduous journey.

Here are some of my observations about the life of prisoners in the Kolyma Region. They lived in buildings of which the walls were constructed of wood and the roofs covered with tarpaulin. Each building accommodated 120 persons. The heating system consisted of two iron oil drums, but the quantity of firewood was small and it was very cold outside when the outside temperature was 60 degrees (F) below zero. The prisoners huddled together to keep warm. There was no straw for mattresses and all of them slept on plank bunks huddled together. Rest under such conditions was impossible, we were freezing. Water froze in vessels overnight, sometimes right to the bottom.

The prisoners were divided into three categories as to food rations: punitive ration, one and three quarter pints of balanda (thin soup) and 11 ounces of bread; ordinary worker ration — the same quantity of balanda, 18 ounces of bread and 2 spoons of porridge (kasha); shock worker ration — 28 ounces of bread and a better quality of soup and porridge.

The conditions under which the men had to work were horrible. The work consisted mostly of the digging and moving of rocky ground. Each prisoner's quota was from 2½ to 8 cubic yards, depending on the nature of the always frozen ground, solid rock, gravel, etc. This much had to be moved from the diggings by wheelbarrows of 1/6 to 1/3 cubic yard capacity.

In social background the overwhelming majority of the prisoners were farmers, intellectuals and "cult servants", that is priests. In ethnic origin the prisoners were mostly Ukrainians or Highlanders from the Caucasus mountains or from the Turkic peoples of Central Asia.

The GPU - NKVD administration treated prisoners in a grim, inhuman manner and when Yezhov came to power their lot became intolerable. Every trifle was severely punished by lengthening prison terms. This procedure became very commonplace.

The cold and the Kolyma climate in general caused most of the suffering, especially to prisoners from Central Asia and Caucasus. Climatic conditions were the worst punishment for them and many of them, unable to bear it, committed suicide.

REMINISCENSES OF STALIN'S CEMETERY — WHITE SEA BALTIC CANAL

"Senior Tutor" Popov finished reading the paper. His eyes, behind his glasses, carefully scan the lower row of bunks which are packed to capacity. There were no questions.

"Canal Guards! 'Perekovka'* has brought alarming news. The nineteenth sluice-valve, the northern gate of our handsome one, broke down today. Command of the eighth military Vig-Ostrovsky Division has been ordered to send one company of carpenters. The Commander of the seventh point, citizen Gordeyev, has entrusted this emergency task to your collective. Has anyone anything to say?"

The grave silence of those who were not asleep is broken only by the groans of the sleepers.

"Junior Tutor" Moskalenko approaches Popov.

"Citizen senior tutor! The paper has been read in the second barrack. The brigadiers are coming... dressing now."

Citizen senior tutor Popov, a former member of the All-Union Communist (Bolshevik) Party, today an exile on the strength of the same clauses as "citizen chief", is undergoing penal servitude imposed on him by the Leningrad district court. In the office of the former company commander, now company roster keeper Molchanov, a thirty-fiver,** he is trying to solve the "emergency" problem with the brigadiers. Leader of the worker carpenter collective Babkov, tries to convince the command that the job will be finished on time. Brigadiers go quietly to their 24 inch living spaces on the bunks. The barrack groans. There are wisps of smoke here and there over the beds — some cannot sleep. Some have weigh-

* Name of a newspaper.

** Sentenced on the basis of article 35 of the criminal code.

tier problems than fatigue, than exhalations of steaming bodies, clothes, felt boots, foot rags, bast shoes and makhorka stubs. Leaning against the wall by the door, like a biblical patriarch sits a former shepherd and farmer of the sunny Trans-Caucasia, "a spy and agitator" according to the Moscow board of the GPU. He seems to be drowsing but no sound escapes his ears, especially the groans in the night. Stepanyants recalls his life in the Turkestanian barracks and his eyes grow sadder. There, too, there were only sporadic groans at the beginning.

Yesterday when I was going to the barracks from work Stepanyants grasped my hand: "Batsky die soon. Stepanyants hear when he sleep." But a few short weeks ago a strong fellow who could raise the heavier end of a 23 foot log to his shoulders all by himself, he was now lying immovable on his back. A medical assistant stood by the window trying to read the thermometer.

"Over 101 degrees — scurvy in its first stage. . . I'll speak to the doctor." The life of this son of the Don steppes was burning out in his deep feverish eyes.

"You should drink more liquid," added the medico from the doorway, hitting the barrel with a wooden top standing by the door.

There was in each barrack a big barrel which the day caretakers filled with branches of pine, pouring boiling water over them. This was a primitive anti-scurvy drink for everybody. Canal guards drank this White Sea medicine and kicked the bucket. In truth, the fifth company suffered less than the others, fewer members joined the "transport of no return" but the reason for this was the simple fact that carpentry is easier than rock splitting or earth digging. How long will the fifth company last? Smirnov, the quota man, has already doubled the number of logs to be cut. Stepanyants feels this and that's why he is so shy when he goes for his ration, which the brigade earns by additional cubic yards of cut wood. He knows how hard it is to cut them. He himself, at one time, when he could no longer stand the groans in the Turkestanian barracks and their "karabchi"* cries, switched to carpentry and cut these logs, but the quota at that time was 17½ linear yards, and now. . . He had already taken Batsky to the hospital. . . Among the Turkestanians it was the same. At the beginning he and an orderly carried

* Thieves!

out one of them, he cannot now remember who it was, and six months later two big barracks were emptied and the remaining Turkestanians moved to a small board barrack. The Turkestanians worked at the diggings. In the fall the quota was $2\frac{1}{2}$ cubic yards of frozen earth a day, which had to be hauled 220 yards with a wheelbarrow. Not being used to such work the Turkestanians became tangled in their long overcoats, fell down when wheeling boards into wet holes and quarrelled about the boundaries of their diggings when these were measured, but they managed to get, if not the full 35, at least 28 ounces of bread and other food besides. But Smirnov soon doubled the quota. The rations dwindled to 21 and 14 ounces of bread and small pots of "balanda". The pine remedy was supplemented by a special anti-scurvy ration, a small daily spoonful of vegetable salad. Some fortunate ones returned from the hospital with a note that they "should be put on light work for a month" (they were really permanently invalided) while others never returned. One happened to be put in the same box as a White Ruthenian, another, with an Amur kozak, into standard size boxes made of cut-offs and transported to the 16th sluice. There are many of them, there are a great many. And how many of them are scattered all along the 141 mile course of the White Sea — Baltic Canal? Berman and Rappaport on Bear Mountain were not alarmed over nothing and the Registration Distributing Bureau (URB)** did not send out circulars advising against sending out to work men from national minority groups when the outside temperature drops to 60 degrees below. This was done for somebody's protection if something should go wrong.

No, it was not the cold that put them to eternal sleep in the Karelian swamps. It was the inhuman quota!

At 4 o'clock in the morning Stepanyants was fingering dry poles that slipped from under overcoats and lay on the bunk. It would be so pleasant to stay a few moments in the bed warmed up during the night by body heat. The windows are covered with a thick coat of ice.

"Get up boys, get up!" say the brigadiers. And the boys get up. They do not get up because they have to go ten miles to the 19th sluice; today's quota has to be done at the northern gates of the "handsome" one.

Stepanyants has wakened them all and sits by the door. The barrack becomes alive. Stepanyants watches lest some

** Uchotno-Raspredeletelnoe Byuro.

thief should steal in unnoticed. This time is a golden opportunity for thieves. At this the Turkestanians used to cry "karabchi" but Stepanyants watches carefully over the wretched belongings of the men who sit before him in four rows on the beds, rubbing their swollen feet, carefully pressing them with the finger tips to see whether the pressure leaves hollows, a sure and terrible sign of scurvy which can be cured only by fulfilling one's quota of work. Not the fatherly "get up boys", but this cursed quota makes them quit their beds, almost throws them out, makes them fall in and urges them on to sluices and dikes, driving them more mercilessly than a hundred convoys. In general, the construction of the White Sea Canal proceeded without convoys. Troopers of the Armed Guards convoyed only prisoners sentenced to hard labor, taking care not only that no one should run away from the camp, but also that no prisoner should enter, if he had not completed his quota. In places where prisoners might meet civilians armed guards were stationed, former low grade GPU officials who often wore civilian clothes. The Finnish boundary was guarded by special GPU divisions, that all Union armed guard division. South of the White Sea — Baltic Canal camp beyond Petrozavodsk as far almost as Leningrad stretched the Svirsk camps. To the east were Kotlas, Pechora, several Ukhta, Vishera and Arkhangelsk camps and beyond the Urals, Sib-lags (Siberian Camps). The way to the north was blocked by Murmansk and Kandalaksha camps. Only one way was open for escape, by rail to the south, but this was possible only with documents. The forests were patrolled by armed guards, and local hunters were also on the look out for escaped prisoners. They received a bonus of seventy two pounds of wheat flour (2 puds) for each escaped prisoner they caught. Natives of this region should not complain because some prisoners sometimes following bear tracks to hide the scent destroyed their pursuers; to them freedom was not equivalent to 2 puds of wheat flour. There were cases of escape to the north, to Murmansk and Kandalaksha, where one could get along without documents of any kind. It was impossible, with so many people on hand and over a million square miles of territory, to surround each camp with bayonets and convoy prisoners to and from work. Camp history recorded cases where prisoners took arms from the troopers, bayoneted them, and ran away following wolf trails. Then hunters did not dare to stop these runaways. Such cases were rare, but there were some.

The most important thing in the construction of the White Sea Canal was manpower, because the GPU promised to build this canal in 300 days. Special incentives were invented to make people work. There were no "prisoners" only "canal guards", no convoys, individual quotas instead of group quotas for each brigade, and those who completed their quota for the day could return to the camp and rest. Food rations were also fitted into this pattern, there being six bread rations according to the amount of work done and six grades of other food, from the best to the poorest. There was also a special food ration for record workers, an eleven ounce "Uspensky pirog" (pie) at work and, later, even permission to visit camp prostitutes, especially for those of approved social background, for "one night" "without having to go to work next day" or "going to work" after that night. This privilege was granted upon the resolution of several Gordeyevs and "petitions" from Popovs.

At 5 o'clock in the morning the senior dispatcher URR Dimitriev, "camp god", — a virtual arbiter of the prisoners' fate — personally received the reports of brigadiers. Babkov's "collectiv" stood in its customary place beside the guards at the 17th sluice.

"Ivanov's brigade, muster roll 31" — reports Ivanov. "Formation has 25 men, company orderly Stepanyants, orderly, cook, laundress Zakhariants, junior tutor Moskalenko. Batsky is in sick bay."

"Batsky does not appear to be in the sick bay!"

"But this man is there!"

"If the brigade does not put Batsky to work he will receive a penal ration."

"Batsky soon won't need even those 11 ounces," whispered Pavlo B., a young Kuban kozak, sentenced by the Moscow GPU tribunal for preparing an armed insurrection against the Soviet Union.

"Camp god" finished hearing the brigadiers' reports and stepped in front of the brigade.

"Company at the 19th sluice will be considered as a supplementary unit of a temporary character. Information about work accomplished will be sent to us. All non-productive workers will do standard work. This is the chief's order."

From the time orders were issued that all must be accounted for, the "unproductive group" was not to be greater than 12 per cent. This group included all attendants, Gor-

deyev himself and the sick in the sick bay. This was why there were so many productive workers, and the sick bay tried to live up to Gordeyevs' verbal order "There are no sick at my point".

An anecdote that was whispered in the camps may sound funny only to those who went through that hell. It went like this:

"Two 'archangels of death' — a name given to members of the health section including doctors — take to the death-chamber a prisoner who is still alive. The unfortunate victim gathers his last strength and says: 'I am not dead yet!' 'Shut up,' say the orderlies, 'the medical assistant knows better than you do.'" The background of this anecdote is really tragic. The sick man who says "I am not dead yet!" is of the "unproductive group" which because it still appears on the "productive roll", must be accounted for before the divisional authorities. The dead are struck off this roll and do not make the "unproductive group" greater than 12 per cent, thus automatically raising other percentages. The efforts of the health squad to hasten the demise of their sick also received an incentive from the fact that there was a competition going on, for camp points wanted to receive the "transitory banner", divisions the "administrative banner", and the administration, Berman, Rappaport and Uspensky wanted decorations, rewards and advancement.

Did the great builder of the White Sea-Baltic Canal, engineer Budassi* think of what he constructed and at what price?

Production quotas for carpenter prisoners consisted mostly of cutting posts. Smirnov, who set quotas at the 16th sluice, increased it from 9 to 20 linear yards. For carrying out one's quota the economic section allowed 35 ounces of sticky black bread, and the kitchen gave dinners from the "normal" kettle: a spoon of millet porridge (kasha) in the morning, and a second spoon at work; soup and a piece of fish or horsemeat in the evening. Everyone dreamed of receiving 46 ounces of bread, and food from the first class kettle, in which the soup was much thicker, fish weighed 3 1/2 to 5 1/3 ounces and the spoon of kasha was seasoned with colza.** But to get such food one had to do 125 per cent of the quota. Considering that the quota also included all

* Budassi the chief constructor of the White Sea-Baltic Canal, later sentenced to 10 years for sabotage.

** Rape-oil.

the unproductive personnel each two-man team had to cut 60 linear yards, that is 11 square meters, of the wall and, in addition, so well that the steel meter-stick of the construction superintendent could not be inserted between posts. This was checked by the foreman, each attending to two brigades. It was very seldom that anyone could perform such a quota under such inhuman conditions. It was sometimes done by means of "tufta".* This was not easy to do, but misery made the prisoners exceedingly inventive. If, some day, it should be discovered, the Section of Correction and Inquiry would be after some foreman who signed the daily report with this "tufta" when accepting the daily output. No one bothered because the fellow would receive an additional two or three years for doing this. Let him wriggle out of it if he does not want to handle heavy logs.

"Socially close" to the Soviet authorities, the thieves — thirty-fivers — sometimes issued an ultimatum to a foreman: "Write 'tufta' or we will put you in a hole, cover it with stones and say that you ran away. What do you say? Are you against us? Do you want to make fools of us thirty-fivers? Write!" And the foreman wrote. A week or so later such a thief collective would be transferred elsewhere on the "wide construction front", and be replaced by brigades of national minorities, quiet industrious farmers, and the "tufta" engineered by the thieves was covered up by the sweat and heavy toil of newcomers.

Smirnov wanted only reports showing the highest production, he was always after maximums, and did not care if these reports corresponded to reality or not, because, of course, he did not want to push a heavy wheelbarrow himself. The chief of the point only wanted figures.

"Maybe the quota at the 19th sluice is lower. There is no 'denikinets' Smirnov", thought every prisoner, refusing to recall that points 8 and 9 belonged to the same Vig-Ostrovsky division of the White Sea-Baltic Canal Camp.

The snow crackled under a thousand feet. The fifth company passes the watch of the 17th sluice. The stout watchman, in a good fur coat, lists the men of each brigade. The junior tutor Moskalenko, dubbed "our-calf" by the prisoners, is the last to pass. He holds the "transitory banner" of the 8th division. The fifth company of the phalanx cannot carry this "banner of honor" in spite of the fact that the famous

* Cheating, padding of records.

Babkov's carpenter collective works there, because they are counter-revolutionaries and twelve cubic yards of earth moved by them are not worth a shovel thrown by a thirty-fiver, (Gordeyev's words when he was handing this red banner to the Abashidze collective of the thirty-fivers). But at the 8th or 9th camp point Babkov's collective may work under this banner. There it will be gazed upon while brigades of shock-workers, having completed their task at another sluice, come to set an example to the lagging 19th sluice, on the blacklist of the eighteenth division. Some brigade will work there, too, under a black banner made out of bast sack. This will be taken care of by the "tutors" of those camp points. To be sure, nobody takes this comedy of "banner of honor" very seriously, but all become used to it, just as Ivanov's brigade got used to its drone, "tutor" Moskalenko.

The land beyond the 17th sluice is sparsely wooded with thin Karelian birch trees. An hour's walk in the slippery snow warmed up the column. The silent forest night brought a sense of freedom. The air, permeated with the scent of pine trees was tainted by the smell of Kremenchuk makhorka and by the stink of the central organ of all the All-Union Communist (Bolshevik) Party. Brigades were in the vanguard, the Siberians clustered around Babkov who was telling them stories of his adventures in the Siberian taiga. Sometimes they would stop to look at some track in the snow. The broad shouldered drudge, Sveragin looked into Babkov's eyes. Cheerful Kosytsin told witty anecdotes in such pure Ukrainian language it was hard to believe he was a native of Siberia. Ivanov, fifty years of age, was talking with his compatriot from Poltava district, Sukhonis, about his skill as a carpenter. Proud Sukhonis never complained about his fate. He only regretted that Serhiy Oleksandrovich* was caught so soon. If he had only been given a year longer our people would not be roaming as exiles in these Karelias. They are followed by a tall White Ruthenian, and by Boleslaw Bzhezowsky who is really the famous machine gunner Bzhezinsky, from the partisan detachment of Orel. In such a glade as this, but far away where Volhynia borders on Podilla, his "maxim" sent to hell many members of the punitive expedition of the Vynnytsya district Cheka. Uncle Yasha fondles his silky beard and exchanges jokes with the giant Abdullah. Today he will see his own brother Myshko

* Serhiy Oleksandrovich Yefremiw implicated in the SVU trial.

at the 19th sluice, and will give him a piece of his mind because Myshko does not want to grow a beard. This 26 year old "uncle" Yasha has made up his mind to run away, but only with his brother. Together they went through the torture chambers of the Starobilsk GPU and together they will set out again. Mike can be relied upon.

Snow crackles underfoot, the moon casts a silver sheen on the Karelian birches and a sharp wind from the Soroka bay reminds us that morning is near. Then, suddenly, the metallic sounds of a campaign march is heard from the direction of the 8th camp point. A morning parade is in progress there. Other brigades were coming to meet us on their way to the 18th sluice. Our brigadiers slowed up in their walk and were coming near their brigades. Junior tutor Moskalenko hastened to the front of the column and, coming abreast of Babkov, unfurled the red flag of the 8th division.

The cruel reality of another day of heavy toil scattered all too soon the momentary oblivion.

M. S.

SENTENCED TO FIVE YEARS

I would like to say a few things about the year 1933, though I was not in Ukraine at the time. My scant property was confiscated and I was given five years of penal servitude.

I served my sentence in Svir concentration camps on the Kirovsk railway line, stations Pakostya and Lodeinoe Pole.

During that winter alone, 1,800 people who were sent there from Lukiyaniwska prison in Kiev at the same time I was, died there from hunger and cold. Many died from dysentery and quite a number were injured when cutting forest trees. These people were mostly farmers, the so-called "kurkula". They told many stories about the famine then raging in the Ukrainian villages.

M. Lazorsky

THE SHIP SAILS SLOWLY AWAY

Brisk wind lashes the sea rising in high waves that rock the ship at Murmansk wharf. Finding an obstruction, it seems to be enraged, striking the steel sides of the ship with even greater force, raising the waves still higher. They peep greedily into illuminators and then, as if sensing their impotence, become gentle and playfully fall to the deck, breaking into pearly spray. The wind whistles in the shrouds, angrily snapping the large canvas of the Norwegian flag.

With feet spread out, like a strong oak rooted to the place, there stands on the bridge a middle aged captain with greying temples. He draws on his pipe and carefully watches the ragged crowd dragging heavy dressed planks from the bank to the ship. He studies this unusual crowd of people for almost an hour. These people, with exhaustion and hunger staring from their faces, were going down the ladders and depositing their burdens in narrow half-dark corridors. Norwegian sailors kept order and told them what to do. On guard beside the loaders there stood, in watchful silence, soldiers with rifles.

These people were prisoners of the Kem Division of the Solovetsky camps. Some belonged to "penal groups", because they "systematically" failed to do their "lesson", meaning their quota; others were "sold", that is, those were sold by the administration to Soviet companies for "normal remuneration". This was the time of Soviet dumping. Forest products such as props, logs, planks and other products of fibrolitic plants and sawmills were sold at ridiculous prices to England, Denmark, Holland, Sweden and Norway. Red Russia wanted to shake the national economies of European countries by slave labor.

This labor force consisted of millions of Ukrainians.

The Kremlin murdered them also here in the cold, northern territories bordering on the Arctic Ocean.

The cold wind made it hard for them to keep on their feet. They had had nothing to eat for two days now. Working silently and breathing heavily they could scarcely move their heavy, swollen feet.

At last a rail was struck for dinner. In order that the prisoners should not waste time going to the barracks the management gave an order to bring dinner to the place of work. Other ragged men brought a large kettle of some thin soup in which floated fish heads. This was well known in the North, half rotten "vobla" or Caspian roach. When the cover was taken off it stunk to high heaven. A sailor grabbed his nose with his fingers and quickly stepped away, but the prisoners smelled the air and waited impatiently. Pieces of sticky bread having been distributed, all were ordered to sit in a circle.

The captain came near the prisoners, sniffed the air and made a wry face.

"What is this?" he asked the overseer pointing at the kettle with his pipe.

The overseer did not understand. The captain then nodded to a sailor.

"Ole, you speak Russian. Ask them what they are eating."

"Yes sir! It stinks because the fish is rotten. The prisoners are glad to get even this because they have not eaten for two days. They are a 'penal group'."

"What are they punished for?"

"Yes sir! Punished for failing to do their 'lessons'."

Ole has already had a chance to find out from a young prisoner all about "lessons". He had talked on the way so as not to be noticed.

"What 'lessons'?"

"Each two men to cut 40 large pine trees, trim the branches and bark them, cut them into props and logs and haul them to a storage place."

The captain became thoughtful. He took a step back and kicked with all his force. The nasty liquid spilled to the deck and the kettle rolled noisily and plumped into the sea.

After this, confusion.

"Midshipman", shouted the captain. "Give dinner to these people."

"Yes sir."

In five minutes, as if by a magic wand, each woodcutter had a dish of cooked meat and hot boiled potatoes before him. They fell upon the food like a pack of hungry wolves, eating greedily and sucking the tasty juices. Each also received a cup of sweet coffee. They had never dreamed of such a repast. Having finished, they stood up and bowed silently before the captain, who stood aside thoughtfully smoking his pipe.

The Cheka guards were enraged. Nobody had foreseen such an eventuality, there was nothing in their instructions which would tell them what to do in such a case. None of them dared to protest before the captain. But the chief could not stand it any longer and shouted madly, "Finish stuffing yourselves! Get to work!"

They went to work right after dinner. Carrying the remaining load of boards, they put them in compartments and secured them to the posts.

The superintendent hastened to the chief.

"Comrade chief", he whispered, "that blonde boy is to blame for all this. I saw him talking to a sailor."

"What is his name?"

"Khromchenko."

"Send him to me after work."

Not paying any attention to the brigadier who flatteringly tried to catch his eye, the chief went ashore.

Khromchenko was carefully fitting boards in their places when the shadow of the Norwegian sailor made him look up.

"Watch out! They are on to you."

The boy was chilled by these words.

"They must have seen me talking to the sailor."

"What a pity! Try to reach the end of the corridor, I'll hide you."

The axe fell from his hands and Khromchenko bent to pick it up. He stealthily looked around. The prisoners were hustling here and there, each at his task. He began to drive the board into a crack, then bent down, dropped the heavy wooden hammer and, snakelike, crept to the end of the corridor. The Norwegian pulled him by the shoulder and he found himself in the semi-darkness of a sack.

"Keep very quiet," he said and locked the door.

Towards evening the puzzled chief and ten of his henchmen appeared on the deck. The captain and the seaman Ole quietly watched the armed soldiers.

"Comrade captain, sir," — said the chief in an excited

manner, "it's a very unpleasant thing, but one of our prisoners ran away when the ship was being loaded. He worked here. We want permission to search the ship. It won't take us very long."

"Ole, tell them that they have my permission to search, but only in those parts of the ship where the prisoners were working today. Take them there."

"Yes sir."

The Cheka men threw themselves into the search. They looked into every nook and corner, lifted boards, probed all cracks with their bayonets. Two hours passed and the first mate said politely.

"Our ship has to sail in 15 minutes, according to agreement. The Captain's orders are that you leave the ship in ten minutes."

"We are not going to do that until we catch the runaway. We know he is here, maybe he had some help."

The first mate shrugged his shoulders.

"I am sorry, but no one can interfere in the ship's sailing orders, not even your central authorities. The captain is in complete command here."

"I'll bring a dog here," persisted the chief.

"Comrade chief," said a stout Cheka man, "the dog won't help. All the corridors here smell of petroleum and some other pungent oil."

The chief turned it over in his mind and gave up the idea.

"Look for him."

The Cheka men began to move the planks and probe zealously the tops and sides of compartments with the butt ends of their rifles.

Ten minutes passed.

"The Captain wants you to come to his cabin," the midshipman on duty said politely.

Sweating and perplexed, the chief followed the midshipman to the cabin where the grim captain smoked his pipe. The latest newspaper lay before him and Ole stood at attention by the door. Not inviting the chief to sit, the Captain said curtly:

"Ole, tell him that in five minutes the ship sails to Hammerfest, and to please get off the ship."

"Yes sir!" said Ole happily.

"We haven't found our runaway yet," said the chief angrily.

"Ole, tell him his people also worked on land, and the prisoner could have escaped there. This is none of our business, I gave you a chance to do your duty, I cannot allow anybody to hold the ship."

The Captain turned away from the chief.

The ship then moved slowly away from Murmansk wharf.

A boy stood in the dark corridor. Bowing his head to the steel wall he wept, prayed, and wept for the unexpected good luck.

F. Fedorenko

MY TESTIMONY

When the bolsheviks retreated before the German onslaught in the Second World War they took care in advance not to leave any prisoners behind when the Germans arrived.

The prisoners were driven, en masse, under heavy NKVD guard deep into Russia or Siberia, day and night. Many of them were so tired that they could go no further. These were shot without compunction where they fell. Terrible things happened then. Sometimes, wives recognized their husbands among the evacuees, as the prisoners were being driven through villages. There was great despair when they saw their loved ones taken under the muzzles of automatic guns, to far, unknown places.

The villagers took care of those who did not die at once from the NKVD bullets, but this was a very dangerous thing to do before all the bolsheviks cleared out.

But the NKVD could not evacuate all the prisoners, there were so many arrests, and jails were replenished constantly. In such a case the NKVD, before making a hasty retreat, would murder the prisoners in their cells.

I recall that when the Germans came, in the fall of 1941, to a little town, Chornobil, on the Prypyat River, 62 miles west of Kiev, 52 corpses of recently murdered people, slightly covered with earth, were found in the prison yard.

These corpses had their hands tied at the back with wire; some had their backs flayed, others had gouged eyes or nails driven into their heels; still others had their noses, ears, tongues and even genitals cut away. Instruments of torture which the communists used were found in the dungeon of the prison.

Many of the tortured people were identified because

they were mostly farmers from the local collectives who had been arrested by the NKVD for some unknown reason.

For instance, one girl (whose name I cannot recall now) from the village of Zallissya, a mile and a quarter from Chornobil, was arrested because one day she failed to go to dig trenches. All were compelled at that time, to dig anti-tank trenches. The girl was sick but there was no doctor to examine her and the NKVD arrested her, never to return.

Two days later, when the Germans arrived, she was found among the fifty-two corpses.

Polikarp Kibkalo

BLACK DAYS OF THE YEZHOV REGIME

(Reminiscences of a Soviet citizen)

The author of these lines, a farmer, who lives at present in a city in West Germany, is in possession of a document of Stalin's justice, the decision of the Poltava regional court, dated October 25, 1939, sentencing him to five years imprisonment in the "far camps of the Union" for "praising the people's enemy, Trotsky", and spreading lies about the communist party and the government.

(Editor)

I was born in a farmer's family in Novo-Senzhar district of the Poltava region, in Ukraine in 1896. My father had 22 acres of land, one horse, a cow and some farm implements. After the death of my father in 1916, my brother and I divided the inheritance and I became the owner of 11 acres of land. My family at this time consisted of three persons. When the bolsheviks seized power in the country, I received 4 acres, and began to farm on 15 acres of land. My livestock consisted of one horse and one cow.

Being quite popular in the village, I was elected to the collective municipality executive where I worked six months in the land division. In 1920, I was elected head of the village executive and when these were changed to village soviets, I became a member and was engaged there for four years in the cultural-educational section. When co-operatives were organized in our village in 1924, I became a member of the board. A collective farm was formed in our village in 1930. I was appointed bookkeeper and held this position until 1938.

This information about my past is given here in order to show that my so-called "proletarian past" was without blemish of any kind and I could not by any stretch of ima-

gination be regarded as a "class enemy of the Soviet system".

In fact at the present time all the people in USSR are clandestine enemies of the bolshevik system.

In spite of my proletarian background and clean slate, the mass liquidation of more active and influential elements in 1938 did not pass me by.

Our collective farm was made up of three brigades of which one was close to four miles away. On June 22, 1938. I went there on official business. When I was about to go home an NKVD detective appeared and said to me:

"You are . . ." and called my name.

I nodded agreement and he told me to sit in the buggy. When I did this, he handed me a warrant for my arrest signed by the district public prosecutor. I read the warrant and thought that it surely must be some mistake but the detective said to me: "You have a revolver and no permit to carry a gun. It will be better for you if you give it up". My protestations that I had no gun and had never had one were of no avail. My house was searched, and in spite of the fact that nothing was found I was taken to the district town and not even given a chance to say good-bye to my wife and 92 year old mother.

That evening, when we arrived in town, I was hustled to the district NKVD quarters. The NKVD chief met me in the corridor and at once began to berate me in a brutal manner, called me "zhovte-blakytnyk"* and ordered me to be imprisoned. The cell into which I was thrown was empty. Half an hour later another man from our district was thrown in. He also was arrested for having a gun. He was very much shaken because he was arrested on the way home from work. His family knew nothing of his arrest.

At the break of day we were led into the prison yard and were ordered to sit on a truck which was ready to go. Three NKVD men went with us. Thus we arrived at the Poltava headquarters of the NKVD.

Dead silence reigned in the cellar to which we were led. At the door of one cell we were searched, and after our waistbands and belts were taken away and all the buttons from our clothes cut off, were literally pushed into the cell. This was a one-man cell, but there were already twenty two people in it. All took turns to stand by a small crack

* Meaning Ukrainian nationalist, yellow and blue are national colors of Ukraine.

1.1 the door to get a little breath of the corridor air. The order was very strict: anyone taking more than one whiff was scolded because, as it was said, all wanted to live. We were told to take off our clothes but could not move and stood as if rooted to the ground seeing such conditions. There was no room for everyone to sit, and some stood fanning the air with their clothes while others sat. We took turns in these activities, day and night, because there was no room for everyone to lie down either.

I lived under such conditions till July 12. Nobody bothered me. The inmates told me that those who wouldn't sign a confession presented to them by the examiner had to "pass through the bar" and all kinds of other tortures until they signed. At first I thought that because I was innocent the mistake of my arrest would soon be explained and I would be set free. On the third day of my sojourn there they brought to the cell a man half-dead, covered with blue welts, who had been taken for examination three days before my arrival. We somehow managed to clear a space for him to lie down but no one dared to ask him any questions, seeing how tortured he was. This was agriculturist Vykovets, employed in Poltava.

Between 9 and 12 o'clock every night some prisoners were ordered out of our cell and taken somewhere. They had to leave behind their clothes, which were picked up in the morning. These men were the ones who were judged by the three-man NKVD tribunal.

At seven o'clock on the evening of July 12th I was called also. They escorted me to the third floor, room number 52, where public prosecutor Kurachyk was performing his official duties. On the way, in every room, I heard angry shouts of examiners: "Write! Are you going to write?" Groans of tortured men and women were also in the air.

In the room where I was taken sat the examiner and two thugs, the so-called "buksyory". The examiner asked me to sit down in such a wild manner that my misgivings were gone. He lighted a cigarette and asked my name, and the date and place of birth. He did not ask me anything more but began to write. Three hours passed this way or more. Only once did he stop to ask politely: "Are you sleepy?" "No," I said.

About 12 o'clock he turned to me: "Well, come here". He indicated a stool by the table and I sat down. Then he took the papers, placed them before me and handed a pen:

"Sign these papers". When I took the first page to read it he snatched it out of my hands.

"What? You don't trust the organs of NKVD?"

"No", I said, "but I won't sign anything before reading it."

The examiner's face became red with rage and his eyes bulged.

"You will write!" he shouted.

I repeated again that I would not sign without reading.

"Ah, you nationalist bandit. You are not in Petlyura's* camp now!" and grabbing the stool swung it and hit me over the head. The blow felled me down. The thugs stood me up and began to berate with staffs all over the body, especially on the knees and elbows, at the same time stamping with their shoes on my toes. The examiner persistently asked all this time: "Are you going to write?"

I had no time to answer him because the bullies beat me without mercy. This was continued with short intervals when the examiner would say: "Enough! He will sign now!" When I said "No" the beating would begin anew. This went on till morning.

The examiner who started his "work" at three o'clock in the afternoon had to go home. One of the thugs remained with me. His instructions were not to let me sit, lie down, eat or drink anything and at the same time make me rue the day I was born by using favorite NKVD methods such as "parachuting", "flying on a planet", "hot and cold baths" and so on.

This treatment continued for three days without let up. During my tortures in the room, examiner Kurachyk was trying to get a "confession" from another prisoner. He would point at me and say: "Try not to sign and you'll get the same as that bandit. And he'll sign anyway. . ."

After three days on my feet without a moment's rest, without food and sleep I began to weaken. I became unconscious a few times and fell to the floor. My legs swelled so badly that the soles of my feet began to crack. I asked them to finish me off because I could stand no more, but the examiner laughed and said: "There is enough time for that. We'll manage to do it".

* Generalissimo of the Ukrainian armies during the War of Liberation.

The fourth day the examiner came with a smile on his face and asked: "Well, how's your health?"

I did not know what to answer. He told the thugs to take a rest, put a package on the table, lighted a cigarette and said kindly: "Sit down, your feet must be tired".

Having spent three days on my feet and having endured all kinds of tortures I wanted to sit or lie down at least for a moment. The examiner brought me the stool. "Sit down!" I tried to sit but my legs would not bend at the knees and unendurable pain shot all through my body. I could not bear it any longer, shouted and then I don't remember what happened to me.

When I regained consciousness I lay on the floor all wet. The examiner and another NKVD official whom I had not seen before that, stood above me. The examiner went out and the stranger sat behind the table and began to read the papers. I was ordered to stand up and sit down. I stood up but could not sit down because my legs would not bend at the knees.

"You realize," said the stranger to me in pure Ukrainian language, "that you won't gain anything by this, only lose your health. It would be far better for you to sign that confession. There is nothing bad. You'll get about eight years, no more."

I could have strangled him. The examiner Kurachyk came in. They whispered together for a while and the stranger went out. Kurachyk took the package from the table and unwrapped it revealing two buns, two good herrings and two tomatoes. He cut the bun and a tomato and said: "I know you're hungry. Stop being a stubborn ass, sign the papers and have a good meal. I'll send you to jail and it will be better for you there. If you don't sign I'll throw your bones into "parasha!"*

I did not say a word. Seeing buns and herrings which I had not had for a long time I had a painful desire to eat. But when I was in the cell I had heard from the inmates that these things are purposely given to the prisoners and then water is refused. "Sign and you may have a drink". I remembered this and decided not to become a victim of temptation.

"Well, all right", said the examiner, "have something and then you'll think it over and sign."

* A big barrel kept in prison cells for human excrement. There was no other more sanitary facilities.

When I thanked him and refused to eat he jumped at me and hit my jaw with the gunstock so hard that one of my teeth was bent in and the other broken clean off at the level of the gums. The blood poured out of my mouth. I fell down but did not lose consciousness. The examiner made a call, the thugs came in and carried me out to a hole in the cellar.

I remained there till evening when they came, washed away the blood and led me again to the examiner Kurachyk. The same procedure was repeated.

Only those who have had first hand acquaintance with a Soviet prison can imagine all the tortures that the Soviet prisoners have to undergo. I was tortured continuously for six days. It's true, there were some "lucky ones" who did sign everything that was handed them by the examiner. They received for this a cigarette, hearty thanks and 15 - 20 years or a passport to heaven behind their backs.

On the eighteenth of July between 10 and 11 o'clock at night there came to the examiner's room, where I was still held, the chief of the division and chief of Poltava NKVD, Volkov. They told me to face the corner of the room and began to talk among themselves. Then Volkov left and Kurachyk began to talk louder to the chief:

"What should I do with him? He does not want to sign."

Why make a fuss over him? Liquidate him at once," said the chief, and left.

"Turn around!" said Kurachyk to me.

I wanted to turn but my strength gave out and I fell down. The examiner grabbed the collar of my shirt and helped me to rise. He led me to the table.

"Did you hear what the chief of the division said?"

"Yes, I did."

"Well, are you going to sign?"

"No," I said, "kill me, the sooner the better."

The examiner made a call. Two NKVD men appeared and, having tied my hands behind my back, led me downstairs. My waning strength revived. Till this moment I could stand up with difficulty but now I went down unassisted. All life passed in review before my mental eye: childhood, native cottage, wife, mother, my friends. We came to an empty cellar.

"I'll give you one last chance, are you going to write?" asked the examiner.

I don't remember what I said to him. I was blindfolded.

All I remember after that is two shots and nothing more.

I regained consciousness, or rather was made conscious, by the two thugs in the well known cubicle and was taken again to the examiner's room. I could not walk, my legs were as if paralyzed, and I had to be helped to the table.

"Well, are you going to write?"

I did not answer. Then they took my hand, stuck a pencil into it and, moving it over the paper, signed my name on the last page. Thus I "signed" the confession and the examination was finished.

In cell number 20 to which I was taken, because I could not walk at all, I lay a number of days, unable to rise. I began to walk again some weeks later.

On August 11th I was again ordered to appear before my old acquaintance Kurachyk. He sat at the table and wrote something.

"Well, how are you?" he asked me when I entered.

I could not say anything.

"It's hard to believe you are angry at me. We shall be good friends yet."

I kept silent. Then he handed me a paper.

"You'll have to sign this paper. It's two hundred."*

I began to read. It was article 200, and it stated that I was charged with having broken sections 2, 10, and 11 of chapter 54, part one, that hearing had been completed and that I could not add anything more.

Having read this, I said:

"I was not at the hearing. I don't know what the charges are and I am not going to sign this."

"We are not going to beg you to sign. You can go," said the examiner.

I was led again to the cell. Next day I was taken to a prison in Poltava, special corps, cell number 5. Conditions there were the same as in the cellars of NKVD, 6-8 persons to one square meter (1.2 square yard). No connection with the family, no outside food allowed under this article except onions and garlic once a month. It was only in this way that one's family could learn that the prisoner was alive or not yet sent to concentration camps. I was kept there till December 1938.

One day in December the "black crow"*** brought me

* Article 200 of the criminal code.
** Literally should be "black raven".

back to NKVD cellars, cell 19. I learned here from the inmates that Yezhov had been removed, his place taken by Beria, and that examination methods had been changed: examiners allowed prisoners to read accusations.

The next day I was called before the examiner in room 48. It was the same Kurachyk. There were no toughs.

"How's your health?"

I could not contain myself and answered:

"Are you supposed to be the doctor who is going to cure me again?"

He did not answer but sat there turning over leaves of a sheaf of papers and then said:

"You have to confirm the statement you made July 18," and he read to me a paper saying as much and that I could not add anything to it and sign my name.

I read the paper also and said:

"I made no statement, no one asked me anything and I have nothing to confirm."

"Don't play the fool. Isn't this your statement?" he said and indicated a bundle of papers on the table, tied together. He began to pace nervously in the room.

"You can go. I'll talk to you later." I was led back to the cell.

"Well, what did you find out? Do you know what you are accused of?" asked the inmates in the cell.

"I did not find out anything."

"Why didn't you ask to be allowed to read the statement. He had no right to refuse."

"Yes, I think that was my mistake, but it can still be corrected."

Next day I was again called before the examiner.

"Are we going to finish this business?"

I answered that I knew nothing about any kind of "business."

"What is this, then? Isn't it your statement?" he said pointing at a pile of papers on the table.

"If that is my statement then let me read it and then I'll know if we can finish this business."

The examiner smiled, took half the papers from the pile, turned to a page and said:

"You can read this, but be quick about it."

I began to read. My God! I nearly froze reading this supposed "statement". It said that in 1936 I had joined an illegal organization which had for its aim the destruction of

the Soviet regime. The organization was headed by Ohiy, Matiyash and Fedorchenko. The latter was active in the Poltava region and the other two in Moscow. My county was represented by Pysarenko and according to my knowledge the following persons (here were given 13 names) joined the plot. I was acting as liaison between Poltava and Moscow.* Twice a month I took mail to Ohiy and Matiyash and brought back instructions to Fedorchenko. Besides this I was agitating against any improvements made by the authorities. against the Stalin constitution, against the supreme Soviet election act, praised the people's enemy Trotsky, sabotaged work in the collective, agitated against the Soviet press, etc., etc.

The hair rose on my head. I read further statements of the witnesses, 13 in number. All of them confirmed the truth of "my" deposition. All this was composed in such a way that an outsider reading this "frank statement" could not believe it was false. Further on was my background, which said that I came from a "kurkul" family, which had 50 acres of land, a steam threshing machine, that it exploited hired help and that later my parents' property was confiscated by the state and they themselves sent to concentration camps in the North.

I have already said in the introduction that my father died in 1916.

Having finished reading I asked the examiner what good this was to the Soviet government. The examiner smiled.

"Isn't it true? The witnesses corroborated it."

I denied it. "We'll see," said the examiner in a significant manner.

Half an hour later two witnesses, Koba and Voznyanko, my neighbors from the village, were led into the room. They corroborated in my presence all that was written in the act of accusation. I could only listen, not being privileged to ask them any questions. Other witnesses took their turns in confirming all the statements. Only one of them looked at me, began to weep, and said:

"I cannot say any thing."

"You are afraid of him," said the examiner to the witness. "Don't be scared, he'll never come back. The place for such revolutionaries is in Siberia or Kolyma." The witness

* I never was in Moscow.

continued to keep silent. I was led back to the cell. How this witness fared later on, I don't know,

Next day I was again taken to prison where I remained till April 5, 1939. Three days earlier I had been handed a copy of the act of accusation written on 16 pages. On the fifth I was told to take all my belongings, ordered into the "black crow", and taken to an unknown destination. When the car stopped, my hands were tied behind me, and, accompanied by two guards, I was led into the yard of the Poltava district court. There I saw all the witnesses and my wife, who was in tears, and looked so ill I could hardly recognize her. They led me to her but she did not know me and looked at the "black crow" expecting me to get out.

Passing by her I managed by an inhuman effort to free one of my hands and took her by the hand.

"Didn't you know me?"

The guard hit my hand with the gun and I let her hand fall. She fainted and I was led into the court chamber.

The court was held in camera* and there was no one there with the exception of the judges, witnesses, public prosecutor and defence attorney. The chief justice, Orikiwsky, informed me that I had no right to ask any questions of the witnesses nor the court. The roll of the witnesses was read and the court commenced.

The chief-justice read the accusation, and examination of the witnesses began. The first witness called was Koba.

"Tell the court what you know about the counter-revolutionary activities of the accused."

The witness forgot what he had said previously and stood, not saying anything. The justice began to prompt him. I protested and the defence attorney only nodded his head.

"Stop the proceedings," said the chief justice. "Please make a record of the fact that the defence attorney Krasnopolsky's behaviour in court is improper. He tries to influence the witness."

This was done. The document was signed by the members of the court and the public prosecutor. The attorney for the defence refused to sign. After this, the chief justice announced that the court would continue with the case. He turned to the witnesses: "Do you confirm the statements you made before the detective and when confronted with the accused?" All witnesses answered unanimously that they did.

* Closed to the public.

Then the public prosecutor had the floor for ten minutes and said in conclusion that he considered the guilt of the defendant proven and basing his demand on article 54, sections 10 and 11 he asked the court to mete out a "higher punishment", but considering the fact that the defendant had no criminal record and that the crime had not actually taken place, the punishment might be reduced to ten years in the far concentration camps of the Soviet Union.

The defence attorney, given an opportunity to enter a plea, said curtly: "I cannot say anything in defence of my client because the court was not conducted in a proper manner."

The chief justice asked me if I had anything to ask of the court. I said that on going to the court I had believed in Justice but now my faith was lost and I had nothing to ask. The deliberations of the court were short because everything was prepared in advance. After a brief conference a sentence was read to me:

The chief justice asked me if I had anything to ask of personal freedom in the far concentration camps of the Soviet Union for a period of eight years and after he has served his term, to forfeiture of citizenship rights for five years. The defendant is given the privilege to appeal against the sentence to the Supreme Court of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic within seven days from the date of receiving the sentence."

I was taken to the prison and not given even a chance to see my wife. Then I sent an appeal against the sentence from the prison to the Supreme Court giving all the details of my arrest, examination and court proceedings. This appeal I handed to the prison office personnel. On September 26, in the evening, I was called out to an empty room and handed the decision of the Supreme Court, which annulled the decision of the Poltava district court and ordered a new trial before a tribunal made up of judges different from those who tried me before.

The same evening I was ordered to appear before a new NKVD agent. It was not Kurachyk, but a man called Konyushyn. Having looked through some papers on the table he addressed me:

"I am acquainted with your case. It is very serious. You signed a confession that you belonged to an organization whose aim was the overthrow of the Soviet government. But now it has been established that such an organization did not

exist in your district. Why did you mislead the NKVD organs? To finish this case you'll have to sign a "denial" worded as follows: 'The statement I made before NKVD organs on July 18, 1939, was given under psychological pressure and therefore I consider it to be untrue and ask that charges against me under article 54, sections 2 and 11, be withdrawn'. You'll have to sign here," said the agent. "Is everything clear to you?"

"No," I said, "not clear at all. There was no psychological pressure, but physical and moral pressure from the agent Kurachyk and two "bukysors" (thugs) which continued for seven days. Nobody asked me anything or accused me of anything but, after tortures which lasted seven days and a simulated execution, they took my hand and signed some paper. I don't know what was written on it because I was not allowed to read it. I can sign only this kind of statement."

The agent looked at me, smiled and made a call. A few minutes later Kurachyk came. Konyushyn repeated our conversation. After he had heard all of it Kurachyk turned to me:

"I did not scare anybody and cannot do it," I said to him, dit's ugly mug. You should have been shot. You begin to scare the NKVD organs."

"I did not scare anybody and cannot do it", I said to him, because I am a defenceless human being. Stalin's constitution guarantees personal immunity to Soviet citizens."

Kurachyk shouted like a beast: "Shut up! We'll find a place for you!"

I kept quiet. Konyushyn asked me to sign that paper. I refused and said I would not answer any questions in the absence of the public prosecutor. Then both NKVD agents began to shout at me and make threats. This lasted for about two hours. Then Kurachyk went out and a few moments later a stranger came in. He was a young man of about 25 years of age. After having conferred with the agent he turned to me:

"I am prosecutor Bava. What do you want?"

I told him everything and added that I did not want to talk without him being present because Kurachyk threatened me with execution. I asked that my statement be put into the records, and not the one that was written by the NKVD agent. After a lengthy discussion with the prosecutor the agent began to write. When it was finished he threw it at me: "Sign it!"

I signed it seeing that he put in everything I wanted. Two days later I was called before the public prosecutor. He read to me the new act of accusation. The charge of having been a member of an illegal organization was withdrawn but other charges in slightly altered form were still there, namely, that I was agitating against the government, sympathized with the enemies of the people, Bukharin, Tomsky and Sokolovsky and said that we should fall upon the Kremlin, kill Stalin, and everything would be all-right. Two communist witnesses were added who, confronted with me, corroborated everything that was in the act. The prosecutor asked me again to sign the statement that I considered myself guilty of having broken article 200 but I refused to do so and was taken back to prison.

On October 22, I was again ordered to gather all my belongings and appear in court. The accusation was handed to me at the prison gate on the way out. I noticed in the court room that the tribunal consisted of the same men as before. Having opened the court session the presiding judge asked me if I had any objections to tell the court.

"Yes," I said, "I have. In the first place the decision of the supreme court plainly asked for a court of a composition different from the first one and, besides this, the accusation was given to me on the way to court and I have had no time to read it."

Having exchanged a few words with the other judges and the prosecutor, the presiding judge said to me:

"How much time do you need to read the act of accusation?"

I decided to say "two-three days" in order not to delay the matter unnecessarily. The case was postponed till October 25.

The court that day was composed of different judges but the prosecuting and defence attorneys were the same. This time they allowed me to question witnesses and the court. The witnesses were confused, having forgotten what they said before and the judge and the prosecutor had to remind them constantly of what they had said the first time. But it was easy for me to defend myself from the false accusations of the witnesses. It would perhaps be too monotonous to go into all, quite often very interesting details here, and I'll tell only of one.

The witness Kumpan said that I constantly agitated against the Soviet government, against the Stalin constitution,

against the supreme Soviet election act and against the member of the Supreme Soviet from our district, citizen Sereda.

When he was through the judge turned to me: "Defendant, tell the court how you agitated."

I said, "I don't know, maybe I did agitate, because I don't know much about politics having not had much training in this respect. I worked in a circle which was studying the Stalin constitution and the Supreme Soviet election act. All that time I received instructions from the party council in what points to take up and how to explain them. Two party members, one of them the witness Kumpan, were present at every session. When they dictated counter-revolution to me I passed it on unwittingly to the members of the circle. Kumpan always said that my lectures were correct. Therefore, for any agitation against the election act witness Kumpan should be responsible, not I, because I only repeated his words. Why didn't you tell me then that I was lecturing incorrectly? You were present at every session, were you not?" I asked witness Kumpan.

"Well, Kumpan, answer the question!" said the judge to the witness.

Kumpan stood up and said that I did not agitate against the government at all, but always told the audience only what party leadership dictated.

The prosecutor could not refrain from saying to Kumpan, "You know that false testimony in court is punishable by a six month jail term." He took his testimony as it was recorded, read it aloud and asked, "Which is true? The first or the last one?"

The witness blanched, began to tremble and said, "The first one is correct."

The court lasted six hours. I was confident I would be set free because all the witnesses were confused or contradictory in their statements. But the prosecuting attorney said, in conclusion, that no matter how much the defendant tried to prove his innocence, he considered that the charge of agitating against the government was proven and therefore he demanded that the defendant be sentenced to a five-year term in the concentration camps and, after serving his term, to be deprived of citizenship rights for three years.

Disregarding my protest and that of my defence attorney the court, after a few minutes of deliberation, sentenced me to a five-year term in the concentration camps and a loss of citizenship rights for two years. The defence attorney

said, after the sentence was passed, that it would be useless to make an appeal because then all the witnesses would have to go to prison. I was only allowed a 15 minutes visit with my wife. She told me that after my arrest she, as the wife of an enemy of the people, was treated very badly. She was given the hardest work to do in the collective, her "voluntary" loan to the government was three or four times greater than others, she received no fuel, to put it in a few words, there was also prison at home.

Such was the reward I received from the "workers' and farmers' government" for my 18 years of loyal service. My case was not an isolated one. Similar things happen in the Soviet Union daily even now. Countless numbers of such "peoples' enemies" as I was, based on trials such as I had, or even without any trial, have gone to the far North, to Siberia, to the Kolyma goldfields, never to return and to lie in unnamed graves.

All this happens in the "most democratic country of the world" the "country of socialism".

P. Lysenko

STALIN'S CRIMES IN DONBAS

This happened in the city of Ordzhonikidze, formerly Nadiiwka, in Donbas. I was 24 years old, and was employed in the machine shop in one of the mines in this district. I had already seven years of service to my credit, was a member of the trade union, did not belong to the communist party, but conscientiously fulfilled all my duties.

On January 11, 1932, I was suddenly called to go to the mine. Almost at the same time there came in two men, one of them the director of the mine, Serikov, a party member, and the other a stranger. The director introduced the stranger as a representative of the trust. We went to the mine office. There were only three of us, I, Serikov and "the representative" who proved to be an agent of the NKVD. I was told to raise my hands up under the muzzle of the gun aimed at me, while the director searched my pockets and the agent asked my name and place of birth. He waved the gun before my eyes and said that we would soon be going to NKVD headquarters and if I tried to escape he would let me have all nine bullets from the gun. I was put in a car and covered with a ragged blanket. Thus we arrived at the headquarters of the district NKVD.

At that time the NKVD chief in the city of Ordzhonikidze was comrade Rosenberg, a man with grey eyes and blond complexion. He met me with invective in corrupt Ukrainian threatening "insurgents, eh, I'll give you Ukraine". Then he insisted that I should tell him what I was arrested for. Naturally I could not tell him because I myself was in the dark. The agent who arrested me sat to one side, mute. Then came in a tall lanky fellow with a stripe on his collar and a distinctly sadistic cast of face. I learned later on that

me, uttered my name and turning to Spodkovsky said "Yes, that's him".

She pretended to know me very well and added that they should not spare me and I would tell them everything, spat some very dirty oaths in my face and disappeared.

Chief Rosenberg, who came in, phoned to the orderly who came at once. He cautioned Rosenberg that the prisoner was very important. I was put into a solitary confinement cell where I spent two days without food. They did not examine me. On the third day I was taken to a cell already occupied by thirty persons. The cell was small, there was no room to lie down. We received a very small ration of food once a day, 3¼ ounces of bread, 4 1/3 ounces of soup, and a small cup of water.

I learned in this cell that 11 inmates of this NKVD prison were "insurgents" and that I, most certainly, must be one of them. I denied this, but my prison colleagues assured me that it was so. I was an insurgent and would have to "confess".

One month passed in that cell. I was not called to appear for examination, but I learned quite a lot. I found out what the gun shell was which Spodkovsky showed me, and what the metal rule was, and that it was better "to confess" than to maintain one's innocence and say that one didn't know anything.

One evening, we were loaded on cars and taken to the city of Staline, to the "special building" which consisted of deep underground vaults. The cement walls were damp and the floors often covered with water. We were starved there.

One day, I saw a farmer from the village of Zhelizne in Donbas region brought to the prison. His name was Zayats. He was arrested because he went to the flour mill and, being aware that it was dangerous to return home at night with flour, he took a shotgun along. Somebody noticed this and reported him. He was accused of "armed insurrection" in spite of the fact that he had a permit for that gun. This circumstance was completely ignored and he was arrested. He tried to point out to the official who examined him that he was not being treated in a lawful manner, but the orderly took the poor man to prison.

Sometime later a woman came to the orderly's wicket and asked whether the NKVD knew what had happened to her husband, if he was not arrested. It was a time when people simply vanished, and nobody knew where and

how such things happened. This poor woman's husband went to work and didn't return. The orderly asked the date and then said that there was no such person in the prison. When the woman went away the orderly turned to his friend, laughed, and said that the man in question had been arrested that morning.

I was informed that my examiner would be the NKVD agent Kes. I was taken to him at four o'clock in the morning. Kes was a very young man, dark, with one stripe on the collar of his military uniform. He smoked for quite a while without saying anything and then asked me if I knew why I had been put in prison. I said I did not. Then another came in and asked me the same question and soon afterwards some "beauty", brightly painted, began to talk to me kindly saying that I might not be guilty at all, that I was as young as she and wanted to live. Then the agent asked me if I wanted to eat, and ordered the girl to bring us tea. We sat down, all three of us, and drank tea and the agent seemingly casually, but with emphasis, remarked that if I confessed I would be set free. Spodkovsky entered and asked that the accusation act be read to me. He went out with the girl. The charges, as read to me, were that I had joined a plot to destroy "the Soviet government with arms in my hands". I was told to think it over and tell Kes all I knew about it. A guard appeared and took me away to think. He led me to a little glass-walled room from which all the corridors of the fourth floor could be plainly seen. There was already one occupant in the room, a young boy, Makhno by name. He told me that he was being beaten because they wanted him to confess to something. Shortly after this, the poor boy was taken away and I was left alone to think.

Try as I could, it was impossible to think and come to any conclusion because there were shouts, cries of pain and weeping everywhere and quiet thinking was out of the question. I saw one man in a dead faint dragged along a corridor, or someone covered with blood in another and from all the rooms the words resounded: "Well, speak! Are you going to speak?" accompanied by oaths and invective. I was glad to be taken back to the cell at six o'clock.

They put me through the third degree there for three months and then I was left to myself. Later on I was taken to Horliwka, one of the bigger cities in Donbas where I spent an additional seven months in prison. The tortures I had to endure in this place are indescribable. Three names in par-

ticular struck terror into the hearts of prisoners. They were: Dimitriev, a young skinny Russian of short stature and grey eyes, Tsukerov, a blonde, and Svirsky. These three butchers caused people to hang themselves in their cells, as did a young teacher Taranukha, a Ukrainian. Some cut their throats with pieces of tin. This happened to an agriculturist Yaschenko, a Ukrainian, employed at the Voroshilov collective farm. He was married and had a family. Another young Ukrainian, 25 years of age, an agriculturist from the Nikitowsk collective farm in Donbas was arrested as an insurgent and later charged also with causing farm livestock to die. The poor fellow could not stand any more torture and tried to hang himself, but the guard noticed it and cut him down. He was later sentenced to eight years in the concentration camps, though he was absolutely innocent.

One day they brought in a small man, a Ukrainian, VasyI by name. He was 34 years old, of a very poor family, illiterate, and yet he was accused of having connections with foreign countries. This man was born in Bukovina, which was at that time occupied by Romania, but he lived near the boundary on Soviet territory. Later, he went to Donbas where he worked as a common laborer. Unfortunately at that time they were building an arms factory and the NKVD was interested in newcomers, paying special attention to the place of their origin. When they found out that this man had lived, at one time, near the boundary, they arrested him. He was held in prison for four months and then sent to concentration camps.

Some people were held in prison for three to eleven months not knowing why. One of these, Mytro Mykhaïlovsky from the village of Zahruniwka in Kovaliw district came to Horliwka looking for work. He looked suspicious to the NKVD and they arrested him, releasing him after six months. I also saw in there four Ukrainian boys, children, the oldest only 12 years old. They were in terrible condition, emaciated and hungry. Nobody knew why they were held there. I asked one of them if their parents brought them any food and the boy said that they were orphans. Sometimes the prisoners asked for more food when it was distributed. Then inspector Sviridov, a Russian, would say: "You fool, you should be satisfied that you have free board here. Your kind are dying from hunger on the streets and you're lucky you are here eating the ration of a Soviet official".

We received occasional visits from the public prosecutor Gorlovsky. Comrade Ivanov, a Russian, was a frequent visi-

tor making the rounds of the cells and asking for "confessions". There were some Ukrainian girls from the village of Pavliwka in the Poltava region. I asked them what was their "crime" and they said that they were working in Horliwka and were arrested by NKVD agents who wanted to know where their parents were. They could not very well say that their parents were "kurkuls" whose property had been confiscated by the state. These girls suffered torture both day and night from such fellows as Nazarov and others of his kind.

At last I learned why those little boys were kept in prison. They formed a "witness reserve", that is, when somebody said he did not know a fellow with whom he was confronted they called one of the boys. Having been fed, and instructed what to say the boy would "testify" that he had seen these two men in a certain place talking together.

Horliwka NKVD prison is patterned closely on that in Ordzhonikidze, former Nadiyiwka. The personnel of about 50 - 60 persons consisted of a chief, examiners and other agents exclusively of Russian or Jewish origin in the proportion of about half and half. Among the prison guards there may be Ukrainians. There were two in Horliwka, Tarasyuk and Balaban, both from the Kherson region.

The NKVD building is two storeys high and looks clean and beautiful from the front. It is enclosed by a high board fence behind which there are dwellings for the personnel. There are single and married men, the chief and the caretaker family. Although they live in different dwellings and rooms nobody except NKVD officials are allowed to go in there. The second half of the enclosure forms a prison yard, all empty except for the latrines which have no doors. The fence is topped by barbed wire.

There is a passage from this yard to the vaults, which are quite deep, damp and dark. Some have small loop holes but the sun never shines through them. They are illuminated by electric lamp bulbs day and night. Some have a single two inch pipe run through them which supplies all the heat that is allowed. The cells are big, $8\frac{1}{4}$ by $12\frac{1}{4}$ feet, but each is full of people and there is no room for all to lie down. There are crude beds recessed into the walls. The prisoners have to sleep on the cement floor if they can. They are not supposed to cover themselves with anything for fear they would cut their throats, but this is quite impossible because they are half naked and there are no rags to spare.

Andriy Vodopyan

CRIME IN STALINE

In this city in the NKVD prison factory the communists executed 180 persons and buried them in two holes dug in the prison yard. The corpses were liberally treated with un-slaked lime, especially the faces.

My brother was sentenced to three months in jail for coming late to work. After serving 18 days in the factory prison he was set free, and a month later was drafted to the Red Army because this was in July 1941.

Later, his wife and my mother found him among the corpses, identifying him by the left hand finger, underwear and papers he had on him.

This atrocity came to light when prisoners who remained alive were liberated. They had also a very close call. Six days before the arrival of German troops they heard muffled shots.

The prison was secretly mined by NKVD agents in preparation for the German invaders.

Yuriy Dniprov

INNOCENT VICTIMS

In the little town of Zolotnyky in the Ternopil region the bolsheviks murdered a captain of the former Ukrainian Galician Army (UHA) of 1918 - 1922, Mr. Dankiw, and clerks of the Ukrainian cooperative store, the sisters Magdalene, Sophia and Clementine Husar from the suburb of Vaha. Clementine and Magdalene were tortured in a beastly manner and had their breasts cut off.

Other people executed at that time were: Slavko Demyd, Yosyp Vozny, Vasyl Burbela, Zynoviy Kushniryna, Pavlo Kushniryna and a non-commissioned officer of the UHA, Mr. Tsiholsky.

P. K.

THE INFERNAL DEVICE OF THE RUSSIAN COMMUNISTS

(By an eyewitness)

In the year 1942, when the Red Army, harassed by the German divisions, retreated from Katerynodar (Krasnodar), the regional NKVD division evacuated all the prisoners and sent them in the direction of Novorossiysk. The railway line between Katerynodar and the station of Krymska was jammed by nearly two hundred freight boxcars filled to capacity with political prisoners.

Suspecting that all these prisoners might fall into German hands the Russian NKVD men, as a precautionary measure, poured gasoline on the cars and let them burn.

Thus a few thousand people perished in inhuman torture merely because they were suspected of anti-communism.

When the Germans entered Katerynodar they found in the regional divisional building of the NKVD in Sinny Bazar, a horrible torture chamber. In the vault of this building there was a dark passage which ended with a wooden platform which dipped down at a sharp angle. Right underneath it there was a machine which resembled a straw chopper. It was a disk equipped with a system of big knives that revolved at great speed. It was powered by a motor.

After questioning, the innocent victims were driven by the NKVD agents towards the wooden platform and rolled under the knives of the hellish meatchopper. The chopped bones and flesh of the victims fell into the sewers and were carried away with a stream of sewage into the river Kuban.

Having discovered this horrible place, the Germans gave permission to all who wished to view this inhuman device.

Thousands of people visited the place, among them the author of these lines.

Other nations direct their talents towards the discovery of better medicines, new materials, better means of communication to make living conditions better. The Russian people are using all their talents for the production of machines and new methods of mass murder and torture.

Andriy Zaporozhets

I TESTIFY

My father and I were arrested and tried in 1932 - 1933. I was sentenced to two years imprisonment and my father received eight years. Our crime was being "kurkuls". I served my two years in the prison in Zaporizhya city and my father was taken to Siberia, never to return.

The chief of the Zaporizhya prison was Sklarsky. Our rations were 11 ounces of sticky bread and 1¾ pints of warm water. Each morning I saw 25 - 30 dead bodies carted away in wagons ordinarily used for hauling manure. These were people starved to death. The dead were dumped into a big hole at plant number 29. It was never covered, but after each dumping the corpses would be covered by a thin layer of earth. This went on for two years of my imprisonment, day after day.

The prison was designed for 6,000 persons but sometimes there were 15,000. The cells were so overcrowded that one could be stifled to death. The people had to remain on their feet day and night because there was no room to sit. Our petitions were ignored and those who dared to criticize were taken away, never to come back.

The GPU ordered people to appear in its offices every day. These offices were close by and I saw people daily tortured to death. The prison was replenished daily by 100 - 150 fresh arrests and one company was sent to Siberia each week.

P. Verowsky

BOLSHEVIK METHODS OF DESTRUCTION

The district NKVD in K., a town in Ukraine, burned its files on September 1, 1941, before evacuation. When the Germans entered the town a very interesting document was found under the pile of ashes. It was a list of secret collaborators* of the NKVD up to the year 1935, which escaped undamaged.

The list was made up as follows: number, surname, name, patronymic, code call, when born, where and with whom working and exact address of the stool-pigeon.

There were 283 names on the list but only 176 of the persons named still remained in the district. Some were evacuated or worked in different districts or had died. But according to the information supplied by some of these informers, their army grew to over 2,000 during the years 1936 - 1941. The local population knew some of them very well to be stool-pigeons and suspected many others. There were two kinds: voluntary and drafted. The first category was made up in its entirety of social scum, idlers, drunkards, moral derelicts, and numbered about 205 persons; the other was made up of those who were formerly more prosperous and the state had confiscated their property (kurkuls), other "enemies of the people", their children, repressed and ordinary criminals. The first group was more trusted by the NKVD and was better remunerated for the "work", while the second group was regarded as less reliable and was paid little or nothing for its services. Only very highly qualified specialists in this work, and for especially valuable information, were well paid.

Here is the way one of my friends L. was pressed into

* Seksoys — from the Russian words: sekretny-sotrudnik, that is secret collaborator.

the service for "a crime". This middle aged man, a hydro technician by profession, well informed and able, spoke German, French and all the Slav languages. He professed to be very strongly and uncompromisingly opposed to the Soviet system. He secretly listened to almost all radio broadcasts in Europe. His father was a doctor, a brother-in-law an agriculturist and party candidate.

He was hired by the authorities to build a series of dams with sluices for fish ponds. The ponds were stocked with carp. When the fish grew to full size the pond watchman secretly caught a five pound carp and invited my friend to a "secret supper" and drink. That night the watchman's wife reproached him for being a hog and not bringing her a bit of that fish. The next morning Mr. L. was asked to visit the NKVD and explain the fish story. The story was very plain: Mr. L. had fallen into an NKVD snare. The NKVD set two alternatives: ten years in concentration camps for complicity in stealing a "socialist" carp or collaboration. Mr. L. chose the last one. His code name was "technician". After this when he met his friends, loudly criticized the government and proposed listening to foreign broadcasts, he was speedily found out for what he was.

The list mentioned above contained three names of priests of the Russian orthodox church who still remained in the district. One of them was a former district archdeacon I., 75 years of age, whose code name was "Lev" (lion). Strong and mild mannered, he did not renounce his order and always appeared in priest robes. As his church was turned into a granary of the collective he held services for his former parishioners "secretly" at night in his home. Even party members came to him for religious services, such as confession, communion, child christening, blessing of Easter bread, and marriage ceremonies. This servant of God and the NKVD was eager to render religious services to wobbly party members and their families.

Special attention was paid to confession. The priest was interested not so much in the ordinary sins of the client, which he later absolved, as in his and his family's attitude to the "satanic Soviet government and Antichrist Stalin". The naive victims kissed his hands and offered him the best products of their toil for this provocative work. He fulfilled his duties as an agent of the Soviet butcher for ten years. How many hundreds of innocent Ukrainian souls he sent

there, nobody knows, but "his work was so valuable to the Soviet authorities that his fame reached even Moscow", testified the wife of the chief of NKVD.

When the Germans came he donned a new silk cassock, hung a golden cross on his neck and assumed the duties of an archdeacon.

The second priest went by the code name "Tsyhan" (gypsy). He really resembled a gypsy very closely. He "served God" in the only church in town that escaped confiscation by the state, and remained at his post so long that even old women stopped attending it. This stool-pigeon was destroying the Church from within. He was always drunk when he conducted High Mass. The remarks he addressed to the faithful were cynical and brutal, he made fun of all their religious feelings and demanded heavy remuneration for his services. To crown all this he used to break into women's bedrooms. Two years of such "religious services" were enough. The church became empty and was torn down for bricks and "Tsyhan", having completed the NKVD assignment, disappeared.

The third priest, whose code name was "Popadya", renounced his order through the papers and was employed as a bookkeeper in a factory. The information for the NKVD was collected by himself in the factory, and in town by his aggressive and greedy wife. When the Germans came he also put on a cassock, donned a silver cross, and became a shepherd of Christian souls.

He was a faint-hearted, modest man, scared of the NKVD and his wife.

For almost a year these voluntary and drafted stool-pigeons remained at their posts and positions. They were called to appear before the German or district civil authorities. Almost all of them, except the volunteers, maintained stoutly that they had been forced to do this kind of work under threat of heavy penalties and that they had deceived the NKVD and did not report on the real enemies of the Soviet government. There were some who repented, wept, and were ready to expiate their crimes even with their lives. But the people did not understand why this gang of traitors escaped arrest and punishment for such a long time. They became restless and threatened to lynch the stool-pigeons who were only boycotted so far.

At last came the day of retribution. One August day

in 1942 they were all arrested and marched under guard to the railway station. They were accompanied, not only by their own relatives and friends, but also by the friends and relatives of their victims who had perished in Stalin's torture chambers. This resembled a funeral march when, as it seemed at that time, the last attributes of the totalitarian Soviet system were being buried. There were 175 living dead, surrounded by police, slowly and unwillingly creeping towards their doom. Mr. L. who would have been number 176 was fortunate to die before his arrest.

The procession was headed by the aged archdeacon in a new cassock and a golden cross on his chest. He went very slowly, his face white and without any expression. The police permitted the people to talk to the prisoners and to give them food and clothing. The two kinds of stoolpigeons differed very much in their attitude, looks and behaviour. In fact they were opposite to each other. The voluntary group kept apart from the others. They had collaborated with the Soviet authorities either from greed or idealism. They looked around with the eyes of a wolf that had fallen into a snare and meditated on revenge. The biting questions and reproaches from the crowd of victims they answered angrily and threatened that the Soviet regime would come back and mete out cruel punishment to their tormentors. Still more aggressive were their relatives. They attacked both people and police with laments, scolding and threats and encouraged the prisoners.

The drafted ones, once perhaps honest people but of weak character, deeply hated the Soviet regime. They looked scared and depressed. They kept quiet and did not look anyone in the eyes. Their relatives looked around as if accusing and imploring forgiveness from the crowd. And the people felt sorry for them.

About a week after the trial in the county seat the archdeacon unexpectedly came back home. Smiling uneasily he explained that the bishop had intervened on his behalf, he had been exonerated and set free. The others were all shot.

But the local authorities did not share the views of the bishop and "Lev" was arrested again. A few days later he was taken, with four Soviet guerillas and the wife of an executed voluntary stoolpigeon who had acted as liaison for the guerillas, in an open truck out of town for execution. The archdeacon stood in the middle of the truck in the same

cassock but without a cross. His long grey hair and silk cassock played tag with the wind as if trying to hold on to life. He wept and prayed. What did he think about, whom did he pray for in the last moments of his life — nobody knows. Maybe for those hundreds of Ukrainian souls whom he had betrayed to save his life or maybe for the soul of his only daughter who had died in the Soviet torture chambers for the Ukrainian cause. His wife tore her hair, uttered hysterical curses and threats addressed to the Germans and the police and wanted to jump out of the truck. The guerillas kept grim silence.

The archdeacon found his grave in the pine forest on a sand hillock where farmers of the collective buried their dead animals. Being faint-hearted, he had led a shameful life and as companions in death he had only Soviet guerillas whom he hated.



Note: These reminiscences are based on the author's own observations, the statements made by stoolpigeons at the trial and the testimony of the wife of the chief of the NKVD, who was sent to concentration camps.

The author intends no reflection on the Church and priests under the Soviet regime before the war. The characters described here should be regarded as casual fore-runners of Stalin's present Orthodox Church, which has nothing in common with true religion.

On the contrary, the author bows his head in reverence before the great martyr priests from this district. Most of them, 22 noble men, perished in Soviet torture chambers for either the religious or the Ukrainian cause or both.

V. Dibrova

SPECIAL CELLS

After a long time of suffering and torture in the clutches of the Kharkiw NKVD I received my sentence of five years exile to the concentration camps in the Far North. This was in April of 1936.

While waiting for transportation I tried hard every day to get out into the prison yard to breathe a little fresh air and when a call "to work" sounded I was the first to run out. The same thing happened the day I unexpectedly discovered a secret of the NKVD, if this be an appropriate word for what I am going to relate.

There were two of us. When we reached the ground floor the guard did not lead us into the yard, but went on to the end of the corridor until we found ourselves before the door which separated a part of the corridor from the rest. Upon entering, we saw four doors leading to a couple of cells on each side.

Unlocking the doors the guard said: "Clean up these rooms and keep mum about it!" He threw us some rags and departed, locking the door in the corridor.

I happened to enter the cells on the left. Stepping in, I glanced over the cell and was shocked with fear. I saw many Soviet prisons and NKVD dungeons, and once spent some time in a death cell, but I never saw anything like this. It was a huge steel safe used by banks to store valuables — but no, it was a cell because there was a bed, a stool and a bench for the prisoner, but all this was made out of steel, literally everything: walls, floor and ceiling. No windows. The bed, the terrible death bed was unusually short, a little over three feet long, also made of steel with a steel pillow on it. It was welded to the floor. The edges

were very sharp, one had to be careful when touching it not to cut a hand or when sitting on it not to get hurt. The chair and the bench were the same and also welded to the floor. They could not be moved. The doors and door frames were also of steel.

While cleaning, I looked at some cinders and previously molten blobs of the welding rods and terror froze my heart when I thought of those unfortunate countrymen of mine who would be "examined" in this cell of death or to be more exact, "a cell of confessions to any crime" never even dreamed of by the tortured.

The other cells were locked and we could not see into them, but they appeared to be ordinary cells with floors and doors of wood. Their purpose was obvious. They must have housed some electric generators which heated, cooled or let electrical currents through these steel death cells, as I called them because upon closer examination of the open doors we saw that they were insulated.

The purpose of these steel cells was then not only for isolation, but to compel the prisoner to confess to crimes which the NKVD wanted. A prisoner could be suffocated there because the doors fitted so closely that no outside air could get in, he could be roasted or frozen, or worse still, an electric current could be sent through him and by manipulation, increasing and decreasing the intensity, cause him unbearable pain that he would either become insane or would confess to have committed some criminal act though absolutely innocent.

Now I don't wonder at all that at the Prague trial in Czechoslovakia all the communists pleaded guilty the same as Bukharin, Rykov and others in the USSR before them.

You'd do the same after a "treatment" in a cell like that!

CHAPTER
II
CAMPS OF THE DEPORTEES

Ivan Trotsenko

UKRAINIANS IN RUSSIAN EXILE CAMPS

Dedication: To the memory of my dear parents, brothers and fellow-inmates in Exile Camp 205, who are suffering in Russian-Communist slavery across the Urals.

November 20, 1952, Toronto, Canada.

I

Twenty years have passed last June since my parents and my brothers, along with thousands of other Ukrainian families, were exiled by the Russian-Communist occupants across the Urals. Their property confiscated, robbed of all their hard-earned possessions, sadistically tortured in prisons they were sentenced without trial, and shipped to the mines and forests beyond the Ural Mountains.

I, too, was exiled with my parents, but later had the good fortune to escape and eventually reach the free land of Canada. For twenty-one years now, hungry and half-naked, they have mined coal in the Ural mines and have cut timber in the wet taiga, receiving for their hard labor a meagre ration of soggy black bread. Men, women, young and old, are all forced into the mines under the vigilant eyes of the NKVD. On their knees, or even lying down, they hoist to the surface tons of coal to be used in the Ural military plants where arms and ammunition are manufactured to conquer more nations.

For the past twenty years the Communists have used slave labor to cut timber, fill in swamplands and build cities like Komsomolsk, Magnitogorsk, Kuzbas and others. The slaves have built railroads in Siberia, paved roads and dug

tunnels. In 1934 - 1936 slaves from the Dallag* concentration camp built the second trans-Siberian railway to Vladivostok. In 1936 - 1939 they built the Baikal-Amur main line, (B.A.M.). This railway runs through taiga and mountainous regions north of the Baikal Lake. Between Chita and Khabarovsk they built railway lines, connecting the old main lines and the new B.A.M., through impassable taiga swamps. The slaves also built the Amur ice road in 1935 - 1937.

Slave labor is used to mine gold, silver, iron ore, oil (on the Sakhalin Islands), and to build military fortifications on the Pacific coast. In the last twenty years hundreds of thousands of people have died from hunger, cold, typhus and tuberculosis, and in their places the NKVD brought in recruits from Ukraine, Georgia and Central Asia. Thousands have lost their arms and legs, have been crippled with rheumatism or maimed by tuberculosis and scurvy.

Why have these people in Siberia for the last twenty years been suffering and dying? What crimes have they committed, and why is the Russian-Communist occupant punishing them in this way?

II.

The first communist collective farms were set up in 1929 to 1933. The farmers went into collectivization against their will. No one wanted to surrender his land, livestock and machinery. Local communists, few in number and undependable, were hopelessly incapable of coping with the task facing them. Then Moscow mobilized 25,000 high-pressure Communist propagandists in Moscow and Leningrad, the so-called "twenty-five thousanders", and sent them into Ukraine. The communist press raised a frantic attack on the Ukrainian farmers. They were classified as "kurkuls", "middle farmers", and "poor". The kurkuls were at once denounced as an "enemy class" which should be destroyed.

All farmers were called to daily mass meetings where the professional propagandists tried to talk them into signing up for collective farming. They pleaded, ranted, promised paradise, and threatened with their revolvers, but the farmers remained obdurate.

Concurrently with collectivization "de-kurkulization" was begun. At secret meetings local communists pointed out

* Abbreviation for Russian Dalnye Lagerya, that is Distant Camps

"kurkuls" to the squad from Moscow and Leningrad. The families of these men were immediately rounded up and driven by wagon or sled into the steppe or some ravine and there abandoned. The men were arrested and imprisoned; their muscles were needed by the regime.

Even after the destruction of the "kurkuls" the remaining farmers refused to sign up for the collective farms and tenaciously clung to their possessions. To those who volunteered, they promised the privilege of buying new suits of clothing or footwear in the co-operative stores. These goods were just as scarce then as now and whatever little there was, was available to the privileged only. The activists were given first opportunities to purchase whatever they wanted and next came those who paid their taxes promptly. This bribe also failed to seduce the farmers.

The GPU was called, and official proclamations were made that "enemies of the people" were carrying on subversive propaganda against collectivization and the communist government. Arrests became frequent and the "middle farmer" was attacked. These were divided into two categories: first, those who defended the "kurkuls" and agitated against the collective farms were dubbed the "underkurkuls", and secondly, those who supported the communist government and would join collective farms.

Because they had no grounds to "de-kurkulize" (dispossess them of property and exile them to Siberia) the "underkurkuls" the communists devised another way to destroy them. It was what they called the "individual farmer plan". They levied extreme taxes on these people, beyond their means to pay. Failure to meet the tax payments promptly gave the communists grounds to mete out to them the same treatment as the "kurkuls". Their property was sold at auction for next to nothing as the other farmers, anxiously fearing a similar fate, refrained from buying. When the sale was completed they were all arrested and their families evicted from their homes.

This plan also failed to bring the farmers flocking into collective farms. On the contrary they organized an armed resistance. They killed communists and activists. In the forests and ravines, insurgent groups attacked district headquarters and disarmed the militia and GPU officers. The GPU cavalry led an attack on the villages making radical searches and arresting all suspects. However, it was power-

less to stamp out this revolt, and the Red Army cavalry units and motor brigades were summoned. They surrounded the forests, ravines and swamps and fought the rebels.

Sometimes they made a surprise attack on some village. They would surround it, make a thorough search, carry away all the food and isolate the village, prohibiting people from leaving or entering it. The villagers lived on whatever food they had hidden; then they ate dogs, cats and mice; then they died. The whole village would die, and the army units would proceed to the next unyielding village on the list.

The farmers began a mass slaughter of livestock, and turned the horses out into the steppes where they wandered aimlessly.

In order to stifle this resistance of the Ukrainian farmers and force them into collectivization Stalin committed through his Commissar of Ukraine, Postyshev, the greatest crime in the history of mankind. In 1933 he organized a man-made famine in Ukraine. All food was forcibly taken away from the farmers. Armed groups made the rounds from house to house and took everything they could find: grain, flour, potatoes, peas, onions. Other groups, with iron rods, and spades, the "light cavalry" searched in the straw, dug under houses and in the garden, poked and pounded the walls.

The people were hungry, their bodies swelled and they died. It was a horrible, gargantuan, total famine. Whole villages, and even whole areas, were wiped out. In the Poltava, Chernyhiw and Kharkiw regions people resorted to cannibalism. Contagious diseases spread rapidly. In the village of Severyniw, in the Kiev region, hungry farmers ate dead horses which the government had imported for a new collective farm in White Ruthenia. The horses had died of glanders and the people contracted this disease. A group of men from the Military Sanitation Department herded the suffering villagers into barns and sheds and nailed up the doors and windows. The whole village died this way.

Ukrainians were forbidden to leave their homeland.

III.

My father was labelled an "under kurkul". He refused to sign up for collective farming but took no interest in poli-

tics. The communists decided to eliminate him. On the records of the Village Council he was listed as "middle farmer". He had two horses, one cow, one hog, five sheep and forty chickens. His portion of granted land consisted of about thirty-five acres, which had to sustain a family of six. Prior to the Revolution neither my father nor my grandfather had owned any land, but had rented from the landowners.

Until 1921 my father and his brother lived in one house and worked the land jointly, but they had an agreement as to how the property would be divided after my grandfather's death. Grandfather died in 1924, and my father and uncle still continued to work together for a while. In 1926 they sold their cattle and horses and bought an American Fordson tractor, but a year later the government took it away from them. My uncle, through some foreboding of approaching peril, sold his share of the property and emigrated from Ukraine.

In 1929 heavy taxation began in the form of money, produce and obligations. In the fall of 1930 the "individual farmer plan" was introduced. We were asked to pay the Government 2,500 rubles and 500 bushels of grain. My father could not meet this obligation even when he had sold all his property and home. We waited for the robbers from day to day, and prepared to be turned out of the house. Mother cried constantly and pleaded with father to bury some of the things, or to store them with relatives.

One dark night, my parents stealthily carried some of their most valuable possessions to our relatives, mostly our clothes, bedding and potatoes. Then my father decided to go to Kharkiw and present his grievance to the president himself, Gregory Petrowsky.

"It is not right that the village soviet has the right to force me to take part in the 'plan'," he told mother bravely. "I am not rich. I served in the Red Army. I will go to Petrowsky and he will take care of everything."

He donned his new jacket, took along his documents and set out for the capital. There Petrowsky refused to see him and he was received by a secretary, who listened to father's complaint and smiled blandly, "We shall look into this matter and write the village soviet."

On the day my father presented his case, the village soviet came to our home and noted down all our possessions.

On the following day they held an auction, and as father was nearing our home on his return from Kharkiw he heard the chairman of the village soviet call out:

"For failure to pay his taxes all property of "under kurkul" Trotsenko is being sold. The house is valued at 200 rubles, whoever bids more buys it." His offer was met with dead silence from the small crowd of farmers.

"Then I will buy it myself," he declared, "I bid 250 rubles."

In a legitimate sale the house would have brought 1,800 to 2,000 rubles.

"The horses will go to the collective farm," the chairman continued.

Everything was sold at absurdly low prices. The farm machinery was taken to the collective farm and household articles were bought by activists.

This was more than father could bear. He sat under a willow tree in the garden and wept like a child. When the auction was closed we were given twenty-four hours to vacate the premises. That evening we collected our few personal belongings in sacks and started out for Zaporizhya on foot. There father secured work in a quarry and we obtained ration books.

One winter night in 1930 there was a knock on our window. We all awoke with a start, father opened the door and two men in civilian clothes entered. They checked our documents and arrested father.

Our ration cards were taken away, and we were soon very hungry. We had no money. Mother looked for work, but because she was a "kurkul" no one would employ her. Then she sold father's clothes. Between hunting for food, looking for a job, and visiting father in prison, mother was away from home most of the time. It seemed we rarely saw her. She waited in line for hours at the prison gate to give father a mug of soup or a couple of boiled potatoes. Finally, having passed it to him through a receptionist, she waited until nightfall for the return of her basket. Our home was searched several times; once they took half a sack of potatoes, and another time a cupful of millet seed.

There were hundreds of women and children waiting at the prison gate. They came from villages throughout the whole of the Zaporizhya region. The "kurkul" and "under kurkul" husbands were imprisoned 200 to 300 men to a

cell, while communist "justice" collected mountains of evidence and beat their skulls with revolver butts, demanding confessions to counter-revolutionary activity.

Father had been in prison six months. During that time, he later told us, he was called for investigation twice. The investigator charged him with being a "kurkul" who had savagely refused to pay the state's taxes; that he had instigated the farmers against collectivization and against the Soviet government; that he belonged to a secret counter-revolutionary organization which was preparing for an armed rebellion; that his father had also been a "kurkul" and had owned 500 acres of land, five pairs of oxen, fifty head of cattle; that he had exploited the workers; that his brother had been an officer in the tsarist army and also a "kurkul" who had lost his citizenship rights, had organized a counter-revolutionary organization and then escaped into hiding, but that the infallible security organs had already captured him and he would be tried together with my father. After reading the preposterous indictment the investigator added that he knew "everything", that if father wanted to live and see his children again it would be better for him to confess honorably and name his fellow-conspirators in the counter-revolutionary plan. He threatened that father's brother had already confessed to "everything" and disclosed the plan, and that an investigation would bring them both face to face at the trial.

Father tried to deny these charges. He pleaded that never, at any time, had he defaulted on his tax bill, but that the demands of the "individual farmer's plan" were beyond his ability to pay; that he had never dissuaded anyone from signing up for collectivization nor agitated against the government; that he had never belonged to any secret organization and that he knew of no one who did; that his father had died in 1924 and had never owned any land but had rented from the landlord; that he had pastured cattle on the land allotted which had belonged to Jewish city-dwellers; that his brother had been only a junior officer in the war with Germany in 1914 - 1917.

The investigator was beside himself. He shrieked and shouted and threatened, pushing the protocol at my father for signature. This my father categorically refused to do. The furious investigator grabbed his revolver and brought

it down on my father's head and knocked him out. So ended the first investigation.

IV.

In a month father was called again. Again he was questioned about the counter-revolutionary organization, its plans and his co-conspirators. Father steadfastly denied everything, and the investigator changed his tactics. Referring to father's comparative youth, and the small children he had left, he said that his co-workers, having confessed, stated that he had played only a minor part and that if he would now make his own confession he would be freed by the court. Father still refused to sign. The investigator ranted in a fit of animal rage for some time, finishing with the statement that his brother had already been tried and shot by a military tribunal and he would likewise be tried. Father was never summoned for trial. At the end of April, 1931, he was ordered to prepare for a long journey, "with belongings".

In the prison courtyard a military officer was reading out a long list of prisoners' names and announcing their sentences. Father's sentence was ten years of forced labor in a concentration camp outside the territories of Ukraine.

Under heavy, mounted, GPU guard several hundred prisoners were taken from the prison in groups and escorted, on foot, to the first etape depot. Earlier, the building had been a school for the deaf and dumb, and the communists had changed it into an exile embarkation depot.

I knew the way to this depot well. I had gone there with my mother several times helping to carry the basket. One day she asked me if I would take father his basket alone as she had something important to attend to. As I approached the place I noticed that a huge crowd of women and children had gathered at the iron gate, and the queue was very long.

For weeks before this the women had met in groups and discussed ways and means of securing permission to see their husbands. Some had suggested an appeal to the town soviet, others had maintained that the latter had nothing to do with the matter. Finally, they all decided to meet outside the building where the men were kept and collectively demand to see them. They were now here, from far and near,

bent on achieving their purpose. A few bolder ones began to call loudly, then the others joined in until the whole throng was clamoring in a loud chant.

"We want the chief. We want the chief. We want to see our husbands. The chief." Inside, bedlam broke out and strong whistling.

A window opened and four GPU men peered out. They stared at the mob dumbfounded. The women fell silent for a second, eyed one another and then loudly called in unison.

"Let us see our husbands."

"Impossible," came the answer.

"Let us see them," the crowd roared.

The window closed; the shouting intensified. Small boys who had climbed up on trees called down that soldiers with guns were running towards the gate, and a military command was heard. A small gate opened and several GPU men appeared with rifles. The women stared in awe.

"Who wants to visit the prisoners?" asked the one in charge.

Instantly hundreds of voices answered, "I, I, I."

"Whoever wants to visit will have to write it down and hand it in at the window," he stated.

"We need paper, give us paper," the women all shouted in reply.

The chief said something quietly to one of the men, and he disappeared inside, in a little while returning with the paper. Soon, like white doves, small pieces of paper bearing the requests were flying in through the window. I wrote one too, everyone did, and waited for the answer.

The narrow iron gate opened, and all the women went into the enclosure. I was asked my age and refused entrance. Not one woman returned from that visit. They were all arrested.

I returned home late that night and related to my mother what had happened. She gravely shook her head and lapsed into silence. A sense of foreboding hung in the air.

That night we heard a knock on the door. Mother did not answer. We heard the stamping of feet outside and someone rapped on the window. Mother asked who it was.

"Open up. It's the militia."

Men in civilian suits entered. They arrested us all, made a thorough search of the house and read the sentence. Being

a "kurkul" family we were sentenced to five years of forced labor in the Urals.

We were given the order to dress quickly, and in two hours we were in a wagon on our way to a small station in the steppes, Yantsenovo, near the city of Zaporizhya. In two days hundreds of "kurkul" families were brought there, and on the third day a sealed train pulled in carrying the husbands and fathers of those women who had been arrested when they asked for permission to see their husbands.

We were shoved on to the train. At each car entrance was a sign, "For 60 people". Father was with us in the car which held eight families, totalling 47 people. The door slammed shut and was bolted from the outside. And so, on this dark night of May 26, 1931, our train of sixty-one cars, under the surveillance of the GPU, headed for the east.

V.

The train was crowded and stuffy. The cars were tightly closed, and it was difficult to breathe. The tiny windows were heavily barred. The children fretted and cried. Occasionally we received a little food, but not every day. For every ten people we were given one loaf of heavy black bread and half a pail of tea, or very thin soup. Our mouths were parched from thirst, and we pounded on the doors begging for water, but no one answered. The guards were deaf. We passed Kharkiw and headed for Moscow. There we stopped for the night, and in the morning took off for Samara and farther east. We passed Ufa, Zlatoust, Mios, and Chelyabinsk. At Severnoe our train took a branch line. On June 3rd the train halted, the guards opened the doors and bellowed:

"Get out!"

VI.

All around us was nothing but dense forest. To the west we could dimly distinguish two towers rising over the tall trees. We were placed under a new command. They drove us like herds of cattle into the forest, and told us to make camp. Each family resourcefully set about building itself a hut from tree branches. The days were hot, and the nights uncomfortably cold. There was a daily routine check-up for

which everyone was required to go to the command headquarters.

It was some time before we were brought a little food. Our ration then consisted of a pint of thin soup per person per day and 10½ ounces of bread. About half the men were sent to saw timber, and the others into mines Nos. 22 and 23. A new mine was being excavated near our camp, No. 205, — and this was the number by which the camp was also known. Besides having a name, every camp also had its own number.

The hot summer days passed and fall set in. This was a rainy season and the huts were soaking wet inside. When the rains subsided a little, we tried to build fires with the wet wood but were not very successful. People became ill and died. The infants died first, nearly all of them, and were buried in the cemetery near "Sylova", the electric power plant which supplied the current to the town of Kopeisk and the mines.

The men dug shallow graves, but even those quickly filled with water. They placed tree branches in the water and the dead infant bodies on top. Parents of a dead baby would go around inquiring if anyone had a board or two with which to make a coffin. If none was available they wrapped the baby in rags and buried it in the wet clay. Every grave had a birch cross on it.

In November we began building earthen huts for the winter. This task was assigned those who were unfit to work in the mines, mostly the old folks, cripples and juveniles of about fourteen years of age. Married, childless women and unmarried girls worked in the mines.

Shortly, seven rows of these huts were up. These were constructed by driving poles into the ground, about four and a half feet in height. Beams were laid on top of these and then rafters were attached. The roof was covered with rough boards and sod. Spaces between the poles were also filled with sod. A wall across the middle divided the hut into two parts. Each part had a tiny window and a door at one end. A brick stove was placed in the middle.

Each half of these primitive huts was occupied by two families. Inside they were raw and damp. Water dropped from the ceiling and ran along the walls. No tables, chairs or beds were provided, while the prisoners' resourcefulness was strained to the utmost with nothing but axes and thick slabs to work with.

VII.

The camp "Constitution"

After moving from the first twig huts into the new, earthen ones all prisoners of Special Exile Camp No. 205 were called to a general meeting. There the camp commandant, a lieutenant with three "squares", (they still wore the insignia then), Chermishanov, read the "constitution". The camp regulations were as follows:

1. Leaving the camp grounds was strictly prohibited. Any violation of this rule would mean prosecution by arrest and a term in the "penalty battalion" attached to the GPU station in Kopeisk. (We all knew the meaning of this: 10½ ounces of bread a day and fifteen hours of hard labor).
2. The camp was divided into wards, and subdivided into units of ten mud huts. The commandant appointed wardens to head the wards and "desyat-skys"* in charge of the units.
3. Wardens were to be responsible to the commandant, and their duties consisted of reporting escapes or suspicious attempts at escape. "Desyat-skys" were to be under the supervision of wardens, and were to keep an eye on prisoners in their units. At the request of the wardens each had two aides, picked from the ranks of the exiles. For every prisoner caught escaping the wardens received a reward of ten rubles of the prisoners' confiscated money.
4. Mutual Responsibility: If a man escaped, his neighbour was duty-bound to notify the warden or the commandant. Failure to do this made him liable to 30 days in the penalty battalion.
5. A prisoner caught escaping, or about to escape, was to be arrested immediately and sent to the penalty battalion without trial, and an extra five-year term was to be automatically added to his original sentence. All his money was to be confiscated.
6. Disobedience or refusal to work was punishable with a term in the penalty battalion ranging from fifteen days to six months.
7. Failure to accomplish the work quotas imposed was

* "Desyat" means "ten".

to be considered sabotage, and the guilty were to answer to the command.

8. All teen-agers, starting from 14 years, the old people, women and cripples were to work at sorting and loading coal.
9. Intermarriage between prisoners and free workers was strictly prohibited.
10. In the event of death of any member of a family the deceased's bread ration card was immediately to be given up. Failure to comply with this regulation was punishable by arrest.

In spite of these rigid rules people escaped from the camp, sometimes singly, and sometimes by whole families. So as not to implicate his neighbour, the escapee picked a moment for flight when he was at work, or else two neighbours conspired and fled together. They fled at night during a windstorm or a heavy rain, travelling for forty or fifty miles on foot through the forest until they reached some remote railroad station. There the refugees would present forged passports and buy their tickets.

First they would ride for about a hundred miles eastward, then leave the train and board the Vladivostok-Kharkiv express, which flew through the exile camp zone swiftly. Passing through the first guard station successfully, the refugees ran the risk of being caught by Russian civilians who vigorously hunted for them in the forests. For each captured prisoner they brought to the commandants they received about three puds (108.34 lbs.) of flour and fifty rubles in cash. Sometimes the captured prisoners were robbed and murdered, their corpses buried or burned. This practice was encouraged by the GPU to frighten others against similar attempts.

VIII.

Commandants

Commandant Radchenko. He was the first camp commandant. Semi-literate and cruel, his period of authority was at the time we lived in the twig huts and during the move into the mud huts. He wore three squares on his collar. Instead of a military cloak, he was generally seen in a civilian coat. He never made speeches or announcements but had a spokesman, propagandist Putilin, do it for him. All

orders and regulations were written by his secretary, and he signed them. When a prisoner was brought before him for some offence Commandant Radchenko plastered him with the filthiest Russian curses. It was during his command all the babies died in the wet twig huts. At his orders only one barrel of drinking water was brought to the camp daily and a pint doled out to each person. It was also in his reign that typhus ravaged the camp, taking scores of lives.

Commandant Chermishanov. Chermishanov was famous for a particular characteristic. He constantly wore full dress uniform with three squares. He daily rode into the camp on his gray horse, carrying a leather whip in his hand. At the sight of him the women and children scurried into their huts. Wardens and desyatskys ran to meet him, handing in their reports. All suspects, the unyielding, the "simulants and saboteurs", were written down in his notebook. Having heard all the reports, he immediately tore off for the huts of the "offenders".

Issuing profane Russian curses he pounded heavily on the window or the door. Rounding them all together he drove them ahead of him to the commandant's headquarters.

It was during Chermishanov's reign that local prisoner-hunters robbed and murdered escaping prisoners. He conducted night raids on the huts, frightening the sleeping children. He beat and tortured the miners of the lagging brigades for not having reached their monthly production quotas and wrested signed statements from them that the following month they would accomplish at least 120 per cent of the quota demanded.

He arrested women for failure to come out for snow shovelling during severe snowstorms, or to appear for "subotnik" (extra work after a full day in the mines). "Subotniks" were announced by the commandant, and he drove the exhausted miners to dig soil at the so-called state farm association. Every camp had a sort of miniature state farm where children, old women and cripples worked. Barley, rye and potatoes were the main products and these were all seized by the NKVD as soon as harvested.

Chermishanov held back bread ration cards from the women and children for time lost at work, and during his reign malaria and typhus spread throughout the whole camp, claiming lives from every hut.

He was eventually transferred to work in a secret department of the Chelyabinsk tractor plant.

Commandant Slobodin. After Kirov's assassination, camp discipline worsened to a marked degree. Commandant Slobodin absolutely forbade anyone to leave the camp grounds and made numerous arrests while enforcing this rule.

Several German and Bulgarian families were in our camp, and one day they were ordered to prepare for departure. They were not told where they were to go but were put on a train and taken to Kopeisk. Germans and Bulgarians from other camps were brought there, and so the Kirzavod Exile Camp came into being.

Our mud huts began to disintegrate. The walls and the ceilings caved in. Commandant Slobodin issued orders for a new camp to be built. The new two-family dwellings were to be constructed of timber.

The NKVD (GPU changed to NKVD in 1935) knew that a new camp would need to be more durable than the mud huts, which lasted only four or five years. By that time the ten-year sentences imposed on the Ukrainian exiles would expire and no one would stay to work in the mines on a voluntary basis. A scheme was devised to hold these people there for the remainder of their lives.

Commandant Slobodin called a special meeting and announced that the exiles would no longer be required to live in the deplorable mud huts. The government was supplying lumber and other necessary materials, and each family would build itself a house. The cost of the houses would be 10,000 rubles, the payments to run over a fifteen-year period. As soon as their terms of imprisonment expired, they would be earning wages and paying their debts to the government. The commandant would employ special brigades of carpenters to construct the framework and make windows and doors.

We all understood the commandant. He was placing a lifetime yoke on the people.

On the following day all family heads, as well as single men, were summoned to the commandant's headquarters and told to sign contracts for building these houses. Now indebted to the government for the huge sum of ten thousand rubles no one would dare attempt to return to Ukraine. We were now doomed for the rest of our days.

Came 1937, and the Yezhov terror was felt even in our "special exile camp". Mass arrests were made nightly. The victims were driven by sled to the nearest regional commandant headquarters in Kopeisk, and then shipped to Cheylabinsk prison. Their fate was never known. On a few occasions, about three months after the arrest of a husband or son, some member of his family received a letter addressed in an unknown hand. Inside the envelope was a small scrap of paper folded in half and sealed with gummed bread. On the outside the words "please forward this letter to the following address" were written, and the address was given. Inside the message read something like the following:

"Dear Nataalka, mother, and my beloved babies,
Petrus and Vira: We are heading for the far east.
We have been given ten-year sentences. Remember me always. Love, Yours, P. I."

"Cultural Worker" Ivan Putilin.

The interminable "cultural worker", who was actually a professional communist propagandist, and assistant to every commandant, was one Ivan Putilin. Semi-literate and infinitely wicked, a soldier of the old guard and a native of the Urals, he was no less famous for his ruthlessness than Chermishanov and Slobodin. At meetings he boasted of his functions:

"It is my job to drive the counter-revolutionary spirit out of you counter-revolutionaries and enemies of the people, the former kurkuls, partisans and Petlyurists: to wring you into obedience and harness you to the socialist wagon."

He used the commandant's headquarters and the club to "beat the counter-revolutionary spirit" out of the prisoners. In the commandant's absence, Putilin sat in his chair. His victims were brought before him and he "beat the spirit" out of them with his fists and rifle butt. He beat it out of those who found it difficult to fulfill their work quotas, those who were caught outside the camp limits, those who were under suspicion, and those who were caught in the forest trying to escape. He beat it out of the men, women, the old folks and youngsters. He accompanied these beatings with foul-mouthed, blasphemous language. He shook his victims, threw them to the floor or stood them up against the wall and berated them with his rifle. Having beaten this

counter-revolutionary spirit out of a prisoner, he dispatched him to the penalty battalion for ten to fifteen days.

The club was the other place where Putilin drove the "spirit" out. Every month he called two or three meetings of the young people at which he complimented Stakhanovites and cursed and threatened the "lazy", the "simulants" and "saboteurs". At these meetings, agreements for social competitions were signed among brigades of miners. Stakhanovites made speeches, and those who were dragging wept and pleaded that the following month they would exceed them.

In the club Putilin held preliminary meetings for the 'dyelo' (record). There was a "dyelo" for every prisoner at the commandant's headquarters in which all information about him was kept, such as: why he was arrested, why sentenced and for how long a term. All his offences in camp were entered in it.

There he also organized "evenings of independent activity". At his request the young folks presented plays portraying the "kurkul" agitating against the Soviet government and exploiting the worker. Guilty of all sorts of crimes and injustice, he invariably tried to flee but the vigilant NKVD always caught him. He was arrested and re-educated, returning to his native village a decent citizen. The "actors" also held forth against God, debased the "lazy", lauded Stakhanovites. The choir glorified wise Stalin, the party, the government and the mighty Red Army.

Before every state holiday Putilin herded the youth to the club, to decorate it in proper fashion. They nailed up placards, slogans, and wall newspapers. On holidays he called general meetings of all prisoners, who filled the club to capacity. All sat in silence and watched the stage where, solemnly, behind a table with a red cover, sat the camp administration: the commandant and Putilin. On occasion, an NKVD representative or the Regional Commandant sat with them. Putilin shouted a speech, the beginning and end of which all prisoners knew by heart.

He began by announcing the day, the date and the holiday, and, continuing, told how the whole of the USSR was happily celebrating the day, and the revolutionaries were grinding their teeth, but the NKVD was constantly on the alert for "enemies of the people" and was steadily destroying them' He praised the all-wise Stalin (here it was neces-

sary to applaud), the party, the government and the invincible Red Army which would never allow anyone to enter the USSR territory, but would fight the enemy on his own soil. The USSR did not want foreign lands, but would never relinquish any of its own. He went on to say that people in the capitalist countries were suffering from terrible hunger, and the workers were fighting on the barricades; that capitalism would soon perish and Soviet rule would triumph all over the world.

At the mention of Stalin or his government the hall instantly resounded with: "Long live the Soviet party of Bolsheviks!" These cheer leaders were especially instructed, and placed at intervals among the prisoner audience. It was best for the prisoners to applaud after such outbursts.

Central Administration

The highest administration for exiles was the Regional Headquarters of the Regional Commandant. It was a two-storey building in Kopeisk, situated on the main street opposite the High School, surrounded by a high fence. A guard always stood at the gate. Behind the main buildings were three, a garage for the "black crow", a store for merchandise for the NKVD and the regional prison. Behind its grim bars were prisoners from the penalty battalion.

The first Regional Commandant was Tokarev, with two stripes. He visited our camp several times. He was succeeded by Commandant Bezsmertnykh whom I met personally. In the fall of 1934, I violated the camp "constitution" by overstepping the camp boundary without a permit, and was summoned by Commandant Slobodin. He shouted curses at me as he wrote in the "dyelo", then sent me to the Regional Headquarters with a guide. There I was handed over to a guard who entered my name in a book, made a thorough search of me and left the room. I was alone.

As I gazed around my attention was drawn to a poster on the wall. It was the Regional Commandant's order for the day and at the bottom, in uneven lines, were scrawls of hooks, lines, crosses and circles. Looking at what was supposed to be the Commandant's signature I realized the startling fact that Commandant Bezsmertnykh was practically illiterate. The guard returned and led me upstairs. We came to a leather-covered door, the guard knocked and we entered. Behind a massive desk sat the fat, soft-faced

NKVD officer, Major Bezsmertnykh. In 1935 he was promoted, and appointed governor of the famous Chelyabinsk prison.

IX.

A Few Words About the Martyrs in Exile Camp No. 205

This camp was almost entirely made up of Ukrainians who had been brought there chiefly from the Zaporizhya region. Here are some I still remember:

Akhinko. His daughter, and his sister, Paulina, both worked as nurses in the camp's ambulance division. His son Mykola fled from the concentration camp. Putilin carried on an extensive search for him and held out threats of the penalty battalion.

Akhinko. He was a miner in mine No. 205, until he became a victim of acute rheumatism from the cold dampness. His wife worked in the camp store temporarily.

Bahatko. There were three of them in the camp, two brothers and their mother. The older brother was hurt in the mine and his face badly disfigured.

Barabash. For some reason, Putilin searched his hut on several occasions. Finally he confiscated his bread card.

Baran. His wife was killed by a thunderbolt during an electric storm, leaving him with five small children.

Berekhlyvv. He and his son worked as painters.

Betin. After a hard day's work in the mine, Putilin called him to the club to direct the choir. When, on several occasions, he tried to beg off because of fatigue, Putilin threatened him with the penalty battalion. The choir was famous throughout all the concentration camps.

Boiko. His parents died in the camp. Ivan and Tamara once studied in a University in Ukraine but because they were kurkul children they were expelled. They were all arrested by the GPU and brought to this camp. Because they were Ukrainian intellectuals, Putilin abused them more than anyone else. Ivan was punished several times. Because of his medical training he was responsible for the camp's sanitation.

Bushtryuk. I saw his children picking up potato peelings on the garbage dump outside the mine cafeteria.

Chumakow. A former kozak from the Urals, he was now the medical aide of the camp. He had been trained

in a military sanitation school. In his dispensary he had alcohol, iodine, and quinine. Alcohol was used to wash wounds, and quinine was given to malaria sufferers, who usually lost their hearing from the drug but found no relief from malaria. The medical centre was located in a mud hut. Summer and winter he wore a huge sheepskin cap, a relic from his kozak days.

Chupryna. Worked in mine No. 205.

Chybukin. Former school teacher, now worked in the office of mines No. 22 and 23. Because he was a Ukrainian intellectual, Putilin detested him. He and his wife were the first to be called for "subotnik" to shovel coal all night in the mine. "Subotniks" were organized on Saturday nights to Sunday mornings in winter during a severe snowstorm, to clear the railroad tracks.

Chybukin. The two brothers worked as cabinet makers.

Dmytrenko. His son was tried by the NKVD for violation of the camp "constitution". He served a six-month sentence in other camps, then was brought back.

Dombrowsky. His son was arrested several times and was punished for different crimes.

Dub. His wife was called by Putilin to the Regional Commandant's Headquarters several times because, during a raging storm, she had failed to appear for snow shovelling.

Dudnyk. His wife died of starvation, leaving him with three small children.

Fedorchenko. Pavlo, Vira, Polla and Volodymyr. Their father could not stand the unbearable slave labor. He became insane, and later died of hemorrhage of the brain.

Gros. His daughters worked in the mine. His son, Dmytro, was requested by Putilin to paint posters for the Regional Commandant's Headquarters, and portraits of Communist lords.

Hladky. His parents died in the camp.

Hlushko. His father died in the camp.

Horobets. His parents died in the camp.

Horodka. His father worked as a carpenter. His oldest son and his son-in-law were arrested by the NKVD in 1937 and shipped to the Far East "without the right to correspond with him".

Karmaz. Both his sons underwent long suffering

from malaria. During milder moments they would come out and warm themselves in the sun. On one such occasion Commandant Chermishanov came by, and seeing them thus screamed, "Why don't you malingerers work instead of sitting out here in the sun. Off with you to Headquarters".

Khakhlov. He worked with Nets and Kurelekh, building mud huts. Someone informed headquarters that he was about to escape and he was searched several times at night. He finally fled.

Khupavka. He worked as a carpenter, building mud huts and the club. His daughter and son worked in the mine.

Kokhan. He had a large family, who were constantly hungry. His oldest son was ill most of the time and often had nose-bleeds.

Kolesnyk. His father was sentenced, together with Zhuravel, to ten years in prison and died there.

Kolomiets. His wife caught a serious cold in the fall rain, and died in the twig hut. He, his mother and two small children survived. Later, his mother died of starvation.

Kolpakow. His son and brother were arrested in 1937, and shipped to the Far East.

Kolyada. His mother died in the camp. He, a former school-teacher, could not endure the abuse and tortures of Putilin, and fled. Putilin forced him to shout "the fighting slogans" at meetings. He was summoned to Headquarters several times, and threatened with the penalty battalion. His fiancée from Ukraine visited him a few times, but they were forbidden to marry.

Korotchenko. He set the windows in the mud huts and joked with the children, "Don't you break those, my dears! This is Siberia, not Ukraine. You'll freeze like sparrows".

Koryaka. How well I remember him and his son, Fedia. I have not forgotten how he divided his bread on the haying field. Fedia thought he had received the smaller share. He cried and threatened his father with Headquarters. You measured the pieces with a straw several times. Then Fedia complained that someone in the hut had cut off a piece from his share.

Koshlakow. Putilin's faithful lackey. Finally he was made manager of the club. Decorated the walls with propaganda slogans. At meetings he informed on prisoners.

During meetings and speeches he was the loudest cheerleader. He was finally released from the camp.

Kotow. His parents died in the camp, leaving him and his brother alone.

Kowtun. His parents died in the camp.

Kubatko. His wife died of starvation, leaving him with five small children. I remember his son's words: "Mother gave me a whole bun today".

Kulbaba. I remember how he once took his bread ration and ate it right there in the store. Then he joked to the boys, "I'll wager with anyone that I can still eat two kilograms of bread and one kilogram of sausage".

Kuratchenko. He was brigadier of the land brigade. He was arrested in 1935 for wasting government property while being vice-director of a collective farm.

Kurelekh. He died of consumption, leaving his wife with two small children.

Kushch. Because his mother fled to Ukraine, Commandant Chermishanov punished him with the penalty battalion.

Kushch. He had the good fortune to escape across the border.

Kushch. For failure to reach his work quota the Commandant called him to headquarters for questioning.

Kuts. His father found it impossible to endure torture and persecution, and died in Ukraine. His mother, with three small children, was brought to the concentration camp. She died of starvation and the three were orphaned.

Kyrychenko. He was a camp warden and informed on the prisoners. For every prisoner caught escaping, he received ten rubles of the confiscated money.

Kysil. His mother died of starvation.

Larin. He and his father made trips, with a group of women and children, to Mytrofaniwsky state farm to cultivate potatoes. As a qualified gardener he was left there for some time and later returned to camp.

Larin. His wife was summoned several times by Putilin and threatened with the penalty battalion because she did not appear for work in the collective farm.

Lebid. The whole family died in the camp.

Lemish. His fourteen-year-old daughter died of starvation. His son, Mykola, was released from the camp and

drafted into military service. He died in the war with Finland. His family was always very hungry.

Loboda. Both parents died in the camp.

Loshenko. Before he had time to complete his first hut of tree branches he was called out "with belongings". With other prisoners he was loaded on a train and sent into the deep taiga to cut trees. His infant daughter died in the hut.

Maksymenko. Father was a stableman in the camp kolkhoz. During the plowing and seeding, he found himself in an undesirable predicament; Putilin had ordered him to harness a horse caught in the forest belonging to the forest cadres. For this the forest workers assailed him and threatened him with an axe. Whom was he to listen to?

Matsko. Worked as a fitter in mine No. 205. During work he injured his arm. After several months of treatment by the medical aide, he was left a cripple for life. He was then forced to work in the steam bath, drawing water from a well with a crane with one hand.

Matsyura. Brother was a guard on a building project, and another brother worked on explosives in the mine.

Medvediw. Nadia and her brother worked in the mine, he as a driller, and she shovelled coal. Because they found it impossible to accomplish their quotas Putilin constantly threatened them with the penalty battalion.

Mihulya. I happened to enter his mud hut one day and found the family seated at the table. They had thin millet soup in their bowls, and out of a box Mihulya produced a loaf of bread and a stick marked in red and blue. He explained to me that the stick was a bread measure. All the portions of a loaf of bread were marked on the stick, the biggest for the worker of the family, the next for the mother and for the children the smallest. Before cutting, the loaf was always very carefully measured. He wondered if he would ever eat bread without measuring it first.

Mukha. His wife died in the camp and he found it extremely difficult to manage with small children.

Myachenko. A former student of a Building Institute. As a kurkul's son he was expelled, arrested, and brought to the concentration camp where he was a building foreman. In 1937 he was arrested and taken to the Far East "without right to correspond".

Nalyvaylo. When the camp collective farm was or-

ganized, he was made director. All shortcomings heavily burdened him and he was summoned to Headquarters dozens of times. In 1937 his oldest son was arrested and sent to the Far East.

Nazarenko. His father took care of the rabbits in the kolkhoz. His small son, Vanka, fell and broke his arm. It was never treated and grew stiff.

Nets. While still living in the first twig huts they buried their baby. They dug a grave in the cemetery but it quickly filled with water. Placing tree branches in the grave they lowered the coffin on them. The rain came in torrents during burial and his wife fainted.

Okselenko. His son Paul was arrested several times by Putilin for not accomplishing his work quota and threatened with the penalty battalion.

Oliylyk Vasyi. At first he was an auto-mechanic in the Kopeisk garage, then transferred to the Melkikh mines, and later to the Severny concentration camp.

Oliylyk L. He had a family of five children. After moving from the twig huts to the mud huts, he began secret preparations to escape. For two years he saved kopeks to buy train fare. One dark night he left his hut, with three children, and headed for the forest. Before dawn his wife followed in his tracks with the other two children. Before leaving, she had placed damp wood on the fire and all morning the smoke rose from the chimney. The first day no one knew of their flight. The father with three children successfully reached the railroad station and waited for his wife with the other two. But in vain. She was caught by the refugee hunters and brought to Headquarters. Chermishanov was raging mad. He pounded the table with his fist. Putilin notified the Regional Commandant's Headquarters and a posse was sent to hunt for the father. The mother was searched for hidden money. The hunters demanded their 50 rubles for each person caught. On this day I was working at headquarters, and I saw Putilin take out a hunk of bread from the woman's sack, cut it in two, then into four, into eight, and then into tiny scraps, but found no money there. He searched through all their clothing, in the folds and seams, took off their footwear and searched, but no money was found. The children were terribly frightened and wept bitterly. The mother said they were robbed and that the father, with the other children, had been taken

away, she knew not where. The refugee hunters, however, had told a different story and demanded their reward. Chermishanov ordered the woman to undo her braid, but this also was in vain. After two days the father returned with the three children. He was arrested and put in the penalty battalion, and later transferred to Zlakadovsk camp. In 1937 he was arrested and sent to the Far East "without right to correspond".

Osochenko H. He died in the camp. He had loved singing and directed the camp choir. His son, Anthony, was a bookkeeper for the collective farm. Putilin arrested him several times and sent him to the penalty battalion.

Osochenko. He had a large family. The oldest boy worked in the mine, and younger daughters on the farm.

Osypiw, Vanya and Klava. Orphaned, when both their parents died in the camp.

Petryk. A short, stubby, heavy-set fellow he was one of the first miners to excavate mine No. 205. Due to constantly working in water in the mine he became crippled with rheumatism.

Porosiuk. Died in the camp. His father worked as a carpenter.

Prochan. His son died outside the camp limits, and his father was the only member of the family allowed by the NKVD to witness the burial. The other sons made a few attempts to reach the town of Chelyabinsk but the refugee hunters always brought them back.

Prokhoda. A former school teacher, he was brought to the camp alone. During the fall rains he died of inflammation of the lungs.

Prykhodko. His wife died in the camp, and he and the two small children suffered great hardships.

Samitno. Both grandparents died in the camp.

Semenko. His father worked in the mine, and when his health failed was transferred to the collective farm and died there.

Shalyk. At first he worked in the mine office, and was later assigned as a bookkeeper to the collective farm in camp Melkykh Mines. His wife twice attempted to escape to Ukraine, and for this crime Shalyk was punished with the penalty battalion. In 1937 he was arrested, and sent to the Far East "without right to correspond".

Shewchenko. He was a cook in the mine cafeteria.

He was known for the way he enjoyed eating his bread. Taking it out of a bag, he would eye it lovingly and slowly take bites. Before long a throng of children would collect around him, gaping with wide-eyed wonder while the piece of bread became smaller and smaller. When the last crumb was eaten someone would invariably remark, "How could he take so long to eat a piece of bread? I would have gulped it all like a gander."

Shokar. Both his parents died in the camp from starvation, and he was left, at 16, to work in the mine. When his health declined from undernourishment and overwork he was sent to the collective farm to work in the forge.

Shyian. Father died in the concentration camp. In an accident with a buzz-saw, his brother's arm was cut off. His mother worked on the collective farm.

Shyp. He died in the camp from starvation, leaving his wife and four small children. They went around begging for food and were often seen picking potato peelings on the dump outside the cafeteria.

Skrybka. A single fellow who worked in the mine.

Spytsia. He delivered bread from the bakery to the store with horses belonging to the collective farm. Someone informed headquarters that he was preparing for flight. Commandant Slobodin and Putilin both called him for questioning, but he finally escaped.

Spytsia. There were five of them in the camp, three girls and their old parents. The older two loaded coal in the mine, and the father worked as a carpenter.

Subtelya. The father worked on the collective farm, and his daughter, Klava, in mine No. 205. Her brigade repeatedly failed to reach its production quota. Putilin called them all to headquarters and threatened them with the penalty battalion, but still the quota was not reached. Then the brigade was arrested and tried for sabotage. Their six-month sentence was served somewhere outside the camp.

Svyatovets. He had the largest family in the camp, and the biggest twig hut which he found extremely difficult to keep from flooding during the frequent downpours.

Taranenko. The father worked as a builder. Borys and Liza worked on the collective farm. They were always very haggard and tattered. Liza wore a skirt made from a gunny sack. They all went barefooted from early spring until the cold weather in the fall.

Taranenko. I saw him taking his dead father for interment in the large cemetery by the electric-power plant, the Sylova. The coffin was placed on the wagon and the three small children sat on it. The mother walked behind the wagon and cried.

Tkalych. He was the blacksmith on the collective farm. During the busiest farming seasons, seeding, haying and harvesting, it was extremely hard on him. He worked from sunrise until midnight in the forge.

Tretiak. His parents died in the camp when he was about 13 years old and he was left an orphan.

Tayubka. Former officer in the tsarist army. He was arrested in 1934 and never returned to camp again. His wife and children remained without him.

Turchyn. In order to be able to buy one's bread ration it was necessary to get up at midnight and go to the camp store to sign up in the queue, as there was never enough to go round. Marking one's number on the palm of the hand, all stood around and waited until 8 o'clock in the morning. The bread was always hot and damp and steaming. Several hundred people shoved and pushed outside the door and trampled on each other's feet and the queue broke. No one was a bigger offender in breaking out of line than Turchyn. He always came to the store last, and was the first to get his bread. He paid no heed to the protests, but pushed and elbowed his way through the door. The women scolded, and the children screamed and cried. He was then about 16 years of age.

Vasko. His parents died in the camp.

Voloshchuk. His family suffered extreme hunger. His son made several trips to Chelyabinsk for bread and was penalized for it.

Voychenko. This old man twice tried to escape to Ukraine "to die in his native land" but the dreadful famine forced him to return to the concentration camp. Putilin man-handled him, and his two sons were punished by the penalty battalion for their father's act.

Yawtushenko. He was one of the first to be sent to the penalty battalion. To display his superiority Chermishanov ordered all adults to be brought to the club under escort and put on the stage facing the audience. In the hall dead silence prevailed, a sense of ominous foreboding. Commandant Chermishanov proceeded with the judgments, with wild screams

and filthy curses directed first at the group on the stage and finally the whole camp. Having played himself out, he handed the whole group to the mounted NKVD division which drove them to Kopeisk. Yawtushenko's oldest son died from typhus. The younger one fled after suffering extreme hunger and drifted around the small towns in the Urals. He reappeared at the camp once, his face swollen and head bruised. Then he disappeared, and no one ever saw him again.

Yurchenko. Not all this family was brought to the camp. A fourteen-year-old son remained in Ukraine. During the 1933 famine he was left by relatives to shift for himself. He begged for food, and later came to the camp to join his parents.

Zhuravel. His father and Kolesnyk were guarding potatoes. He was often approached by women who begged for a potato or two for their hungry children. Commandant Chermishanov heard of this. He was arrested and, for "wasting socialist food", was sentenced to ten years in prison. He died there.

Zhydkiw. His parents died in the camp.

Zhykhar. His parents died in the camp.

Motya and Fedya. They were brother and sister and were referred to in camp as "monks". I have forgotten their surname. They worked, at first, in mine No. 205, shovelling coal with large shovels unto the freight cars. Dressed in tatters tied with a rope at the waist they were a pitiful sight. Their legs were bound with rags to the knees, and on their feet they wore "lapti" (tree-bark sandals). I saw Fedya every morning outside the bread shop begging for bread, holding the yellow ration card in his hand, his eyes full of tears. Martynovich, the storekeeper waved his hands and said, "Fedya, go to the devil. You ate your bread already". But Fedya remained rooted to the spot. Even when Martynovich lost his temper and threatened, he still did not move. He grinned childishly and persisted in a calm voice, "Ivan Martynovich, please, just a little bread."

Motya contracted malaria. I do not remember which mud hut she and her brother occupied, but when she became ill she lay in the stable where horse harness was kept. She lay on bare boards with a straw-filled sack under her head, and was covered with some filthy tatters. Beside her stood a can from preserves into which someone had poured soup for her. Flies swarmed around this can and her face. Her

face, now grey and covered with down, had become as small as an infant's. Her eyes had sunk deep in the sockets and stared dully at the brown ceiling. She never moved, but lay so still she gave the impression of death. Only when the flies tried to crawl into her open mouth would she slowly close it, giving evidence that life still remained. She never begged for help, and none came to offer any. Time passed and the stable filled with a deadly stench. She was slowly dying.

I have mentioned only those names which are still clear in my memory. Many, many others which I have forgotten over the fifteen years will perhaps someday be mentioned by those who, having undergone persecution, somehow managed to remain alive. They will be mentioned by the Ukrainian nation when she reads the indictments of all Chermishanovs, Slobodins, Putilins, Tokarevs, Bezsmertnykhs, and especially that of their overlord, teacher and friend, that arch-criminal Stalin.

Our camp also had other nationalities, who, as Ukrainian citizens, were exiled for torture and extermination.

Germans. Lebtakh, May, Peters, (who until 1934 was secretary for Commandants Fulks, Geberline, until 1934 director of the camp collective farm).

Bulgarians. Nachev, Popov, Kiskin, (who constantly suffered hunger, and one day ate hot bread in the bread store and died). Dimitrov, Zadeka.

Czechs. Shmyhul.

This list also is far from complete. So many names have become lost to my memory. After Kirov's assassination, Germans and Bulgarians were taken away to Kirzawod camp near Kopeisk, especially organized for these nationalities. In 1937, during the Yezhov reign, all males in that camp over 16 years of age were arrested and shipped to the Far East for hard labor.

X.

The Neighbouring Camps For Exiles

Syevyerny Camp

Beside Camp No. 205, where I suffered for five years, there were other camps. Three kilometers from our location was a camp "Syevyerny" identical with ours. It was

first occupied by Kalmyks. These perennial nomads of the Astrakhan steppes became bitter enemies of Russian communism. They also were forced into collectivization and divided into kurkuls, middle-class and poor kurkuls. Robbed of their possessions, they were brought across the Urals for destruction. They wore leather clothing summer and winter. Both men and women wore braids so that it was difficult to tell them apart. The GPU tried to force them into the mines, but not one Kalmyk agreed to work there. To them a mine was "a terrible hole". Machinery, locomotives, automobiles and electricity were "wild wonders". They distrusted and avoided them. With a few exceptions, they could neither speak, or understand Russian. "For disobedience and refusal to work" all adult males were deprived of their worker's bread ration. For the yellow cards given them instead, they could obtain only 12 1/3 ounces of bread per person, and from 4 1/2 to 11 pounds of cereal per month. Consequently, all the Kalmyks suffered perpetual hunger and one after another began to die.

In the spring of 1933, a great number of the collective farm horses died from starvation and some unidentified disease. They were hauled into the forest and buried. The hungry Kalmyks would steal to these graves at night and exhume the dead animals for their own consumption. They were soon themselves infected with the scourge, and by mid-summer of 1933 every Kalmyk had died, with one exception, Lev, who was the Commandant's secretary and translator. He is the only living witness to that horrible tragedy.

Zlakazowsky Exile Camp

About three miles west of us was the Zlakazowsky Camp which harboured the Kazan Tatars. They lived in long wooden barracks, several families to a room. No beds, tables or chairs were provided for them. They slept and ate on the floor. By 1935 only a few Tatar families were left in the camp; the rest had died from typhus and starvation.

"Shallow Mines" Camp

Five kilometers west of Kopeisk was located the "Shallow Mines" Camp. It was filled with Ukrainians from Chernyhiw. They worked in the damp shallow mines and lived in dark low dug-outs. Until 1937 their Commandant was Kuznetsov (three squares on his collar). The mines often caved in. During one such incident a whole brigade of miners was

buried. The Chelyabinsk Party Secretary, Kuzma Ryndin, himself came to conduct the investigation and several arrests were made.

Potanino Camp

This camp was situated near the small railroad station, Potanino. In its dugouts lived kurkuls and counter-revolutionaries from the Volga region. Passing its cemetery in spring and summer one could always see every dog in the vicinity devouring the corpses which they had dug up from the graves. The offensive stench from the cemetery was carried by the wind for miles around.

Emanzhelinovsk, Etkulsk and Korkinsk Exile Camps were all located within about 30 miles of the town of Kopeisk.

Ivan Bondarenko

COMMUNIST TERROR IN NAHILNE

Our family consisted of six members, our parents and four sons. We owned 14 acres of land, two horses, two cows, a house and a stable. For these possessions the Russian communist government classed us as "kurkuls". My oldest brother was sentenced to eight years imprisonment and the second oldest was given ten years. Both were sent away to build the White Sea Canal. The rest of us were ordered not to leave the premises.

On March 18, 1931, communist government representatives came to our house, headed by Solovyov and Ivanov. We were ordered to prepare to leave but to take nothing out of the house, not even extra clothing. We got on a sled, which was ready for us, and were driven to Rostyh. There we were put on a train consisting of 48 freight cars each one packed with 45 people.

We came to Krasnoyarsk and were all herded into a large hall used as a washroom, with cold water only laid on, and with no segregation as to sex or age. After this we were again packed on to the train and proceeded to a camp on the other side of the Yenisey River. There we lived in dugouts measuring about $5\frac{1}{2}$ by $27\frac{1}{3}$ yards. Stalin's satrap, who was the camp director, informed us that every ten people were to be allotted $2\frac{3}{4}$ yards of space in the dugout dwelling. After a week in these holes we were moved to an isolation camp in Tomsk which had 13,000 people in it.

During my stay in this isolation camp at least 18 to 20 people died daily from starvation and different diseases. The director of this prison was Podolsky. We received 9 ounces of bread per person and a bowl of murky, unsalted

water which for some reason was referred to as soup. It stank of spoiled fish.

Whenever Podolsky visited the isolation cells we were forbidden to stand up. The administration headquarters was located at 12 Spaska, in the town of Tomsk.

In May a convoy came and picked out those who were still able to move, to be shipped to a port on Tom River. We were brought to the Bakhcharsk Administration. The Commandant's name was Belkin. We were shown to an area almost completely surrounded by water and told that we would have to build our own dwellings but we were given no materials or instruments. The men were driven to work building a new harbor. We were allotted 7 ounces of bread and were expected to procure additional food wherever and however we could. The water was unfit for drinking and these harrowing conditions soon became too much for the people. They became ill and died.

There were about 5,000 persons in the Bakhcharsk Administration. From here we were transferred to the Parbinsk Administration where Maksymov was the Commandant transferring with us later to the Bundyursk Administration. There we were given one axe and one saw to ten families and told to build our own dwellings. For each person we were given 6 1/5 ounces of rye flour and nothing else, not even salt. When my father and I completed our hut from tree branches Maksymov ousted us and gave it to another family. We were told to build another. A Canadian Ukrainian, Yuhym Korkyshka, died in this camp.

Conditions became so unbearable that a revolt broke out. To stifle it a mounted division of NKVD came from Tomsk. As a first step towards bringing the uprising under control they shot a former priest and his family of four.

The foregoing is a concise account of the true experiences of myself and my close relatives. There is much more; and much that has been obliterated from my memory by the passing of time.

Petro Stepovy

STALIN'S CRIMES: A TESTIMONY

The communists seized Ukraine in 1920 and began their rule by confiscating the land belonging to the farmers and making it state property. To induce the farmers into collectivization they brought to the collective farms cattle, grain for seed, machinery, fertilizer, etc., all pillaged from the more prosperous farmers.

The collective farmers lived poorly. They took no interest in their work. The cattle and horses died from lack of proper care, the grain rotted in the fields, machinery rusted and deteriorated and the people were hungry and ragged.

On the other hand those who still farmed independently worked their land well, rented more land from the government, bought machinery and cattle from those who gave up farming, and soon became prosperous in spite of the heavy taxes imposed on them. "There will be enough for the state and for us," they told one another and doggedly continued on. The difference between the independent farmers and those of the collective farms became more and more apparent, and soon the latter began to disintegrate.

This did not suit the communists. They saw that simple propaganda was no inducement to the farmers and that they still resisted collectivization. The more prosperous were also the better informed and were consequently more skeptical of the promised paradise of collectivization. The communists decided to deal more drastically with this group.

In 1929 propaganda was intensified. The press and radio daily blared "destroy the "kurkul" and hasten complete collectivization." Mass arrests of the better farmers

were started, and indictments fabricated were: late in paying taxes, late in completing harvest, agitation against collective farms, and others. Soon hundreds of thousands of farmers were arrested and sentenced to different terms in concentration camps. In 1930 a real catastrophe occurred. Meetings were called in the villages and, under the NKVD's dictates, decisions were reached to bring about a 100 per cent collectivization and liquidate the "kurkul" as a class. The better farmers were ousted from their homes. Everyone in the village was warned not to give these people refuge or food, or they would be punished in the same manner. It had also been decided that they were to be exiled beyond the boundaries of Ukraine. This plan was also carried out.

In 1923 I married and received my allotment of land. In two years I built myself a house and other buildings needed on a farm. I had a cow, a horse, ten sheep, a hog, and about twenty chickens. It was a modest but well-run farm which could sustain about four people.

In 1929 I was labelled a "kurkul" and asked to sell to the state 619 bushels of wheat, impossible to grow on 12 acres of land. I well knew what failure to fulfill this requirement meant. I would be dispossessed of my property and banished to a concentration camp. I sold all my possessions and bought wheat at a high price to sell to the government at a fixed price. Somehow I managed to get the 619 bushels required.

In January, 1930, Stalin, "father of the people", began to "liquidate the kurkuls as a class". On February 23rd of that year I was arrested and, without trial, sentenced to be exiled from Ukraine. On February 26th I was placed on a vehicle and driven to the station. There were only six families leaving at this time although about fifty had been evicted from their homes. They had neither food nor place to sleep. Everyone in the village, fearing a similar fate, shunned them as if they were lepers. Our group, the bigger criminals, were taken to a side station near Kirovograd. We drove under heavy guard along blind alleys and unused trails, detouring to by-pass villages. At this station we crowded, with many others from our district, into freight cars of 40 to 50 people to a car and were rushed off north. We travelled without stops, with several NKVD men guarding every car. We were given no food or water. Cars

where women and children were crammed soon had not enough air. People died, but they were completely disregarded. We rushed on to the North.

We arrived at Bakaritsa station in Arkhangelsk. Men with sleds drove up to the train and began loading our pitiful possessions on them, together with the infants and corpses of those who had died on the trip. Women and the old folks were told to walk. The men were warned, under penalty of execution, not to leave the train. After the sleds left with our families, we were all ordered into a large frame barrack. It was unheated although the temperature was around 35 degrees below zero. We did not know why we were there, or why our loved ones were taken away. We waited silently, shivering and our teeth chattering, for we knew not what.

After about five hours we were taken out and put into a barbed wire enclosure. An NKVD officer approached and announced in Russian: "You were brought here not to sleep or loaf, but to work. You and your families have been taken under the care of the government and you will have to build homes for yourselves and your families. You have committed no crime but were brought here because the government and the party require it".

After this speech we were packed into a train again and taken in the opposite direction. At six o'clock the following morning we arrived at the small station of Konosha. We got out in a small clearing and were told to build a hundred barracks. These barracks measured 18 by 12 yards at the bottom and gradually came together at the top in the shape of a cone. They were built from fir trees and covered with frozen mud on the outside. At each end was a door, a clay oven in the centre and three tiers of wide ledges along the walls which served as bunks. Each one of these contraptions was to house 300 people.

The fir for these buildings had to be carried for a distance of 500 yards. We got stuck in the deep snow and fell. The long clumsy clothing tangled around our arms and feet when we made an attempt to get up. The NKVD lost their patience and beat us with the heavy ends of their rifles. Before the end of the day a barrack frame was built and we spent the night in it. The temperature was about 35 degrees below zero. We built a fire and tried to thaw our

stiff, frozen garments. There was no escape. All around us was the formidable forest and guards with dogs. As soon as dawn appeared we were driven off to work, although no one had slept a wink.

At ten o'clock were taken to the station cafe and given 14 ounces of bread and tea, then off to work again. After eating bread and tea again in the evening, we slept in the snow or crowded into the cold barrack. It was filled with a thick heavy smoke from the open fire in the middle which stung the eyes and choked the inmates, but the mass of humanity slept. In the morning we trudged to work again, our faces unshaven, unwashed and our boots and clothing scorched.

In five days ten barracks were already standing, still without heaters. They were filled with women, children and old people, while their men were taken to some new site to build other barracks. It was 30 degrees below zero. Most of these women were from Tauria and wore light summer clothing. The babies needed care after the long, arduous trip. By morning 26 of them had frozen to death.

In all my life I have never witnessed a more heart-rending sight. Mothers of the dead babies wailed broken-heartedly, pulled their hair and beat their heads against the ground. Helplessly, the whole mob moaned loudly. Indignation and anger mounted.

The NKVD set their dogs on the crowd. They tore the dead infants from the mothers' arms and ordered a grave to be dug. Under the snow there were about twenty inches of frozen ground and water under that. Into this water 26 infant bodies were laid to rest ("enemies of the people") and covered with clods of earth and snow. Wiping away our tears, we wondered if the same fate had befallen our own children. (Later we learned that our families were in Arkhangelsk, in army barracks).

In churches, shops and barracks wide ledges, in four or five tiers, were constructed along the walls and served as bunks. These places teemed like beehives with wretched humanity, but were not as orderly. Because of lack of sanitation facilities they were soon filthy, and reeked with foul air. There was no light, no water or sewerage.

However, these conditions were paradise in comparison with the plight of those who were virtually dumped out in

the cold in some forest without a roof over their heads or of those who lived in mud huts or dugouts.

Trainload after trainload of Ukrainians were transported to this desolate North. Barracks were hastily thrown together and quickly jammed with new arrivals. Over a 400-mile stretch, from Gryazovets to Arkhangelsk, within a 30-mile radius of the railroad, every camp was overflowing with these victims. It was difficult to tell the exact number that were there, but estimates showed about 2,000,000, of whom 50 per cent were children. Babies and young children died like flies. In Vologda, Arkhangelsk and Kotlas the child death rate reached terrifying proportions. To conceal his abominable crime the "father of the people" ordered everyone removed to the forest immediately.

At the beginning of April we were all moved deep into the forest and into barracks. On April 8th I received word that my wife and children were still living, in Yemetsk but that the children were critically ill with scarlet fever. On April 14th we were told that all those who had families in Yemetsk would be allowed to join them there. The next day we were loaded on a train and at 10 A.M. pulled off to the North. Everyone of us anticipated the meeting with excitement and a guarded elation. "At least we can die together," some remarked.

But all our hopes were in vain. The train passed Yemetsk and speeded on. Some of the men broke boards in the cars and bars from the windows and leaped out. The NKVD rushed into action and started shooting. Eight men were killed.

At seven o'clock that evening we arrived at Obozorka and stopped there. We were told that from there we were to walk to Pinega and build accommodations. We walked about 11 miles from the station to a tiny village, and were billeted in the homes of the inhabitants. A guard stood at every house, and the streets were heavily patrolled.

Taking advantage of the fact that the house in which I slept stood on the very outskirts of the village and next to a thick forest I fled, taking only some bread with me. By morning I was on the road, walking towards Obozorka with the hope of finding my family.

I reached the station late at night and stealthily got in a train for Yemetsk. At 2 A.M. the train pulled out. I was

breathless with excitement and my heart was bursting with happiness that by morning I would be with my loved ones again. Before dawn the train pulled in at a small intersection and I alighted. I figured I had about three miles to walk to reach my destination. The two sleepless days and nights had left me exhausted and I was feeling terrible pangs of hunger, but the thought that now only an hour's walk separated me from my family gave me new strength and I walked on.

I entered the barrack and when I saw my worn out and haggard wife, whom I hardly recognized, and my children bundled in rags I fell in a dead faint. When I revived, I saw that the barracks were filled with a mass of such jaded humanity, all helpless in their abject situation.

I am sorry I cannot describe this tragic scene adequately. I trust the reader's imagination will aid him to visualize its enormity. In Yemetsk there were 97 barracks which housed 32,000 people. The majority of them were children, all suffering with measles or scarlet fever. Medical aid was nil. For food they received 14 ounces of black bread, $3\frac{1}{2}$ ounces of millet seed and $3\frac{1}{2}$ ounces of fish. They lived 300 to 350 people to a barrack. All were haggard and dirty. Every morning funerals were held for those who had died during the night. There were so many of them that the processions never ended throughout the whole day. On April 28th my daughter died. The three-year-old "criminal" had paid for her parents' and grandparents' "crimes". Her martyrdom, and that of hundreds of thousands like her who died at Stalin's bloody hands, will not go unpunished. These innocent victims will pray to God for retribution on Stalin and his lackeys. The rivers of tears and blood will have to be requited.

Six months later I managed to escape to the Caucasus, taking my wife along. I managed to find work under an assumed name, changing my place of residence often.

In 1935 I was caught and arrested again and sent to the same exile camp. As I passed through Yemetsk I noticed that the cemetery where once the crosses had stood was now a level stretch of ground. The executioners had covered the traces of their fiendish deeds. The half-demolished barracks were the only reminder of the terrible tragedy.

Anatol Romen

HOW THEY GREW UP

In the taiga beyond the Ural Mountains. On the fourth day, towards evening, about 43 miles from the railway station of Nadezhdinsk the whole column heard the resounding shouts of the guards: "Attention, attention!" Looking in the direction from which these shouts issued we saw an official of the GPU, who stood on a tree stump on higher ground. He cleared his throat, and when everything had quieted down shouted: "Your Ukraine is right here," and pointed at the primeval taiga that sent an ominous rustling sound above our heads. "Those who try to escape from here will be shot." That was the whole of his speech.

The men began to build primitive tent dwellings. Fires were started around them, and were kept burning day and night.

Living conditions became worse from day to day, as the cold became more severe. The people suffered from colds. When December came, the ravages from the cold became alarming: everyday not only tens of children or the old and sick froze to death but also healthy grownups. All through the day and night rang the heart-rending cries and wails of children who had some of their limbs frozen. Some people became insane. Mothers killed or hanged their children, and took their own lives right beside them. Every morning there were corpses of children and grownups, especially women, hanging from the trees, covered with sparkling frost.

At last, in January 1932, bending all our efforts to the task, we finished building flimsy barracks for our dwellings. Now the people were safe from the cold, but not from contagious and other diseases, such as typhus and scurvy. Exhausted and hungry, they were an easy mark for disease and died en masse.

In April, that is six months after our arrival in this place, our transport which numbered 4,800 people dwindled to 2,300 persons. Some tried to save themselves by running away, but all of these more daring individuals were caught, and either executed or sent to even worse concentration camps. Other runaways perished from the cold in the taiga.

It was all but impossible to run away. The woods were patrolled by roaming natives who were armed and hunted out those who escaped from exile. These hunters of blood money were well paid by the state. They received for every caught runaway, dead or alive, a pud (36 pounds) of white flour, one 36 ounce bottle of whiskey (vodka) and one hundred rubles in cash.

This was the Soviet way to build a railway line from the settlement to the railway station of Nadezhdinsk. It was finished on November 7, 1932, and the place was named "Stalino". The station was decorated by a huge sign in Russian: "Long live our great leader and teacher, comrade Stalin." Above this sign the hateful red flag that froze our hearts fluttered in the cold wind.

Escape

The first of May 1933 being a holiday, I went with Mykola to a clearing in the taiga. Talking, we remembered this "first of May" day in Ukraine.

"And to-day sunk in this abysmal taiga, hungry and half-naked we won't last long. We'll perish as thousands of others have already done. . ."

We didn't want to die. The desire to live, and live the life of a free man, was overpowering. We began again, as we had many times before, to think about escape. Our greatest worry was how to get guns, because a plunge into the taiga meant certain death for an unarmed man. Having made our plans, we were going back to the settlement. It was early afternoon when we passed the station. We noticed that the station master was getting ready to go on some trip with his family. Hiding behind bushes, we tried to go near the building to see if he was going to carry his guns. He took a rifle and a revolver, which meant that his shotgun was left behind. The station master went in the direction of Nadezhdinsk. Only his aged mother remained at home.

Soon after, she appeared with pails and a towel and went into the stable. It was plain that she was going to milk the cows. We rushed into the house, grabbed the gun and

the shells, and hid all this in the forest. Then we quickly returned to the settlement to get some provisions and other things as far as was possible. We did not forget to borrow a frying pan from our neighbors, assuring them we would soon return it. Then we left the settlement, and ran into the taiga to get as far as possible from the settlement.

On the third day, thinking we were far enough away, we decided to take a rest. Choosing an isolated tree, we made our camp under it to rest and prepare food for our further march. Mykola made a fire and stretched hammocks in the branches of the tree, and I went on a hunt into the forest.

About an hour later I returned with a deer. Mykola was very glad to see it, and began at once to prepare it. Pretty soon meat was roasting in the frying pan.

Having rested the next day, we started out again. Having no compass we tried to go in a north-easterly direction in order to bypass the village of those Siberian natives who hunt for runaways. The trees were our only guide.

A long and tiresome way lay before us. We were aware of the fact that all kinds of natural obstacles and great dangers lay in wait for us in the taiga. Many times, following animal trails, we stumbled upon a sleeping bear or climbed the trees to escape from wild pigs, keeping very quiet until they had disappeared.

But the greatest misfortune was when my true friend Mykola became sick with acute dysentery. A few days later he was so weak that he walked with great difficulty. This caused us both a lot of worry and anxiety.

On the fifth day of our escape Mykola died, and I was left all alone in the vast taiga. In great grief I buried my friend, laying his body between two big uprooted trees, covered it with branches and what other things I could find. I raised a cross over his resting place, weeping bitterly, and, saying goodbye, was lost in the taiga.

Marko A. Krubly

THE HAMLET OF ROMANCHUKY

One night in the early spring of 1931, the men in our hamlet of Romanchuky in the region of Poltava, having been officially defined as "kurkul exporters", were put under arrest. The hamlet was small, there were only 104 farmer families living in it.

The prisoners were taken to the little town of Nedryhayliw and, because there was no room in the town prison for all of them, the communist authorities confiscated their own storehouses and log pigsties, took the buildings to Nedryhayliw, built a board fence topped with barbed wire around them, and imprisoned their owners in them. At the same time, arrests were proceeding in the neighboring hamlets and villages. Each storehouse or pigsty had to serve as prison to as many individuals as could be squeezed into it, and in the end the buildings were packed like cans of sardines with 300 - 500 persons in each of them.

After the arrests, the hamlets and villages, in which only women and children remained, were harassed each day by the so called "buksyor brigade" (a gang of toughs) with instructions to discover and confiscate all products and clothing. This went on till the end of June. The first week, in July 1942, families from our hamlet and many others from the neighboring hamlets and villages were ordered to prepare for evacuation to an unknown destination.

We were taken to the village of Buryky, seat of the village soviet. It appears we were the last to come to this gathering point, because there already was a long line of wagons waiting.

From the village soviet building there came the chairman, Simon Saliy, three strangers in civilian clothes, perhaps

representatives of the county party or administrative authorities, one individual in NKVD uniform, and 10 - 12 NKVD agents who surrounded the wagons.

The NKVD leader, speaking in Russian, said to the drivers of the teams: "Drive one after another and don't fall behind even a step!" and, turning to the NKVD men: "If anyone should try to run away, shoot to kill without warning."

The line moved in the direction of the county of Nedryhayliw in the Sumy district, and arrived at Khustyany where another line of teams as big as ours was waiting for us. The two lines having joined together, at about one o'clock at night we continued our exodus. The combined line was so long that both ends of it could not be seen at the same time. It was made up of "kurkuls", grown ups and children from the village soviets of Buryky, Khustyany, Smila, Khmeliw, Sulemiw, Pekariw, Marsheliw, Bizhew, Hruniw, Besediw, Tomashiw, etc.

We arrived in Nedryhayliw in the afternoon and were ordered to make camp on the village common. My mother showed me a long row of storehouses, stables and pigsties enclosed by a board fence and barbed wire, about 300 yards distant from our camping ground. "Your father is in one of those," she said. Towards evening a huge crowd of women and children gathered before the gate of the enclosure. Each woman wanted her husband to know she was already here.

The next day, my mother told me to wait by the gate for a possible chance of seeing my father. When the gate opened, 6 or 7 prisoners under NKVD guard rolled out a big barrel used for holding water in readiness for fire. They went to get water. I heard my name called. It was my father whom I had not seen for four months, and did not now recognize. He was emaciated, with long hair, clad only in shorts, barefooted. Other prisoners looked the same. I rushed to my father in spite of the shouts of the NKVD men and told him that all of us were here. I asked my father why they had so few clothes on, and he answered that the place was so hot that it could not be any different.

About 5 days later, Nedryhayliw was packed with countless numbers of wagons taken there by the NKVD. We were told to prepare for further travel under augmented guard. The men were driven separately on foot. The NKVD guards had dogs and machine guns. We turned to the East. That

evening we arrived at the railway station of Vyr and were loaded into boxcars. After a while the families were reunited, and we were glad our father was with us. The older ones said that it would be better to die together if they had to. Those women and children whose husbands and fathers escaped were very sad, and wept, cursing their fate.

As far as I can remember our travel ended on the eighth day. Our train stopped in the wilderness, surrounded by primeval forests and high mountains. We were ordered to get off the train and head towards a river flowing about 1/3 mile from the railway. This was the river Usva. We made camp on a large meadow by the river. I learned that these were the Ural Mountains. The NKVD guard departed, and its duties were taken over by a civil guard armed only with rifles.

Our transport was divided into four groups, one remained in the locality of Stolby, the others were sent to nearby Brevno, Zolotaya Yamka and the last one, to which we belonged, to Medvezhoye. There was a barrack here about 40 yards long, furnished with two tiers of raised wooden platforms to serve as beds. There was no room for all of us in the barracks, and half the people had to remain outside.

Our guardians supplied us with axes and saws, and all began to work at cutting forest trees. Women, old people and those who were crowded out of the original barracks, built a new one, covering the roof with birch bark. The floor was made out of branches of conifers. We ceased to be called "kurkuls", and received the more respectable name of "special settlers".

Our food rations were brought and distributed once a week. They consisted of bread, dried fish, cereal and sugar. The rations must have been very small because I remember that people roamed the woods trying to find something that could be eaten. The children began to die out. The weekly rations grew smaller each week and in two months the quantity became so small that a weekly ration could be eaten at one meal. Now older people, too, began to swell up from hunger and die.

In the spring of 1932, the authorities forgot about us altogether. We did not receive any food, and the death rate grew to alarming proportions. Human bodies were scattered in the forest, and there was no one to bury them. For instance I'll mention the family of Yukhym Romanchuk. He and his wife died from hunger early in the spring, their

son Ivan also died and the daughter-in-law, Anstisa, who had a two year old child, committed suicide and murder. She threw the child into the river Usva and then jumped in herself.

The family of Yakiw Romanchuk, Yukhym's brother, consisting of three persons, also perished from hunger. Others that shared a like fate were Andriy Panchenko's family of eight persons, and Mytro Antsibor's family of five. Panchenko's youngest daughter, about seven years old, died last, gnawing the flesh of her fingers before she died. In our family of eleven persons, six died from starvation.

In 1936 my father and I returned to Ukraine and lived there illegally, but the new law requiring every person to carry a passport forced us to apply for them in the Smila county of the district of Sumy. We were arrested by the Smila NKVD. I was put into one cell, and father into another. I never saw my father again.

I was held in prison for a month, during which time they questioned me every day. In the end however, I was set free as a minor and issued a passport valid for three months. When I was waiting for my passport at the desk the NKVD chief, Polovy said to the official issuing passports: "Vasily Andreyevich, give him a passport. He is a young man, and Vladimir Ilyich Lenin said that a young man is like a pliant osier twig, it may be bent in any desirable direction". When I was free and asked Polovy about my father he said: "Your father was sentenced to ten years in concentration camps without privilege of correspondence", then added: "Don't say he's your father, he is an enemy of the people".

Later, I learned in a round about way that my father had died in the concentration camp of Nyandoma, near Arkhangelsk.

During my examination at the Smila prison I inadvertently mentioned the famine that raged in Ukraine in 1932 - 1933. When the NKVD agent heard the word "famine" he jumped from the chair, slapped my face and said: "What famine? We had no famine here. only state difficulties."

In 1941 I returned to the hamlet of Romanchuky. I found 62 farmer families there instead of 104, and more than half of them were strangers brought from distant localities.

E. Yemchenko

FROM VOLOGDA TO UKRAINE

We lived in the hamlet of Havryliwsky, in the village of Malo Oleksandriwka, Oleksandriwka District, Mykolaiw province. I was the daughter of a Ukrainian farmer.

As soon as they occupied Ukraine, the Russian Communists began destroying farmers. In October, 1928, Moscow issued the "de-kurkulizing order" and instituted collectivization. When they came to our farm they levied taxes on us beyond our means to pay. Our property was then confiscated, and our whole family driven out of our home on a cold autumn day. We were not allowed to take any personal belongings or food. We were driven to the Bila Krynytsya station, and as we approached we noticed that a huge throng of people from the surrounding villages was already collected there to be shipped to the far north, to the Vologda region.

The train was ready and we were all loaded on, 2,000 people, 60 to a car, mothers, fathers, children, grandmothers and grandfathers. The train headed for Moscow. During the trip some people in desperation threw themselves off the fast moving train to kill themselves, or inflict some injury that would stave off deportation. During our whole ride to Moscow we were given no food or water. A great number of people died or became insane. When we reached Moscow, only half of those who started out remained alive.

In Moscow we were given "soup" — absolutely clear water. As we carried no utensils with us we drank it directly from the pail. When this feeding was finished, we were taken outside and all lined up as we were, parents and children and grandparents, and ordered to undress to the skin. Then a thorough search was made for gold, and all

gold teeth were extracted. Some of the women went mad during this process, and were immediately sent to insane asylums.

Then we were again loaded on the train and continued to the city of Vologda. There we were placed in churches, which were extremely cold, with broken windows and cement floors. Intense frosts prevailed during this period, and the snow was over 6 feet deep. Forty-seven churches were packed with deportees, predominantly Ukrainians, though other nationalities were in considerable evidence; Tatars, Georgians, Germans. We were located in the Church of the Assumption, which was under the command of NKVDist Khrystov. Along the walls "nary" (wide ledges to sleep on) were constructed, and we all slept together, young and old and small children.

Soon, the men were all called away to work at lumbering. Life was horrible. The children were allotted 7 ounces of bread and workers 17½ ounces. Forty to fifty children died daily, and were buried in mass graves. The older people went insane in great numbers.

We lived here until spring, and when the thaw came and the River Sukhona was clear, we were loaded on barges and carried 185 miles to the Nyuksenitsa district. At a spot in the midst of a thick forest and deep snow we were told to alight, and that was where we were to live.

Commandant Firsov brought us saws and axes. We went to work immediately clearing the snow, chopping down trees, and building huts from tree branches and covering them with bark and moss. Families were divided, different numbers in different timbering projects. Besides our pitiful rations we received no other pay for our hard labor. Everyone was forced to work, even young children were driven off to collect moss.

And so we built settlements in this desolate wilderness, on human corpses. . .

I spent three years in this slavery, separated from my parents, sisters and brothers, who were also somewhere in this vicinity but in different camps. I was now fourteen years of age, my childhood having been spent in these dreadful circumstances, and decided to flee.

I made the trip through the vast north on foot, undergoing terrifying experiences, but my intense desire to return to Ukraine persisted, and I doggedly continued on.

When I reached my native land it was 1933, the year of the great famine. I encountered alarming changes. It was impossible to buy bread, while in Russia stores were overflowing with goods. People were dying everywhere. There was absolutely no food; it was all taken away to the last kernel.

CHAPTER

III.

**COLLECTIVIZATION, LIQUIDATION OF
KURKUL CLASS AND FAMINE**



COLLECTIVIZATION AND "KURKUL" LIQUIDATION

The Communist Party Convention's resolution to collectivize all individual small farms received very wide publicity in the Soviet press in December, 1929. In the wake of this convention one hundred thousand active communists from industrial centres in Russia were mobilized and sent to the villages in Ukraine. The villages soon became the target of large detachments of militia and GPU. The local communists were ordered to remain at their posts and acted there as guards together with the Komsomol.

Being employed at that time in the land division of the local administration, I was also called upon to assist and was sent to the village of Birky in the Zinkiw county of the Poltava region.

The village had about 300 individual farmers and close to 6,000 inhabitants. Four collective farms were supposed to be organized there which at first were called "Societies for Common Land Cultivation" and later "Village Farming Co-

operatives". The mobilized promoters of collectivization were divided into four groups which had common headquarters. The leader of the group in which I was engaged was F. Kramarenko, district judge from the town of Zinkiw, a communist, 55 years of age. (He was later, in 1937, arrested and exiled to Kolyma).

The first step taken was a meeting of all farmers in the village soviet building, at which the secretary of the county party executive Udovychenko informed everyone that the Central Communist Party Committee and the government in Moscow had given orders that all enemies of collectivization should be deprived of their citizenship rights, their properties confiscated and handed over to the collectives as a basis for collectivization. Going into details there were 64 such farmers found in the village of Birky who became the first victims of this "voluntary" collectivization. The chairman of the village soviet, the local communist Semen Velychko, read the list of these farmers. They were: Mykyta Gontar, Avram Korobka, Hnat Lewchenko, Mytrofan Minyailo, Mykhaylo Mykytenko, Levko Polakiw, Trokhym Savisko, Andron Storozhenko, Roman Yablunowsky, and many others. The actual "dekurkulizing" action was entrusted to a special brigade composed of the local dregs of humanity, such as idlers, gamblers, criminals and other unsavoury characters, who became a bulwark of the Soviet regime in the villages.

Thus by the end of December all those destined to be dekurkulized were driven out of their homes with the exception of Roman Yablunowsky who had six small children, and for whom I interceded before the leader, Kramarenko, asking that he be allowed to remain in his home through the winter months.

At the time when these so-called "kurkul families", driven out of their homes in winter, were roaming the outlying parts of the village looking for shelter, a meeting at which attendance was compulsory was called to announce to the villagers the party and Kremlin government decision to dekurkulize an additional 20 farmers. The assembled farmers were also told that dekurkulizing of the 64 farmers on the first list had been completed and threatened that, in case of continued resistance to collectivization, the village soviet and the party committee would be forced to resort to further dekurkulizing action.

The prisons were filled with farmers who had failed to

attend meetings or had criticized the collective system of farming. There they were shown "to be in error" and, when released, most of them joined the collectives.

Besides these measures those unwilling to join the collectives were forced to do so by taxes in produce and money imposed on them. This was the so-called "plan do dvoru" (individual farmer plan). The deadline for paying such a tax was 24 hours after receiving the order, but very often the order was delivered only a few hours before the deadline, and sometimes not at all. When the time of payment passed and the tax had not been paid, the property was sold to the village soviet (in the absence of the owner) at assessment prices in the village records. These properties were sold at ridiculous prices of 50 to 200 rubles each, when the taxes imposed according to the "individual farmer plan" amounted to 5,000 rubles in money alone. Besides this the sales were held at night and the farms were sold to the communist leaders or their henchmen who later resold them at high prices of 2,000 rubles or higher.

By the end of March, 1930, 75% of the village of Birky was collectivized, the management organized and the work begun. Thus, the bulk of the Ukrainian farmers was forced to join collective farms by means of terror and blackmail.

In spite of strong militia and GPU troop detachments in the Ukrainian villages at the time the farmers did not limit themselves to passive resistance, but met force with force and lawlessness with lawlessness. In January, 1930, the GPU chief was attacked and severely wounded close to Birky. Burning of collective farms was also resorted to. In March all the buildings of the collective, "New Way", burned to the ground and 47 horses, cows, sheep and pigs were lost. Houses of dispossessed "kurkuls" which became the property of the communist leaders, shared the same fate. F. Mykytenko, a communist leader from Birky, was attacked and badly mauled.

One Sunday at the beginning of March, a meeting of all the villagers was held in the yard of the village office in Birky. The representative of the county authorities was addressing the crowd when some one whispered from behind the crowd, "They are being taken away". Everyone turned away from the speaker to watch two armed men convoying Roman Yablunowsky's family, dispossessed and expelled, from their homes. The mother had a baby in her arms and two children, a little bigger, were holding on to her dress. The

father led two children by the hand, and the eldest girl, behind, carried a bundle of clothing. The crowd of farmers, seeing this, could not restrain itself from weeping which, growing in intensity, turned into a loud sobbing.

The farmers expected that the expulsion of the kurkuls from their homes would spell the end of the punishment meted out to them because, after all, they were innocent. There were still in Birky, about 400 homeless persons from babies to old people, 85 years of age, to remind everyone of the heinous crime of the Kremlin rulers.

The people were wrong. On March 14, during a heavy snowfall, an order was posted on the building of the village soviet forbidding anyone to give shelter and comfort to the kurkuls. Armed bands, militia and GPU, scattered all over the village began to expel the dekurkulized from their improvised dwellings and to take them to a gathering point. Small children and old people, unable to walk, were put on wagons. Then a column was formed which moved sadly out of Birky in the direction of the village of Sorochyntsi. There, about three miles from Birky, close to the forest, were great ravines formed by the action of water in bygone ages, called Redkovi Pechery (Radish's Caves). These caves received the first victims of collectivization, who were forbidden to return to the village. There were about three hundred persons in the group, including 36 children and 20 old people. The ground was still thickly covered with snow, and it was cold. It would be hard to describe the despair of the cave dwellers. But when evening twilight enveloped the tragedy of these people, shadows began to appear here and there who, hiding from each other, were surreptitiously trying to locate the new tenants in the ravines. They were afraid of stumbling on the GPU watchmen. Having located the objects of their search, the shadows would give them the things they brought, food, and sympathy that comforted the unfortunate and kept the spark of hope alive.

When the GPU and communist leaders discovered that the villagers were helping the victims, they sent additional GPU policemen who surrounded the "camp" and began a search. This was on Saturday of the same week. All food, consisting of bits of dried bread, corn, millet, flour, beans, potatoes, beets, onions, etc., was confiscated, put on two wagons and hauled away. These products were in small sacks from 5 to 12 pounds in weight. It was, undoubtedly, taken to

"grain collection points" as an additional supply for the insatiable Russian rulers. The gang who carried out this order repeatedly bragged how they had robbed the terrorized people and of the booty they had obtained.

Some of the people in Radish's Caves who had no small children or old people to take care of, sensing that their situation would not improve, ran away from the camp to the industrial centres. It was difficult to get work, but after a long wait they did, as a rule, get some jobs. But even there they were persecuted and, when found out, they were deported to concentration camps in the far North or in Siberia.

On April 18, two hundred human wretches who remained in the ravines were herded together by the police and driven to the railway station of Abazowka where trains were awaiting them. All of them, with tens of thousands of others like them, were loaded into boxcars and, under a strong GPU guard, were shipped to the far North.

Y. Maslivets

WHAT DID UKRAINIAN FARMERS GAIN FROM COLLECTIVE FARMS?

All the farmers who joined the collective* work for a whole year without remuneration and are responsible for carrying out government plans. Accounts with members of the collective are settled on January 1 each year.

All members, men and women alike, have a quota of work to perform each day and are credited with "1" (one day) when they do it. In some cases the credits are expressed in hours, that is, 8 hours a day. When quotas are not completed the credits are correspondingly marked as $\frac{3}{4}$, $\frac{1}{2}$ or $\frac{1}{4}$. When a member habitually fails to complete his quota or do his work properly, he is punished by subtraction from his account of a few days already credited to him.

After harvest and threshing, the grain is hauled to state collection points as "farm product taxes" to the state. This is called, in the official Soviet press and in circulars, a "fulfilling of the first Soviet commandment".

In 1932, in the county of Zinkiw, of Poltava province, these taxes amounted to about $7\frac{1}{2}$ bushels per acre.

In the collectives of the village of Birky in the county of Zinkiw, the assessment was as follows:

	Area in acres	Tax in bushels**
The collective "Bolshevik"	2,965	20,576

* We use simple form "collective" instead of "collective farm", a translation of the Russian "kolkhoz" or the Ukrainian "kolhosp", as a more convenient term.

** Changed from metric to English measures, basing calculation on the following equivalents: 1 hectare — 2.471 acres, 1 kilogram — 2.2046 pounds, 1 bushel — 60 pounds, as for wheat, though rye, barley and other grains were cultivated to some extent. Fractions are dropped as insignificant.

The collective "New Life"	2,718	17,637
The collective "New Way"	2,418	16,535
The collective "Socialist Way"	2,471	18,739

It must be added here that the above acreage included pasture, gardens, hoe crops and fallow land, which decreased the actual area under grain crops by 10 - 18% of the total.

Besides this basic state grain collection plan, the collective farm had to pay additional farm product taxes: 25% of the total yield to the "M.T.S." (Machine-Tractor Station) and "voluntary sale" to the cooperative, in addition to the state taxes. The government fixed prices were low, and the transaction was voluntary only in name, that is, in reality



Women weeders on a collective farm in the province of Dnipropetrovske.

it was an ill concealed robbery of the farmer, legalized by the administration. The M.T.S. tax was paid only by those collectives which were served by the stations, and consisted of 5.2 bushels per acre to the seed reserve, 2.2 bushels to an insurance fund and 2.2 bushels to the fodder reserve. The grand total of these "taxes" in the collectives in Zinkiw county amounted to 21.14 bushels per acre of all land under cultivation.

An average yield of grain in this district was 19 $\frac{1}{3}$ bushels of winter grain and 14 $\frac{7}{8}$ bushels of spring grain per acre. Not until the state requirements were satisfied was the remainder of the grain divided among the members of the collective according to the number of days of work each had to his credit. But quite often there was no remainder

to divide, and in 1932 the yield was not sufficient to satisfy the taxes and other state requirements. As the members of a collective are responsible for the payment of taxes, they were forced to give to the state small supplies of grain they kept for their own use. The discovery and confiscation of small amounts of grain held by the farmers was entrusted to brigades composed of communists and communist youth (komsomol). In this way, all the grain was taken away from the collectives. Individual farmers were treated even more severely. The taxes imposed on them were 5 to 10 times greater than the amount of grain they harvested that year. This was the infamous "individual farmer plan" which led to the liquidation of all individual farmers who were, in addition, treated as "kurkuls" had been in the previous years.

Such were the causes behind the great famine in Ukraine.

Government prices for grain collected from the collectives were as follows:

	Rubles per bushel
Rye, according to quality	1.31 to 1.42
Wheat, according to quality	1.47 to 1.77
Barley, oats, buckwheat, millet	1.10 to 1.50

At the same time, the prices of these grains raised on state farms were 2 to 2½ times greater though the workers producing them were paid starvation wages.

In addition to produce taxes, the collectives had to pay taxes in money which often were so high that the money received for what was left of the grain was insufficient to pay them.

It is obvious that collectives built on such principles, and with such a system of accounting were a "paying proposition", though they made their members the poorest people in the world.

The general financial records of the collective were kept separately from the accounts of the members, and were often juggled to present a false picture of their welfare. The members were debited for all personal services they received, such as using a team to go to town or to get fuel, going to a doctor or hospital, the plowing of a garden, creamery by-products (skimmed milk, whey, etc.), kindergarten and many others. During the year these things added up to large sums which appeared in the records as part of the income of the collective. When there was any grain left at the

end of the year, it was also divided among members and recorded as income.

Having thus arrived at the total income, 15 - 35% was kept as a reserve fund for the collective, 10 - 15% as a cultural fund, 3 - 10% as a relief fund, and about 10% for other "funds". In this way about 70% of the income was kept for further development of the collective, and for the state. The remainder was divided by the total of "work days" and each member was credited with a certain sum of money as his yearly wage.

These earnings quite often did not cover the indebtedness of the member for the personal services he received from the collective.

The value of a "work day" in the Zinkiw county collective in 1932 was from .10 to 1.20 rubles. In order to increase the income of the collectives and the value of a "work day", which was very necessary for propaganda abroad, the collectives were ordered to raise many other seed grains not included in the government price regulations, and to supply these to the members. Following these orders, the collectives began to raise a good deal of sunflower seed, which afterwards sold to the members as sunflower seed oil at 4 to 5 rubles a pound. Pigs were slaughtered, and the meat sold at 3.60 to 6.80 rubles a pound. Prices for the private use of teams, firewood, straw and other things were also raised. Besides this the collectives took subcontracts from government agencies to do lumbering or land drainage, for which they were paid in cash, and credited their members with "work days".

As a result of this, the income of the collectives and the value of a "work day" were increased, but the material conditions of the members did not improve at all. Financial statements showed huge sums as income of the collectives, and the increased value of the "work day". These statements, widely publicized in the Soviet press, were calculated to impress gullible readers abroad. They were handed to some visiting foreigners who, afterwards, would spread propaganda at home about the happy and prosperous life in the Ukrainian collectives. These people did this, perhaps, in good faith, because they did not see the accounts between the members of the collective and the government, showing how many "work days" or "ones" each received, and how much grain they received for their "ones" and how

much went to the government and at what price. How did this price compare with the value of "work days" they had been paid for in money?

So in spite of great sacrifices and resistance, the Ukrainian farmers fell a prey to Russian imperialism, a form of material misery and lawlessness hitherto unknown.

E. M.

COLLECTIVIZATION

Cold twilight, that would soon change into real darkness, covered the village of Velyki Solontsi in the county of Novy Sandzhar, in the Poltava region. The first autumn frosts that came in the wake of heavy rains made the roads very rough. A quiet evening.

Then the stillness is broken by the rattle of wagon wheels over the frozen bumps. It comes nearer, growing in intensity, and a wagon appears, then another, and yet another, a whole line of wagons. They turn to a wide road that leads to the town of Kobelyaky.

At this time, that is the end of November, 1932, I was working in Velyki Solontsi together with my husband, and I knew from my own observation what was happening around us in the village, and in the whole district.

This was the time of collectivization and of attacks on individual farmers. The "centre", that is Moscow, sent to Ukraine 25,000 party "activists" who, upon their arrival, formed commissions and brigades to promote the boon of collectivization. These brigades, formed from the poorest and most bolshevized elements, were sent to the villages with instructions to establish collective farms by convincing farmers that the individual way of farming was part of the bourgeois capitalist system, built on exploitation; that it could not exist in a country which had a Soviet form of government; and that farming in a small way was wasteful, and in a big way it exploited the poorer farmers. Only the nationalized, collective way of farming would bring happiness to all.

The farmers were lectured at "ten-house"* meetings

* Meetings held in every tenth house.

every day till twelve o'clock at night, and sometimes till morning. They sat, listened, asked questions, smoked and dozed in the heavy atmosphere, nodded their heads in agreement that perhaps it would be a better way, but did not want to agree to nationalization of their possessions.

The first step to success in collectivization was made when the land and home of a prosperous farmer, Andriy Sepity, who lived in the very centre of Velyki Solontsi, close to the church, were confiscated. This property formed a basis for the collective farm, which received the name "Granit" (granite). The poorest farmers, that is the landless and those having little land of their own and, of course, all the activists who joined the communist party, flocked to it. The latter believed that a change in farming practices and in the social order would surely bring happiness to the working people.

Out of 500 farmers only 18 - 20 joined up, and even these were reluctant, the next day, to drive their cattle and take their farm implements to the collective.

Sepity was banished to Siberia, his wife and children driven out of their home, and they disappeared. Yet even this harsh measure did not make people join the collective farm. As a last resort, the communists formed a committee of three which prepared a list of "kurkuls", enemies of the Soviet government.

This list contained 52 names. I do not remember them all now, and can give only a few. The victims were: Yukhym Chmykhalo; Panas, Yukhym and Petro Dikhtyar; Halushka; Kryven; Polycarp, Petro and Danylo Kybkalo; Vasyl, Hryhoriy and Stepan Pudlo; Vasyl Sepity, brother of the first "kurkul", Andriy; Ivan and Petro Spivak.

When all the men on the list had been taken away, the authorities realized that at last they were on the right track, and the families of the obstructionists were taken away at night to escape observation. Women and children were ordered on to wagons, and dumped off on the sandy stretch along Vorsklo river from the village of Shchorbiwka to Kuneva Hill, close to Kobelyaky. Tired and terrified, they were thrown out like garbage, in the hope that they would perish there from cold and hunger.

"All kurkul dirt must perish here," said the secretary of the communist party centre, and ordered the teams to return home. "Those that would comfort and help the ene-

mies of the Soviet government shall themselves be regarded as enemies. Let them freeze!"

The poor souls were forbidden to leave the place, and had to remain on that wasteland. In the morning, mothers dug deep holes in the ground, lined them with dry weeds and leaves and made covers out of osier-willow that grew on the river bank. The holes sheltered their children, destined to become a sacrifice on the altar of collectivization. Making fires close to the holes they sat there forlorn, wrapped up in a few rags that they had managed to save from their homes.

But the collectivization was a success. The five collective farms initially planned were slowly being filled with people who chose the lesser evil of the two: to lose everything and do forced labor for "trudoden",* or go to Siberia, be separated from one's family and thus sentence it to inhuman suffering and death.

"Long live collective farming and a happy joyful life!"

* Working day.

D. T.

GRAIN COLLECTION

Another phase of Soviet enterprise, before collectivization, was grain collection. Revolution and reconstruction exhausted grain reserves, and grain collection brigades were formed to go from house to house and buy grain at a very low price set by the government. These brigades were made up of Komsomol members, party members and rural professionals: teachers, doctors and their assistants. But brigades thus made up were too easy on the farmers, not efficient enough in this kind of work, too "soft", and special "shock brigades" were thus organized to do grain collecting in a bolshevik manner.

The free trade in grain was not satisfactory. It could not meet all demands and more and more grain was needed. Besides this, it was planned to make the farmer join a collective farm and he would not do this as long as he had some grain of his own. So "contributions" were invented as a means of robbing the farmer of his surplus, that is, each farm was supposed to supply a certain quantity of grain, potatoes, vegetables, meat, etc.

To be sure, well to do farmers paid more, the poorer less, and activists still less. The contributions had to be delivered at a certain specified time and at "collection points". Now the real tragedies began. There were some farmers who gave all the grain they had, but who were still short of the prescribed quota. Then they bought grain at market prices to satisfy state demands and avoid persecution. But as soon as grain quotas were satisfied, a farmer would get an order to pay more. He could not meet this additional demand and had to sell his property, or be dekurkulized, in which case his land and other property was confiscated and

he himself exiled. A great many people were treated in this manner.

Seeing that there was no way to satisfy the exorbitant demands of the authorities, and as a sort of passive resistance to robbery, the people began to conceal their grain. Suitable hiding places were found in gardens, fields, behind false walls, under stoves or in sheds, leaving in the house a small quantity, sufficient only for a few days.

Then the grain collection commission started a house to house search for grain. Special tools were made for this purpose, consisting of long rods with sharp points. These were thrust in suspected places and the grain, if found, was confiscated. As punishment, potatoes and other vegetables were also taken away with the argument "This kurkul has more hidden some place. Let him dig it up and eat it."

Having cleaned out the village, the commission was glad if it "went over the top", that is, collected more than the authorities required. But the people were left without bread and even without potatoes. What could they eat? Cows and pigs were gone to fulfil "meat collection" quotas or were nationalized, grain and potatoes were taken away by the grain collection commission. Those that saved some corn did not go hungry and were satisfied, but others looked starvation in the face.

Then people started to sell their household effects and such clothing as had escaped the keen eyes of the collectors. Embroidered towels, shirts or fur coats were either sold or exchanged for peas, beans, lentils to feed themselves and their children.

Now the "workers government" showed its true colors. "Shock brigades" were organized to squeeze out the last ounce of grain from the people, and the search ordeal was renewed. Perhaps some had taken out grain from concealment or had been lucky enough to buy some. The collectors broke insolently into the houses, especially of those people suspected of being potentially dangerous to the authorities, or not loyal enough, and they searched everywhere, in trunks, stoves, chimneys, shelves, in store rooms, sheds, etc. When anything was discovered they scattered it on the floor and enjoyed the sight of weeping children gathering grains of lentils or beans from the dirt. Little sacks of seed that the women carefully preserved for spring sowing were taken away.

These "shock brigades" committed many cruel robberies, after which they boasted of having no pity for the "kurkuls". Especially zealous in this work were Maria Derevyanko, komsomol member Didenko, and midwife Evrosinia Antonowna Pysarenko. Abusing the inmates in the most vicious and indecent terms they would not only pry in every nook and corner, but would pull out from the ovens pots with cooked beans or peas, or conduct a personal search of the farm women looking behind every seam in their clothing. Once I heard this midwife bragging about her heroism and I could not help saying: "Have you no consideration at all for the hungry people and especially the children? Have you no shame before them?" Her answer was: "The Soviet government has no sympathy to waste on its enemies. I, as a Soviet citizen, am obeying its orders." This soulless toady spied, listened and informed. If anyone had a little food she would at once call the brigade to search for it and take it away.

The inevitable result of this government policy was that many people found themselves in tragic circumstances. They ground dried corn cobs without grain, or leaves, or mixed chaff with food. Children busied themselves gathering peels and fruit stones on the rubbish heaps. Then cats, dogs, hedgehogs and carrion were eaten, and nobody gave them any help or sympathy.

But the activists received additional rations for having done food collection over 100 percent.



KREMLIN'S CRIMES IN THE VILLAGE OF NOVOSELYTSYA

I was born in the village of Novoselytsya, in the county of Popilnyaka of the Zhytomyr region in Ukraine. I grew up there. The following lines, in which I wish to relate events in my native village should be considered true to the facts, subject only to the usual human weakness: I have forgotten some details.

The first victims of communist persecution in 1928 - 1929 were the following 29 farmers:

1. Pavlo Boyko;
2. Maksym Chub, 5 persons in the family, owner of 16 acres of land;
3. Todos Chub, had 8 acres of land;
4. Oleksa Dmytrenko;
5. Rodion Dmytrenko, family of 5;
6. Trokhym Dmytrenko, 6 persons in the family, had 19 acres of land;
7. Domakha, 3 in the family, 8 acres;

8. Hryhor Dzhus;
9. Ivan Hladun;
10. Motrya Hladun, a widow, thrown out of her house;
11. Todos Hlushanytsya;
12. Ivan Honishewsky, 2 in the family, $5\frac{1}{2}$ acres of land;
13. Stepan Honishewsky, 6 in the family, 19 acres of land;
14. Dmytro Honishewsky, a family of 7 persons, had $13\frac{1}{2}$ acres of land;
15. Motrya Hulchan, a widow. Her husband fought in the bolshevik army in Kazan and died for the Soviet cause. The widow was granted building materials for a house in recognition of her husband's services to the state. Her son, Oleksander, helped her to build the house. They had 8 acres of land. All their property was confiscated, and they were thrown out of their home;
16. Ivan Hulko and his son, Trokhym, were driven out of their home. Ivan was 74 years old and his wife, Anna, 70. Trokhym was 29 and had two small children;
17. Fed Kryvynchuk, 4 persons in the family, 11 acres of land;
18. Anton Matash was serving a term in prison in Bila Tserkva when his wife and two children were driven out of their home. They were barefooted in the snow, but the villagers were forbidden to shelter them. They had 11 acres of land.
19. Vasyl Matash, 8 in the family, the oldest child 17 years of age, 19 acres of land;
20. Omelko Matash thrown out of his house;
21. Yakiw Mykhalchenko;
22. Pavlo Nahornyak, 5 persons in the family, $13\frac{1}{2}$ acres of land;
23. Obozuchka;
24. Mykhailo Palamarchuk;
25. Andriy Ryndych, 6 persons in the family, 11 acres of land;
26. Yakiw Ryndych, 70 years old, had only $5\frac{1}{2}$ acres of land but was thrown out of his house with his wife, and both died in a ditch. The people were afraid to give them shelter and disobey orders of the party and the government;
27. Musiy Sydorчук and his son, Ivan were exiled. They had $9\frac{1}{2}$ acres of land;

28. Hryhor Vyruk was sent to concentration camps with all his family. He had 4 children, the oldest 14 years old, and 12 acres of land;
29. Anton Yalovitsky was driven out of his house in wintertime and arrested. He escaped from prison at Ivano-Voznesensk. He had 9½ acres of land.

Having small farms, none of these 29 farmers were "kurkuls" that is "exploiters of the working class", but all of them perished from exposure, in prisons or in exile.

A new wave of terror, gripped the village in 1932. The new regulation issued August 7, 1932, called for summary execution of persons committing the "crime" of gleaning. This "law" and grain collection took additional toll of human lives.

Anna Berezowska, a widow, was sentenced to a prison term with hard labor. She was detained in the jail in Bila Tserkva.

Opanas Berezowsky was arrested and executed when 25 pounds of wheat were found in his possession. This grain was gleaned in the fields by his ten year old daughter, Anstice, but this did not make any difference. He left a widow with three children.

Kost Berezowsky was expelled from his house in wintertime. He had three small children, the eldest only 8 years of age. They found shelter in a cave.

Levko Berezowsky was arrested and sentenced to a ten year term in prison because the search revealed 44 pounds of wheat ears in his house. These ears were gleaned in the field by his mother, when the grain was already stoked. He left his wife with three children, his mother and a sister.

Petro Hlushanytsya died in prison.

Oleksander Khalchenko also had about 40 pounds of gleaned wheat ears in his possession, but he escaped before his arrest to the Murmansk region, and did not fall into the hands of the NKVD. He was sentenced in absentia to a ten year term.

Todos Matash was sentenced to a ten year term, and sent to build the White Sea — Baltic Canal where he died. His crime: 44 pounds of wheat ears gleaned by his sister-in-law, Kylyna. She begged and protested that it was her wheat but this fact was ignored.

Yakiw Mykhalchenko drew a two year term in jail.

Mykhailo Palarmarchuk, sentenced to a two year term,

was serving it in the Bila Tserkva prison. When released he died from hunger on the way home.

Lukash Syrenko was hobbled in irons and led, barefoot in wintertime, at 22 degrees below zero to a hole in the ice where his body was repeatedly dunked in the water. He was asked to reveal where he had buried his grain. This method of questioning was devised by members of the grain collection brigade, consisting of party members sent from Moscow, Kovbasa and Tarakhonov, chairman of the village soviet Zadorozhny, head of the collective farm Fedir Mykhalchenko, Hryhor Khidchenko, Malashov (a Russian) and Falbushenko.

The following were exiled, but survived and came back: Prokip Dmytrenko, Stepan Honynyuk, Ivan Khiktotashka, Maksym Matash and Metodiy Nahornyak.

The toll taken by the White Sea — Baltic Canal construction at this time was as follows:

Terentiy Boyko — died,
Oleksa Dmytrenko,
Danylo Dmytrenko — died,
Tykhon Hlushanytsya — returned,
Hnat Holyshevsky — died,
Stepan Holyshevsky — died,
Trokhym Horpinevich — died,
Hryhor Kozyk — died,
Ivan Kozyk — returned,
Vasyl Matash — died,
Todos Matash — died,
Hryhor Ryndych — died,
Trokhym Shabatiw — died,
Nychiper Sydorchuk — returned after 3 years,
Fedir Sytynyuk — returned after 3 years.

Thus eleven out of sixteen men perished building a canal designed to bolster the Soviet economy.

The famine year of 1933 was perhaps the hardest in the history of the village, used as it was to terror and suffering. Here is the list of people who died from hunger:

Andriychuk Ivan
" Khrasyna
" Tykhon
Antosyevich Lena
" Hryhor
Babchuk Kylyna
" Vasyl and son

" Stepan
 Barvitska Melania
 Barvitsky Avram
 " Oleksa
 " Andriy and all his family
 " Hryhor
 " Ivan
 " Ivan
 " Karpo
 " Maksym and son
 " Semen and daughter
 " Todos was buried alive
 " Trokhym and son
 " Zachar
 Boyko Petro
 " Platon
 " Trokhym and baby
 30 " Viktor and his 2 sisters
 Bushavytsya Nikyfor and three children
 Chernetsky Dmytro and 2 children
 40 " Ivan and 2 children
 Dmytrenko Andriy
 " Danylo
 " Petro
 Fed
 Hlushanytsya Andriy
 " A.
 " Mykola
 50 " Paraska
 Holyshewsky Vasyl
 " Fedor
 Khalchenko Mykola and his wife
 Khywruk
 Korotyniuk Oleksander
 " Maria
 " Dora
 Kozyk Oleksander
 60 Kucher (a woman)
 Kupashnyk and his wife
 Kuzym Demyd and his wife
 Kuniber Panas
 Kytsuts (a woman)
 Labunsky Oleksander

- 70 " Petro and 2 children
 " Platon
 Malenko (child)
 Manushyna Kylyna
 Matash Andriy, his wife and 2 children
 " Arkhyn
- 80 " Panas and his wife
 " Vasyl
 " Lazar
 " Yavdokha
 " Maksym
 " Petro
 " Viktor
 Mykhalchenko Oleksander
- 90 " Yakiw, his wife and 2 children
 " Matrona
 " Mykhaiylo
 " Todos and son
 Nahornyak Kyrylo and 2 children
 Paran Oleksander
 Petryk Petro
- 100 Pinkiivskyi Lukash
 Polyvyany Fedir
 Prytulak Vasyl
 " Khyma
 Rychmydyn Motrya
 Ryndych Yakym
 Sabatyn Vasyl
 Shabatyn Anton
 " Ivan
- 110 Sirenko Demyd, his wife and 2 children
 Slywka Vasyl, his wife and brother
 " Kyrylo
 " Havrylo
 " Ivan and his mother
- 120 Stebliivska (a woman)
 Storozhuk Arsen
 " Denys
 " Levko
 " Mykyta
 " Pavlo
 " Prokip and child
 Stozhuk Eva

- 130 Strilchuk Fedir and wife
 Sydorчук Danylo
 " Maria
 " Mykola
 " Sylyma
 " Danko
 " Trokhym
- 140 Tymkushcha, mother and 3 children
 Vdow Oleksander
 Volynets
 Vuyko Pavlo
 Yawtushenko Yukhym
 Zhuk Omelko
 Zymny Maksym
- 147 Zytny Pylyp

Although there were more than 147 victims of Soviet planned famine, our losses were proportionately smaller than in the neighboring villages. Curiously enough, many people were saved from death by the dead in the Roman Catholic cemetery which was in our village. Rich people used to be buried there before the revolution and, married or single, they had gold rings and other jewellery buried with them. Our villagers secretly opened the graves, and thus obtained gold for which everything could be bought at the Torgsin store. In the villages of Rohizno, Yakhny, Polovetske, Trylisy, Krasny Lis, Shamrayiwka, Buky, Stryukiw and Holubyatyn almost all the people died from hunger and GPU troops had to be sent there to bury the dead.

One day, when I came to the grain yard of our collective farm I happened to see Panas Vitawsky, whose duty it was to collect the dead and bury them. The state paid him 9 ounces of bread for each corpse he buried. He always tried to bury more, to get more bread. When Todos Barvitsky, a boy 13 years of age, saw Vitawsky he began to run away. But a hungry swollen boy was no match for the husky and better fed Vitawsky. He fell into the ditch and Vitawsky caught him by the foot, hit him on the head with the whip handle and threw the body on top of the corpses gathered the previous evening. I protested: "So, you bury live people now, too?" He said: "He'll die tomorrow anyway, and I'd have to come to this part of the village again. I can't do that. I'll have to go to other places, and in the meantime his body will lie here."

The arrests were renewed in 1937. The following villagers were the victims: Oleksander Eutymovich, Stepan Holishewsky, Klym Matash, Kyrylo Matash, Ivan Matash, and Danylo Sychynsky.

In 1939, the Russian troops were sent to "liberate" Poland from the big landowners and, having completed their task there, they began to "liberate" Finland.

During the exchange of prisoners after the Finno-Russian war, it became evident that many of those who were regarded as killed or lost were really prisoners of war in Finland. Their wives, who had received pensions from the government, were now ordered to reimburse the government and pay taxes because their husbands were not killed but were "traitors" to the motherland. Seven such "traitors" were sentenced to life terms at hard labor: Dmytro Boyko, Stepan Hlushanytsya, Zinko Kuchereshko, Pavlo Kyrylyuk, Fanasiy Motronyuk, Khorka Mykhalchenko, and Tymko Zhuk. The eighth "traitor", Yakiw Holishewsky, was executed and all his property confiscated.

Stepan Chorny

HOW I WAS DEKURKULIZED

I had a small farm in the hamlet of Lychmariw in Hadyach county of the Poltava region in Ukraine.

In 1930, the Russian communist government launched its farm collectivization drive, which met with determined opposition from the individual Ukrainian farmers.

A detachment of Russians who called themselves "moskvichi", that is, natives of Moscow, was sent to our hamlet from Russia. It was under the orders of one Osipov, also a "moskvich".

Commander Osipov added to his gang some local bad characters, mostly Russians, and having trained them, began his collectivization activities. The method was to demand from farmers large amounts in taxes, which many of them could not meet. If, in rare cases, a farmer met these demands a still higher tax was imposed, often greater than the value of his whole property.

I was also taxed a few times in 1930, and in the end could not pay. This led to my arrest. I was called out to the village soviet on December 30 and put under lock and key. When I was tucked away in jail, Osipov confiscated all my property and my wife and child were driven out of the house. They were not allowed even to take any clothing or food with them. Sometime later, Osipov released me from arrest and told me where I could find my family.

When I came to the place indicated by Osipov, I found there two other families crowded in a small hut. There were 17 persons. These families suffered the same fate as mine, their property was confiscated and mothers and children driven out of their homes. One of the men, Kryvonis, died from heartbreak when he came back from the prison and the other, Hvozdyka, was sent to slave labour in concentration camps in Siberia. I was fortunate enough to escape from the hamlet and reach Donbas.

F. Fedorenko

DISAPPEARED WITHOUT TRACE

There is a state farm about 2½ miles east of the town of Ivankiw, in the Kiev region. I cannot recall its name but I know of a fellow who worked there.

He was Mykola Prokopovich Shkuratenco, who was employed at the farm for a long time as a bookkeeper. Before that, he had served a long prison term in Kiev jail for his membership in the Union for the liberation of Ukraine (SVU). As a bookkeeper he was a very reliable and honest worker, one of the best on the farm. But in 1937, during the bloody Yezhov regime he was suddenly pounced upon by the NKVD-ists, and disappeared without a trace.

The general opinion was that he had been arrested, as were many others, for having been a member of the SVU, and had been promptly executed in one of the prisons.



P. V.

COLLECTIVE FARMING

The above picture shows collective farmers in Ukraine. Note the rope harness, the bent and hungry horses, a stick for a whip in the hands of the first woman, and the cows in the last plow which have to drag the plow and fulfil a milk quota as well.

Women do the plowing because their husbands are "building socialism". All of them are barefoot and look wretched in their rags and tatters. The man standing apart is the overseer. He appears to be well off. Doesn't he remind you of the manager of an estate in the days of slavery?

Members of the collectives composed many songs about such henchmen of the enslaving regime. A little sample:

Green corn waves new shoots

Though planted not long ago.

Our brigadier sports new boots

While we barefoot go.

Oh, oh, oh, . . . (unprintable)

Why should we lie

When we have no shoes.

Thus do the people "respect" the promoters of Stalin's classless society.

F. Fedorchenko

TRAGEDY OF DANYLO ARTEMENKO

A large farm called Snizhne, which belonged to the collective administrative unit of Novo-Mykolayiwske in the county of Ivankiw in the Kiev region was owned by Danylo Artemenko, one of the best farmers in the district. He was born in the village of Karpyliwka in a poor family, and was illiterate. Settling on the farm, he became quite prosperous in spite of a large family of 13, because he was very industrious and a good husbandman.

The first misfortune in the family was when Danylo's son, Volodymyr, to avoid being drafted into the Red Army, smoked a lot of tea leaves and died.

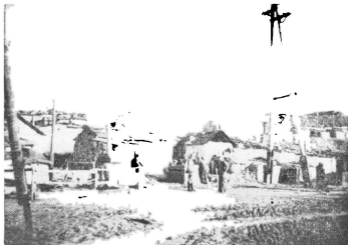
Four years later, in 1931, the whole family was arrested, and exiled to the city of Izhevsk in Russia. All were sentenced to hard labor.

During this arrest one daughter, Anna Artemenko, decided to escape with her husband. They took a team of horses and drove away, but were caught by the communists in the village of Domaniwka. The communists took everything away from them, and put them under arrest. Anna's clothes were taken away and she was thrown naked into a deep basement, which was flooded. She became hysterical with fear, standing knee deep in water in a dark place and fighting off frogs or other vermin that flocked to her. This treatment lasted 24 hours, and at first she was heard to cry but her cries were completely ignored. When she was at last released, she had completely lost not only her voice, but her sanity as well. A few days later she died from pleurisy, and her husband was sent to a concentration camp.

Anna's sister, Natalia Artemenko, was thrown out of her house with three small children. Her household effects

became the booty of the raiding party of communists, windows were boarded up, and the house locked. Then Natalia went to her father's house, which stood empty in the forest.

But the communists found her there. A drunken communist gang broke into the house one winter night, tied Natalia's hands behind her back and beat her mercilessly. After this, they threw the poor woman into a snow drift. Her children were also thrown after her through the broken windows. Not satisfied with their work, the communists made a pile of icons, books, kitchen utensils and furniture



Living quarters of the workers of "Azovstal" in Mariupol.

in the middle of the house and set fire to it. By morning, Artemenko's house was a heap of ashes.

Trying to save her own and her children's lives, Natalia went back secretly to her former home, locked up by the communists. But the next day she was discovered and murdered there, together with her two-year old child. The other two children were ordered to get out. The perpetrators of this crime were communist party members: Yedlitsky, county commissioner, Yesip, a gypsy halfbreed, and his

relative Andriy Tsarenok, a Ukrainian drunkard. This happened in the fall of 1932.

Ten years later, when the Germans occupied Ukraine, Natalia's husband, who had managed to conceal his identity and thus remained free, returned home and found his two children. His joy was shortlived. They were caught by the Germans and sent to the notorious German concentration camps to perish there, and their father Petro Sydenko was murdered in 1943 by the communist underground. When he was searched after the arrest, a Bible and other religious books were found in his possession. This "crime" required special punishment. He was led into the forest, his eyes gouged out, tongue and nose cut off, hands broken and then shot at close range. When people found his body on June 1, 1943, they could hardly recognize their good neighbor.

Artemenko's other children all died in the Izhevsk camp. The old mother, Hapa Artemenko, died of grief when she learned of the death of her last son, Vasyl.

The old man, Danylo Artemenko, managed, by some miracle, to return home. I met him once in his native district. He acquired a horse, and wanted to do a bit of farming by himself. But the Germans confiscated the animal, poor as it was. Then Danylo threw bags over his shoulder, and became a beggar.

Such was the fate of one "dekurkulized" Ukrainian family.

Hnat Sokolowsky

ANTI-COLLECTIVE UNREST IN UKRAINE

1. Ukrainian Villages against Bolshevism

The bolshevik pressure on the individual farmers, inaugurated in 1929, met, in Ukraine, with spontaneous resistance. The farmers did not give all the grain the government demanded from them, and they tried to hide it in likely places, usually in the ground. There were no volunteers to join government sponsored collective farms. On the contrary, this idea met with ridicule among the farmers.

Being aware of this attitude, the bolshevik authorities began to woo those groups which could be used in subduing the farmers, former "red guerillas", "komsomol"* and also the village poor, organized in "Poor Farmers Committees", welding them together as tools in terrorizing the farmers. The leaders of these pro-communist bands were usually party members, village school teachers, and officials in the county seats. But these measures were not successful.

In some cases resistance came out in the open. A typical case was that which happened in the village of Vizirka in the Odessa region. The authorities sent there an old bolshevik, Rashkov. This fellow bitterly attacked in his speech the so-called "enemies of the Soviet government" who sabotaged government enterprises. He threatened people with prison terms for "counter-revolution". The farmers did not argue with the speaker. Men quietly smoked their pipes. The initiative fell to the women. They fell upon Rashkov, tore off his clothes and gave him a good thrashing as a liar and instigator and, in the end, took him under guard to the county seat.

* All-Union Leninist Young Communist League.

In many other villages the farm women also played an important role in protecting villages from bolshevik pressure. These frequent cases of resistance sometimes acquired the character of real "rebellions".

Having met with such resistance, the party and the Soviet government sent to the villages 25,000 party members and government officials, specially selected gangs of bolshevik cutthroats. This step by the government brought real tragedy to the farmers. These "special commissioners" had extraordinary powers, and were ruthless. The villages were terrorized but still resisted.



A family from the region of Dolyna, Galicia, "liberated" by the bolsheviks in 1939. Before 1939 it had 60 acres of land. In 1944, during the second "liberation" the father of the family was shot. The mother and her sons are now in a collective farm.

The first serious case of unrest, which had the earmarks of insurrection, happened in the Dnister valley in the district of the villages of Hradonytsi and Troitske. It was put down by armed Odessa militia, and party activists. The insurgents were imprisoned. Their fate is unknown.

Extraordinarily strong resistance to collectivization was shown in the region of the city of Sicheslaw in the county

of Pawlohrad. All the people here, irrespective of their economic or social differences, stood firm against the bolsheviks because oppression by the Soviet government had become unbearable.

The insurrection began in 1930, in the little hamlet of Osadchy in the county of Mezhiw in the region of Dnipropetrowske. It soon spread to the counties of Mezhiw, Vasylikiw, Blyznyuky and Pawlohrad. The insurgents were in sympathy with the aims of the "League for the Liberation of Ukraine" (SVU), a secret organization with widespread ramifications. This insurrection spread so wide that armed insurgents came within six miles of Pawlohrad, in which the 30th Red Army division was stationed at that time. It was under the command of Myasoyedov. But the red troops did not take the field against the insurgents, though the government demanded such action from the divisional command.

I myself, and a few others, knew at the time that the leader of this insurrection was carrying on negotiations with the commander of the division, Myasoyedov. All had hoped that the division would join the insurgents, giving them support. But when things came to a head, the Soviet authorities arrested Myasoyedov and all his staff. The division was not used to put down the insurrection. Well armed detachments of GPU troops and militia from Kharkiw, Zaporizhya and Dnipropetrowske, augmented by local party members, also armed, were thrown against insurgent farmers armed mostly with forks and scythes. Very few had firearms, most of them relics from the years of civil war, or taken from the bolsheviks in skirmishes with the enemy.

The bolshevik revenge after the defeat of the insurgents was terrible, even in this land of constant terror. The leader of the insurrection vanished, but the GPU vaults were crammed full with insurgents taken prisoner. In one village alone, Dmytriwka, in the county of Vasylikiw, 100 persons were arrested, among them Anna Ivanchenko, Hryhory Koborsky, Yawtukh Kononenko, Serhiy Pawlenko and others. Most of them were never seen again.

The mass arrests which took place over the whole of the insurrection area did not deter people from opposing collectivization. The arrests, and new methods of forcing farmers to join collective farms, led to widespread burning of collective farm grainyards and other buildings. The authorities met this manifestation with new mass arrests. Then the author of this account was also made prisoner.

All the arrested farmers were put in a special prison. I happened to be locked in cell number 6, which already was crammed with 83 men. To lie down was absolutely impossible. The examinations and the beating of prisoners lasted all night through. The investigation was conducted by "examiner" Ignatiev. This man was a sadist and looked like a real hangman. He enjoyed beating and torturing defenceless farmers. The daily food ration in the prison consisted



In the foreground — the "houses" of the workers, seen against the factories in Mariupol.

of seven ounces of bread and a half rotten herring. No water. Only strong individuals could withstand such treatment and torture.

The GPU chief in the county of Vasylikiw was Kuchenkov, who was even worse than Ignatiev. He used to get "confessions" from those prisoners whom Ignatiev could not "split".

After a month of such "examination" in the Vasylikiw prison, we were taken to a provincial penitentiary in Dnipropetrovske and from there, with broken ribs, teeth knocked out and jaws split, we were sent to concentration camps.

I did not reach our destination because, taking advan-

tage of a stormy night, I escaped from the transport at the railway station of Ulyanovka. My escape went unnoticed. Then I managed to get hold of some documents and remained free from 1930 - 1936 living in many localities of the Soviet Union.

In the fall of 1934, I came to Horliwka in Donbas, and learned there that my father had been sentenced to ten years for this insurrection, my brother to eight, and that my mother, with four younger children, had been driven out of her home. This was very bad news.

But more bad news was on the way. One of the workers at the Shcherbaniwka mine, where I was employed, recognized me as his former co-villager. I was caught, and the GPU sentenced me to five years in concentration camps in Kolyma.

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE FAMINE

The famine of 1932 - 1933 was needed by the Soviet Government to break the backbone of Ukrainian opposition to complete Russian domination. Thus, it was a political move and not the result of natural causes. The year 1932 was similar to previous years, as far as climatic conditions were concerned, for there was sufficient precipitation and plenty of sunshine. The acreage under crops also was about 2.5 million acres greater than in 1927 or 1928. It amounted to 64,240,000 acres.

The yield that fateful year was good. The amount of grain harvested in 1932 was 463,705,500 bushels, more than adequate to feed the whole population and leave reserves for seeding, which required about 88 million bushels. This would have left more than 375 million bushels for the needs of the population. If divided among the population it would have provided 11.5 bushels or 690 pounds of grain for each man, woman and child in Ukraine. Such an amount of grain would have been sufficient to feed, not only people but cattle as well. This fact, based, as it is, on official Russian statistics, cannot be refuted.

What then was the reason for the famine? There was plenty of food for all, but famine nevertheless gripped this rich agricultural country. The truth is that the famine was planned and carried out by the Soviet Russian Government. The Russian government confiscated by force all grain that was in the hands of the farmers. In order to stop the farmers from hiding even a few pounds of grain in the walls of their houses or in the ground, the Soviet Russian police invented special long iron rods to probe the walls of the dwellings and the surrounding yards of the farmers, trying

to find the last few handfuls of grain hidden by the starving population. In this way, people were left without any food whatever. The famine of 1932 - 1933, artificially created by the Russians in Ukraine is unequalled in the history of Europe for intensity of horror and the great number of men,



The Famine of 1933 — by M. Dmytrenko.

women and children who perished from starvation. Dictator Stalin achieved his purpose. In villages, on roads and fields, numberless swollen bodies of men, women and children who had died of starvation could be seen. The land was filled with the groans of the hungry and the pitiful cries of children. There were cases of cannibalism, where men,

driven by the insanity of a great hunger, ate human flesh.

The Soviet Russian Government, during all that frightful time, strictly prohibited anyone to write or speak about the famine. Officially, it was asserted that the population lived in plenty. If someone received a food parcel from relatives abroad, it was, as a rule, returned, accompanied by a note stating that such help was not needed in Ukraine.

Offers from the Red Cross and other philanthropic or-



The house of Petro Pyrih, in Hulayivka, near Lubni. Three neighbors came to bury the dead family, victims of the famine in 1933.

ganizations were rejected with the sarcastic advice that they should help their own unemployed.

The granaries of Ukraine were overflowing with wheat, but not one pound from these millions of bushels was released for the starving population. People died in the midst of plenty.

What was the price paid by Ukraine for Russian rule during the famine? How many perished?

The statistical and economic yearbook on agriculture in Ukraine, printed in Kharkiw in 1939, states that the normal yearly increase of population in Ukraine was 2.36%. The

census of 1926 shows that Ukraine then had a population of 29,042,900. According to this information the Ukrainian population should have grown from 32,680,700 to 33,406,100 persons in 1933. In January 1934, it should have reached 34,258,000 persons. If the Ukrainian population had increased in the normal way and without a famine, it should have totalled 38,426,000 persons in 1939. However, the last census of 1939 shows that the population of Ukraine, in the older boundaries, amounted to only 30,960,200 persons.

This proves that as a direct result of the artificial famine the Ukrainian population was cut down by 7.5 million persons. This includes the millions that died of starvation and the subsequent decrease in population due to the famine. Even Soviet Russia statistical data, published in the Soviet Russian yearbooks for 1932 and 1934, show that the actual number who died from starvation during the famine was not less than 5.8 million and that more than 2 million more were missing as a result of the famine.

Five million constitutes about 18.8% of the total Ukrainian population. India is noted for its widespread periodical famines. During the last famine in India, which was unusually large, about 3.5% of the whole population died. The worse famine in India never rose above this percentage. But in Ukraine, Soviet Russia created a famine that was five times worse. During the first world war the number killed, in proportion to the population of the countries at war was about 0.9%, while in Ukraine during peace time and in about 8 - 9 months, 18.8% of the entire population was lost. About 1,000 Ukrainians died every hour during the famine. These facts speak for themselves. They prove that Stalin and his henchmen will not be deterred by crimes of any proportion from keeping power in their hands for the glory of the Soviet Russian empire.



P. Lykho

SOVIET DOCUMENTS ON THE FAMINE IN THE UKRAINE

The communist agents of the Kremlin try to deny that, in 1932 - 1933, a terrible famine raged in Ukraine, a famine of immense proportions dreadful in its aftermath; a famine organized by the government and the party. Following instructions from Moscow, these paid and "voluntary" agents propagated and still propagate the fairy tale that there was no famine in Ukraine at that time, and if there were some isolated cases, then "it was the fault of those who suffered hunger", as they must have brought it upon themselves; "they buried and destroyed their grain, took away their stock, did not want to work and . . . died of undernourishment . . ." — after all, the government and the state had nothing to do with it.

It is difficult to imagine anything more cynical. All these revolting lies and calumnies are spread to whitewash the genocidal gang in the Kremlin and to absolve them from the guilt of such a terrible crime.

Now, on this side of the iron curtain, there live thousands of witnesses of the famine in Ukraine of

1932 - 1933; yes, thousands of witnesses, who did not "observe" the famine from afar, but actually suffered it. Thus, when we find any who would defend the guilt of this heinous crime, or those who no matter how hard they try, find it difficult to believe that such a "fantastic" occurrence could ever take place, we, the living witnesses of the Moscow crime, are ready to stand before any responsible tribunal and testify. . .

We quote below, in their entirety, documents never before published, which should prove helpful as evidence of our accusation that the famine of 1932 - 1933 was engineered by the Russian Communists, that is by the Party and by the government; furthermore, the documents bear witness to the fact that this famine was organized specifically in Ukraine in order to achieve a certain political aim.

The history of the discovery of these documents is as follows, in the finder's own account.

In September 1941, the demoralized Red Army retreated panic-stricken before the thrust of the German Wehrmacht. The Germans had crossed the Dnieper at Kremenchuk in the South and at Chernyhiw in the North. At the line Poltava — Konotip — Bakhmach — Cherkasy five Soviet armies were surrounded. All attempts to break the circle were without success. After two fruitless tries the potentiary of the Council of Defence, by order of Stalin, Georgi Malenkov, late at night on the 14th of September 1941 left the headquarters in Piryatyn to fly in two planes to Kharkiw. The command was taken over by the commanding officer of the OUVU (Special Ukrainian Army Corps) Kirponis, who was killed, together with the staff, near the villages of Haika, Zhdani, Melechi and Yuziwka. This valley was later named by the population of that country "the valley of death" as thousands of Red Army men met their death there. But the most tragic loss was that of 700 soldiers, who had been sent by Kirponis on trucks and tractors in a "psychological attack" against the German tanks. The seven hundred killed were chiefly the higher, middle and lower command contingent of headquarters of the southwestern front.

After the destruction of the headquarters and command staffs of the armies under Kirponis, the trapped armies sur-

rendered, only a very small group of them escaping. The great 'Kiev ring' prevented the Soviet civil authorities from fleeing. Almost all the staff of the central, provincial, county and village civil authorities had to remain. As a result of this the county civil authorities of Chornukhy were not only prevented from fleeing, but also from destroying secret documents. The descent of a parachute commando battalion aided in this, sealing off all escape routes from Piryatyn to Chornuchy, Lochvitsya, Hadyach. And so, later, the secret documents were discovered. The German military



A little cannibal.

authorities had no interest in them, and a good opportunity was at hand to study and use the documents. The files consisted of secret and top secret material from: 1. The Chornukhy County Party Committee (raipartkom), 2. Chornukhy County Branch of the NKVD (raividdil NKVD) and Militia, 3. Special Branches of the Chornukhy County Executive Committee (raivikonkom), 4. Chornukhy County

Military Committee (raivoenkomat), 5. Chornukhy County Prosecuting Office, 6. Chornukhy Branch of the State Bank, 7. Chornukhy RINGO (County Inspecting Office of Peoples' Domestic Economy Inventory). The documents of the South-western Front Headquarters were immediately taken over by the German authorities.

The documents were found in the forest. They had been prepared for evacuation but later had been hastily buried. All the safes and iron trunks were counted by the Germans, who opened them in the presence of the new local authorities to whom the documents were handed for safe keeping.

"Given this opportunity", writes the discoverer of these documents, "I was able to examine them over a long period of time, and to acquaint myself thoroughly with them. I was especially interested in documents relating to the famine of 1932 - 1933. I selected and made copies of them in order to be on the safe side".

Below, certain documents are quoted in their entirety (omitting secret codes, but retaining dates and numbers).

Moscow-Kremlin, TsK VKP (b)

20. I. 1933, No. 26/.....

Top secret, Letter

To the Secretary of TsK KP (b) U (Central Committee of Ukrainian Communist Party of Bolsheviks)

Comr. S. V. Kosior.

Copy: To the Secretaries of Provincial Committees, of City Committees, and of County Committees;
OGPU and the Prosecutor of the Republic.

With regard to the project of Stocking Grain I order the selling of forage grain for cash for the horses of kolkhozes in Ukraine. Take severe measures for the reception, transportation and custody of the grain forage in kolkhozes. This forage may be used exclusively in the period of the Spring Sowing Operation of the current year. Pay specific attention to the stock-piling of grain forage in kolkhozes, not allowing its use for any other purpose. The persons guilty of stealing, unnecessary spending and malfeasance are to be brought to justice without mercy, according to the law of August 7th, 1932. Report on the execution of this order to the Central Committee on the 20th of February of the current year.

* * *

Kharkiw, 22. 5. 1933 yr. No. 17/.....

Top Secret, Series

To all heads of provincial branches of OGPU-USSR and provincial prosecutors.

Copy: To county branches of the OGPU and county prosecutors.

The Department of Codification of Laws of the Narkomjust (Department of Justice) of USSR gave the following explanation in its letter of 15th of May of the current year under No. 175-K:

Whereas the present criminal code does not cover punishment of persons guilty of cannibalism, therefore all cases of those accused of cannibalism must immediately be transferred to the local branches of OGPU. If cannibalism was preceded by murder, covered by article 142 of the Penal Code, these cases should be withdrawn from the courts and from the prosecution divisions of the Narkomjust system and transferred for judgement to the Collegium of the OGPU in Moscow. Accept this order for unwaiving and correct execution.

Peoples' Vice Commissar of OGPU — Ukrainian SSR
Karlson (signature)
Prosecutor for the Republic
Michailik (signature)

* * *

Moscow-Kremlin, TsK VKP (b)

17. 6. 1933 year, No. 79/.....

Top secret, Series

To the Secretary, TsK KP (b) U.

Comr. S. V. Kosior.

Copy: To the Secretaries of Provincial Committees, of City Committees and of County Executive Committees of the Party.

Because, for some time, we have allowed our stocks of grain to be thrown away, some of the naive comrades from among the lower ranks of the party and government officials have mistakenly eyed the stores of the Grain Stock Project. It should be realized by these comrades that the Central Committee of the Party has done everything in this respect. It

is high time that they should learn to think like the progressive people of our period, but in their thinking they are still reminiscent of the characters in Gogol's novels. The Central Committee of the Party and I, personally, wish to have this explained to them once more.



This Ukrainian woman was the last surviving member of a once well-known family from the village of Berezotocha, near Lubni. Her husband was executed, and her sons were deported to Siberia where they died. She herself fled to another province, but returned to her native village before her death. She died of hunger during the Russo-Finnish war.

The Central Committee of the Party recommends these comrades to bear in mind and never forget the mistakes committed by them last fall, when, as a result of the slackening of control among the lower branches of government in the kolkhoses of the Ukraine, tens of thousands of hundred-weights of valuable grain were thrown away. Therefore all the efforts and attention of these comrades should be directed towards stocking grain and delivering the grain to the state. This year's crop may exceed our expectations, but still this does not give us any right to use our "neprzapas" (stock pile).

Once again we categorically repeat our former directions, that only 10% of the total threshed grain may remain in kolkhoses, and this, according to present directives, may be used for the subsistence of the kolkhoseworkers, until the plan for deliveries to the state, for payment in kind to the MTS, and for seed and forage stores has been completely fulfilled. Therefore, you are now completely faced with the immense responsibility for the lower Party ranks and Soviet officials. For the last time you are reminded that any repetition of the mistakes of last year will compel the Central Committee to take even more drastic measures. And then, if you will pardon my saying so, even their old party beards will not save these comrades.

— (facsimile — J. Stalin).

The documents which have been quoted here, orders from Moscow signed by Stalin himself, show that the famine of 1932 - 1933 in the Ukraine was created by Moscow — by the Communist Party and the Government. The documents are characteristic in the sense that they mirror the situation throughout Ukraine.

One of the documents sheds light on the whole situation. Cases of cannibalism were so numerous that Moscow had to interfere officially, so as to conceal this terrible phenomenon: the Commissariat of Justice of USSR circulated a special letter (No. 175-K) in which it explained what should be done in cases of cannibalism. The hearings of these cases in the courts would not only cause unwelcome publicity, but data concerning such terrible crimes and the famine in Ukraine in general would appear in the files of the courts all over Ukraine.

On the basis of a study of the files, and an interrogation

of employees of the Soviet government institutions it was possible to compile the following data on the results of the famine in Chornukhy county.

Natalka Hasukha, the longtime head of the county branch of ZAHS (Acts of Civil State) and the senior inspector of Chornukhy RINGO (County Inspection Office of Peoples' Domestic Economy Inventory), communist Serhiy Dubovy gave in their testimonies data as to the number of people who had died of famine during 1932 - 1933:

On the 1st of January 1932 Chornukhy county had a population of 52,672; on the 1st of January 1934 the population of the county was 45,714.

The actual increase in population in these years was as follows: 1932 — 315; 1933 — 114; total — 429.

Taking into account the actual increase in population of this county — 429 persons — 53,101 individuals should have been living there on the 1st of January 1934; the 52,672 persons of 1. 1. 32 plus 429 actual increase. If this number — 53,101 be taken and the number of inhabitants as of 1. 1. 34 be subtracted from it, we get the following result: 53,101 — 45,714 — 7,387, which shows the decrease in population of Chornukhy county.

On the basis of a study of vital statistics (birth, death, marriage, etc.) registered in the files of ZAHS and RINGO — it was calculated that the number of people who perished in the famine were as follows: children up to 18 years of age — 3,549, men — 2,163, women — 1,406. Total — 7,113.

It should be mentioned that only a very small number of the inhabitants was able to leave the country since movement was forbidden and the rule was severely enforced. Trains, too, were guarded.

The situation in the Chornukhy area was typical of that existing in the country as a whole.

Mykola Prychodko

THE YEAR 1933 IN SOVIET UKRAINE

Ukrainian newspapers everywhere abroad have given a full account of the tragic events of 1933 -- the most terrible year of starvation in the country's history.

Unfortunately, few writers in the USSR dared put on paper any account of the suffering and privations of that year. They could not, for even a mention of the famine brought swift retribution by murder from the NKVD, or slave labor in Siberia.

For, officially, there was no famine. Stalin very graciously refused all offers of aid from foreign countries, assuring them that no famine existed in the Soviet Ukraine: the whole USSR lived in the utmost contentment and abundance. Communist papers abroad, ever-willing slaves of Moscow, outdid each other in spreading this convincing reply throughout the world.

Yet, in 1941, when the Germans entered Ukraine, they found in the Academy of Science in Kiev the true statistics of the crops harvested in 1932. These figures proved, statistically, that the yield was sufficient to feed the Ukrainian population for 2 years and 4 months. There was no natural cause of this famine; it was purposely created to break the resistance of the farmers to the collective farm system.

All the grain of 1932 was loaded into special trains as soon as it was threshed, and it was immediately appropriated by the government. The carloads rolled northward to feed the bureaucrats of Moscow, or to be exported to finance plans for communist revolution in China and other countries. The Ukrainian farmer received only the screenings from the threshing machines.

During the latter part of 1932, the farm women added potato peelings, weeds, anything to stretch the loaves of

black bread. With the coming of 1933, even these meagre additions were unavailable. People ground the bark of trees, scratched roots from the frozen ground, searched hopelessly for any substance which would keep body and soul together.

Helpless, despairing, they died by thousands, by tens of thousands, yes, by millions. The statistical bureaus were ordered to register the deaths as resulting from prevalent "digestive ailments", not from starvation.

Peasants who could still stand on their feet, gathered their few belongings and flocked to the cities. Here a person could exchange an artistically embroidered shirt, a most



Year 1933 in Kharkiw — by A. Leybovych.

highly-prized possession, for a single loaf of bread. Beautiful priceless rugs, heirlooms through generations, could be bought for a few pounds of flour. The Russian elite covered their walls and floors with such treasures.

Through the streets of Kiev, Kharkiw, Dnipropetrowske, Odessa and other cities, the miserable hulks of humanity dragged themselves along on swollen feet, begging for crusts of bread or searching for scraps in garbage heaps, frozen and filthy. Each morning wagons rolled along the streets, picking up the emaciated remains of the dead. Often even the undershirt had been stripped from the corpse, to be exchanged for a slice of bread.

Those who were lucky enough to reach Moscow had a better chance for survival. Here were more scraps of bread, made of Ukrainian wheat, on the dumps; here one could

also buy a little food on the black market.

The difficulty was to get there. On the trains and in the stations the GPU, in their red and blue caps, halted every traveller, demanding his official travelling permit. Those who could not produce them were arrested.

At this time my friend S., was working as an assistant in the October Revolution Hospital. Having completed his medical studies in 1931, he now worked in the surgical division. One evening he invited me to visit him in the hospital, promising me an unusual spectacle. When I arrived he took me to a large garage in the yard. A guard unlocked the door and we entered. S. switched on the light and I beheld an unforgettable picture of horror.

Piled like cord-wood against the walls, layer upon layer, were the frozen corpses of the victims picked off the streets that morning. Some of the bodies, I later learned, were used for dissection and experiments in the laboratories. The rest were simply buried in pits, at midnight, in nearby ravines out of sight of the people.

"This, my friend", S. whispered softly, "is the fate of our villages".

I was too unnerved to utter a word. With unbelieving eyes I could only stare at the hundreds of outstretched frozen hands which still seemed to be begging for bread, begging for life.

S. turned out the lights and we departed without a word. The guard slammed the door and locked it behind us. Slowly we walked home, speechless and shaken, but with mutual understanding between us.

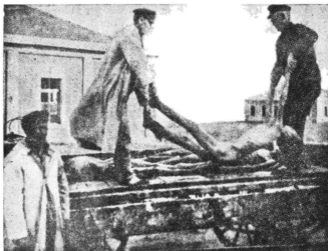
It seemed ages before I could rid myself of the horror in that garage, sixteen years after that fateful October Revolution for which the hospital was named. Even years later I once awoke in cold sweat from the nightmare of that ghoulish experience.

There is another unforgettable incident which I witnessed in that year of 1933. It happened in the spring, as I was riding on the train from Kiev to Uman. At the Monasteryshche station 12 farm laborers came aboard, their faces bloated with starvation, tattered and dirty, all on their way to work on a state farm. With them was a young lad, about 14, his hands tightly pressed against his chest, inside the shirt.

Like a pack of wolves, the men gathered around the

boy, their hungry eyes glued to the hand at his bosom. The lad tightened his grip upon his possession — a slice of black bread — and stared back with frightened eyes at the fierce, unshaven, swollen caricatures of human faces around him. To a man, they were urging and pleading with him to share the bread with them. Tomorrow, they promised, there would be boiled potatoes at the farm, maybe even bread!

The hungry boy stoutly refused. His mother, he explained, had somehow procured that one slice for him and had admonished him to save it for tomorrow.



Victims of the famine being thrown into a pit.

The tragic scene ended when the twelve men, as though electrified by a command, fell upon the lad and tore away the bread which crumbled and scattered over the floor. The starving, snarling, human beasts tore the crumbs out of each other's fingers, scratched them out of crevices, as though in a paroxysm of insanity. The hungry youngster sobbed bitterly, but for the men he had already ceased to exist.

By this means, 1933 brought death to the villages of Ukraine. Many places which had formerly boasted of popu-

lations from 2,500 to 3,000, now counted some 200 to 300 inhabitants. Later, the government transported whole colonies of Russians into these villages, where the families occupied the vacant lands and to this day plow and till the rich black loam of Ukraine.

The tougher farmers, who survived the deadly famine and lived to see the following harvest, were sentenced to ten years of Siberian slave labor if they so much as picked a pocketful of wheat heads, to chew the half-ripened grains for nourishment. This crime was known as "theft of socialist property".

Over seven million Ukrainians died in that artificially created famine. If the statement seems far-fetched, the reader need only look into "The Small Soviet Encyclopedia" of 1940 and under the heading Ukrainian SSR note this fact: in the 1927 census Ukraine had a population of 32 million; in 1939 (12 years later), only 28 million. Where did the 4 million disappear and where was the natural increase in population, which should have numbered another 4 or 5 million people? What became of those 8 or 9 million Ukrainians? The only answer is: The famine of 1933 and Siberia.

Even so, the figures were unquestionably falsified by Moscow, for in 1937 a census was taken, which revealed a still greater deficit. The man responsible for these figures was the well-known member of the Academy of Science in Kiev, Ptukha. In 1938, during my imprisonment in Kiev, he was sentenced to 25 years in jail for his "errors" in the census figures. His assistant, Professor Pustokhod was sentenced to 15 years for the same crime. Ptukha received a "re-schooling" and the statistics were modified to suit requirements in 1939.

Unable to tolerate further the tragic plight of their people, two of Ukraine's outstanding communists, Mykola Khvylovy and Mykola Skrypnyk, who had upheld the Revolution with heart and soul, committed suicide. They had realized too late the falsity, the duplicity, of the communist ideals which they had so earnestly believed in and preached.

Today, amidst the abundance of Canada, it seems incredible, impossible, that my enslaved countrymen actually lived and suffered through the ghastly tragedy of 1933.

I. D-ko

ULYTA

The Zamriy family lived in Dubyniwka street in the village of Medvyn in Kiev province. Ilko Zamriy spent his youth in the service of the big landlord, Malewski, on his farm "Dibriwka".

He married an orphan girl, Ulyta Dubyna, who had also grown up in the service of Mr. Malewski. After the wedding, Ilko separated from his father, who gave him about 2¾ acres of land on which the young couple built a cottage at a little distance from the road.

After the revolution in 1917, the family received more land, bought a cow, a horse and some pigs. Ulyta began to raise geese and save the feathers, looking forward to the future when she would have to give a dowry to her daughters. They became more prosperous and lived a happy, contented life.

But good things never last. The collectivization robbed them of their land, their cow and their horse while Ilko, with Ulyta and the children, became as poor as ever he had been. Then came the dreaded dark year of 1933. The communist zealots in the village, bolshevik turncoats, especially Havrylo Zamriy, carrying out party grain collection ordered the confiscation of all food, sweeping away the last handfuls of grain.

Then came the famine. People swelled and died. There was no one to dig graves in the cemetery, make coffins or bury the dead. Holes were dug around cottages, bodies were dragged to them and covered with earth like cattle.

Dubyniwka Street, considered more prosperous than other parts of the village, did not escape the famine. The Plaksuns, all of them shoemakers, died, all four families,

Semen, Kost, Zachar, and Mykyta. Tymotey Stupka, who had returned to his native land from the United States in 1922, died, and all his family. The same lot overtook the families of Stepan and Omelko Dubyna. All members of the family of Yawtukh Mytyai, a very skilled locksmith, died and also the families of Borsuk, Khamlenko, Markelanko, Polyvyany, Radzykhowsky, Shabaturenko, Sobko, and Sukhoplis. A few survived, mostly women, but, as a rule, only one in a whole family.

Ilko's family was no exception. All of them swelled with hunger and died, Ilko, his eight daughters and his son, Trokhym. Only Ulyta and the eldest daughter survived. The daughter was married, but lived with her parents because her husband, Hrytsko Zavedenko, was serving a prison term.

One day, a woman, Mrs. Smilyk, also on the verge of starvation, came to visit with Ulyta. She went into the house, but no one saw her come out. Her son became alarmed when he could not find his mother and notified the police. Ulyta said she did not know where Mrs. Smilyk was, but her behaviour at the time awakened suspicion among those present and they began a search which revealed a pot of boiled meat in the oven and a dish of salted meat in the cellar. This was all that was left of Mrs. Smilyk. Ulyta and her daughter, Tanaska, were arrested and taken away. Their further fate is unknown, though there was a rumor later on that they had been shot at Bohuslaw.

The famine took its greatest toll among the poorer people, who were the object of special care at the beginning of the communist rule. They formed the so-called "committees of poor farmers" and helped the communists to dekurkulize their neighbors who were a little better off. Being uneducated and self-centered, they kept away from the town and industrial centres where the more active elements could get at least a little help during the famine. They were those in whose name the communists made their "social revolution" and who destroyed the more active and prosperous farmers. The family of Ilko Zamriy belonged to this group of people.

I. Kh-ko

HOW I LIVED THROUGH THE FAMINE OF 1933

I am a son of a farmer from the once prosperous Poltava region. My parents had 25 acres of land, a team of horses and two cows. There were nine persons in the family. We joined the collective farm when our neighbors did and our land, horses, cows and farm implements were taken away. Three months later we were notified that we were classed as "kurkuls" and were subject to "dekurkulization of the third category", that is, we had to vacate our house. Soon village "activists" appeared, sealed our house and everything in it, and took us to the hamlet of Mátviytai where all "kurkuls", destined to die of hunger with the poor natives of that place, were taken.

Before we were hustled out of our home, my father managed to conceal some grain in the leggings of his boots and we lived on this for a few days in the hamlet. Then came the ordeal by hunger. There was no food, and our bodies began to swell. It was at the time when hordes of "grain collectors" invaded the villages and searched for concealed stores in the ground, in granaries, stables, orchards, fields and even wells.

My father died on the road near the hamlet and his body lay there for ten days; nobody buried him, because the dead lay scattered everywhere. My mother could not bury him because she too had become swollen with hunger; her body was covered with sores and she was very weak. She could hardly walk and the seven hungry children beside her looked even worse than she did. The things we had to eat. Even now the memory haunts me and a lump rises in my throat. Merciful God, forgive me!

I don't know where or when my father was buried. After

his death, one day my mother and three little sisters joined him. Before they died the little darlings stretched their tiny hands asking pitifully for some food. All of us were small, we could not bury our mother and sisters, and their bodies lay in the house a long, long time. Three other sisters and I were still alive, but we could not walk, only crawl. We would crawl thus to our mother and lie beside her. Then about two weeks later our mother's body began to move with a mass of maggots, we managed to roll it on to a ladder and drag it out of the house.

R. Sova

THE YEAR 1933 IN UKRAINE

During the famine I was employed as an economist in the planning division of a county in Southern Ukraine and I have first hand knowledge of this great tragedy and the main reasons and causes behind it.

Soviet literature dealing with methods of planning states solemnly: "A plan is a directive based on scientific facts". Then there is a detailed discussion of these "scientific facts".

The total yield of grain from the cultivated area in the county in 1931 was 735,000 bushels and the grain collection plan called for 1,100,000 bushels.* It was stated that the provincial planning commission included in this figure remainders from previous years in spite of the fact that these had been taken away every year since 1927. A member of the Politburo, the commissar of agricultural stocks in the USSR government in Moscow, Mr. Mikoyan, was sent to the county to make the grain collection campaign more effective. The county party executive was headed by Popov, who answered Mikoyan's question in regard to the feasibility of collecting the planned amount of grain: "Even if we sweep the whole county with a broom we won't find so much grain in the district." The Moscow dignitary did not say anything to this, but Popov was soon removed from his post.

During the period of intensive grain collection in Ukraine in 1930 - 1932 Moscow, Leningrad and other Russian industrial centres mobilized thousands of party members, variously known as the "ten thousand", the "twenty-five thousand" etc. brigades, to carry out the Kremlin directives because local Ukrainian communists were not strong enough to do it. Upon many occasions I saw the last ounce of grain,

* 20,000 and 30,000 metric tons in the original.

flour, and even peas and beans, taken away from the farmers.

Extraordinary beastly measures were applied in the case of more prosperous farmers. Not only were all their food stores, land and homes confiscated, but even most of the clothing; then the whole family would be put on a wagon and taken to a designated place. In our county hundreds of families, made destitute in this manner, were dumped in a sandy stretch of land near the village of Klusiwka, where they were supposed to dig holes for shelter during the cold, late autumn weather. Later on most of them were shipped north, to cut forests in the Murmansk district whence only a few individuals returned.

These cruel acts of terror and violence were committed on the express orders of the central Russian authorities in Moscow. The new chairman of the county party executive, Volkov, said to a circle of trusted persons: "Either I am crazy and don't know at all what's happening around me or some others are insane. . . Why punish the children?"

The vital statistics for 1932 were sent by the county executive to a special branch of the NKVD in the district. I was able to find out from the secretary, B., that 11,680 persons had died in the county in 1933. At the same time there were less than twenty births. Taking into consideration the total population of the county, which was close to 60,000, the famine took the lives of 19.4% or one-fifth of the total. Not only families, but whole villages died out. Katerynoslaw province suffered most, especially in the north, along the river Orel, where village soviets ceased to exist because the people had died. In the village of Chernytchana, in the county of Nekhvoroshch, which counted 200 homes, not a soul survived.

Towards the end of the spring, in 1933, there were sporadic cases of cannibalism. I knew of 9 such cases in our county. The spring proved to be more fatal than winter. As soon as green shoots appeared the hungry people would fall on them and, as a rule, die from stomach disorders.



Year 1933 in the Province of Poltava — by A. Leybovych.

V. K-o

THE YEAR 1933 IN POLTAVA

I lived in the city of Poltava in 1933. Hordes of hungry farmers, who came to the city hoping to get a crumb of bread to save themselves from starvation, were lying in the streets. I learned from the secretary of the city council that every day close to 150 dead bodies of famine victims were gathered up in Poltava. They were mostly farmers. My friend told me also of cases of cannibalism that were known to him.

WHAT HAPPENED IN HADYACH COUNTY

Having received from comrade Kolotov, boss of the county seat, instructions to establish a commune, the chairman of the village soviet, Tereshko Myshchachenko, took great pains to carry them out. He gave them wide publicity and, as a further incentive, put his name first on the list of commune farmers. Another reason was comrade Gapon from the city of Orel who certainly would have been made chairman if Tereshko failed in his "duties".

This was in 1930. The village of Kharkivets then numbered 780 individual farmers. Out of this number, only four followed his lead and joined the commune. It was easy for them to do so because they had never had places of their own, or else had sold their houses shortly before the instructions were received.

But this venture was still-born. Even these four, having tasted commune life for one season, turned against it and began to think of leaving it.

The authorities, aware of the fact that people were reluctant to join a commune, changed their tune and began to encourage a "collective farm" idea. With this object in view, there appeared Demen Karasyuk from the city of Tambov. He spoke a Russian-Ukrainian jargon, while his family spoke only Russian. Karasyuk appropriated the house of "serednyak"* Brychko and sent him to Siberia, where the poor fellow was worked to death six months later. Thus, began collectivization and the liquidation of "kurkuls" as a class.

Rallies were held in the centre of the village each day, at which communists from the county seat agitated for col-

* "Serednyak" — Middling rich -- the farmers were divided into classes: poor, serednyak, rich, kurkul.

lectives. But people did not want to join them and said so, arguing that the government had divided the land against them. And every day GPU agents arrested two to three men.

The village soviet, seeing that people did not want to attend these rallies, hired a boy of 12 to go around with a list and ask people to sign promises that they would attend the gathering. This measure was not successful because men would hide, and their wives would sign their own names arguing that the law gave both sexes equal rights. They also caused a lot of confusion at the rallies by causing a terrible noise. The GPU stopped this by sentencing Maria Treba to one year in jail.

Then the communists changed their tactics. The farmers were called out individually. Under threat of reprisals they were asked to sign papers agreeing to have their property nationalized.

The farmers began to sell their livestock and horses. Their unwillingness to join the collective was stimulated by the fact that people from the neighboring counties of Komyshany and Myrhorod, from villages already collectivized a year ago, came to the village begging for bread. This was an indication as to what they could expect from a collective farm and "communist socialism".

The taxes had to be paid in kind and those who paid them received additional demands, sometimes even greater than the first time, to pay with their products, especially grain.

Seeing no end to this the people began to hide their grain and potatoes if they had any left. A new arrival from the Hadyach Centre, comrade Shukhman, who was commissioned to collect grain in three or four counties, gave orders to form "bukysor brigades" who had authority to manhandle every farmer until he gave all his grain to the State. These brigades were supplied with special tools made in advance in some factory to facilitate the "grain hunt". These were steel rods about $\frac{5}{8}$ inches in diameter, three to ten feet long, with one end sharpened to a point and the other equipped with an oval-shaped handle. Some had a kind of drill on the end instead of a point. The "bukysors" would attack piles of straw, first of all sticking their rods into it to see if sacks of grain were hidden in it. The other tool was used to drill in the gardens and other likely places. The grain

when found was, of course confiscated and the owner was forbidden to remain in Ukraine and was sent to Russia (Sokolovky, Siberia, etc). The collective farmers did not hide the grain they received for their "days of work" because there was very little of it.

In October, 1932, comrades Shukhman and Kolotov organized a "Red Column". Commandeering about 60 farm wagons they filled them with toughs and sent them to the villages. Coming to a village, the toughs would scatter, go to the houses of collective farmers and ask how much grain each had, pretending this was only for registration purposes. When the information was in hand, teams would come up to each house and the grain would be taken away. When all the farmers were robbed of their grain, the wagons would be decorated with banners and slogans which proclaimed that the farmers had voluntarily, and in an organized manner, given their grain to the State.

This "red column" passed through villages to be observed, but was always under NKVD protection. When guards were absent, the columns would run into the woods or be robbed by former prisoners who escaped. Such columns took their toll from all the neighboring villages.

It should be observed here that the communists robbed people not only of grain but also of potatoes and any other thing that could be eaten. In some cases farmers were ordered to thresh the straw when the records showed a yield to have been poor. Combating the communist menace, farmers would leave some grain in the straw by breaking the teeth in the cylinder of the threshing machine. Sometimes they succeeded in concealing up to 30% of grain which remained unthreshed in the straw. They hoped to thresh out this grain later, and thus save themselves and their families. But cases when farmers, in desperation, burned the straw together with the sheds were common.

Searches and arrests led people to despair. The indignation reached its culminating point on November 21, 1932, when great unrest in the village made the village soviet and all the buksyors flee to the county seat for protection. The collective flew to pieces in half an hour. It was exclusively the work of women. They took their horses and cattle home, and the next day went to the approximate location of their former fields because all field boundaries were destroyed.

The communists were prompt in checking the incipient

rebellion. They arrived in force in GPU cars next night, arrested five persons and ordered that all collective farm property be returned. This order was carried out.

A stranger was now the chairman of the village soviet. Nobody knew where he came from, though he had a Ukrainian name, F. Boyko. He began to continue the work of his worthy predecessor, paying special attention to the Ukrainian movement for independence. "This is the work of our arch-enemy, Petlyura", he said. Then he tried to find out who had served in Petlyura's army.

Alarmed by the prospect of inevitable doom which was approaching, the people carried off, one night, all the grain from the collective grain stores, covering their tracks with pepper to protect themselves from detection by GPU hunting dogs. Some went to the forest to gather acorns, but this practice was soon stopped by Boyko who declared the woods to be State property. It was forbidden to go there.

It was impossible to grind grain in the mill because government grain quotas were not fulfilled. The farmers constructed hand mills and stampers. Boyko issued an order for the immediate arrest of the constructor of these machines, O. Khrynenko, but he was warned in time and ran away to Donbas. His wife was thrown out of the house, and it was locked by the GPU. Then she was tortured to reveal the whereabouts of her husband and the hiding place of gold (money). She gave them 230 rubles in gold, but did not know where her husband was, and died in their hands.

The former chairman of the village soviet, Tereshchenko, sold his house to buy liquor. He then took a house from Petro Yarosh, and with the assistance of Boyko, managed to have the Yarosh family exiled to the region of Sverdlovsk where all eight persons in the family died from hard labor and ill treatment. Another case was that of F. Shobar, who did the same thing with the brothers Mykola and Stepan Nedvyha. One of these escaped and the other perished in Siberia together with his family of ten persons.

A week or so later the GPU arrested the following families: Borobawko — 5 persons, V. Brychko — 7 persons, Ostap Ilchenko — 5 persons, Nykyfor and Zakhar Koroniwsky — 3 persons, Kryvozei — 4 persons, Vasyl Mashok — 3 persons, O. Perepadya — 4 persons, K. Riznyk — 7 persons, Shyka — 4 persons, Elysey Taras — 6 persons, Vasyukno — 4 persons and others. All of them received life terms with

hard labor and were sent 280 miles north of Sverdlovsk. In 1942, 5 of these returned and said that all the others had died from hard labor and scurvy. They were fortunate to get forged papers and escaped to Donbas, where they worked in the mines. They did not stay long in any place, because as soon as they cleared a patch in the forest and built barracks and other buildings, they were sent to another place in the wilderness 18 to 24 miles away where the same thing was repeated. The direction was always north, further north. Their address was: Sverdlovsk 5, Letter G.

"There are no "kurkuls" now, and presumably no Petlyura partisans, and we can build up our collective farms in peace," said Boyko. "But you should keep in mind that there are many "near-kurkuls" whom we have to watch and if they are going to harm our Soviet government, we'll send them after the others." He again held meetings urging people to join a collective farm. The government took away grain and meat for taxes. There were no cows or sheep in the village.

In the evening of November 2, an unknown group of farmers attacked a "buksyor" brigade. Makar Verba was killed, and three men ran away. The next day the GPU confiscated all the shotguns in the village. The attackers were not caught. Boyko then threatened that the Soviet Red Army would come and wipe out all the farmers.

The people were terrified. It was hard to find a farmer who did not serve a jail term. Practically all joined the collective farm now, only twelve swore that they would not do it, and did not till 1941. But these were all women and children whose husbands and fathers were exiled to Siberia.

After the fall of 1932, it became customary to go around and beg for bread or food from the neighbors. These beggars were usually children and old people.

A new "buksyor" brigade appeared in the village, more cruel than the first one.

In the spring of 1933 one third of the people in the village were starving. The others had a little food, and ate once a day to keep from swelling. To save themselves and their families from starvation, men began to offer their properties for sale or in exchange for food. Some went to Khar'kiw, Kiev or Poltava to buy a little food and came back

disappointed. Those cities were no better than Hadyach. Then they went to Moscow, Stalingrad, Voronezh and Orel where food could be obtained. But the GPU soon found this out and the people were searched on the trains, food confiscated, and they themselves were charged with speculation. Then an order was issued that no farmer would be allowed to travel by train without a permit from the county soviet executive.

In March, 1933, all the people from the collective farm went to the authorities, asking for bread. They were not allowed even to enter the courtyard.

On March 28, 1933, we were shocked by the news that Myron Yemets and his wife, Maria, had become cannibals. Having cut off their children's heads, they salted them away for meat. The neighbors smelt meat frying in the smoke issuing from their chimney and, noticing the absence of children, went into the house. When they asked about the children, the parents began to weep and told the whole story. The perpetrators of this act argued that they would have children again. Otherwise, they would die in great pain and that would be the end of the family.

Chairman Boyko arrested them himself, and about six hours later the GPU began to question them. "Who has so cunningly persuaded you to do this, kurkuls, near-kurkuls or Petlyura henchmen? You know that this is the work of our enemies to cast dishonour on our country, the Soviet Union, the most advanced country in the world. You have to tell us who did it!" Hoping to save themselves in this way, the accused pointed to Pavlo Lytvynenko, who was supposed to have said: "If you have nothing to eat, butcher children and eat them!" Lytvynenko was arrested and shot as an example to the others. Myron and Maria were sentenced to ten years in prison. However, they were shot about three months later because even the Soviet government was ashamed to let them live.

At the end of March or the beginning of April, a big department store was opened in Hadyach on Poltavaska Street, by the park, across the street from Lenin's monument. It was called "Torgsin". Stocked very well even with goods from abroad, it had one fault, that of selling only for platinum, gold, silver or precious stones. The prices were: For 10 gold rubles one could buy there 17½ pounds of bread, 22

pounds of buckwheat cereal, 6 2/3 pounds of millet and 10 herrings.

As soon as people learned about this, all who had any gold or silver flocked to the city. There was a queue eight abreast and 1/2 mile long before the store. There always were 50 - 70 persons who could not get in before the store closed for the day. They spent their nights on the sidewalk disregarding cold, storm or rain. Thefts were very common, but most died from hunger or stomach cramps after eating too much and too greedily the food they bought. The corpses were removed every morning by a GPU truck.

I also stood in line with my mother. There I saw with my own eyes ten dead bodies thrown on the truck like so many logs and, in addition, three men that were still alive. The dead were hauled to Hlyboky Yar ("Deep Ravine") and dumped off.

None of the clerks in this store were Ukrainians and the store belonged to the State.

A month later, in April, this store was broken into and robbed. Half an hour before the opening, an alarm was given that the store was robbed at daybreak. The militia with dogs began to search the people waiting in the queue. All who were a little stronger, had little or no swelling and, perhaps, some gold, were arrested and taken to the building of the county executive committee which was quite close and had a large basement. The prisoners were searched and the gold coins or any other valuables, if they had any, were confiscated. Other NKVD agents, without dogs, did the same.

One woman, Maria Bowt, had a golden "ship" awarded her husband during the Russo-Japanese war for her husband's bravery in saving a ship of the Russian fleet. She was also arrested during this "investigation" and was sent to work at construction projects in Komsomolsk on the Amur river close to the Pacific Ocean. All trace of her vanished. The "ship" must have been taken to swell the Russian treasury or went into the pocket of some NKVD agent. Two weeks later, it was discovered that the real culprits in this case were the clerks, in collusion with the militia. They were not punished because they had false documents prepared in advance, and they escaped arrest. This explanation was given out by comrades Shukhman and Kolotov.

This department store had its bad and good sides. The Russians robbed the people of practically all the gold they

had. On the other hand, it saved many people's lives because 6 - 11 pounds of grain often saved one from starving to death. Those who had no gold for food died like flies, or went to the cemeteries in search of corpses.

The most critical point was reached just before harvest. More and more people starved to death each day. Everything was eaten that could be swallowed, dogs, cats, frogs, mice, birds, grass, but mostly thistles, which were delicious if the plants were about 15 inches high and cleaned of spines. Many people went to "graze" and often died on "grazing fields".

When rye ears began to fill out and were at least half full, the danger of death from starvation receded. The people cut ears of grain in the fields, dried them and rubbing them down they ate the precious green grains.

The communists now began to combat "grain barber menace", that is, people who cut ears of grain with scissors. Mounted guards and others on watchtowers protected the grain from the "grain barbers". One of these watchmen, Fanasiy Hursky, killed a fellow who dared to "steal government property". But the "barbers" struck back in some cases. Some of them sawed through the props under the tower of Ivan Palchenkov when he was asleep. When the wind blew, the tower toppled down and Ivan was killed.

In the spring of 1933, 138 persons died in the village of Kharkiwtsi. In comparison with other places this was very good. A great many people died from diseases caused by hunger, especially dysentery. There was only one child born at that time in the whole administrative unit to which Kharkiwtsi belonged.

The 1940 - 1941 school year saw no beginners at all, while previously there were about 25 each year. The new school principal, a communist, saw the implication, and to save face made first grade out of children a year younger if they were a little better developed than the others. The same thing happened in other neighboring villages.

The orphans who survived the famine were taken to a children's home in the village. They were well cared for and most of them grew up properly and reached maturity in the years 1939 - 1941. The boys raised in these homes when inducted into the army in 1941 were the first to desert with arms and go back to avenge themselves on the communists in their home villages, who deserved punishment.

In 1934 the communists, continuing their fight with individual farmers, gave them the worst land, mostly low lying and flooded in the early spring, but their taxes were increased and they had to pay 50% more than their brothers who joined the collective. All who could not meet these high payments were, in 1935, sentenced to twelve years forced labor in the region of Karaganda in Central Asia. The persecuted were: Semen Hursky — 4 persons, Yykhym Hursky — 2 persons, and Petro Perepadya — 4 persons. The families (12 in all) who joined the collective farm and remained there till 1941, fared little better than the exiles.

The people tried to find some protection from collectivization from the dignitaries in Moscow. Andriy Kolisnyk, angered by the harsh treatment of the local authorities, went to Moscow to find justice. He managed to get an interview with Madame Krupskaya and Kalinin and to present his complaints. They told him to return home, that his case would soon be investigated. To be sure, it came on the heels of his return home. Two weeks later he received an order to be ready in 24 hours for departure to a sparsely settled district at the mouth of the river Ural. He was sent there to join a state farm instead of the collective farm at home.

June 8, 1938, at night, the village was again visited by the NKVD. One man, Korniy Riznyk, threw snuff tobacco into the eyes of two agents who came to arrest him, pushed them into a ditch over six feet deep which was by the house, and escaped. The shots of the agents, blinded by tobacco, went wild. But with others they were more successful. Seven villagers were arrested: T. Bokhan, Mykola and Zachar Koroniwsky, Mykola Riznyk, Semen and Amrosiy Shyk, and Semen Treba. No reasons were given for these arrests, only Treba was asked if he remembered that in 1918 he rang church bells to warn people and have them prepare a defence against communist troops.

This echo of the events of 1918 - 1920 referred to the fact that at that time the villages of Sara, Rashiwka, Lutenska, Lysiwka and Kharkiwtsi organized a defence against the communist invaders. They built barricades on roads leading into the villages from plows and harrows to prevent a communist cavalry attack and fought with arms in hand. But in the end they had to give in to the much stronger enemy. The Russians then burned half the villages and killed half the people.

Out of these seven, only one man survived, Zachar Koniwsky. He returned to the village in 1941 and said that he was left in Uman and the others were sent on to unknown destinations.

Two or three days before the arrival of the Germans, the people lynched many of their former tormentors, 12 were hanged or killed and two had heart attacks from fear and died unpunished. Karasyuk ran away with his family and could not be found. Gapon was sent to a new post in Western Ukraine, district of Lutsk, in 1939 - 1940.

When the Soviet army returned in 1943, four persons were hanged the first day and Hrytsko Khaba, K. Leonid and Petro Petrovich were sentenced to 25 years exile in Siberia, in the Omsk region where they may be still working, if they are alive.

Those that were taken to Germany during the war as "ost-arbeiters", both boys and girls, were not allowed to return to their native village but were sent to coal mines in the Ural Mountains. My sister, Tina, is there. Only married men or women were permitted to return to Khar-kiwtsi.



THE SPRING OF 1930

Collectivization came to us* in the early spring of 1930. At the end of March, our family was thrown out of our own house, our household goods confiscated, and we were taken by the communist militia to Yarky.

Between nine and ten o'clock, two wagons appeared in our yard and that of our neighbor, Petro Yarovy. The women began to lament, and became so hysterical that they had to be put on the wagons.

"To leave our own houses and go? Where? What did we do? What are we punished for?"

Their lament fell on the deaf ears of the fanatical GPU agent Zozulya. "Hurry, there is no time to lose with this riff-raff," he shouted.

The way to Yarky led over Valuyky highway through the village of Karmazyniwka, beyond which, at a distance of about four miles was a ravine, Yarky, the future place of residence for "kurkuls". At the bottom of this ravine was a sluggish little stream which supplied water. The forest was over two miles away.

The NKVD men were pleased with their day's work. The people were taken to this ravine and told to get out. There was no building of any kind, nor any tools to build one. "All 86 persons have no right to leave this ravine or go

* County of Svatiw of the Voroshylowhrad region.

further than a mile and a quarter from it," said the NKVD leader. "There is water in the bush, you can use it. You can also work as much land as you can. Now is your chance to prove you did not live by exploiting others. If you break these regulations, you'll be arrested."

There were 21 families in the group. The night was cold and children suffered most; the older people built fires and spent the night sitting around. With the break of day some started to dig holes in the ground, others went to the forest to get wood, and before sunset two dugouts were half ready. Women and children had shelters.

These "houses" were holes in the ground with a few logs laid over them. These, in turn, were covered by twigs and grass and topped with a layer of dirt. By the end of one month in that place, each family had its own dug-out.

The names of the people sent here were: Panas Boyko, Vasyl Serdyuk, Kost Fesenko, Vasyl Rybalka, Oleksiy Rybalka, Pylyp Hruzdo, a widow with her son Fedir and a fellow from the village of Kuzemiwka whose name as well as those of many others, I forgot.

The people worked for a whole summer on the land. My father planted ten acres of watermelons. The cooperative bought 132 tons of these, promising to pay 45.45 rubles per ton, that is 6,000 rubles for all the watermelons they took from us. My father never saw this money.

Other families also worked hard for a whole summer and raised sufficient food for the whole winter. We began to lead a new life, and never mentioned what happened. Being very poor, we consoled ourselves with the thought that we were safe because we had next to nothing that could be taken away from us. Some planned to build real houses the next spring. Dug-outs could be used for chicken-coops. A few even acquired some livestock.

Winter that year was stormy, and blizzards tied people to their dug-outs. They were quite safe there, or so they thought. At the end of February, they had visitors: activists and village soviets and NKVD agents. The communists were looking for something. All were drunk and as vicious as a pack of hungry wolves. Disregarding the presence of women and children, they began to abuse the inmates in indecent terms and say: "No matter how much you're knocked down, you creep out again. . . We'll show you how to start "kurkul" business again. . ." Nobody dared to say anything and this passiveness made the communists still more angry.

They began to destroy things. The clay fire places and ovens were knocked down, pillows ripped open and feathers blown away by the storm.

The problem now was: What to do? Where to loo' for protection? Opinions were divided; one group wanted to leave the place, go away and get lost in some far away place; and the other wanted to remain. This matter was discussed for a month.

Then a group of 19 young men and four girls left the place in the dead of night. They hoped to earn their living by working in industry.

They worked at first as day laborers, and later managed to get false passports and become regular factory workers. Many became skilled in their work, sent for their relatives to Yarky, and helped them to get work and become established in new occupations.

This did not last long. There came a purge, all workmen were screened: Who is he? Where did he come from? What is his social background? They could not remain in their jobs with their false documents.

In the spring of 1934 these "migrating birds" had to fly again. Some went to Crimea, others to Caucasus, Central Asia or Siberia, changing again their name, place of birth, occupation, etc.

In spite of these precautions, most of them fell again into the net of the NKVD. They were sentenced to five years in the concentration camps. Among these unfortunates was my brother.

A. S.

THE FAMINE

In the fall of 1930 the authorities made a list of my father's possessions and arrested him. The rest of us were marked for deportation to Siberia. My elder brother and sister took us smaller children and our mother, at night, to another county. There we spent most of the wintertime in a hole which supplied sand for the neighborhood. Later we had to flee still further, to a cottage belonging to my mother's parents, where we lived secretly in the loft.

When the communists robbed the people of their grain in 1932, our mother died from hunger. Three of us were left; I was 11 and my sisters were 8 and 6. We lived in a cottage that was not heated, and we ate whatever we could beg from the people. At that time my father was released from prison and joined us. He came to us swollen with hunger, like thousands of others in the village. In the spring of 1933 when the snow melted, I went with my father to dig in the fields for half-rotten beets or to gather grain at the site of grain stacks.

MACHUKHY

I was born in the village of Machukhy, in Poltava province, in a farm family consisting of 13 persons. In 1928 my parents, and my brothers and sisters over 18 years of age, were disfranchised because father some years ago had belonged to a group of church elders. Two years later, all our property was confiscated. Then older members of the family went away to find some employment and four of us little children remained at home with our mother. In December 1930, we were thrown out of our cottage and were not allowed to take anything with us. That winter we live a nomad life in our native village, and in the spring went to Poltava where father was employed as a construction worker. There we lived in privation and hunger till 1933.

At that time the grim reaper had a bountiful harvest. Walking the streets of the city one saw dying people every 50 to 100 steps. The sanitary branch used to send wagons at night to collect corpses. My father died from hunger on March 15, 1933. I dug a grave with the help of my younger brother, and buried my father. In June of the same year when I, as a son of "an enemy of the people" was in prison, my mother died, also from hunger.

Sometime after my release from prison I visited my native village of Machukhy. It had been very big, close to 2,000 homes. During the famine the population dwindled to about half. My relatives told me that younger and stronger folks ran away to Donbas looking for work there. Those that were fortunate enough to do this survived. I also learned that many villages and hamlets literally had ceased to exist, all the people in them dying in 1932-1933. For instance, in the village of Soroky, where 50 families lived before, not a soul remained alive. Their cottages were soon after torn

down by the neighboring collective farm. Some men from the village of Lakhy were exiled to Solowky, and the rest died out. In the hamlet of Lebedi, where 5 families consisting of 31 people lived, all died, and almost the same fate overtook the hamlet of Hety with 4 families (37 persons) among them four relatives of my mother. Only 2 persons survived in the latter hamlet. The hamlets of Tverdokhliby (5 families) and Malolitka (7 families) died out. Three persons from the hamlet of Boruny managed to run away to industrial centres, and were thus saved from the doom which overtook the remaining members of the three families who lived there.

In Machukhy, among those families whom I knew personally, 126 persons died from hunger.

Y. P.

FAMINE IN MOLOCHANSKE

During the famine in Ukraine I lived with my husband and two children in the county town of Molochanske, in the district of Melitopil, lecturing in the agricultural and public schools. It was already apparent in the fall that famine was inevitable. The authorities requisitioned all grain and other food supplies from the villages. In October the teachers were each given a sack of potatoes and then nothing till the new crop was harvested the following year. My husband was getting 11 ounces of bread and $1\frac{3}{4}$ pints of soup a day at the factory where he worked. This food had to be divided into four, and was absolutely insufficient. Soon my son, seven years old, swelled up and lay in bed, while my husband looked like one of the living dead.

When March arrived the people turned black and died, but we were forbidden even to mention the word "famine". Bodies of the dead lay in the orchards and on the streets of Molochanske. In the village of Terpinnya, close to Melitopil, which raised only fruit, all the people either died or were scattered all over the country. The place was completely deserted, quite dead. Later, Russian colonists from the Orel district settled there.

I had parents in Lviw, then in Poland. One day, in despair, I wrote a letter to them asking them to send some money to Torgsin that I might buy a little food. Some time later my husband went to Melitopil and brought some food from Torgsin.

But my letter asking for help was not forgotten by the NKVD. Four years later when my husband and I were arrested, this letter figured as one among many other charges. I was sentenced to ten years in exile, my husband was also sent away, and my sons went to "children's homes". one in Donbas and the other near Kherson.

V. L.

NIZHEN FAMINE SKETCHES

The district of Nizhen is flat with a low horizon and plenty of sky. Someone, sometime, compared it to Holland.

During the war for the independence of Ukraine much blood was shed there, both of her sons and of her enemies. Kruty is there, where three hundred heroic young Ukrainians faced overwhelming odds to shield Kiev from the enemy. And as late as 1923 a detachment of Soviet militia was mowed down near the village of Berkiywka, by those who had refused to give up the fight.

The bolshevik leaders tried to make much of the "red guerillas" in the district of Kropyvyany, Tochony and Osypenko. Even a "Red Guerilla Collective" was organized near Nizhen, only to be liquidated in the fated years of 1932 and 1933. Thus, Ukrainian communists who helped Russians gain control of Ukraine were later rewarded by them as oppositionists.

Troyitsky Cemetery

The disaster of 1933 did not pass by this gentle corner of the Ukraine, even though in the province of Chernyhiw it was not as acute as in Poltava province and other southern and central provinces of Ukraine.

However, trucks loaded with dead bodies became a common sight on the streets of quiet Nizhen during the first months. Every morning at daybreak they were in a hurry to go, and tarpaulin coverings would quite often be lifted by the wind to reveal their horrible loads. The people already knew what was hidden under them and were not as scared as they were at first, but the trucks themselves felt uneasy and wanted to dump their loads into some hole near

the Troyitsky Cemetery, prepared the previous night, as soon as possible.

Cannibalism

Chernihivska Street is close to the cemetery. Quiet, covered with smooth green grass, wide, as all the streets in our towns are. The militia uncovered here a "meat combine" with a great variety of processed meats. They were sold everywhere, at the railway station, on the public market. The sources of supply were children or teenagers who had not lost much weight. The marinated remains of the body of a stout wagon driver, known by everyone in the town, were found in another, similar butcher shop.

In a cul-de-sac close by a mother, became insane from hunger, killed her child with a knife and having eaten a little herself, died in terrible agony.

The centre of the town boasts of "Torgsin", a universal departmental store. The show windows display everything that may satisfy either primitive hunger or the most capricious taste. All of it is of Ukrainian origin, except the expensive woollens and silks, products of industries discouraged in Ukraine because she is to remain a source of raw materials. Everything may be had for gold or silver. The country is thus drained of the last remnants of gold, wedding rings, gilded picture frames, monograms, etc.

From the "closed rationing centres", especially organized for the Soviet bureaucracy, the NKVD agents and party members carry away white bread, sugar, chocolate, butter. Centres for higher officials of the county party executive are not as well stocked and those for the intellectuals only supply them with enough food to keep body and soul together.

The Children Arrange For The Funeral

My friend M., a student at the Arts Academy in Moscow, also a native of Nizhen, visited with me today. This is his first visit for a year. Always jolly, his face now has a greyish tinge and his eyes burn with fever. He cannot bear any longer to see corpses lying in the streets. There is no such thing in Moscow. In the Russian villages he did not see a single corpse, or a child swollen with hunger. Why does Ukraine suffer so terribly? Being alone with me he is not afraid to make a horrible guess: The famine was pur-

posedly planned to break down the resistance of the Ukrainian farmers.

He saw two little children, swollen from hunger, slowly move their heavy feet, carrying the rudely made coffin of their youngest brother. He helped them carry it, assisted in the burial and gave them the last bit of bread he had received for making posters for the military division. Weeping with powerless rage, he cursed and cursed. Then he drew from the folder a sketch of that funeral. Goya, immortal master, the terrors of your times pale in comparison with those of Stalin!

In The Frunze Collective Farm

A walk to the green suburb of Owdiyiwka does not calm one down. Again a funeral, the deserted homes of farmers who had loved them, dead bodies of members of the collectives and others, a few of the dead lying by the road, one of them already in a state of decomposition.

Why such inefficiency? He was beaten to death. Not being a member of the collective farm, the hungry fellow had stolen a little flour. The party leaders in the collective used this incident to incite the hungry, bad tempered members who were near to breakdown. They were fed just enough to keep them alive in this "shock" collective. They behaved like beasts. Chasing him with dogs they fell upon him and belabored him for a long time, enjoying it, perhaps because of their despair and anger at the situation in which they were involved. That night they robbed the seed reserves of the collective.

In the club of the collective the artist, our friend S. S., is painting frescoes. In order not to die from hunger, to get some thin beet soup and sometimes a piece of dark material resembling bread he "glorifies" the organizers of famine. Look at one of them and you'll see the hateful face with the thick mustache, the industry, the tractors. But at home the pictures shown only to trusted friends are different: a dead landscape with dead people; a hungry, almost dying, woman at the window of a railway car going somewhere; a whole family begging, a dead landscape as a background with red ravens, a father dying before the cottage.

Yesterday 5 persons died in the Frunze "shock" collective and today 8. How many died outside? Young girl students sent out to collect grain often hear when they go near some cottage: "Don't go there. They are all dead!"

Educational Institutions

The old teacher has tears in his eyes telling of the girl student who cried today during the lecture, "I cannot bear any more. . ." Then the whole class in the normal school began to cry. Then this incident was hushed up somehow. One cannot speak of this aloud, — there are ears everywhere.

The building of the Nizhen lyceum is fronted by a white colonnade. Gogol was educated here. Now it is a place where future pedagogues are trained, mostly farmers' sons and daughters. More and more often they cannot answer the questions put to them. "My memory is weak", "I did not grasp the question", "I cannot work", — they say. Some lay in bed for hours. To say "I am hungry" is not permissible in spite of the fact that in the student's dining room one gets only a little mouldy flour or rotten cabbage, sometimes with a cockroach or two. If you complain you have to face the severe look of the huge principal, S. Porada: "What! Hungry? You are spreading Hitler propaganda, you promote class hatred" and he's gone.

It is even worse when the matter reaches the ears of the party monitor, agent of the "state security organ", and secretary of a party cell in the normal school, comrade Pirogov. Small in stature from a congenital deformity, with a cruel face, he nourishes a pathological hatred of all that is Ukrainian. He is a friend of Porada and assistant to the principal Tykhy, those two exemplary traitors, but he watches them. Later on, in 1934, after Skrypnyk's suicide, he'll crucify them together with the whole Ukrainian communist party, professors, but just now traitors are useful. The successful execution of the famine pressure on Ukraine depends to a great extent on such traitors. They are privileged persons who get food from "rationing centres", they are everywhere, in every collective farm, institution, school. The hungry students accompany the departure of this triumvirate with looks full of the deepest hatred.

In some forgotten corner of the building Karpo Arkhy-povich quietly dies, the old librarian of the lyceum, which boasts of over 200,000 volumes. His tall, slim figure standing in the door protected the library from vandalism in the days after the revolution. "I won't let you in," he would say, no matter who controlled the town. No one dared to touch his holy of holies. He loved his work; he dedicated his life to it. Only generous industrious natures are able to

do this. Karpo Arkhypovich would find, in a few minutes, any book that was needed without consulting the catalogue, and professors would often turn to him instead of trusting the catalogue, which was not a very reliable guide. Breathing hard before his death he said: "Chaos in Ukraine, we'll all perish". His son Vasyl roamed the rooms like a sad shadow. He and his mother also saw the grim reaper approaching (their legs began to swell up).

After Karpo Arkhypovich, another old worker died, Shamin, a heroic old figure who had served the lyceum for 50 years, and a few girl servants died. When someone remarked that they had died from hunger, Pirogov spat out: "What? Famine? Counter-revolution!"

I. I. Koval

TWENTY YEARS OF DRACONIC LAW

The law for the protection of socialist property, promulgated by the Soviet Government on August 7, 1932, that is, 21 years ago, involved a transformation so unheard of, in the nature and extent of its extermination of the Ukrainian people, that it may safely be termed "genocide".

The law said: "The rapid growth in economic strength of the socialist division of agriculture makes the enemies of the socialist state mad with rage and hatred. The remnants of the kurkul elements are using all possible means to ruin it, in order to hinder the development and strengthening of our socialist state. One very widespread method is the stealing of socialist property. Taking all the above into consideration, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR has decided to punish every theft of socialist property, irrespective of circumstance and material value, by five years of imprisonment in the distant concentration camps and with confiscation of all property of the defendant and higher punishment, if necessary, to obtain the greatest measure of social justice."

At first it was hard to grasp fully the significance of this "law". Its real meaning and aims became clear only after the Russians began to put it in practice.

Truly, these were terrible times for the Ukrainian people, and the effects of this law were frightful. Robbed of the last ounce of grain by the state planned grain collection, which was carried out ruthlessly by sweeping the granaries to get the last grain, the people remained without food. The farmers and their families went into the fields, now bare, to glean and thus get at least a few handfuls of grain. But pioneer — komsomol brigades whose task it was to protect

"socialist property" hunted them down and, calling in those organs of "justice", the militia, and the NKVD, arranged for public prosecution in the courts.

And so these unfortunate toilers, the Ukrainian farmers, who had been robbed of all food, were dragged to trial for stealing "socialist property", based on the law of August 7, 1932.

I shall never forget one incident which overshadows everything else I saw. The wife of a member of the collective farm in the village of Orliwka in the county of Kulykiw, province of Chernyhiw, having six little children to feed, went, with another woman whose husband had been killed by the NKVD during the collectivization drive, into the fields to find a few ears of grain. Her husband was sent east for committing a "crime" against the Soviet government. They had each picked up only two or three ears when the pioneer brigade caught them and brought them before the militia officer, who took them to court. The poor women were both sentenced to imprisonment in the concentration camps of the far North of the Soviet Union.

Another member of the collective in the same village was sentenced to ten years in concentration camps for picking up ten onions from the garden of the collective!

This law of August 7 was a prologue to the infamous artificial famine in Ukraine. The late fall of 1932 was especially terrible. Older people, children and weaker individuals began to die by the thousand. In May of 1933, only a few score people remained alive in villages whose population a year before had run into hundreds or even thousands. For instance, in the villages of Orliwka, Smolanka and Hrabiwka there were 45 to 80 persons left, who looked as if they had risen from their graves. Before the famine these villages had housed more than 3,000 to 4,000 people. In some counties all the villages were marked by black banners, to show that there was hardly anyone left alive. University students were sent from Kiev to these villages to gather in the crops, which were very good that year.

The village and city streets in Ukraine were littered with hundreds of dead farmers, victims of famine. There was no one to bury these toilers of the soil who fed the country.

At this time the French minister, Herriot, passed through Ukraine on his way to Moscow but he was not allowed to see the dire straits of the Ukrainian people. The day he was due to arrive in Kiev, all the stores on the route he was to

take in the city were filled with bread and other food which was not for sale. The NKVD took great pains to remove from the streets leading to the railway station to the opera* house all the victims of famine. Mr. Herriot saw only "prosperity" at a time when hundreds were dying from hunger in the "European Market" in the city. So Herriot did not see any of the citizens of the country with which he desired friendly trade relations.

During the preparations for Mr. Herriot's visit I happened to see how one of the Russian gauleiters, P. P. Postyshev, was directing operations on Tymofiyiwaska Street, near No. 13. He ordered the NKVD men who were protecting him to arrest those who were staring at the newly-built shop benches, filled with bread and other food. The sale of the food was forbidden, and the NKVD guards watched the shops day and night to protect them from attack by the hungry people until the visit was over. As far as I know such precautions were taken all along Mr. Herriot's route from Kiev to Kharkiw and beyond, as far as the boundary of Ukrainian territory. This happened at a time when the yield was above average. The statistical data definitely proved that Ukraine, having an average yield, can feed almost the whole of Europe.

* From the railway station along the boulevard and Bezzakowska, Tymofiyiwaska and Fundukleyewska streets to the city opera house

J. Chmyr

SPEAK RUSSIAN OR STARVE

I am a native of Kiev province, from the village of Bridky in the administrative unit of Parada.

In June, 1931, I was drafted by the bolshevik government for compulsory work in the city of Marupil to build the Lenin Factory named "Azovatel". There were many others brought here from Ukrainian villages, about 400 people, and we were lodged in the former Theological Seminary building under the watchful eyes of the NKVD.

The living conditions in that place were dreadful. Our daily ration consisted of 11 ounces of bread and some thin soup (balanda). Dirty rags on the bare floors, full of crawling lice, served for beds. We did heavy work under these conditions, dug ditches and carried bricks.

Close to the seminary was a separate enclosure, protected by barbed wire, in which 4,000 priests and 36 'deviationists' were being detained. They fared even worse than we did. All of them were completely naked, hungry, and during hot spells they were not allowed enough water to drink but were forced to do the heaviest work. Numbers of them died every day.

At the first opportunity that presented itself, after three months of this living hell, I ran away. To remain at large I had to work at some very heavy jobs, and be constantly on the lookout for NKVD men.

I came home on April 5, 1932, and there learned that the NKVD was again looking for me as a traitor and deviationist. I had to go away. I thought that I might get some work in Donbas and lose myself there. But when I came to the railway station on April 11 I was not able to buy a ticket to the place I wished. The only way left was to go

to Moscow to work at the construction of the Moscow-Donbas railway line.

There were others in the same predicament. We were told by the employment agent: "You have two alternatives, to go and work at railway construction, or starve".

Ten days later we made up our minds. Transportation charges, amounting to 34 rubles per person, had to be paid in advance. That night we were loaded in boxcars with a double row of bunkbeds. Each car had to accommodate 110 men and we were rather crowded. The next day our train, with a human load of 4,000 was dispatched to Moscow. Not an ounce of bread or a drop of soup was given us while we were on the way and the result was that by May 1 eight had died. They died from hunger.

We were not allowed to get off the train in Moscow, but were taken to the town of Kashira 75 miles away. Since we were such a long time without food 370 more died on the way.

We spent four days in Kashira being organized for work, but still there was no food. Then we began to beg, but those who could not speak Russian did not get any help. The Russians would say: "I won't give you any bread if you cannot ask in Russian. Go back where you came from, and perish there from hunger!"

Twenty-five others and I were sent with the railway survey party from Kashira back to Moscow. We surveyed 67 miles in 30 days, and each night stayed in a different village.

I had an opportunity to observe the life of the "muzhiks" in the Russian villages. It was different from life in the Ukrainian villages. Each farmer had, on the average, 4 horses, 6 cows, sheep and pigs, while in Ukraine the people had been deprived of all their possessions and were starving. The Russians had bread, meat, and potatoes were rotting in the farm yards. No one dreamed of any famine here!

I worked here for a year. Towards the end I lived in a Moscow suburb, and saw Ukrainians come to buy bread, which they tried to take back to their dying families in Ukraine.

I left Moscow on April 20, 1933, after having provided myself with 79 pounds of bread. When about to leave I met two women from my native village who had come to Moscow to buy bread. Our journey was uneventful until we reached Bakhmach on the Russian-Ukrainian border. Here, all the passengers were ordered by the NKVD to go to the customs

office, where the officials took away my bread, leaving me only 9 pounds. This was in consideration of the fact that I had been working in Moscow, but my countrywomen were not only robbed of their bread but were themselves detained for "taking" bread away from Russia.

These two unfortunate women left hungry children at home. Their husbands died from hunger, and the children were alone. They never came back.

After my arrival in my native village I was ordered by the village soviet chairman, a Moscow henchman, Klym Komychenko, to oversee a brigade of women, swollen from hunger, whose task it was to sow and weed sugar beets. Practically all the people in the village were suffering and swollen, many were already dead from hunger. The work these hungry women were doing was too hard for them, and they would fall down and die. It was terrible to look at them, the skin cracked and water oozed out. The peak of mortality was reached just before the harvest.

Then another man and I were ordered to roam over the village and gather up the corpses. Cannibalism raised its ugly head, mothers ate their children and wives their husbands. Nastya Kyzyma ate her husband, Andriyan, and one child, and then she and her remaining five children died. Osadchy's wife ate him when he died, and then told the neighbours that she had buried his bones behind the cottage. The hot weather hastened the decomposition of the bodies and the stench in the village was unendurable. About twenty people died every day and there was no one to bury them. Four men were steadily employed at the cemetery, digging graves. We brought in the dead on the wagon like logs. No one lamented their deaths because their families or relatives lay sick or were already dead. The NKVD agent, a Russian, was telling us what to do. People were buried worse than cattle. If I should, by some miracle, return to my native village I would be able to find all those holes where more than half the people in the village were buried.

I worked at this collection of the dead for two months, and then myself swelled with hunger. All I had to eat during that time was $3\frac{1}{2}$ ounces of bread and a small potato a day and lack of other foods, especially meat and fats, began to affect my body. I ate nettles, lambs quarters, locust flowers and drank water. My body swelled so badly that I could walk no longer, I could only crawl along.

But luckily for me, the ears of rye began to fill with

a milky substance. I greedily sucked the ears and the swelling abated. In Moscow I had weighed over 200 pounds, but now I was only 106. Slowly my strength returned. I could walk, and in four weeks was out of danger, thanks to the ears of rye.

Then I managed to get hold of some forged documents, and I went to Donbas. I never went back to my native village.

V. Hai

COMMUNIST TERROR IN VLASIWKA

I remember the time in 1932 when many wagons appeared on the street and, nearing our cottage, stopped. I was young at the time and no one objected when I went among the wagons. All the drivers were strangers to me.

Then some important people arrived, and asked the chairman of the village soviet, Tverdokhlib: "Where is he?" "Ran away, the son of . . ." was the answer, "but we'll catch him!"

The chairman then fell upon my mother and hit her in the face. She fell down and began to cry from pain and fear, and all of us children imitated her.

I realized that they were looking for my father, and warned him to go as far away as he could. When I came back our house was empty: grain, cattle and everything else had been cleaned out by the activists. This happened in November, 1932.

Ours was not the only family to meet with such disaster. Most of our neighbours were robbed of their grain, cattle, poultry, clothes and any other personal property they owned. As a result of this "grain collection drive", the people had nothing to eat and in the spring of 1933 were forced to gather peels, roots, corn cobs, all kinds of leaves and weeds. Some of these were poisonous, and many died. The worst time came when spring work was begun. The people were driven to work by force, and had no time to gather leaves or weeds for food. They swelled and died by the dozen each day. The leaders of the collective farm took steps to bury the dead. Then it was discovered that 17 families had died out completely by the beginning of May.

At the end of May, some of us were driven to the village

of Pyrky in Shchomiw county, to work there. There were twenty five of us, but four died before we reached our destination. They were: Ivan Debely, Hrytsko Prokopenko, Kyrma Shvydky and Oleksiy Valakh.

Working there we received once a day a thin mixture of flour and water. I was there with my sister and on the third day we succeeded in running away. When we came back to our village we learned that people had found human meat at Mekhey Prokopenko's place, that of their two children. Later, Prokopenko confessed that they had eaten their two children and two strangers, a man and woman, who had asked them for a night's lodging.

After hearing of this tragedy, I went to the state farm "Ryzhiy". On the way there I saw many corpses. They were naked, and no one covered them up. They did not want to give me work at the state farm because I had no evidence to prove that my social background was acceptable. I had to shift for myself as best I could.

When I returned home all my family were alive, but death had taken a terrible toll in the village. Here is a partial list of the dead:

Khomenko Hordiy, his wife and son,
" Khymka and his daughter Falozhka,
" Stepan and his wife,
Motyk Hrytsko,
Motyk Nestor and 2 children,
Mykhel Ulyana,
Ostelemey,
Prokopenko Trokhym,
Ryabykha Svyrydon,
Shatsky Hrytsko and his son Mykola,
Shvydky Ihor, his wife Platonida and 2 children,
Stetsyuk Ivan,
Sydorenko Pavlo and his wife,
" Semen and his children, Petro and Olena,
Valakh Odovka,
" Yakiw,
" Paraska,
Vowk Ivan and his wife, Ulyana
All of the families of:
Baydachenko Makar — 4 persons,
Chykalo Ivan — 6 persons
Hotsenko Karpo — 5 persons,
Khomenko Ivan — 4 persons,

" Petro — 6 persons

" Taras — 6 persons

Lysak Ostap — 4 persons

" Sylvester — 7 persons

Prokopenko Levko — 4 persons

Stas Ananiy — 3 persons

" Myron — 4 persons

There were others, but I cannot now recall their names.

In the hamlet of Bochaniwka, close to our village, all 12 families died from hunger.

Petro Drobylko

THE CURSED THIRTIES

This happened in 1933, in that part of the village of Smila called Chudniwtsi, in the county of Sumy.

There were four persons in the Chernukha family, father, mother and two daughters. They had been "dekurkulized" and driven out of their cottage. Then they built a dug-out, and were thrown out of that, too. Nobody dared to give them shelter because Stalin's henchmen had declared that if anyone gave a night's lodging to a "kurkul" he would also be regarded as a "kurkul".

Later on, when they found some kind of shelter, the old man, Andriy Chornukha, disappeared, but no one looked for him because the communist authorities really hoped that our people would be wiped out in one way or another. Sometime later the daughter, Marta, disappeared. Nobody searched for her either. The family now consisted only of the mother and the youngest daughter, who was ten years old at that time. This girl would not sleep at home, and ran away at the approach of evening. She told people that her mother had already eaten her father and her sister Marta, and now once more there was nothing to eat, and she was afraid that her mother might kill her, too.

When the militia learned of this, a search was made and two heads were found, that of the father, Andriy Chornukha, and of her daughter, Marta. The militia took the heads and the mother away and a little later, the youngest daughter also. No one knows what happened to them after that.

Thus, after long privations and tortures, Andriy Chornukha's family found shelter and eternal peace. Up till that time love and peace had reigned among them. The respon-

sibility for their tragedy must be laid at the door of Stalin and his gang.

This was not an isolated case that happened only in my native village. Similar tragedies were common all over Ukraine.

I am almost illiterate and write in a simple manner, but what I write is true, and truth, they say, shall overcome evil.

Ivan Shewchuk

A LETTER FROM A WIFE

I was fortunate to be serving in the eighth rifle regiment, stationed at that time (1933) in Feodosiya.

One day, during a meal in the messhall, I received a letter from my wife who lived in the village of Barashne. We did receive letters occasionally. My wife's letter ran as follows:

"My dear and beloved Ivan,

"We are still alive, but almost all the people in our village are swollen with hunger except for the head of the collective, brigadiers and activists. I can hardly move on my swollen feet. You should see how our boy looks! The only thing that saves us is milk, some mouldy two year old buckwheat, beets and leaves of linden trees. The cow serves four families, I milk her only every fourth day and the other three days she is milked by our neighbours.

"In Ivan Buhay's family all have died. Seven of them lay dead when the brigadier came to call them to work. Stepanyda is also dead, the one called "Fyorka", who belonged to the collective farm "Bolshevik", and all her family of four. I am writing this about our neighbours, but the same thing is happening in all the villages and perhaps all over Ukraine.

"Don't leave us half dead without help! Save us!"

Before I had finished reading the letter to my friends, it was seized by the political instructor, and in the evening I was called to the regimental office and ordered to denounce the letter the next day, in front of the political instruction class. I had to say that the letter was not written by my wife, because she was unable to write, but that it must be the work of class enemies, kurkul enemies, whose aim was the disruption of the Red Army.

The statement was written by the political instructor.

My wife and son did not live to receive any help from me.

F. Fedorchuk

HOW COMMUNISTS DECEIVE FOREIGN MISSIONS

Many people from Ukraine, that is those who could move around, and had some money to spend, travelled to Orel and other Russian provinces to buy bread. These travellers were especially numerous during the last two weeks of June, 1933, when the weather was fine. Since the railway station of Lozova was a junction, everyone had to change there, and as the trains were crammed with people some had to wait their turn to board them. The waiting period was never less than two weeks, often longer. Those returning home with a little food for their families would consume their scanty purchases and, unable to get home and lacking any other food, starved to death in and around the station.

At this time the Turkish mission, on its way home from Moscow, wished to have a meal at the station restaurant at Lozova. But the station was full of people with bags, dead bodies, swollen human shadows, full of rubbish, alive with lice. The GPU sent trucks and gathered all the dead and those who were still alive but unable to walk, and took them to an unknown destination. The rest of the ragged human mass, who could walk, were taken about 18 miles out of the city and forbidden to return under threats of a fate worse than death, which meant interrogation in the cells of the GPU.

Then the station was cleaned and all kinds of food was brought from Kharkiw, with pretty round-cheeked girls as waitresses. To complete the deception, the station was filled with a "public", also from Kharkiw, dressed in new clothes, gaudy neckties and hats who briskly walked around as if on some business of their own. All wore smiles on their faces.

The station restaurant was also filled with people, who sat at the tables loaded with all kinds of wine, fish, fried chicken and caviar. As to prices, I only remember that fried chicken cost 25 kopeks.*

When the Turks arrived they saw clean, prosperous-looking people at the station and the restaurant filled with customers eating whatever they desired. One fellow hardly touched the chicken which he had ordered and pushed it aside as if disgusted with it. The Turks were surprised and nonplussed. Perhaps they had expected to see something different. But they had a very inexpensive meal in Ukraine in 1933, even though they did not see any of the famine then raging in the country. Or maybe they did see it somewhere else.

* 100 kopeks — 1 ruble — 25 cents at the present rate of exchange.

F. Fedorchuk

3,441 DEAD IN RYAZHSKA

The village of Ryazhska is situated in the corner of Poltava province formed by the boundaries of the provinces of Kharkiw and Dnipropetrowske. It was very big, numbering, before the famine of 1933 9,000 persons. Many of these died in that fateful year, and people often wondered what the total was. It was impossible to find out during Russian rule, but when the Germans came a thorough investigation revealed that the total had reached the terrifying number of 3,441 persons.

The elders of the village received permission from the German authorities to raise a monument to the dead victims of the famine. A big mound was built in 1942 on the site where a church had stood till 1933. It was topped by a huge oaken cross bearing the inscription: "In memory of 3,441 victims of the bolshevik regime, in the year 1933".

Then on Whit Sunday that year a requiem mass was held, attended by practically all the villagers. There were many speakers after the church services but the most heart stirring was that of the lady teacher who made almost 5,000 people cry, and some faint.

I, too, remembered then my brothers and sisters and their children. Sixteen of them fell victim to the insatiable Russian imperialism disguised as socialism striving for the betterment of the human race.

I. Mariupilsky

THE GIRL WHO BEGGED FOR BREAD

In 1933 I was living in Mariupil.

One day, as I waited in a queue in front of the store to buy bread, I saw a farm girl of about 15 years of age, in rags, and with starvation looking out of her eyes. She stretched her hand out to everyone who bought bread, asking for a few crumbs. At last she reached the storekeeper. This man must have been some newly arrived stranger who either could not, or would not speak Ukrainian. He began to berate her, said she was too lazy to work on the farm, and hit her outstretched hand with the blunt edge of a knife blade. The girl fell down and lost a crumb of bread she was holding in the other hand. Then the storekeeper stepped closer, kicked the girl and roared:

"Get up! Go home, and get to work!" The girl groaned, stretched out and died. Some in the queue began to weep. The communist storekeeper noticed it and threatened: "Some are getting too sentimental here. It is easy to spot enemies of the people!"



THE LETTER

I was ten years old when armed bands called "cheka" began to raid villages in Ukraine. One day these "chekists" suddenly appeared in our hamlet.* Our neighbours ran away from their homes, but our family for some reason was caught in the cottage. It was hard to understand them, not only because they spoke a different language, but because they were drunk. Shouting insults they shot at the ceiling or the floor and then fell upon my father and elder brother and began to beat them. My mother tried to protect my father and brother. The result was that soon all three of them lay insensible on the floor in their own blood, beaten by the thugs' gun butts. Having taken all those things which caught their fancy, the chekists departed.

After some time my mother and my brother regained consciousness and, a little later, my father. He had a large white beard which seemed to have become still whiter now;

* Hamlet of Chervy-Bychky in the county of Kozelsk in Poltava province.

it looked like a white poster with a large red spot of dried blood.

After this incident we were almost sure that the chekists would not disturb us again, but we were wrong. They did come again, — the same gang. They set fire to our cottage and other buildings, took my father and elder brother, and departed. On the way my brother was ordered to get off the wagon and take 50 steps to one side. They were getting ready to shoot him, but just before the command to fire was given my brother dashed away in the evening twilight, and vanished in the nearby ravine. Hundreds of shots failed to reach him. Then they fell upon my father, beat him up on the way and then, in the cheka quarters in Kreminchuk they killed him. They threw his corpse into the street and ordered the village soviet authorities of Pryhariw to take it back to our hamlet. We were glad that my brother had escaped, but on the Saturday before Whit Sunday the cheka detachment caught him together with his friend Ivan Kuzmenko, by Sytnyk pond in the county of Kozelsk. They were shot on the spot. I saw their bodies, mutilated and shot many times.

Now only my mother, my two younger brothers and myself remained. I went away. There were many such waifs and strays as I was at that time. After a while I went back and helped my mother to build a small cottage, and by 1929 we again had a horse and cow, and began farming again in cooperation with a neighbour.

Then they came again, — a different gang this time. I did not wait to be caught, and ran away before they arrived. My mother and brothers managed somehow till 1932 when all of them were driven out of the cottage, the horse and the cow confiscated and the elder of my two brothers was sent as a "class enemy" to a concentration camp in northern Russia. He was not alone, Maksym Bychok, Trokhym Cheremys, Pavlo Khvydrya, Semen Starchyk and many others kept him company. The menfolk exiled, the grain swept away, my mother and brother wandered from house to house.

I obtained forged documents, changed my name and worked at the railway station in Donbas. By sending a letter through other people I received one in return from my brother:

"Greetings, dear brother!

"We were very glad to receive a letter from you. Maybe you will remain alive. Mother and I lead a very hard

life. Mother has become so thin and weak that she can hardly walk, and we are in dire straits, walking from one collective or state farm to another from morning till night, but they drive us away and will not give us work. Mother's legs have begun to swell and it makes me very sad to think that soon I shall be left all alone. My legs have not swollen yet, but they are aching. The pain is so sharp sometimes that I have to try very hard not to cry, because mother may feel bad about it. To add to this it is getting colder and we have no clothes, mother has no shoes at all and mine are almost gone. No money to buy them, and yet there are no shoes in the stores. Collective and state farms are about to finish threshing and all the grain is hauled to the railway station. When it gets much colder and the snow covers the ground then we will perish because it will be impossible to glean and we have not a single grain to keep us alive in winter. Even now we are so hungry that sometimes I faint. We ask you, dearest brother, to send us a loaf of bread if you have money to buy it, if not please send us all the crumbs and small pieces of bread that may be left from your meal. It does not matter if they are very small or are burned, we'll eat them here, because mother and I are so hungry. I will remain grateful to you for this help until I die!

"Your brother Fedir and Mother".

Having read this letter I sold everything I could, got permission to stay away from work for a few days, bought food and went to visit my mother and brother. But before I even entered my native hamlet I was arrested, because they had been hunting for me for a long time and were ready. They took me to the county seat and thence, with three others, to a deportation camp near Kiev, called Lenin's Smithy. Then we worked on Trukhaniw island, near Kiev, building a bridge across the Dnieper and at the end of 1932, we were sent in sealed boxcars beyond Baikal to build new mines and dig coal.

Ten long dreary years passed thus. Very few of those comrades who had arrived with me in the sealed cars were still alive. But I returned.

When I came to Chervy-Bychky I could not find anything. The site where our cottage had stood was plowed up. My mother and my brother died waiting for me to bring them food, — died from hunger. — and no one could tell me where their grave was.

Sava Shynkarenko

BLACKLISTED

The village of Verbky lies about 3 miles north of Pawlohrad, in the province of Dnipropetrowske, on the river Samara. Of considerable size, it is cut almost in half by the highway leading to Lozova and by the railway in the western end.

It was the autumn of 1932. Almost all the villages in Ukraine, like Verbky, failed to fulfil the grain quotas, which were raised impossibly high just for this purpose.

At this terrible time Verbky was one of those very backward villages whose names appeared on the country's black list. All the villages were decorated by huge black boards on which the names of people, of whole villages, or of industrial plants appeared. Everyone and everything that was regarded as backward and harmful to administration plans was thus branded by the bolshevik leaders. All those black-listed were subject to public abuse, received less food and were persecuted at every step. Briefly, they were candidates for prison terms and all the other forms of punishment.

At this time the village was teeming with "commissioners" sent by the higher party organs to do a thorough job of successful grain collection. They were strangers from the central provinces of Russia: Bugrov, Pukhteyev, Avtomonov, army commissar Teplov, Senin from the militia, and others. They were loyal pets of Stalin, who had no mercy for the poor people in the county.

The brigades they organized cleaned out the collective farms of all their grain. But the quantity collected fell far short of the plan. Then these brigades invaded the homes of the members of the collective and began to "collect" everything, the grain the people received as their yearly

wage for work in the collective, as well as handfuls raised in their gardens. All windmills were closed, the only village store was closed, and the people were forbidden to leave the place. Watchmen encircled it and a boycott of the village was proclaimed. The county seat, Pawlohrad, was decorated with posters urging people to "Boycott Verbky" and stores displayed the warning: "Verbky people stay out!"

• • •

Mr. Pukhyeyev sits at the table. He is drunk and in a belligerent mood. Banging his fist on the table he shouts at the widow, Anna Solod:

"Only till tomorrow! If you don't deliver 220 bushels of grain by tomorrow we'll scatter all your rubbish heap to the winds!"

"Where can I get it? Even now we have nothing to eat."

"You first of all deliver to the state, and then think about yourself!"

The next day a sign appeared on the white walls of the widow's cottage: "Shame to the saboteur and enemy of the grain collection plan!" It was illustrated by a cartoon. A whole brigade of seven men went to search for grain. They scattered everything in the cottage, demolished the oven, dug the earthen floor, but there was no grain hidden anywhere. The widow fainted from grief and despair and the children ran away.

The whole village groaned in the Russian talons. Seeing no way out from the unbearable situation Dmytro Chapla, Pavlo Volyn and Petro Yawtushenko hanged themselves. The latter scribbled before committing suicide: "I cannot live any longer in this hell."

These dreadful events were followed by many arrests. More than 200 men were put in prison or sent to concentration camps in Siberia. Those who gleaned in the fields because they had nothing to eat, those who did not welcome the officials, those who had little hand mills, in short all whom the Russians disliked for one reason or another — all were arrested. They were charged with "counter-revolutionary activities." The Moscow bullies were assisted by Ukrainian turncoats: Havrylo Lytvynenko, Ilko Moronets and Petro Trotsenko.

Later, in the fall, the whole management of the collective "Lenin's Memorial" was arrested for trying to protect people as much as they could. Their names were: Roman

Kolisnyk, Yakiw Lytvynenko, Yukhym Shpurenko and Ivan Trotsenko (Mamay). They were sentenced to 6, 8, and 10 years in the far concentration camps.

Others also received similar treatment: Oksana Vasychenko was sent for three years to a concentration camp for gleaning; Danylo Demchenko, Sofron Kotenko, Panko Shynkarenko and Tyshchenko and many others were sent away for being politically unreliable, — they talked "counter-revolution" — when all these people did was to complain that life had become much harder since they were forced to join collective farms.

These persecutions were followed by a terrible famine which lasted till the next harvest. The toll was 997 persons out of a total of 7,000. There were only two births.

I cannot forget the date April 30, 1933. A beautiful sunny day, cherry orchards in bloom. Only to live! But a wagon loaded with the dead moves slowly and all is gone. That day 20 villagers were buried in a common grave.

I remember some of their names: Maria Buzoverya; Matviy Kolisnyk and all his family: Ivan, Pelagia and Dmytro; Khoma Ponomarenko; Ilko Ryabukha and his family: Petro, Maria and Ulyana; Panas Tkachenko; and many others.

That year the whole family of the young poet Hryhoriy Chapla died. His father, one of the poorest in the village, was the first to join the collective farm "Zirka". When the poet, who taught public school in the village of Khandelewivka in the neighbouring county, came home to help his kin he found all of them dead. The thatch on the cottage was half gone, windows broken. The number of such deserted cottages grew and grew.

The people in Verbky were dying out. The same thing happened in the neighbouring villages. It was at a time when government granaries were bursting with grain.



THE TRAGEDY OF VIKNYNA

The village of Viknyna is situated at the meeting point of three provinces: Vynnytsya, Kiev and Odessa. The district in which Viknyna, with its 900 families and total population of 5,000, lay was rich in deep black chornozem, covered in summer with a sea of rye and wheat crops.

This village was unaffected by the famine of 1921, like the neighbouring villages. In spite of the fact that the meddling of the Russian administration with people's lives, their religion, their traditions, their customs and laws was keenly felt by them, on the whole the village led an industrious, carefree and happy life until the fall of 1929.

Then, in December 1929 and January 1930, two meetings were held which all the villagers had to attend. These fateful meetings profoundly affected the lives of all in the village. Although they opposed it for a long time, in the end

the farmers, intimidated and terrorized, passed a resolution to collectivize the whole village. To convince the farmers that they were wrong and that Stalin's pronouncement "to destroy the class of kurkuls by means of total collectivization" was right, the authorities dispossessed and sent to Murmansk concentration camps the best and the most industrious farmers with their families, including babies and little children. These people were, in the eyes of the occupying power, the greatest obstacle to collectivization. The unfortunate families as far as I remember were: the Borutski,* the Chorovoly, the Dobrawski, the Kucheryavi, the Netrebchuky, the Oliynyky, the Pidvysotski, the Stari (brothers nicknamed Honchari), the Zaiky, and others. Individuals who managed to escape from exile later told the grim story that on the way to Murmansk forests all the babies and little children froze to death and that their bodies were, on orders of the GPU guards, cast out from train into the snow along the railway tracks. Later many older people were dealt with in the same way and the remainder perished in the camps.

In February 1930, when the collectivized cattle began to die off and the farm implements to rust in the snow, there was the so-called "women's rebellion". Desperate women armed with pokers, hay forks and oven irons fell upon the collectives with great shouts, tongue lashings and curses addressed to the Russian occupants and in a moment the collective ceased to exist. They took their property, which had not been destroyed back home. A few days later special GPU detachments and militia arriving in the village arrested a score of people, mostly the poorest ones, who regarded themselves as more privileged and did not fear the bolsheviks as much as the others. Some of them were summarily executed and the others were sent to Siberia. The rest of the "rebels" were forced, under threat of execution, to return the cattle and farm implements to the collectives. The farmers obeyed the order, but did not go back to the collectives themselves. Only a few formerly prosperous families remained in order to save themselves from "dekurkulizing", which meant total loss and deportation. Lacking human hands for work, horses, cattle and farm implements, much of the collectivized land became fallow, only producing giant weeds about seven feet high.

In 1930-31 the Russian occupants tried to break down

* Plurals.

people's opposition to collectivization by exorbitant taxes, but the people went to extremes to pay them in order to remain "induses", — the derisive name for individual farmers. The same thing happened in the neighbouring villages. This caused the failure of total collectivization. The Russian emissaries and local activists became raving mad because failure to carry out the orders of the Moscow politburo meant that they themselves would be liquidated. Such was the situation at the beginning of 1932.

Before the harvest in 1932 the individual farmers received assessment notices. The farmers from the anemic collective farm also received one. The amounts of taxes in these notices ran into astronomical figures and caused a widespread lament in the village, as if there were a dearth in each family. Such taxes could not be paid even if all the available land were cultivated and the yield the highest possible. But to remain free the people, in despair, delivered to the state collection point, into which the church was converted, all the grain they could scrape up at home. The farmers from the puny collective farm did not reach even one third of the amount demanded as taxes. Soon after, the village swarmed with GPU agents and militia. At the hastily called meeting of the villagers the Russian "twenty-five-thousander" openly called them saboteurs and accused the village of being a nest of counter-revolution. Then "grain collection brigades" were organized which fell upon the farmers with zeal and the "vykachka" (rolling out of grain) began.

Two or three days later these brigades cleaned the village of the last ounce of grain, actually applying brooms so as not to leave a single grain behind. But they did not limit themselves to grain alone, — scanty remains of food, flour, crushed cereals, little bags and jars of peas and beans left for seed, ready made bread, cakes, etc. — all were gone. Looking for hidden food stores, stoves, beds, earthen floors in cottages, grain barns and stables were wrecked by digging and probing, in short all likely places suspected by the bolshevik investigators of concealing food. Men's pockets were turned out and women were searched for grain hidden in their dresses. The trunks were opened and bolts of homespun linen, furs, embroidered towels, kerchiefs were tucked away under the overcoats of the "investigators." The effect was not unlike the action of a terrible hurricane which destroyed or carried everything away from the village.

Facing the spectre of famine, some began to thresh again the straw already threshed once in order to find a few grains. But even these grains, found by great toil, were more often than not seized by the communists who kept watch over the village day and night. Some were fortunate enough to glean little stores in abandoned fields, to find a few potatoes overlooked by the diggers or some roots of beets, but many paid for breaking the law of August 7, 1932, which was added to the Stalin criminal code under the innocuous title of "law for the protection of socialist property."

The remnants of food which people were able to hide only lasted till Christmas. The victims helped each other, but in spite of this fact many swelled up at Christmas time and some died from hunger. It is worth noting here that the first to suffer and die were the poorest who, after "grain collection", had literally nothing left and lived by begging for food or by baking "bread" out of crushed corn cobs. People who were better off felt the famine less acutely and the most prosperous were still better off because as a rule they managed to hide a little grain for food.

The events which took place in Viknyna after Christmas, when the scanty grain supplies were exhausted, followed each other in rapid succession.

Most of the hungry people who remained in the village soon caught and ate all the dogs and cats.

The real hunger fever and the mass exhaustion of the people began in March and lasted till the new harvest. During this period the walking corpses gnawed the bark off the trees, ate all kinds of roots, buds and the furry catkins of pussy willows, then turned to weeds such as goosefoot, dock and amaranth, both raw and cooked. An epidemic of dysentery added to the suffering and people began to die in increasingly greater numbers, first of all men and children. The first cases of cannibalism appeared.

In every second or third house lay dead men, women, children and older people. Driven by the village soviet authorities, the half-dead loaded the dead like logs on the wagon and buried them in common graves. The doors and windows of the empty cottages were nailed by boards put crosswise. Every second or third cottage was thus decorated. Soon the paths leading to these dwellings were covered with vegetation and in the orchards, in which most of the trees were cut for fuel in wintertime, and in the fence-

less yards, — fences, too, were used up for heating purposes, — the weeds grew up to the roofs.

Some of the tragic events in Viknyna made an indelible impression on my memory.

Among the first victims of famine towards the end of 1932 was the Taranyuk family: father, mother and three sons. Two of the latter were members of the Komsomol and actively assisted in "grain collection". The father and mother died in their cottage and the sons under neighbors' fences.

At this time six persons died in the Zverkhanowsky family. By some miracle a son, Volodymyr, and a daughter, Tatyana, survived.

The swollen blacksmith, Ilarion Shewchuk, who, in January 1933 came to the village soviet to ask for help, was lured to the fire hall and murdered with staves. The murderers were: Y. Konofalsky, chairman of the village soviet, his assistant I. Antonyuk and the secretary V. Lyubomsky.

The poor widow Danylyuk and her sons had a very tragic end. Her dead body was eaten by maggots and the two sons, Pavlo and Oleksa, fell dead begging for food. Only the third son Trokhym survived, by being able to find some food in the city.

Porfir Neterebchuk, one of the most industrious farmers, lamed by hard work, was found dead by the church fence.

An old man, Ivan Antonyuk, died when his daughter Hanya fed him with "bread" made from green ears of grain which she had secretly cut in the fields in spite of the watchfulness of the village soviet authorities.

Oleksa Voitsyekhowsky saved his and his family's (wife and two little children) lives by consuming the meat of horses which had died in the collective of glanders and other diseases. He dug them up at night and brought the meat home in a sack. His older brother, Yakiw, and his sister-in-law died earlier from hunger.

The brothers Kondra, Konon and Teofan Stary and all the members of their families died after eating soup made of lamb's quarters.

But the most horrible deed, which moved even the half-dead who were near death themselves, was committed by the letter carrier, Trokhym Soloviychuk. In despair and fear of death, he began to eat the corpse of his wife and feed his three children with it. Then the same fate over-

took his two younger children. The oldest child learning somehow where his little brothers had vanished and sensing that he might be the next victim, ran away. Both the village as well as the county authorities were aware of this horrible case of cannibalism but they hushed it up and liquidated those who dared to talk about it.

It would be no exaggeration to assume that out of 4,000 people in Viknyna, — that is exclusive of those who were exiled, shot or vanished in 1929 - 1932, — more than a third died of famine, artificially created by the Russian occupant. The tragedy of some of the neighboring villages was even greater. In Kocherzhyntsi, 4½ miles from Uman, all the people died with the exception of a few of the village soviet authorities who saved themselves by official "food rations".

The above are only a few authentic facts concerning the tragedy at Viknyna. Many others will come to light when the satanic iron curtain is no more.

O. P. Chernyawsky

"RECEIVER"

When, on orders of the Russian communist gangsters, death was reaping rich harvests in Ukraine, I was living at Piwdenna Railway Station in Poltava. Having found refuge in Canada, I now feel free to tell the truth about the communist practices, the more so because literally all my relatives had been exiled from Ukraine to distant concentration camps before I left the country.

In March 1933 many new farmers could be seen arriving every day. They came from far and near, leaving their cottages and villages despoiled of everything, escaping from hunger and hoping to get some work and food in the city and thus save themselves and their children. These people dreamed all the time of food: to have a good meal and die! They could not think of anything else, which was exactly what the Russian communists wanted. Hungry, they often walked more than one hundred miles, dragging their children along. Most of them fell and died on the way. Everyday crowds of children cried at the station, looking for their lost parents.

At that time the chief of the NKVD detachment entrusted with the "protection" of this section of railway was Vasylewsky. He was also at the head of a NKVD tribunal which decided whether someone was to live or die and this they accomplished in about three minutes.

The tribunal was dissatisfied with the crowds of children at the station and decided to have a "receiving car" where all of them would be placed. The next day an open railway car was switched off to a side track, the floor was littered with straw, and a few minutes later there were 47 children in it. The trio ordered the chefs in the restaurants to take turns feeding the children.

I worked as a common laborer in restaurant No. 1, and I was the first person to feed the children in the "receiver". When the door was opened by the guard I gave the food to the children, some roasted grain "coffee" and a little bread. This was at 8 in the morning, March 25, 1933. In a corner of the wagon there were four children. The eldest boy, about 12 years of age, held a little sister and two other sisters clung to his side. They cried, and asked the elder brother for food and said they were cold. "Where is our mother?" they asked. They did not ask about their father because they knew he had died a few months ago. The boy quieted them though he also was near tears, "Mother will come soon and we'll go back home." Looking at me he asked: "Why doesn't my sister move and why is she so cold?" I told him that she was dead. The boy began to cry and became hysterical, but in the end I persuaded him to give me his dead sister. I was ordered to take the body to a wagon that stood ready near the station. The tragedy I saw in that car unnerved me so much that I could not help shedding a few tears. The NKVD guard gave me a nasty look when he saw me wiping my eyes and must have thought, "This snake in the grass should be liquidated!"

The dead bodies of the children were thrown into holes, just as they were, and covered with earth. This procedure became so common at that time that nobody paid the slightest attention to it. It is quite cold in the month of March in this district, some ice and snow still lingers on, and the children had to sleep in unheated, open, dirty freight cars, half naked. Every morning a score or so bodies of children who had died from hunger and exposure would be removed from this "receiver". Any sanitary help was out of the question. There was no room in Ukraine for some people and their children.

Yar Slavutych

**CANNIBALISM AND EXILE
(STORY OF ONE VILLAGE IN 1933)**

I wish to tell you what happened in a village in the Novo-Shewchenkove district of the county of Dolyna near Kryvy Rih.

This administrative unit was made up of five villages: Novo-Shewchenkove, Obytoky, Utishne, Khutir and Blahodatne. 300 farm families lived there and the total population was a little over 1,000 persons. The most prosperous farmer in the neighborhood had, in 1929, no more than 74 acres of land, and the poorest 12½, that was the basic allotment per person.

When collectivization got under way, in 1929 - 1930, the bolsheviks dealt with each farmer who did not wish to join the collective farm according to the "individual farmer plan", that is each had to deliver to the state a quantity of grain and pay a tax in money, both of which were far above his means. Those who did not meet these demands were "dekurkulized". I was an eye witness of the "dekurkulizing" of the village of Khutir which was composed of only seven prosperous families. Being very industrious, these families were very prosperous. Each of them had a team or two of horses, two or three cows and around 30 acres of land. Their unwillingness to join the collective farm afforded the bolshevik henchmen an excuse to "dekurkulize" them.

One night in June 1932, there arrived in the village a few wagon loads of members of the "komsomol" chosen from among the sons of the poorest farmers. They were accompanied by armed militia from the county seat and by the communists, some of local origin and some imported from Russia. They surrounded Khutir in such a way that escape was impossible. Each person in the village was or-

dered to take only clothing he could wear and the rest, — pillows, rugs, blankets, trunks full of linen and five coats, — were loaded on the wagons and hauled to the club in Novo-Shewchenkove where all these things were appropriated by the participants in the raid. Cows, horses and the remaining grain stores were taken to the collective farm. At daybreak all seven families were loaded on the wagons and, with children crying and women lamenting, they were taken to the railway station of Uysun and thence to Solowky or into the Arkhangelsk region. I was fortunate. Though only 15 at the time, some neighbors' boys and I made a hole in the boxcar and escaped into the fields soon after the train left Kharkiw. A few months later, under cover of night, I visited my native Khutir. It was completely deserted. The tin roofs were torn away, doors and windows removed from the cottages. The village was overgrown with weeds man high. Black polecats with glittering eyes made their nests in the ruined cottages and storerooms, once so prosperous and peaceful.

The same year, from the Novo-Shewchenkove district about one hundred families were banished into central Russia, to Vologda and Arkhangelsk, and to Siberia. This was one third of the total population. One man, Kropyvyahy, hanged himself in despair. Many others ran away to Kryvy Rih, Zaporizhya, Donbas, Caucasus and Central Asia, where they laboured hard for miserable pay.

In the fall of 1932 the local communists, directed by Russians from the county seat, did a thorough job of grain collecting for the state. Hardly an ounce of it escaped their searching eyes and in the early spring of 1933 a real famine raged in the villages. There were cases of death from starvation and malnutrition. Out of 300 farm families there remained no more than 150. The people became ill or insane and died en masse. There was no help from the county. There were five cases of cannibalism, one of them a woman I knew personally. It was Vekla from the village of Obytoky, formerly a prosperous and hospitable woman whose daughter attended the public school in Novo-Shewchenkove with me. I used to protect this girl from the dogs when we walked home from school and her mother, Vekla, would generously feast me with sweet red apples. This woman, crazed by hunger, killed her daughter and lived for some time on cooked meat. A few days later when the veil of insanity lifted from her brain she realized what she had

done, and running out into the street confessed to the crime. Arrested by the village authorities, she was judged in closed court and sent to Solowky.

Two cases of cannibalism were also recorded in the neighboring village of Shulichene and in the hamlets east of the forest near the village of Huriwka.

That terrible year (1933), from April to July, 23 persons died of hunger in the Novo-Shewchenkove district. I verified this figure from the records of the village authorities. The cause of death was, in every case, stated to be some disease and in no case was a death from hunger mentioned by the communist authorities. It was the same everywhere, in spite of the fact that there were villages in which all the people died out.

The free world should know the truth about Ukraine, which did not break during these terrible times but endured, and now raises her voice in protest and demands a reckoning with Russian Communism.

Prof. M. Mishchenko

MENTAL AND PHYSICAL EFFECTS OF FAMINE

The year 1933 afforded a vast field for observation of the mental and physical effects of famine upon human beings. It was forbidden to talk, much less to write about them, and they did not become an object of a special research. It was held that in a country of socialism, where everything was foreseen and planned, there could not be any famine.

This official view was strictly observed by the press, and it refrained from mentioning the famine even when thousands lay dead on the pavements of the cities. There was no registration of deaths, no medical help or food given to the people. The hospitals, when a few lucky individuals from the famine-stricken mass managed to get in, did not issue any reports and were strictly forbidden to give the true cause of sickness and death.

Hunger exhausts the reserves of energy in a body. Vitality important and necessary amounts of sugar and fat are lost. The body becomes more and more worn out. The skin becomes thin, assumes a greyish color and wrinkles. A human being seems to get old from hour to hour. Babies look like old people. Their eyes become big, assume a serious and severe immobility. Dystrophic processes sometimes cause a far reaching drying of the tissues, and the sufferer resembles a skeleton wrapped in skin. But, more often, the tissues distend and legs, hands and face swell up. The skin cracks, and wounds appear which are very slow to heal. The body loses strength. Insignificant physical effort causes extreme fatigue. To carry on the most necessary functions of life — breathing and heart beat — the organism uses up its own substance, albumen, that is, it consumes itself. The nervous system becomes weak and coordination of the phy-

biological processes is disturbed. The least effort causes heart fatigue and faster breathing. The pupils in the eyes become bigger. Then comes the famine diarrhoea, which is very dangerous because the least exertion at this time causes paralysis of the heart. This frequently happens while walking, going up stairs or trying to run. General weakness increases, and the sufferer cannot sit up in bed or move at all. He falls into a drowsy state which may last for a week, until his heart stops beating from exhaustion.

The mental changes are even more far reaching. The cortex, in its weakened condition, loses control of the lower centres, the seat of the inherited instincts. The food instinct, excited to too great activity, affects the changed consciousness and gains absolute domination over the personality. This instinct dictates new laws of behaviour and still more, changes the spiritual outlook. Family ties are loosened, and friendly feeling to other members is lost. The father abandons the family, which breaks up and scatters. The children are especially sensitive in this respect, they feel the helplessness of their parents and run away. Becoming independent, they form gangs of the homeless. They not only feel helplessness but also some danger. For instance, here are some replies given by children in a psychiatric clinic during the famine. Asked how he came to the city, a boy, seven years old, says:

"My father died and mother swelled and could not get out of bed. She said: 'Go and find food for yourself!' and I went to the city."

A boy 8 years old: "Father and mother died, only my brothers were left, there was nothing to eat and I went away from home."

A boy 9 years old: "Mother died and father swelled up and moved around. His looks scared me and I ran away."

A boy 9 years old: "Mother said 'Save yourself, run away to the city!' I turned back twice, because I did not want to leave mother. But she begged me and cried, so I had to go."

A boy 8 years of age: "Father and mother lay all swollen up, and I ran away."

These children came from villages 30 - 45 miles distant and were picked up on the streets because they showed some nervous and psychical disorders. But there were very few so "fortunate" as to land in hospitals. Most of them were picked up at night by the mobilized NKVD trucks,

taken far away from the city, and dumped into a deep precipice.

This was going on at that time in the capital of the "Ukrainian socialist republic" in the city of Kharkiw.

The death rate among those who happened to be taken to hospital was very high. But even when they recovered they felt unhappy and indifferent for a long time, never mentioned their parents, showed no longing or sadness, spoke of tragic family events without emotion, just like any other happenings of everyday Soviet life.

But in the political significance of the famine the children were well oriented, whispered among themselves and manifested great shrewdness and adaptability to life.

Towards the end of the famine, under pressure of the silent disdain of the people and the condemnation in the press of democratic countries, the NKVD organized a huge concentration camp for children, "death barracks" whispered the people, where tens of thousands of farm children picked up in Kharkiw, were gathered. The death rate in these barracks reached 40%. An attempt was made here to separate them from the children of "kurkuls". But almost all the children said they were the offspring of heads of collective farms. Only one older girl, 13 years of age, to show her contempt, stoutly declared that she was a "kurkul's" daughter.

All these manifestations show great changes in personality, indistinct orientation and diminished clarity of mind. For instance, in the village of Surmachiwka, in the county of Hlynsk, in the Chernyhiw region the hungry mother made a fire in the stove in the daytime, called a ten year old son, her only one, and began to tie his hands saying: "Keep quiet, don't shout, because people will hear."

The mother had over-estimated her strength, the boy tore away and called in the neighbors. When arrested, she did not deny her intentions and realized what she had been about to do. She would sit quietly not noticing anybody or start weeping, which resembled a howl. A whole gamut of various feelings could be distinguished in her crying, profound misery, boundless sorrow, and perhaps a feeling of frustration, dictated by the overwhelming pathological feeling of hunger. She vanished in the cells of the NKVD.

Seven years later it became apparent that the increase of children in 1933 was so insignificant that there were no children to start school. Then the number of Ukrainian

schools was reduced and only the net of Russian schools remained unchanged.

Thus a combination of these physical and mental changes causes complicated and characteristic disturbances of the whole personality, which are totally different from other psychoses afflicting human beings. In psychiatry, there is nothing that could be specifically defined as a "psychosis of hunger" because such a famine as Ukraine suffered has never been observed in the centres of European civilization. It could have happened only as a result of a consummate blend of Soviet socialism with Russian imperialism, both unsurpassed in their anti-humanitarianism.

CHAPTER

IV.

**THE STRUGGLE FOR THE INDEPENDENCE OF UKRAINE
AND
LIQUIDATION OF THE UKRAINIAN INTELLECTUALS**



THE SVU TRIAL

(Kost Turkalo, one of the 45 defendants in this case is probably the only one of the whole group to remain alive. — Editor).

The case against the Ukrainian liberation organization "Union for the Liberation of Ukraine" (SVU — from the first letters of the Ukrainian name "Spilka Vyzvolennya Ukrayiny") was tried in the Kharkiw opera house. It began on March 9, 1930, and ended in the late hours of April 19th the same year. The presiding judge of the circuit session of the Supreme Court of the Ukrainian SSR, Prykhodko, finished reading the sentence twenty minutes before the Easter bells were rung, proclaiming Easter Sunday and the Resurrection of Christ.

This case or, as it was aptly dubbed by the defendants, this "grand opera", (an allusion to its being held in the opera house) went on for almost a month and a half.

It began with the interrogation of the defendants, each of them being given a chance by the presiding justice to say

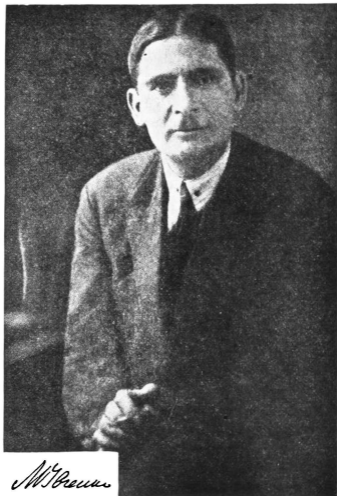
whether he had received a copy of the bill of indictment and, if so, whether he pleaded guilty or not. When all had been put through this ordeal, the justice began to read publicly the whole of the bill of indictment, the reading continuing for more than two days, because the bill was a 230 page book. This book was also given a special name by the defendants, they called it the "libretto of the grand SVU opera".

The defendants had to listen to this tiresome and insolent concoction in bitter silence and, worse still to feel that their highest ideals were being trampled upon, to say nothing of the sad and tragic consequences to follow. Everyone was perfectly aware of the court's attitude. It was plain that all details of the trial and its final outcome were planned ahead, and that it was necessary only for propagandist purposes abroad and for the fanatical party followers and some deluded citizenry at home. It was to be a sort of bomb, exploded in the "stillness" of great enthusiasm and rapture over the "happy" life in the first socialist state in the world under the wise leadership of the communist party and the soviet government, a master touch as it were, revealing a small group of bourgeois nationalists, mostly of religious background, who planned to overthrow the existing government and deliver Ukraine back into the capitalist yoke.

The defendants' bench was occupied by forty-five of the most prominent Ukrainians, the flower of the Ukrainian elite, headed by academician Serhiy O. Yefremiw.

Opposite them sat a panel of pseudo-intellectuals comprising a bolshevik elite which was judging those forty five academicians, professors, doctors, cooperators, writers, engineers and university students. Taking this fact into consideration the group of judges was selected to include five justices with Prykhodko in the role of presiding judge. One of these justices was a farmer, Odynets, known from the times of the "Central Rada", now president of the "Committee of Poor Farmers" (Komnezam) in Ukraine.

The chief prosecutor was Mykhailyk, assisted by three "citizen" prosecutors: Panas Lyubchenko from the Communist Party of Ukraine, Oleksa Slisarenko from the writers, and academician Sokolowsky from the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences. Apart from these, there were six ordinary prosecutors chosen from among the most prominent in their class, and twelve defence lawyers, also prominent professors and jurists.



Mykhaylo Ivchenko
writer

The story of the "citizen" prosecutor from the Academy is quite interesting. The GPU appointed Professor Krawchuk, a mathematician, to this position, but he refused to serve. Then Professor Sokolowsky was appointed. He attended a few sessions, and then, feigning sickness, failed to appear and because of this diplomatic sickness he did not have any part in the accusation. Later, both of these academicians found themselves in the northern concentration camps, together with those whom they were supposed to indict.

The trial was widely publicized throughout the Soviet Union and the most remote corners of Ukraine not only knew all about it but also felt its impact, — many thousands of people who had had no connection with the trial were, after it was all over, without any public trial marched to the far north of their "limitless fatherland" to swell the population of Solowky, Kem, Bear Mountain, and the like.

Such was the end.

But the real beginning happened much earlier. The insurrections which were of such frequent occurrence in many Ukrainian localities in 1921 - 1922 at the very beginning of the red Russian domination convinced the Russians that the Ukrainian people were different from those under tsarist rule. The national revolution had deeply penetrated every nook and corner of the Ukrainian territory. National consciousness, the realization of the peoples' socio-economic and political rights and an urge to preserve and extend them were becoming stronger and stronger. This was a great menace because, at the very beginning of the communist regime in Russia, it threatened her further development along the desired lines.

This problem was serious. To insure the success of their revolution the Russians had to discover a means to bring unruly Ukraine to heel. Well aware that each movement among a people is led by intellectuals, it became obvious that they would have to be dealt with and destroyed first of all. But where were they? Most of them had emigrated, only a few of the more prominent remained in the country. But there must be many of them unknown and unnoticeable, reasoned the Russians.

They were right. There were many individuals, intellectuals who worked like beavers, and were ready for the greatest sacrifices without seeking any glory or recognition

from their countrymen. They were idealists wishing only to serve their people to the best of their abilities.

It was clear that Ukraine did not merely consist of wild steppe, and virgin soil covered with sweet beets and corn and bright flowers to gladden the eyes of romantics and day-dreamers, and her people was not a herd to be easily swayed by mendacious and deceitful slogans nor lured by that bird in the bush, the promise of world revolution and a soviet paradise on earth.

Such a situation put Russia face to face with new problems, to discover bigger and, even more important, lesser people who were doing great deeds. Concessions of a cultural character had been allowed to the conquered nationalities, "ukrainization" in Ukraine and "georgization", and "tatarization", etc. in other soviet "republics". This course was warmly received everywhere. It caused a luxuriant development of national cultures, but revealed the identity of the workers in those fields.

The leading group of Ukrainian intellectuals, having zealously thrown themselves into cultural activities, at once realized that new methods and different tactics more suitable to changed conditions were necessary in their political activities.

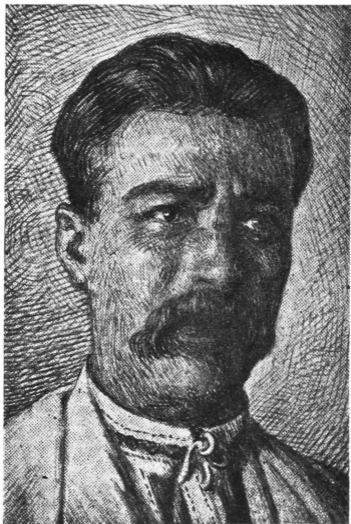
The time for insurrections and disturbances was past. It took many victims, many lives, and had but few positive results. For this reason the new organization, the "Union for the Liberation of Ukraine", formed on the basis of an older political organization, adopted new tactics. It based its fight with the occupant not on insurrection, armed resistance and bloodshed, but on gaining control of many branches of the economic and cultural life of the country, on the organization of the people and the raising of their national and political consciousness in order to hinder the Russians in their efforts to keep the people and the country in a backward condition and at the same time to promote the idea of national, economic and cultural individuality and thus prepare people for active resistance at the proper time in the future.

These activities, based on reasonable premises, were readily adopted by the young people who organized a "Union of Ukrainian Youth" (SUM — from Spilka Ukrayinskoyi Molodi) and faithfully followed the SVU program, becoming a part of it.

Then came the fateful year of 1929. The arrests began

in the very early spring of that year. SUM was the first victim, and the beginning of July saw the arrests of older people until the autumn press reported that the GPU had discovered a counter-revolutionary organization the "Union for the Liberation of Ukraine".

The trial lasted over nine months. The secret "courts" of the GPU tribunals arrested and sent to concentration camps thousands of Ukrainian people. Only 45 of them were judged in open court. The sentence imposed harsh imprisonment; they never saw their native land again and now hardly any of them are still alive.



Academician Serhiy Yefremiw

K. Turkalo

LIST OF CONVICTED PERSONS IN THE SVU TRIAL

1. Academician **Yefremiw Serhiy Oleksandrovich**, 53, son of a priest, full member of Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, former colleague of the Head of the Central Council, former leader of the Ukrainian Party of Socialists-Federalists.
2. Academician **Slabchenko Mykhailo Yelisevovich**, 47, former member of the Ukrainian Socialist Labor Party, graduate of the Military-Law Academy, former captain in the tsarist army, full member of All-Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, professor at Odessa University.
3. **Hermaize Yosyp Yuriyevich**, 37, professor at Kiev University, former member of Ukrainian Social-Democratic Party.
4. **Nikowsky Andriy Vasylyovich**, 44, former member of the Central Committee of the Ukrainian Socialist Labor Party, former minister for external affairs in the government of the Ukrainian People's Republic.
5. **Chekhiwsky Volodymyr Moisevich**, 53, son of a priest, former member of the Central Committee of the Ukrainian Social-Democratic Party, former prime minister in the government of the Ukrainian People's Republic, University educated, former director of the autocephalous orthodox church.
6. **Starytska-Chernyakhivska Ludmyla Mykhailivna**, 60, writer.
7. **Pavlushko Mykola Petrovich**, 26, son of a priest, student at Kiev University.
8. **Hrebenetsky Oleksander Zinovyevich**, 55, son of a priest, lecturer at the 1st Kiev Labor School (Public School and High School combined).
9. **Chernyakhivsky Oleksander Hryhorovich**, 60, professor at the Kiev Medical Institute.
10. **Hantsow Vsevolod Mykhailovich**, 37, professor of phi-

logy, former member of the Ukrainian Socialist Federalist Party.

11. **Matushewsky Borys Fedorovich**, 22, son of a landlord, student at Kiev University.

12. **Trezvynski Yuriy Konstantynovich**, 44, son of a priest, teacher at the 1st Kiev Labor School.

13. **Tokarevska Nina Serhiyevna**, 41, daughter of a priest, former member of the Ukrainian Social-Democratic Party, teacher at the 1st Kiev Labor School.

14. **Zalisky Andriy Petrovich**, 44, son of a priest, teacher at the 1st Kiev Labor School.

15. **Ivanitsya Hryhoriy Mykytovich**, 38, professor of philology, member of the staff of Kiev University, former member of the Ukrainian Social-Democratic Party, scientific associate of the All-Ukrainian Academy of Sciences.

16. **Doha Vasyl Mykailovich**, 44, of peasant descent, professor of Kiev University, former member of the Ukrainian Social-Democratic Party, scientific co-worker of the All-Ukrainian Academy of Sciences.

17. **Shylo Konstantin Stepanovich**, 50, son of a civil servant, head of the editorial department of the Kiev branch of the State Publishing House, scientific associate of the All-Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, former member of the Ukrainian Socialist Democratic Labor Party, former employee of the Department of Education during the Directoria (1919).

18. **Morhulis Zinoviy Hryhorovich**, 50, son of an important rentier, member of the Collegium of Defenders, scientific associate of the All-Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, former member of the Ukrainian Socialist-Federalist Party, former assistant to the provincial commissar of Kiev province during the domination of the Central Council (1917-1918).

19. **Iwchenko Mykhailo Yevdokimovich**, 47, writer.

20. **Holoskevich Hrihoriy Kostyantynovich**, 45, son of a priest, graduate of the Kamianets-Podilsky Theological Seminary. He was a scientific associate of the All-Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, editor of the Dictionary of Living Language, a former member of the Ukrainian Socialist-Federalist Party, former member of the Central Council.

21. **Kholodny Hryhoriy Hryhorovich**, 43, son of a high school principal, scientific associate of the All-Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, professor at Kiev University, principal of the Institute of Ukrainian Scientific Language.

22. **Kryvenyuk Mykhailo Vasylovich**, 58, of peasant descent, biologist, scientific associate of the All-Ukrainian Aca-

demy of Sciences, editor of IUKM, former member of the Ukrainian Democratic Socialist Labor Party.

23. **Strashkevich Volodymyr Mykhailovich**, 54, son of a priest, scientific co-worker of the All-Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, editor of IUKM, former member of the Ukrainian Democratic Socialist Labor Party.

24. **Sharko Vadym Viktorovich**, 47, son of a civil servant, scientific associate of the All-Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, editor of IUKM, professor of mathematics.

25. **Dubrowsky Viktor Hryhorovich**, 53, son of a civil servant, scientific associate of the All-Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, head of the publishing department of the Sugar Trust.

26. **Turkalo Kost Timofiyevich**, 38, son of a priest, chemical engineer, former member of the Central Council, scientific associate of the All-Ukrainian Academy of Sciences.

27. **Pidhayets Volodymyr Yakovlevich**, 45, scientific associate of the All-Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, former member of the Ukrainian Socialist Democratic Labor Party, former member of the Central Council, professor at Kiev Medical Institute.

28. **Kudrytsky Mykola Antonovich**, 46, son of a priest, former member of the Ukrainian Socialist Democratic Labor Party, scientific associate of the All-Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, professor at the Kiev Medical Institute.

29. **Barbar Arkadiy Oleksiyovich**, 50, son of a landlord, former member of the Ukrainian Socialist Democratic Labor Party, scientific associate of the All-Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, professor at the Kiev Medical Institute.

30. **Udoenko Volodymyr Vasylyovich**, 49, son of a civil servant, well-known scientific associate of the All-Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, professor at the Kiev Medical Institute.

31. **Bolozovych Avksentiy Avtonomovich**, 49, son of a priest, co-operative organizer, professor at the Kiev Co-operative Institute.

32. **Botviniwsky Maksym Nykyforovich**, 41, son of a peasant, former member of the Ukrainian Party of Socialist Workers, co-operative organizer, member of the administrative staff of the Milk Production Board (Molochar-spilka).

33. **Chekhiwsky Mykola Moiseiovich**, 51, son of a priest, former corps commander in the Petlyura Army, priest of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Church.



Hryhoriy Kosyachenko
writer

34. **Yefremiv Petro Oleksandrovich**, 47, son of a priest, professor at the Dnipropetrovske University.
35. **Biliy Mykola Pavlovich**, 30, son of a tsarist civil sercant.
36. **Bidnova Lyubov Yevhenivna**, 47, daughter of an officer, a teacher.
37. **Towkach Konstyantyn Ivanovich**, 47, of peasant descent, lawyer, former priest of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church, former member of the Ukrainian Socialist-Federalist Party, member of the Poltava Collegium of Defenders, head of the Poltava District Church Council.
38. **Shchepotyev Volodymyr Oleksandrovich**, 49, professor at Poltava University.
39. **Bliznyuk Petro Stepanovich**, 49, co-operative organizer, former commissar of the Central Council in Tauria, former member of resistance committees.
40. **Lahuta Mykola Dmytrovich**, 34, former member of the Ukrainian Party of Socialist Workers, university professor.
41. **Karpovich Yosyp Romanovich**, 43, son of a presbyter, former member of the Ukrainian Socialist-Federalist Party, founder of the autocephalous movement in Chernyhiw district, teacher at Kotsyubynsky school in Chernyhiw.
42. **Otamanowsky Valentyna Dmytrovich**, 37, head of the Vynnytsya branch of the People's Library of the Ukraine.
43. **Slabchenko Taras Mykhailovich**, 25, secretary, Odessa Scientific Association of the All-Ukrainian Academy of Sciences.
44. **Panchenko-Chalenko Kyrylo Mykhailovich**, 42, pedagogue.
45. **Durdukiwsky Volodymyr Fedorovich**, 35, son of a priest, former member of the Ukrainian Socialist-Federalist Party, principal of the 1st Kiev School.

Ivan Bahryany

DOES THE WORLD HEAR?

The whole civilized world, painfully preoccupied with the peace problem, paid little attention to that laconic item of information, given out by the Associated Press Agency on May 12, 1947. It was short, but its real importance was so great that it deserves the attention of the whole world, and especially of the world's powers on whom depends the preservation of the rights of those peoples whose fate has not yet been definitely decided.

The Associated Press Agency gave the following information, dated May 12th:

Poland, the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia signed a common agreement directed against partisan groups of Ukrainian nationalists which are mainly operating in south-east Poland.

The agreement aims at a common struggle against these partisan groups.

Seemingly nothing of great importance. Except that the three countries signed an agreement, in reality a military coalition against partisan groups. All this is openly presented to universal opinion as a struggle against "bandits".

Nevertheless, there has never been any example in history where three countries closed a formal agreement and mobilized their military forces to fight "bandits". Therefore, it is clear that this agreement had nothing to do with the fighting of "bandits". It was a fight against the Ukrainian partisans. So it must be understood. But this is already a notion of some political and ideological importance, for it implies that the Ukrainian partisans were so powerful numerically and ideologically that the combatting of them required a coalition of three countries.

Who was the initiator of this agreement, who conceived its text, for whom of the three partners was this agreement of the utmost importance, and why did this coalition not include the Ukrainian state, which has been proclaimed as an independent unit of the USSR? We do not know.

But it is known that Poland and Czechoslovakia form part of the sphere of influence of a Great Power which is dictating their internal and foreign policy, and not the contrary. It is also known that this Great Power has been struggling against the Ukrainian national partisans, both armed and ideological, for more than twenty-five years and considers this problem as one of the greatest problems of its internal policy — the unresolved Ukrainian national problem. It is the problem of the national independence and sovereignty of a nation of forty million people. This is the problem which contributes to East European complications. This is also the problem which called forth the agreement in question, since it is formally based on the struggle against "partisan groups of Ukrainian nationalists". The scene director always knows what he is doing.

While trying to solve its most complicated internal problem (the Ukrainian problem) for many years, the communist government of the Great Power has adopted the tactics of profaning and stigmatizing all manifestations of the Ukrainian national will, aspirations to freedom and independence, and any anti-bolshevik and anti-imperialist resistance by suppressing them with the most brutal measures.

All that has been and is anti-communist, anti-imperialist, has been and is considered as "nationalist" and for twenty-five years has been branded with epithets like "fascist", "reactionary capitalism", or, in general, as "bourgeois nationalism". With these phrases they have grouped together even commissars and representatives of numberless political opinions which agree in one particular — the idea of Ukrainian independence and national sovereignty.

Is this idea only a dream of the discontented? No! Sovereignty and independence are the culmination of the historical process which marks the development of nations. The totalitarian attempts to check this development are only a black reaction.

In the practice of Soviet political definitions there have been and now are only two classes into which everything is officially grouped — communist (positive) and bourgeois nationalist (negative).



Roman Shukhevich (Taras Chuprynka), commander-in-chief of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA), killed by the MVD on March 5, 1950.

Even at the time when the above mentioned agreement was conceived by the three countries, it led in Ukraine to the decimation of the population by the "purification of the party" the "purification of the administrative personnel", the "purification of collective farms from nationalistic elements" according to the statements of the world press. Therefore this agreement must be judged for its concrete essence in the light of the whole history of struggles against the Ukrainian nationalist and anti-communist government. It is then clear by whom the agreement was conceived and for whom it had the greatest importance. That is why the world must take an interest in it. Was the situation really such as was officially announced? But according to information from other sources (Dena-Reuter Agency), in the ranks of these Ukrainian partisans were also representatives of other nationalities and "members" of Yugoslav and Hungarian organizations.

How are we to understand this? We can interpret it in many ways. But there can be only one unprejudiced interpretation. It certainly has nothing to do with "bandits".

These partisans had, of course, some great progressive ideal. When Lord Byron died for the freedom of Greece, when Stendhal supported the movement of the Italian Carbonari, when the Russian Decembrist Ryleev passed as poet and man to the side of the dishonored and profaned Ukrainian national heroes — they did it in the name of justice and out of a great compassion for the enslaved. They did it in the name of freedom.

Like every progressive human ideal, the ideal of these Ukrainian partisans must have as a matter of fact a great magnetic power when even foreigners were sacrificing their lives for it. It is of course the ideal of a subjugated nation of many millions of people, and if foreigners are dying for it, they are maintaining the traditions of the best men in universal history.

At any rate, considering the fact that in this movement, against which the agreement of three countries was directed, headed by a Great Power, representatives of a series of European nations are involved, this fact must deserve the attention of universal opinion and not only that of the treaty partners. This treaty is only a detail of the total war which is being carried on against the eternal Ukrainian popular democratic movement in general — and the partisan move-

ment in Poland figures only as a pretext for mobilizing all the powers.

The world must in the name of peace and justice attempt to solve this complicated problem, once and for all. In other words it must solve the Ukrainian problem by giving that whole nation the opportunity to say its word too. The favorable solution of the problem of the independence of the Ukrainian people certainly will at once end such an emergency as an armed partisan movement and it will not be necessary to conclude treaties in order to fight it down and disturb the world's peace.

No treaty of the three countries will be able to solve this problem for it demands another solution. There was a time for making use of those principles which are today open to the entire civilized world and for bringing the matter before such an institution as the U.N. Security Council.

For it is clear in the light of this treaty that the Ukrainian problem is no longer the problem of Poland, the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia, but that of the larger world, and especially of those nations which have laid the foundation for democracy and have taken upon themselves the safeguarding of peace and justice.

S. O. Pidhainy

PORTRAITS OF SOLOWKY EXILES

Genadiy Sadowsky — son of a railwayman, then a student at the theological seminary and later at Kiev university — joined the Ukrainian Army under Petlyura and all his life regarded himself as a soldier of this Army.

Tall and slender, with blue eyes and blond hair, Genadiy was known to be a youthful but devoted supporter of the cause of national and social freedom for the Ukrainian people and he was respected for it.

One evening, resting on the top bunk of the ninth Kem branch of the White Sea-Baltic camp called "Morsplav", I heard someone asking for me. Getting down I answered the call.

"Are you Pidhainy?" — he asked.

"Yes."

"Are you from Kharkiw?"

"Then we are countrymen. I was held prisoner in the special cells of the Kholodnohorsky prison. I am Sadowsky."

We became acquainted. Genadiy had already spent eight years in prison. He had seen and measured, barefoot, the whole Solowky archipelago, built to the greater glory of the "vampire" White Sea Canal and now he was on the "Morsplav" headed once more for Solowky.

But he remained as he was during those memorable days when the Ukrainian people wakened and rose up. He still takes an interest in everything, finds out things, organizes, teaches, learns himself and helps everybody as much as he can. He looks for his countrymen among the grey mass of human beings in concentration camps, in order to advise them. Having had a long experience of prison life he tells them how to behave, how best to obtain a little food, how to preserve their self respect and honour while living among

the despairing, groaning, mocking and crying flotsam of humanity.

One day Genadiy and I, and a thousand others, were sent to Blagopoluchie Bay in the Solowky. Having gone through all the preliminaries, a small group of us was awarded the hardest task at the north eastern coast of the island, the so-called Pichugi, — the extraction of iodine from sea weed.

Genadiy Sadowsky always talked like a free, high-principled man. Sometimes he would sit and compose songs, playing them on the bandura. These songs were sung all over Solowky, the White Sea, the Baltic Canal and Karelia, illegally of course. I remember one complete song and the beginning of another:

Sleep, you unknown,
In moss covered glades!
Sleep, you tortured slaves!
The Solowky pines are whispering
Over the fighters' graves.

The second song was composed at the White Sea-Baltic Canal construction camp. It was popular not only among Ukrainians but with many others who had the misfortune to be imprisoned there. It even figured as an example of agitation in a trial of members of an organization which was preparing a mass escape of prisoners. But the GPU could never find out who was the author of the song.

Sentry boxes are asleep at night,
Primeval pine forests moan,
Fires burn on the canal slopes. . . .
It's we the tortured ones,
Who are sentenced to die,
Crumble the hard granite rock
With our chains.
We are one family,
We've become brothers all:
Turkoman, Uzbek, Chechen,
And a sad Georgian,
Son of Ukraine,
Karelian "kaimen",*
Udmurt and Czech,
Lithuanian and White Ruthenian
We dig with picks

* A contemptuous name for Karelians.

And pry with crowbars
And send curses
To all torturers. . .
And we the tired ones.
Sentenced to die,
Firmly believe that the time
Of revenge and punishment will come.

In July, or probably in August 1937, Sadowsky was to become a free man again after having served his term of imprisonment. His health began to give way. Then, unexpectedly, he received some clothes and shoes from his wife who had escaped to Siberia to avoid persecution. He was immensely cheered, knowing that his wife and children were awaiting his return. He loved his heroic wife very much. And then again unexpectedly, his sentence was "extended" for another three years.

The NKVD men stealthily entering the barrack picked up Sadowsky's belongings and put him in the worst isolation cell that could be found.

After two months, climbing to the third floor of the Uspensky Cathedral in Kreml, which was ruined by fire through the heavily barred windows of the lunatic ward of the Solowky hospital an insane Genadiy Sadowsky with bent head and a grim look on his face could be seen pacing the room.

Stepan Zaporovany

Stepan was a well built, stout farmer's son. He represented the younger generation which could only listen to stories of the war of liberation or was too young at the time to understand what was happening. To be sure a young, active, cultured Ukrainian agriculturist could not escape the attention of the GPU and early in 1932 he was accused of being a member of a secret military organization and sentenced to five years. He was sent first to Kazakhstan and later to Solowky.

It was a pleasure to see and think that under a hostile regime and when the fires of national revolution had died down a young man like Zaporovany and thousands like him could grow up. Industrious, steadfast and straight he was a little severe and impatient, but stubborn and active, — traits of the Ukrainian farmer class. Only when he was alone with a friend would he pull out the notebook in which he

used to write about his own tragedy and that of those around him.

"What if enemy bullet should find me,
An unknown soldier in the steppe,
The native sod would receive my body. . ."

he would read from the notebook. At other times he was silent.

In 1937 quietly, full of hope for a better future and with trust in his own and his nation's strength, Stepan Zaporovany, throwing a look full of contempt at his jailers, signed in a beautiful hand, the notice that his term of imprisonment had been extended for another five years.

Volodymyr Benedyk

A young public school teacher, short, with jet black eyes and a pallid, tired face, he was at the head of the great farmer's insurrection in 1930 which spread from Kamyanets Podilsky to Vynnytsya and then to Kiev.

He was not executed after capture merely because the GPU was at a loss to explain how, under the Soviet regime, such a sincere, idealistic, straight-forward and honest enemy of bolshevism could have been raised. Consequently, the GPU decided not to shoot him but to send him to Solowky with the stipulation that he was never to depart from the islands. He worked there in the first agricultural establishment, and he was the magnet who attracted all the young men who had taken part in the farmer uprisings in Ukraine. He wielded great influence among villagers and farmers, who turned to him as a judge in all their disputes.

Tormented by sickness and tired out, he never despaired and always urged his comrades to love their native land and never to give up. He often lovingly repeated: "There never was a nation that won its liberation without sacrifice."

Oleksander Berezowsky

Being a member of the underground Ukrainian anti-bolshevik organization called "Freedom of the People" (Narodna Volya) in 1926 he fell into the clutches of the GPU and was soon sent to the Butyr isolation cell in Moscow. There he spent six years deprived of the right to receive letters, newspapers, books, listen to radio broadcasts or have any kind of contact with the outside world. Then he realized that he might become insane from such "correction methods", and he decided either to die or to gain the right

to be transferred to an ordinary prison. In 1932 a hunger strike which lasted a long time convinced his jailers that he was determined to win his point, and they sent him to Solowky to be jailed in Kreml. He was deprived forever of the right to leave this place.

As a result of hunger and artificial feeding his vocal cords atrophied and he lost the power of speech. In Kreml, he lived with his cell mates in the so called "mansarda" on the third floor of the ruined Uspensky cathedral.

Berezowsky loved his wife and only daughter and was very happy when, in the eighth year of his imprisonment, he received a letter from home. This event helped him to regain hope for a better future and he did all he could to endure the Solowky slavery and at the same time to save his strength for his eventual return to the sunny Ukraine for which he had suffered so much.

Ivan Kozlow

Ivan was a farmer's son, one of those who hunt for an easier living and shun the plow. He worked as a secretary and as a "village lawyer". In company, after a few drinks, he used to talk about country politics, about Ukraine and a soviet system of government without the communists.

Kozlow long remained a day dreamer under the influence of the revolutionary ideals of 1917. Then the reality of the famine in 1932 - 1933 opened his eyes, and he decided to quit the bolsheviks. Active, alert and having some education, he soon created a large underground organization that spread over several counties in the Poltava and Sumy regions, and he started an insurrection on his own account. He gained control of these counties and defied the Soviet authorities for a few weeks during which time they were helpless.

As was to be expected, the GPU troops put down the insurrection, shot the participants and burned down the villages, but they did not catch Kozlow until a year later. At the hearing he tried to justify his actions by quoting the teachings of Karl Marx, who supposedly said "it was better to die by the sword than by hunger". He and the farmers who rebelled had no choice but to die either way, he said. They chose the sword.

It seems that the GPU liked his arguments because he was not shot, but sent to Solowky.

Vasyl Otchenash

Vasyl's father was a tireless industrious farmer and had a good farm. He tried to instill in his own son a love of both soil and industry. This might have been the reason why the farm was ruined, the father shot and the mother, with Vasyl and a younger brother and sister, driven out of their home.

Vasyl was 15 years old when the local authorities became displeased with the fact that the family still had fur coats, dishes and spoons, and they decided to drive the widow out of the poor cottage she and the children had rebuilt with great effort, and to carry off the fur coats, dishes and spoons. When this operation was under way and the village soviet chairman, assisted by the militia, was doing his official duty Vasyl, finding an opportune moment, pinned the chairman to the floor with a three-pronged fork, and jumping through the window ran into the woods, followed by shouts and shots from behind.

The widow then suffered many torments from the kom-somol henchmen and activists. Vasyl found a friend in the woods and began to shoot at the activists, especially when they were at supper. Then, learning that a thorough search of the woods was about to begin, he boarded a train and went away. He took the first train that was handy, and found himself in Moscow.

In Moscow he changed his name from Otchenash to Hryhorovich and obtained documents under this name. Homesick, he wrote to his aunt in the neighboring village to find out what was happening at home. The aunt replied telling him of the communist plague in the form of impossible taxes, murders, arrests and robberies in the villages and also that his mother, thrown out of the cottage, had to live in a dug-out near the forest because villagers were forbidden to give her shelter. The names of those responsible for this new outrage were also given.

After reading the letter Vasyl decided to avenge the injustice and to punish the perpetrators of these lawless acts. He quit work in the storage division, left his quarters and went to the Moscow suburb of Sukharovka. There he bought a shotgun, to help him to get a revolver and depart for Ukraine. He was lucky enough to meet with a soldier carrying a gun, but betrayed by his shotgun at the critical moment, he was taken, under the muzzle of the gun he had hoped to get, to the Lubyanka prison in Moscow. There he

went through the ordeal of "examination". His true identity was established. But in the end, taking into consideration his youth, he was given only ten years "with commutation".

Oleksander Nawrotsky

There were always many Ukrainian agriculturists in Solowky. The oldest of them, Oleksander Nawrotsky, was, before his arrest the chief agriculturist of the newly created "Soyuzsakhhar".*

A great specialist, a pupil of the Kiev polytechnic, he devoted all his life to work on soil. At Solowky he was appointed director of the agricultural division. He always tried to help others and to protect them from all kinds of persecution. He made the prisoners' work much easier, when it was possible to do so.

When guards came to take him to the isolation cell he took his belongings, lighted his pipe and said: "It serves me right! Old fool that I am, I ought to know what I have served for twenty years."

Ivan Boiko

Ivan Boiko, an agriculturist from the Poltava region, once told me that he had served as a captain in Petlyura's army, but begged me to keep my mouth shut about it.

He was a good agriculturist, a great organizer and an indefatigable husbandman. When at work he seemed to forget that he was a prisoner, but when he was alone or with a friend he would remember his native Lohvytsya, Pyryatyn, Lubni. Then, if the whole of Solowky should be glutted by fire he would not move even his little finger.

A real friend, he very often did all he could, together with the agriculturists Sapozhnikow, Arsenenko, Lashkevych and many others whose names I cannot now recall, to better the living conditions and the food of the Solowky prisoners.

Mykola Lyubchenko

At one time Mykola Lyubchenko, whose pen name was Kost Kotko, held very high positions in the Soviet Ukraine.

One grey morning he appeared in a group of Ukrainian communists at the distribution point at the Kremi's north gate where he met for the first time his former friend from

* Government agency for the exploitation of the Ukrainian sugar industry, literally: "Unionsugar".

revolution days and, later, his implacable enemy, Genadiy Sadowsky. It was a very sad meeting. . .

That day Mykola Lyubchenko went to work on the prison farm.

Even before the suicide of Panas Lyubchenko, the prime minister of the Ukrainian SSR, Mykola's position became still worse. He was often called to the third division. Now all hopes of a quick release from Solowky were gone.

He hated Postyshev. When Pravda printed an unfavourable mention of Postyshev, Lyubchenko was very happy and, reading the paper, sang an improvised song:

. . . Such is our fate,
Pavlo Petrovich Postyshev
Soon will be at Kreml's gate.

He invariably referred to Postyshev as the "little boy who needs thrashing". He also held a grudge against Petrowsky, hinting that Petrowsky had been in favour of his arrest.

His life in Kreml was sad and lonely. His only solace was his family, especially a little son to whom he wrote very long letters in verse, and always in Russian. But even this exemplary conduct did not help him much.

Oleksander Shumsky

Oleksander Shumsky appeared in the north when Stalin drowned his ideas in blood, together with all his partisans and comrades.

During the war of liberation Shumsky had been the central figure of that "independent social revolutionary"* group which rebelled against Symon Petlyura and the Ukrainian Peoples' Republic, and began to propagate the idea of a Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic, that is an independent socialist Ukrainian state. He conceived and inspired the creation of the Ukrainian Communist Party (UKP) which was supposed to have been the only party to represent Ukraine.

When, in 1926, the Politburo of the Communist Party (Bolshevik) of Ukraine was reproaching him with being a social revolutionary he answered: "I never entertained any other ideas than those of class struggle and the national liberation of the workers and peasants. Ever since 1919, during all my revolutionary activities, I have not deviated a bit from this course. I have never renounced anything I

* Called in short "borotblats", that is "strugglers".

have done in the past and I think I have always followed the bolshevik and Lenin line in Ukrainian reality, though I was not a member of Lenin's party. I do not renounce this now, on the contrary, I am proud of my past."

But the Politburo could easily reject Shumsky's "leninism" because:

1. He organized the Ukrainian Communist Party as a counter-balance to the Communist Party (Bolshevik) of Ukraine, which he invariably called an organization of the Russian occupants and he demanded its liquidation.

He set the Soviet Ukraine against Soviet Russia and demanded the creation of a separate Ukrainian army and the withdrawal of the occupation army from Ukraine. He wanted full economic and cultural independence for Ukraine.

3. The Russian communists and the Union Communist Party he called "carriers of Russian chauvinism".

4. The Ukrainian communists who supported the Communist Party (Bolshevik) of Ukraine he called "traitors", "renegades", "contemptible Little Russians". He maintained that they felt like stepchildren in the party.

5. He demanded a great speed-up in Ukrainization and supported everything that was opposed to the centralizing policies of the Russians.

6. Finally, his activities caused a split in the Communist Party of Western Ukraine* and a division among Ukrainian communists into communist patriots and communist toadies.

No matter where he worked, whether in the party, or in the cultural and educational field, as a judge, or as minister of education, he always followed his course, that is the course of struggle for an independent, socialist Ukraine and because of these ideas and activities Shumsky found himself in the North.

Solodub

The position of the plenipotentiary for foreign affairs in Ukraine was somewhat similar to that of the ministry of post and telegraph in Moscow which, as a rule, was given to those who happened to fall into disfavour. The minister holding this position expected to be executed, imprisoned or if lucky, dismissed. There was one plenipotentiary for foreign affairs in Solowky, Solodub, who arrived there at the end of 1933.

Solodub was an old party member, and accounted for

* Then under Poland.

his arrest on internal or family grounds, so to speak, party intrigues, not on grounds of general policy. Being a party member he had more freedom on the island, and began first of all to study the second five-year plan for the economic development of the USSR. Beginning with an analysis of the five-year plan he became enthusiastic about the Stakhanovite movement, and finally arrived at different conclusions.

The longer he lived on the island and the more Stalin's policies took shape, the closer Solodub grew to the Ukrainian group. He began to take more interest in it and to sympathize with it. Gradually this man, talented and full of energy and initiative found himself. Then, beginning in 1937, he became very active in Ukrainian affairs and was accepted as one of the group.

Semen Semko

In a little hermitage, "Filiton", in a separate cell, Semen Semko, former president of Kiev University, then Chief of the Ukrainian Central Archives, led a lonely life. The neighboring cell was occupied by the former archbishop of Khar-kiw and Poltava Voznesensky, and a few priests. For all that, the archbishop and the priests remained strangers to Semko and he had no social contact with them. He, like Solodub, being a party member, had plenty of time to think things over.

We met as good old friends. He told me at once that he did not wonder at all why I had been sent to Solowky because the route had lain before me ever since I was expelled from the university during his presidentship, but he was still puzzled why he himself had been banished.

Then I told him that he was also there "legally" because: a) he is a Ukrainian, b) a founder of the Ukrainian party of social revolutionists which later joined the Communist Party (B) of Ukraine, c) that he had not wanted to expel me, and did it only under pressure from the "special division", d) that I knew of other similar affairs at the university and, finally e) that when he was in charge of the planning committee and later of the archives, he always followed a Ukrainian course. I don't think that my arguments made any impression, because Semko continued to be sad and lost and finally said: "If all you say is true then the facts are deceptive, but I think it is not so."

M. Poloz

A former minister of finance of the Ukrainian SSR Poloz came to Solowky some time in 1934 and, till 1937, lived in a small hermitage called "Ambarnaya". Severely guarded, he had as a neighbor the well known Ukrainian communist and statesman, Prykhodko. As a party member he had the privilege of not being compelled to go to work and still receive an adequate food ration. Ambarnaya was, of course, out of bounds for the other prisoners and the stout figure of Poloz and that of Prykhodko were first seen only when Solowky was transformed into the "Solovetskaya Prison for Special Purposes of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR".

Being at the head of a so-called federal state, Poloz, like others, tried to retain most of the power in his own hands, and did, occasionally, oppose unjustified Russian demands and obtain some concessions for Ukraine, which Moscow had to make because of the internal and external situation at the time.

It was Poloz who, together with Skrypnyk, had opposed the creation of a single all-union land ministry and the passing of an all-union act, arguing that such an act would be unconstitutional. He had also, along with others, demanded a greater share of the revenue for Ukraine.

All these steps were carefully noted by the Russians, until they were ready to destroy completely the old guard of the Ukrainian communists.

Ivan Petrenko

I met Ivan Petrenko, the former plenipotentiary of foreign affairs of Ukraine, an able economist, a social democrat who later joined the communists, at the end of his Solowky "career" because the year 1936 was the last of his ten-year term of imprisonment.

His home town was Pereyaslaw, and he wanted to go there for at least a week or two after his release to learn something of the fate of his wife who had also been arrested when he was. He did not communicate with her for ten years after that. His dreams were shattered by the fact that he had to wait at Solowky three months over the ten years, until Moscow decided to banish him, after release, to eastern Karelia as a "special settler". He was only allowed to settle north of the 64th parallel.

Petrenko often spoke of the colonial dependence of Soviet Ukraine upon Russia and the harmful effects of this dependence on the economic life of Ukraine.

Yuriy Samborsky

Before his arrest Yuriy Samborsky represented the Ukrainian soviet government in Moscow in matters touching upon the cultural and national needs of the Ukrainian minority in the Russian SSR. Ukrainians could and did turn to him in Moscow with their problems. When the Central Executive of the All-Union Communist (Bolshevik) Party decided, on December 14, 1932, to liquidate all Ukrainian institutions in the Russian and other Soviet republics and to send Postyshev to Ukraine, Samborsky was arrested.

There was a wave of arrests at that time. All professors and their assistants at the Ukrainian University in Blahovishchensk in the Far East ("Zeleny Klyn"), institute in Krasnodar, at the teacher training college in Poltawska settlement in the Kuban region and at the normal school in Bilhorod in Kursk region, were arrested. At the same time many persons connected with Ukrainian high schools and universities, publishing houses, museums and so on, founded by Mykola Skrypnyk in territories settled by Ukrainians or separated from Ukraine and included in the Russian Soviet Republic, suffered the same fate.

On the way to Solowky, when we were held in "Kresty" prison in Leningrad Samborsky used to say: "I am getting old, my dear! When they take me to Solowky I'll die just the same, so it's better to run away abroad." We began to think this matter over but flight from Leningrad was impossible. When we arrived in Kem, we could hardly keep on our feet, exhausted as we were with hunger and the "corrective treatment" of the GPU.

Samborsky's forebodings in Leningrad became a reality when we arrived in Solowky. He became seriously ill and remained in the Solowky hospital until 1937, when he was evacuated with other Ukrainian prisoners.

Mykolenko

He was a director of a branch of the department of education, and later chief librarian of the Ukrainian National Library in Kiev. Arriving in Solowky in 1935, Mykolenko from the start demonstrated himself to be a good, honest, well educated and active person. He took an active part in

the life of the Ukrainian prisoners on the islands and often started interesting discussions or initiated some useful action.

Being optimistic, he was always in a good humor and inspired others to believe that everything would, in the end, turn out well.

Roman Zaklynsky

A most modest figure among the Solowky Ukrainians was Roman Zaklynsky, director of the Shewchenko Historical Museum in Kiev. He came to Solowky in 1935 or, perhaps, in 1936, and worked in the forest, later on the farm, when he became less interested in the life of the Ukrainian community. He was usually exhausted, and would mull over his personal affairs and the things he liked.

Yewhen Shablyowsky

In 1932 when Skrypnyk's position became shaky and Russian attacks on Ukraine reached their highest point, there appeared in the Institute for Shewchenko Studies "a star of the first magnitude" in the person of Yewhen Shablyowsky. He became a favourite overnight for his bolshevik "discovery" of Shewchenko whose writings the "deplorable nationalists Yefremiw, Hermaize, Hrushewsky, Nikowsky, Yavorsky not to mention others, have misinterpreted and falsified". He was paid for his "discovery" by the directorship of the Institute for Shewchenko Studies. This star appeared when the GPU almost had me in their clutches.

This Institute a branch of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, was under constant Russian surveillance and was the object of their first attacks, for the simple reason that it was engaged in research and study of the Ukrainian language. Consequently, all its directors and members were always accused of being nationalists and put behind bars. In the end only academicians were allowed to do any work there. This time no one could be found to fill the position better than Professor Shablyowsky.

But pro-Russian bias and servility did not save Shablyowsky from arrest because, to head the institute of Ukrainian language studies he had to be a Ukrainian, to love his work and care for its development, and this was sufficient to be branded as a "nationalist" and an "enemy of the people".

And so Shablyowsky, like many of his predecessors, soon became an exile.

Academician Matviy Yavorsky

The Ukrainian historian and "marxist", Matviy Yavorsky, came from Galicia in 1918 when the German armies overran Ukrainian territories. Finding himself in a bolshevik environment, in time he acquired pro-Soviet views and later became, so to speak, an official party historian of Ukraine. Being a party member he held some very high positions but this fact did not save him from banishment when the Russian drive against Ukrainian culture was launched.

During the purge in 1930 Yavorsky was confronted with the fact that he had served as an officer in the Austrian army in the military police division. This meant that he was finished. He was arrested soon after and sent to Solowky.

We met in the Solowky Kremlin as old friends, though in Kharkiw we hardly knew each other. Yavorsky was interested in the activities of the Ukrainian historians. When I told him that not a single scientific publication dealing with Ukrainian history had appeared in 1932, he said it was no wonder because the actual program of Ukrainian historical scholarship had already begun in the fall of 1929, after the first conference of marxist historians in Moscow.

I noticed during our conversation that Yavorsky was continually pulling out bits of bread from his pocket and eating them. At the same time he kept a watchful eye on his bunk, which seemed rather unnatural. I understood. He was suffering from a hunger psychosis. All of us at Solowky were helping him out by bringing bits of food which Yavorsky ate or secreted at the head of his bunk.

After six months of our "treatment" Yavorsky became normal again. This may be understood fully only by one who has been tormented by the pangs of hunger as long as Yavorsky was.

No one ever showed so openly his anger and contempt for the NKVD-men and for all that reminded him of the Soviets and Russia as Yavorsky. He never cared about his clothing, "made in Moscow — Minsk". He always did the hardest jobs and while working preferred to be left alone and not to talk. When asked why he was so diligent in his work he answered "Because I am mad." This was the honest truth.

The best illustration of his attitude to Russia and bolshevism were his answers to the questions in a questionnaire

during the all-union census of the USSR in the spring of 1937. Asked about his nationality he said: "You may put Chinese, Malayan, or whatever else you wish, except Russian or Soviet." His answer to the question of party membership was: "I had the misfortune to belong to the most miserable party in the world, the communist party."

As was to be expected after such excesses, Yavorsky vanished from sight into the darkest dungeons of the "White House", that is the administration buildings of the "third division" of Solowky.

When the end of Yavorsky's term was in sight he wrote his famous letter to Stalin. This letter was copied and read illegally by the entire Ukrainian group in Solowky. The "third division" was supposed to have sent it to Stalin. The letter was short but deadly. It was really an act of accusation of the Ukrainian people, composed by one of them, against Russia. Yavorsky ended his letter with the declaration that he renounced his right to be liberated "as long as Stalin and the Russians are going to rule in Ukraine".

When this letter reached the third division, Yavorsky was put into an isolation cell and two or three weeks later was informed that "after having examined his record on file it was found to be necessary to extend his term of imprisonment for another five years beginning with the day of this announcement".

Yavorsky remained in isolation till November or December 1937 when he was evacuated with a large group of Ukrainians who went to the special camp in the "Ukhta-Pechora" direction.

Academician Stepan Rudnytsky

When I write of the Ukrainian intellectuals in Solowky I think first of all of writers, poets, historians, philologists and agriculturists and only later of others. This is not accidental, it is simply because the bulk of the prisoners really belonged to this category, often called the "engineers of souls".

But there were others as well. Among the most prominent was Stepan Rudnytsky, world famous geographer who had been lured by bolshevik blandishments from Prague in Czechoslovakia to Ukraine hoping to found in Soviet Ukraine a large school of Ukrainian geographers. He became the head of the Scientific Research Institute of Geography in Kharkiw.

Soon, however, he was arrested by the NKVD and one

spring day in 1935 he appeared in the Solowky Kreml. Grey-headed, and exhausted by NKVD examination and the arduous journey to Solowky, he lived in the "first colony", in a dark, evil smelling cell into which the sun never shone. A bunk full of bedbugs, heavy air permeated by the smell of bad tobacco, wet foot rags, pants and felt boots hanging around, cold and hunger, — these were the conditions under which the famous scientist had to live.

Advanced in years and physically exhausted, Rudnytsky could not do any work. Soon after his arrival in Solowky the doctors pronounced him unable to work. He was put on the invalid list and suffered very much, as did other invalids, from starvation rations, poor food and other inconveniences. The Ukrainian prisoners tried to help him as much as they could but their help was of a rather sporadic nature and was not effective.

Any serious scientific work under Solowky conditions was beyond the realms of the imagination. Rudnytsky knew this. He would sometimes talk about his past, about his numerous acquaintances, friends and colleagues among the West European scientists especially among the Germans, about his books, many of which had been translated into other languages, and about meetings and jubilees. Quite often he expressed his deep regret at having trusted the bolsheviks. He always remained true to his native land.

But he did not remain in Solowky very long. Towards the end of 1937 he was evacuated and sent in the direction of Ukhta — Pechora — Vorkuta to spend the remaining days of his life in some God forsaken "special camp", unable to write or have any contact with the outside world and living in misery among the most heinous criminals of the state.

Vasyl Babyak

The former assistant professor at Kharkiw university, a young geographer and geologist, Vasyl Babyak, was the only pupil of Rudnytsky to serve his term in Solowky together with his teacher. Having taken an active part in the Ukrainian war of liberation he could not and did not sympathize with the anti-Ukrainian "general course of the party" and was exiled to Solowky.

In the summer of 1937 Babyak was summoned to the "White House" and notified that some NKVD "body", having examined his case, had decided to prolong his term of

imprisonment for another five years. After signing the notice the young scientist calmly resumed his ditch digging.

Academician Mykhaylo Slabchenko

Author of the brilliant four volume history of **The Ukrainian State from Khmelnytsky to the World War**, the outstanding work **The Social and Economic Organization of the Zaporozhian Sich** and many other gifted and thought-provoking books, Mykhaylo Slabchenko was an economist rather than a historian and his books became the basis for a study of the economic history of the 18th and the 19th century Ukraine. Under his patriotic influence, and that of his colleagues, the "free city of Odessa" became a centre of Ukrainian studies, especially those of the Black Sea region. Odessa lost its Russian character as did Kharkiw, thanks to another Ukrainian historian, academician Bahaliy.

Slabchenko was in Kiev when his son was arrested in Odessa, and knew nothing about it. He was visiting friends in the Ukrainian Academy. When he returned from Kiev to Odessa, his home, he was arrested and in March, 1930, appeared on the defendants' bench in the case against the "Union for the Liberation of Ukraine". Then he was sent to Solowky, and confined in the isolation cell of the Hermitage and the church of St. Savatyi close to Sekirnaya Hill on the big Solovetsky Island. He remained there till the end of 1936, when his eight year term of imprisonment ended.

Yosyp Hermaize

He was a prominent scientist and historian, and a great orator. A social democrat in the past, he remained true to the principles of democracy and to the idea of the Ukrainian democratic revolution, that is he was a follower of Petlyura. It was not by chance that he became secretary to the department of Ukrainian history at the All-Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, and a close collaborator with Mykhaylo Hrushewsky after the latter's return to Ukraine. This was responsible for the fact that all his scientific work was closely connected with problems ideologically paralleling those of the Ukrainian People's Republic. In spite of his frequent declarations that he was a marxist, Yosyp Hermaize was excluded from the roll of marxists at the first historians' conference, and later even from the roll of historians.

He was a great scholar, and a great organizer among

the historians and students at Kiev university, just as Mykola Zerow was a beacon for writers and language scholars. Students flocked to his lectures and their university and extra mural organizations were, in reality, part of the Union for the Liberation of Ukraine.

Mykola Pawlushkow and Vira Mazurenko were his closest friends, and after the latter's suicide Hermaize dedicated to her memory his work "Ukraine and the Don". The young people around him were the most patriotic and cultured among the university students of that period and all of them were later enmeshed in the NKVD snares, together with their teacher. Some of them, like Pawlushkow, were tried in court (case of SVU), while others were shot without trial or sent to distant concentration camps.

Hermaize also received an eight year term and lived in one of the isolation cells of St. Savatyi hermitage. He remained there with Mykhaylo Slabchenko, Professor Barbar, Professor Udovenko, Professor Chekhiwsky and Mykola Pawlushkow till 1936, when he should have been set free, but a new wave of terror in 1937 caught up with him, and he was sentenced to a further ten year term in prison.

Mykola Pawlushkow

Growing up among nationally conscious and well educated Ukrainians, Pawlushkow belonged to that minority of young Ukrainians who were not only well acquainted with the Ukrainian cause, but were ready to fight for it. Well read and industrious, he published an essay on Kulish and prepared others which, as might have been expected, had nothing to do with official Soviet scholarship.

He was careful in the selection of his friends, seeking them chiefly among those of country origin, perhaps less well educated, but as persevering and idealistic as he was himself. Thus among his young friends there were many sons and daughters of those who had died for the cause of liberation or who were still alive and worked for it, those who fought for the Ukrainian People's Republic. These young people composed the membership of the Union of Ukrainian Youth (SUM) which was counteracting the influence of the Komsomol or Union of Communist Youth, and supporting the fight for liberation.

Being a representative of this youth Pawlushkow fell into the clutches of the GPU and was sent to St. Savatyi's hermitage in Solowky. He was to serve an eight year term

but in 1937, when he should have been freed, he was given a new term of punishment.

Mykhaylo Novytsky

Thirty miles away from the railway station of Sosnovets on the Murmansk Railway there is a place called Yuryev Ostrov (George's Island) one of the worst sections of the Lower Vyg branch of the White Sea — Baltic concentration camp. The barracks were built on marshy ground in the forest, surrounded by a high fence. One of the barracks was really a dug-out.

It would perhaps be superfluous here to mention the "green" terror that hung over these barracks. During my seven years in concentration camps I saw many bad holes, yet when I found Mykhaylo Novytsky, a well known literary scholar and authority on Shewchenko in this place, I was shocked.

I found him sitting in a corner, on the lower bunk. His pale face was covered with a sandy beard, his nose sharp-pointed, his eyes had sunk deep in their sockets. He was in very bad shape, but was compelled to work every day.

Novytsky was a great authority and commentator on the works of Shewchenko. He knew the last details of Shewchenko's biography. Sometimes we would sit in the evening and read Shewchenko's poetry.

It was both painful and funny to regard this scholar who had devoted his whole life to the study of a poet as a "counter-revolutionary". His invaluable literary works remain unfinished or perhaps were lost forever.

But the terror endured by this "counter-revolutionary" at George's Island was not enough. In the winter of 1939 - 1940 he was sent with a company which had to build a strategic railway line in eastern Finland. This was during the Russo-Finnish war. The position of the prisoners was unendurable. We had to save ourselves as best we could; but such people as Novytsky were helpless in this kind of situation. He went with the company in torn shoes and a ragged coat when the outside temperature was 58 degrees below zero.

In the spring of 1940 thousands of prisoners, crippled by frost, returned from the railway construction camp. They told me that Novytsky was still alive, working as a caretaker in the camp.

Fedir Pushchenko

I became acquainted with Fedir Pushchenko, a professor of foreign languages, in Solowky though before our arrest both of us had lived in Kharkiw. He was a very good man, but his life was exceedingly miserable and only our help saved him from starvation. He worked as a storehouse watchman, the usual occupation of professors, bishops, academicians and poets.

Pushchenko had a knowledge not only of European but also of the Near and Far East languages. He had travelled all over the world and had spent most of his life abroad. Besides this, he was a masterly story-teller. We used to listen to his stories about Australia, the Azores, India, the Solomon Islands and so on for whole evenings. When asked what languages he knew he would say: "I know them all, except Russian." He never talked about his own arrest. In the summer of 1937 he was unexpectedly taken away from Solowky in an airplane, as the rumor had it. to Moscow.

Ivan Shalya

Professor of Ukrainian language in the Krasnodar normal school, Ivan Shalya, the well known author of a grammar written in collaboration with P. Horetsky, was charged by the NKVD with membership in the mythical "Union of Kuban and Ukraine". Sent to Solowky, Shalya had the misfortune to be taken to the island of Anzer, where he suffered great hardships in spite of his comparative youth. He remained there till he was evacuated with other Ukrainian prisoners. During this time his health was greatly undermined.

Vasyl Levytsky

A staff member of the Institute of the History of Ukrainian Culture in Kharkiw, Vasyl Levytsky arrived in Solowky sometime in 1935, together with a large group of Ukrainian scholars and writers.

Petro Hrebinnyk

Formerly a teaching fellow at the T. Shewchenko Scientific Research Institute in Kharkiw, and later a member of the faculty of Ukrainian literature in the teacher training college in Krasnodar, Petro Hrebinnyk was one of that

group of Ukrainian intellectuals who stubbornly resisted all attempts to make them abandon their cause without a fight.

Even on the way to Solowky, in the so called Morsplaw, he was very active among the Ukrainians. Possessor of a clear mind he was serious and thoughtful in his dealings, and was respected by all Ukrainian prisoners in Solowky.

Hrebinyk, like myself, was not sent with the first transport of Ukrainians from Solowky due, no doubt, to an oversight by some official in the "distribution division". I was glad to meet Hrebinyk during the search conducted among the prisoners of the second transport. Together, we were taken to the mainland to follow the first transport. But there were some last-minute changes, and after two months of official haggling we were sent to the White Sea — Baltic Canal camp. I am not going to describe all the terrible experiences we had to endure in this camp. Our life there was one long nightmare of exhausting marches, "special" and "punitive" assignments, until we met again in the prison hospital in Sosnov. Hrebinyk had a permanently impaired heart, pleurisy and lung and kidney inflammation. After his discharge from the hospital, he was fortunate enough to get a bookkeeper's job at the Sosnov camp division and he later helped me to obtain the same kind of employment. This was towards the end of 1938.

But, as it happened, Hrebinyk was not allowed to keep his job. There were a few "fascist" trials in the Sosnov division and Hrebinyk, according to charges laid by the "third section", was supposed to have been at the head of one of these. He was again taken to an isolation cell, with a group of other prisoners. As was to be expected, Hrebinyk did not confess to anything and his behaviour at the trial did not mitigate the sentence at all. With irrefutable logic he proved to the "judges" that this trial was a shameful provocation, that all the "evidence" was false, and that he was not guilty at all. But the "court", having heard his defence, slapped on another ten years of imprisonment, and sent him back again to the Sosnov divisional point in August of 1938.

The news of the Soviet-German accord was like a thunder clap among the prisoners, but it did Hrebinyk a good turn. All the sentences meted out during all the so called "fascist trials" which had not yet been confirmed by the higher authorities, were annulled. Hrebinyk's sentence also was quashed, and he was transferred from Sosnov to Maiguba

where he continued to work as a bookkeeper. His term was supposed to end in January 1941 but I do not know if he regained his freedom at that time, because I lost all contact with him.

Ananiy Lebid

Lebid arrived in Solowky with a group of Ukrainian writers and scientists, and from the beginning could not reconcile himself to rank injustice, and that, in spite of his professed innocence, he had been sent to this island of terror and death. Pale and wan of face he used to sit among his colleagues. Anything he said was full of bitterness and passion. He seemed always to be criticizing his colleagues saying that they, and many others, could not endure NKVD tortures and had "confessed" to having been "counter-revolutionaries", "spies", "opponents of the regime" and so on.

He seriously and thoughtfully composed long petitions to Moscow, in which he tried to persuade the high Russian dignitaries that he was innocent, and asked for a revision of his case and his eventual liberation from exile.

I often used to sit with him in his cell and talk. When our conversation touched upon problems of Ukrainian culture and literature he always spoke with enthusiasm.

"The Ukrainian intelligentsia", he used to say, "is of a third social class, because we are flesh and blood, we farmers, laborers and artisans. Only in this way can we explain the fact that the Ukrainian intellectuals, the new Ukrainian intelligentsia of the revolutionary period, has in so short a time made such prodigious advances in the creative field judging by the works of its most important representatives, such as Khvylovy, Kurbas, Kulish, Vyshnya, Petrytsky and many others. This is equally true of Ukrainian culture as a whole because, during this time, we not only had prominent mathematicians like Mykhaylo Krawchuk but geographers, geologists, chemists, aerodynamic experts, and so on, all of them farmers and workers, all belonged to the third social class."

Professor O. Yanata

When I was "free" I was not acquainted with Professor Yanata, a prominent botanist and director of one of the scientific plant research institutes. Only in Solowky did I learn that he was a former party member. This circumstance, however, did not save him from exile and he became

a resident of the former home of Saints Zasya and Savatyi. I knew him on the island for about four years. All this time Professor Yanata was working on the prison farm especially in the "Solowky experimental farm".

It should be noted here that many millions of rubles were spent on this farm especially when, owing to Michurin, the fad of raising southern plants in the North was widespread in the Soviet Union. There were always many agriculturalists and pomologists of the highest order in Solowky. It is no wonder, then, that Professor Yanata found much interesting material and many possibilities in the laboratory and at the experimental farm.

Appointed agriculturalist and plant pathologist of the farm, he became wrapped up in his work. From very early on, the greatest enemy of the Solowky gardens was a cabbage fly. Some theoretical and practical solution to the problem of combating this harmful insect was very important. But how could it be done? Yanata, like all the other prisoners, lived in a dirty cell where shouts, noise, laughter and crying were always in the air. To be able to do scientific work Yanata resorted to this practise: Coming from work early, he would eat his ration of "balanda" and go to sleep immediately. After one o'clock at night, when everyone was asleep, he would wake up, get his box of notes, sit by the table and work till morning. He had thousands of file cards all systematized and properly arranged. His files bulged with sheets of data on temperature and precipitation, and with descriptions of experiments.

I slept beside him for three months, but I did not hear a single word from him. He was not persecuted in any way and lived on his "balanda" and dreamed of discovering a way to combat insects harmful to plants. The authorities on the island were aware of Yanata's work, and during the systematic searches of the prisoners they refrained from searching his files.

Just when everything seemed to be going well, sometime in September 1937, the transport commander, unexpectedly entering the cell, shouted: "Yanata! Gather your belongings and be ready to leave at once!" This shout "belongings" and "at once" was a great shock to the professor. He needed at least a day to collect everything and pack it up properly.

"It's terrible! It's absolutely impossible," he said and

sat down without making the slightest attempt to do it. Seeing this, the commander went out and reported that Yanata could not be ready immediately. Five minutes later two husky prison guards came to help. They pushed the professor away from his belongings and throwing everything, papers, herbarium, notes, old shoes and the filing cards in sacks, tied them up and carried them away.

"Follow us!" — shouted one of them. The botanist had no time even to say good-bye to the inmates, and listlessly followed.

Narushevich

In 1930 the Higher Learning Administrative Branch of the Department of Education of the Ukrainian SSR organized a two week seminar for workers in Ukrainian museums. There I met Narushevich, author of a book about Vynnytsya and director of the historical and social branch of the museum in that city. He was a modest man, devoted to his work, highly qualified, who worked very assiduously at putting the museum on a high scientific level. It was obvious that Narushevich could not remain there very long, he had to go, and not only did he lose his position, but had to go to Solowky. At first he worked on the construction of the White Sea-Baltic Canal where his son Lyonok was brought to him because his wife had vanished, no one knew where. For perhaps the first time Solowky prison saw not only a prisoner father but also a nonprisoner son, living in exile. In any case, until Solowky was transformed into a prison of special assignment, Lyonok lived in the same cell as his father and was cared for by all the Solowky prisoners.

There was a school on the island for the children of the NKVD men and armed guards, and the camp chief ordered Lyonok, as a free person, to attend it. They gave the boy proper clothing and he began to attend school, but neither he nor the children of the NKVD men showed any desire to become friends and Lyonok returned to Kreml right after school. He remained on the island till June 1937 and was evacuated from the island to an unknown destination soon after. His father, remaining behind, suffered greatly at being separated from his son. He continued to work at the prison farm. Later Narushevich also left Solowky with the Ukrainian transport.

Mykola Zerow

He was undoubtedly the most colorful figure at Solowky. Poet and professor, learned in antique poetry, a translator of the Latin poets, on arrival at Solowky he continued to dwell on his beloved themes and poets. He seemed unaware of the tragedy of his position and the fact that he found himself in the former home of Saints Zosym and Savatir in no way affected his outlook, just as the spiritual world of some monk was not changed by his being sent from some Volokam desert to the gloomy Solowky hermitage.



Mykola Zerow
poet and scholar

When I first saw him, one grey spring morning, he had his "professor" hat on his head, an eye-glass in his eye, and a broad grin which was peculiar to him. He was given a shovel and told where and how much ground he should dig up. Going there by chance about noontime I met the professor sitting on a rock.

"And all of us shall be there,
The last moment arriving
We shall be thrown into the boats
 when our turn comes,
And gloomy shores shall meet us in
 ternal exile."

I recited.

"Yes, yes," — said the professor — "I have always been moved by those lines. It's for all ages. It is eternal poetry."

"How is today's quota? You have not even started working?" — I asked.

"No, I tried. Don't you see, I dug about ten times. But you know it's not earth in here but rock, and it's overgrown with some pesky weed. Then I, my friend, remembered that Latin proverb, which says 'One who was not born a hero should not be too hasty to become one', and I sat down to rest.

After midnight till five in the morning Mykola Zerow became a poet. He sat in the corner of his bunk with a pencil, and translated the Latin poets. Sometimes he tried English poetry. He translated a few of Pushkin's poems.

One dark Solowky evening all the cells resounded with the shouts of guards who called the prisoners' names and ordered their immediate departure. Everyone hastened to grab his worldly goods and say good-bye to a friend and follow the guard. They were led to the farm barracks, where everyone passed through a preliminary search. There was another search at the docks and the last one on the mainland in Morsplaw.

I cannot state definitely that Zerow's works were lost, but there can be no doubt that the manuscripts were taken away from him. I think, however, that they were lost, like Professor Yanata's scientific research notes, odd sheets of which were found at the site of the search. The group in which Zerow was included was searched again in Morsplaw and all personal belongings were confiscated from the prisoners who were given prisoners' clothes minus buttons and sashes. The guard having been strengthened, the prisoners were loaded in to the train and taken to an unknown destination.

In January of 1938, when I happened to be in that same Mosplaw, the personal belongings of the transport were pilfered by professional thieves and hired NKVD men.



Pavlo Fylypovich
poet

Pavlo Fylypovich

Pavlo Fylypovich, who became conscious of his national heritage during the revolutionary period, became a prominent figure among the Ukrainian neo-classicists. An outstanding poet, a living literary encyclopedia, a Ukrainian professor and scholar in literature — he could not avoid falling into the GPU net. The fact that he gave up writing poetry in Russian and began to write in Ukrainian was sufficient for his arrest.

No other prisoner suffered as much from exile in Solowky as Fylypovich. We was always gloomy and lonely. Compelled to do hard manual labor, he tried as hard as he could to reach his quota, but as a rule he never succeeded. He was fortunate because the Solowky Ukrainians helped to obtain easier assignments for him.

He never associated much with others, preferring to be left alone. Alone, he roamed around the Uspensky Cathedral in Kreml and fed the lapwing chicks. It is certain that he wrote and translated poetry but he never read anything he wrote to a larger group of people. Only very occasionally would he unbend and read a few lines to his closest friends.

All his works perished, like those of other authors, because he was evacuated with a group of Ukrainians at the **Yewhen Pluzhnyk**

end of 1937.

Yewhen Pluzhnyk, a talented young writer, author of **Days, Illness and Equanimity**, was arrested when he was hopelessly ill with tuberculosis. Brought to Solowky he was at once taken to hospital and, in spite of all the efforts of the Ukrainian prisoners to help him, he died there in the spring of 1936. His grave in Solowky is known because the NKVD made no secret of his place of burial, as it frequently did in other cases.

Les Kurbas

Kurbas wrote in 1917: "We see a turn in our literature . . . a great turn, the only right one and profound. This turn is to Europe and directly to ourselves, without middlemen and authoritative models".

Writing about new ways in Ukrainian literature, Les Kurbas not only theorised about them but actually applied them, clearly and boldly, to Ukrainian drama. He elevated this art literally to the heights of the theatrical art of the



Yewhen Pluzhnyk

Yewhen Pluzhnyk
poet

world. The Russians tried to break Kurbas as they did Tychyna, Rylsky and Bazhan but realizing that their methods would be ineffective in this case, sent him to Solowky. When unendurable terror gripped Ukraine, friends advised Kurbas to go to Moscow in order not to irritate the NKVD men any longer. He did just that, he not only went to Moscow but became a producer at some theatre in that city. But he was too prominent a figure to avoid the scrutiny of the ever



**Les Kurbas
producer**

watchful GPU and our producer had to exchange the theatre for the Butyr prison in Moscow.

The trial lasted a long time. At that time, all kinds of Russian and Soviet toadies pictured Kurbas in the papers as a very dangerous counter-revolutionary, nationalist and fascist. The examiners made it a point to hand Kurbas these papers in his cell, in order to convince him that his work in the theatre was definitely at an end, and that he would never leave prison. They demanded a "confession" from him. He could have said that he plotted to kill Stalin, incited people to rebellion or was a spy. In a word, he could have chosen any part or all of them together, because in both the Butyr



Микола Куліш

Mykola Kulish
playwright

prison and in Lubyanka the producer was the GPU and Kurbas could only appear as an actor.

The famous producer, it is true, from the beginning was not assigned heavy physical work. He was forbidden to leave Kreml. There was at that time a camp theatre in Solowky, and Kurbas began to work there as producer. He remained in this position till the Spring of 1937 when the theatre closed down. The regular patrons of the theatre were NKVD men headed by the island camp chief Ponomaryov. It is not hard to imagine the position of the famous Ukrainian producer in this prison temple of Melpomene. This, perhaps, was the reason why he turned grey. To make things worse, some producer with an Armenian-Greek name arrived in Solowky from Leningrad, and began to write reports denouncing Kurbas. The "Third Division" of the NKVD began to watch Kurbas. During the second half of 1937 Kurbas was idle because at that time all of us, with a few exceptions, were put into isolation cells.

I don't know where Kurbas is nowadays, for no one except the GPU knows where the Ukrainian transport of 1937 is now.

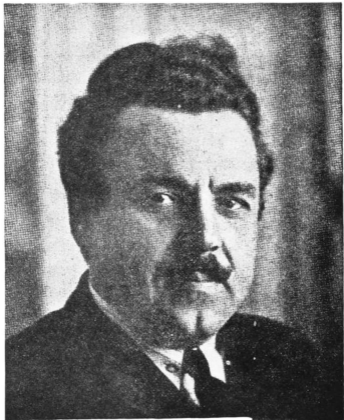
Mykola Kulish

The famous playwright Mykola Kulish, hounded when he was still a "free" man, and later exiled and put into the second Solowky isolation camp, was never seen by anybody. He was ill with tuberculosis and was not indeed living but slowly dying in such a prison. We tried all kinds of ways to help him, with food or in some other way, but our efforts were futile except when we managed to smuggle through a little butter and apples.

In spite of the fact that our playwright was very sick he was not allowed to be taken to hospital. He was still alive at the end of 1937 and no one knows whether he was evacuated from the island in 1937. Probably he remained in Solowky during the winter, and was evacuated in the Spring of 1938, but where and how nobody knows.

Oleksa Slisarenko

The well-known Ukrainian poet and prose writer, Oleksa Slisarenko, never fell into despair and his personality, with his kind eyes and grey hair evoked unintentional sympathy among people. He was calm and always kind. His smile was sincere and his language, even when he talked of in-



Oleksa Slisarenko

Oleksa Slisarenko
writer

human deeds was quiet and tinged with a slight irony or a light French humour. He never complained about anything. Coming to Solowky he at first worked in the greenhouses. He was assigned to take care of the flower beds and he did his work well and carefully. "I like contrasts," he used to say, "Solowky and flowers." Later he became a caretaker in one of the farm storerooms. He remained at this task till his evacuation from the island.

Sometimes he wrote verses, short stories and verse-letters to his wife. He loved his wife and always spoke of her warmly and gently.

He continually stressed the importance of creating a new Ukrainian story in a carefree, light genre. "Enough of philosophizing and cheap politics! What is needed are stories written interestingly to imbue our people with a love of life and a desire to create. The reader must rest when reading our book. Literature, the theatre, art, philosophy, science, church, the family and all future national organizations must be based on the idea that their purpose is to teach our people to respect themselves as a nation, to be unquestionably faithful to their native country, and also to be honest and courageous."

Russian culture and literature he regarded with great reserve, underscoring their Asiatic, theocratic character.

In the late fall of 1937 Oleksa Slisarenko, strolling by the Uspensky Cathedral in Kreml, said: "The last two lapwings left us today. Maybe we'll have to get ready to go too." The navigation period was about over, which meant there would be no more transports from Solowky. But Slisarenko's premonitions soon became reality, and we said goodbye to the poet.

Klym Polishchuk

An interesting book by Vitaliy Yurchenko lying in front of me tells of his wanderings in the far northern concentration camps. It contains a short description of the tragic fate of Klym Polishchuk, that gullible person who, believing evil promises, went to the Soviet Union. No one understands better than we do those provocative practices of the GPU-NKVD who were not squeamish about means. When Klym Polishchuk complained about Pylypenko, who had been executed long ago, and about his own wife Halyna Orliwna he was not justified because the real cause did not rest in Pylypenko or Orliwna. The prime cause was at the root of

everything, Ukrainians and bolshevism are two things that exclude each other. And so Klym Polishchuk was neither the first nor the last person to swallow the hook baited by Soviet lies.

A friend of his told me that Polishchuk used to say, before his departure to the Soviet Ukraine: "I'll go and do some work; if they arrest me, I'll write a poem about concentration camps." Only a naively honest person could have said this.

But in fact it happened differently: the introduction to Polishchuk's poem was written by Yurchenko, I will tell about the middle section and God knows who will write the finale because I am very, very certain that it will not be written by Polishchuk himself.

Klym Polishchuk was very sick, his health ruined. He was so nervous that he could not stand loud talk, banging or noise. He spoke very slowly and haltingly, sometimes losing the thread of conversation. His favorite pastime was to sit with his back to the heater and keep silent. In truth, his presence increased the melancholy that reigned there. He once showed me his stories, written in Soviet Ukraine, beautiful things, but they were the reason why he was sent to Solowky.

He worked for a long time as caretaker of a storeroom until sadness and sickness sent him to hospital. He was very sick when he was evacuated from the island at the end of 1937.

Geo Shkurupiy

Geo Shkurupiy or Zhora, as we used to call him on the island, was a very pleasant man, a good companion, attentive and sympathetic. All of us befriended him, and helped him as much as possible. He was put to work on the farm. At first he was a gardener, weeding and caring for cabbages, and later on he was assigned to combating insects damaging the garden crops. Slinging a sprayer over his shoulder, he would roam the gardens. This was, so to speak, Shkurupiy's Solowky profession.

It was rather odd that such a gifted poet was so helpless in personal matters.

Zhora Shukurupiy was simply a poet. Small wonder, as I heard, that his mother-in-law complained to the wife of a writer: "Just think of it, Zhora has been arrested as a Ukrainian nationalist! Lord, he's only a poet." And truly



Geo Shkurupiy
poet

Shkurupiy was only a poet and no one could expect anything more from him.

Marko Vorony

A young journalist, Marko Vorony, son of the well known poet Mykola Vorony who also lived in exile, arrived in Solowky in 1935. He was arrested in Kiev, though he had lived for a long time in Moscow, fleeing from the GPU-NKVD persecution of himself and his father.

Son of the prominent Ukrainian poet he, alas, did not seem to be a high-principled person with clearly defined opinions. This might have been a result of the unremitting persecution of his father, which forced the son to adapt himself and care little for national traditions, or perhaps the long examination made him indifferent and crushed. At any rate, Vorony the son was a quiet, sympathetic person though perhaps rather irresolute.

Hryhoriy Epik

Hryhoriy Epik discredited himself by his letter to Pavel Postyshev. This letter was not a fictitious concoction of the NKVD, but was a real document, written and signed by Epik himself. It was a sad affair, not only for Epik himself, but for all of us who, broken by unheard-of terror, had to give up our positions and say and write such things.

The tragedy of the situation lay in the fact that in his letter Epik wrote not only about himself but about a whole group of people who were imprisoned at that time in the Kiev NKVD and he branded them as "murderers". This group had been sent with him to the Solowky Kreml. This was the reason why Epik, from the very start, kept away from Ukrainians.

He began to seek connections with all kinds of shady characters, proclaimed himself a "shock worker", and was happy (or pretended to be so) when his name appeared on the "Red Bulletin Board". He was writing a novel about the NKVD "re-education" of people in which the heroes were NKVD angels who were saving the soul of a hapless counter-revolutionary. Being young and active he could not break away so easily from native ground nor, on the other hand, could he remain alone and abandoned by all. Slowly he began to clear his mind of the Soviet rubbish, and perhaps for the first time in that far foreign land, in prison, he felt himself to be a free man; he found himself and realized

who he was, whose son he was and whom he should and must serve. By tacit agreement he was accepted, this poorest of the poor — "the prodigal son" of the Ukrainian people; not alone anymore but in the company of his friends and country-men, he left the Solowky.

Myroslaw Irchan

In 1932 the Kharkiw theatre staged a play by Myroslaw Irchan, entitled **Platsdarm**. This was a communist propaganda piece of poor quality which however, received wide publi-



Myroslaw Irchan
dramatist

city. This play by the author of the **Brushmakers' Family**, replete with servile tendencies, was later used by Kulyk as a basis for his denunciation of Irchan, as a spy and apologist.

for Polish imperialism. The accusation was very strange, but quite natural.

Two of my fellow prisoners in the overcrowded transitory prison at Kharkiw in 1933 had some peculiarities in their speech which set them apart from the rest. These two strong men were miners, and hailed from Canada: "I'd give anything to meet our dear comrade Irchan who in Canada was so lavish in his praise of this paradise," said one of them: and his face assumed a wry expression. We then learned that, thanks to Irchan, a few hundred Ukrainian-Canadians, having believed his promises, came from far-away Canada to build socialism in Ukraine and live a care-free, happy life in their native land.

Hundreds of these repatriates were taken to our Donbas mines and soon saw the horror of Soviet "socialism". After a year's hard work, when all their money was gone, they asked the Soviet government to permit them to return to the land of "capitalist slavery and exploitation". All who applied for such permission were, as a rule, arrested by the NKVD. Others tried to flee from the country, but were caught on the Soviet border, also by the NKVD. All were sentenced for having broken the famous sixth article of the Soviet criminal code, that is, for being spies, and were sent to the most remote corners of the Soviet Union.

After some time, Irchan also realized that the Soviet paradise was not the "sugar plum" which he had previously imagined it to be. He arrived in Solowky in 1936, but he was arrested long before that.

I did not remind him of the **Platzdarm** nor of the duped Canadians. Sad and listless, Myroslaw Irchan walked the Solowky Kreml and in his eyes lay a deep sadness. He also left Solowky with the Ukrainian transport in 1937.

Antin Krushelnytsky

Sad was the fate of the Krushelnytsky family, discredited among the Ukrainians. The father — a well known novelist in Western Ukraine, went into raptures over bolshevism from a "beautiful distance". He believed in the sincerity of the bolshevik patronage of Ukrainian culture and edited a pro-Soviet magazine, **New Ways**, in Galicia. Then, thinking that the Soviet Ukraine was a promised land, he emigrated from Western Ukraine to the Soviets with his sons and daughters.

Fate dealt very harshly with the gifted sons of old



Dmytro Zahul
poet

Krushelnytsky. They were arrested with their father long before the murder of Kirov. After Kirov's death, when a hecatomb was held over the grave of this toady of Stalin's, the Krushelnytsky brothers were shot as "inciters" and "spies" which they obviously never were.

The grieving, grey, tired father, dragging his feet in a dark cell, lived in the Solowky Kreml. His only consolation was his daughter, who also lived in the Kreml and worked as a junior doctor in the Solowky hospital.

As if expiating the sins of her family, Krushelnytska was a Ukrainian Red Cross nurse, treated the prisoners very well and helped her countrymen as much as she could. Krushelnytska, together with the Russian women Brusilova, Vechora and Basilyeva, was a paragon of political maturity and human decency. In the summer of 1937, when all the women had to leave the island, Krushelnytska had to say farewell to her old father. I can see her even today standing with her grey-haired father, all in tears, saying good-bye. There has been no news of her since, although she spent some time in the White Sea-Baltic Canal camp where, we learned, Brusilova was executed and probably Vechora too. All of them left Solowky at the same time.

In the late fall of 1937, old Krushelnytsky was also evacuated from the island to some new, untrodden wilderness of the Soviet northland that he might empty to the dregs the cup of humiliation and suffering for his own and his sons' naivete and for his belief in the existence of a Soviet eldorado.

In concluding my short notes on Ukrainian scientists, writers, poets and journalists I must say that, apart from those mentioned here, there were a great many others about whom I knew very little or whom I never met. Among these was Volodymyr Shtanhei who was writing a novel, and who kept apart from the Ukrainians. The others were Vakar from Canada, whom I met in "Mansard", V. Berezowsky, Vasyl Mysyk, Mykhail Semenko, Vasyl Bobynsky, Hryhoriy Kolyada and so on. I could say the same about Professor Chekhiwsky, Professor Barbar, Professor Udoenko and others. Pavlo Khrystyuk also lived in Solowky for a long time and in 1932 worked on the fifth prison farm near Beheraksha in the ninth Kem branch of the White Sea-Baltic Canal.

With these words I end my short testimony about my fellow prisoners and exiles. It is a pity that many of the

names of our heroes and martyrs have escaped my memory, and that my statements here are not based on any special effort on my part, because my colleagues and I never even imagined at that time that some day we would write our memoirs. Many of the names of our intellectuals, thousands of people who devoted their energies to the fight with Russian bolshevism and for the cause of liberation, for the freedom of their native land, are not mentioned.

Professor I. Roz'hin

Volodymyr Symyrenko

The Symyrenkos were an old Ukrainian family which became famous, not for their coat-of-arms and other family regalia, but for creative efficient work and a high culture acquired through centuries from the Ukrainian soil and the ever creative Ukrainian spirit.

Volodymyr accomplished the task which the Symyrenko family had set before them. He became a world famous expert in the theory and practise of pomology, and one of the founders of modern theory of pomological research. Volodymyr Symyrenko meant more to Ukraine than Burbank to America or Michurin to Russia.

His achievements were remarkable. He organized high schools, higher educational institutions and scientific research institutes and trained hundreds of highly qualified Ukrainian scientists, teachers and research workers in pomology. By a system of nurseries he began to rejuvenate all the orchards in Ukraine, and he also began the systematic planting of new orchards stocked with new, purely Ukrainian varieties of fruit trees, unrivalled as to productivity, and adapted to the climatic conditions of the country. He also organized Ukrainian fruit farming and placed the selection of fruit trees on a scientific basis for all Ukrainian ethnographic territories. Besides scientific articles dealing with the selection of fruits he wrote such classic monographs and handbooks as **Varieties of Fruit in Ukraine, Fruit Tree Nurseries and Pomology.**

Volodymyr Symyrenko was born in 1891. He attended public school in his native village, and acquired his professional training in the Polytechnic Institute in Kiev where he took a course in argiculture, graduating in 1918.

When the Ukrainian Scientific Agricultural Committee in Kiev, this first academy of agricultural science, was organized, Volodymyr Symyrenko was invited to join it as dean of the Pomological section. He worked there from 1920 to 1926. At the same time he was Professor of Pomology and Intensive Farming in the Kiev Agricultural Institute and in the Pomological Institutes in Uman and Poltava. All this time, from 1921 until his arrest, he lived in Kytaiw — a Kiev suburb, in the Pomological Institute which he organized.

As soon as conditions became more favourable in 1921,



Prof. Volodymyr Symyrenko

Volodymyr Symyrenko began to continue and develop the work of Ukrainian fruit farming. Using his nationalized family property in Mliyew as a basis, he organized a Pomological and Horticultural Station under his own directorship.

The three years of his efforts and that of some of his assistants were crowned with great success. The station grew from 25 acres of land in 1921 to 1,600 in 1924.

In 1930, with an experimental station as a basis, he organized an All-Ukrainian Scientific Research Institute of Po-

biology which at first was affiliated with the Lenin Ukrainian Academy of Agricultural Science, like the Mliyew Station of Pomology and Horticulture where the hybrids alone numbered more than 40,000. In this way Russia gained control of this splendid institution not to develop it, but to hold it back if not to destroy it.

After his arrest on January 8, 1933, Volodymyr Symyrenko was sentenced to be shot, but this sentence was commuted to ten years "hard labor". He spent eleven months in the NKVD prison and in April, 1934 was transferred to the "NKVD Corrective Labor Colony" in Kherson to work in his profession. This colony "employed" in the summer 30,000 prisoners, but in the winter this number was reduced to 10,000. The author of these lines when working in Kherson in 1933 - 1934 often visited with his friend, a doctor, who was also a prisoner working in the colony. There he saw Symyrenko several times in the distance, and asked his doctor-friend to introduce him so that he might have a little talk, but the rigorous watch kept over the prisoners at that time did not permit it.

Symyrenko's sentence was reduced to five years in 1937, and because of his accredited days of work he was set free, but forbidden to live on Ukrainian territory. He went to the Kursk region and began to work in a fruit tree nursery but was again arrested and taken to Kursk. Since October 1939 there has been no news of him.

This was the end of a creative period in the life of our famous pomologist, the most prominent representative of the Symyrenko family.

Lew Hankevich

THE LAST DAYS OF SEMEN VITYK

Semen Vityk, one of the founders of the Ukrainian Social-Democratic Party of Galicia and Bukovina in Austria, general organizer of the first farmers' strike in Galicia, a member of the Austrian parliament in Vienna, President of the Labor Congress in Kiev after the war and Minister for Galicia in Yewhen Petrushevich's government, emigrated with many others and settled in Vienna. He edited a thick magazine, *Hromada*, propagating the idea of a mass return to Ukraine. At the end of 1925 he went there himself.

Before his departure the Polish Socialists (PPS) made a futile effort to get him to go back to Poland, promising him many conveniences. However, he devoutly believed that Ukraine was growing up as a nation, even though a communist one, and that every Ukrainian was obligated to go and help in its progress. Semen Vityk paid dearly for his mistaken belief, because when he left for Ukraine he seemed to have vanished into thin air. This great advocate of the farmers and of labor became as silent as the grave.

Quite recently, by accident, I met someone who was in prison with him in Kharkiw. "I cannot swear," he told me, "that I remember every word he told me during our conversations but I swear on my word of honor that I have given you his thoughts conscientiously and accurately."

"On March 8th, 1934, I was arrested and thrown into Kharkiw prison on Radnarkom-Chernishevsk Street. At the beginning of April, I was transferred from a single cell to a public cell, № 31, in which there were already three prisoners, one of whom was Semen Vityk. All three knew me as a worker in DVU (Ukrainian State Publishing Co.). Semen Vityk had been arrested on March 12, 1933.

"The first question he put to me was whether I knew why I had been brought to that particular cell. When I said that I did not, he informed me that it was because I had not yet confessed. He further enlightened me that he and the others had long since confessed but that they were being held, even though others had been sentenced for ten years, to convince "novices" of the necessity of signing the confessions demanded by the GPU. At the same time he warned me that they must do all this otherwise they would be deprived of visits from their families, all literature and newspapers, and gifts of food. In addition they were threatened with a quick trip to a concentration camp or isolation camp. Finally, with emphasis, he said that I was to act in whatever manner I saw fit and they would STRONGLY urge me to confess because they must. He was in very poor health then. He was suffering from scurvy and he was badly swollen, especially around the face. Of himself he said:

"All my life's work has been disgraced to such an extent that were I a biased person and read my own statements, I would consider myself a provocateur of no less importance than Azef. The GPU is not satisfied with knowing the present; it is interested in the past and demands information on the DECEASED, such as Rosa Luxemburg or Tyshko and Radek, and people connected with events which took place during the liberation movement in Ukraine. The GPU forced such testimony from us and has our signatures. These have become documents to be used in falsifying history and defaming people who are still out of reach of the GPU.

"I was charged with being a member of UVO (Ukrainian Military Organization) and especially with the fact that I directed underground anti-Soviet propaganda. For several months after my arrest I tried to convince myself that it was all a misunderstanding or a false indictment, until I finally realized that it was neither one of those things. The investigator himself gave me to understand that he knew it was all a fabrication but that the testimony was vital for the Soviet government and in one way or another the GPU would have it.

"To extract it, the GPU resorted to every means known to them. For the first few weeks I was not allowed to sleep. They measured me for the size of a coffin and expressed their sympathy. After six months they placed me in a cell

with well-known communists from Western Ukraine who convinced me of the necessity of a confession. I was tried by the GPU College in absentia, at a closed session, and was given a ten-year sentence.

"It has been revealed that even in 1933 and 1934 they demanded evidence from him that Lyubchenko, Chubar, Hrynko, Zatonsky were nationalists, and especially that Lyubchenko was a Ukrainian Mussolini, even though at that time they were all heading propaganda campaigns to destroy Ukrainian nationalists.

"In spite of his poor health Vityk meticulously took his turn as the cell caretaker. When we wanted to help he insisted on carrying out the latrine, scrubbing the floor and doing other chores himself. He was then about 68 years old. We played chess or dominoes in order to sit close to each other and talk in low tones. One day he seemed very thoughtful, sighed heavily and said quietly:

"I am done for. I cannot endure this for ten years, but that is nothing... I edited *Hromada* in Vienna and called upon people to come to Ukraine. Many took my advice... Now they are all in the same predicament as I.' Then he asked, 'Who, of the Western Ukrainians is still free?' I could not name any and his face saddened still more.

"I have them all on my conscience,' he said despondently.

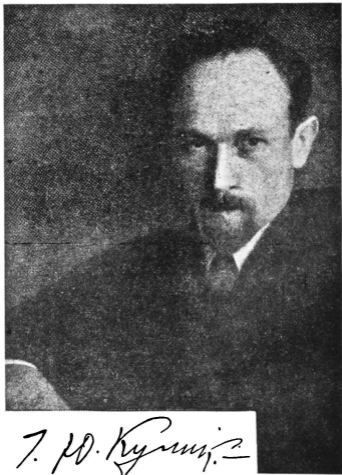
"Another time he made the following statement, 'The Russians have made a Little Russia out of Ukraine to a greater extent than the Tsars ever did, and all the Ukrainian communists who are defending and dying for Ukrainian rights are doing just as much as those who are fighting with arms.'

"UKRAINE MUST BE FREE. BOLSHEVISM WILL REACH ABSURDITY AND A STATE OF CONTRADICTION. POWER MAY BE GAINED THROUGH FALSEHOOD AND LIES AND HELD FOR A TIME BUT NOT FOR EVER!" The 12th convention of the KPBU in February of 1934 was characteristic in that it was there that Zatonsky carelessly dropped a few statements. He publicly declared that, in uncovering conspiracies of Ukrainian nationalists, the GPU was aided by the Polish Security Service. He was strongly reprimanded for this by Kossior, Lyubchenko and Balitsky. None of this was entered into the minutes of the meeting. When I told Vityk all this he be-

came greatly agitated and remarked, 'I have noticed that during my investigations'.

"Within a month the door to our cell opened one night and Vityk was ordered to collect his belongings and prepare 'for the etape'. He timorously shook my hand and said in fare well, 'You see, they consider me no good any more. You are a hard nut.'

That was the last I saw of him. In 1937 I received an unverified report from a Trotskyist who was said to have seen him in an isolation camp in Verkhniy Uralsk. That was the end of a great leader of Western Ukraine...



I. Y. Kulyk
writer

P. Wolyniak

THE EXECUTION OF WRITERS IN DECEMBER, 1934.

In December, 1934, the Russian occupants of Ukraine shot, in Kiev, a group of talented Ukrainian writers and poets. They were: Hryhoriy Kosynka, Oleksa Vlyzko, Dmytro Falkiwsky and Kost Bureviy. The reason given for their execution was: that the Russian Communist Nikolaev had assassinated the Russian Communist Kirov. The underlying cause, however, was the ever-existent desire to destroy everything Ukrainian and especially those who, through their talent, could stir the Ukrainian spirit to proportions dangerous for Russian domination.

Oleksa Vlyzko.

A poet of great temperament and force, but with refined and subtle feelings. The appearance of his first collection *I Will Talk for All*. 1927, was enthusiastically greeted by the critics. Y. Sawchenko wrote:

"In Vlyzko we have a distinct and peculiar individuality... His poetry stems from buoyant youth and great force, surging turbulently in and around the poet. In him are happily merged deep thoughts and emotional tension, lyric interpretations of reality and intellectual knowledge. Both are active in him. The poet yearns to surge forward, to live life to the full, with all his powers to hear and comprehend, to live in the deepest pathos and the highest degree of exaltation". (*Life and Revolution*, № 5, 1927.)

Oleksa Vlyzko's works also had a special interest because of their theme of the sea. He knew and loved the sea better than any other Ukrainian poet. He loved its unruly might and the incomprehensible mystery of its secret paths which lead poets into distant, unknown territory.



Dmytro Falkivsky
poet

Vlyzko was the favourite poet of the younger generation, and a legend has grown up around his sudden execution. Rumours spread in Kiev and throughout the whole of Ukraine that before he was shot Vlyzko spoke (he was a deaf-mute) and expressing his intense hatred of the Cheka, foretold a quick end for Russian domination in Ukraine and threatened Russia with vengeance for the suffering of the Ukrainian people.

The communist hatred of Vlyzko is best described by S. Adelheim, an orthodox Marxist critic, who became prominent after all Ukrainian critics, without exception, were liquidated in 1933 and 1934. (Adelheim was a recent Communist victim as a "cosmopolitan"). He wrote in the *Literary Gazette*, 1935: "For the various 'yellow and blue' Vlyzko's poetry has served a double purpose. It was a screen for bandit activity and a weapon for bandit assault and treacherous poisoning".

Vlyzko's collections include, *I Will Talk For All*, Kiev 1927; *Poems*, Kharkiw, 1927; *I Live On My Work*, Kiev, 1930; *A Book of Ballads*, (Selections) 1930; *My Best*, Kiev, 1932; *The Drunken Boat*, Kiev, 1933; *Raid*, 1934. The strongest anti-communist works were: *An Intellectual* and *The Ballad of Basmach Mameta Abdul*.

Dmytro Falkiwsky

Dmytro Falkiwsky was born October, 22nd, 1898, in the village of Velyki Lypesy, in the District of Kobrynsky, in Polisia. He came from a poor family. His father worked in a brick factory. He entered High School in Brest-Litovsk, but the First World War interrupted his studies and forced him to acquire his education at home. He joined the Red Army in 1920 to participate in the Revolution, quitting in 1923. During that period he even served part-time in the Cheka.

His works were first published in 1924 in such magazines as *The Red Pathway*, *Life and Revolution*, *Universe*, and *The Globe*. They were coolly received by the critics. He was given credit for talent but was advised to cultivate his poetic education, to overcome his antiquated ideas and the decayed mentality of an "old-fashioned bard of 'village beauty' and not to roam in foreign moods and griefs". (Yakiw Sawchenko). In general Falkiwsky often delved into the past instead of into contemporary life; themes from the First



Григорій Косинка

Hryhoriy Kosynka
writer

World War were dominant in his works and this gave him the distinction of an excellent "battle-poet", and in this form of poetry he has his special niche.

Besides battle-pieces he also introduced themes from Polisia into our poetry. He loved his birthplace quietly but passionately.

D. Falkiwsy was a great patriot, and when faced with the choice between Communism with Russia, and Ukraine he unhesitatingly chose Ukraine and laid down his life for her.

Hryhoriy Kosynka

Among the poets and writers shot on the 14th of December 1934, Hryhoriy Kosynka, a noted short story writer of the Ukrainian post-revolutionary period, takes a distinctive place. He was a self-educated man. Son of a poor peasant, of the lowest social rank, he had plenty of opportunity to feel at first-hand all the types of both social and national repression, one of the results of Russian domination in the Ukraine. It was indignation at the injustices committed by Russia which prompted the young Kosynka to take up the national cause as his own. As a soldier of the Ukrainian Army under the leadership of Symon Petlyura, he did not cast aside his weapons until the very moment when he was thrown into a deep dungeon by the Cheka. Through an oversight he was not shot. Leaving the Cheka prison, Kosynka started to write, so as to popularize, or rather to propagate those ideas for which the whole people had fought. Kosynka was never a supporter of the ideas of socialism or of any other "ism", and certainly not of communism. All the heroes in his short stories are people who have consecrated their lives to the fight for a free life in a free Ukraine. Kosynka was a nationalist, or rather an enemy of usurpation and occupation. Kosynka saw that the very limited autonomy of Ukraine promised by Moscow was gradually dwindling. He tried to make the peasants alive to the danger, since he considered them to be the main source of power in a fight for the independence of the Ukraine. Kosynka wrote many beautiful short stories but few of them were cleared for publication by the Soviet censors. The few which were printed became the real reason for his liquidation as a terrorist (which, of course, he never was) on the 14th of December 1934.

Oksana Bureviy

KOST BUREVIY

My father, Kost Bureviy, came from a family of small farmers. At fifteen he became absorbed with the idea of revolution and joined the Socialist-Revolutionary party.

In 1905 he was arrested and released again in 1907. He became a member of the Ostrohorsky Committee of the Socialist-Revolutionary party. Three years later he was exiled to Olonetsk for his part in the peasant uprisings.

Having served his term he went to Petersburg and wrote an examination for a maturity certificate, enrolling for a "Higher Commercial Course", and at the same time working on the editorial staff of a newspaper *Mysl*. In July, 1914, he was arrested with other workers on the paper and confined to the Spaska prison where the whole "Pravda" editorial staff was already imprisoned. There he met Skrypnyk, Yenukidze, Kamenev and others.

Later Kost Bureviy was sent to the Tural country. In this remote corner, in spite of strict orders against it, he made occasional visits by boat to Skrypnyk, who was also serving a sentence. The guard always brought him back, making a suitable report, until there were eighty-seven such reports. For this Bureviy's sentence was increased to fifteen years. However, Bureviy fled to Yenyseysk, and from there, with the aid of Petrowsky to Petersburg. There he lived illegally, often changing his place of residence, his name and even his outward appearance, and worked on illegal newspapers. The police hunted for him, and though for a time he managed to evade them, he was finally captured and sent to Siberia.

He wrote an account of his adventures in the book **Dead Loops**. There he mentions sixty-seven different tsarist prisons in which he was confined. When the Revolution broke out, Bureviy returned from Siberia, and was elected president

of the Voronizh Council of Labor, Farmers' and Soldiers' Representatives. At that time he was a member of the Central Committee of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party. He fought against the bolsheviks, and after their defeat was one of the organizers of the Povolzha uprising against the bolshevik government. When Kolchak seized power Bureviy left the party and went into hiding. He was imprisoned again and after his release left politics and gave himself entirely to literature and social work among Ukrainians in Moscow.

He organized a Ukrainian Club, and later, in 1928, an Association of Friends of the Ukrainian Theatre, and others. He started a publication, **Village and City**, which published literature forbidden in Ukraine, which was shipped there from Moscow. Bureviy's first work was **Khama**, which was printed in **Red Pathway**. He sometimes wrote under the pen-name of Edward Strikha, mostly parodies of different magazines.

After some time Bureviy moved from Moscow to Khar-kiw. There he worked on the history of the Ukrainian Theatre. He edited a number of memoirs of Ukrainian actors and painters. He also wrote several plays himself, **Opportunia**, **Four Chamberlains**, and **Sheep's Tears**. The critics called them nationalistic and the government forbade their publication. Notwithstanding this stumbling block he continued to write under different pseudonyms, though his works were not published.

When Khvylovy and Skrypnyk died, it became unsafe for him to remain in Khar-kiw, and he returned to Moscow, leaving Mother and me behind. For two years he led a wanderer's life evading the NKVD, sometimes secretly coming home for a few days. In November 1934 he was arrested and we never knew what became of him.

I recall that terrible December, 1934. It was dreadfully cold. Long queues waited outside news-stands in Khar-kiw for the paper for hours, eager for some news. Every day new arrests were heard of. One day the news came that a group of Ukrainian writers had been arrested a week or so earlier and father was among them. They were all charged with participating in Kirov's assassination, absurd though it was. For several days mother had tried to prepare me for this horrible inevitability. A list of the executed had already appeared in the papers and any day my father's name might be included. I was nervous. Every day I was



Borys Antonenko-Davydovich

Borys Antonenko-Davydovich
writer

first in line in front of the news-stand. Crippled with a cold ague I ran there and back to still the violent tremor.

I recall December 18th. The cold was more penetrating than ever and I trembled. Finally the paper was in my hands. I pushed my way home through the crowded streets and went into the garden. Mechanically I opened the paper.

Father had been shot...

I went into the house and looked at my mother who in a week had become an old, gray woman. She sat in the corner and shivered. I had only enough strength to make a trivial remark about something remote and unimportant. I tried to push back the terrible grief which was tearing at my heart, stifling me and driving me into frenzy.

The neighbours came, one or two at a time, to borrow some trifles. They searched our faces for evidence that we knew, and went away silently. Fedora, the laundress, came. She was an old friend and illiterate. Smiling sheepishly she unfolded a newspaper: "They say there is something interesting here about Kost Stepanovich."

Late that night, when the neighbourhood was asleep, I moved close to my mother and put my arms around her. We sat in silence until morning.

I am now in a free country. My father who fought and suffered for freedom is not here to enjoy it. Here his works are read without fear and they carry the priceless message — cherish your freedom and fight for it.

BORYS ANTONENKO- DAVYDOVICH

Borys Antonenko-Davydovich was a social worker, writer and journalist. He is the author of the novel **Death**, and a whole string of short stories: **Stamp**, **Wings of Artem Setyuchy** and the literary reports, **With Ukrainian Soil**. Davydovich belonged to that class of Ukrainian writers whom the Russian government particularly hated for their uncompromising attitude and their strong influence in shaping the Ukrainian outlook, especially that of the young people. His book, **With Ukrainian Soil**, was read by young Ukrainians more than any other, and some parts were actually memorized.

Dmytro N-ko

YURIY VUKHNAI

Forty-five years have passed since the birth of Yuriy Vukhnaï (Ivan Kowtun), one of the best humorous writers in Ukraine. He appeared on the literary scene in 1926-1927 and quickly became very popular with Ukrainian readers. Publishing his works in the magazines **Youth**, **The Young Bolshevik**, and a number of others he soon surpassed the well-known Ostap Vyshnya in popularity.

His best known story is **The Life and Activities of Fedir Huska**. This book was printed several times, and was taken to heart by the young as well as by more mature readers. Fedir Huska represented the true Soviet Comsomol. One could meet him in the village recreation centre, in the theatre, in school, in the factory, and virtually everywhere, but no other writer had succeeded in portraying this untidy, unscrupulous, impudent, quarrelsome, bragging, lazy hypocrite as had Yuriy Vukhnaï.

He was short of stature and lame in one leg. With his long hair combed back, a sallow complexion and a resonant voice, he possessed boundless wit and humour.

His jokes and satires finally resulted in his arrest, and probably his death, in a concentration camp.

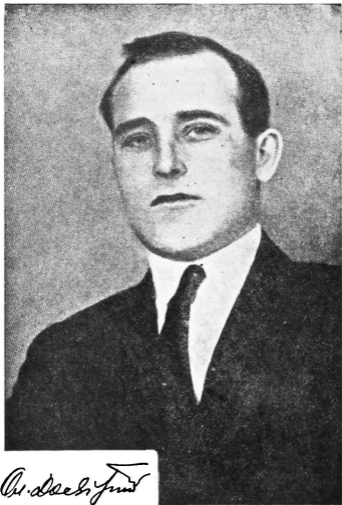


I. Kotlyarewsky

RUSSIAN COMMUNISTS PRACTICE GENOCIDE ON UKRAINIAN WRITERS

Begun by I. Kotlyarewsky (1798) and fostered by T. Shewchenko and the poets and prose writers of the 19th century, the Ukrainian renaissance reached its zenith in 1918 when the independence of Ukraine was proclaimed on January 22.

The war of liberation (1917-1921), even if it did end in temporary defeat, had an epochal significance for the growth of national consciousness among the lowest strata of the Ukrainian people, who thus became a modern nation conscious of their heritage and possessing all the necessary attributes of nationhood. For this reason the cultural, and especially literary, resurgence of the twenties must be regarded as the result of one hundred years work of the Ukrainian writers since Kotlyarewsky's "Aeneid" and the



Oleksander Dosvitny
writer

Ukrainian political activities of the last quarter century from the founding of RUP (The Ukrainian Revolutionary Party). The most fortunate circumstance for the Ukrainian literary resurgence was the fact that the Russian bolshevism which had displaced Russian tsarism was young and weak. Before it became much stronger, the resurgence sowed in the fertile soil a vigorous seed that no aggressor will ever be able to uproot.

It was the Russian tsars who, foreseeing the widespread awakening of the Ukrainian people, tried with all means at their disposal to halt its development and sent the finer representatives of the Ukrainian elite into exile, or held them in prisons.

The great Ukrainian poet, T. Shewchenko, spent ten of his most creative years in exile in the wastes of Asia, then Panteleimon Kulish, Mykola Kostomariw, later Arkhyp Teslenko and other writers were punished by exile. Pavlo Hrabowsky wasted almost his whole life in Russian prisons and died in exile. Beginning with 1850, after Valuyev's pronouncement "There wasn't, there isn't and there cannot be any Ukrainian language," the Russian tsars persecuted almost every one of the Ukrainian writers.

But the greatest and most cruel persecution fell upon Ukrainian literature after the bolsheviks came into power, those heirs of the tsarist regime. In order to destroy the Ukrainian nation and turn it back to mere ethnic material, having no past nor future, and then to Russify it, the modern imperialists led the attack with two parallel methods of destruction: 1. Liquidation of the elite, the brain of the nation, and 2. Liquidation of the farmers, the basis of the nation.

According to the Russian bolshevik's plan, the Ukrainian people have to become a blind, unreasoning herd, which could be managed by an appointed herdsman. This would ensure that the great natural resources of the country, grain, iron, coal, would flow north for the aggrandisement of Russia.

Exclusive of separate, occasional cases, which always cropped up, the Russian bolshevik plans for destruction, which were carefully laid and executed at the proper time, may be divided into three periods.

The first period 1929-1934. These five years resulted in incalculable losses. Millions of farmers were "dekurkuzized", driven into collectives and starved by the artificial



Ivan Mykytenko

writer
Ivan Mykytenko

famine in 1933. Thousands of intellectuals were exiled or shot. Here is one of the typical documents of that time, a verdict passed by a Special Commission of the Supreme Court of USSR, published on December 18, 1934, in many papers:

"The Military Tribunal of the Supreme Court of the USSR under presiding Judge, Comrade Ulrikh and members Rychkov and Goryachow, at its circuit session held December 13 - 15 this year, has examined the case of Ivan Krushelnytsky, Taras Krushelnytsky, Roman Skazynsky, Mykhajlo Lebedynets, Roman Shewchenko, Anatoliy Karabut, Petro Sudoriw, Hryhoriy Skrypa, Koglowsky, Dmytro Falkiwsky, Hryhoriy Kosynka-Strilets, Mykhailo Oksamit, Oleksander Shcherbyna, Ivan Tereshchenko, Konstantyn Bureviy, Oleksa Vlyzko, Yewhen Dmytriyew, Adam Bohdanovich, Porfiry Butuziw, Ivan Butuziw, Volodymyr Pyatnytsya, Yakiw Blachenko, Dominik Polyovy, Ivan Khoptyar, Petro Boretsky, Lerna Lukyaniw-Svitozariw, Konstantyn Piwnenko, Serhiy Matyash, and Oleksander Lyashenko, accused of organizing preparations for terrorist acts against the Soviet authorities. The tribunal has established the fact that the majority of the defendants had come to the USSR by way of Poland and some via Rumania intending to perform terrorist acts. Pursuing resolution of the Central executive Committee of the USSR... the circuit session of the Military Tribunal of the Supreme Court of the USSR has sentenced all the above named persons to be shot and all their property to be confiscated. The sentence must be carried out." (Tass).

And how many such sentences were not published!

To be sure, none of the executed planned any terrorist acts. With the exception of a few Galicians lured to the USSR almost all the condemned were native born, nationally conscious representatives of the Ukrainian elite. Among them were a few well known poets and writers.

The second period 1937-1938, the Yezhov period, was more terrible still. This brought the tragedy of Vynnytsya. The writers destroyed at this time were mostly those who had given up their literary careers not wishing to collaborate with the bolsheviks.

The third period was the beginning of the German-Soviet war on June 22, 1941. The destruction this time was more cruel and more thorough than before. Hundreds of Ukrainians were burned in wooden buildings or shot near specially prepared graves.



Valeriy Polishchuk
poet

After a respite during 1942-1946 necessitated by the war, the persecution of Ukrainian literature began anew.

The **Kiev Literary Gazette** in its issue of November 20, 1947, published a report of a "unanimous" decision to expel Petro Karmansky, Mykhaylo Rudnytsky and A. Patrus-Karpatsky from the Union of Soviet Writers of Ukraine and called them "incorrigible bourgeois nationalists", "a wretched and disgusting figure" (Karmansky), "typical pseudoscientist" (Rudnytsky), "incontinent books" (about **Waters of Life** by Yuriy Yanowsky, **His Progeny** by Ivan Senchenko, **Loyalty** by Maksym Rylsky, **Ostap Veresai** by R. Burlak) and so on.

In another issue of this paper dated November 15, 1947, Pavlo Tychyna, on orders from Moscow, was compelled to make the following declaration: "I very strongly condemn all that has been revealed to be erroneous and harmful in the writings of Yuriy Yanowsky... I want to say about the literary production of Maksym Rylsky that there are passages of a nationalist nature."

Another grovelling critic, A. Katsnelson, attacked: "M. Rylsky revives Rousseau's ideas, pretending that being closer to nature has a beneficent influence on human morals." According to Katsnelson's opinion only Stalin's pronouncements improve human morals, and so on.

Such is the picture of mutual accusations. The dark thirties were repeated in great detail. This terror rages on. Only recently we had an opportunity to read in the press that the Russian communists forbade the Ukrainian writers to write "Love Ukraine" (the well known poem of V. Sosyura), again branding many of them as "bourgeois nationalists".

As a rule the physical destruction of an author is followed by proscription of his writings. Thus everything that is best, that has some national characteristics, is destroyed, and the worst scribblings, mostly propaganda booklets, that can not be called literature by a long stretch of imagination, are promoted.

During the thirty years of Russian domination in Ukraine were shot or exiled to concentration camps about two hundred Ukrainian poets, prose writers, philologists, literary scholars and artists.



Yakiw Savchenko
literary critic

EXECUTED

- Kost Bureviy, prose, drama and parody writer,
Vasyl Chumak, poet (shot by Denikin-men in 1919),
Hryhoriy Chuprynka, poet,
Mykhaylo Donets, actor,
Petro Doroshenko, art critic (shot in Odessa 1919),
Dmytro Falkiivsky, poet,
Mykhaylo Hawrylka, sculptor (1920),
Hryhoriy Kosynka, prose writer,
Ivan Krushelnytsky, poet,
Taras Krushelnytsky,
Agatangel Krymsky, academician, poet, philologist,
Mykhail Lebedynets, prose writer,
Lada Mohylanska, poet,
Murashko, painter (1918?),
Hnat Mykhailychenko, prose writer (shot by Denikin-ists
in 1919),
Volodymyr Naumenko, literary scholar, pedagogue
(1919),
Mykola Plevako, literary scholar (killed in exile),
Serhiy Pylypenko, prose writer, fabulist, journalist,
Dmytro Revutsky, musicologist, folklorist (1941)
Roman Shewchenko, literary scholar,
Roman Skazynsky, prose writer,
Oleksander Soroka, poet,
Ivan Steshenko, literary scholar (killed in 1918),
Lyudmyla Starytska-Chernyakiivska, poet, novelist,
Volodymyr Svidzinsky, poet (burned alive 1941),
Ivan Tereshchenko, literary critic,
Oleksa Vlyzko, poet,
Ivan Yukhymenko, theatre director (burned),

COMMITTED SUICIDE:

- Dmytro Borzyak, prose writer (used broken glass in
prison),
Hryhoriy Holoskevich, philologist (hanged himself in
exile),
Arkadiy Kazka, poet,
Mykola Khvylovy, poet, novelist, pamphleteer (shot
himself),
Vadym Okhrimenko, prose writer (shot himself in 1941),
Lyudvyk Sidletsky (Sava Krylach), prose writer and
his wife,
Vira Sidletska,



Михайло Семенко

Mykhaylo Semenko
poet

Mykola Skrypnyk, educationalist and statesman (shot himself),

Borys Teneta, prose writer (hanged himself in prison).

EXILED TO CONCENTRATION CAMPS:

Ivan Andriyenko, prose writer,
Borys Antonenko-Davydovich, prose writer,
Vasyl Atamaniuk, poet,
Yulian Bachynsky, publicist,
S. Ben (Bendyuzhenko), poet,
F. Bila-Krynytsya, poet,
Vasyl Bobynsky, poet,
Mykhaylo Boychuk, painter,
Sava Bozhko, poet, prose writer,
Dmytro Buzko, prose writer,
Vasyl Chechvyansky, prose writer,
Dmytro Chepurny, poet,
Veronika Chernyakhivska, poet (became insane),
Vitaliy Chyhyryn, prose writer,
Vasyl Desnyak (Vasylenko), literary critic,
Spyrydon Dobrovolsky, prose writer,
Oles Dosvitniy, prose writer,
Mykhaylo Drai-Khmara, poet, literary scholar,
Viktor Dubrowsky, philologist (died ?),
Mykola Dukyn, prose writer,
Antin Dyky, poet,
Hryhoriy Epik, prose writer,
Mykola Filansky, poet,
Pavlo Fylypovich, poet, literary scholar,
Yukhym Gedz, prose writer, humorist,
Volodymyr Gzhytsky, prose writer,
Mecheslaw Hasko, poet,
Josyp Hermaize, historian,
Kost Horban, literary critic,
Mykola Horban, prose writer,
Dmytro Hordiyenko, prose writer,
Dmytro Hrudyna, drama critic,
Myroslaw Irchan, dramatist,
Pavlo Ivanow, prose writer,
Owsiy Izyumow, philologist,
Ivan Kalyanyk, poet,
Pylyp Kapelhorodsky, poet, prose writer,
Ivan Kapustyansky, literary scholar,



Volodymyr Yaroshenko
poet

Yewhen Kasyanenko, translator, journalist,
Hnat Khotkevich, prose writer,
Pavlo Khrystyuk, publicist,
Andriy Khvylya, literary critic and publicist,
Meletiy Kichura, poet (died),
Petro Kolesnyk, literary scholar,
Hryhoriy Kolyada, poet,
Volodymyr Koryak, literary critic,
Hordiy Kotsyuba, prose writer,
Yakiw Kovalchuk, prose writer,
Borys Kovalenko, literary critic,
Mykhaylo Kozoriz, prose writer,
Antin Krushelnytsky (senior), prose writer,
Mykola Kulish, dramatist,
Ivan Kulyk, poet,
Les Kurbas, theatre director,
Ivan Krylenko, prose writer,
Ivan Lakyza, literary critic,
Ananiy Lebid, literary scholar,
Maksym Lebid, poet,
Petro Lisovy, prose writer,
Ostap Lutsky, poet (died),
Mykola Lyubchenko (Kost Kotko), prose writer, humorist
Ivan Lyzahiwsky, editor and publisher,
Hryhoriy Maifet, literary scholar,
M. Makarenko, connoisseur in art, archeologist (died),
A. Muzychka, literary scholar,
Yukhym Mykhailiw, painter,
Andriy Mykhailyuk, poet,
Ivan Mykytenko, prose and drama writer (shot himself?),
Ivan Myronets, literary critic,
Osyp Nazaruk, novelist,
Nedolya, playwright,
Andriy Nikowsky, literary scholar,
Mykhaylo Novytsky, literary scholar,
Halyna Orliwna, prose writer,
Ivan Padalka, painter (shot?),
Mykhaylo Panchenko, stage director,
Andriy Paniw, poet and prose writer,
Hryhoriy Piddubny, designer,
Valeriyany Pidmohylny, prose writer,
Lyutsiana Piontek, poet,
Yewhen Pluzhnyk, poet (died in Solowky),



Maik Yohansen
writer

Klym Polishchuk, poet and prose writer,
Valeriy Polishchuk, poet,
Oleksiy Trawdyuk, literary critic,
Fedir Pushchenko, linguist,
Hryhoriy Richytsky, publicist,
Mykhaylo Rudynsky, art connoisseur, archeologist,
Petro Rulin, drama critic,
Yakiw Sawchenko, poet, critic,
Vasyl Sedlar, painter,
Mykhaylo Semenko, poet,
An. Senchenko, critic, active party member,
Yewhen Shabliowsky, literary critic,
Ivan Shalya, philologist,
V. Shchepotyew, literary scholar,
Samiylo Shchupak, literary critic,
Ivan Shewchenko, poet,
Geo Shkurupiy, poet and prose writer,
Volodymyr Shtanhei, prose writer,
Illya Shulha, painter,
Mykhaylo Shulha-Shulzhenko, poet,
Hawrosh Siry, poet,
Oleksa Slisarenko, poet and prose writer.
S. Smerechynsky, philologist,
Oleksander Sokolowsky, prose writer,
Todos Stepovy (Didenko), playwright,
Mykhaylo Strutynsky, literary critic,
Oleksa Synyawsky, philologist,
Dmytro Tas (Mohylyansky), prose writer.
Ivan Tkachuk, prose writer, publicist,
Zinaida Tulub, prose writer,
Petro Vanchenko, prose writer,
Marko Vorony (M. Antiokh), poet,
Mykola Vorony, poet,
Vasyl Vrazhlyvy, prose writer,
Ivan Vrona, painter (died),
Yuriy Vukhnal, prose writer, humorist,
Mykhaylo Yalovy (Julian Shpol), prose writer,
Hr. Yakovenko, prose writer,
Feliiks Yakubowsky, literary scholar,
Volodymyr Yaroshenko, poet, fabulist,
Matviy Yavorsky, historian,
Serhiy Yefremiw, academician, literary scholar,
Maik Yohansen, poet and prose writer (became insane)

at deportation point and died),
Volodymyr Yurynets, publicist,
Pylyp Zahorulko, prose writer,
Dmytro Zahul, poet,
Mykola Zerow, poet, literary scholar.

RETURNED AFTER A TERM OF IMPRISONMENT OR EXILE

Ivan Bahryany, poet, prose writer, publicist,
Kost Bohuslawsky, composer,
Yuriy Budyak, poet and prose writer,
Oleksander Doroshkevich, literary scholar,
Vasyl Dubrowsky, historian, orientalist,
Yuriy Dywnych, literary critic,
Yosyp Hirnyak, actor,
Mykola Holoborodko, writer,
Mykhaylo Iwchenko, prose writer (soon died in the Cau-
casus),
Hryhoriy Kostyuk, literary critic,
Hryhoriy Kosyachenko, poet (soon died),
Olena Kurylo, philologist,
Vasyl Mysyk, poet,
Ivan Nimchuk, journalist,
Petro Odarchenko, literary scholar,
Mykhaylo Orest, poet, literary scholar,
Todos Osmachka, poet and prose writer (pretended to
be insane),
H. Owcharow, literary scholar,
Semen Pidhainy, memoir writer,
Mykhaylo Pronchenko, poet (later shot by the Germans),
Ahapiy Shamrai, literary scholar,
Ivan Shkvarko, memoir writer,
Mykola Sulyma, linguist,
Mykola Tereshchenko, poet,
Kost Turkalo, philologist,
Ostap Vyshnya, prose writer, humorist,
Ivan Zilynsky, philologist.

The above list includes almost all the poets, prose writers and literary scholars, but is far from complete as to those engaged in the drama and fine arts. The author has purposely omitted names of scientists and those publicists who had no connection with literature. A few of those in the list are of Jewish origin (Koryak, Kurylo, Kulyk, Shchupak).



A group of artists, three of whom (Mykhaylo Boychuk, Ivan Padalka, Vasyi Sedlyar) were executed.

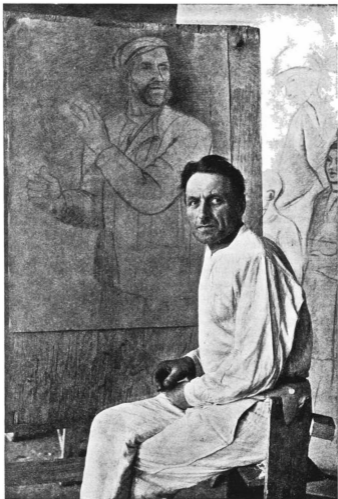
P. Wolynyak

THE EXECUTION OF THE ARTISTS

As proof of Communist reassurances that under the guardianship of "the older brother" Ukrainian culture flourishes majestically, we are showing the above photograph of a group of Ukrainian artists. From top to bottom: Oksana Pavlenko, Vasyl Sedlyar, Professor Ivan Padalka, Mykhaylo Shaposhnikow, Professor Mykhaylo Boychuk.

The following have already been executed: Mykhaylo Boychuk, Ivan Padalka and Vasyl Sedlyar.

These artists painted the frescoes in the Chervono-Zavodsk Theatre in Kharkiw. Because they never displayed any great love for the "older brother" these frescoes were torn down immediately after their unveiling, and three of the five artists were shot.



Mykhaylo Boychuk
painter

YUKHYM MYKHAILIW

On July 15, 1950, fifteen years had passed since the untimely death in exile of Yukhym Mykhailiw, in the northern town of Kotlas, USSR. October 28th of that year was the 65th anniversary of his birth in Oleshky on the serene Dnieper River.

In occupied Ukraine no one ever mentioned him, not even his friends, such as P. Kozytsky and P. Tychyna, in whose office hung one of his best paintings, "Yaroslawnna's Grief".

The name of Mykhayliw belongs to outstanding eras in recent Ukrainian history: to the era of Ukraine's rebirth 1917-1919 and to the era of the Ukrainian cultural Renaissance after the Civil War in the twenties. Very few artists were still left in Ukraine from that generation. Y. Narbut and Modzalevsky died, some, like D. Shcherbakiwsky committed suicide, and others like P. Tychyna and M. Rylsky had to change their orientation. The rest were liquidated. Yukhym Mykhayliw went with the latter, because he was not one who could conveniently change his tune.

All his works are a glaring contradiction of "social realism", which enforced itself with an iron hand on all branches of art. A spontaneous nationalist character was prominent throughout his work.

The painting of Yaroslawnna, as a weeping Ukraine, dominated Mykhayliw, and he painted several variations of it. Ukraine as a nation was symbolized by the ruins of the Golden Gate and the Hetman's staff lying lost in the grass. That was a long way from Soviet reality and he did not paint a single picture glorifying it. This was the chief cause of his arrest and destruction in slavery.

M. Didenko

TELL THEM ABOUT MY DEATH

On his deathbed, on the board "nary", in a prison in Ukraine, Doctor Oleksander Hrynko called me to his side one dark night and said, "If you ever have the opportunity to live in a free world, tell everybody everywhere about my death..."

I knew Doctor Hrynko and his family before our arrests. Besides being a surgeon in one of Kiev's clinics, he also lectured in the Kiev Medical Institute, and was a member of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences.

At times when I met his wife on the street and asked how her husband was she invariably answered, "I am actually afraid for him. He spends his days and nights reading and takes no interest in anything but his surgery. He absolutely never goes anywhere; he has completely deserted everyday life."

This summed up Doctor Hrynko accurately. He devoted his whole life to medicine; never taking the remotest interest in politics. He was a man of high culture and an excellent surgeon. He loved his pupils and his colleagues.

But the Yezhov period of total communist terror and destruction of the "enemies of the people" reached out its bloody hand and seized him. He was arrested and confined in prison. At the first interrogation the NKVD confronted him with charges of organizing and heading a Ukrainian counter-revolutionary group at the Medical Institute. A list of over thirty names of his students and colleagues was included with the indictment. These people, with other similiar groups, were to have started an armed revolt with the aim of severing Ukraine from the USSR.

Upon hearing this indictment Dr. Hrynko lost consciousness. When he came to, he tried to explain to the investigator that in all his life he had never held firearms in his hands and did not know how to handle them.

The young investigator smiled ironically and said, "Enough of trying to play the role of an innocent child," and continued to hurl profane abuse at him. "We know," he went on, "that a counter-revolutionary organization existed in the Institute and that you were its leader, and we won't talk about that any more. What we want to know is: where are the arms and ammunition, and who gave you orders?"

The frightened Dr. Hrynko tried to convince the investigator that he knew nothing of any arms, that he took no part in any group, and that he gave all his time to study and the welfare of humanity.

These protestations made no impression on the callous investigator. The doctor was put to the rack. Three thugs threw themselves bodily upon him. They beat him with their fists, kicked him with their boots, lashed him with a rubber whip. They revived him with cold water, sat him on a chair and demanded a confession, "where were the arms?". They thrashed him again and again, threw him in the cell and again brought him back for investigation.

After these repeated tortures, with a closer resemblance to a chunk of red meat than a human being, but still possessing an animal desire to survive, he announced consciously that he knew where the arms were hidden. Instantly the beatings stopped.

"Where?" roared the investigator. Doctor Hrynko searched for an answer for a moment and replied, "In the University Park beside the Shewchenko monument."

It was obvious that a public place like the University and Volodymyr Street, with lights burning all night and people always passing by, with the whole area teeming with guards and militia would not be a likely hiding place for arms and ammunition, but the investigator was beyond any sense of logic.

The day was just beginning to dawn when the "Black Crow" with Dr. Hrynko, the investigator, and the thugs, was already making its way to the University Park and the Shewchenko monument.

Naturally they found no weapons. "Where are the

weapons?" barked the investigator. "I don't know," replied Hrynko.

"Why did you bring us here?"

"To stop the beatings."

"We have a way of making you remember where," the investigator threatened, as the "Black Crow" drove them back to prison. Again he was in the same cell, № 13, and again the maddening question, "where are the arms?"

Now the investigator gave full vent to his venom for being taken on a wild goose chase. The inhuman tortures began all over again. They broke his ribs, hurt his internal organs. His whole body was bleeding. In the morning they brought him back to the cell and threw him on the cement floor, an inanimate bundle.

There were six more of us prisoners in the cell. We laid him on the "nary" on some rags, washed the blood from his face, and poured water down his throat. He lay deathly still. We stood by helplessly as his life ebbed away.

I knocked on the door and asked the guard to call the prison doctor, explaining that a man was dying. The guard swore at me and threatened that if he were thus disturbed again I myself would be in the same condition in an hour.

Actually, though, medical aid was useless for Dr. Hrynko. For two hours he showed no sign of life. Then he stirred a little and weakly asked me to place his head on my knees. He wanted to tell me something. I complied with his wish, and bent my head low to his lips. He whispered:

"I am dying. Being a doctor I can feel that I have fatal internal injuries. I am talking to you as if to my own brother: as if I were confessing before God himself. I am wholly innocent. I was never interested in politics but I never forgot that I was Ukrainian. I wanted to do good for my people. Why am I dying? How I wish I could live," he sobbed.

"If you ever succeed in being free give my wife this message. Tell her that in the right drawer of my desk are my notes. They are not complete but they are very valuable to humanity. They deal with an operation for stomach cancer. I worked on that problem for five years but no one knew of it. There is also other material on surgery. Tell my wife to give all that material to the Institute, and perhaps they will complete my work there.

Tell her, my son, everything that you know about me.

Tell him about my indictment, the tortures and my death. It is so hard to talk, and so hard to die."

After a lengthy pause he summoned all his strength and spoke again:

"The end has come. Farewell, farewell..." He sighed for the last time and his deep blue, intelligent eyes closed.

A deadly silence reigned in the cell. Instinctively we all stood up and bowed over the warm corpse of a great doctor and a great Ukrainian scholar. Tears ran from our eyes as the oldest prisoner, the eighty-year-old former priest whispered a prayer, ever so quietly.

After I left prison I gave Dr. Hrynko's message to his wife. She collected all his manuscripts and handed them over to the Institute. They were considered so valuable that notwithstanding the fact that they had been written by an "enemy of the people", the University directors decided to compensate his widow with a few thousand rubles.

Dr. Hrynko died on January 27, 1938.

CHAPTER

V.

GRAVES OF MASS MURDER VICTIMS

Prof. I. Roz'hin, D. Sc.

THE CRIME AT VYNNYTSYA

Vynnytsya is an old Ukrainian city known as far back as the 14th century. It is famous for its association with outstanding Ukrainian names.

Now Vynnytsya is a symbol of brutalities and mass murders unequalled in history. These did not take place in times of war or revolution but during the "peaceful building of the Soviet Socialist State". Vynnytsya endured four onslaughts of Russian mass murders.

1. In the period 1921-22; when the armies of the Ukrainian People's Republic were defeated by the Russian communists more than 10,000 officers, soldiers and leading Ukrainians were killed for their participation in the war of liberation.

2. When the Russian communists discovered the "Union for the Liberation of Ukraine", a secret Ukrainian organization, over 8,000 Ukrainians were killed or exiled in Vynnytsya alone. Exile to Siberia meant just as certain death as murder on the spot.

3. During 1930-31, when Ukrainian farmers resisted the Soviet Russian Government's effort to expropriate their farms by turning them into state owned collectives, about 20,000 of them paid with their lives.

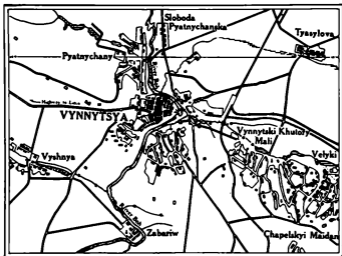
4. In 1935 when one of Stalin's henchmen, Kirov, was assassinated in Moscow, a wave of mass murders spread over the whole Ukraine. Over 2,000 persons were killed by Russian police in the Vynnytsya district.

5. During the rule of the infamous Yezhov, the head of the Russian secret police in 1937-38, about 15,000 Ukrainians were murdered in Vynnytsya and the surrounding area.

6. During the artificial famine in Ukraine in 1932-33 over 150,000 died of starvation in the district around Vynnytsya.

It staggers the imagination to think how many innocent men, women and children were destroyed by the Russian communists in all Ukraine, when so many were murdered in Vynnytsya alone.

In 1943, at the request of the citizens of the city of Vynnytsya an International Commission, composed of well



City of Vynnytsya

known and prominent men from different countries in Europe, opened the mass graves in which recent victims of the Soviet Russian police had been buried.

The commission was made up of such men as Prof. Soenen of Belgium, Prof. Pesonen of Finland, Prof. Duvoir of France, Prof. Kazzaniga of Italy, Prof. Gegquist of Sweden, Prof. Poorten of Holland, Dr. Wagner, Prof. Shra-der and Dr. Konti of Germany.

This commission opened three mass graves in different locations, and also investigated all documents and materials found on the bodies and in the graves. The commission

established that Vynnytsya had three prisons during the Russian communist regime. Before the revolution there was only one prison. The old prison was built for only 2,000 inmates but the Russian communists kept about 18,000 prisoners in it. From 1937-38 the three prisons housed about 30,000 people.

The documents showed that Ukrainian victims of the Russian communists were killed in a garage which had a special sewer for the disposal of human blood. In the main prison the basement was used for mass murders and the Russian police used dry peat to absorb the blood.

The commission investigated mass graves in three different places. In a fruit garden 34 graves with 5,644 bodies were found. In a cemetery 40 mass graves were uncovered



Vynnytsya. Bodies of victims. Photo by P. Pavlovych.

and 2,405 bodies found. In the city park of Vynnytsya 13 mass graves were found containing 1,583 bodies. Altogether 9,432 brutally murdered men and women were found in the graves of Vynnytsya.

Medical investigation of the exhumed bodies showed that some had been tortured with red hot irons. Some of the bodies showed evidence that they were used for research

as the corpses had been incised according to the rules of pathological and anatomical technique. There was no doubt that after experiments had been made on the prisoners, they were operated on to check the results of the experiments.

On the basis of documents found on the bodies it was established that 60% of the victims were farmers. The rest were factory workers and the intelligentsia. The majority of the murdered men were from 20-40 years of age. All of them were killed by a revolver shot in the back of the head.

Such brutal murders of Ukrainians by the Soviet Russian Government were repeated in every Ukrainian village, town and city.

The Vynnytsya murders are a reminder to the free world of the risk it runs by continuing to deal with these insane and fanatical Kremlin murderers in the same way as it does with other civilized and humane governments or political parties.

Stepan Fedoriwsky

THE PEAR ORCHARD AND THE GORKY PARK OF CULTURE IN VYNNYTSYA

The Ukrainian press has often raised the question of the Vynnytsya graves, and several times Ukrainian organizations have made an attempt to bring the matter before the UN and the American government, but all seem to have turned a deaf ear to these pleas.

What happened in the Pear Orchard and the Gorky Park of Culture in the Ukrainian town of Vynnytsya is no extraordinary Russian-Communist event. In 1938, according to the Vynnytsya Town Council ruling, the old cemetery was converted into the Gorky Park of Culture and Rest. In a day the monuments vanished, graves were levelled, paths were made among the trees, flower-beds were raised, swings were erected, benches and stages were constructed. The band played merry tunes and young people sought recreation there.

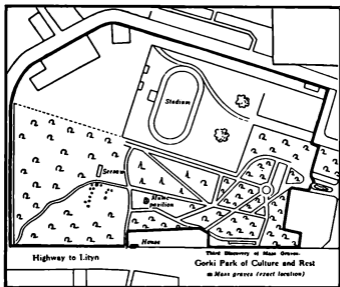
Then one day it was surrounded by a high board fence, and a brick sentry-box, with an NKVD guard, appeared beside the gate that looked out on Polovy Street.

In 1941 war broke out, the guards vanished and the people of Vynnytsya approached the German military administration for permission to probe into the mystery of the park which had later become "warlike". But the Germans were so overwhelmed with their quick victories on the front that they ignored it.

In 1943 the Germans were already being defeated. Their immense military machine rolled back from Stalingrad. In the confusion of retreat the Germans started digging up Gorky Park. All Ukrainians now know what was exhumed from the graves. Most of the world knows, because the

investigating commission included representatives from several European countries and clergy. I was also an eye-witness of the exhumed graves as were hundreds of other Ukrainians, many of whom now live on this continent.

In March, 1944, the Soviet armies re-occupied Vynnytsya, and on the following day Rapoport was made chief of the NKVD District administration. He ordered all Vyn-



Vynnytsya. Plan of the mass graves of the victims of the NKVD in the "Gorki Park of Culture and Rest."

nytsya residents to gather at the site of the graves and announced:

"Here lie buried traitors to the Soviet fatherland and enemies of the people. Those who are their relatives or friends come forward." Naturally no one dared to go forward. The mob of people, surrounded by the NKVD, stood transfixed. In an hour the executioner, Rapoport, returned with a long list of names. These would become the new victims. He read over 170 names of those who were in some way related to those he had murdered earlier. They were



Vynnytsya. Graves in the orchard on Pidliana street.

machine-gunned there before the rest of the crowd.

For some reason the world is silent about such incidents. The Katyn story is discussed again and again. A special U. S. A. Congress Commission is probing into it. The policy-makers of the world must realize that events in this atomic age are leading in a frantic tempo to a clash between two worlds: a world of truth and a world of lies, a world of light and a world of darkness, slavery and savage terror. The Kremlin knows that one of these worlds must fall, and in a planned, furtive way is preparing to dominate the world. Parks of Culture and Rest, like the one in Vynnytsya, will then appear in Paris, London, Washington.

WE DEMAND that the Russian Communist crime in Vynnytsya be probed, and there are many more such graves of murdered victims in other cities and towns of Ukraine. We demand this because it is our right and duty, as a great conquered nation, to arouse the conscience of the peace-loving world.

"We know about the mass graves in Vynnytsya..." wrote Frank E. MacKeany, head of the National Committee of the Democratic Party, in a letter to the Manifestation Committee in New York. The story about these graves should be known not only to a few individuals in the West, but to all the people in the democratic countries. They should know about such cases and draw the proper conclusions.

Bishop Sylvester

THE VYNNYTSYA TRAGEDY

Testimony of an eye-witness

In the summer of 1943, I happened to be in Vynnytsya on business about some Church matters and agreed to hold funeral rites over the opened graves. A service was conducted in several spots among them. I listened to numerous official accounts and saw the half-decayed corpses in the wet clay and, in the display window, clothes and household articles.

How can one comprehend the tragedy of a simple school-teacher who fell into the NKVD claws and into the mass grave, together with his notebooks? This indicates that there had not been time to indict and try the arrested. They were given a bullet in the nape of the neck immediately upon being seized. Some of them had clay in their mouths, showing that they were still breathing when buried.

The wet clay transformed the corpses into virtual mummies. It prevented them from decaying or becoming odorous and made them recognizable.

In company with the mayor I was making a tour of two 'Parks of Culture and Rest' and the "Old Cemetery". Scarcely one-third of the graves were re-opened and already 5,669 corpses had been interred before my visit, the mayor informed me. The fifteenth funeral took place in my presence. These funerals were witnessed by representatives from fifteen countries. From Roumania Metropolitan Visarion and Professor Popesky; from Bulgaria, the Dean of a Seminary with several archimandrites; from Greece, Bishop Kalinikos; from Serbia, several representatives of the clergy. They all saw the horror of the opened graves

and heard countless first hand accounts of sadistic communist practices.

Before the NKVD began filling the mass graves with corpses the site was first surrounded by a high board fence, the entrances and exits guarded by NKVD. Where the whole area was pitted the surface was carefully levelled and packed, the board fence replaced with a picket one, and so a "Park of Culture and Rest" came into being.

People were buried in huge groups. The first layer was placed very deep, and covered with a thin layer of earth; on top of that the blood-soaked articles which had belonged to the dead, their clothing and food, and then another thin layer of earth. On this layer lay the two or three men who buried the others, to cover up all evidence, and the pit was filled to the top. Some of the victims had merely lost consciousness when buried. When they revived they breathed and filled their mouths with earth.

The whole operation was conducted hastily and rapidly. The executioners were not concerned with the state of the victims when buried, as long as they were silent.

Such sadistic acts could be committed only by one bereft of all God's Spirit, surpassing even the most savage beast. They could be committed only by one creature — the Godless communist.

Archbishop Hryhoriy
— witness of the dis-
covery of the graves
at Vynnytsya.



P. Pavlovich, K. Sybirsky

TESTIMONY ON THE CRIME IN VYNNYTSYA

Correspondent: Would your Excellency tell the listeners what you related during your appearance on television and at the Ukrainian Manifestation.

Archbishop Hryhoriy: I told them I was the Archbishop of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church which had been brutally and utterly destroyed by the Soviet regime in Ukraine. The communists liquidated 35 Ukrainian bishops, over two thousand priests and an incalculable number of followers. I myself was persecuted by the communists and I consider it my obligation before God and humanity to reveal here in the free world the horror of the inhuman terror raised by the communists in my native Ukraine.

One such horrible crime was the murder of peaceful residents of the Ukrainian town of Vynnytsya where, in 1943, mass graves were revealed. Some 9,439 corpses of NKVD victims shot between 1937 and 1940 were exhumed. I was the administrative bishop of Vynnytsya and participated in the special commission which uncovered and in-

investigated this crime. I have told the free American citizens about it."

Correspondent: "Did you tell how these graves were uncovered?"

Archbishop Hryhoriy: "Yes. I said that I was asked by representatives of Vynnytsya citizens to take part in the first search of these graves. I told of the morning of May 24, 1943. I, Bishop Evlohiy, the mayor of Vynnytsya, the editor of the local newspaper, doctors and others went into the large pear orchard surrounded by a high board fence. The local residents had suspected that graves were hidden there, but the orchard had belonged to the NKVD and entrance had been prohibited to everyone else. We noticed several depressions in the ground, overgrown with tall grass. We started digging one of these depressions and about three feet down came upon some clothing and shoes. Throwing all this on the surface we beheld a horrible sight; a mass of half-decayed human corpses with their hands tied behind their backs. An examination of the bodies and articles, particularly papers found in the clothing, revealed that these people were arrested by the NKVD in Vynnytsya between 1937 and 1940."

Correspondent: "You spoke about how the excavations were carried out and how the bodies were recognized?"

Archbishop Hryhoriy: "Naturally. I related that the excavations took six months, that in the pear orchard 39 graves were uncovered and 5,644 bodies were exhumed.

When the people read about this in the newspapers a pilgrimage to the uncovered graves began. Those whose relatives had been arrested in the period of 1937 to 1940 identified them by the remnants of clothing or papers and other articles. I know of 682 cases of such identification."

Correspondent: "How many bodies altogether were unearthed in Vynnytsya?"

Archbishop Hryhoriy: "Altogether there were 9,439 bodies dug up out of 95 graves.

Later these victims of communist terror were interred according to Christian tradition. With the participation of huge multitudes of people from all over Ukraine I escorted them on their last journey..."

Correspondent: "Thank you kindly, Your Excellency, for your information. Mr. Pavlovich, tell us what you said



Bishop Yevlohiy and Archbishop Hryhoriy witness the opening of the graves in Vynnytsya in 1943. Photo by Yanushevich.

during your television appearance at the Ukrainian Manifestation about the uncovered graves in Vynnytsya."

Petro Pavlovich: "I was a member of the Ukrainian Commission which was elected by the Ukrainian people to investigate the crimes in Vynnytsya. I gave a detailed account of the investigation by the Commission and what it discovered.

I spoke about the papers found on the bodies; search warrants, tribunal verdicts, receipt documents for the prisoners' goods and money and other documents which were conclusive evidence that these were victims of communist terror arrested between 1937 and 1940."

Correspondent: "Did you show these documents on television?"

Petro Pavlovich: "Yes. I have here with me the original document, a search warrant of December 23, 1937, of one of the victims. He was my wife's father. I have saved this document as a sacred memento of a departed relative. He was a farmer and left behind a wife and six children, whose photograph I also showed on television. Besides this paper my mother-in-law found his footwear and an initialed handkerchief."

Correspondent: "What did you say about the investigations of the bodies?"

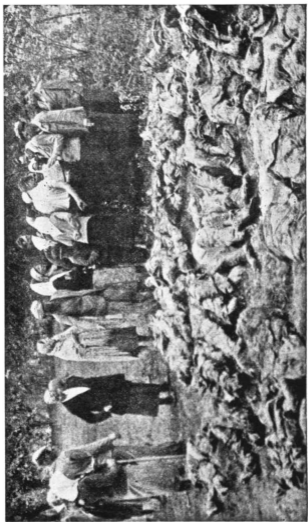
Petro Pavlovich: "Our Ukrainian doctors, who conducted autopsies, concluded that the bodies had been buried from three to five years.

The published protocol stated the following deductions:

1. Death resulted from shots from small fire-arms.
2. Every corpse had a bullet hole in the nape of the neck and the bullets remained lodged in the brain.
3. The bullet hole was blackened with gun-powder, as usually happens when a shot is made at close range.
4. Slant of the bullets' travel showed that at the time of the shooting the prisoners were on their knees with their heads bent low and their hands tied behind their backs.

These facts, with details, were later corroborated by the International Commission made up of representatives from eleven European countries.

The Commission also declared that many prisoners had been buried alive because earth was found in their throats and stomachs."



P. Pavlovich reads to the peasants the NKVD search report which he found on the body of a victim. Photo by Yanushevich.

Correspondent: "What other details of the Commission's investigation did you mention?"

Petro Pavlovich: "I told them that on the basis of the documents discovered and the bodies identified by relatives it was established that most of the executed victims were farmers and laborers; for instance out of the five hundred identified in my presence 212 were farmers, 82 laborers, 77 professional and office workers, 16 army men and 4 priests.

Not one of the families questioned could tell us what offense their relative was charged with when arrested. But my countryman, Kost Sybirsky, who was arrested and imprisoned in Vynnytsya prison at that time will be able to tell you more."

Correspondent: "Mr. Sybirsky, you also testified on television and at the Ukrainian manifestation."

Kost Sybirsky: "Yes, I told of the terror in Vynnytsya in 1937 when every night the gloomy closed cars scoured the deserted streets carrying arrested victims to NKVD quarters which then occupied the whole of Dzerzhynsky Street.

One of these cars came to my home and they arrested me in spite of the rights promised me in the Constitution, and without any grounds. In searching my premises they found a book, "Ten Days which Shook the World", by an American author, John Reed. This book depicted the events of the October Revolution and in his time Lenin stated in the foreword that it was a "mirror of the Revolution". Later, the facts as stated in the book did not coincide with Stalin's version of history and the book was prohibited.

In the small Vynnytsya prison built for 3,000 convicts there were 18,000 of us. The NKVD worked feverishly. People were tried by the Military Tribunal, a Special Commission, and mainly by the "Special Council of the NKVD College". The latter considered the case in the absence of the defendant."

Correspondent: "Being arrested in 1937 you obviously knew many who were shot and whose bodies were found in the mass graves."

Kost Sybirsky: "Yes. Many of my cell-mates were shot. Every night at 2:30 A. M., 12 to 30 men were called out from each cell to the cellar under the NKVD garage where mass shooting took place. To deafen the gun reports two

or three large motors were left running, but even through the din of running motors we could hear the shots and screams.

I had been sentenced to Siblag concentration camp from which I managed to escape and return to Vynnytsya in 1943. I tried to locate the graves of my friends who had been arrested in 1937, and soon found them in three large burial grounds on Pidlisna Street, in the park and in the cemetery.

I also told of a fact well-known to me. When the communists returned to Vynnytsya in 1944, Rapoport, the last NKVD chief, announced that all those who had remained during the German occupation were required to appear. From these they picked out the ones who had identified their relatives dug up from the mass graves. Thus, they collected two hundred people, shot them and threw them into the open pits.

I finished with these words: terror is an integral part of the communist system and can be curbed only by the destruction of bolshevism."

Correspondent: "Thank you all for your information and best wishes for success in your future activities."

P. Pavlovich, the chief witness of the mass murder at Vynnytsya.



A Few Corrections of the Main Facts on the Uncovering of the Mass Graves in Vynnytsya.

1. With permission from the local German occupation administration a group of Ukrainians began digging up the mass graves in the pear orchard on Pidlisna Street. This was on May 24, 1943, and the group consisted of Dr. S. Doroshenko and Dr. O. Klunk, both medical men; professors Savostianov and Dr. I. Malivin; and the editor A. Trembovetsky. In the presence of Bishop Evlohiy they conducted an autopsy on the 102 bodies dug up from the first grave and issued the following findings:

1. Death occurred from a bullet injury in the lower brain.

2. Entrance of the bullet was at the nape of the neck.

3. From the presence of soot, it was evident that the shooting took place at very close range.

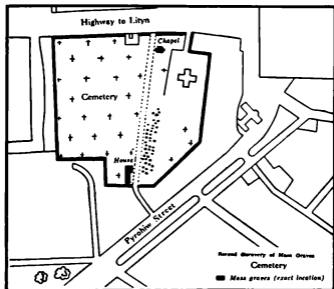
4. The direction taken by the bullet indicated that the shooting took place when the victim was on his knees with the head bent low.

5. The absence, in many cases, of bullet outlets and the external appearance of the lead bullets lodged in the skulls

showed that small firearms were used in these instances, presumably pistols.

Taking into account the decomposition undergone by the corpses, the length of time that these had lain in the graves was fixed at from three to five years.

On June 29, 1943, the reopening of graves in the Orthodox Cemetery began. On June 30th, digging started on the graves in the "Gorky Park of Culture and Rest". The whole



Vynnytsya. Graves of the executed in the Orthodox cemetery.

process of uncovering these graves in the three places lasted from May 24 to October 3, 1943. The 19th and last funeral was held on that day.

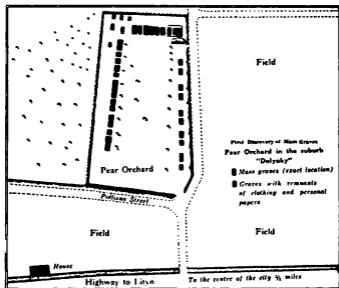
6. The number of uncovered victims was 9,439 and not 9,432 as was announced by the German Commission. I do not know the reason for not counting the seven bodies uncovered from grave No. 14 in the "Park of Culture and Rest" as was done by the Ukrainian Commission. The Commission was not in charge of the bodies found in Vynnytsya prison after the communist retreat in 1941 nor of the Red

Army men who were found shot at the Railroad Station, tied in several groups with barbed wire. The Germans made an official announcement about this in 1941. The large grave in "Kozytsky Park" was not re-opened. It covered the Cheka and GPU victims of 1923.

7. Altogether there were 95 graves:

Pidlisna Street — 39 graves — 5,644 bodies.

Orthodox Cemetery — 42 graves — 2,405 bodies.



Plan of graves on Pidlisna street.

Gorky Park — 14 graves — 1,390 bodies.

In the protocol prepared by the International Commission, of all 11 European nations, 37 graves were recorded for the first site and 24 in the Park. The protocol was signed on July 15, 1943 but subsequently two more graves were re-opened at No. 1 Pidlisna Street. The number in the Park remained 14, the extra 10 mentioned by the International Commission were old pits, relics of the old Polish Cemetery.

8. During the excavation period 19 public funerals of

the exhumed bodies were held in true Christian tradition. All the bodies were laid in rows in 24 fraternal graves with their heads to the east. A careful count was made before interment and this was later published in the press. The graves were about 80 yards in length. 9,436 bodies were buried in the fraternal graves. Two were buried separately and one in the village at the family's request. Altogether 9,439 bodies were interred.

9. With the help of different articles found in the graves, through documents and close relatives 682 bodies were identified. In the German "White Book" 679 names were given. They had omitted from the list two Jewish doctors whose bodies had documents on them and one Ukrainian whose bereaved wife asked that his name be withheld because she had a son in the Red Army, who naturally would have been threatened with danger.

10. Of the total number there were 169 women's corpses uncovered, their hands tied behind their backs, and bullets in the napes of their necks. Some of them were completely nude. Twenty were identified and their names were as follows: Anna Benkovska, of the Kostianov district; Maria Burkatska of Sobolivka; W. Vakhovska of Nemyriw; Maria Vashnewska of Olhopil; Ksenia Hoba of Kulchynka; Sophia Hryhorowich of Vynnytsya; Sophia Davidowa of Vynnytsya; Paulina Kwasnevska, Olena Kornienko, of Kordyshevka; Lydia Lisniakiwska, Mikhalina Makhowska, Margarita Novikova and Yadvyha Rolinska all of Vynnytsya; Franciska Malkevich; Maria Nosalevska; Olha Radetska of Mykhayliwka; Philipina Sulkovska of Vapniarka; Maria Salenska of Hnivan; and Olena Shuman.

A. Vasylchenko

ANOTHER "VYNNYTSYA"

About 12 miles from Kiev on the road to Chernyhiw there is a place called Bykownya. Construction work of a mysterious nature was carried on near there, in a forest in the spring of 1937 and finished by June of the same



Mass graves of prisoners shot in 1941 before the German onslaught against Ukraine.

year. Later, every day in the early morning or late at night a number of trucks, strongly guarded, were seen taking unknown loads into the enclosure built there. No one was able to learn the nature of the loads on the trucks. Police

dogs guarded the surrounding area, and no one was allowed to come nearer than 300 feet under penalty of being shot. The heavily loaded trucks took loads to this enclosure every day for four years, till 1941. When the Russian army retreated under German pressure, the local population was able to find out what kind of "work" had been carried on in the enclosure.

A fence about 10 feet high surrounded an area of about four acres. In one corner stood a building filled with empty preserving cans and liquor bottles. The surface of the ground was covered with scattered under-clothing, shoes, women's dresses, uniforms, etc.

When people began to dig the ground they found that the whole enclosure was one great mass grave, and was filled with bodies of murdered men and women. It is impossible to calculate the number of Ukrainian victims of the Russian police in that place. Thousands of men and women were tortured and buried there during the four years.

M. Kowal

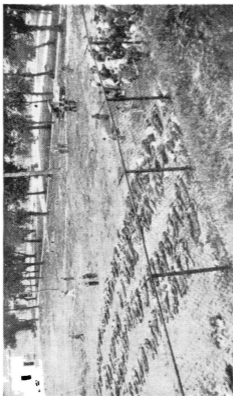
BOLSHEVIK MURDERS

I am Michael Kowal, from the town of Kaminka Strumylova in the Lviw Region in Ukraine. During the communist occupation of Western Ukraine I personally witnessed three arrests in my native town on June 22, 1941, those of Bohdan Mulkevich, and Michael Mulkevich who lived on Zamok Street, and Michael Mulkevich's blacksmith apprentice, presumably from the village of Rymaniw in the same Region. They were suspected of disloyalty to the communist regime.

After the communist retreat from Kaminka-Strumylova they were found in the town prison with 33 other victims, murdered in a horribly sadistic manner. All the corpses were tied together with barbed wire and all bore signs of terrible beatings. Some had nails driven into their skulls. None of them had been shot to death. Their bodies, nude and badly mauled, were practically unrecognizable to their relatives.

Bohdan Mulkevich's wife recognized her husband but, trying to verify her identification by his gold teeth, found them missing. All the bodies were taken away for interment.

That same day 19 other bodies were discovered near the village of Todan about 9 or 10 kilometers from Kaminka-Strumylova. They were tied to trees and their chests were pierced with bayonets. These were all indentified by relatives and taken away for burial.



**Exhumation of those executed during 1937-38 in Zolochiw, near
Kharkiw.**

Andriy Vodopyan

A RAVINE FILLED WITH THE BODIES OF CHILDREN

I was serving in the Soviet Russian Army. Our artillery unit was retreating before the Germans in the direction of Yeletsk. On September 18, 1941, our unit came to a wide ravine situated about 14 miles from Chartsysk station, and about 60 miles from the city of Staline. The ravine stretched from the station of Chartsysk to the station of Snizhy. When we approached the ravine we were taken aback by a horrible sight. The whole ravine was filled with the bodies of children. They were lying in different positions. Most of them were from 14 to 16 years of age. They were dressed in black, and we recognized them as students of the F. S. U., a well-known trade and craft school. We counted 370 bodies altogether. All of them had been killed by machine gun fire.

This group of children was being evacuated from Staline when the Germans neared the city. The children had marched 60 miles, and, exhausted and unable to continue walking, asked for transportation. The officers in charge promised to send them trucks. Instead of trucks, a detachment of the Russian political police (NKVD) arrived, and shot the children in cold blood with machine guns. This ravine, filled with hundreds of bodies of slain children, moved even the soldiers, accustomed as they were to the sight of death.

CHAPTER

VI.

**THE RUSSIAN COMMUNIST DICTATORSHIP
IN PRACTICE**

Petro Ver

DEVASTATION OF KUBAN

On the orders of the TsK VKP(b)* and the USSR government, the population of thirteen villages in Kuban were exiled for "failure to deliver the wheat quota, and sabotage", to the far north. The exile was directed by the Assistant GPU Chief, Kabaev, authorized by the Politburo. The terrific number of "exiles" or, rather the destruction of several hundred thousand Ukrainian-Kubanese may be determined by the following figures: the village of Poltava with a population of 17,500, Uman, with a population of 45,000, and Myshastiwska with a population of over 40,000 were totally removed. Some of the villages were partially removed, for instance Ivaniw had only 50 per cent of its population exiled.

Farm implements and personal belongings which people had prepared to take along with them were taken away when they were loaded into trains. Departures were usually conducted with public shootings and bloodshed.

* The Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (of the Bolsheviks).



THE CITY OF KOMSOMOLSK IN AMUR

On April 20, 1932, our Komsomol centre summoned the Kharkiw Komcomol to Horkom (City Committee).

The Komsomol secretary was Blyznyuk, and he hastily called a meeting of Komsomols and Party candidates and took them to the Horkom Komsomol. When we arrived other Komsomols were waiting in the corridor, and we took our places alongside. Finally my name was called and I went in. As I entered I noticed five men sitting behind a table. All were in military dress without insignia. The first question put to me was whether I was a Komsomol and if I planned to continue to be one. I remembered that if I declined future membership in the Komsomol I would have to return to the village and work in the collective farm. I knew of 40 men who had been forced back to collective farms when they completed their schooling, while those who remained in the Komsomol were given jobs in the city.

My answer was that I wished to continue to be a Komsomol and was told that the party and the government would send me to work on a building project. Although I was curious I was given no hint as to what it would be and where, but was ordered to be ready for departure at

12 o'clock midnight with no luggage except for a change of underclothing inconspicuously wrapped. All this was to be kept in the strictest confidence and any infringement would be severely punished. I was admonished that in case of my failure to appear at the appointed time my ticket would be handed to the GPU.

At 12 o'clock we were driven to South Station where a freight train was already waiting. Each car had two tiers of ledges, a stove and a latrine. We were given a pail of water to forty men, a tea kettle, a plate and spoon for each and a few tins of food. Then the cars were sealed and we were warned not to sing or talk in loud tones as we were constantly surrounded by enemies of the people who, if they should learn that the train was carrying important people, might want to cause us harm. There were 46 cars in our train.

I do not know why, but our train was filled not only with Komsomols but with civilians from Kharkiw, Kryvy Rih, Zaporizhya, Dnipropetrowske and other places.

We arrived in Khabarovsk at night, and immediately boarded two boats, the "Columb" and the "Comintern", and a barge, the "Clara Zetkin", which was attached to one of the boats. We travelled about 580 miles with the current along the Amur River and came to the village of Permskoe. This was May 10, 1932.

Permskoe contained twenty-five houses and a church. We were forbidden to fraternize with the local residents. The church was turned into a diner, where we took our three meals a day.

The following day we were divided into brigades and ordered to go and clear the taiga of trees. The whole surface of the taiga was covered with water, under which was a layer of ice. On May 20 we had an eighteen inch snowfall which we were ordered to disregard and keep on working. Some of the men had come in their summer attire and torn canvas shoes. They soon became ill and died.

After several days the snow disappeared and work progressed more rapidly. We started building "kurini", huts made from tree branches. Inside were ledges along the walls used as bunks to sleep on. We had absolutely no bedding.

Soon a fairly large area was cleared, draining ditches were dug and the land was fairly dry. Then we undertook the building of barracks, and a few were completed before

the winter set in. They were cold. We tried to make them and the huts a little frost-proof by plastering them inside and out with mud.

The harrowing conditions soon began to tell on us. Many became ill with scurvy. We received no fresh food whatever. Potatoes and onions came dried, though the latter were so scarce it is hardly worthwhile mentioning them. People suffered horribly but escape was impossible. The river banks were guarded so that travelling on foot was out of the question. Boats seldom anchored, and when they did were heavily guarded. The mail was relayed from the boats by row boats with two or three men in them.

Some had secured maps and studied the shortest route to the railroad. The nearest station was at Bochkachevo, 210 miles away through the dense taiga, but to venture on such a journey without food would have been foolish. A few individuals, however, made the attempt and were successful, but more failed.

Our brigadier, Olshansky, and four others, started out but had hardly gone 35 miles when they were captured in Khabarovsk half dead from frostbite, and they were returned to Komsomolsk to the Premsk station. Their komsomol tickets were confiscated and they were labelled "enemies of the people". There were many more such instances, but unfortunately I do not remember the names.

Among us was one, Bublyk, from Kharkiw, who became crippled by scurvy. He was not allowed to return home, so that his story would not be made known, but was ordered to remain in Komsomolsk. (Komsomolsk was the new name for Premsk, a village on Amur). Another was Maslo who also became maimed. He was given permission to return to Kharkiw under strict orders to keep silent, and with promises that he should go to a resort later. He landed in a resort all right, a prison on Kholodna Hora (Cold Mountain) in the first corps of 17 cells from Kharkiw prison.

Early in June 1933, we were called to a large meeting and were shown a film which depicted "kurkuls" burying wheat in the ground, the Komsomols discovering these hiding places and being murdered by the guilty "kurkuls". But because the Soviet government was lenient and never punished anyone severely their only sentence was a short term at constructive labor, the building of a new town, Komsomolsk. The projects to follow were dockyards and aeroplane factory No. 125. They ought to vindicate them-

selves before the Party and government and also learn to respect the Komsomols as not only capable of tracking down buried grain but of building new towns and factories. We were advised not to help the "kurkuls" and not even speak to them. The number of these "kurkuls" would be about 6,000.

On June 12, 1933, the first "enemies of the people" arrived with ten-year sentences of hard labor. At first they were unguarded, as escape was impossible. In spite of the harsh warnings we were anxious to talk to these people, and stealthily asked them questions. There were unexpected meetings of fathers and sons or other relatives, but usually these ended in calamity.

For instance, I knew a brigadier, Rudometkin, who recognized his father when he arrived. The whole story was later published in the local paper, *Amursky Udarnyk*, that the brigadier had concealed the fact that his father had been an officer in the White Army, and a lot of other incredible trash. The outcome was that the brigadier was given a sentence.

Several times Komsomols caught "kurkuls" taking bread from their huts. They took them before the militia but received a stern lecture: "Why did you bring him here? The Soviet government had done with them whatever it could. They should have been shot, but the Soviet government offered them life, not for their own pleasure but for the benefit of the nation. After their ten-years terms they will hardly survive. It is beyond our powers to give them extra punishment, but if any of them causes you any harm, kill him. You will not be punished for that. They killed Komsomols, didn't they? Now you kill them."

After that we never reported those people to the militia. I have no idea how they were fed, but we often saw them scouring garbage pits for fish heads which they cooked in tin cans. After eating this salty concoction, and then drinking water from a mud puddle, they were usually stricken with dysentery and died like flies.

Once another brigadier and I decided to criticise our local administration before a Komsomol meeting. Coming home we had barely entered our barrack when we were summoned to the Parkom. The Secretary of the Party Committee was one, Ponamarev. We were harshly rebuked for our boldness and expelled from the Komsomol. The next day an article appeared in the *Amursky Udarnyk* defiling us as

"enemies of the people", but through some good fortune we were not arrested, though our brigadier posts were taken from us.

Somewhat later the newspaper again printed articles about us, this time that we were concealing our past and were really "enemies of the people". Actually, though, our past was very simple. I had left behind, near Kharkiw, an old and lonely mother. However, I realized that the only solution to my predicament was to flee.

Unexpectedly one day I was able to go about 550 miles further into the taiga. There I lived for nearly a year until I was discovered and called to the local NKVD branch. I was asked a few simple questions, among them whether or not I was corresponding with anyone in Komsomolsk. I answered that I had written two letters but received no replies. I was asked if I knew that the parties I wrote to were "enemies of the people." When I gave a negative answer I was given a routine warning that the NKVD was all-powerful, they had even tracked me down over 500 miles, and released.

In this manner new cities, new plants and new aerodromes are built and are called Komsomolsk.

Hordiy Pekuchy

THE HOMELESS AND "URKI"*

We had been subjected to vast doses of communist propaganda from all the radio stations throughout the USSR. It is my desire, herewith, for the benefit of those who are uninformed on Soviet children's homes, to give just two facts.

In 1926, before the GPU was so aggressive I, as a Soviet citizen, was drafted for military service and assigned to the Navy. The term in the Red Navy was four years, and during this whole period I was 1,200 miles away from Ukrainian frontiers.

From 1929 on the letters I received from home were filled with apprehension and panic about the so-called "de-kurkulizing" of farmers, the seizing of grain and other aggressive Soviet measures. The brief leaves I had gave me no opportunity to study the situation of the farmers thoroughly, but even what I did manage to observe was sufficient to turn me, heart and soul, against abominable communism.

In 1930 I resumed civilian life. In my homeland I saw innocent children of "de-kurkulized" farmers hungry and ragged, standing outside bakery shops, pleading in heart-rending tones:

In the name of God, please give us bread."

The Reds continued sweeping the last kernels of the farmers' wheat into storage houses, at the same time sweeping these blameless children into their graves.

These scenes tormented me and I could not contain myself. I voiced my thoughts and indignation at a miners' meeting in the Vechirny Kut station in Kryvorizhya, where

* Gangs of homeless orphans.

I worked at the time. It had not occurred to me that I, being a true proletarian, a worker and miner, who had influence on other workers, was in any danger of arrest for speaking the truth. Nevertheless, to my great surprise I was home barely three months when I was suddenly arrested and thrown into a GPU prison.

The charges laid against me were, first, anti-Soviet propaganda and, secondly, economic counter-revolution, since, as a locksmith I had ignored the new mechanical devices, when, in the words of Stalin, "technics decided everything".

Shortly I found myself in a concentration camp in Okhotsk serving a seven-year sentence. I had no more news from Ukraine. My close relatives had all either died in the famine or were imprisoned. After serving nearly six years of my term I returned to Kryvorizhya.

The shock of what I found in my native land must have shortened my broken life by half. Those who had continued living in Ukraine had gradually become accustomed to the changes but I had left in 1926 when that country was more or less intact. Now, ten years later I was met by horror everywhere I turned. Scores of houses in every village stood deserted, the gardens overgrown with weeds. I was informed that the owners of these vacant homes had died in the famine and their children, who survived the agony of starvation, had gone with the "Urki". I had met these gangs of orphans at the railroad station. They were of all ages, some groups of five to six-year olds, and others of about twelve to fourteen.

The possibility of securing any help for these children was out of the question. Because I had been imprisoned I was under the constant surveillance of the NKVD, and reported to them at regular intervals in Kryvy Rih. That fall I was working in one of the mines in Kryvy Rih. We were putting through an electric line to a geological research centre. This line was to go past the childrens' home on Ukrainska Street.

When I entered the yard of this Home I was quickly surrounded by a mob of youngsters from about five to fifteen years of age who answered my greeting with:

"Hi, brother, give us a smoke".

One of the most persistent was a lad of about seven or eight. He was ridiculously dressed in a pair of grimy

man-size overalls, a large heavy cotton sweater which came over his nude body, and a pair of old cast-off rubber miner's boots on his feet. The other children were similarly clad, and all were extremely dirty. When I chided the boy for smoking so young he answered:

"Very well, if you won't give it to me you don't have to". But in no time at all my tobacco pouch was in the quick hands of one youngster who quickly divided the tobacco among his buddies. When they were all smoking he politely handed the empty pouch back to me with the words:

"Sorry, Mister, you can buy yourself more. We have no money, so don't be cross with us for taking your tobacco".

From these wards of the Soviet regime, children of respectable, successful farmers murdered in NKVD cellars, I learned that their feared enemies were Comrade Rayokhmadel, Comrade Drobinina and Comrade Shtiepleman.

About their life in the home they said:

"Not enough bread, so we pilfer a little."

They had sent a delegation to the superintendent of the Institution, Comrade Chubukin, but he angrily called a policeman and ordered him to take them back and not let them outside the premises of the home again.

One of the boys told me that he had recently arrived from Lokhvytsia, and he did not like the place. He had tried to escape to Moscow and had hidden in the coal car on a train, but he was detected by a "pharoah" (a guard in their jargon), and brought back. One of the boys came from a small village, Rakow, near the city of Voznesensk. His father had been arrested by the NKVD, and his mother had died in the famine. He had fled to Kryvorizhya and lived from petty thefts. He had been placed in a slave labor camp and worked with other prisoners in a quarry. Having served his sentence he was brought to the Home.

I could not endure to spend any more time with them listening to the pitiful stories of these unfortunates. Having only recently returned from distant Okhotsk I knew how the fathers of these "Urki", who were once normal, lovable Ukrainian children, were languishing in the far north in Soviet concentration camps. One of these homeless orphans remarked that, were they a little older, they would be

accepted by one of the Special NKVD Schools which were specifically organized for such as they.

After my 32nd birthday I married, and began my family life. I secured work in an iron ore mine near Vechirny Kut. Once, my wife, who had undergone as much suffering as most Soviet citizens, said to me in the course of conversation: "You worry so over the fate of our Ukrainian children. Isn't there anything we can do for them?"

One evening I was sitting at a table writing out work assignments for the next day, when my wife walked into the room. She was followed by three children, a girl of fourteen years of age, and two boys, eleven and nine. They were dressed in old clothes, but they were clean and neatly patched. The boys were very pale with pinched cheeks. Their large brown eyes stared wearily, almost vacantly. The girl had beautiful blue eyes and seemed somewhat less haggard than the boys.

When they were seated, their searching gazes did not leave my face. My wife locked the door and began the explanation. The girl was attending school and was in sixth grade. She came from a large family of five children, an old grandmother, and an invalid mother. Their father was the sole breadwinner. He worked as a loader at the Kryvy Rih Electric Plant and supplemented his meagre earnings by working as a shoemaker after hours. This was still insufficient to feed them all and he was forced to take the girl out of school and send her to work.

The two boys were faced with an equal plight. Their father had died in forced labor at the Kryvy Rih Metallurgical Mill. Their mother worked as a charwoman, earning 115 rubles per month, which was scarcely enough to buy bread for the three. They had no clothing or shoes for the approaching winter, but they wanted to continue going to school. They had decided to write for help to the Soviet government, but did not know how to address the letter, so their mother asked my wife's advice when she met her on the way from work.

Hearing this story, I asked the children a few questions. The younger boy seemed unusually bright. The government would have to help him, he said, because he wished to acquire an education. He was going to ask for money to buy clothes and shoes. As to fuel, well, he and his brother could collect splinters. It was true that he had a severe

pain in his abdomen after carrying these loads home, but that was nothing. His mother also had a pain in her side which often kept her awake at night, and sometimes made her cry a little, but she continued to go to work just the same.

The simple, sincere words of the boy caused me to lose my self-control and I left the room so as not to reveal my exceedingly disturbed state. Hundreds of thousands of our Ukrainian sons were tortured into a slow death in the Baltic White Sea Canal, the Baykal, Amur Magistral, the Dalstroi in Kolyma, and those who were still here lived in constant dread of the NKVD but the world, not yet touched by adversity, regarded the dying of the Ukrainian nation with seeming indifference, buying Ukrainian wheat from Moscow, while Ukrainians died from starvation.

Innocent Ukrainian children were withering under Moscow's crushing heel, while their fathers were fettered and helpless to defend them.

Gaining some semblance of composure I returned to the room. My wife had already fed the children. I told them that the right person to address a letter to was Stalin himself. I offered to compose the letter for them in such a form that it would seem as though it had actually been written by a young student. This they would copy in their own handwriting. We decided not to ask for a specific sum, although the younger boy persisted that they needed at least 500 rubles.

It was not until one day in December, 1937, that I met the children again. I had returned from work one day and found them in my home. They were all smiling happily and holding up a letter, announced in chorus:

"Here is the letter. We will get the money."

The letter stated that the children were to appear at an appointed time in the local Department for the Protection of Mother and Child to receive the money donated by Comrade Stalin. The appointment was made for Tuesday, but as I had to make a trip by truck to Kryvy Rih on Wednesday for extra machinery parts I decided to take the children with me on that day.

Leaving them at the Department, I went about my own business and called for them a couple of hours later. When I asked if the children were ready to leave, Comrade Sophia Shkrab scowled at me and asked what I wanted. I explained

that I was taking the children home to Vechirny Kut. She left the room and returned with another, Comrade Drabininnoi, who also asked me what I wanted, both taking a good look at my new clothes, in a more civil manner. She asked me into her private office where an advocate was waiting.

They asked me if I knew who wrote the children's letter to Stalin. I assumed an indifferent attitude and answered that I knew nothing of the letter, that I had only promised their parents to bring the children there and safely return them home. Comrade Drabininnoi said caustically, "They are useless people who squander their money on drink, and are too lazy to work. They avoid our institutions and make their beggarly appeals directly to Comrade Stalin. They are trying to make it seem as if our nation is a nation of beggars".

When I met the children, they looked sad and disappointed. They explained to me that for nearly two hours they were drilled about who wrote the letter. They were promised bribes but steadfastly kept their promise to me, and refused to divulge the secret. Finally, they were told to write a few words on paper and the handwriting was compared with the letter. This seemed to satisfy them because they asked no more questions.

They added with tears in their eyes that for the three of them they had been given 150 rubles. This would not even buy shoes, they added brokenheartedly. Their eyes seemed to say:

"Thank you, Comrade Stalin, for our 'happy' childhood".

Shortly after this episode I was held by the NKVD but was saved from actual arrest, like many others then, by a strange coincidence. On March 12, 1938, the NKVD Chief of Dnipropetrovsk Region, Comrade Korokin, was himself arrested.

When I returned home again I found that the girl was already working in a mine sorting ore, the younger boy was still attending school, and the older one was a semi-invalid with a constant pain in his abdomen.

I followed the advice of my friends and relatives and left the district in order to evade arrest and Siberia. I wandered from place to place, avoiding the eyes of the NKVD.

Now, ten years later, and bearing the marks of Soviet concentration camps, I have come to this strange new land.

F. D.

"A HAPPY CHILDHOOD"

We lived in the District of Kosharsky, in Rostov Oblast. We were a small family, two children and our parents. In his youth, our father had been a laborer. He was a hard worker and frugal, and was soon able to buy himself a small place and set up his own farm.

When the communists came to power he was forced to leave everything and flee. Leaving the other members of the family behind he took me with him and made his way, under an assumed name, to Donbas. There, however, he was captured by the GPU, on January 8, 1931, arrested and shipped to the far north, as a slave laborer on the Baltic-White Sea Canal, and later on the Volga-Moscow Canal.

I was all alone in this strange country, at five years of age. I begged for food in order to survive. No one would take me in. I was the child of an exile, and no one was secure from a similiar fate. Even distant relatives would not openly help me so as not to incur their own arrest.

With the help of some kind souls I was put into a shelter for the homeless, but it was discovered who I was and I was expelled. I continued to beg. Knowing my father, and what had become of him, most of the people were kind and secretly tried to help in whatever way they could. I stole occasionally, but mostly I ate from the garbage heap.

Once a policeman, who had known of my plight, approached me and handed me a piece of bread and said in Ukrainian, "Here, take this, you poor wretch".

I slept anywhere I happened to be at nightfall; in a straw pile, in a tunnel, on a manure heap, in someone's

stable, and if I was fortunate, sometimes in the deserted house of some "de-kurkulized" farmer.

Several years of this wandering existence passed, although I was only one of hundreds of thousands of such waifs, and I was beginning to feel grown-up. I left the Donbas and went to Rostov. Here I was arrested by the NKVD. They put me up against a wall, facing a revolver, and demanded a "confession" against my father, so that they might destroy whatever remained of him. Being still of a tender age, I was naturally dumbfounded as to the meaning of it all.

My wretched childhood and adolescence had planted in me an intense abhorrence of the despictable Soviet-Muscovite imperialism and the infernal NKVD persecutions. Without schooling, in continuous want, a homeless waif, I grew up under the Soviet-Stalinist system, in this so-called "country of the happiest childhood in the world".

M. A. H.

HOW LEPLEVSKY'S DOWNFALL CAUSED THE DOWNFALL OF HIS "ELECTOR"

In the first election to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR Odessa, the port city, elected Leplevsky, Chief of USSR Internal Affairs, a State Security Commissar of the third rank.

In front of a small building on Lenin Street, previously called the Richelieu, there were parked several cars and a truck. Odessa's very gods themselves, the Regional Party Committee Secretary, Teleshev, the Chief of the Regional Executive Committee, Kalchenko, and the Regional Comsomol Secretary, Stakhanov, were on hand, giving advice on the arrangement of the palms and flowers, chairs and dishes, and other things brought by the truck. They were all in the home of an old worker in the Lenin factory, Vereskovsky. The table was laden with rich food and first-grade cocktails, also brought by the Regional Party Committee cars.

Late that night, car after car rolled down the street leaving the modest home on Lenin Street, driving the important guests from the banquet in a worker's home...

Next day the local newspapers, the Ukrainian **White Sea Commune** and the Russian **Bolshevik Standard** carried a detailed account of the banquet, with photographs, headlined "Meeting Between Candidate and Elector". The photographs showed the worker with his family, standing among the many guests and shaking hands with the People's Commissar.

Several months after his election to the Supreme Soviet, People's Commissar Leplevsky was shot as an "enemy of the people".

A few months following this incident a single car drove away late one night from a small house on Lenin Street in Odessa. It was the "Black Crow" carrying P. Vereskovsky and his family for having once feted, and been photographed with the "enemy of the people" Leplevsky.

This time the "Meeting of Candidate and his Elector" took place, not in the Socialist paradise, but in the next world.

E. Mury

THE COMMUNIST DICTATORSHIP IN PRACTICE

I was seven years of age when I first realized what communism meant. My father had been a village priest, and in 1918 went abroad. This was sufficient for us to be suspected by the communist government.

As soon as they entered our village, our house was the first to be invaded by the police. They questioned mother about father, then began pillaging our home. They took my father's entire library of some 2,000 books, piled them up in the yard and set fire to them.

I recall an interesting incident. One of the guards put his shot-gun on the table and my younger brother and I moved up close to it, and began examining it curiously. The guard asked if I would like to learn to shoot. When I said that I would, he asked whom I would like to shoot. I answered, the Bolshevik, meaning our dog, who was thus named by a German fellow who once lived with us.

This conversation of a seven-year-old was enough for the communists to hold my mother responsible for counter-revolutionary talk. All explanations were of no avail. They ordered mother to stand against the wall to shoot her. Realizing what this meant we threw ourselves at mother in a panic, entwining our arms around her. She stood rooted to the middle of the floor, her hair instantly turning white. Our maid fell on her knees, pleading with them and beseeching them not to shoot mother.

All this would not have saved her had not a curious coincidence occurred. One of the officers walked in from outside. He had crossed from Denikin's Army to the side of the Reds. A son of the priest from a neighbouring parish,

he knew our whole family very well. He saved my mother's life.

In 1927 a former public school teacher from the Pechenizky District, 23 year-old L. Chornenky, returned from the Red Army. He came of a poor family. His father had been a farmer in Volhynia. Because he spoke Ukrainian, discussed Ukrainian history and literature, and adhered to Ukrainian customs and traditions, the GPU considered him a suspicious character, and in 1928 he was arrested and thrown into Kharkiw prison. He was charged with counter-revolutionary activities in the interest of Ukrainian bourgeois nationalism, and sentenced to three years of forced labor in the Kirghiz Steppes.

This was not the end however; in 1931 the GPU arrested all those teachers who had at one time or another taught with him, who had met him at teachers' conventions, and even those who had taken over the schools after him, even though they had never known him personally, or even seen him at any time. Caught in this web were two women teachers, Pechenih-Troitska and Dzyubina. All these teachers spent three or four months in Kharkiw prison not knowing what offence they had committed. Miss Dzyubina died in this prison, never learning the reason for her confinement.

In 1931, in the village of Pisky, in the Osypivsky District, Starobilsk Region, the local administration, on instructions from the GPU, taxed all the so-called "class-enemy elements". Being closely connected with the church, I was naturally most concerned with the taxes levied on that establishment. Although I have forgotten the exact figures, I do remember that the whole sum was staggering and almost beyond the parishioners' means to pay. Nevertheless they outdid their expectations and raised the required amount.

This pacified the local administration somewhat, but the order came from the Regional Headquarters to close the church on whatever pretext was feasible. So the mayor of the village announced this at the local Party meeting. The village administration was compelled to find some excuse to liquidate the church. This they did promptly. They decided to liquidate the priest.

A heavy meat tax was immediately levied on him. The farmers somehow managed to pay it for him, but the Reverend M. Makedonsky was taxed again. This time the

quantity of meat asked for was so high that neither he nor the villagers were able to raise it. For this, allegedly deliberate, tax evasion the Reverend Makedonsky was arrested and convicted by the Osypivsky Regional Court for subversive activity in the Soviet government's meat tax measures. He was given five years of forced labor in a concentration camp, which he served in the mines of the Kuzbas (Kuznetsk Basin).

Thus the church was finally liquidated, and the priest probably perished because I did not hear of him again.

I also witnessed how communism settled its accounts, not with class enemies, but its own faithful servants who had in some way displeased the regime. One of these, whom I knew well, was the Dean of Kharkiw University, 1934-1937, Neforosny. During his deanship he enjoyed considerable authority among Soviet society. He had been a Party member since 1914, commander of the Poltava Red Army Division during the Civil War, member of the Kharkiw Bureau of the Party District Committee, member of the People's Commissariat of Ukraine. He was an old Bolshevik, not an imperialist, but a Ukrainian communist.

The Yezhov period did not overlook Neforosny. On orders from the NKVD, the Kharkiw Bureau of the Party District Committee expelled him from Party membership and classed him as a bourgeois nationalist. Several weeks following this incident, he was arrested and sentenced to a 25 year term in a concentration camp in the north, without the right to correspond.

Then came the year 1931; the Yezhov era. Not a single dwelling in Kharkiw remained free from arrests. The tide also reached the University. The majority of the arrested students were Ukrainians. Three of them were very well known to me: J. Kovaliw, son of Professor Kovaliw; W. Hreze, son of a scientist; W. Strakhov, son of a Professor. They were all arrested on the same night.

It was assumed that they were arrested because the Professor of Geology, Kovaliw, had been arrested several years earlier on grounds of "sabotage in education". His own son was now sentenced to ten years of exile in a concentration camp, allegedly for connections with his father. The other two were released after spending one year in prison. This was a very rare exception, as release from an NKVD prison was practically unheard of.

To us it was evident that the NKVD had an informer in the student body of the University. For instance, one student whom I knew well from the Biology Faculty, Kuzma Rets, I later encountered in uniform as a full-fledged NKVD agent. Another, W. Lampert, on the science staff, appeared in an NKVD uniform after the German retreat from Kharkiw and took over the questioning of his former colleagues.

Oleksander K-r

ONE OF MANY DESTINIES

At the close of the last century a farmer from Podilya, Pavlo Dibrova, sailed to Nikopol, on the Dnieper, to seek a kinder fate. He settled there as a manganese miner. He brought his family down and soon became a professional miner. During the Revolution in Ukraine he had fought on the Red side and later returned to the mine.

"I'll be the only miner in the Dibrova family. I'll educate my children so they won't have to go near a mine. They'll have no cause to complain that their father did not provide for them." So Dibrova planned.

His son Mykola completed High School and enlisted in the Air Force. In 1938 he was decorated for heroism during a battle with the Japs on Lake Khasan. In 1939 he took part in the Soviet attack on Poland, and later transferred to the Finnish front. In December of that year the older Dibrova received a letter from his son asking him, for some reason, to take care of the latter's wife and small son. This worried the old man, causing him to believe that all was not going well on the Finnish front, but he heard no more from Mykola.

Late in the Spring of 1940, Dibrova and his daughter-in-law were invited to Air Force Headquarters in Leningrad. The Commander met them with grave respect and announced that "Comrade Dibrova died a heroic death in battle with the White Finns, adding an illustrious page to the history of the Soviet Air Force". But no one could tell the stunned father how, when or where his son Mykola died. The widow and child were to receive a pension.

About a year later, Dibrova received a letter from Kiev, in his son's handwriting. The contents read that in an air

battle over the Finnish town of Vipuri, his plane had been brought down, he had been wounded in the leg, and was taken prisoner by the Finns. After the conclusion of the Russian-Finnish war the Soviets claimed all those men who had been prisoners-of-war. They were all brought, under heavy guard, to Murmansk and there loaded on barges and sent to the Ukhta-Pechora concentration camp. They were all given five-year terms of slave labor, and were serving them in coal mines near Vorkuta, in Komi ASSR.

This letter had been sent by Mykola Dibrova through prisoners who had fled from the concentration camp. He begged his father not to reveal this secret to anyone, and not to write to him. He had also stated that the chief witness against him was the same Commander who had met the old Dibrova so cordially in Leningrad. He again pleaded with his father to look after his wife and son.

Finishing the letter the old man, for the first time in his life, wailed like a baby at the injustice of it. A year went by and there was no more news of Mykola. War with Germany broke out. The communists fled from Ukraine, and old Dibrova lost all hope of ever seeing his son again.

Then, one evening in July, 1942, when the grand-father Dibrova was playing with his grandson, Taras, someone leaped out of the tall sunflowers, ran up to them both and hugged them tightly. It was Mykola, gaunt and exhausted and tattered but happy. The whole family came to life and their happiness knew no bounds. Mykola's situation was a precarious one, however, as he was a fugitive from German custody.

When war came, Mykola Dibrova, just like thousands of other slaves, had been driven off to the front to form penalty detachments. In May, 1942, in a battle near Khar-kiw, General Timoshenko's whole Soviet army had been taken by the Germans.

The German treatment of prisoners-of-war is now common knowledge, and so Mykola Dibrova had no desire to submit to the abuse of the new occupant. At the first opportunity which presented itself in the village of Yasen-ovata, he fled.

Fedir Yakymenko

WHERE IS MY BREAD?

This was not the year 1933, but a normal year of the Stalin Five-Year-Plan. At this time the country had expanded territorially, adding parts of Finland, Esthonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Western Ukraine.

Before the red sky of the morning dawn was visible over Kiev the black loudspeaker, made in Leningrad, whispered, hissed, piercing the room's silence. Eight workers lived in this room. The loudspeaker, having entered the Stakhanovite movement, carried out all instructions of the Moscow transmitter. Hissing louder now from the plywood wall it gave the exact time. It was 7 a. m. The men all lay thinking that at any minute now the factory whistle would blow and then all, as if electrified, would rush off to work, trying to get there before the others.

After the third whistle everyone was in his place at work.

In the evening, when the whistle blew, everybody left his work with all the haste he could summon, staggering and tripping, in order to reach the shortest queue for bread.

The line had already formed when I came. I was the one hundred and thirtieth. Two or three minutes later I would have been five hundred or more yards farther back, and virtually without hope of reaching the bread shop.

At the shop entrance the worst kind of disorder reigned. Those who had entered and bought their kilogram of bread had no possibility of making an exit. The entrance was jammed with shoving humanity. The only other door was through the display section but the store-keepers were wary of using this outlet because, on his way out, the hungry Soviet proletarian might not be averse to taking a head of cabbage, a few carrots or a potato.

After some time a guard walked in and escorted those who had purchased their bread out through the front entrance, watching them all the time.

One man, slight in built, tried to reach the door of the shop by resorting to trickery. After pushing and elbowing through the mob he finally shouted loudly: "Make way for a lady with a baby". The packed crowd loosened, and he managed to move up a bit but the bread shop was still so far away that he gave up.

In an hour and a half my turn came. I wanted to buy some sugar and cucumbers but the shop had emptied as if by magic. Coming back with my bread I saw people running as though to a fire. I asked one where he was heading, but he only waved his hand and continued hastily on his way. I bit a piece of bread from my loaf and started running with the crowd.

At the shop a vast crowd was already milling around, but more were running and forming into line and I took my place. I asked my neighbour what was selling. He shrugged and said nothing. I asked the man behind me, but no one seemed to know. Then a man appeared from inside wearing a bright red tie and announced, "Today we have nothing for sale in the store. You may leave now".

He made an about turn in military fashion and disappeared inside, locking the door behind him. The mob indignantly became noisy and with shouts of anger and curses dispersed.

Going home I turned the problem over and over in my head; what was I to eat with my bread? I was passing a small restaurant which sometimes sold pickled fish. Only about fifty people were waiting outside so I decided to get in line. As I stood I broke off a piece of bread and chewed on it. I noticed that at the front when one got his fish and walked away two or three others came and took his place. The line grew miraculously. Before I could decide what to do a voice echoed: "No more fish". "Open another barrel," the mob shouted back. In the excitement a melee occurred, they heaved and jostled and the whole crowd fell in a heap. I was on the very bottom and the loaf of black bread was knocked out of my grip. The bread, hard-earned and procured with such difficulty, was foremost in my mind now. Two or three men went inside and rushed out with the happy announcement that they saw another barrel of

salted fish. The mob threatened the shop-keeper and pushed inside until they packed the tiny premises like the fish in the barrel they were after, and more kept pushing in. The noise and the commotion drew a police officer to the scene. He fined one man, arrested two, and dispersed the rest of the crowd.

But I lay there until an ambulance drove up and took me to the hospital on Broversky Street.

Where is my bread? I wondered, as I lay on the stretcher.

I. Antonenko

DEVASTATION OF THE HAMLET OF HRUSHKA (In the Kiev Region)

On May 19, 1930, I approached my native hamlet. The house at the very end belonged to my brother. As I drew nearer I noticed that something was amiss. The house was deserted, the windows all broken and the oven had crumbled. A black cat sleeping on the window sill was the only sign of life.

The hamlet was made up of 16 small farms with about 950 acres of fertile land. The smallest orchard was three and a half acres. Every farmer had a thriving fruit orchard surrounded by willows and linden trees. The hamlet had two nice ponds and excellent buildings. The streets and alleys were planted with white acacia and sycamore trees. In summertime the broad main street was a green and fragrant tunnel, the trees spreading their boughs to join those from the other side. The hamlet also had livestock: 96 cows, 22 pairs of oxen, 28 horses and a great number of hogs and poultry. All that had been pillaged.

In three years the lovely hamlet had become rubble and weeds. On the ruins a "radhosp" (state farm) was built, which, to my knowledge, had not yielded as much in ten years as the hamlet had in one before the desolation.

I found my wife and two children beside their house. My wife had put up a sort of hut made of threshed wheat sheaves, and had already spent four nights in it with the children. The children did not recognize me. They asked if I had come to evict them again. Finally they allowed themselves to be convinced that I was their father, resurrected from the dead. The reunion was happy and pain-

ful at the same time. My older daughter, four years of age, came up timidly and said:

"Do not worry, father, that they put us out of our house. See, we fixed up another. They won't drive us out now. This is our garden."

There was a big lump in my throat. The barn had long since been demolished, the shed had gone the day before yesterday, the house was broken into and the oven thrown apart. Everything was sold at auction to the Bziw Village Council for 127 rubles. My wife continued telling me how most of the villagers had been liquidated. The remaining eight families were to go to the village of Bziw and live in kurkuls' homes. But the people were wary and reluctant.

K. Shvets was to live in M. Khomenko's house in Bziw. The previous day he had gathered up the remnants of the pillage and prepared to leave with his wife and four children, the oldest of them six years old. Before starting off, Shvets, who was an amateur photographer, snapped a picture with his cheap camera, of the house and the family. It happened that a shock brigade was nearby, and one of the men saw him. Instantly a soldier and several komsomols attacked him, took away his camera, and arrested him. That same evening he was shot in Boryshiwka as an "enemy of the people". When his wife, a sufferer from heart disease, heard of what had happened, she died instantly. The children were taken away by the police, no one knew where.

Fedir Khomenko, with his wife, nine children and old parents of 75 years of age, was exiled to the Solovetsky Islands. His nine-year-old boy, Oleksiy, leaped from the wagon and tried to escape into the bush, but komsomol M. Serdyuk shot at him, injuring his legs. He was taken to a hospital, and the rest of the family continued on to the far north without him.

The whole family perished on the Solowky. The boy recuperated and was taken in by his grandmother, with whom he lived for a year in Bziw. When she learned that he was in danger of being sent to join his family she sent him away to Donbas where he lived until 1941.

There he went to school, was a good student, and graduated from the University as a Mining Engineer. When, in 1942, the Germans occupied Ukraine he returned to his native village. During all that time M. Serdyuk had been an un-

failing Soviet stooge. A true activist, he directed the attacks on the villages. When the communists retreated he was left behind to undertake subversive work in the rear. When the Germans came his wily nature stood him in good stead, and he soon established himself as a trusty. He was secretary of the local administration and virtually ruled the village.

He led his double life with apparent ease, working for the communists and at the same time playing up to the Germans, terrorizing the native residents, beating them and bleeding them of the very last kopek the Germans levied.

At this moment Oleksander Khomenko returned from Donbas, now a handsome engineer. The day after his arrival he went to the village administration on some business, and there, to his great surprise, sat M. Serdyuk. Khomenko immediately recognized him as the man who had shot him many years ago. Serdyuk turned faint. Pulling out his revolver, Khomenko asked:

"Where are my parents, my brothers and sisters? You gave me eighteen shots; I'm giving you just one," and pulled the trigger.

The next day a German police officer came to investigate and dismissed the case with the words:

"A rat has died a rat's death."

I. Smus was a modest farmer. He had a large family of eight boys and three girls, three sets of twins among them, the oldest being 11 years of age. When they were being evicted his wife, Horpyna, asked:

"Where are we to go with this flock of children?"

Nosov, a bona fide 25-thousander, answered sarcastically, "Moscow does not believe in tears," took hold of her hair and dragged her out of her home. She fell headlong on the ground face downward and her nose began to bleed. The children were thrown out in a like manner. When Horpyna saw this she was up on her feet instantly and threw herself at him, digging her finger nails into his face. He grabbed her arms in his strong coarse hands and in sheer desperation she bit him. The raging Nosov grabbed his pistol and emptied the seven bullets into her. The kom-somol brigade rushed to his aid, threw the half clad children on to the waiting wagon, drove them to the station, and loaded the frightened mites on the rough freight train bound for the Solovetsky Islands. Their father managed to escape.

For some mysterious reason the children only went as far as the village of Bziw and were left there. How they got along no one knew, but in 1933 nine of them had already died. Only the oldest boy, Ivan, and a girl, Oksana, survived.

When war broke out with Germany, Molotov made a smooth and noble speech on the USSR radio network. He called on the "brothers and sisters" to defend the USSR from Hitler's assault. Ivan was then 22 years old and in the category which was called upon to fight for the "fatherland". During this speech Ivan turned to the crowd who had assembled for mobilization and said:

"So now Stalin needs his "brothers and sisters". Where was he in 1933 when millions of innocent children died like flies in the famine, including my seven brothers and two sisters? Now he is forcing us to go to war, and there is no other way out."

While his friends went to battle Ivan Smus was arrested and executed by a military tribunal.

My wife continued bringing me up-to-date on local events which I had missed through my seven-month absence from home.

I stayed until evening. Parting with my family was painful, especially in this unstable period, but I was a fleeing prisoner and stopping any longer was unwise. That evening I managed to reach the station in Berezhan and boarded a train for the Caucasus.



THE SECRET OF LVIW CEMETERY

The jarring ring of the telephone called me out of bed.

Eight o'clock in the morning. Who could that be? A life of continual tension makes one fear the worst.

"Hello," I said.

"Comrade Dmytrenko, this is Myron speaking," said a muffled voice, "my father died, what am I to do?" The voice was that of the son of the well known Ukrainian painter, Ivan Trush. Not fully awake, I was unable to answer immediately. At last, having expressed my condolences, I asked him to call me again in a few minutes. Every civil servant had to consult with his superior officers before acting in any matter at all. So I called the Cultural Propaganda secretary of the Oblast Party Committee. Luckily, the secretary was already there. I explained the matter and awaited instructions.

"Call me later," said the second secretary of the Office of Cultural Propaganda, Comrade Prykhodko. "I must contact the centre."

The twenty minutes of waiting seemed an eternity. At last the ring of the telephone broke the silence.

"Is that you?" asked the same voice. "Yes," I said. "Well, independent of whether the family want to give the deceased a church or civil burial, we attend the ceremony," said the secretary dryly, "I'll pick you up in half an hour. We will select the grave together. Then you will receive further instructions. You have been appointed head of the Funeral Committee," said the secretary, as though reading from a manuscript and hung up. All this had to be repeated to the son of the dead painter. So the work of the Committee for the funeral of the famous Ukrainian landscapist began. We did not have to wait long. The horn of the long "ZIS-101" car, proclaimed its arrival. We entered the car and set off. The siren of the "narkom" car cleared a way for itself far ahead. One more block of houses and we entered the long avenue with hundred year old linden trees on each side, leading to Lychakiw Cemetery. A few seconds more and the car slowly drew up before the entrance to the cemetery. A man, bald, with a glossy forehead and wearing a military uniform, ran towards our car. Putting his belt in order as he ran, he raised a great deal of dust with his deformed legs. The glossy shoes, together with the bald head, widely spaced teeth and the misshapen ears gave him the appearance of a degenerate. Panting he stopped at the very moment that Comrade Prykhodko, whom he doubtless knew, opened the door for me, since I was unable to do it myself. This made a definite impression, since, if the second secretary of the Oblast Party Committee himself opened the door for somebody, then that somebody must be from the centre, he certainly thought. He hurriedly introduced himself.

"Bohoyavlenski," he said, cautiously extending his hand to me. "Can I be of any assistance to you?" he continued after I had said "Glad to have met you," pressing his hand. Comrade Prykhodko explained the purpose of our visit. "Ah," sighed Comrade Bohoyavlenski with relief putting his hands into his pockets. "A well-known Ukrainian landscape artist," he repeated with evident pleasure as though happy that his part of the world was not forgotten. "Wel," he continued, "when Boris Semionovich, the secretary of the Lenin County Party Committee died, I found such a place for him, such a place!" At this point the degenerate produced approving clucks, as if one could talk with a Kaiser, at the very least, from such a place. "And now for the Ukrainian landscape painter an extra special place will

have to be found," resumed Comrade Bohoyavlenski, looking with his squint eyes into the sky, as if at a notebook, in which he could see the exact place decided upon by God. Turning briskly, he marched in the direction of the place he had already selected and, having motioned to us to follow, abruptly stopped. Keeping his hands in his pockets, he sketched with his foot the proposed site of the grave which, he believed, could not be bettered. The site really was excellent. Indeed, a cemetery was the only place in which no-one grudged Ukrainians the best. "You must have had a good deal of experience," I observed, admitting that the place was excellent. "Oh, yes," he said complacently. "Ten years of it," he added hurriedly, putting his jacket down smartly, "I started to work in the CHEKA at the beginning of 1918, but my nerves did not hold out, and so I took this job here. And imagine, this work is not a demotion. It is even more responsible, since this is a great state enterprise and it has, like the other enterprises immense importance, with its "promfinplan," with its great number of employees, among whom the matter of the re-education of cadres is one of the most timely questions, which I must lead personally." This he delivered as a report, without a breath, in no way differing from the reports of the thousands of other enterprises of that "unembraceable motherland of mine." Willy nilly we were forced to listen to this boring speech by the egoistical director of the Lychakiw cemetery, from the beginning right through to the end; a speech which later was to take on a deep significance, and which placed its hearers in great danger, whether they listened of their own free will, or were forced to do so. It seemed that Comrade Bohoyavlenski, thinking I was some big figure in the Party wanted to seize the opportunity to applaud himself and his efforts for the Soviet people and their government, with the furthering of his career well in view. Perhaps. Or perhaps he felt already the warmth of the Medal of Lenin or the Red Star on his breast. Perhaps so. Certainly he must have had some reason for adding something more interesting and extraordinary to his crystal clear biography.

"The re-educations of cadres, that is, of gravediggers, if one is thinking of a cemetery, is one of the most important efforts in my enterprise," continued the former CHEKA-worker, "and the most important point is that of "tongues"... Once upon a time, when a burial took place, there were

lots of "Oh" and "Ah", condolences, and tales, and vodka, as a recompense, untied the tongues of the grave-diggers; but this is dangerous. Nowadays, other methods are necessary. The main thing is to be quiet. You know the marks of our times... Yes, yes", almost in a whisper Bohoyavlensky prepared himself for something extraordinary. He took a deep breath.

"The whole thing is tied in with the "promfinplan" (production and finance plan) of our institution. The city of Lviw is big; so is its mortality. If we take, say, February, that is the month of greatest mortality. You see, spring is in the air, TB fulfills its plan, many kiddies cannot survive the change of air, and so, during last February some 750 were buried officially. Well, not quite all, that is," he lowered his voice, "I'd say 750, without the 'counter-revolution'... You see, it is really the counter-revolution which allows us to overfulfill the promfinplan, many times over. We even have our own Stakhanovites, the work demands them, you see. We have lots and lots of work. 160 workers work, sometimes without pause, during the daytime for the city and during the night time for us. It is necessary. Well, at night, "kagda mirnoye naselenye spit" (when the peaceful population sleeps), then we start our Stakhanovite work. We are simply exhausted. There are different days, though: sometimes we have less work, sometimes we have more work, but there is always work up to our necks, especially for me."

At this point Bohoyavlenski put his hand over his eyes, apparently trying to remember something. Prykhodko looked at me and I noticed a certain change in his expression. There was a concealed embarrassment, a hidden warning to me, that the conversation had gone too far, making us unnecessarily conscious of the events which take place only when "the peaceful citizenry lies asleep". Whether Comrade Prykhodko was afraid that I would hear of matters he already knew, or whether he was as uninformed as I was about matters hidden during the long winter months, he was unable to hide his embarrassment from me. In short, it was clear that a dangerous situation had arisen which no-one dared to ease in case he should commit some indiscretion. But Comrade Bohoyavlenski himself saved us from this dilemma. Taking his hands from his forehead,

he showed us light, ash-grey eyes with their black pupils. The whites were blood-shot.

"Yes, my nerves do not hold out," he slowly pronounced in a weary voice, turning towards the main entrance of the cemetery, as if he could see there the beginning of his tale, which he continued: "See, that is the gate where I receive the counter-revolutionary parade" said he, pointing with his chin in that direction. His eyes lighted up with a malignant expression. It seemed, as if, like an owl, he could see better at night than during the day. He swallowed hard and started again, with the widely used Russian "da" (yes). "...And so, they call me up and tell me a number, say 200 or 500. That's enough for me to give directions. When the sun has set behind the horizon and the gates are safely closed, a brigade, armed with shovels, get the order to prepare a spot for the Polish bourgeoisie and the 'nationalistic counter-revolution'. The graves, that is. Those are not ordinary ones; they are about 4 by 5 metres, and at a depth of..." he said languidly waving his hand as if the bottom of the grave could not be reached at all. He stepped back, as though afraid he might himself fall into the grave he had prepared, that grave from which there is no chance of escape, once in. He looked again at the gates, evidently afraid that he would not have time to finish the grave, before they brought him some more material to fulfill the promfinplan. Cocking an eye, he consoled himself with a naive. "My Stakhanovites have never put me into a bad spot yet. And at night when 'the peaceful citizenry are asleep' and even the deep night closes its eyes, so that there are no witnesses, 'strielki' (guards) bring, yes, yes, about 5 or 6 trucks, loaded with counter-revolutionaries. And this goes on almost every night. Here I and only I receive this parade. To tell you the truth, it does not take place in parade clothes: all of them are practically naked, with only a number, yes, yes. With a number on the leg or on the arm. That is the number of counter-revolution and here we have an exact reckoning. 'Socialism is reckoning,'" the CHEKA-worker cited Lenin, trying to enliven the story of terrible reality by a joke. At the same time he wanted to show off his knowledge of bolshevist theory. Now the Chekist went into a trance; he crouched and hurriedly dug a small hole in the ground with his hands, as if to illustrate, just as the teacher explains some proposition to his students.

"No time to be lost," he continued with a commanding voice, "the trucks back up with the dead-wood 'counter-revolutionaries' to the graves and then they are emptied like potatoes in the fall." Then he stopped as if asking us with a look: "What happens then?". Now slowly, silently, without words he demonstrated with his hands. He filled out the hole he had dug in the sand, smoothed the surface and started to make with his finger regular-spaced little grooves on the smoothed grave. And he added: "When the counter-revolutionary is covered by a thick layer of earth, we make four or six regular graves about them, we put up the crosses, and no one, would ever think that under these make-believe graves 'rots the enemy of socialist development.'" The chekist stopped talking. Raising his head he observed from beneath his eyebrows the effect of this unexpected finale on me and on Prykhodko. For some time longer he crouched, self-satisfied. Suddenly he straightened and rose to his full height to tower in imagination over those small graves which remained like mud under his feet. "That's in our Lychakiw cemetery," the chekist said disappointedly, not giving us time to take ourselves completely in hand. "But in the Janiw cemetery..." he started drawing out the syllables, and with a dreamy, jealous expression on his face. "There they have a promfinplan!" Bohoyavlenski finished his story. It was clear that his sorrow lay in the fact that he had not the supreme happiness of heading the Janiw cemetery. Prykhodko turned pale. At this moment I felt like an idiot. I felt silly, since the fact that I had heard such a speech meant great danger for me. It was not impossible that a few days later I myself would be brought in through the gates on the truck with a number on my leg, to be welcomed by Comr. Bohoyavlenski at the parade of the counter-revolution, and to be buried in the graves prepared by the Stakhanovites, trained by Bohoyavlenski, for the thousands of innocent people, the victims of the never satisfied "revolution".

Bohoyavlenski was called to the telephone. Silently, Prykhodko and I stood as though admiring the enchanting March day. I decided to act now. One should make oneself safe with Prykhodko. "Well, could they not find a greater fool for such a responsible position?" I said, trying to show my "bditelnost" (an untranslatable word, meaning roughly a state of complete realization of one's responsibility towards

the state"). "And what do you think, are there no fools 'there'?", answered Prykhodko with a double-entendre, and with his foot he effaced those sandy graves built by Bohoyavlenski, as if thus trying to wipe away all clues to the terrible mass graves enfolding the bodies of the victims of the Socialist Baal.



FROM UKRAINE TO YAKUTIA

I have been convicted twice. I was accused of the crime of agitation against the government, and sentenced to 5 years imprisonment. Later, I was accused of heading an underground sabotage organization, the purpose of which was to undermine the economic strength of the Ukrainian SSR and to reinstate an independent democratic ("bourgeois-capitalist") Ukrainian State. The second time I was given a 20-year term of hard labor, with loss of citizenship for a period of five years, and deportation to the Far East. The verdict had not even been confirmed by Moscow when we were sent out. But at this time the all-powerful Yezhcv fell. And so the travesty of justice started again. As I have already indicated the verdict had not been affirmed, and so backwards rolled the wheels of justice. In this way I escaped, together with some of my friends. This was a unique occurrence, isolated and unrepeatable. Although I suffered a great deal before 1941 (and was regarded as an "enemy of the people" anyway), still, with God's help, I outlived both Hitler and Stalin. Since I do

not care to write about myself, I will describe briefly the state of affairs in two neighboring villages and then in my own. I will relate the stories of the village of Suki and of the village of Yerastiwka, in Kremenchuk county, Poltava district. Suki is an ancient Cossack village. Two big mounds made during Mazeppa's time stood right outside its limits. But when the Cheka came, they selected 18 of the most active villagers and shot them. In 1928, 14 peasants were termed "close-fisted" persons — "exporteurs". They were each sentenced to 10 years and sent to Solowky. In 1929 they started to talk about kolkhozes. The peasants did not want to go to the kolkhozes, so the communists first begged, and then they started to threaten. But all these methods failed. And then, one night, some millet was put into the ears of twelve horses of the poorest peasants in the village, and the horses perished. This provocative action was committed by the secretary of the party committee. But such an occurrence meant that a "class enemy" was at large, and so eight peasants were arrested as belonging to a counter-revolutionary organization. Those people were neither seen nor heard of again. But collectivization made great progress and, as at least 10% of the peasant population was imprisoned and sent to the Urals during the year, the rest joined the kolkhoz "voluntarily". Then the Yezhov period began and again people from Suki were sent to mass graves via the prisons. Well, even that was not the end. The year 1941 arrived. There were rumours of war. There were rumours of total deportation. And finally, Comr. Maklakov, a plenipotentiary, came to the village and told the assembled peasants that there was not enough land in the Ukraine. He said then that 4000 peasants were at once to set out on a new life in the wide regions of the great Yakutia. "Who agrees to leave Suki and to go with the whole kolkhoz to the wide-spread fields of blooming Yakutia?" exclaimed Maklakov. His answer — a deadly silence; and then unrestrained weeping and wailing, crying and cursing broke the silence. Then the NKVD troops appeared and with them the trucks. The peasants were thrown into the trucks which took them to the virgin taiga of far Yakutia, away from sunny Ukraine. After some time they brought into the village some new people — Russian peasants.

Things somehow happened differently in the neighboring village of Yerastiwka. The people there used to be serfs

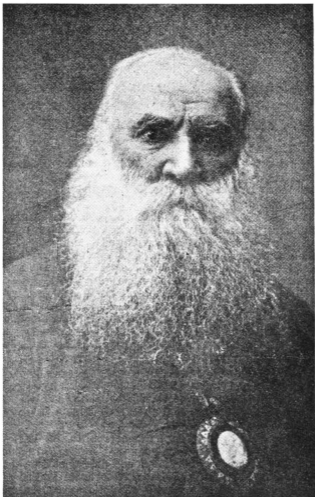
of a landlord by the name of Yerastov. The people were poor, and so, when the revolution came they started to live a bit better. And then the men from the centre came and said: "Let's make kolkhozes!" But the people said: "Really! We have not yet recovered from the landlord's yoke and here you want to put a new one on us." Then the Party Committee sent to Yerastiwka a plenipotentiary 25-thousander, Lashkov. Lashkov talked a great deal. He compiled black lists and he arrested a few peasants, but that did little good: the people refused to go to the kolkhoz. Then the secretary of the Party Committee said: "You are a nincompoop. Let me teach you how to do things. Set five houses on fire, and in the morning we'll have the NKVD around, and then we'll get our kolkhoz filled." A short time later, the village of Yerastiwka was set on fire. In the county paper we read, "A sabotage organization was caught in action in the village of Yerastiwka. This organization had been secretly active for some time against the worker-peasant government, and against Stalinist collectivization. The head of this organization, of this sabotaging, counter-revolutionary gang was a kurkul, a bloody Petlyura-supporter, Stepan Bondarenko." It was quite easy to collectivize the village then, since about one quarter of the Yerastiwka peasants were found to be members of the "sabotage gang".

This village was again purged during the Yezhov period and so a new, much heavier, yoke was put on the shoulders of the peasants not yet healed of the blisters of the landlord's yoke.

CHAPTER

VII.

PERSECUTION OF RELIGION IN THE USSR



**Metropolitan Vasyl Lypkiwsky —
tortured to death by the NKVD.**

Yewhen Prirva

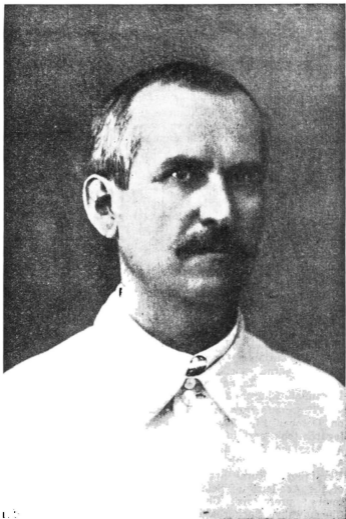
THE UKRAINIAN AUTOCEPHALOUS ORTHODOX CHURCH

Thirty-two years had passed in October, 1952, since the rebirth of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church and its hierarchy at the first all-Ukrainian synod in Kiev, 1921.

The undermining of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church by the Russians dates back to 1686, when the metropolitanate was integrated with the Moscovite patriarch who, in conjunction with the Russian tsar, bribed the Turkish Sultan who, in turn, prevailed upon the Patriarch Dionisiy to concede the Kiev Metropolitan under Muscovite subordination. At that time Muscovite patriarchs strove to create a "Third Rome" in Moscow and strained all their efforts to bring all the Orthodox Churches under their domination. In the reign of Peter I the Holy Synod was formed to head the Russian Orthodox Church. It was an organ of the government and from that time on the Russian Church was completely harnessed to the wagon of the Russian Empire.

The Russian church gradually transformed these subordinate Orthodox churches of the dominated countries into wholly Russian Churches and they were to aid the government in the Russification of these nations.

The tide of Ukrainian national rebirth in 1927 also swept most of the clergy and church-workers. Two months after the collapse of Ukrainian self-determination conferences were held in Kiev, Poltava, Kamyanets Podilsky and other diocese. They all passed resolutions requesting the renewal of an independent Kiev metropolitanate, the return of the Ukrainian language in church services and sermons, and the restoration of church customs and traditions which



1.2

Volodymyr Chekhiwsky, a preacher and church leader, perished in prison.

the Russians had changed during the time that they had the church under their jurisdiction.

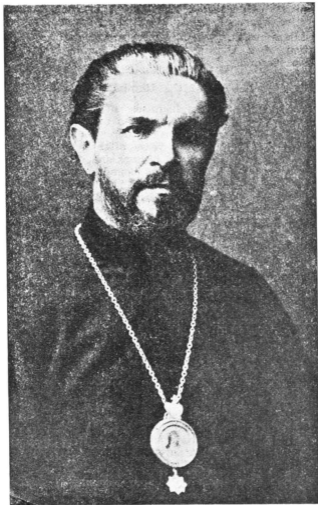
The Kiev conference of 1918 opened with the slogan an "Autocephalous Ukrainian Orthodox Church" but was forced to break up when the bolsheviks occupied the capital.

The Ukrainian government joined the churches in their demands and the Minister of Religion of the Ukrainian Central Council issued a declaration in 1918 calling upon the Muscovite conference of his bishops to create an independent Kiev metropolitanate, according to the will of the Ukrainian people. These requests were turned down by the conference. And in January, a new regulation was adopted by the Ukrainian Central Council stating that, "the Ukrainian Autocephalous Church, with its hierarchy, is in no way dependent upon the Muscovite patriarchate".

Nevertheless, during the war the Ukrainian Church had not achieved its full autocephalous state. During the revolution, parishes sprouted up all over Ukraine, holding services in the Ukrainian language. These parishes were grouped into gubernatorial councils which were headed by the all-Ukrainian Orthodox Council in Kiev which, in turn, was headed by the archpriest, Vasyl Lypkiwsky, of St. Sophia Cathedral.

This church, however, had no hierarchy, no metropolitan, or bishops at the head of it. In accordance with canon law, bishops could be consecrated only by bishops, but the Russian hierarchy in Ukraine refused to acknowledge these demands for an independent Ukrainian Church. Therefore, the all-Ukrainian Orthodox Council called a conference of representatives of the faithful and clergy where definite decisions were to be reached regarding the reforms in the Ukrainian Church and the formation of an hierarchy.

The conference opened in St. Sophia Cathedral in Kiev, on October 14, 1921. Four hundred and seventy-two delegates took part in the discussions; 64 priests, 12 deacons and laymen from different social levels. They came from all over bolshevik occupied Ukraine, including Kuban. Ukrainian cultural life was represented by such Members of the Academy of Sciences as: Krymsky, Stebnytsky, Yefremiw; professors: Chekhiwsky, Danylovich, Storozhenko, Cherkawsky, Shcherbakiwsky, Karpiw, Krasitsky, Pavelko and Starakevich; writers: Mme. Starytska-Cherniakiwska, Steshenko, Kosynka; doctors: Kudrytsky, Levytsky, Cher-



Metropolitan Mykola Boretsky, perished in an NKVD jail.

niakhiwsky, Honcharow, Kozytsky, Yatsnevich, Haidai; co-operative heads: Levytsky, Buchylo, Kudrya.

All representatives unanimously upheld the idea of the creation of a Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church with a hierarchy.

Rebirth of the Ukrainian Church

The creation of the hierarchy of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church and its eventual downfall had a positive influence on the further growth and development of the Church. Two years after the conference the Church had 2500 priests, 36 bishops and over two thousand parishes. It grew by leaps and bounds, mainly due to the truly religious character instilled by its clergy and other heads. At the head was the Metropolitan, holding authority over a highly qualified clergy, some of whom have been mentioned previously. They all considered their work as part of the struggle with bolshevism. They counteracted bolshevik ideology with Christian doctrine.

The swift development of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church soon roused a counter-attack from the bolsheviks. At first they had not the audacity to liquidate the Church outright, but resorted to all sorts of interference. All Church members were excluded from government positions or office work. The children of the priests were prohibited from attending school. The bolsheviks confiscated churches and persecuted the clergy on the smallest pretexts. Publication of church books and journals was not allowed, high taxes were levied on Church properties and on the priests, and various different measures were employed to hinder the development of the Church.

This repression only cleansed the Church of all unstable elements and strengthened its morality. Its leaders threw themselves into their work with greater ardor. Failing to stifle the Church in its growth, the bolsheviks began a straightforward attack: first, against Metropolitan Lypkiwsky and the all-Ukrainian Orthodox Council. The Metropolitan was arrested in 1923 during his visit to the parishes in Bohuslava. Later he was released but forbidden to leave Kiev, and in 1925 all Council members also were forbidden to leave the capital. Many bishops and other church workers had these bans placed on them also. Numerous arrests were made, investigations held, warnings were issued to the



Bishop Yuriy Zhevchenko — executed.

Church to cease its activities and attempts were made to remove Metropolitan Lypkiwsky.

Finally the GPU issued an ultimatum; either the Church would get rid of Metropolitan Lypkiwsky or the government would completely annihilate the whole Church. In order to forestall this action the All-Ukrainian Orthodox Council called a conference for October, 1927. After the delegates were elected the GPU arrested them all, ordering them to elect a new Metropolitan and to denounce the activities of Metropolitan Lypkiwsky.

At the conference the GPU repeated its demands and threats, adding that if these were not complied with none of the participants would return home. Metropolitan Lypkiwsky addressed the conference in a courageous, fiery speech which buoyed his audience with new faith and strength. The conference elected a new Metropolitan, M. Boretsky, but refused to denounce Metropolitan Lypkiwsky.

Bolshevik Attack on the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church

The second conference of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church took place while the GPU was making a strong attack on the Church. The communist government had stepped up its general attack on all Ukrainian life, even the Ukrainian village and farm, and naturally could not condone such a strong organization as the Church had become.

The NKVD outrageously shot, or liquidated through torture and concentration camps, about 30 bishops, over 2,000 priests, nearly all the leading church workers and many church-goers. Metropolitan M. Boretsky died in a dungeon in the far north. Member of the Academy of Sciences, W. Chekhiwsky and Archbishop S. Orlyk also died there. Archbishop Y. Mikhnovsky died in prison; Bishop M. Karabinovich was shot. Those who died from torture were: Bishops Y. Zhywchenko, W. Dakhiwnyk-Dakhiwsky and M. Zadwirnyak and countless others. Many were exiled and never heard of again.

Metropolitan Lypkiwsky was arrested immediately after the second conference. He was released and lived the life of a recluse, since all those who visited him were arrested instantly. Finally he was re-arrested and murdered in an NKVD cellar.

All buildings and other church property were confisc-

ated. Some of the churches were demolished and others turned into clubs, theatres, shops and even concentration camps. Even the ancient churches were destroyed: such architectural monuments as St. Michael's Monastery, St. Nicholas Cathedral, Mazeppa Cathedral, Mykilsky Monastery, Holy Trinity Church, St. George's Church and many others.

The last stages of the Church's struggle with communism were in 1932 to 1936, when the communists waged the final battle against all signs of religious life.



HOW COMMUNISTS PERSECUTE CLERGYMEN

I am a priest of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church which was reborn in 1921, progressed under the leadership of two martyred Metropolitans, Vasyl Lypkiwsky and Mykola Boretsky, fell victim to the Soviet Communist regime and suffered terrible destruction. This church had thirty-six bishops and over three thousand priests who, along with tens of thousands of the faithful, died on the Solovetsky Islands, in the concentration camps of Dallag, Sibltag, Bamtag, White Sea Canal, in Kolyma and other distant points of exile.

In 1942, when Ukraine was temporarily free of Russian-Communist occupation, 270 priests returned from exile with dreadful memories of their experiences, and with impaired health. I was one of them.

I was arrested by the GPU on September 8th, 1929, in the village of Pidvysoka in the Uman District. I was then twenty-six years of age and had served my people for four

years as a priest. I spent a day and a half in prison with two other men of about thirty years of age. One was imprisoned for murdering his wife, and the other for stealing a farmer's cow.

Then we were taken, under escort, to Uman, a distance of about thirty-five to forty miles which we walked all the way. Throughout the whole trip our escort reviled and ridiculed me. According to him, clergymen were greater criminals than robbers or murderers.

After spending the night in the Uman militia centre I was taken to the Uman GPU headquarters. There I was told to take my place in the corridor, where several other prisoners were already seated. Sitting there, I could see through the window trucks bringing more prisoners to our building. Soon there were over a hundred of us sitting and waiting.

My turn came, and I was questioned. I was ordered to renounce the priesthood, and when I refused they beat me. All my papers were taken away such as my pastoral document, my diploma and others.

All those already interrogated were taken to the prison by the GPU, under guard. In the prison courtyard a thorough search was made of every prisoner and we were all assigned to cells. During these searches such articles as knives, razors, belts, string, and others, were taken away. When I was searched I was relieved of my penknife, a belt and my silver cross which was never returned to me.

I was thrown into a cell about twenty-four square yards in area which already contained thirty-four men. I was the thirty-fifth and found a place beside the latrine.

The daily routine was as follows: in the morning we were given some dark, hot liquid called "tea". Later in the day we received 200 grams of black, very soggy bread and some "balanda". After this lunch we were taken out for a walk for ten to fifteen minutes. Back in the cell again the prisoners occupied themselves killing lice. This was our greatest calamity. In the damp cells jammed with human beings they thrived and multiplied and stung our bodies until we were covered with obvious sores.

I spent only a week in the Uman prison, and then was moved to Poltava. This was because I had served parishes in Poltava District and had been transferred to Uman only two weeks prior to my arrest. Thus, the Poltava GPU was to study my case.

Here I was placed in the GPU headquarters, where several other priests were already confined: Rev. Hryhoriy Kononenko, who lost his sanity there, Rev. Fedir Stryzhak, later executed, Rev. M. Nesterowsky, Rev. Volodymyr Slukhayevsky, and several others. Investigation of all clergymen was conducted by Baturyn, who was authorized by the GPU. He was an extremely cruel and wicked man. I was again asked to renounce the priesthood and beaten, but when this proved of no avail I was taken to the prison.

During the communist reign new prison buildings were added to those already in existence in Poltava. During tsarist times, Poltava had only one prison, on Kobylyatsky Street, but it now had in addition the one on Pushkin Street, one on Koloniyska Street, which was a converted Seminary, a prison at the District Militia Headquarters and several prisons in different sections of Poltava. I spent some time in the Kobylyatsky prison, although most of the time I was confined in the former Seminary on Koloniyska Street.

This was a large three-story building packed closely with prisoners, the majority of whom were Ukrainian farmers indicted according to political articles. There were also many Ukrainian intellectuals: professors, doctors, school-teachers and clergymen.

There was hardly a cell that did not hold a priest. I was in cell No. 67 with two other priests. They were both shot, while I was sentenced by the GPU College to seven years in the Administration of the Solovetski Camps of Special Assignment.

During a four-month period, October, 1929 to February 1930, 28 Ukrainian Orthodox priests were jailed in the Poltava prisons. Five of them were shot, one became insane and the others were given five to ten-year terms of exile in the far north.

Instead of being sent to the Solovetski Camps of Special Assignment as originally ordered, I was for some reason taken to the Dallag Administration, first to the First Division near Vladivostok and later shifted to the coal mines of the Second Division, at the Seventeenth Kilometer of the Suchan Tributary. There I picked coal for six years.

There were several chains of concentration camps in the Far East. The first chain, Dalrybosoyuz (The Far Eastern Fishing Association), was located along the shores of the Okhotsk and Japan Seas. The second chain was the

Dalvostenroi; the third — Dallyes; the fourth — Daltranshol; the fifth, Kolyma — Dalzoloto, and others.

In one region of Vladivostok I know of the following camps which functioned from 1930 to 1935: Sixth Stand, Bukhta Deomid, Ehersheld, First Stream, Second Stream, Sidanstoi, Sixth Kilometer of the Suchan Tributary, Eighth Kilometer of the Suchan Tributary, Ninth Kilometer of the Suchan Tributary, Seventeenth Kilometer of the Suchan Tributary and the Location on Suchan River. There may have also been other camps besides these eleven, which I knew well.

Living and working conditions in the concentration camps were as follows: the prisoners worked ten full hours in the pits digging coal, then they came out for the so-called rest. Upon leaving the mine every prisoner was required to stand in line for bread, and in another line for soup or tea. This was a nervewracking procedure for us and took up much time. Bread was doled out according to the quotas accomplished: 1000 grams, 800 grams and 600 grams. The hot liquid was issued according to the amount of bread given.

We slept on bunks called "nary", attached to the walls in tiers, in frame barracks of about 200 to 250 men to each barrack. In the middle stood a heater made from an iron mine wagon. Around this make-shift stove hung our undergarments, handkerchiefs and foot rags. The place was filthy and stinking. Prisoners who slept farther away from the heater came close from time to time to warm up a bit, then returned to their bunks. In winter they caught severe colds and quickly died.

The priests invariably got the worst jobs; coal diggers, latrine attendants, horse attendants, pick miners, and others. We were known as the "silent ones" because no matter what we said we were punished for it and we had become reticent and aloof.

Persons could be, and were, tried and sentenced for things they had said or done. For instance the GPU Trio selected 300 of the better men from among the prisoners in our camp: teachers, engineers, priests and farmers and shot eighty-seven of them in Vladivostok. The rest were sentenced to ten years in special political isolation camps.

There were also cases when people were burned at the stake. In Bukhta Siziman the chief of the Donalis Concentration Camp and his wife burned people alive, shot them

with pistols or set the hounds on them. This chief's terrorism was known throughout all the neighboring camps.

Having served my term, I was released in 1936. I was denied all citizenship rights and the possibility of securing a permanent position. I travelled all over Ukraine and the Donets Basin working at temporary jobs, usually manual labor.

I lived under the communist regime for twenty-two years, from 1919 until 1941, in Ukraine and beyond its borders. During this time I was imprisoned for seven years in the Far East and for sixteen years, being a priest, I was denied all citizenship rights.

BISHOPS OF THE UKRAINIAN AUTOCEPHALOUS ORTHODOX CHURCH MURDERED IN COMMUNIST PRISONS AND CONCENTRATION CAMPS

Metropolitans:

1. Mykola Boretsky — 1937
2. Vasyl Lypkiwsky — 1938
3. Ivan Pawlowsky — 1938
4. O. Vzovenewsky — 1938

Archbishops:

5. Olexander Yarenchenko — 1936
6. Stepan Orlyk — 1928
7. Yuriy Sawchenko — 1928
8. Yuriy Mykhnowsky — 1937
9. Petro Tarnawsky — 1935
10. Yukhym Kalnyshevsky — 1936
11. Oleksander Cherniwsky — 1936
12. Konstantin Krotewich — 1936
13. Theodosiy Ariyiw — 1936
14. Osyp Oksiuk — 1934
15. Konstantin Malyushkewich — 1935
16. Volodymyr Dakhiwnyk-Dakhiwsky — 1936
17. Petro Rometaniw — 1937

Bishops:

18. Yakiw Shulayewsky — 1929
19. Hryhoriy Storonenko — 1928
20. Marko Hrushewsky — 1929
21. Kanon Bey — 1937
22. Vasyl Pshenychny — 1934
23. Anton Bronowsky — 1934
24. Volodymyr Mikhnowsky — 1937
25. Maxym Zadwirnyak — 1935
26. Mykola Karabinevich — 1935
27. Volodymyr Samborsky — 1935.

H. Senko

HISTORY OF THE DESTRUCTION OF THE UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

The Village of Mykhailiwka, (county of Sakhnoshchany in the Poltava region)

The church in this village was razed by fire by Soviet activists in 1929. This trick was resorted to after all other attempts to destroy the church met with strong resistance from the villagers. Heading this action was one Peter Bezruchko, head of the Village Council, and a Russian immigrant, T. Fydrya, head of the "Komnezam", Committee of Poor Farmers. They used the small building beside the church, originally meant as a residence for the caretaker, for a temporary prison for the "counter-revolutionaries". In one of the rooms they conducted the new type Soviet-perfected tortures on the arrestees. The victims were kept for days without water while the small heater was kept red-hot constantly, so that the room's temperature caused unbearable thirst in the prisoners.

One fall night in 1929 this prison-house burned down and the church with it. During that night several men were being tortured for defending their faith and their Church. They were: Pavlo Sybirny, president of the Church Council 1927 to 1929, his two brothers, Pylyp and Fedir Sybirny, Andriy Kosenko, Fedir Malil, Ivan Brynza and Hrytsko Brynza. The special GPU college sentenced each of them to ten years in concentration camps.

Pavlo and Fedir Sybirny, Andriy Kosenko and Fedir Malil were sent to serve their term in Kem, on the Murmansk railroad line on the White Sea. Pylyp Sybirny, Ivan and Hrytsko Brynza went to Arkhangelsk to work at wood cutting.

Children and other relatives of these men were constantly persecuted as "politically unsound". In Mykhailiwka they were under the continuous surveillance of T. Fydry and Ivan Sudorenko, an agent of the GPU, who was brought to the village especially for this purpose. The three children of Pavlo Sybirny are a good illustration of the treatment of all such children.

At all public meetings the name of their father was announced. They were refused documents by the Village Council so that they could never leave the village. Only rarely were they accepted by the collective farms for work, and then they were given the worst manual tasks. To show the slightest displeasure meant the same fate as their father's. No matter how they tried to "become loyal" to the Soviet regime it was of no avail. When Muscovite imperialists stepped-up their attack on the Ukrainian villagers all three Sybirny sons were caught in its web. They were all charged with alleged "anti-kolkhoz agitation" and the older two each received ten-year terms in the far north, while the third, Mykhaylo, was sentenced to execution.

He spent 32 days in a death-cell in the Poltava prison annex. The appeal court changed his sentence to ten years in a concentration camp, with loss of citizenship rights for five years after the first term had been served. By coincidence he was sent to Kem, where he met his father. That was in 1937.

At the beginning of 1942 he, and thousands of other exiles was sent to the front to defend the government which had ruined his young life. He was taken prisoner by the Germans and liberated from Hitler's concentration camps by the coming of the Americans in 1945.

"My deep faith in God saved me from complete physical destruction", says Mykhaylo Sybirny.

The Village of Deimaniwka (Pyryatyn, Poltava)

The church of St. Nicholas in this village was a frame building. It was closed in 1929 and the priest, O. Zhyrytsky, arrested. There were certain indications that he was murdered in a GPU cell, although his family was told that he was serving a ten-year sentence without the right of correspondence.

He was a highly educated man and was held in high esteem not only in his own village but by all surrounding villages. At the same time the church elder, Stepan Mud-

renko, was arrested, along with Fedir Fedya and Nikifor Mudrenko. None of these was ever heard of again.

At the beginning of 1930 the crosses and the bells were removed from the belfry by the local activists, under the direction of the chief of the village council Ivan Hryhay and including: Mykhaiylo Semenyak, M. Zozulya, Hrytsko Kostyany, Platon Kostyany, Ivan Saik, Petro Saik, Hrytsko Lohvyenko and others. On March 18, 1930 the whole group broke down the church door and wrecked everything inside. They called this an "anti-religious carnival". All ikons were torn and piled in a heap outside and burnt with all the books and archives.

The rugs were taken and used in the Village Council "offices", and the costly vestments and silk altar cloths were ripped into small pieces and divided among the looters, to be made into tobacco pouches. After this vandalism the church stood vacant until 1932. From 1932 until the outbreak of the war with Germany in 1941 it was used by the Deimaniwsky collective farm, "the Red Woods", as a granary for wheat.

The Village of Rudiwka (Yabluniw, Chernyhiw)

The communists closed the church in this village in 1921, but it was not until 1930 that they destroyed it completely. This, however, was not easily accomplished. The villagers stalwartly defended their church. They took turns in standing guard beside it day and night the whole winter of 1929-1930. The women watched in the daytime and the men at night. During the cold spells they made bonfires for warmth.

The village activists were helpless in their desire to wreck the church so they called the party komsomols from other villages (and the town of Pryluky) to their aid. Finally the destruction was accomplished on February 16, 1930. When several of their attempts at the church were repulsed by the villagers the activists quickly summoned two fire engines from Pryluky. These were told to disperse the crowd, who were stoically guarding their church, by turning the hose on them. The firemen did this and when a passage was cleared the hoodlums rushed in. The ladders from the fire engines were raised and soon they had the crosses and the bells down. The others tore inside, breaking and smashing everything in sight. Books, ikons and ornaments were thrown outside and burned. The orgy was soon in full

swing and all the activists were joining the "anti-religious carnival". The village prostitute, Nataika Cheperys, donned the sacred vestments, draped herself with the embroidered altar cloth and, dancing around the burning heap, sang popular communist ditties.

"Representatives of the people" stood up and made loathsome speeches vilifying the Church and those who believed in God.

The Village of Melyukhy (Chornukhy, Poltava)

The church in this village had two altars, Holy Trinity altar and the Assumption of the Holy Virgin Mary altar. It was built in 1907 by local builders, Andriy Kapusta and Pylyp Salyvon, in true Ukrainian style.

In 1929 the church was closed. Before this, however, numerous arrests were made to break the villagers' resistance. In 1931 the church was wrecked and looted. Two GPU agents from Chornukhy and Lokhvytsya came into the village and with the help of local activists, Sydir Tserkovny and Hrytsko Punko, took down the bells. They dismantled the church, dividing the loot among themselves, later using it in their own homes.

At the same time severe reprisals were conducted against those who had defended the church. Because Pavlo Kapytanenko had been a church elder he was under harsh attack by the Soviet stooges. He was taxed unmercifully, and when he was unable to meet these demands his property was auctioned. Fedir Zarudny, a very poor farmer but a devout church member, was also subjected to the same treatment. His barn and small shed were sold and even a tall poplar that grew in his garden was cut down and sold, to pay the taxes.

In 1934, when the church was made into a community centre, religious villagers refrained from entering it.

The Village of Klushnykiwka (Myrhorod, Poltava)

The church of the Holy Mother of God was in this village. It was built by the villagers themselves under the supervision of an architect from Poltava. Rev. Vasyl Vysylenko was the pastor since its inception in the days of the Ukrainian National Revolution. He conducted all his services and sermons in the Ukrainian language. In 1929 he was arrested and confined to the Kharkiw prison. Later



The All-Ukrainian Orthodox Council — nearly all of its members were executed.

he was given a ten-year term in the far north without the right to correspond.

The church was taxed heavily. Almost daily two or three thousand rubles had to be paid. Those who defended the church were: Havrylo Sokhatsky, Viktor Sokhatsky, Maksym Sokhatsky, Yosyp Sokhatsky, Ulian Khodyak, Kurpian Horbyk, and others. On instructions from the Regional Party Committee the local activists called a meeting and decided to collect the villagers' signatures petitioning the closing of the church. This meeting was held in January, 1930. The closing of the church was motivated by the need for a community centre for "educational-cultural" activities.

These "voluntary" signatures were collected by: Petro Honcharenko, Anton Bondar, Nestor Len, and Oleksander Holoborodko. The church was stripped of all its precious possessions. Heading this action was T. Korol, authorized by the Regional Communist Party Committee. On the evening of February 15, 1930, all ikons, books, archives and other articles were taken out in the courtyard and burned. Some people actually threw themselves into the fire to rescue some of the things, and managed to keep them hidden until the German occupation.

During this procedure the local communists got up and harangued the village saying that religion was the opiate of the people. The following day Ivan Chervyachuk and others went up and tore down the crosses and the bells. These were given to the state as scrap iron. The highly artistic woodcarving on the altar screen was broken up and burned.

In 1932 the communists attempted to make a community centre of the church. The people were determined not to allow this, and the first time that workers arrived to start on the alterations they were driven away. The communists then acted in their usual manner. One night in the spring of 1932 the "Black Crow" drove up from Poltava and carried away over 30 people. They were mercilessly tortured in the NKVD chambers. Their names were: Maksym Sokhatsky, Yosyp Sokhatsky and Hryhoriy Korsun. Their fingers were squeezed by a closing door during interrogations and they were tied in special sacks and rolled. They were all given ten-year terms in the far north by a closed court without the right to correspond.

When the workers returned again, the women rushed into the church and took away whatever the communists

had overlooked earlier. Some of these women were: Kateryna Kovalenko, Ulyana Harashchenko, Ewdokia Sylenko, Domakha Stenko, Kateryna Sokhatska. By the time the renovation was completed, new orders came from the regional headquarters that it was to be used as a granary.

During the German occupation the villagers redeemed the church for religious services, furnishing it with the few articles which had been saved from communist destruction.

The Village of Towkachiwka (Malodiyske, Chernyhiw)

This village contained the church of the Holy Mother of God, which was destroyed by the following local communists: Yakiw Kumeyko, Stepan Malko and I. Lisnychenko, the village mayor. It was these men who decided on those who should be arrested in the village, who should be "de-kurkulized" and exiled. It was this trio who initiated the closing of the church in 1929.

First they arrested the priest, and no one knew what became of him. Then they went about the "formality" of closing and ruining the church. This was done in the fall of 1929. For the sum of 100 rubles and a quart of vodka the village activist climbed up to the belfry and knocked down the bells and the cross. A representative of the District Party Committee came, called the former head of the parish and asked him to go to the church with him and show him where the church valuables were hidden.

Entering the church, the devout church elder removed his cap and made the sign of the cross. The plunderers who were with him laughed, and ridiculed him. In half an hour the vandals ruined everything. The Komsomols and activists broke up and tore the sacred paintings and decorations, giving full vent to their abnormal instincts. The Holy Scriptures and other books which were the church's treasures, the psalms and notes, were a pile of rubble in the middle of the floor. These barbarians also destroyed the special record books which were kept by the local priests since the beginning of the sixteenth century. The altar screen was broken into splinters and everything was burned.

The Village of Polova (Pryluky, Chernyhiw)

This village had a church built of stone and annually commemorated the day of the Blessed Virgin. In 1928, the Reverend Father Pylp, who was the resident pastor, was

arrested as an underground Petlyurist and exiled to the far north, where he was finally murdered in 1929 by a gang of hoodlums, the GPU guards.

On October 6, 1929 the local communists held a secret meeting where they decided to destroy the church. On orders from headquarters they called a general meeting on November 11th, in the school building. The presidium consisted of Stepan Chornomaz, Hryhoriy Chornomaz, I. Khytniak and Petro Olyfirenko. The doors were guarded so that no one would leave the meeting.

When no one raised their hands to vote for the destruction of the church, all present were called to the front individually to sign a prepared statement. Only twenty names were signed; those of the activists and a few terrorized victims. The others refused to give in to this coercion. Two people openly stood up in defence, Kateryna Zinchenko and Fedir Pyatyhorets. Although no definite decision was reached the following day a document was dispatched to the District headquarters stating that "the people had petitioned for the closing of the church and only the 'kurkuls' and their stooges protested".

On November 10, 1929, the activists started the procedure of ruining the church, but the villagers interfered. A militia unit and a GPU group came to the village and made numerous arrests. All arrested were kept in prison for three days and interrogated. Some of the arrested were: Pyatyhorets, his wife and daughter, Dmytro Demyd, Maryna Bilka, Dmytro Bilka, Kost Zinchenko, Pylyp Filonenko and many others, mostly women.

After all the more courageous ones were arrested, the activists went ahead with their vandalism. T. Bondariev, a Russian from Moscow and then residing in the village went up and threw the cross down. For this he received a quart and a half of vodka. The date of this act was November 12, 1929. On this same day the activist group sneaked inside the church and completed the destruction of the interior. The altar screen was smashed and later burned in front of the church with all the books, ikons and other furnishings. The bells were taken down, flattened with hammers, and hauled to Pryluky.

Later some activists voiced the opinion that it had not been wise to take down all the bells, as they could have been used in case fire broke out. The church building stood

deserted for many months, and later was used as a prison for "kurkuls".

The first "kurkuls" to be imprisoned there were the former church elder Dmytro Bilka and his wife. Her baby was taken away from her three days after birth and they were both shipped, with the older children, to Arkhangel'sk. Several other families were arrested then and shipped to this northern outpost. None of them was ever heard of again.

The Village of Demydiwka (Kreminchuk, Poltava)

In this village stood the Holy Trinity Monastery, built in 1755 by two local Ukrainian lords, Mehdyna and Hustynovych. In 1915 the villagers had commemorated the 160th anniversary of its existence.

The parish priest, Father Yukhym Murashko, well-known throughout the neighbouring villages had served this village for sixty years. In the years of the Ukrainian National Revolution he assembled the people from surrounding villages and blessed them for the struggle with bolshevism.

In June, 1920, the Cheka came from Kreminchuk and murdered this Ukrainian patriot beside the monastery wall. The several succeeding priests were also annihilated.

This beautiful edifice stood until 1928, when it was turned into a library. In 1930 it was demolished and the material taken to build barns and a tobacco storage house on the collective farm "Petrowsky". Those who participated in the destruction were the head of the collective farm, Trokhym Lutsenko, Kuzma Zaychenko, Mykola Slonov. As usual, they started by going to the top of the building and throwing down the cross, first dividing among themselves the gold plating. Then they knocked down the bells. The biggest bell, weighing over 6,500 pounds, had to be pulled down from the belfry.

Because the door was locked, Zaychenko and Slonov, with a flock of komsomols, broke down the door with a long pole and tore inside. They carried in ladders, propped them against the ikon and ripped off the gold and silver trimmings. According to evidence of the faithful there were about thirteen pounds of gold taken and about forty pounds of silver. Many treasures were looted by the activists.

After this stripping, a secret Party-Komsomol meeting was held where it was decided that the monastery should be demolished. The villagers intervened at first when the

destructive work began. The local party activists and kom-somols were so enraged that they planned to kill the parish priest, the Reverend Mykhaylo Potapchuk, in reprisal. News of this leaked out and he was forewarned of the contemplated action. He was given some false documents and with these he fled from the village. This was in 1928.

After this, all defenders of the monastery were punished in different ways. Those who suffered the most were the ones taken as hostages. They were arrested as "suspects" and imprisoned in the Kreminchuk jail from 1928 to 1930. Among them were: Ivan Kowal, Fedir Kowal, Prokip Kowal, Hrytsko Kowal, Yukhym Kowal, Korniy Kowal, Prokhor Pawlenko, Ivan Pawlenko, Prokip Pawlenko, Hnat Pawlenko, Davyd Pawlenko, Mykhaylo Hryhorowich, Andriy Kotlyarewsky, Fedosiy Kotlyarewsky, Ivan Onysko, Korniy Nalywayko, Ustym Pustowiyt, Fedir Vorokuta, Mykyta Ohniwenko, Platon Ohniwenko, Semen Prokopenko, and many others.

In June, 1930, they were brought to Potoka, a small railroad station, where their families were also brought after their homes had been looted and all their possessions taken away. In closed freight cars they were all shipped to the Urals and unloaded in the forest under the bare Siberian sky, without any sort of dwelling places whatsoever. They were the first settlers of the new, vast concentration camp of Yayva.

There they all died from overwork, cold, hunger and the ravaging diseases. The one who headed the process of exiling these decent citizens was the head of the village council of the village of Demydiwka, Ivan Volkov. Some of the women had refused to leave their homes and were thrown out by force, their fingers being broken off when they clung to the doorways. The kom-somols, under the leadership of their secretary, Ivan Shcherbukhow, and an activist, Mykhaylo Kowal, pulled all the rings off the women's fingers and actually broke the fingers of those who protested.

This whole deportation process was carried through in three hours, from 11 o'clock P. M. until 2 A. M. On the way from the village to the station many young girls were raped, among them Maria Pawlenko and Marta Kowal. In a week and a half new settlers arrived to occupy the homes left by those families. They were Russian families from Vyatsk.

A. Fedorenko

FREEDOM OF WORSHIP IN THE SOVIET

In order to destroy the Orthodox Church in Ukraine the bolsheviks had first of all to close all the church buildings, but as this was not an easy thing to do they had to recourse to all kinds of stratagems. The following is a fair sample of their work.

The village of Karpylivka in the county of Ivankiw, in Kiev province, boasted the beautiful, large church of the Holy Trinity. Almost a score of the neighboring villages and hamlets belonged to the parish of this church. It was a thorn in the side of the local bolsheviks and they decided to destroy it.

First of all they ordered the priest to move out of the church residence, and changed it into a club and offices for the village administration. The church building was already carrying a load of newly-invented taxes, but the people paid them and made this line of attack ineffective.

Now however, new means of attack were at hand. On Easter Night when the church was full of people the communists compelled all members of the komsomol to attend an all night festival, held in the former residence of the priest. There was an orchestra from the county seat and enthusiasm ran so high that it seriously interfered with the service in church. This was exactly the purpose behind the dance, apart from a hope that the young people who filled the church would be drawn away from it and join the revellers. Failing in their hopes the komsomol members were ordered to rob, steal or destroy things in those houses whose owners had gone to church, leaving no one at home. In the early dawn at the end of the solemn Easter Service there was a glow outside and the church bell rang the alarm. In the excitement and confusion that followed some shouted

that the village of Vydumky was on fire. The people ran there to help but on coming closer they saw how they had been tricked by the communists. Having hauled some bales of straw beneath a large tree standing apart, the communists set fire to them and thus broke up the Mass and spoiled the holiday mood.

A little later the the communists made a hole in the church wall and, putting an old shell in it, spread the rumour that it might explode at any time. They thought this would scare the people away from the church, but this also failed.

It was not until the Yezhov period when the priest and many parishioners were arrested and sent to Siberia, that the communists succeeded in closing the Church of the Holy Trinity. It was stripped of valuables, and served as a granary for the collective farm. In the end red guerillas set fire to it in 1943 and caused a conflagration in which half of the village of Karpyliwka was destroyed.

A different method, practiced in many other places, was used in the county seat, Ivankiw. When holy Mass was under way, some female member of the Komsomol would jump into the church and, shouting vulgar abuse, would berate the priest for failing to pay "alimony" for his "child". Everybody knew perfectly well that this was foul communist provocation but kept quiet because they also knew that opposition to the administration "laws" would be followed by mass arrests and the closing of the church. This church which, by the way, I visited many times, was closed in 1932 and later torn down and the material used for building a club house.

There were two churches in the town of Chornobyl on the Prypyat river, the Church of St. Elias and the Church of the Immaculate Heart. One day the communists tried this scheme: At the Easter all-night service they sent to church a "believing" communist who, putting candles before the ikons set the paper flowers, a wreath adorning the resurrection scene, on fire and caused confusion among the people. The fire was speedily put out and the scheme failed. but in spite of everything the church was later closed, the roof removed, and it became a day nursery for children.

In this way by arrest, high taxes and other "freedoms of worship" the communists closed all the churches in the district, in the villages of Kapryliwka, Orane, Krasyliwka, Sloboda, Cherevachi and in the towns of Ivankiw, Horno-staipil and Chornobyl.

THE UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH AND COMMUNISM

(Abridged from "First Victims of Communism", Rome, 1953)

1) The First Communist Occupation: (1939-1941)

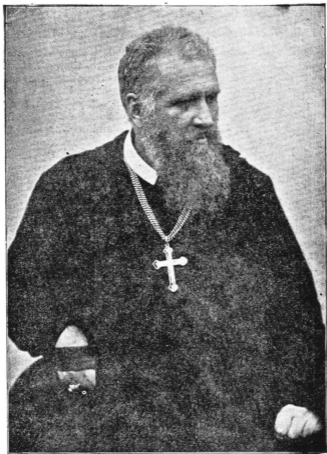
Following the collapse of Poland in 1939, the Ukrainian Catholic Church suffered its first appalling baptism of fire under German and Russian occupation. The twenty-two months of the first Soviet occupation of Galicia, as described by the venerable Metropolitan Andriy Sheptytsky, Archbishop of Lviv, were an application of the militant atheistic principles adopted in Spain during the Civil War. The occupation of Galicia and Volhynia by Soviet troops was accompanied by catching shibboleths like: "Liberation of the Ukrainian people from the yolk of Polish capitalism", "Reunion with the Mother Country". But with Galicia reunited, and order established, they once again resorted to enslaving the people physically and morally under the communist regime of Moscow. That which took twenty years to accomplish in Eastern Ukraine was achieved here in the short space of two years, namely: nationalization of industry and private property; collectivization of the estates of small landowners; arrest of prominent politicians, scholars, and economists; suppression of organizations and societies, in order to eliminate the ruling class in Western Ukraine, which had remained voluntarily with their own people despite the communist regime. Within this frame of national and political events, the communist government began its war against the Catholic Church. It had already destroyed Christianity in Eastern Ukraine. But here, in Western Ukraine, it encountered for the first time Ukrainian Catholicism as a strongly organized body, preserved in full vigor

by centuries of struggle for existence. The Ukrainian Catholic Church met the new authorities loyally, but with unflinching courage.

In December, 1939, the Metropolitan of Lwiw, Andriy Sheptytsky, exhorted the priests of his diocese in a pastoral letter to comply with all government orders, in so far as they did not oppose the divine law and warned them against participation in political and worldly affairs, but told them to continue laboring zealously and unremittingly for the cause of Christ among the Ukrainian people. Precise and detailed instructions for the clergy followed in the wake of this pastoral letter. Since the Russian authorities confiscated all typewriters, printing presses, and mimeographs, the letters to each of the 1,276 parishes had to be written by hand. Thus the guiding voice of the Metropolitan reached the priests, although with some delay. The Metropolitan was well aware of the fact that within a year's time he would lose many of his priests, not only because the diocesan seminaries of Lwiw, Peremyshl, Stanyslaviw, were, or would be closed, but also because the Soviets had unanimously decreed the suppression of all monasteries and religious institutions. The arrests and deportations were soon to begin and the priests were to be the first victims. Heavy taxes were imposed on the clergy, who were labeled "ministers of the cult", while many others were driven from their parishes. The Metropolitan protested vehemently against this wanton plundering.

He sent his priests to celebrate Mass in the churches of the suppressed monasteries, and set them up as parishes; the religious students and seminarians were sent to parishes deprived of their pastors. Realizing that many of the faithful were to be deported, he fervently exhorted his priests to accompany these victims of brutal hatred, and to render them moral solace, and minister to their spiritual needs. To protect the faith of the people from the assaults of atheistic communism he earnestly recommended to his priests the preaching of the Gospel, especially instructions in Catholic Doctrine.

With the withdrawal of Red troops from Western Ukraine the NKVD murdered thousands upon thousands of prisoners, among whom there were many priests. In the footsteps of the retreating Russian forces came the German army which was to occupy Western Ukraine for four years. The oppressed people welcomed their "liberators" with great



ANDRIY SHEPTYTSKY, OSBM

**Metropolitan of Halych, Archbishop of L'viv,
Bishop of Kamenets**

Born 29. 7. 1865 — elected 17. 6. 1899 — died 1. 11. 1944

joy. However, their hopes were quickly shattered. The new occupation was no better than the old, and left behind many victims and sorrowful memories.

2) The Second Communist Occupation: (1944-1952)

When the Russian troops occupied Galicia (Western Ukraine) for the second time in 1944, the Ukrainian Catholic Church had the following ecclesiastical boundaries: the archdiocese of L'viv, the dioceses of Peremyshl and of Stanyslaviw, the Apostolic Administration of the Lemki and the territory of the Apostolic Visitor for Volhynia. After the demarcation of the Polish and Ukrainian frontiers, the so-called "Curzon Line", a large part of the diocese of Peremyshl and the entire Administration of the Lemki fell within the boundaries of Poland, while the diocese of L'viv and Stanyslaviw and a great part of the diocese of Peremyshl re-entered Soviet Ukraine.

The communists, at least at first, maintained a cunningly respectful attitude towards the Church, entirely different from their policies of 1939. Soldiers and officers attended religious services; hostile propaganda was imperceptible; perverse literature was prohibited. Even crucifixes were allowed in civil hospitals. But all religious propaganda was persistently prevented from the outset; no more religious books or papers treating on religious subjects were allowed to circulate. In fact, all religious publications and diocesan printing offices stopped operating. Religious instruction was permitted in the churches; however, schools were obliged to remain secularized, and abstain from any religious manifestations. Churches were reopened so that religious holidays could be celebrated. On Easter Day, to add to the joy of the population, even the price of liquor was lowered. Seminaries were allowed to exist. Not only were priests and students of Theology exempted from military service and obligatory work, but even the seminarians and ecclesiastical singers, and in some places, the Presidents of Confraternities. The churches paid very moderate taxes. Convents which the German Command had returned to religious communities were allowed to remain as religious property. It seemed that after the concessions made to Christianity by the USSR in 1941-43, and the following years, the Catholic Church could now breathe freely under the bolshevik regime. The elaborate funeral allowed for the death of the Metropolitan of L'viv, Monsignor A. Sheptytsky, who died on Nov-

JOSYP SLIPY

**Metropolitan of Halych,
Archbishop of Lviw
Bishop of Kamenets**

**Imprisoned April 11, 1945.
Condemned to forced labor
in Siberia.**



NYKYTA BUDKA

Bishop of Patara

**First Bishop for Catholic
Ukrainians in Canada till
1926.**

Later Vicar General of Lviw.

**Imprisoned April 11, 1945.
Condemned to forced labor
in Siberia.**



ember 1, 1944, in which his brother Fr. Clement, religious Sisters and his family took part, seemed to confirm these illusions. But the Soviet authorities soon began taking inventories of property owned by churches and monasteries and making lists of their personnel. Pressure was being applied to ecclesiastical authorities demanding that they express publicly their respect for the Soviet State and its Dictator. Public prayers in the churches were requested for the victory of the Red Armies. But, as a whole, the attitude of the Soviets towards the Catholic Church was one of sly waiting. They wanted to create the impression of a complete change, on their part, towards religion, — and in this way, gain the sympathies of the Ukrainian population for the bolshevik government. This attitude, however, towards the Ukrainian Catholic Church slowly changed.

In the autumn and winter of the year 1944, Soviet authorities commenced summoning the clergy of regional centers for conferences and meetings. The speakers, treating of subjects pertaining to ecclesiastical and historical ideology began, in general terms, to disparage the history of the Church, and to dishonor Rome, the Papacy, and the Catholic Church. The priests were obliged to listen to these instructions which were precisely meant for their "re-education".

The first step in this direction was the publication of an article by Volodymyr Rosovich, on April 6, 1945, "With Cross and Knife". It was directed against the late Metropolitan A. Sheptytsky. This article was first published in the periodical "Free Ukraine" (Vilna Ukraina) in Lviw, and then printed in a separate leaflet for distribution among the people. These preparations served as initial steps toward open persecution. Five Ukrainian bishops were arrested (on April 11, 1945) at Lviw and Stanyslaviw: The Metropolitan J. Slipy, the Archbishop of Lviw, Mons. N. Budka, Vicar General of the Metropolitan, Mons. N. Charnetsky, Apostolic Visitor of Volhynia, Mons. G. Khomyshyn, Bishop of Stanyslaviw, Mons. G. Latyshewsky, Auxiliary of Stanyslaviw, and Mons. P. Verhun, Apostolic Administrator for Ukrainians resident in Germany, arrested in Berlin.

Shortly after, many of the major dignitaries of the Chapters and diocese were also arrested. The students of two Seminaries (Lviw and Stanyslaviw) were conscripted for military service in the Red Army. For ten consecutive days the police searched the Cathedral of St. George and the

GREGORY KHOMYSHYN

(1867-1946)

Bishop of Stanyslaviw

Imprisoned April 11, 1945.

**Died in prison for the
Catholic Faith 1946.**



IVAN LATYSHEWSKY

(1879-?)

Bishop of Adada

Auxiliary of Stanyslaviw.

Imprisoned April 11, 1945.

**Probably died already for
the Catholic Faith.**

Archbishop's palace and carried off the archives, many religious articles and furniture. A similar search was made of the Bishop's palace at Stanyslaviw.

Metropolitan J. Slipy, a few hours before his arrest, predicted the tragedy, and wished to delegate his powers to two priests. They were unwilling to believe in the imminent danger and refused to accept. Following the arrest of His Excellency, the Metropolitan of Lwiw, several Canons proceeded to elect the Vicar Capitular, but he also was arrested soon after. In 1945 the trial of the imprisoned Bishops began. The trial of Metropolitan J. Slipy should have been held at Lwiw, but took place instead in Kiev, behind closed doors. Although accused only of certain "crimes" committed by his predecessor, contrary to all expectations he was condemned to deportation and eight years of forced labor. The 80 years old Bishop of Stanyslaviw, Msgr. G. Khomyshyn, was condemned to ten years of forced labor. Msgr. Charnetsky, "an agent of the Vatican" was condemned to five years and Msgr. N. Budka and Msgr. J. Latyshewsky to 8 years. A dreadful panic seized the clergy when informed of what had happened to their Bishops. Deprived of their leaders, outlawed and persecuted, the priests knew their hour of trial had come.

The Soviet authorities then published an order prohibiting all religious ceremonies. Only those priests were allowed to celebrate who were "registered" by competent state-officials. In every parish, a committee of twenty persons was appointed and charged with the administration of the Church's property.

A few weeks after the arrest of Ukrainian Catholic bishops, a "Movement for the reunion of the Greek Catholic Church with the Orthodox Church" was established in Lwiw — under Soviet direction.

Campaigns of propaganda were always accompanied and protected by the police, who obliged the Deans, through threats of arrest, to assemble the priests of each district. Many were forced to yield to this abuse of authority, but the greater number preferred imprisonment and deportation. The first step of this "Movement" was to clear its proceedings with the "Council of Commissaries of Soviet Ukraine". The Movement was recognized as the temporary ecclesiastical administrative organ for the direction of the Catholic Ukrainian Church, and was authorised in the future to regulate all juridical questions concerning the administration

of parishes and their reunion with the Orthodox Church. It was also obliged to transmit to the Plenipotentiary of the Russian Orthodox Church a list of all the priests and superiors of monasteries who refused to submit to its jurisdiction. This was the first official act of the Soviet Ukrainian Government in regard to the Ukrainian Church in Galicia. It was a direct violation of the Soviet Constitution, which states that the Church in the Soviet Union is separate from the state, — and that the latter does not interfere with the former. With this act, the group of spies accusing the Ukrainian Catholic Church was officially recognized as an ecclesiastical authority. The great majority of the Ukrainian Catholic clergy opposed the action of the "Movement". Over 300 courageous priests signed a protest to the Vice-President of the Ministers of the Soviet Union U. V. Molotov, on the 1. of June, 1945, — against the activity of this "Movement", condemning it as harmful both to Church and State.

The police called all the priests to city reunions and urged them to accept the schism. If some proved obstinate, they were summoned to a private interview with the agent of the NKVD, and then presented two documents to sign: with the first they consented to take part in the "Movement" and with the second they testified to their freedom of choice. Those not willing to sign could leave the room. but were arrested on the street or in their homes, on some pretext or other, and then were browbeaten, until they signed the documents. A few priests wanting to scape imprisonment, were obliged to hide, or flee from their parishes. Some joined the Poles and were transferred from Ukraine to Poland. Others joined the Ukrainian Partisans in the forests. According to the news still arriving from abroad in 1946, — more than 500 Ukrainian priests of the diocese of Lviw, were in prison. An American priest returning from Lviw, who had been imprisoned in 1946 with Catholic Ukrainians there, says the number of Ukrainian priests in jail was about 800. A railway worker related that during one night in the prison of Chortkiw, 150 Ukrainian Catholic priests of the district of Ternopil were deported to Siberia.

Some churches were closed after the arrest or deportation of their priests. Before their arrest, they advised the people, in case of necessity, to baptize the children even without a priest, and pray at home on Sundays and Church holidays. Strange to say, the Soviet authorities did not

impose apostasy on the faithful. At first the people could not understand this treatment of the priests by the Government, but on perceiving the truth, they were filled with consternation and dismay.

The Pseudo-Council took place at Lviw from the 8th to the 10th of March, 1946. 204 priests and 12 laymen were present at this "Synod". It is unknown how many of them were agents of the secret police of the NKVD. No catholic leaders were present, and the direction was completely in the hands of apostates.

The "Synod" sent a telegram of homage and respect to the Patriarch of Moscow, Alexis, and to the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople. It also sent a letter directed to the clergy and faithful of Western Ukraine, plus a message of homage to the "great General" Stalin, and to the Head of the Government of Soviet Ukraine. The "Synod" therefore declared the Union of Berestya annulled. Everything was put under the Patriarchate of Moscow, — and the decrees of the "Synod" were forwarded to the Council of Ministers of Ukraine and the President of the Council for the affairs of the Orthodox Church.

Everything about this "reunion" points to political trickery. A small group of priests allowed itself to be terrorized into complicity with Moscow's schemes. But the great majority of priests resisted firmly, preserving unshaken the faith in the only real Church of Christ. The schismatic Bishop of Lviw, Makarius published in the official bulletin of the diocese the list of Ukrainian priests agreeing to the schism. There were 1111, 532 in Lviw, 302 in Peremyshl and 277 in Stanyslaviw. Even if these figures be correct, it is necessary to bear in mind for a just evaluation of the tragic event that before the war there were in Galicia 2950 priests, 300 of whom, with about 300,000 faithful, had escaped as refugees; therefore over 1500 priests would still remain faithful to the Catholic Church.

3) Ukrainian Catholics in Communist Poland

After the second occupation of Galicia by the Soviet troops (1944) and the renewal of the Polish Communist State, a part of the ethnographic Ukrainian territory remained within Poland. According to the bolshevik Government, even here the Catholic Church of the Ukrainians was to be destroyed. The persecution was to level the Church in the territory of the Apostolic Administrator of

**JOSAPHAT
KOTSYLOWSKY, OSBM**

(1876-1947)

Bishop of Peremyshl

**Died imprisoned for the
Catholic Faith January 17,
1947.**



GREGORY LAKOTA

(1883-?)

Bishop of Daonio

Auxiliary of Peremyshl.

Deported into USSR.

**Probably dead already for
the Catholic Faith.**

Lemki, and a great part of the diocese of Peremyshl. The communist Government disregarded any consideration of Ukrainian nationality at first. At Peremyshl (Episcopal See) they brought back all the schools which existed before the War, plus some Ukrainian institutions. But the Basilian Fathers living in Zasiannia were molested and annoyed.

In other cities, such as Yaroslav, Lezaysk, Porokhnyk it was worse, and frequently there was open conflict, pillage, and massacre of Ukrainians.

The agreement between Soviet Ukraine and communist Poland, wherein the ethnical minorities were to be exchanged, — was concluded in September 1944. Thus the Ukrainians residing in Poland were to be "returned to their native country" in the Ukrainian State. This repatriation was carried out with force and brutality. The palace of the Ukrainian Bishop of Peremyshl was searched many times, as also the monastery of the Basilian Fathers. Finally on the 19th of September 1945, there were arrested and imprisoned at Ryashiw a priest and 17 illustrious citizens, — followed by the arrest of H. Exc. J. Kotsylowsky, Bishop of Peremyshl, two days later.

The day after the arrest of Bishop Kotsylowsky, the Chapter of Peremyshl with its Auxilary Bishop G. Lakota was taken into custody and transferred to the prison of Lviw, and a month later to that of Kiev. The priests, who left with the faithful, well knew the fate that awaited them with the transfer. Many of them, to avoid the danger of apostasy, remained in Poland, where some adopted the Latin rite temporarily, in order to continue their pastoral work. Others were arrested by the police and condemned to forced labor in Poland.

4) The Condition of the Church under the Communists in Carpatho-Ukraine

In 1944 the Red Army, advancing in pursuit of the defeated Germans, occupied Carpatho-Ukraine for the first time, and thus forced upon that territory an immediate contact with communism. The Ukrainian diocese of Mukachiv then numbered 641,000 Catholics, 281 parishes, 354 priests, 85 seminarians, 459 churches and chapels, 31 schools with an enrollment of 2360 students, and 8 monasteries housing 85 religious of both sexes. The diocese suffered a heavy loss with the death of His Excellency Stoyka, whose duty of keeping high the spiritual level of his people was assumed

MYKOLA CHARNETSKY

(1884-?)

Bishop of Lebedo

Imprisoned April 11, 1945.

**Condemned to forced labor
in Siberia.**



THEODORE ROMZHA

(1911-1947)

Bishop of Uzhhorod

Martyred by the communists during his pastoral duties October 26 - November 1, 1947.

by the Apostolic Administrator, Mykola Dudas. Meanwhile the military situation became continually more desperate, transforming the land itself into a field of agonizing battle. Then on September 24, 1944 Msgr. Theodore Romzha was consecrated Bishop in the episcopal palace of Uzhorod, and soon after assumed administration of that diocese, realizing the innumerable difficulties confronting him. As the Red Army drew closer, the Germans ordered the complete evacuation of Uzhorod. It was only through the intercession of Msgr. Romzha that the order to evacuate civilians was rescinded. Then on October 27, 1944 the Red Army entered Uzhorod, capital of Carpatho-Ukraine.

The Episcopal See, the various religious houses (with the exception of the orphanage at Khust) were immediately transformed into military hospitals, and afterwards were confiscated altogether. Despite this, nearly all the priests carried on their spiritual duties. Bishop Romzha was asked to make a declaration both denying the existence of any religious persecution in Russia and condemning the violence used during the German and Hungarian occupation. Because the Bishop did not make such a false declaration he was labeled a fascist, an enemy of the Soviet people, while at the same time the newspapers vied with one another in producing anti-Catholic and anticlerical literature. Bishop Romzha was summoned before General Petrov who in turn was joined by General Mechlis, the political representative of the Soviets.

On October 22, a Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church held in Moscow nominated Nestor, former bishop of Uman, as Bishop of Mukachiv-Pryashiw. Nestor was of course merely a puppet in the hands of Moscow. Shortly after his nomination he returned to Carpatho-Ukraine, chose the Orthodox Cathedral of Mukachiv as his See, and began the organization of the Orthodox Church.

The local press published an article that Bishop Romzha's jurisdiction had ceased with the arrival of the new Orthodox Bishop, who in turn would assume charge of the Catholic Cathedral at Uzhorod and the Catholic diocese of Mukachiv.

In October, 1947 Bishop Romzha was fatally injured in a collision between his carriage and a Soviet armoured vehicle.

The destruction of the Catholic Church in Carpatho-Ukraine, begun in February 1946, reached its completion

PAVLO GOJDICH, OSBM

(1888-?)

Bishop of Arpsa

**Apostolic Administrator and
later Bishop of Pryashiw.**

Imprisoned 1950.

**Condemned to life imprisonment
January 15, 1951.**



VASYL HOPKO

(1904-?)

Bishop of Midila

Auxiliary of Pryashiw.

**Interned in concentration
camp.**

in April 1949. With every means in its possession, by imprisonment, exile, forced labor, and even death, the ugly demon of religious persecution, unleashed by the atheist government continued with increasing determination to oppress and destroy the Catholic clergy of Ukraine because of its unwavering spiritual loyalty to the Holy See. The Catholic priests who had ministered at one time to profoundly Catholic communities, were now replaced by the puppets sent by the Patriarch of Moscow.

After the destruction of the Catholic Church in Galicia and Carpatho-Ukraine, only two Ukrainian bishops were left who enjoyed a measure of liberty, Monsignor Pavlo Gojdich, Bishop of Pryashiw, and Monsignor Vasyl Hopko, his Auxiliary. However the communist program of religious persecution was begun at a later date in this diocese on the Czech border, and was completed by April 28, 1950. The so-called "People's Trial" which took place in Bratislava between the 12th and 16th of January, 1951, condemned Monsignor Gojdich, 62 years of age, to prison on the customary charge of "crimes" against the People's Republic of Czechoslovakia. Bishop Gojdich's Auxiliary, Monsignor Hopko, is still awaiting trial which is being prepared, undoubtedly in the best traditions of communist injustice.



After this summary of the tragic events that have befallen Ukraine, it is proper to quote Our Holy Father Pope Pius XII who discussed the matter on the occasion of the 350th Anniversary of the Union of Berestya (1595-1596). In His Encyclical "Orientales Omnes" the Sovereign Pontiff, mindful of the continual suffering to which the Ukrainian Catholic Church has been subjected, writes: "For We have learnt with great grief that, in those territories which have recently been made over to the sway of Russia, Our dear brethren and sons of the Ukrainian people are in dire straits in consequence of their fidelity to the Apostolic See; every means are being employed to take them away from the bosom of their mother, the Church, and to induce them, against their will and against their known religious duty, to enter the communion of the dissidents. Thus it is reported that the clergy of the Ukrainian rite have complained in a letter to the civil government that in Western Ukraine, as it is called today, their Church has been placed in an

extremely difficult position; all its bishops and many of its priests have been arrested."

Eight years of suffering and persecution have dragged on, during which the Ukrainian Catholic Church has taken to the catacombs and has carried on, encouraged by the fatherly counsel of the Pope, who wrote the following in his Encyclical: "In this sad and anxious state of affairs our fatherly heart goes out especially to those who are so harshly and bitterly oppressed by it, and first of all to you, Venerable Brothers, the bishops of the Ukrainian people. Great as are the trials which afflict you, you are more burdened with anxiety for the safety of our flocks than for the injuries and sufferings inflicted upon yourselves, in accordance with the words "the good shepherd lays down his life for his sheep" (J. X. 11).

PERSECUTION OF UKRAINIAN PROTESTANTS UNDER THE SOVIET RULE

by the Rev. Lev Buchak

I am writing of Ukrainian Protestants in Western Ukraine, and particularly of those who belonged to the Reformed and the Lutheran denominations. It is also well known that there were numerous Baptist congregations in Western Ukraine, especially in Volhynia and Kholm, but I regret to say that my information concerning our Baptist brethren is so inadequate that I do not consider myself qualified to make definite statements about them and the fate that has befallen them.

Ukrainian Protestants of the Reformed and Lutheran denominations in Western Ukraine, mostly in Eastern Galicia and Volhynia, numbered about twenty thousand members and adherents. There were thirty-five ordained pastors, a number of lay-preachers, and about thirty theological students. Each denomination had its own publication. **Faith and Knowledge** the Reformed monthly, was published in Kolo-myia and **Awakening**, the Lutheran monthly, was published in Stanyslaviw. The Reformed group governed itself independently under the leadership of Superintendent Rev. Vasyl Kuziw; the Lutheran group was affiliated with the German Lutheran Church in Western Ukraine. Although connected with the German Lutheran Church organization, this group was an autonomous body headed by the Rev. Fedir Yarchuk.

Both the Reformed and the Lutheran movements started about 1925. Both groups were comparatively small in number. Since the policy of the Soviet invaders seemed to have been to liquidate the smallest religious groups first, they started with the Ukrainian Protestants.

Immediately after the first occupation of Western Ukraine was completed, it was announced through the radio,

press and at various meetings, that the communists were bringing political and religious freedom, yet, at the same time, the arrests of Ukrainian Protestant pastors and lay leaders were taking place.

The first to be arrested was Rev. Fedir Yarchuk, the leader of the Lutheran group and editor of the monthly **Awakening**. He died in a Soviet concentration camp. Afterwards, two young Reformed pastors, Rev. T. Dowhaluk and Rev. T. Semenyuk of Alexandria, Volhynia, were arrested, sentenced to ten years and after four years of suffering, died in prison. Later, Rev. W. Barna was arrested and died as a result of torture. Rev. Andriy Maksymyuk also died in prison. Rev. M. Zhurakowsky, editor of **Faith and Knowledge**, was imprisoned for a long time. When he was released, his health was ruined and his sight completely lost. Rev. A. Zaborowets of Volhynia, now in Canada, was arrested, but during the Soviet-German war succeeded in being released. Rev. J. Chyrva was imprisoned in 1941 when the Russian Communist armies were withdrawing from the city of Riwne. He happened to be cast into one of those jails in which the communists, fleeing from advancing German armies, attempted to rid themselves of as many prisoners as possible by throwing hand-grenades into the crowded cells. When the first grenade was thrown into the cell where Rev. J. Chyrva was kept, he was the first to fall — his foot shattered. On him fell many mutilated bodies, covering him, thus saving his life. Later, when people came into the cell, they found all the prisoners dead with the exception of Rev. J. Chyrva. He is alive today, a witness of that horrible manslaughter.

All these pastors were charged with anti-communist activities and bourgeois Ukrainian nationalism.

The author of this article, pastor of the Ukrainian Reformed Church in Lwiw, Western Ukraine, and now of Hamilton, Ontario, was arrested by the secret police in 1944. He was kept in prison for seven months. It was a horrible experience. Fourteen to eighteen persons were packed into a cell 13 by 11 feet. There were no beds, no benches. The prisoners sat and slept on the floor. Filth, fleas and lice added to the pangs of fear, hunger, constant hearings and threats inflicted by the prison authorities. As this prisoner was an American citizen, he was finally, on the intervention of the American Embassy in Moscow, re-

leased from prison and in 1946 permitted to return to the United States.

Out of thirty-five pastors, nine were imprisoned. Of these, five died in Soviet prisons. About sixteen succeeded in escaping to Western Europe. Some of them are now in Canada and the United States. As far as we know, only four out of the thirty-five remained in Western Ukraine and were still alive two or three years ago, but not engaged in Church work. Others "disappeared", presumably sent to Siberia, and today are considered missing.

In addition to destroying church leadership, church buildings were confiscated, publications closed, congregations and young people's organizations dissolved.

Thus the two Ukrainian Protestant groups in Western Ukraine, the Reformed and the Lutheran, were liquidated. However, we have reason to believe that many individual Ukrainian Protestants remain true to their religious convictions, hoping, praying and working to the end that the communist tyranny under which they suffer may soon perish and democratic freedoms prevail.

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 Territories form an absolute majority (51% - 100%) of the population in the territory bounded by this line
 Territories with mixed population in which Ukrainians have a relative majority

0 50 100 150 200 250 Miles
 0 100 150 200 250 Kilometers

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