





*PETER KARDASH*

**GENOCIDE  
IN  
UKRAINE**

*FORTUNA PUBLISHING*

MELBOURNE

2007

KYIV



## Foreword

Dear reader! You hold in your hands an extraordinary book that was written by many individuals, who never imagined that their reminiscences of events in which they were destined to take part would one day be published. Their memories of harsh times, unimaginable pain, and profound loss spurred them to explain Ukraine's difficult past to the younger generations.

**Genocide in Ukraine** is a compilation of materials spanning three centuries. The book begins with an article by the eminent human rights defender Levko Lukianenko. It is an articulate, convincing, and persuasive general overview of the Ukrainian genocide, the Holodomor. In his conclusion the author writes: "Historical accountability between Ukraine and Russia should commence from the seventeenth century. Indeed, the art of politics is based not on satisfying emotions of revenge, which are focused on the past, but rather on creating a positive basis and conditions for the future development of the [Ukrainian] nation."

Lukianenko's indictment of Soviet crimes against Ukraine is followed by materials related to two key events in Ukrainian history: Hetman Ivan Mazepa's struggle to achieve independence for Ukraine during the reign of Tsar Peter I of Russia and the eventual abolition of the Zaporozhian

Sich. These events underline the continuity in Ukrainian history stretching from the seventeenth to the twentieth century.

The period of the national-liberation struggle during the first independent Ukrainian republic of 1918-1921 is reflected in the materials on the battles of Kruty and Bazar, and the liquidation of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church and its faithful. Kruty, in particular, was a new stage in the struggle for Ukraine's freedom.

"...The events of Kruty represent the beginning of our revolutionary struggle for independence, more so than all those formal historical dates associated with the formation of the Central Rada..." wrote the poet Yevhen Malaniuk.

**Genocide in Ukraine** contains numerous eyewitness accounts and materials from the archives of the OGPU-NKVD-KGB, including many photographs, which attest to the various crimes committed against the Ukrainian nation during the twentieth century alone: collectivization, dekulakization, deportations, summary executions, the destruction of the Ukrainian intelligentsia, the liquidation of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, the Stalinist purges, the Gulag, the devastation of the Second World War, Auschwitz, and the Polish deportation action code-named "Wisla."

In his eyewitness account of

the notorious Kolyma Soviet labor camp, A. Fedoriv writes: "The Kolyma concentration camp, where I was imprisoned from 1937 until the end of 1940, constantly had 10,000 prisoners... Each prisoner was forced to work 12-14 hours a day, shoveling 10 cubic meters of hard frozen earth containing gold fragments and he had to haul it by wheelbarrow for some 200-250 meters. The exhausted prisoners died like flies: out of 10,000 prisoners who were brought here from 1937 onward, there were only 500 survivors by 1940. The dead were always replaced by new prisoners, in order to keep the total at our concentration camp at 10,000."

Many of these first-person accounts concern the famine-genocide of 1932-1933, known as the Holodomor, arguably the greatest crime against humanity in the twentieth century. To a large degree the Holodomor, which claimed the lives of some 7.5 million to 12.5 million Ukrainians, is still little known, and facts relating to this tragic event are frequently distorted and falsified.

Even in Ukraine, which recently celebrated its fifteenth anniversary of independence, a significant proportion of the population is not aware of the truth about the Holodomor and other tragic pages of Ukrainian history. It is not acknowledged by many Ukrainian leaders, not to mention the younger generation. Indeed, if all Ukrainians had an adequate understanding of their tragic

history, especially the monstrous crimes of the communist satraps, Ukraine would not be experiencing a crisis today.

We would not be hearing any anti-Ukrainian slogans. Pseudo-parliamentarians would not be calling for the revival of communist ideology and the "fraternity of peoples" with its omnipotent usurper-state. The old flags of the criminal Communist Party would not be fluttering over the Ukrainian land, and a foreign language would not be reigning supreme in Ukraine. Above all, monuments glorifying the sadistic torturers of the Ukrainian nation would not be ubiquitous.

The world must learn the truth about the genocide in Ukraine. This book, compiled by the Australian activist Petro Kardash, is a contribution to this crucial effort. Of course, **Genocide in Ukraine** does not encompass all the crimes that were committed against the Ukrainian nation. Therefore, we hope that future researchers will devote their attention to these unknown pages of Ukrainian history.

This book calls on all of us to remember our past and inform the world community of the history of a great European nation. We dedicate this publication to the memory of those who sacrificed their lives for Ukraine's freedom. May their memory be eternal!

**Bohdan Rudnytski**  
journalist

# **BILL OF INDICTMENT**

**in the international criminal case  
against the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, accused of crimes committed on the territory of Ukraine  
against the Ukrainian people, which crimes fall under:**

- Clause (a), Article 6, of the Charter of the Nuremberg International Military Tribunal (IMT) (Crimes against Peace);
  - Clause (b), Article 6, of the IMT Charter (War Crimes);
  - Clause (c), Article 6, of the IMT Charter (Crimes against Humanity);
  - The Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, adopted on 9 December 1948;
  - The UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education, adopted on 14 December 1960.
  - Convention No. 29 concerning Forced or Compulsory Labor, adopted on 28 July 1930;
  - The Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, adopted on 10 December 1984;
- The CPSU's unlawful activities stemmed from its criminal imperialist ideology.

## **CRIMINAL NATURE OF THE CPSU'S IDEOLOGY**

*The essence of the CPSU's ideology is that it justified Russia's aggressive imperialist policy.*

*The objective of the CPSU's policies was to expand the Russian empire over an increasingly larger part of the planet.*

*In its activities the CPSU used ideological and organizational methods.*

### ***Goal of Ideological Methods***

The goal of the ideological methods employed by the CPSU was to instill in people the belief that the objective world was developing along a path whereby large nations would continue to expand, while small nations would undergo assimilation and become extinct, and that soon there would no longer be thousands of languages in the world, but only ten or fifteen. Consequently, large states would become a progressive form of the state organization of nations, whereas small states were slowing down historical progress and therefore had to disappear. The CPSU considered the Russians to be one of the large nations with a future, viewing Ukraine and all the other nations of the USSR as lacking prospects and doomed to extinction.

This ideology is criminal because it justified Russification and the gradual annihilation of subjugated nations, i.e., it deprived them of their right to self-determination, thereby violating the UN Charter and Article 1, Clause (1) of the International Pact on Civil and Political Rights, adopted on 19 December 1966. (*Mezhdunarodnaia zashchita prav i svobod cheloveka. Sbornik dokumentov.* [International Protection of Human Rights and Liberties. A Collection of Documents]. Moscow: Iuridicheskaja literatura: 1990, p. 33).

The CPSU's ideology is criminal because it called for the abolition of democracy and the creation of communist dictatorship in society. Lenin said: "We mock 'pure' democracy...Revolutionary expediency is above formal democratism" (*Argumenty i fakty. Ukraina.* [Arguments and Facts. Ukraine] no. 44, 1999. Excerpt from the 5<sup>th</sup> edition of Lenin's works).

The CPSU's ideology is a criminal ideology of pitting different classes against each other, rich against poor, atheists against believers, and inciting deadly enmity among various social strata in order to weaken nations from within and subjugate them. The communists converted their theory of expropriating the expropriators into the criminal slogan of "steal what has been stolen." This slogan legitimized thievery, inciting a large number of social outcasts to commit robberies, and precipitating a moral decline within the entire population.

The CPSU's ideology is criminal because it asserted its state status by banning religions and all noncommunist ideas, thereby depriving Ukrainian citizens of prospects for their comprehensive spiritual development, which caused irreparable damage to several generations of Ukrainians. Hence, the CPSU violated Article 2 of the General Declaration of Human Rights of 10 December 1948 and Article 2 of the International Pact on Civil and Political Rights of 19 December 1966.

The CPSU also committed a crime by instituting criminal prosecution for religious beliefs, national and noncommunist ideological views, and by forcefully imposing the imperialistic communist ideology on Ukrainian citizens.

## ***Tasks of Organizational Methods***

The criminal nature of the CPSU's ideology is evidenced by the following actions aimed at eliminating democracy and establishing dictatorship as a means of preserving the old Russian Empire under a new name.

After occupying Ukraine, the CPSU implemented the Council of People's Commissars' Decree "On the Press" of 9 November 1917, thereby depriving Ukrainians of freedom of the press (*Istoriia sovetskoi konstitutsii, 1917-1956* [History of the Soviet Constitution, 1917-1956], Moscow: Gosizurizdat, 1957, pp. 51-52).

The CPSU committed a crime against democracy when the Council of People's Commissars passed a decree on 7 December 1917 abolishing trials by jury and introducing revolutionary tribunals. This signified the elimination of the third estate and, as a consequence, the legalization of lawlessness. (*ibid.*, pp. 69-71).

In their pursuit of unlimited dictatorship the Bolsheviks abolished parliamentarianism in Russia with the help of a decree passed on 19 January 1918 by the All-Union Central Executive Committee. (*ibid.*, pp. 99-100). After occupying Ukraine, the communists extended the effect of this decree to Ukrainian territory and liquidated the Ukrainian parliament in violation of the Fourth Hague Convention of 1907, which prohibits occupiers from abolishing laws on occupied territory. Under Article 43 of this Convention, occupational authorities must respect the laws in force in that country. (*Mezhdunarodnoe pravo* [International Law], Moscow: Iuridicheskaiia literatura, 1982, p. 523).

On 5 September 1918 the Bolshevik government issued a decree on red terror, which formalized the communist ideology of irreconcilable class struggle. Terror thus became a legal method of governing society.

## ***Mechanism of Mass Terror***

To achieve the established goals, a comprehensive informational system was created using record-keeping, questionnaires, and issuance of passports. It was designed to keep stock of politically suspect individuals. Information on them was classified by chapters (such as "UKR. KR" [Ukrainian counterrevolution], "ukr. k. r. hromadskist" [Ukrainian counterrevolutionary community], "Russian intelligentsia," "PSR" [Party of Socialist Revolutionaries]) and categories (such as "Most Active Members"). These lists were stored at different divisions of the State Political Directorate (GPU) and the NKVD, and data was collected at the Accounting and Statistics Division (USO). In adopting a resolution to start a file on Academician Mykhailo Hrushevsky, the former chairman of the Central Rada, G. S. Eimontov, the assistant of the head of the Counterintelligence Division's First Group of the GPU's Kyiv Gubernia Division, wrote on 20 March 1924: "...place citizen M. S. Hrushevsky on the list of politically suspect individuals and classify him with the group of the Ukrainian counterrevolution, left chapter, and start a data collection file on him to further collect information that is available on him.



(State Archive of the Security Service of Ukraine (DA SBU). Data collection file on Mykhailo Hrushevsky, no. 7537, vol. 1.1. Cited in Volodymyr Prystajko and Yuri Shapoval, *Mykhailo Hrushevskyyi i HPU-NKVD. Trahichne desiatylittia 1924-1934* [Mykhailo Hrushevsky and the GPU-NKVD. A Tragic Decade, 1924-1934] Kyiv, 1966, p. 133).

At the same time, an individual would be characterized as follows:

“According to the materials of the Accounting and Statistics Division (USO), information on citizen Mykola Illich Shrah was being collected on him by the Secret Political Directorate (SPU) of the GPU of the Ukrainian SSR under the chapter ‘Ukrainian Counterrevolutionary Public.’ He has been placed on the data collection record of the Economic Directorate (EKU) of the GPU of the Ukrainian SSR under the chapter ‘Other Crimes.’ 6 May 1931.” (DA SBU, No. 59881-FP, vol. 6, fol. 238).

“According to the materials of the Accounting and Statistics Division, citizen Mykhailo Adamovych Kachaniuk, born in 1889 in Galicia, has been placed on the data collection record of the Ukrainian Military District (UVO) and the GPU of the Ukrainian SSR under the chapter ‘Ukrainian Counterrevolution in the ‘Most Active Members’ category. Data collection file no. 7586. Assistant to the official ‘signature,’ 29 April 1931 (Central State Archive of Civic Associations of Ukraine [TsDAHO, no. 61301-FP/cor. 1606, fol. 110).

A record of members of petty bourgeois parties was compiled during 1920-21. (TsDAHO Ukrainy, no. 31081-FP/cor.177, Control File, fol. Ç). In the following years records on other population groups were compiled based on various compromising features. For example, a card index was created to keep track of visitors to the German Consulate in Kyiv. (TsDAHO, no. 58840-FP/cor. 1495, vol. 1, fol. 115).

When a seven-year-old child began school, a file would be started on him/her. Over time s/he had to fill out countless questionnaires that were essentially self-incriminating. The state wanted to know whether the child had “any relatives abroad,” “any repressed relatives,” or “relatives on temporarily occupied territories.” Initially, the most dangerous question concerned “social origins,” which determined a person’s future destiny.

A network of state espionage enveloped the entire territory of the USSR and, to some extent, the world. Using methods of intimidation and bribery, the state imposed a system of informers on the population. Arrests were made based on information thus obtained. This follows from a resolution handed down on 23 April 1933 by Pogrebny, a representative of the Secret Political Directorate’s Second Department: “Agentura operation no. 383 has been liquidated and introduced into investigation case no. 3199 of the Kyiv Region Division of the GPU (TsDAHO Ukrainy, no. 47299-FP/cor. 0823, vol. 1, fol. 119).

Based on existing lists of politically suspect individuals and the system of questionnaires and passportization of the population, the Politburo of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik) (CC AUCP(B)) passed a number of political decisions targeting one social group after another. For each republic, territory, and region it determined different quotas for the number of executions and the length of prison terms. Terror in the USSR was planned “much like any other campaign, such as bread or milk procurement campaigns.” (Yevgenii Ginzburg, *Krutoi marshrut* [Drastic Route], Moscow, 1990, p. 19).

Today various special details are known about the implementation of the CC AUCP(B) resolution of 2 July 1937, “On Anti-Soviet Elements.” A telegram dispatched to secretaries of regional, territorial and Central Committees of national communist parties ordered “[...] placing on record all kulaks, who have returned to their native lands, and criminal elements, in order to immediately execute the most hostile of them as part of the administrative processing of their cases through troikas and to take stock of other, less active, although still hostile elements, and deport them to raions [districts] on the NKVD’s instructions. The CC AUCP(B) proposes that the composition of troikas and the number of people subject to execution and deportation be presented to the CC within five days.” (*Rasstrel po raznariadke* [Quota-based execution]/UT-rud. 1992, 4 July, no. 88 (21612), fols. 1, 4). Yezhov’s operational order no. 00447 “On the Operation to Repress Former Kulaks, Criminal, and Other Anti-Soviet Elements” included a detailed action plan with quotas for each region [region].

	1 <sup>st</sup> category	2 <sup>nd</sup> category	3 <sup>rd</sup> category	
Kharkiv region		1,500	4,000	5,500
Donetsk region	1,000		3,500	4,500
Odesa region	1,000		2,000	3,000
Dnipropetrovsk region	1,000		2,000	3,000
Chernihiv region	300		1,300	1,600

Local authorities submitted similar proposals: on 5 September, 29 September, and 11 December 1937, I. M. Leplevsky, People's Commissar of Internal Affairs of the Ukrainian SSR, requested additional quotas from the NKVD of the USSR (Yurii Shapoval, Volodymyr Prystaiko, and Vadym Zolotariov, *ChK-GPU-NKVD v Ukraini* [The Cheka-GPU-NKVD in Ukraine] Kyiv, 1997, pp. 167-68). The Council of People's Commissars of the USSR supported this request. Quotas were accordingly increased to 26,150 people in the first category and 37,000 in the second category, a total of 63,950 (HA SBU, no.312, a. 28. See H. K. Kovtun, V. A. Voinalovych, Yu. Z. Danyliuk, *Masovi nezakonni represii 20-kh-pochatku 50-kh rokiv na Poltavshchyni* [Mass Illegal Repressions of the 1920s-Early 1950s in the Poltava Region], Poltava, 1992, p. 22).

Repressions were closely linked to the goals of a planned national economy. In 1930-1932 the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine (CC CPU) submitted requisitions to the CC AUCP(B) for the number of dekulakized peasants to be deported. In the Moscow center these numbers corresponded to data on the "volume" of labor reserves in the Far North regions, required for the construction sites of "communism."

Repressions served as a means of mobilizing a cheap workforce, i.e., the CPSU leaders consciously deprived innocent people of their freedom, thereby committing crimes against justice (Article 174 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine; the deliberate prosecution of an innocent individual).

## ***CRIMES AGAINST PEACE PERPETRATED IN UKRAINE BY THE CPSU***

### **ARTICLE 6, CLAUSE A OF THE CHARTER OF THE NUREMBERG INTERNATIONAL MILITARY TRIBUNAL (IMT)**

On 17 December 1917, as part of its preparations for war against Ukraine, the Council of People's Commissars of Russia presented the Ukrainian government with an ultimatum entitled "On the Recognition of the Ukrainian National Republic by the Council of People's Commissars and on the Presentation of the Central Rada with an Ultimatum in Response to its Counterrevolutionary Activity." This ultimatum was an act of blatant interference in Ukraine's internal affairs and signaled the beginning of the first military aggression against Ukraine. (*Istoriia Sovetskoï konstitutsii 1917-1956* [History of the Soviet Constitution, 1917-1956], Gosiurizdat: Moscow, 1957, p. 74).

On 9-10 December 1918 the CPSU unleashed its second military campaign against Ukraine.

On 7 November 1919 the communists started their third aggressive war against Ukraine.

On 30 December 1922 communist Russia formalized its occupation of Ukraine by creating the so-called Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (without the ratification of the union agreement by the Supreme Soviet of Ukraine).

In September 1939 the CPSU prepared, organized, and carried out an invasion of Ukraine's western regions and annexed them to the Soviet empire.

In 1940 the CPSU launched a war against Moldova and forcibly annexed Bukovyna to the empire, while in 1945 it invaded and occupied Carpathian Ukraine.

All of the aforesaid wars show characteristics of unprovoked, aggressive wars that the CPSU planned, prepared, and conducted at different times for a hostile purpose. Hence, they are crimes according to Article 6, Clause A of the Charter of the Nuremberg International Military Tribunal (Crimes against Peace).

### ***War Crimes (Article 6, Clause B of the IMT Charter)***

The military command of the Red Army blatantly violated the customs and laws of war:

On 22 November 1921 the Red Army captured 359 Ukrainian soldiers in the village of Bazar and invited them to defect to the communists. After they refused, they were executed. The Red Army thus committed a crime under Article 6, Clause B of the IMT Charter (*Encyclopedia of Ukraine*, University of Toronto Press: Toronto-Buffalo-London, vol. 1, p. 188).

In 1921-1922, following the defeat of the army of the Ukrainian National Republic, the communists executed over 10,000 commanders, officers, and soldiers of this army in the city of Vinnytsia for their participation in the war of national-liberation (Semen Pidhainy, ed., *The Black Deeds of the Kremlin. A White Book*, vol. 1, Toronto, 1953, p. 413).

During World War II and the following decade, Ukraine's western regions were the main arena of the Ukrainians' struggle against the communist occupiers, a struggle that was led by the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA). The Soviet forces of the NKVD and KGB used chemical weapons against them (gases, chemical poison in food, etc.). Hence, they committed actions that constitute elements of a crime under Article 6, Clause B of the IMT Charter (the 1925 Geneva Protocol prohibiting the use of poisonous gases).

### ***Crimes against Humanity (Article 6, Clause C of the IMT Charter)***

In 1920 the Red Army approached the town of Boryspil and urged its defenders to surrender. When the Ukrainian army detachment refused, the Red Army captured the town and executed every tenth resident.

In 1930-1931 close to 20,000 peasants paid with their own lives for their resistance to collectivization and the nationalization of independent households in Vinnytsia region (*The Black Deeds of the Kremlin*, vol. 1, p. 413).

During the Soviet-engineered famine of 1932-1933, known as the Holodomor, over 150,000 Ukrainians died in the Vinnytsia area alone. (*The Black Deeds of the Kremlin*, vol. 1, p. 413).

In 1943 the residents of Vinnytsia initiated the creation of the eleven-member International Commission of Foreign Medical Examiners to investigate the mass murders in this city, whose members included the forensic specialists Soenen (Belgium), Pesonen (Finland), Duvoir (France), and ter Poorten (Holland), as well as three health representatives [doctors] from the German Reich: Waegner, Schrader, and Conti. The commission established that there were three prisons in Vinnytsia (one before the revolution). In 1937-1938 they housed 30,000 inmates, who were tortured and sentenced to death. They were then taken away and executed in numerous mass graves in the city and its outskirts (*The Black Deeds of the Kremlin*, vol. 1, pp. 413-15).

After occupying Ukraine's western regions in 1939, the communist leadership deported to Russia 1,173,170 male and female residents of all ages.

The long anti-Ukrainian arm of the KGB reached far beyond the state borders of the USSR. The following is a list of only the most outstanding Ukrainian politicians whom Red Moscow assassinated abroad:

25 May 1926: Symon Petliura, the outstanding statesman, military leader, head of the Directory of the Ukrainian National Republic, and commander of the UNR army. Assassinated by NKVD agent Shalom Schwartzbard.

23 May 1938: Yevhen Konovalts, the organizer and leader of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, colonel in the army of the Ukrainian National Republic.

12 October 1957: Lev Rebet, the distinguished political figure, publicist, and legal scholar.

15 October 1959: Stepan Bandera, leader of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists and ideologue of the national-liberation movement.

The criminal nature of the CPSU is obvious from the following documents (*Izvestiia*, no. 62):

## **THE ALL-UNION COMMUNIST PARTY (BOLSHEVIKS) CENTRAL COMMITTEE**

*No. P64/22, To comrades Yezhov, Vyshynsky;*

*5 September 1938, to regional and territorial committees of national parties' Central Committees.*

*Extract from minutes no. 64 of the CC Politburo meeting of \_\_193\_\_,  
Resolution of 15 September 1938.*

*22 – Question from the NKVD*

1. To accept the proposal of the NKVD to transfer the remaining unexamined investigatory cases opened on detainees in the counter-revolutionary and national contingents pursuant to NKVD USSR orders nos. 00485, 00439, and 00593 of 1937, and nos. 302 and 326 of 1938 for examination by special troikas at the local level.

2. Special troikas shall be composed of the first secretary of the regional or territorial committee of the AUCP(B) or the Central Committee of national parties, the chief of the corresponding NKVD department, and the prosecutor of the region, territory, or republic.

In the Ukrainian and Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republics and in the Far Eastern Territory special troikas shall be formed in every region.

3. Special troikas shall consider cases only of those individuals who were arrested before 1 August 1938, and shall complete their work within 2 months.

4. Cases against all individuals identified as national and counterrevolutionary contingents, who were arrested before 1 August 1938, shall be submitted for examination to corresponding judicial organs of the relevant jurisdiction (the Military Tribunal, circuit and region courts, the Military Collegium, or the Supreme Court) and to a special council at the NKVD of the USSR.

5. To authorize special troikas to impose sentences in keeping with NKVD of the USSR order no. 00485 of 25 August 1937 in the first and second categories, and to return cases for additional investigation or approve decisions to release detainees from custody if the prosecution in their cases does not have sufficient evidence against the accused.

6. Decisions of special troikas in the first category shall be executed IMMEDIATELY

no. P57/48, to comrade Yezhov – everything:

To corresponding regional and territorial committees and political departments of national communist parties. 31 January 1938.

Extract from Minutes no. 57 – meeting of the Central Committee's Politburo of 1938. Resolution of 31 January 1938.

18 – On Anti-Soviet Elements.

a) To accept the proposal of the NKVD of the USSR to endorse an additional quota of individuals subject to repressions, former kurkuls (Rus.: kulaks), criminal and active anti-Soviet elements in the following territories, regions, and republics:

1)	Armenian SSR	– 1,000 individuals in the 1 <sup>st</sup> category and 1,000 individuals in the 2 <sup>nd</sup> category		
2)	Belarusian SSR	1,500	-II-	
3)	Ukrainian SSR	6,000	-II-	
4)	Georgian SSR	1,500	-II-	
5)	Azerbaijan SSR	2,000	-II-	
6)	Turkmen SSR	1,000	-II-	
7)	Kyrgyz SSR	500	-II-	
8)	Tajik SSR	1,000	-II-	
9)	Uzbek SSR	2,000	-II-	and 500 in the 2 <sup>nd</sup> category
10)	Far-Eastern Territory	8,000	-II-	500 -II-
11)	Chita region	1,500	-II-	2,000 -II-
12)	Buriat-Mongol region	500	-II-	500 -II-
13)	Irkutsk region	3,000	-II-	500 -II-
14)	Krasnoiarsk region	1,500	-II-	500 -II-
15)	Novosibirsk region	1,000	-II-	2,000 -II-
16)	Omsk region	3,000	-II-	1,000 -II-
17)	Altai territory	2,000	-II-	200 -II-
18)	Leningrad region	3,000	-II-	500 -II-
19)	Karelian Autonomous SSR	500	-II-	
20)	Kalinin region	1,500	-II-	
21)	Moscow region	4,000	-II-	
22)	Sverdlovsk region	2,000	-II-	

b) To propose that the NKVD of the USSR complete the entire operation in the aforesaid regions, territories, and republics no later than 15 March 1938, and in the Far Eastern Territory no later than 1 April 1938.

c) In keeping with this resolution, troikas shall continue examining cases against former kurkuls, criminal and anti-Soviet elements in regions, territories, and republics listed in Clause A hereof.

In all other territories, regions, and republics, troikas shall complete their work no later than 15 February 1938, so that by this date all cases will have been examined and completed within the quotas approved for these territories, regions, and republics.

**SECRETARY OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE.**

## **UKRAINIAN SSR**

**Nykopil Educational Association,**

**Nykopil Historical Educational Association “Memorial.”**

## **REPORT**

This is to certify that, according to the data of the State Archive of Sicheslav (Dnipropetrovsk) region and the archives of the KGB/NKVD, the population of the town of Marhanets suffered on the following scale as a result of dekulakization, the Holodomor of 1932-1933, and political repressions during 1937-1938:

1. As of 1 January 1928, the town of Marhanets had a population of 13,992, of whom 440 were dekulakized and killed, while 315 more were dekulakized, but survived.

2. As of 1 January 1932, the town of Marhanets had a population of 13,947 – 272 of whom starved to death in 1932, and 429 in 1933.

3. As of 1 January 1937, the town of Marhanets had a population of 17,531 – 900 of whom died as a result of repressions in 1937-1938, while 63 were repressed before 1941, but survived.

(This certificate was issued in response to a query by the Prosvita Society and the Rukh People's Movement of Ukraine in the town of Marhanets on 6 July 1993).

No. 1158/67 to comrade Frinovsky

17 February 1938.

Extract from Minutes no. 58 – meeting of the Politburo of the CC AUCP(B). Resolution of 17 November 1938.

67 – Question from the NKVD

To allow the NKVD of Ukraine to make additional arrests of kurkuls and other anti-Soviet elements and have their cases examined by troikas; the quota for the NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR shall be raised by 30,000.

**SECRETARY OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE.**

**Executions of kurkuls** – extermination of people on the grounds of their material status, which constitutes a crime against humanity under Article 6, Clause B of the IMT Charter.

**Executions of “anti-Soviet elements”** were executions of people for their anti-communist beliefs, which constitute a crime against humanity under Article 6, Clause C of the IMT Charter.

The CPSU used the penitentiary system to mobilize a workforce for the construction of economic assets. It deprived people of their freedom not for actual crimes, but formulated the elements of a crime in such a way as to turn non-criminal masses of people into criminals (e.g., unintentional nonpayment of taxes).

# **GENOCIDE OF THE UKRAINIAN NATION**

## **The Holodomor of 1932-1933**

### ***1. The Authenticity of the Fact of the Holodomor***

The Holodomor of 1932-1933 in Ukraine is a historical fact documented in numerous publications of archival materials, including *Holod 1932-1933 rokiv na Ukraini ochyma istorykiv, movoiu dokumentiv* [The Famine of 1932-1933 in Ukraine through the Eyes of Historians and the Language of Documents], (Kyiv, 1990, 615 pp.); *Kolektyvizatsiia i holod na Ukraini 1929-1933: Zbirnyk dokumentiv i materialiv* [Collectivization and the Famine in Ukraine, 1929-1933: Collection of Documents and Materials] (Kyiv, 1992, 742 pp.); Andrea Graziosi, “Lettres de Kharkov; La Famine en Ukraine et dans le Caucase du Nord à travers les rapports des diplomates italiens 1932-1934,” *Cahiers du monde russe et soviétique*, 30 (1989): 2-106; Dmytro Zlepko, ed., *Der Ukrainische Hunger-Holocaust*, Sonnenbuhl: Verlag Helmut Wild, 1988, 309 pp.

There is also a large number of educational works on the Holodomor (approximately 10,000 titles), as well as proceedings of scholarly conferences, including the materials of international conference “The Holodomor of 1932-1933 in Ukraine: Causes and Consequences,” held in Kyiv on 9-10 September 1993 (conference proceedings published in Kyiv, 1995), and a large number of eyewitness testimonies of people who survived the Holodomor.

The following document was prepared by the Nykopil branch of the Memorial Society, dated 6 July 1993.

## 2. *The Origins of the Famine*

Archival sources, both those that have been published and those that are still stored in the archives of Ukraine, Russia, and several European countries, contain unassailable evidence pointing to the artificial nature of the origins of the famine in Ukraine. The principle causes of the Holodomor were the all-out collectivization of peasant households, the anti-human and fiscal policy of looting or dekulakizing the Ukrainian peasants, total grain deliveries carried out according to the so-called principle of food apportionment by repressive means, the deliberate and continuous confiscation of food as the peasants' means of survival, and mass repressions against the adult male population in Ukraine's rural areas.

### a) **All-Out Collectivization**

All-out collectivization, which was planned and implemented by the totalitarian communist regime, destroyed 4.6 million peasant households in Ukraine, inflicted catastrophic damage on the republic's rural economy, by violent means permanently confiscated 36 million desiatinas of peasants' lands (*See Budivnytstvo kolhospiv v Ukraini: Statystychnyi dovidnyk* [The Building of Collective Farms in Ukraine: Statistical Reference], Kharkiv, 1930, pp. 114-115), and collectivized draught and food-producing cattle, which earlier had belonged to independent farmers and whose numbers fell by two times. (*See Silske hospodarstvo SRSR. Shchorichnyk 1935* [Agriculture in the USSR: Yearbook 1935], Moscow, 1936, p. 521; TsDAVOV, fond 4402, list 1, fol. 225, a. 51-52). Cattle perished in huge numbers during the winter months as a result of poor stabling conditions on collective farms and the lack of fodder. Cattle deaths in the winter of 1933 alone reached between 42 and 75 percent in eastern Ukraine (TsDAHO, fond 1, list 16, fol. 10, a. 43).

### b) **Collective Farms**

In keeping with Stalin's plan, collective farms were slated to become grain-producing factories. By 1934 there were 24,000 collective farms in Ukraine, encompassing four million peasant households that had been expropriated of their land and belongings (TsDAVOV, fond 3470, list 1, fol. 72, a. 3). In spring 1932 one-third of collective farms, and in spring 1933 nearly half of the collective farms in Ukraine did not pay collective farm members, i.e., they did not issue any payments either in kind or cash for completed workdays (TsDAVOV, fond 535, list 11, fol. 338, a. 11), thereby depriving between six and nine million people of any means of survival (*Ibid.*, fond 3470, list 1, fol. 72, a. 3). This ban on issuing grain to collective farm members was initiated by the Soviet government. In 1932 collective farms were permitted to issue payments only after the completion of the state grain delivery plan. (*See* resolution of the RNK of the Ukrainian SSR "On Measures to Boost the Grain Deliveries," dated 20 November 1932, published in *Visti VUTsVK* [News of the All-Ukrainian Central Executive Committee], 21 November 1932). In order to carry out the plan, collective farm administrations deliberately reduced the number of workdays completed by the collective farmers (TsDAVOV, fond 27, list 14, fol. 197, a. 16-17). In July 1933 V. Odintsov, People's Commissar of Agriculture of the Ukrainian SSR, informed Kosior, the General-Secretary of the CC CP(B)U and Chubar, the head of the Soviet Ukrainian government, that in keeping with Stalin and Molotov's telegram, he had sent a draft resolution of the CC and RNK "On the Procedure of Issuing Grain Advances to Collective Farms from the 1933 Harvest for Internal Collective Farm Needs." This document categorically forbids using grain for public consumption during field work. Collective farm members were expected to take their own bread to work (TsDAHO, fond 1, list 6, fol. 312, a. 43). The draft of the resolution contains a fact pointing to the deliberate intention to deprive peasants of food, which attests to the communist regime's criminal attitude toward the Ukrainian nation. A meeting of the Politburo of the CC CP(B)U on 10 January 1934 reported on the non-payment of workdays to members of families that had died, either a father or mother who had worked on a collective farm (TsDAHO, fond 27, list 14, fol. 197, a. 16-17).

### c) **Dekulakization**

The policy of dekulakization, which the communist regime implemented in Ukraine, had an anti-Ukrainian, fiscal (looting) nature, and was inspired by the AUCP(B) headed by Stalin. At the Sixteenth

Party Congress in June 1930 Stalin called for the “arrest and deportation of tens and hundreds of thousands of kulaks.” (*See Visti VUTsVK*, 1 July 1930). In Ukraine 200,000 peasant households were subjected to dekulakization.

#### **d) Grain Deliveries**

Grain deliveries were the principal cause of the mass Holodomor in Ukrainian villages. Grain was forcibly confiscated from peasants by means of a number of punitive-repressive methods: confiscation of property and housing, fines five times the size of the grain delivery, arrest and prosecution, sentencing by the court according to Article 57, Clause 8 of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR of 1927. (*See Visti VUTsVK*, 14 July 1929). “Grain fines” were a death sentence for the peasants, because their compliance with these fines ultimately ravaged their food supplies and doomed hundreds of thousands of people to death by starvation. Attesting to this are letters written by peasants to the government, which are stored in the former offices of Hryhorii Petrovsky and Politburo member Mikhail Kalinin, as well as in other archival fonds of Ukraine and Russia. A fragment from one letter follows:

“I have many children. I have nine members in my family, six of whom are very young; the oldest is twelve years old. All my life I worked and was never a criminal. A fine of 455 rubles is beyond my strength. To pay it I should destroy my farm” (from a letter written by the peasant V. H. Kytchenko, residing in the hamlet of Kytchenkivka, Krasnokutske raion, Kharkiv okruha [region], to the head of the VUTsVK, H. I. Petrovsky (TsDAVOV, fond 1, list 5, fol. 357, a. 1).

The archival fonds of the CC CP(B)U, AUCP(B), VUTsVK, editorial offices of newspapers in the 1930s, and the NK RKI of the Ukrainian SSR [People’s Commissariat of Workers’-Peasants’ Inspection] contain tens of thousands of grievances sent by peasants describing the horrific forms of terror implemented by the party and Soviet organs during the grain deliveries, which led to the famine. They are written proof of the terror by famine that was waged against the Ukrainian peasantry. The volume of grain confiscated by the state in the first half of 1932 turned out to be inadequate. Despite the mass starvation in villages, the Politburo of the CC AUCP(B) decided to step up the grain delivery procedure. Moscow assigned the Soviet Ukrainian government the task of preparing 434 million poods of grain. Even though this quota was later reduced to 356 million poods, it was still unachievable (*Komunist*, 10 July 1932). “Extraordinary commissions for grain delivery” with unlimited rights and powers were created for the implementation of the plan. In Ukraine this commission was headed by Viacheslav Molotov. It set to work to pump out grain on 22 October 1932. Collective farms were forbidden to engage in grain trading (TsDAVOV, fond 24, list 13, fol. 81, a. 18-19), and members of the CC CP(B)U were dispatched to regions and raions to monitor the grain deliveries.

#### **e) Massive confiscations of grain and food from the peasants**

On 20 November 1932 the Radnarkom of the Ukrainian SSR passed a resolution “On Measures to Boost the Grain Deliveries” whose clauses attest to the deliberate creation of conditions that had terrible consequences and caused mass fatalities among the rural population. The Radnarkom of the Ukrainian SSR ordered local government organs:

“1. To ban all utilization of natural reserves created on collective farms that are unsatisfactorily carrying out grain deliveries.

2. With the announcement of this resolution, to put a stop to the issuance of any advances in kind on all collective farms found to be carrying out grain deliveries in an unsatisfactory manner.

3. Collective farms that are unsatisfactorily carrying out grain deliveries and which have issued grain advances in kind for workdays as food for the people should immediately organize the return of the illegally distributed grain in order to direct it to the implementation of the grain delivery plan.

4. To order the RVK [raion executive committee] immediately to organize the confiscation from individual collective farm members and independent farmers the grain that has been stolen from collective farms and Soviet state farms during harvesting, threshing, and transport... At the same time it is crucial to confiscate grain immediately from all sorts of idlers and scroungers, who have not completed workdays but have grain reserves.” (*See Visti VUTsVK*, 21 November 1932).



Collective farms that were not carrying out the grain delivery plan were to be issued a fine fifteen times higher than the normal meat delivery. In keeping with this resolution, on 25 November 1932, the People's Commissariat of Justice of the Ukrainian SSR ordered prosecutors on all levels "to ensure effective repressions in these matters so that they will be able to effect a turning point, and to decisively eradicate all elements that are wrecking the grain delivery plan" (TsDAVOV, fond 8, list 15, fol. 18665, a. 1-2).

f) **"Blacklists": Terror by Famine**

In order to accelerate the speed and volume of the grain deliveries, on 6 December 1932 the Radnarkom of the Ukrainian SSR and the CC CP(B)U passed a fiscally criminal resolution "On Blacklisting Villages That Are Maliciously Sabotaging the Grain Deliveries." The following measures were applied against them:

1. Put an immediate halt to the delivery of goods, put a complete stop to cooperative and state trading on site and confiscate all existing goods from appropriate cooperative and state shops.
2. Put a complete stop to collective farm trading both for collective farm members and independent farmers.
3. Ban all crediting, carry out an immediate confiscation of credits and all other financial obligations.
4. Verify and purge the collective farms in these villages, eradicating counterrevolutionary elements, organizers of the wrecking of grain deliveries" (*Visti VUTsVK*, 8 December 1932). The resolution on the so-called "blacklists" was thus applied to practically all collective farms in Ukraine, thereby dooming hundreds of thousands of peasants to death by starvation (TsDAVOV, fond 1, list 8, fol. 309, a. 74).

In 1932 the total amount of grain harvested in Ukraine was 12.8 million tons. At the same time seven million tons of grain were exported from Ukraine, which had a catastrophic impact on all branches of agriculture in the republic. In 1933, 22.6 million tons of grain were harvested in Ukraine, and 4.8 million tons were stored (TsDAVOV, fond 4402, list 1, fol. 225, a. 6-9). Collective farms harvested 9.2 million tons of grain, while the grain deliveries in the independent farmer sector comprised 75 percent of their gross output (TsDAVOV, fond 539, list 10, fol. 464, a. 275); *ibid*, fond 4402, list 1, fol. 225, a. 6-9). After the collective farms and independent farmers carried out the grain delivery plan, they had nothing left for sowing or feeding their families and cattle.

### ***3. The Territory and Time-Span of the Famine***

The famine began in late fall 1931, which is substantiated by archival documents (TsDAVOV, fond 1, list 8, fol. 117, a. 105-106). In 1932-1933 the Holodomor encompassed practically all villages of the Ukrainian SSR, including ten raions of the Moldavian ASSR, which was then part of Ukraine. The terror by famine lasted for twenty-two months, and its catastrophic consequences continued to be felt even in 1934, when collective farm members were dying of typhus and gastrointestinal poisoning — diseases caused by prolonged physical weakness. Starvation was accompanied by psychological disturbances, which were manifested in mass incidents of cannibalism, necrophagy, the use of food made from human meat and carrion, as attested by archival documents whose reliability cannot be questioned (*The Famine of 1932-1933 in Ukraine*, and peasants' letters addressed to the CC AUCP(B). See *Ukrainskyi istorychnyi zhurnal* [Ukrainian Historical Journal], nos. 7-11, 1989; no. 1, 1990).

### ***4. Repressions Targeting the Starving***

With the goal of preserving collective farm grain and implementing state tasks, on 7 August 1932 the TsVK [Central Executive Committee] and the Sovnarkom of the USSR passed a resolution "On the Protection of Property of State Enterprises, Collective Farms, and Cooperatives and the Strengthening of Public (Socialist) Property," which permitted the application of the highest degree of punishment: execution by firing squad along with confiscation of property or ten years' deprivation of freedom with confiscation of property (*Kollektivizatsiia selskogo khoziaistva; vazhneishye postanovleniia Kommunisticheskoi partii i Sovetskogo pravitelstva 1928-1935* [The Collectivization of Agriculture: The Most Important

Resolutions of the Communist Party and the Soviet Government, 1928-1935], Moscow, 1957, pp. 423-24).

This resolution gave rise to mass terror against the peasants, who were sentenced to be shot merely for trying to save themselves from starving to death by picking ears of grain on their own fields or those belonging to collective farms (TsDAVOV, fond 24, list 138, fol. 81, a. 20-23). For example, during the spring sowing campaign of 1933, 15,166 people were sentenced to death in the Donbas (TsDAVOV, fond 539, list 14, fol. 618, a. 14-16). The documents list the reasons behind these executions: “The case of Valentyna Drobovych, a peasant of average means, was sentenced to five years in distant camps because her child cut up to five pounds of grain ears on their relative’s field” (ibid. a. 3). “Ivan Buriak, a peasant of average means, having cut one kilogram of grain ears, is sentenced to seven years’ deprivation of freedom” (ibid., a. 3-4). All these incidents took place in the summer of 1933 in Voronovytsia raion, Vinnytsia region.

Another fact attests to the lawlessness that was directed against the peasants, who were doomed to death by starvation:

“A poor independent peasant in Kalynivka raion [Vinnytsia region] was sentenced to four years’ deprivation of freedom in outlying camps because on his own field he mowed five meters three to four days before the start of the hay-making season” (ibid., a. 3-4).

The implementation of the 7 August 1933 resolution unleashed mass terror throughout Ukraine. Peasants were sentenced to death without benefit of trials or investigations. Here is one example of a “court’s examination” that took place in Kalynivka raion of Vinnytsia region in the spring of 1933: “In the course of one day K., a member of the region court, heard three cases in three villages, and in two of them death sentences by firing squad were handed down, including one in which [the defendant] was in such a state (swollen) that he could not sit during the court session but lay on the defendant’s bench” (From a memorandum of the instructor of the TsKK [Central Control Commission] of the CP(B)U c.[omrade] Renkachyshek to the CC CP(B)U in the summer of 1933). (TsDAVOV, fond 539, list 14, fol. 618, a. 67-68).

## *5. The Number of Holodomor Victims*

The historical literature lists differing figures of the number of Holodomor victims in Ukraine — they range from six to eleven million people (*The Holodomor of 1932-1933*, pp. 7, 9).

A comparison of data from the 1926 and 1937 censuses indicates that no fewer than 5.5 million people starved to death in Ukraine. The famine also raged in the Kuban, the Northern Caucasus, and Kazakhstan, where ethnic Ukrainians lived in large groups. The mortality rate in Ukraine was three times higher than the birth rate (V. V. Tsaplin, “Statistika zhertv stalinizma v 30-e gody” [Statistics on the Victims of Stalinism in the [19]30s], *Voprosy istorii* [Questions of History], no. 4, 1989, p. 178).

**One confirmation of the genocide of the Ukrainian nation, engineered by the CC CPSU, is the report sent by the Kharkiv-based Royal Consul of Italy, Sergio Gradenigo (See below) to his government (no. 474/106 of 31 May 1933, Consul of Italy):**

## **THE FAMINE AND THE UKRAINIAN QUESTION**

The famine continues to destroy the nation so terribly that it is completely incomprehensible that the world can remain indifferent to such a catastrophe and that the international press, which is so actively calling for the international censure of Germany, guilty of so-called “Terrible Persecutions of the Jews,” remains particularly silent about this slaughter organized by the Soviet government, in which the Jews play a large, but not key, role.

There is really no doubt: 1) that this famine originates from a deliberately organized bad harvest “in order to teach the peasants a lesson”; 2) that there is not a single Jew among those who have died at home, and that on the contrary, all of them are well fed under the fraternal wing of the GPU.

“The ethnographic material” will be changed, cynically stated one Jew, a “big fish” in the local GPU. Today one can predict the death of this “ethnographic material”: it is supposed to be destroyed. No matter how horrific and unbelievable this prediction is, it must still be considered realistic and in the process of implementation.

The government of Moscow, with the aid of brutal requisitions (concerning which I have often sent reports) truly planned ahead of time not a bad harvest — that would be putting it mildly — but the complete absence of any kind of means of survival in Ukrainian villages, in the Kuban, in the Central Volga region.

Three postulates may be found in the basis of such a policy: 1) the passive resistance of the peasant to collective agriculture; 2) the conviction that it is impossible to turn this “ethnographic material” into a model of a real communist; 3) a clearly perceived need to nationalize the lands on which Ukrainian consciousness is awakening with the danger of possible future political complications and where it would be better for the strengthening of the empire that a population, predominantly Russian, lived there.

The first postulate derives from the government’s resolutions, which many party members support.

In sacrificing ten-fifteen million people, the goal of the third resolution was undoubtedly the liquidation of the Ukrainian problem over a period of several months. Let this figure not strike you as exaggerated. I think that it will be exceeded and that they have already reached it. In actuality, this immense disaster, which is mowing down millions of people and destroying the children of the entire nation, is affecting only Ukraine, the Kuban, and the Central Volga region.

“The catastrophe is beginning beyond Kursk,” said the writer Andreev, who arrived from Moscow a few months ago...

I consider it necessary to present another episodic picture of the situation:

Comrade Frenkel, a member of the Collegium of the GPU, admitted to a man I know that every night in Kharkiv they collect up to 200 corpses of people who have starved to death on the street. On my part, I can attest to the fact that after midnight I myself saw trucks with ten-fifteen corpses driving past the consulate...

At the market on the morning of 21 May, dead people were dumped like a pile of rags into the mud [and] the manure along the fence separating the square from the river. There were about thirty of them. On the morning of the 23<sup>rd</sup> I counted fifty-one. One child was sucking at the breasts of its dead mother. One peasant woman with her two children spent all day on that same Pushkin Street, a few meters from the consulate, sitting on the steps, just like dozens of other mothers, who were further up or down the street. She was holding an ordinary box in which someone would occasionally throw a kopeck. In the evening, with one movement she pushed the two children away from her, and standing up, threw herself under a tram that was rushing by at top speed. Within half an hour I saw a street-cleaner sweeping up the unfortunate woman’s entrails. Her two children were still standing there and watching...

Close to midnight they begin to transport them on trucks to the North-Donetsk cargo station. They also take the children away... Those who are not swollen and may survive are sent to the barracks at Kholodna Hora, where approximately 8,000 people die on the straw in wooden huts, and those were mostly children.

Swollen people are transported by cargo train into the fields and left there, some fifty-sixty kilometres from the city, so that no one will see how they are dying there... It often happens that a train is dispatched a few days after it is loaded and closed. A couple of days ago a railway worker who was walking past one of these cars heard a cry. He approached and heard an unfortunate man, who was begging from the inside to save him from the stench of the corpses, which was becoming intolerable. When the car was opened, he was the only living person. They pulled him out and brought him to die in another train car that contained people who were still alive.

When they arrive at the burial place, they dig huge pits and pull all the dead people from the train cars. They don’t pay any particular attention to details, and you can often see how a person that has been tossed into the pit revives and twists and turns in the last signs of life. The diggers’ work does not stop and the tossing of corpses continues.

I obtained these details from orderlies and can guarantee their authenticity.

Today in the village of Harovo, 50 kilometres from Kharkiv, you can count only 200 out of 1,300 residents.

Every day an average of thirty people die in the Kholodna Hora prison.

It seems that areas in Poltava have suffered even more than Kharkiv. Even doctors in Poltava are beginning to swell up from malnutrition.

From Sumy a Komsomol member writes to his girlfriend in Kharkiv that there [in Sumy] parents are killing their younger children and eating them. . .

In closing, I will recount the suicide of the GPU general, Brosky, who on the 18<sup>th</sup> of this month, after returning from an inspection trip to some villages, and a frightening scene with Balitsky, during which the general shouted that this is not communism but “a horror,” and that he has had enough of these inspections and will no longer travel anywhere to institute “order” (I think: to carry out pacification), shot himself in the head. . .

And finally: a person — a “big fish” in the local government and party, whose name I have not been able to determine — went insane after a village inspection. They had to put a straitjacket on him. He was also yelling and cursing: “This is not communism, this is execution!”

I conclude: today’s disaster will lead to the colonization of Ukraine, mostly Russian. It will change its ethnic character. And possibly in the very near future it will no longer be possible to speak about Ukraine, about the Ukrainian problem, since Ukraine in reality will become a Russian country.

With deepest respect,

(Royal) Consul  
(Signature) Gradenigo.

## **THE FORCIBLE RESETTLEMENT OF UKRAINIANS DURING COLLECTIVIZATION**

Dekulakization was accompanied by mass expulsions of Ukrainians from Ukraine to Russia’s eastern raions.

On 30 January 1930 the Politburo of the CC AUCP(B) ratified a resolution drawn up under Molotov’s direction, entitled “On Measures concerning the Eradication of Kulak Households in Raions of Total Collectivization.” In keeping with the resolution, “kulaks and semi-landlords” who had opposed collectivization were subject to deportation to the Far North, Siberia, the Ural region, and Kazakhstan. The process of liquidating the kulaks was accompanied by the confiscation of property and expulsion of people. The basis for introducing this mechanism was the resolution of the TsVK and RNK of the USSR “On Measures to Strengthen the Socialist Reconstruction of Agriculture in Raions of Total Collectivization and on the Struggle against the Kulaks.” This resolution granted the governments of the union republics and the executive committees of territories and regions the right to apply “all necessary measures in the struggle against the kulaks including total confiscation of kulaks’ property and their deportation beyond the confines of individual raions and territories (regions).” The concrete implementation of these measures was described in a secret instruction issued by the TsVK and RNK of the USSR dated 4 February 1930.

In order to resolve questions and the coordination of the measures connected to dekulakization, a commission was created on 23 January 1930. Its members were: S. Kosior, the secretary of the CC CP(B)U (head); V. Balitsky, the head of the GPU; V. Poraiko; M. Demchenko, and P. Postyshev. At a meeting of the Politburo of the CC CP(B)U on 8 February it was resolved:

- “a) To confirm the distribution throughout okruhas for deportation to outlying areas of the Union. . . ;
- b) To consider it crucial to complete most of this entire operation by 15 March.”

Already on 27 February Karl Karlson, the deputy head of the GPU of the Ukrainian SSR, informed the CC “about ten trainloads of 17,294 dekulakized people, 6,256 of whom were men, 5,718 were women, and 5,320 were children, who “went through to the territory of the RSFSR via the Bakhmach railway station.”

A “Report on the Course of Deporting Kulaks from Okruhas of the Ukrainian SSR” announces that as of 12 March, 58,411 people had been deported from 13 okruhas of the republic (TsDAHO, fond 1, list 16, fol. 7, a. 116, 127).

Cargo trains filled with dekulakized and “counterrevolutionary elements” traveled to the Far North and the east, while their place was taken by resettlers from other raions of the USSR. Resettlement to Ukraine also continued in subsequent years.

During 1933-1937, 44,457 families (a total of 221,465 individuals) were resettled in Ukraine by the All-Union Resettlement Committee and Resettlement Division of the NKVD USSR. The largest number of resettlers was brought to Ukraine in 1933 (Gosudarstvennyi russkii arkhiv ekonomiki [RGAE: State Russian Archive The Economy] fond 5675, list 1, fol. 185, a. 2).

## GENOCIDE OF THE KUBAN UKRAINIANS

The testimony of Petro Vyr concerning the ethnic cleansing of the Kuban (“The Destruction of the Kuban”) attests to the fact that an act of genocide against Ukrainians took place:

“On the order of the CC CPSU and the government of the USSR, the residents of thirteen villages in the Kuban were deported to the Far North for “failing to carry out the wheat delivery plan, and for sabotage.” The deportations were directed by Kabaev, assistant to the GPU head and representative of the Politburo.

The scale of the deportations, or in other words, the destruction of several hundred thousand Kuban Ukrainians can be pictured from the following figures: the entire population — 17,000 people — was deported from the village of Poltava; 45,000 from Uman; and 40,000 from Myshastivka. From several villages only part of the population was deported, e.g., half the residents of the village of Ivaniv were deported.

Agricultural tools and personal property that people had prepared to take with them to their places of deportation were confiscated before they were loaded onto the trains. Public executions and bloodshed accompanied the deportation process” (*The Black Deeds of the Kremlin*, vol. 1, p. 441).

The CPSU’s actions in the Kuban fall under Article 2, Clause C of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide of 9 December 1948 and should be punished.

The criminal communist regime was fully aware that it was committing crimes against the Ukrainian nation and thus sought to conceal the catastrophic consequences of the famine and the very fact of the Holodomor in Ukraine.

On 13 March 1933 the Politburo of the CC CP(B)U categorically banned the spreading of rumors about the famine in Ukraine.

In December 1932 a system of internal passports was introduced in the Ukrainian SSR, in accordance with which collective farm members, with the exception of those recruited for construction sites connected to the Five-Year Plan (the existence of a contract and permission from the executive of a collective farm) were not issued passports in order to restrict their migration throughout the country and thus the circulation of accounts of the famine. Their movement throughout the country was strictly limited and regulated by appropriate government resolutions (*Komunist*, 1 January 1933; *Sotsialistychna Kharkivshchyna*, 1 January 1935; *Visti VUTsVK*, 18 March 1933).

Stalin ordered the materials of the 1937 census to be buried in the archives (Tsaplin, “Ukaz” in *Works*, p. 178). Access to this archive became available only in 1989. As a result of the Holodomor, thousands of Ukrainian villages were depopulated, particularly in the southern regions of the republic. Having eliminated Ukrainians from Ukraine, the Russian imperialists began to settle its lands with settlers from Russia. On 25 October 1933 the Politburo of the CC CP(B) resolved to resettle Russian and Belarusian collective farmers in Ukraine, as well as peasants from Central Asia. Stalin, Molotov, and Kaganovich personally monitored this resettlement (RGAE, fond 5675, list 1, fol. 31, a. 8; fol. 41, a. 19). In late December 329 trains loaded with the contents of 21,756 Belarusian and Russian farm households were dispatched to Ukraine and settled in Odesa, Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, and Kharkiv regions (*ibid.*, fol. 33, a. 56).

The government also carried out resettlements within Ukraine — from the northern regions to the south — in order to conceal the horrific consequences of the famine (TsDAHO, fond 1, list 6, fol. 321, a. 6).

In order to better control the moods and conduct of peasants, the government resettled them from small hamlets and independent farms to villages.

## INTERNATIONAL NON-INTERVENTION

Western governments that knew about the famine from their diplomats (*See* publications by Zlepko and Graziosi), did not issue any official statements to the government of the USSR about the genocide of the Ukrainians. Moreover, in September 1934 they accepted the USSR as a member of the League of Nations. This organization ignored the appeal of Ukrainian émigré political organizations, which offered facts on the famine raging in Ukraine. (*See* Oleksander Shulhyn, *Bez terytorii* [Without a Territory], Paris, 1934, pp. 363-68).

## ACCUSATION OF GENOCIDE

The facts presented in this part of the indictment allow us to confirm that an act of genocide was carried out against Ukrainians in the Ukrainian countryside in 1932-1933. The actions of the communist government in Ukraine, as corroborated by written archival sources and official documents of the party and the Soviet government in those years, correspond to the clauses of Article 2 of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, passed on 9 December 1948 by the General Assembly of the UN and ratified by the USSR (*Vedomosti Verkhovnogo Soveta SSSR* [Bulletin of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR], no. 12, 1954, p. 244).

After hearing testimony from all parties, the International Commission of Inquiry into the 1932-33 Famine in Ukraine, the members of which were distinguished jurists (some of them had taken part in the Nuremberg trials), reached the conclusion that “a genocide of the Ukrainian people took place” in Ukraine in 1932-1933. (*See Mizhnarodna komisiia iz rozsliduvannia holodu na Ukraini u 1932-1933 rokakh. Pidsumkovyi zvit, 1990 rik.* [the Ukrainian-language translation of the] *International Commission of Inquiry into the 1932-1933 in Ukraine, The Final Report, 1990*] Kyiv, 1992, p. 76.

After the Russian empire broke the ethnic back of the Ukrainian nation — the peasantry — by means of the Holodomor of 1932-1933, Moscow resolved to destroy Ukraine’s intellect, and from 1933 significantly expanded the scope of repressions targeting the Ukrainian intelligentsia. Whereas in 1932 there were 10,063 scholars and professors in Ukraine, by 1940 their numbers had dwindled to 5,000. (Kost Huslysty, *Narys istorii Ukrainy* [Outline of Ukrainian History], Ufa, 1942). Under Postyshev’s leadership in 1933 the NKVD destroyed 30,000 Ukrainian intellectuals in Kyiv alone. (L. Forostivsky, “Kyiv pid vorozhymy okupatsiiamy” [Kyiv under Enemy Occupations], in *Moskovstvo* [Muscovitism], Drohobych: Vidrodzhennia, 1996, p. 171).

The goal of the CPSU, as the front line of Russian imperialism, was to reduce the intellectual potential of the Ukrainian nation. The numbers of Ukrainians in government bodies and institutes of higher education were reduced so much so that the higher the position the fewer Ukrainians. For example, in 1929 Ukrainians formed 75.9 percent of all raion officials, 53.5 percent of okruha officials, and 26.8 percent of region-level officials. In 1924 Russians formed only 7 percent of the population of Ukraine, but 71 percent of higher-ranking officials were Russians. Ukrainians comprised 80 percent of Ukraine’s population, yet only 3 percent of high-ranking positions were held by Ukrainians. In 1932 alone Postyshev implemented the 14 March 1932 directive of the AUCP(B) by eliminating 27,500 Ukrainians out of a total of 120,000 members and candidates of the CPU. Thirteen thousand Russians replaced Ukrainians in party organizations, as heads of controlling commissions, secretaries of raion party committees, and other leading positions (Shtepa, *Moskovstvo*, pp. 153-54).

In 1937 Moscow dispatched a commission to Ukraine, consisting of Viacheslav Molotov, Nikita Khrushchev, and Nikolai Yezhov. Their task was “to rebuild the forms and methods of the leadership of

Ukrainian culture.” Within two months the commission destroyed the entire ruling stratum of the CPU. Out of seventeen members of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR, only four were left. The membership of the CC CPU was reduced from fifty-seven to twelve, and the leadership of the Union of Writers of Ukraine was dismissed. They were replaced by 35,000 Russians (Stanislav Kosior, “Articles and Speeches,” *ibid.*, p. 154).

The de-intellectualization of Ukraine is evident in the following statistical data. For every 100,000 Russians there were 364 scholars. For every 100,000 Ukrainians there were 60 scholars, a difference of 600 percent. In 1940, 63 percent of all scholars in the Soviet Union worked in the RSFSR, and in 1960 the figure was 69 percent — an increase of 6 percent. In 1940, 19 percent of all scholars in the Soviet Union worked in the Ukrainian SSR, and in 1960, 13 percent, i.e., a decrease of 6 percent.

Per capita expenditures on education in the Ukrainian SSR were four times lower than in the RSFSR (D. Solovei, “Ukrainskaia nauka v kolonialnykh putakh” [Ukrainian Scholarship in Colonial Shackles], *ibid.*, p. 156).

Between 1940 and 1956 the number of institutes of higher education in Russia increased, while in Ukraine they decreased. In 1954, twenty-four institutes of higher education were closed in Ukraine, while twenty-one were opened in Russia. In 1961, for every 100,000 people in the Ukrainian SSR, 811 Ukrainians studied in institutes and universities, compared to 1,769 Russians, and 2,223 Jews (*ibid.*).

Between 1931 and 1960 the number of post-graduates in the USSR rose three times (from 12,000 to 36,000). In Ukraine, meanwhile, the number of post-graduates fell from 3,147 to 2,987 (*ibid.*, p. 155).

Institutes of higher learning and technical colleges switched to Russian as the language of instruction. The number of schools with Ukrainian as the language of instruction was systematically reduced, with a concomitant increase of Russian schools. This is in direct violation of the Convention against Discrimination in Education of 14 December 1960.

The CPSU used the period of the Second World War to continue its genocide against the Ukrainian nation. Thus, in autumn 1941, when the Germans were closing in on Moscow, General Georgii Zhukov dispatched by convoy to Moscow 179,000 members of people’s volunteer corps, consisting of school-teachers, engineers, and scholars from Ukraine. These units were untrained and poorly armed: one rifle and one batch of ammunition were issued for every five men (*Rodina* [Motherland], nos. 6-7, 1991). On 19 December 1941 three cavalry divisions consisting of Ukrainian peasants from the Kuban and Ukraine were thrown into battle against German tanks. Within a few hours the German tanks ground them into mincemeat (*ibid.*)

On 22 June 1944 Minister of Internal Affairs of the USSR Lavrentii Beria and Deputy Minister of Defense of the USSR Georgii Zhukov signed order no. 0078/42 on the deportation of all Ukrainians who had lived under German occupation to distant territories of the USSR (Feliks Chuev, *Soldaty imperii. Besedy. Vospominaniia. Dokumenty* [Soldiers of the Empire: Discussions, Reminiscences, Documents], Moscow: Kovcheg, 1998, pp. 177-79). In keeping with this order, nearly two million people, including elderly people and children, were deported from the western regions of Ukraine to Russia’s eastern districts.

In 1929-1930 the GPU organs fabricated the case of the Union for the Liberation of Ukraine (SVU), which allegedly had links with the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church.

In working out a plan for the trial of Ukraine’s lay and church intelligentsia, the GPU reported to the CC CP(B) that the “Organization united the anti-Soviet intelligentsia, former well known members of the Petliurite movement, activists in the autocephalous Church, and representatives of the kurkul class.” The ultimate goal of their activity was allegedly the liquidation of Soviet rule in Ukraine TsDAHO, fond I, list 20, fol. 2994, a. 185). In January 1930 the GPU organized a “synod,” which passed a resolution on the “self-dissolution” of the UAOC.

The top leadership of the AUCP(B), headed by Stalin, sanctioned the liquidation of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and the subordination of its clergy and faithful to the Moscow Patriarchate, as well as the clergy and faithful of the Mukachiv-Priashiv eparchy in Transcarpathian Ukraine (TsDAHO, fond I, list 23, fol. 1639, a. 97-98). During the night of 11-12 April 1945 the NKVD organs in Lviv and Ivano-Frankivsk arrested the metropolitan of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church Josyf Slipyj, along with

bishops, well known priests, and professors of the Lviv Theological Academy and Seminary. Parishes of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church were subordinated to the Moscow Patriarchate.

The NKVD leadership organized the Lviv Synod of 8-10 March 1946, which passed a resolution on the subordination of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church to the Moscow Patriarchate, a process that was carried out by means of violence and blackmail. Hundreds of priests and thousands of lay people were imprisoned. Several hundred priests went underground. All the measures aimed at subordinating parishes in Transcarpathian Ukraine to the Russian Orthodox Church were developed and implemented by the leadership of the CC CP(B)U headed by Khrushchev (TsDAVOV, fond 4648, list 3, fol. 49, a. 21-24).

On 13 January 1960 the CC CPSU passed a resolution "On Measures to Liquidate Violations by the Clergy of Soviet Legislation on Cults." The CC CP(B)U passed a similar resolution on 19 March 1960. The following measures were foreseen by the implementation of these resolutions:

- reduction of the number of monasteries;
- confiscation from religious communities of those churches in which Soviet and civic organizations were housed before the war;
- assistance with the closure of "fading" parishes;
- demands to weaken the material base of churches;
- reduction of enrolment in theological seminaries;
- liquidation of church charitable work and the maximum restriction of religious propaganda (TsDAHO, fond 1, list 24, fol. 5407, a. 14-18; fol. 5488, a. 84).

During the subsequent antireligious campaign more than half the churches in Ukraine were closed and looted. Thousands of churches were turned into warehouses, sports halls, and granaries. Hundreds of irreplaceable monuments of architecture and culture disappeared as a result of the communist regime's antireligious policy during the 1960s-1980s.

By means of internal deportation, which led to the unjustified suffering of immense numbers of rural residents, hamlets were liquidated and peasants were forcibly resettled. These criminal actions are in direct violation of the Statute of the IMT.

After the Soviets acquired control over Ukraine's western regions, in 1945 the CPSU deported 250,000 Ukrainians to Siberia. In their place Russians were settled in the following regions: Lviv (181,000); Ivano-Frankivsk (40,000); Ternopil (27,000); Rivne (39,000); Zakarpattia (30,000); and Chernivtsi (5,000). Until 1939 there were hardly any Russians in these regions (Shtepa, *Moskovstvo*, p. 181).

Since it was impossible to deport all the Ukrainians from Ukraine, the Soviet leadership decided to apply another tried-and-true method: the Holodomor of 1946-1947, which claimed 369,000 and 628,000 victims, respectively.

There was grain in the Soviet Union at this time. In 1946 the USSR exported 1.7 million tons of grain, mostly in the form of free aid. On 6 April 1946 the Soviet government signed an agreement to supply France with 500,000 tons of grain during April-August. During 1946-1947 Poland received 900,000 tons of grain, and Czechoslovakia received 600,000 tons of grain in 1947 (V. Kapustina, *Molodyi budivnychy Ukrainy* [The Young Builder of Ukraine], no. 6, Kyiv, 1999).

The CC CPSU consciously engineered this famine as an act of genocide against the Ukrainian nation, i.e., it committed a crime foreseen by Article 2, Clause C of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide of 9 December 1948.

## **THE COMMUNIST REGIME AND THE CHURCH**

On 13 February 1922 the Politburo of the CC CP(B)U passed a resolution that set the stage for the instigation of inter-church antagonism in Ukraine between the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church and the Russian Orthodox Church:

"With the goal of exacerbating the struggle between them, the principle of majority must be rejected, granting the possibility to the minority to have its own church and not allow any surveys of citizens." (TsDAHO, fond 1, list 6, fols. 29 and a. 32).



At the same time as the communists were shipping grain out of Ukraine, the Soviet government looted church valuables worth 834,000 gold rubles (*Golod 1921-1923 gg. na Ukraine. Sbornik dokumentov i materialov* [The Famine of 1921-1923 in Ukraine. A Collection of Documents and Materials], Kyiv, 1993, p. 15). In its resolution of 4 September 1922 entitled “On the Work of the GPU,” the Politburo of the CC CP(B)U ordered the GPU “to step up the work of liquidating church counterrevolution by continuing to exacerbate relations between the warring churches” (TsDAHO, fond 1, list 6, fols. 30, a. 61 verso).

A meeting of the antireligious commission of the CC CP(B)U of 13 April 1925 discussed measures to limit the influence of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church, and passed a decision stating:

“Instruct the GPU to collect material on the anti-Soviet conduct of the leadership of the All-Ukrainian Orthodox Church Council (the ruling organ of the UAOC). In terms of practical activity, intensify repressions of the Autocephalous Church” (TsDAHO, fond 1, list 20, fols. 2006, a. 59). At a closed session of the Politburo of the CC CP(B)U on 25 February 1926 “Proposals of the Commission on the Question of Church Affairs” were discussed and ratified. Point 3 is particularly interesting:

“3. To authorize repressions concerning the heads of the Autocephalous Church (Potiienko, Yareshchenko, and Sharaievsky), which have been outlined by the commission, and to publicize their counterrevolutionary activity in the press. Instruct the commission to continue the work of resettling farms located in hamlets to villages.”

The CPSU systematically and on a broad scale exploited the work of Ukrainians on the territory of Russia in order to develop the Russian economy: prisoners, deportees, individuals brought from Ukraine through recruitment and other means, voluntary in form but forcible in essence.

The empire’s use of forced labor is a violation of the C29 Forced Labor Convention of 28 June 1930 (ratified by the USSR on 4 June 1956). Article 1, Clause 1 states: “Each Member of the International Labour Organisation which ratifies this Convention undertakes to suppress the use of forced or compulsory labour in all its forms within the shortest possible period” (*Mezhdunarodnaia zashchita prav i svobod cheloveka* [International Protection of Rights and Freedoms of Man], Moscow: Iuridicheskaiia literatura, 1990, p. 219).

In keeping with international practice ratified by Germany, an exploiter state should pay financial compensation to the victims of forced labor or their direct heirs.

Since the heir of the USSR is the Russian Federation, it bears the responsibility of paying financial compensation to the citizens of Ukraine for their forced labor on the territory of the Russian Federation.

## **THE LOOTING OF UKRAINE BY RUSSIA AT THE BEGINNING OF WORLD WAR TWO**

The 27 June 1941 resolution of the CC AUCP(B) and the Council of People’s Commissars [RNK USSR] “Concerning the Order of Removing and Stationing Human Contingents and Valuable Property” launched the removal from Ukraine to the east of 550 large enterprises from 30 industrial spheres, the Academy of Sciences and its institutes, and the property of hundreds of collective farms and Machine-Tractor Stations (MTSs). Three and half million engineers, designers, qualified workers, and intellectuals specializing in the field of humanities were sent to Russia. In December 1941 twenty light-industry installations were shipped out of Ukraine.

The property of collective farms and MTSs were shipped out of Ukraine: as of 20 October 1941, the CPSU shipped 158,000 horses, 10,807,000 head of large horned cattle, 17,685,000 sheep, and 1,689,000 pigs to Russia. Included in the shipments from Ukraine to Russia were 20,302 tractors, while another 50,000 tractors were dismantled, damaged, or destroyed. (*Sovetskaia Ukraina v gody VOV. 1941-1945 gg.* [Soviet Ukraine in the Years of the G[reat] P[atriotic] W[ar], 1941-1945]. 3 vols., Kyiv, vol. 1, pp. 251-91). The book cites archival sources of the Ministry of Defense of the USSR and Communist Party archives.

# **THE COLLAPSE OF THE USSR AND THE CREATION OF AN INDEPENDENT STATE**

After the collapse of the USSR the Russian Federation inherited the gold currency and diamond reserves, shares, liabilities, and all of the Soviet Union's property abroad, but refused to distribute it among the former Union republics, even though this legacy was created through the efforts of all the republics, not just the RSFSR. This is a blatant violation of the Vienna Convention on the Succession of States in Respect of Treaties (1978) and the Convention on the Succession of States in Other Spheres.

As of 1 January 1991 the Oshchadbank [Savings Bank] of the USSR removed from the Oshchadbank of Ukraine 84.3 billion karbovantsi, representing the savings of Ukrainian citizens, a sum that reached nearly 150 billion US dollars according to the rate at the time.

To this day the government of the Russian Federation refuses to return this money to the citizens of Ukraine. (Letter from the president of the Association of Ukrainian Banks, Oleksandr Suhoniako no. 01/06/266 of 25 June 1997).

Russia's appropriation of money belonging to Ukrainian citizens is a blatant violation of the 1978 Vienna Convention and the Convention on the Succession of States in Other Spheres.

## **ON THE BASIS OF THE ABOVE MATERIALS A BILL OF INDICTMENT IS RENDERED AGAINST THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE SOVIET UNION (RSDRP, AUCP(B), CPSU IN THE PERSON OF ITS LEADERSHIP**

— The CC CPSU, including the leadership of the Ukrainian branch of the CPSU — the members of the Central Committee of the CPSU, which, as the head of the state and government of the USSR, adopting a class-based anti-national and anti-humane ideology as its ideological weapon, and developing its criminal character, perpetrated the following crimes against Ukraine and its people:

— unleashed an aggressive war against the Ukrainian National Republic (UNR) three times and occupied Ukraine, i.e., committed crimes foreseen in Article 6, Clause A of the Statute of the IMT.

— While carrying out combat actions against the armies of the UNR in 1917-1920 and against the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) in 1944-1950, the communist military command shot prisoners, forced Ukrainian fighters to cross over to their side in the war against the UPA, used chemical weapons, shot civilians, i.e., committed crimes foreseen by Article 6, Clause B of the IMT.

After occupying Ukraine, the Russian communist government:

— destroyed the Ukrainian state, abolished Ukrainian laws and introduced its own, liquidated the Ukrainian parliament and judicial system;

— repressed soldiers and state officials of the UNR;

— repressed all Ukrainian political parties, including the Communist Party of Ukraine, Ukrainian churches, and looted church property;

— in crushing the armed resistance of the Ukrainian people, the Bolsheviks engaged in killings, deportations, and torture on a broad scale, i.e., they are accused of crimes foreseen by Article 6, Clause B of the IMT.

For implementing the ideology of expanding the Russian ethnic group on Ukrainian territory, the communist leadership:

— in 1921-1923, 1932-1933, and 1946-1947 engineered famines — the three Holodomors — against the Ukrainian peasants, in the process killing nearly 13 million people, including children, i.e., it is accused of crimes foreseen by Article 2, Clause C of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide of 9 December 1948;

— the CPSU repressed and liquidated the intellectual potential of the nation, i.e., it is accused of a crime foreseen by Article 2, Clause A of the above-mentioned Convention on Genocide.

— the CPSU, deported millions of Ukrainians from Ukraine on the basis of their political, religious, and social attributes, and in order to undermine the ethnic composition of the nation settled millions of Russians in Ukraine, i.e., it is accused of a crime foreseen by Article 2, Clause C of the above-mentioned Convention on Genocide;

— having undermined the intellectual potential of Ukraine, the CPSU supplanted the Ukrainian language by forcibly imposing Russian thereby tearing the younger generations from the language and spiritual culture of their ancestors, i.e., it committed an act of genocide;

— the CPSU created a repressive machinery that was used on the broadest scale throughout Ukraine to carry out brutal tortures and degrading treatment thereby inflicting untold moral and psychological losses, i.e., it is accused of crimes foreseen by the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment of 10 December 1948;

— the CPSU transformed the work of Ukrainian citizens into forced labor thereby violating the C29 Convention on Forced Labor of 28 June 1930.

The statute of limitations on indicting the CC CPSU for war crimes and crimes against humanity, based on Article 1 of the Convention on the Abolition of the Statute of Limitations on War Crimes and Crimes against Humanity of 26 November 1968, is not applied (the Convention was ratified by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR on 11 March 1969). The action of the Convention on Genocide of 9 December 1948 is applied to representatives of the state power and partly to individuals only in the event that the crimes of genocide are not violations of the USSR's domestic legislation.

This indictment, submitted by members of the public to the Vilnius International Public Tribunal on the Evaluation of the Crimes of Communism, is not complete in terms of either accusations or evidence. It is a transitional document.

The communist regime is nothing but the communist stage of the Russian Empire, and since Ukraine was under the rule of the Russian tsars for three and half centuries, and all this time it experienced the cruel



*The 1993 commemoration of the Holodomor of 1932-1933 on St. Sophia's square in Kyiv. The banner reads: "Prosecute the executioners of the Ukrainian nation!"*

hand of Muscovite barbarity, the numbers of Ukrainian victims are immeasurable. Separating the communist occupying regime from the tsarist regime can be done only conditionally.

Historical accountability between Ukraine and Russia should commence from the seventeenth century. Indeed, the art of politics is based not on satisfying emotions of revenge, which are focused on the past, but rather on creating a positive basis and conditions for the future development of the [Ukrainian] nation. Therefore, we offer here a chronologically limited indictment that covers only the period of communist rule. In its content it is only an initial general fragment.

The work of preparing for a trial of the CPSU was begun at a theoretical conference. The National Committee to Prepare an International Trial of the CPSU for the totalitarian regime's crimes in Ukraine and against Ukrainians — Nuremberg II — was founded in 1996. The Vilnius International Public Tribunal on the Evaluation of the Crimes of Communism and this bill of indictment are the latest steps toward convening an international trial of the CPSU (Nuremberg II).

An imperative international court will be created on the basis of a treaty in this matter and signed by several states.

President Leonid Kuchma and his government will not support the formation of an international court, but after him there will undoubtedly be a president who will agree to this, and then this document and the other preparatory work of the Committee for Nuremberg II will serve as a useful foundation. The preparation of this document was inspired by the hope that today's work will be beneficial in the future.

The section entitled "Mechanism of Mass Terror" was compiled on the basis of research carried out by the historian Serhii Bilokin; the section on the Holodomor is based on research by the historian Vasyl Marochko; the section on religion is based on research by the historian Arsen Zinchenko.

Ten scholars and politicians comprising the Ukrainian Public Mission to the Vilnius Tribunal took part in discussing the concept of this document.

**Levko Lukianenko**  
**Honorary Doctor of Law,**  
**Head of the Association of Researchers on the Holodomors in Ukraine**

# THE DESTRUCTION OF THE SICH

The latest Russian-Turkish war ended in 1774, and St. Petersburg was noisily celebrating the victory. But there was no peace in Russia. The fires of revolt were smoldering in the Don River region, where an uprising headed by Yemelian Pugachev was gaining strength. Catherine II, frightened by the rebels, ordered them to be punished severely. Although this did not happen immediately, the tsarist army succeeded in drowning the Pugachev insurrection in blood.

There was also unrest in Zaporizhia. A shocking surprise was awaiting the Ukrainian Cossacks returning victoriously from the Turkish war: Catherine II had generously distributed their long-held lands and the population that was living on them among her favorites and Russian landowners. Serfdom, unknown in the Cossack territories, became a terrible reality. Many Zaporozhians began to declare openly that the Russian empress was ignoring their rights and that it was time to defend them by force of arms. This was also the idea of Camp Commander Petro Kalnyshevsky, who understood that after the liquidation of the Hetman state (1764) and Cossack autonomy in Slobidska Ukraine (1765) the New Sich, destined to be the last in Zaporizhia, would be next in line. Now that Russia had arrived at the shores of the Black Sea, the Sich changed from being a borderland [*okraina*] to practically the center of so-called Little Russia. The empire thus no longer needed the Sich as a protector of its southern borders. Indeed, Catherine II, who was greatly alarmed by the events in the Don River region, could hardly tolerate a Cossack republic on the Dnipro River, with its democratic order — elections, councils, and laws — which were in such sharp contrast to the principles of absolutism.

The Zaporozhian Sich, destined to disappear from the face of the earth, was living out its final days. Plagued by the fact that the Zaporozhian Cossacks had assisted the Haidamaks during the Koliivshchyna rebellion, the Cossacks' constant struggle for their own lands and their opposition to the Russian government's despotic efforts to settle their lands with various foreigners, the Cossacks' land disputes with these foreigners and

fishing disputes with the Don Cossacks over who had the right to fish in the Kalmius River, the Zaporozhians' grievances concerning those injustices, and reminders of Hetman Khmelnytsky's universals, the government in St. Petersburg resolved to abolish the Zaporozhian Sich.

The government was also troubled by the existence of this free military republic with its own order, which completely ignored the tsarist regime that had been established throughout the great state. Furthermore, this boisterous and irrepressible society of warriors could instantly muster 15,000 troops or more and cause much trouble. The Russians greatly feared this and so began inventing various transgressions and damages allegedly perpetrated by the Zaporozhians. For example, the Zaporozhians were reproached for the fact that their statute banned marriage, while the Russians praised foreigners for the same thing and even provided considerable financial assistance to the Knights of Malta, who had the same kind of statute as the famous knights of the Lower Dnipro region. Yet the Knights of Malta had never achieved that kind of renown and had not done so much to benefit their native land as the Zaporozhians.

Kalnyshevsky understood perfectly that if a powerful man wants to turn black into white, he will do so, and being an intelligent man, he saw that new times were in the offing. Since the end of the lengthy war and the raids on the Tatars and Turks, and occasionally the Poles, fishing and hunting alone would not feed the Zaporozhian society. In addition, the government was insolently depriving them of their Zaporozhian lands [*volnosti*]. This calamity had to be prevented; it was no longer possible to live this way in New Sich (on the Pidpolna River), as the Zaporozhians had lived earlier in their various Sich centers. Kalnyshevsky thus began to populate the Zaporozhian lands with settlers from Ukraine, many of whom had come to Zaporizhia from the Poltava, Kyiv, and Chernihiv regions, as well as from Podillia, Volyn, and even from Halychyna.

Within a few years the Zaporozhian steppes were unrecognizable: where once the high feather grass had rippled beneath the blazing sun now

stretched bountiful fields, the ploughed, ageless virgin soil producing huge harvests.

The rumor that evil was being plotted in St. Petersburg for the Sich greatly perturbed the Zaporozhians, and they immediately dispatched envoys: the scribe Antin Holovaty, Sydir Bily, and Lonhyn Moshchensky. They were instructed to intercede in the matter concerning the Zaporozhian lands and rights. To bolster their case, they were given Bohdan Khmelnytsky's universals of 1655, the terms of the Treaty of Bila Tserkva of 1667, and an extract from the constitution of the 1717 Sejm, and other documents. The envoys were instructed to submit complaints against General Voieikov, the current governor of Novorossiisk, who had caused great harm to the Zaporozhians. The envoys were also carrying gifts for various people who might help them during their mission: Turkish and Persian shawls, kilims, damask tapestries, wine, expensive fruit, furs, barrels of cedar juice, liqueurs, honey, smoked sturgeon, Indian songbirds, the famous freshly salted Dnipro winter pike, and Ukrainian horses with expensive Circassian saddles and saddle-cloth. They also brought money. But their efforts were in vain, and the envoys sent a letter to Zaporizhia from St. Petersburg: "Here they know how to take, but are refusing to do anything because, as they say, no one knows anything and cannot help in our matter. A rumor is circulating that they want to divide our lands among the great lords of St. Petersburg, as it is written in the Bible: 'And when they had crucified Him, they divided up His garments among themselves by casting lots.'"

Witnessing the high-ranking Russian officials' unfriendliness to the Zaporozhians, lower-ranking government officials began to make fun of the Zaporozhian envoys. Thus, during a dinner that the tsarina had ordered for the Zaporozhians, they were given spoons with such huge handles that they could not raise them to their mouths. Then the Sich envoys began to feed each other with them, joining in the mockery. Passing among the tables, two dignified courtiers stopped, and one of them asked the other in French, thinking that the Cossacks would not understand:

"And where is this stupid nation born?"

"Naturally, in stupid *khokhlandia* [derived from the derogatory Russian term for Ukrainians: *khokhol*]," said the other. Overhearing this conversation, the Zaporozhians winked at each

other and began the following conversation in tones loud enough for the lords to hear:

"Oh, my brother, look how many lords are here!"

"And they're so great and wise!" said another.

"And where are they born?"

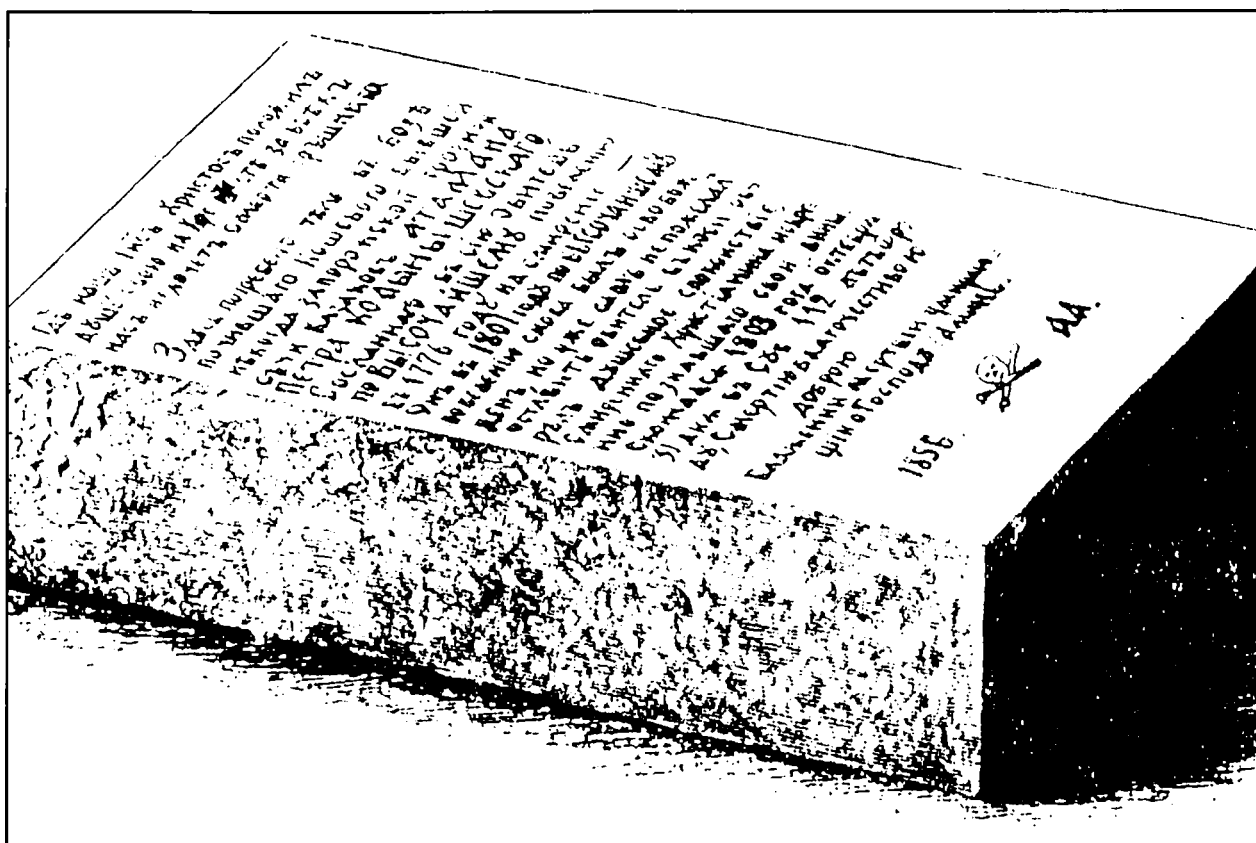
"That's clear: in St. Petersburg and Moscow."

"And where do they die?" asked the first.

"They die in Siberia and Kamchatka!" said the other. The last remark implied that although they were great nobles, they did not enjoy any liberty whatsoever, and thus could not say today what fate would befall them tomorrow or where they would end up. Hearing this, the lords turned up their noses and went away. Meanwhile, the tsarist council passed a resolution to abolish Zaporizhia and destroy its lair — the Sich. Potemkin entrusted this matter to General Petr Tekely and Prince Prozorovsky, who were ordered to get down to this business as quickly as possible, but in secret. Tekely was ordered to lay siege to the Sich, while Prozorovsky would advance with a large army to the small fortifications of Zaporozhian regiments and occupy them. At this time there were few people in the Sich and throughout the fortifications. Since the envoys had not even returned from St. Petersburg, the Zaporozhians were not expecting anything to happen. They dispersed throughout their immense steppe territories to tend to their homesteads, to fish, etc. At Whitsuntide (4 July 1775), a huge Muscovite army surrounded the Zaporozhian Sich on all sides; at the time the Sich only had twenty cannons and no more than 10,000 Cossacks. The Muscovite army consisted of eight mounted regiments, seventeen squadrons of pikemen, ten infantry regiments, twenty hussar squadrons, and thirteen Don Cossack regiments, totalling more than 40,000 troops. Tekely was stationed around the Sich for three days, and when he received the news that Prince Prozorovsky had already captured all the Zaporozhian fortifications, he dispatched an emissary to invite the Cossack officers to his camp. Kalnyshesky assembled the otamans of Cossack *kurins* [infantry units] and asked:

"What will we do, lord otamans? The Muscovite has invited us. Do we go or not? Will we give Mother Sich to the Muscovite or not?"

The Zaporozhian Cossacks became very alarmed. They were incensed by the fact that the Russians had laid siege to them without warning



*Grave of Camp Commander Petro Kalnyshevsky at Solovetsky Monastery near the White Sea (Mykola Arkas, Istoriiia Ukrainy).*

and that all their treaties and rights had been violated. A great uproar broke out. But some moderate Cossack officers saw that there was no point in even considering defending themselves from the far larger Muscovite force. They had also heard reports that a similar number of Russian troops had occupied all their fortifications. They did not agree to the idea of resisting the Muscovites. The Sich archimandrite, Rev. Volodymyr Sokolsky, also began to plead with them not to shed Christian blood, but by placing their hope in God to submit to His will. In this way the majority of the courageous Sich Cossacks were stopped by force. Cossack officers went with bread and salt to Tekely, because they expected that their humility would ensure them some favor from the government.

This is what we know about the fate of these emissaries. Kalnyshevsky was deported to Solovetsky Monastery, where he was entombed in solitary confinement without windows and doors. There was only a small chink through which food was handed to him. There, without seeing a soul, he lived for twelve years. He was later transferred to another cell from which he would occasionally be taken under guard to

attend church services. But he was forbidden to speak to anyone. He was finally released in 1801 during the reign of Tsar Alexander I. By then he was blind and sick, and he refused to leave the monastery. After his release he remained there for another two years and died on 23 November 1803 at the age of 112.

The military scribe Ivan Hloba was deported to Siberia, where he died around 1790 in Kirillo-Belozersk Monastery. The military judge Pavlo Holovaty was deported to Tobolsk Monastery, from which he was not even allowed to attend church services. The colonels Chorny, Kulyk, Pelekha, and Porokhnia, and kurin otaman Holovka and many other Zaporozhian Cossack officers were imprisoned for life in various fortresses and prison cells.

The military treasury, military winter quarters, and all the Cossack officers' household effects were transferred to the tsar's exchequer; the military's flocks and herds were also transferred there and later distributed among the Greeks and Arnauts [Albanians] who had settled the Zaporozhian lands near Kerch. The Sich and all its kurins, and all the winter quarters in the various fortifications were razed to the ground. The Don

Cossacks looted the Sich church, and some of its treasures and the sacristy were taken to Prince Potemkin in St. Petersburg. The Zaporozhian lands were looted and divided. Potemkin took huge lands for himself, wherever and however much he desired. Prince Viazemsky was awarded 100,000 *desiatinas* of land [i.e., 230,000 acres] near the former Chortomlyk Sich; Prince Prozorovsky was given 100,000 *desiatinas* near Katerynoslav; Count Kamensky, 19,324; Count Branitsky, 21,614; and General Strekalov was granted the village of Hrushivka and over 30,000 *desiatinas* surrounding it. Whatever land was not distributed remained the property of the tsarist government, which soon began to settle colonists on these lands, inviting them from Germany, Greece, and other countries. The invited colonists were awarded other people's lands and were granted exemptions, while the Cossacks and peasants who remained in the Zaporozhian villages were once again quickly turned into serfs, the property of those nobles who had acquired those lands.

For one week Tekely sat in his camp, which had thrown a tight cordon around the Sich. The Zaporozhians saw that there was no way to remedy their situation and so decided, as they said, "to put blinders on Tekely": they went to him and began pleading with him to permit them to leave the Sich to go fishing. Tekely agreed. The Zaporozhian *chaikas* [boats], full of Cossacks, left Mother-Sich and sailed to the sea through gulfs and estuaries known only to them. By the time Tekely realized that he had been duped, only some 20-30 ailing and elderly Cossacks were left in the Sich, while the rest were already at sea, having unfurled their sails. They stopped opposite Tylihul, near Odesa, while they obtained permission from the Turkish sultan to establish a Sich on the Danube River. They quickly headed there on their *chaikas* under the command of Liakh, their campaign otaman. Some Cossacks remained in Tylihul, establishing kurins at Peresyp. These Zaporozhians were thus the first settlers of the great trading city of Odesa. They say that more than 40,000 Zaporozhians headed to the Turkish sultan, although the destroyers of the Sich claim that there were only 10,000, because it was more advantageous to them to underestimate the numbers of those who had managed to slip through their fingers.

But let us return to those free sons of Zaporizhia, the members of the glorious army of the Lower Dnipro region, who remained in the Russian state. Those Cossack officers who were not deported were given new ranks in the Russian army, while others entered the civil service. It was decided to create two regiments of pikemen (infantrymen with lances) from the remaining Zaporozhians. However, the free sons of the steppes absolutely refused to be turned into Muscovites and remained in their steppes. Only a very small number was placed in the Kherson and Poltava pikemen regiments.

Soon the government saw that it had been too hasty in abolishing the glorious Zaporozhian army, realizing that it was dangerous to leave such an army in the hands of its enemy. Thus, in 1779 Tsarina Catherine II advised the Turkish sultan either to turn back the Zaporozhians, to whom she promised to grant equal rights with all her vassals and forgiveness for the past, or push them further back from the Russian border. But the Zaporozhians were living so well under the Turks that no one was in a hurry to accept this proposal. Neither did anyone respond from the shores of the Danube to Catherine's manifesto of 1788, which offered amnesty to all those who would return from the Danube. When no one responded to these offers, the Russians began to establish a Cossack army from among the Zaporozhians who remained at home. In 1784 Potemkin instructed the former Zaporozhian military scribe Antin Holovaty and the Cossack officers Kharko (Zakhar) Chepiha, Sydir Bily, and Lehkostup to assemble the Zaporozhians who wanted to serve as Cossacks. In response to the Cossack officers' summons, the Zaporozhians began to assemble in Beryslav, and in 1787, when the tsarina was traveling to the Crimea, she and Potemkin were accompanied by a convoy of Zaporozhian Cossacks.

In 1787 a war began with Turkey, and Potemkin ordered Bily to muster as many Cossacks as possible. Some of the Zaporozhians who had gone to the Turks and were living in the Ochakiv steppes responded to the summons and returned, while those who had gone beyond the Danube River again refused to leave their new Transdanubian Sich. More than 12,000 Zaporozhians assembled in Beryslav, and Bily went with them to Prohnoi, a former Zaporozhian



# БОЖІЕЮ МИЛОСТІЮ МЫ ЕКАТЕРИНА ВТОРАЯ, ИМПЕРАТРИЦА И САМОДЕРЖИЦА

ВСЕРОССИЙСКАЯ.

и прочая, и прочая, и прочая.

Объявляемъ НАШЕМУ вѣрнопопданному Малороссійскому народу.

**М**алороссійской Гетманъ Графъ Разумовской просилъ НАСЪ всеподдан-  
нѣйше, чинобъ МЫ въ разсужденіи просиранспва многотрудныхъ дѣлъ  
Малороссійскихъ, а напросивъ шого и другихъ въ Великой Россіи не меньше  
важныхъ его упражненій, чинъ Гетмана и положенное на него пошому  
правленіе Малой Россіи съ него сняли: МЫ видя его Графа Разумовскаго  
не малое по справедливости обремененіе, и снисходя на его къ НАМЪ все-  
подданнѣйшее прошеніе, уволили его всемилосивѣйше какъ онъ чина Гет-  
манскаго, такъ и онъ всѣхъ Малороссійскихъ по оному дѣлъ. Но какъ народъ  
Малороссійской издревле по единству рода своего, вѣры и Опечества съ  
народомъ Великороссійскимъ, Скипенру НАШЕМУ подданный пребываетъ  
онъ многихъ дѣлъ усердно Самодержавію НАШЕМУ подвластнымъ, кото-  
раго и благоденствіе съ прочими, Богомъ врученными НАМЪ народами,  
зависитъ онъ НАШЕГО же единственнаго къ нему матерьянаго призрѣнія  
и покровительствва; шо и МЫ имѣя на сердцѣхъ возводишь благополучіе его  
на такую степень, въ которой бы онъ вѣдше позналъ НАШУ къ себѣ Импе-  
раторскую милоспвь, пока время и опытъ дастъ НАМЪ о его благѣ лучший  
увищный промыслъ, дабы безъ надлежащаго правленія край сей шеперь не  
оснался, учредили въ немъ коллегію Малороссійскую вмѣсто бывшаго  
Гетманскаго правленія, на шомъ шочно основани, какъ особливимъ  
НАШИМЪ указомъ дано нынѣ знать НАШЕМУ Сенату. И для шого въ  
самой Малой Россіи бытъ МЫ повелѣли яко Генераль-Губернатору, а въ  
сей коллегіи яко Президенту, опредѣля въ оную Великороссійскихъ и Мало-  
россійскихъ членовъ пошребное число, арміи НАШЕЙ Генералу Аншефу  
и Кавалеру Графу Шенру Румянцову, возлагая на него надѣжду, что онъ  
по извѣданнымъ и довольно уже НАМЪ извѣстнымъ его достоинствамъ, не  
шюкмо желаемый въ семъ народѣ сверхъ мѣста своего по коллегіи сохранишь  
порядокъ, но и о польдѣ собшвенной сего народа будеть къ НАМЪ всегда  
добрыи и надежныи предшпанель. По чему и уповаемъ, что народъ  
Малороссійской видя НАШЕ шюликое объ немъ Матерьянѣ попеченіе, не  
оснавитъ оное принципъ съ шюю подданническою благодарностію, которой  
МЫ онъ него такъ, какъ онъ Праопцевъ Своихъ Престолу НАШЕМУ  
вѣрнопопданнаго несумнѣнно ожидаемъ. Данъ въ Санктпетербургѣ Ноября  
10 дня 1764 года.

Подлинной подлинникъ собствен-  
ною ЕЯ ИМПЕРАТОРСКАГО ВЕЛИ-  
ЧЕСТВА рукою, шого:

ЕКАТЕРИНА.



Печаташь въ Санктпетербургѣ  
при Сенатѣ Ноября 15 дня 1764  
года.

fortification at Kinburn Spit, and from there he pitched a fortified camp in Vasylkiv, on the left bank of the Buh Estuary. This army began to be called the “Loyal Zaporozhian Army.” On 27 February 1787 Sydir Bily was appointed camp otaman of this army; Antin Holovaty was named military scribe, and Oleksa Kobeniak, military aide-de-camp. The army was divided into kurins, like the former Zaporozhian army, and it had its own insignia: a large white military ensign and small flags (small ensigns) for the kurins; kurin commanders received maces; and the troops received a seal with the inscription: “Seal of the Camp of the Army of Loyal Cossacks.” Engraved on it was an image of a Zaporozhian with a musket in one hand and in the other, a flag with a cross in the center. Besides kurins, the army was divided into a cavalry force numbering 2,829 men, and infantry totaling 9,681 men. The army, which had its own boats, galleys, chaikas, and barques, was of great assistance to the Russian fleet in that war.

## **THE DESTRUCTION OF THE COSSACK CAPITAL BATURYN**

The news that Mazepa had gone over to the side of the Swedish king Charles XII stunned the Russians. Tsar Peter I immediately ordered a manifesto to be written to the Ukrainian people. In it he announced that Mazepa was a traitor, who wanted to hand the Ukrainian people over to the Poles and institute a [religious] union. The tsar summoned the Cossack officers to Hlukhiv to elect a new hetman. This universal was circulated together with a letter to Colonel Chechel, who was ordered to allow the Muscovite army to enter Baturyn.

A military council took place on 30 October in Pohrebky, where the tsar was stationed with his camp. During the council it was resolved to capture and destroy Baturyn. On 31 October Menshikov arrived at the hetman’s capital with his army and began negotiating with Colonel Chechel. But they failed to reach an understanding, and meanwhile the Cossacks were shouting furiously from the walls: “We shall all die here, but we won’t allow you into the capital!” The Cossacks courageously repelled the Russian army. But during the night of 1 November one of

the regimental officers of Pryluka Regiment, Ivan Nis, went to Menshikov and told him that he knew of a secret gate leading into the castle of Baturyn. As a result of this treachery Baturyn and all its occupants perished. Menshikov took part of his army and made a concerted push from the opposite side of Baturyn, where the entire Cossack army was concentrated to defend the fortified city. Meanwhile, the other part of the Russian army entered the castle through the secret entrance. As soon as they heard, the city residents, led by a deacon and his daughter, rushed to expel the Russians from the secret passage. But it was too late, and Menshikov captured the hetman capital, burned it to the ground, and massacred all the residents — young and old, women and children. Some Cossack officers were cruelly tortured to death, and their corpses were tied to boards and set afloat on the river Seim, as a sign that Baturyn had been destroyed. Other officers, including Koenigsen, were clapped into irons and brought to Hlukhiv, where they were tortured. Koenigsen died en route, but his corpse was tortured and then broken on the wheel.

On 1 November the tsar summoned all the Ukrainian colonels to Bohdanivka (a village in Novhorod-Siversky county, near Desna). But only four colonels who had not joined Mazepa responded to the summons: Colonel Skoropadsky of Starodub, Colonel Polubotok of Chernihiv, and acting colonels Tamara of Pereiaslav, and Zhurakhivsky of Nizhyn, together with the captains and men from their regiments. By 4 November they were in Hlukhiv, where the tsar had arrived. On 5 November they deposed Hetman Mazepa. This was carried out in a theatrical fashion: the Russians built a gibbet and brought out an effigy of Mazepa. On the effigy they hung the medal of Andrew the First-Called, read a list of everything that the tsar had done for the hetman, all his tsarist favors, and then all of the hetman’s transgressions against the tsar were enumerated. Then Menshikov and Golovkin tore up the patent for the rank of Cavalier and tore the medal of Andrew the First-Called from the effigy. The executioner tied a rope around the effigy and hung him from the gibbet. On 6 November a council was held, during which Ivan Skoropadsky, the colonel of Starodub, was confirmed as hetman, in keeping with Tsar Peter’s prior instructions.

The Cossack officers wanted to elect Polubotok to the post of hetman, but the tsar refused, declaring that Polubotok was very crafty and could turn into another Mazepa.

On 11 November the Kyivan Metropolitan Ioasaf arrived in Hlukhiv together with various clergymen, and on 12 November, following a prayer service attended by the tsar, an anathema and eternal curse was proclaimed against the traitor Mazepa. At the same time the metropolitan struck Mazepa's portrait in the chest with his crozier, and the clergymen, turning the candles toward the portrait, sang: "Anathema, anathema, anathema!"

From Hlukhiv the tsar circulated two manifestos to the Ukrainian people. In one the tsar flattered the Ukrainians, urging them not to pay credence to the manifestos and universals issued by Charles XII and Mazepa, because in the entire world nowhere the Ukrainians live so easily and freely as under Muscovite rule. In his second manifesto the tsar promised not to punish anyone for failing to inform the government that Mazepa had planned to go over to the Swedes. He urged Ukrainians not to be afraid of returning to their properties or to reoccupy their former posts. If they did not return within one month, he would consider them traitors, and these people would be stripped of their positions, insignias, and properties, put to death, and their wives and children deported.

On his part, Mazepa circulated his own universals in which he explained the reasons why he had abandoned Russia. "Muscovy," he wrote, "wants to devastate our cities, enslave all the officers, turn the Cossacks into dragoons and soldiers, drive the people into the Muscovite lands beyond the Volga River, and settle our land with their own people."

On their part, the colonels who had gone over to the Swedes circulated universals urging Ukrainians to stand by Mazepa and not heed the tsar's manifestos.

Meanwhile, Charles XII had set out from Desna and arrived in Romen. The Swedish army was camped between Romen and Hadiach, and Lokhvytsia and Pryluka. The Russian army was stationed on the border of Slobidska Ukraine and the Hetmanate, as well as in Myrhorod and Nizhyn.

The Swedish king also circulated his universals throughout Ukraine, in which he assured the

population that he had not come to cause harm to Ukrainians but to liberate them from the Muscovite yoke. He urged them to submit to Hetman Mazepa. The Swedish-Russian war began in mid-December. It was a harsh winter that year and many Swedes died of exposure; the king suffered frostbite to his nose. On 27 December he set out for Vepryk, and by 30 December he was in Zinkiv. He saw in the New Year 1709 there and established his headquarters. On 28 January he set out with some cavalry and artillery to Slobidska Ukraine and near Krasny Kut he clashed with the Russians.

This futile march to Slobidska Ukraine meant that in the interim the Muscovites in Hetman Ukraine were gradually occupying and entrenching themselves in the cities that the Swedes had abandoned. The whole time Mazepa, who was often unwell, was with the king. There were few Ukrainians with Mazepa: after the tsar's manifesto Colonel Danylo Apostol of Myrhorod and General Ensign Ivan Sulyma abandoned Mazepa and returned to their lands. Colonel Zelensky of Lubni also wanted to flee, but the Swedes detained him. Afterwards, all the Ukrainian officers were kept under guard; there was even an "honor" guard for Mazepa himself, because the Swedes no longer trusted anyone. The officers that remained with Mazepa were Orlyk, Chuikevych, Lomykovsky, Horlenko, and the light cavalry colonels Kozhukhivsky and Andriiash. Meanwhile, Peter I hastened to win over the Ukrainians who had not gone over to the Swedes. He summoned Kochubei's widow and son Vasyl, as well as Iskra's widow and her children, and awarded them new properties. He granted properties to the Cossacks Andrii Lyzohub, Ivan Butovych, and others. Then Prince Dolgoruky reminded the tsar about Palii, and the order was given for his return from Siberia, because he had influence with the Zaporozhians. The Zaporozhians were enraged at the Russians, and the new hetman, Skoropadsky, with the help of Palii, hoped to bring them over to the tsar's side.

In mid-February 1709 the tsar left for Voronizh in order to ready the fleet to set sail on the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov against the Turks; he left Prince Menshikov in Ukraine. Menshikov now faced the great problem of convincing the Zaporozhians not to unite with Mazepa. He therefore dispatched his envoys to the Sich with money and presents. But these

efforts were in vain. At a council convened by Camp Commander Kost Hordienko a letter was read from Mazepa to the Zaporozhians. In the letter he requested their help to throw off the Muscovite yoke and wrote that he himself heard the tsar say: "Those thieves and villains, the Zaporozhians, must be extirpated."

Hordienko wrote a letter to King Charles XII, informing him that all the Zaporozhians were asking him to defend them and help them restore their liberty. Without waiting for a response from the king, 15,000 Sich Cossacks marched out. They captured all the small strongholds along the Orel and Vorskla rivers, expelling the Muscovite troops, and the people who had abandoned their homesteads and were hiding in the forests from the Russians and the Swedes began returning to their homes. On 26 March Hordienko and his companions in arms arrived in Budyshcha, a little town in Zinkiv county.

Mazepa sent an escort guard to meet them: two colonels and 2,000 Cossacks, who accompanied them to Dykanka. Mazepa met them in Kochubei's building. Entering the house, Hordienko made a deep genuflection to the hetman, while the Cossack standard-bearer, in a

sign of respect, lowered the otaman's standard before him. Then Hordienko declared: "We, the Zaporozhian army of the Lower Dnipro thank your grace that you, as befits the oldest Ukrainian chieftain, have taken the fate of our country close to your heart and have set about liberating it from Muscovite slavery. We are certain that only because of this, and not for your own benefit, you have the courage to join the Swedish king."

Mazepa replied: "I thank you, Zaporozhians, for believing in me. I applaud your conscientious desire for the good of your native land. When I joined the Swedish king, it was not for the sake of some benefit for me but out of love for my native country. I have neither wife nor children, and I could go anywhere and live out the rest of my life. But in leading Ukraine sincerely for as long as I had strength and ability, I cannot, forgetting both honor and sincere love, do nothing and abandon our land to the will of the oppressor."

The next day Hordienko and fifty Cossacks visited the king. There they discussed the agreement with the Swedes.

**Mykola Arkas**  
(*Istoriia Ukrainy*, 1908)



## IVAN MAZEPA

(1644-1709)

The hetman of Left-Bank Ukraine (1687-1708) was born in Mazepyntsi in the Kyiv region, near Bila Tserkva. Mazepa came from a Ukrainian noble family. His father was a Cossack officer, who had served under Bohdan Khmelnytsky. Mazepa attended the school of the Kyiv Brotherhood and later the Kyiv-Mohyla Collegium. He also studied with the Jesuits in Polatsk. As a young man he served as an orderly at the court of Poland's King Jan Kazimierz. He studied artillery science in Holland, and he also traveled in France and Germany. Mazepa knew several languages: Polish, German, Italian, French, Dutch, and Latin. After returning from abroad, he became the king's confidant for whom he carried out a number of diplomatic missions. In 1663 he left the king's service and returned to Ukraine, where he served under the hetman of Right-Bank Ukraine, Petro Doroshenko, and later under Hetman Ivan Samoilovych in Left-Bank Ukraine. In 1682 he served as the general aide-de-camp. In 1687 Mazepa was elected hetman after Samoilovych.

Mazepa's rule coincided with the destruction by Russia of Ukraine's autonomy, denationalization of education and scholarship, closure of schools, restriction of the rights of the hetman and his Cossack officers, the appointment of Russians to state positions, and the introduction of serfdom. Hetman Mazepa, who had long contem-

plated Ukraine's separation from Russia, was forced to participate in the policies of Tsar Peter I, and he was even awarded the medal of St. Andrew the First-Called and other decorations. At the same time Mazepa had long sought an opportunity to break with tsarist rule and become independent.

Thus, in 1706 he entered into secret negotiations with the Polish king Stanislaw Leszczyński and King Charles XII of Sweden. In 1708 he concluded an agreement with the Swedes against Peter I. In March 1708 Mazepa issued a universal to the Zaporozhian Sich, calling on the Cossacks to wage war against Russia to obtain Ukraine's sovereignty. However, some Cossacks believed Tsar Peter's letter in which he called Mazepa a traitor, declaring that the Swedes had come not as the Ukrainians' allies but occupiers. After the Battle of Poltava, Mazepa and Charles XII retreated to Moldavia.

Hetman Mazepa died in Bendery on 2 October 1709. Tsar Peter I destroyed the Sich, the hetman's capital of Baturyn was devastated, and thousands of Mazepa's supporters were either executed or exiled to Siberia. According to a legend, the hetman did not die but went secretly to Kyiv, where he took a vow of seclusion in the Kyivan Cave Monastery, where he remained until his death.

**V. Shevchuk**

# THE KRUTY AND BAZAR TRAGEDIES

Imagine that you are looking at photographs depicting the mourning procession during the funeral of the young heroes of Kruty on 19 March 1918. You are struck by the massive participation of Kyiv's residents, who could not fail to come and pay their last respects to the glorious knights, who did not fear death and fell on the field of battle for Ukraine's freedom.

Perhaps you were born near Kruty but did not know anything about their tragedy, which the Bolsheviks kept hidden under lock and key.

Looking at these photographs, you restrain your tears, pondering all the calamities that have shaken Ukraine throughout the ages. You are troubled by one persistent question. Why was Ukraine unable to do away with the enemy yoke? Why was Ukraine nearly always on the losing side? And why did only a few hundred young stalwarts, mostly students, confront a 6,000-strong Russian force at Kruty? Where was the Ukrainian army? Did one actually exist?

Reams of paper have been expended on recording the terrible events at Kruty, and we read them in order arrive at the truth.

## BACKGROUND

The Russian tsarist empire had collapsed beneath the weight of social and national oppression, the brutality of Russian imperialism and chauvinism, and the endless imperialist wars that had been waged over the centuries. Tsar Nicholas II had abdicated the throne. The hour of liberation had struck and Ukraine sprang to life. In Petrograd the Provisional Government came to power. In March 1917, even before the creation of the Central Rada, the Society of Ukrainian Progressives issued an appeal:

“Ukrainians, citizens, comrades! The time has come. Ukraine, oppressed throughout the ages, robbed and deprived of everything, even its own national name, is heading toward the “great new family” of liberated nations, to a new life. Time does not stand still and waits for no one. Let us head out cheerfully and bravely where the star of our national liberation and resurrection has begun to shine.”

At the time, several million Ukrainian soldiers and officers, including high-ranking ones, were serving in the Russian army, on the front lines against German and Austro-Hungary and in the rear lines throughout Russia. In response to the appeal issued by the Society of Ukrainian Progressives millions of soldiers, learning that they were not *khokhols*, or Little Russians, but Ukrainians, began to muster into separate Ukrainian military units under the command of more nationally conscious officers.

As a result of the sharp awakening of national consciousness, the Ukrainian Military Club was founded in Moscow; the Military Council was established in Odesa. Ternopil was the scene of a public meeting of front-line soldiers, who demanded national-territorial autonomy for Ukraine and the joining of Halychyna, Bukovyna, and the Kuban to Ukraine. Symon Petliura headed the Ukrainian Front-Line Council created in the Belarusian city of Miensk for the soldiers of the Western Front. The initial force of the revival of the Ukrainian National Movement thus emerged among the soldiers, from whom mighty Ukrainian armed forces could be forged.

In March 1917 the Kyiv Military Garrison organized the Ukrainian Military Club with the right to create branches throughout Ukraine. A large role in these efforts was played by the founder and ideologist of Ukrainian nationalism, Mykola Mikhnovsky, who was the most distinguished of the handful of Ukrainian political figures who advocated independence. The club's council issued an appeal to Ukrainian soldiers:

“Sons of the great Ukrainian nation! Glorious Ukrainian soldiers! We are appealing to you in this difficult historical time. We congratulate you on the new order! You achieved this new order with armed force. . . But let us not rest on our laurels. The struggle is not over! We warn you: be ready! For us, Ukrainians, this time is of the utmost importance. You have gained freedom for Ukraine, and we, Ukrainians, must strengthen this national liberty of ours. Let us remember that an intractable enemy is standing on our land and is exerting his last efforts to gather all of Ukraine into his hands. . . Ukrainian comrades! Unite in



*Monument at the gravesite of the heroes of Kruty on Askold's Hill in Kyiv.*

your Ukrainian groups! Unite with the idea of Ukraine's freedom, its Cossack strength."

The Ukrainian soldiers began to group together, and at a mass meeting in Kyiv a resolution was passed "to demand the formation of a Ukrainian national army with all types of weapons, the first step toward this [being] the division at the front of all Ukrainian soldiers into separate national units, and to form exclusively Ukrainian regiments in the rear."

The Ukrainian Military Organizing Committee was founded at this time. Its members included colonels Hlynsky and Voloshyn, Lieutenant Mikhnovsky, and Ensign Pavelko.

Various Ukrainian regiments began to be formed: Ivan Gonta Regiment in Uman, Petro Sahaidachnyi Regiment in Zhytomyr, Petro Doroshenko Regiment in Symferopil, Pavlo Polubotok Regiment in Rostov-on-Don, Ivan Mazepa Regiment in Saratov, and in Moscow, the Ukrainian Zaporozhian Regiment.

Unfortunately, the Central Rada did not support the spontaneous enthusiasm of the Ukrainian soldiery. This was the starting point of the tragedy that culminated in Kruty. The Ukrainian elite was incapable of rising to the task. Kyiv was in disarray. The Central Rada gave no

thought to organizing a Ukrainian army, because it was not even contemplating separation from Russia. The naïve Ukrainian socialists, who formed the majority in the Central Rada, dreamed of autonomy for Ukraine within the framework of a socialist Russia.

Sensing the cold-blooded indifference of the Central Rada, the soldiers continued their work independently. Proclaiming the Ukrainization of military units that remained in the Russian army, they formed them entirely of Ukrainians. Volunteer cavalry regiments were formed in Kyiv. Through the efforts of the Ukrainian Military Organizing Committee the formation of the 1<sup>st</sup> Hetman Bohdan Khmelnytsky Ukrainian Regiment was completed on 18 April 1917. The newly formed regiment had 3,754 soldiers, including cavalry, artillery, machine-gun units and engineers, headed by Staff-Captain Demian Putnyk-Hrebeniuk.

\* \* \*

The command of the Kyiv Military District was closely following the activity of the Ukrainian soldiers. The district commander was the Socialist-Revolutionary Konstantin Oberuchev, who was faithful to the principles of a "single, indivisible Russia." Putnyk-Hrebeniuk was arrested, the

loyal commander was appointed in his place, and the regiment was transferred to the front.

During the night of 26 July the Russian army fired on the regiment's echelons. Sixteen soldiers of the Khmelnytsky Regiment were killed, thirty wounded, and the officers were disarmed. The regiment's weapons and ammunition were looted, and its soldiers were interned.

The deaths of these soldiers heralded the beginning of the bloody struggle against the Russian invaders. Deaf to threats and arrests, Ukrainian soldiers began to organize more intensively in all corners of the empire. The Pavlo Polubotok Club distributed tens of thousands of circulars. Attesting to the surge of patriotic feelings, a telegram sent by Ukrainian soldiers in Courland to Kyiv declared: "If it becomes necessary to die for Ukraine, all of us to a man will go joyfully to our deaths."

The war against Austria and Germany continued, and the Bolsheviks had not yet come to power. Swayed by the Ukrainian soldiers' patriotic manifestations of their desire for freedom, the Central Rada finally convened the First All-Ukrainian Military Congress on 18-21 May 1917. It should be noted that Russia's Provisional Government was firmly against granting autonomy to Ukraine, and Russia's Minister of War, Alexander Kerensky even refused to allow the congress to take place. Taking part in the congress were 400 delegates from the front and the Black Sea and Baltic Fleets, as well as 300 delegates from various garrisons and rear units. The delegates were convinced that the foundations of a Ukrainian army would be laid during the congress. In the congress hall, turbulent protests broke out in response to a negative telegram from Petrograd.

Despite the patriotic enthusiasm of the Ukrainian soldiery and to the immense astonishment and disappointment of the delegates, the socialist Central Rada objected to the creation of a national army and, what is worse, to an independent Ukrainian state.

During his speech at the congress Volodymyr Vynnychenko, the vice-head of the Central Rada, declared: "Ukraine has no reason to create its own army because it does not want to enslave anyone. Ukraine must now conclude the war and together with the Russian working classes establish a new life in the common state of Russia... At the present historical moment the fate of Ukraine

should not be separated from the fate of Russia. Let us be at the height of our national dignity, so that no one will have to reproach us for national passions and exclusivity."

Other socialists also spoke at the congress, undermining the soldiers' enthusiasm. Instead of a categorical response to Petrograd's call to refrain from creating a Ukrainian army, it was decided to send a delegation to Petrograd "with obeisances" in order to smooth out the "misunderstanding." The congress went on to elect the Ukrainian General Military Committee whose membership included Vynnychenko and other socialists.

The military delegation was thoroughly disenchanted with the conduct of the political leaders. So much hope had been placed in the Central Rada, headed by the distinguished scholar Mykhailo Hrushevsky and the celebrated writer Volodymyr Vynnychenko.

Nevertheless, in response to a demand of the military, the congress resolved to implement the "immediate Ukrainization of the army according to the national-territorial principle," and to "single out units with a Ukrainian majority." The soldiers demanded the introduction of Ukrainian commands for Ukrainized units, military schools, and textbooks.

The discord among the Ukrainians concerning Ukraine's further destiny became more acute during the Second All-Ukrainian Military Congress that took place two weeks later, on 4-11 June. The congress was opened by Hrushevsky, who called for a struggle to realize Ukraine's autonomy within a federated Russia.

A passionate discussion ensued. The voice of a nationally conscious seaman echoed in sharp protest against the views of the naïve socialists:

"There is no free Ukraine in a free Russia. Instead of the "Romanov state" the "state of the Russian people" is emerging. And the methods of this old state remain in this new one... Millions of us have arms, and I am certain that even the Ukrainian peasantry, which placed its full trust in us at its own congress, will follow us! We must courageously decide our cause, and quickly!"

The Central Rada socialists rejected the sailor's appeal, and in response to a proposal from independence-minded delegates to proclaim an independent Ukrainian state, they replied in the words of Vynnychenko, who declared: "We do not want to introduce disorganization into the single revolutionary front," referring to the front



with the Russians in Petrograd and generally in Russia.

After the turbulent debates, the congress nevertheless resolved: "The Central Rada will no longer deal with the Russian government and must immediately set about organizing the country." However, the Central Rada was not even considering implementing this resolution. Neither did it seek to assert its authority in Ukraine, hoping for autonomy, which the Russians would hand over "on a silver platter."

In response to the Central Rada's indifference, in late June 1917 the military spontaneously formed the Second Hetman Pavlo Polubotok Ukrainian Regiment in Kyiv. The Central Rada did not give it support.

Distrusting the higher-ranking officers and fearing a military coup, on 16 July 1917 the Central Rada issued its Second Universal, which declared that Ukraine has no intentions of separating from Russia and that the formation of Ukrainian military units within the Russian army is completely dependent on Russia's Minister of War.

Accordingly, the Polubotok and Khmelnytsky regiments were disarmed through the efforts of the Central Rada and Petrograd. But this did not stop the Ukrainian soldiers from continuing the struggle. In early November 1917 the Third All-Ukrainian Military Congress took place in Kyiv, with the participation of 2,000 delegates from the two-million-strong organized soldiery. Among the delegates were sailors, who earlier had raised the blue-and-yellow flag over the Black Sea Fleet. The Provisional Government in Petrograd could no longer tolerate the "futile arbitrariness of the Little Russians," and was ready to censure the Ukrainian government (General Secretariat) and disband the Central Rada, which was bowing and scraping before the Provisional Government, pleading for autonomy for Ukraine. Little did the Provisional Government know that it would soon be disbanded by the Bolsheviks.

The Central Rada ignored the demands of the Third All-Ukrainian Military Congress. On behalf of the socialists Mykola Porsh declared: "Ukrainian democracy has occupied the road of federation, and the army should tread this path. Separation is not in the interests of the working masses." Even the prophetic words of the delegate from the Free Cossacks failed to convince the socialists: "Remember that before the congress ends

without having accomplished anything, it should hold a funeral liturgy for Ukraine. Those of you, who want the congress to disband without having done anything, remember that you are leaving your people at the mercy of the Muscovites. Remember that the present moment is the most propitious one for gaining land and freedom for the nation."

The socialists of the Central Rada did not come to their senses even after the Bolshevik coup took place during the 7 November congress in Petrograd. The Ukrainian military took the initiative to form a regiment to protect important sites in Kyiv and arrested the members of the self-proclaimed Bolshevik committee.

The fatal errors of the Ukrainian National Republic's Central Rada are described in the book *The Heroes of Kruty*, published by the Drohobych-based publisher Vidrodzhennia in 1995. In his article "Why Kruty?" Ivan Ilienکو writes: "In August 1917, the Ukrainization of the 34<sup>th</sup> Russian Corps was launched with the permission of the Russian, General Kornilov. The 1<sup>st</sup> Ukrainian Corps was formed from it. It was commanded by General Pavlo Skoropadsky. The corps consisted of eight infantry and two artillery regiments. In late November a coup took place in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Guards Corps. The soldiers refused to obey their officers and elected the Bolshevik Yevheniia Bosh as commander. They began advancing on Kyiv to establish Bolshevik "rule." But General Skoropadsky blocked their advance. He disarmed the Bolshevized soldiers, put them on trains, and shipped them to Russia.

What was the Central Rada's General Secretariat doing at this time? Distrustful of Skoropadsky, the Rada replaced him with General Handziuk, and in January 1918 splintered the corps and later demobilized it. But this was not the end of the General Secretariat's pro-Russian activity, which seemed to be the product of confused minds. The Ukrainian soldiers were ready to defend Ukraine from any hostile incursions. Meanwhile, like the Bolsheviks, the Central Rada, with its deluded socialist propaganda, was demoralizing the regiments, divisions, and corps. Having disarmed Ukraine of its million-strong army, the Central Rada was only capable of mustering a few hundred soldiers, mostly schoolboys, who were dispatched to Kruty to defend the entrance to Kyiv from the Muscovite invaders."

These were the main reasons that led to the tragedy of Kruty.

\* \* \*

After the change of power in Russia, on 20 November the Central Rada issued the Third Universal, proclaiming the Ukrainian National Republic. Yet this document makes no mention of Ukraine's separation from Russia. At this time Lenin had signed the propagandistic "Declaration of Rights of the Peoples of Russia," in which he "guaranteed" equality and sovereignty to the point of these nations' secession from Russia. This declaration helped the Lenin to pull the wool over the eyes of nationally unstable Ukrainians, who had not completely rid their consciousness of Little Russianness.

The Leninist government, the Sovnarkom [Council of People's Commissars] launched an armed offensive against the Central Rada. In Ukraine the Bolsheviks had far less influence on the masses. Therefore, Lenin and Trotsky decided to take Ukraine by war and terror. All kinds of accusations were directed against the Central Rada leaders, who were allegedly recalling units from the front, disarming the Soviet army on Ukrainian territory, and refusing to admit Red troops that were marching on Kaledin, who was leading the Don Cossack army to the Don and Kuban regions.

On 17 December the Sovnarkom sent its first ultimatum to Kyiv, demanding an end to the activities that were against the interests of revolutionary Russia. The Central Rada was given forty-eight hours to reply. If the Sovnarkom did not receive a reply, it would consider that the Central Rada was deliberately waging war against Soviet rule in Russia and Ukraine.

The elections to the founding All-Russian Congress of Soviets had taken place the previous month, in November. In Ukraine the Bolsheviks obtained only 10 percent of the vote — the sum total of Soviet power in Ukraine. However, the Bolsheviks, through their propaganda and the weakness of the Central Rada, were rapidly gaining supporters. The land question was key, and the Central Rada issued a similar ukase only after Kruty.

The General Secretariat of the Central Rada replied to the Sovnarkom's ultimatum with a note signed by Vynnychenko and Petliura, emphasizing the fact that a country cannot recognize the right to self-determination to the point of separation

and at the same time encroach on this right by imposing one's political order.

The General Secretariat issued a call to create a federal state without violating the sovereign rights of the peoples of Russia. On the very day that the ultimatum was received the First All-Ukrainian Congress of Soviets began in Kyiv. Among the speakers at the congress were Petliura, Vynnychenko, and President Hrushevsky, who harshly condemned the Leninist Sovnarkom, which was already plotting a war against the Ukrainian nation. The president declared that a hostile army had already entered Ukrainian territory with the aim of penetrating to the heart of Ukraine — Kyiv.

Events unfolded rapidly. On 19 December the congress passed a resolution. Treating the Sovnarkom's ultimatum as an attack on the Ukrainian National Republic, the authors of the document appealed to the peoples of Russia to join forces and prevent a destructive civil war. The Bolsheviks had disregarded the concept of "freedom of nations," their only goal being to subjugate nations to their Marxist-Bolshevik will. While the gullible politicians of the Central Rada believed in truth and justice, the Bolsheviks believed in brutal force. While the Central Rada was demobilizing its army, the Bolsheviks were organizing their own. Three thousand delegates arrived for the congress in Kyiv, among them 124 Bolsheviks, who rejected the congress's resolutions and demonstratively left the hall. This group decided to establish Soviet power in Ukraine. They went to Kharkiv, where they attended the 3<sup>rd</sup> Congress of Soviets of the Donetsk and Kryvyi Rih basins, where they proclaimed the gathering a Congress of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies of Ukraine. Although this congress was not legitimate, owing to the fact that only 95 out of 300 soviets were present, the Bolsheviks managed to proclaim a "Soviet Government" in Ukraine, in opposition to the democratic and lawfully elected Central Rada.

The congress ignored the fact that it had no support among the people, because it was backed by a real military force: at this very time a Russian force, led by Antonov-Ovsienko, was marching through the territory of Ukraine on its way to curb the disobedient Don Cossacks.

The Bolsheviks — both Russians and Russified Ukrainians — despised everything Ukrainian. The true nature of the Leninist slogans

about the brotherhood of nations was revealed by Ye. Karpenko, a delegate from the Katerynoslav region to the All-Russian Congress of Soviets. He recalled how enraged Bolsheviks broke into the Prosvita building and ransacked the library, shredding portraits of Taras Shevchenko and Borys Hrinchenko, and ripping Ukrainian flags from the walls. On New Year's Eve they threatened Ukrainian speakers with punishment along the lines of the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre.

This was the result of the policies of the Central Rada leaders with their "socialist demagoguery," which served only to demoralize healthy national elements in the military. This debacle is described in the book *History of Ukraine in the Years 1917-1923* by Dmytro Doroshenko.

Seeking to understand the mentality of the Ukrainian political figures in those turbulent days, we conclude that they were more dreamers than state builders. Their illusory faith in socialist ideals led them to the conviction that an autonomous Ukrainian republic as part of a socialist Russia would ensure the free development of Ukrainian national life in all its manifestations. The idea of independence was foreign to them. This is evident from the four Universals that were issued by the Central Rada.

On Lenin's instructions, Mykola Skrypnyk became the head of Soviet Ukraine, which was proclaimed in Kharkiv on 27 December 1917. Not trusting this so-called government, Lenin sent the "internationalist" Grigori Ordzhonikidze to Ukraine, who was entrusted with exceptional powers. Russia was on the brink of famine. In January 1918, Lenin, Antonov-Ovsienko, and Ordzhonikidze ordered trainloads of grain shipments from Ukraine to be sent to Russia. At the same time they halted coal deliveries to the Ukrainian National Republic.

The Soviet Ukrainian puppet government received financial aid from Russia for the "sovietization of Ukraine." Describing the real state of sovietization, Vasyl Shakhrai, who was responsible for military affairs in the Kharkiv government, wrote: "As the sole military bolster for our struggle against the Central Rada we have only an army that Antonov-Ovsienko brought to Ukraine and which regards everything Ukrainian as something hostile, counterrevolutionary. What kind of Ukrainian government is this, when its members absolutely do not know and do not want to know the Ukrainian language?...What

kind of "war minister" am I when I have to disarm all Ukrainized units in Kharkiv because they refuse to follow me to defend the Soviet power?"

Antonov-Ovsienko, who was supposed to march on Poltava, delayed because he did not have a single Ukrainian army unit. His own soldiers and officers could not elicit any sympathies among the Ukrainian population, which he was obliged to liberate from the "bourgeois" Central Rada. Hryhorii Lapchynsky, another member of the Soviet Ukrainian government, attested that Antonov-Ovsienko was "surrounded by officer types, who were obviously alien to the working class, with the arrogant physiognomies of bandits."

By mid-January 1918 Antonov-Ovsienko finally succeeded in forming a company of "red Cossacks." A destructive, fratricidal war thus began, as the Central Rada gradually began to lose its influence among Ukrainian soldiers, primarily through its inertia. Most of the Ukrainized troops did not rise to the defense of the Central Rada, but poisoned by Bolshevik propaganda, began going over to the enemy or proclaiming neutrality.

At this time Antonov-Ovsienko's army numbered 30,000 troops with 60 cannons and 10 panzer trains. Meanwhile, the Ukrainian national army was limited to the Haidamak Kish of Slobidska Ukraine (600 soldiers) under Petliura's command. There were also units of Free Cossacks in Kyiv and the Zvenyhorod region, commanded by M. Kavenko and Yurii Tiutiunnyk, respectively, as well as a few small subunits and the B. Khmelnytsky 1<sup>st</sup> Military School.

The great calamity that the Central Rada was not prepared to avert was not long in coming. A Bolshevik army, commanded by the cruel despot Mikhail Muravev, flying the red communist and black anarchist flags, began advancing from Kharkiv to Poltava.

According to Lapchynsky, the battle capability of this force was questionable. It was advancing only because there was no resistance from the armies of the Central Rada. Muravev asked Antonov-Ovsienko to supply him with half a million rounds of ammunition and as many bombs and dynamite as possible, since he was intending to destroy everything in his path and massacre the defenders of the "bourgeoisie." On 27 January 1918 Muravev captured Bakhmach, and from there, together with subunits that were arriving

from Voronizh and Romodan, the road to Kyiv was open.

Sensing the clear threat to their country, Ukrainians began organizing a defense. On 24 January the Ukrainian centrist fraction of St. Volodymyr University published an appeal in the newspaper *Nova Rada*, "To Ukrainian Students," urging students of higher educational institutions to fight for Ukraine's freedom. Students quickly began enlisting in the Sich Rifleman Battalion. Finally, on the night of 24-25 January 1918 President Hrushevsky convened a session of the Small Council and read the text of the Fourth Universal proclaiming the independence of the Ukrainian state.

However, even this decisive step ultimately demonstrated the confused thinking of the leaders of the Central Rada, who decided to "disband the army completely," and in its place "institute a people's militia." As a result of its vague land policies, the Central Rada failed to ensure the support of the peasants, who formed the core of Ukraine's population.

## KRUTY

Numerous memoirs, articles, historical surveys, and poems have been written about the tragedy of Kruty. Its youthful defenders would never have perished — indeed, this disaster would never have taken place — if there had been more and better-armed troops. At the time there were enough forces in Ukraine to stop Muravev's army between Kharkiv and Poltava; they might also have expelled the Soviet forces from Kharkiv.

The most reliable sources on the events at Kruty are memoirs written by the participants of this tragedy. In his memoir *The Battle of Kruty*, Averkii Honcharenko, a captain in the army of the Ukrainian National Republic and the commander of the battle of Kruty, describes his feelings after receiving the order to head the defense of the city of Bakhmach, leading to Kruty Station: "I was filled with inexpressible sadness. The young flower of our army — young boys — was being thrown into a nearly impossible situation, while amidst the mad anarchy tens of thousands of armed, battle-tested soldiers were being calmly demobilized."

The battle of Kruty was shaping up in extraordinarily difficult circumstances for Ukraine. After

proclaiming the Fourth Universal, the Central Rada began peace negotiations with the Central Powers (Germany, Austro-Hungary, and Turkey) in the city of Brest, where the negotiations were led by Bolshevik Russia. The head of the Soviet delegation, Leon Trotsky, mendaciously assured the delegates of the Central Powers that the government of Ukraine and the Central Rada no longer existed and that a Soviet government had been installed in Ukraine. In fact, the Ukrainian government was still functioning in Kyiv, struggling with internal anarchy and making superhuman efforts in defense of the country.

Army commander Otaman Kapkan dispatched the 1<sup>st</sup> Bohdan Khmelnytsky Youth Military School, consisting of four companies, each totaling 150 youths, to defend Bakhmach, through which railway lines passed from Homel (north) and Kharkiv to Kyiv. There were twenty officers and sixteen machine guns in the city.

On 22 December 1917 Otaman Kapkan appointed Captain Honcharenko as the commander in charge of the defense of Bakhmach, where Muravev's army was heading. For the defense of the left flank in the direction of Chernihiv, Honcharenko dispatched Captain Semyrozum with a platoon of students, and on 24 December he sent an advance detachment in the direction of Homel. When Doch Station was taken, two captured Bolshevik soldiers revealed how and when Muravev's army was advancing. The students sent to Vorozhba Station clashed with the Bolsheviks. The main threat, however, came from the Bakhmach Railway Depot, where 2,000 workers, mostly Russian, worked. They declared neutrality, and Captain Tymchenko, the commander of the territorial headquarters for the Chernihiv region, naively believed them.

Honcharenko, however, was cautious and re-grouped the school. Disgruntled by this decision, Captain Tymchenko left with his headquarters to Kruty Station, in his hurry forgetting to detach the ammunition wagon from the train. From Kruty Tymchenko reported that a division was arriving to help the students. For some reason the division never arrived, although several trains loaded with ammunition wagons did. No help was coming from Kyiv. The peasants' hopes for an equitable division of land were not fulfilled, and the peasants living around Bakhmach looked askance at the strange youths who had come there to defend the lords of the Central Rada, while the Bolshe-

vics were promising them “paradise on earth.” The peasants, blinded by ignorance, turned away from Kyiv and Ukraine.

Out of tactical considerations the defenders of Bakhmach retreated to Kruty, but not through Bakhmach because the depot workers had joined the Bolsheviks.

After getting the lay of the land, Honcharenko fortified his positions and prepared for the defense. Finally, on 25 January 1918 Kyiv sent an adequately trained students’ company. At 4:00 a.m. on 27 January the company, consisting of some 115-130 students, arrived at Kruty Station. The students engaged the Bolsheviks in a lengthy battle and succeeded in halting Muravev’s advance.

On the morning of 29 January the Bolsheviks appeared. In his memoirs Honcharenko says that they seemed to be convinced that the Ukrainians had run away. Well hidden, Honcharenko’s companies allowed the Bolsheviks to approach and then opened fire on them. Suffering significant losses, the Bolsheviks scattered and began firing back. Gradually, the Bolshevik troops occupied a five-kilometer line. There was no panic as the unequal battle began.

At around 10:00 that morning Captain Loshchenko arrived in an armored vehicle fitted with a cannon and firing accurately, immediately began to sow confusion in the rear lines of the enemy whose advance was stopped.

At noon Muravev’s troops renewed their advance, which quickly stopped owing to the fierce crossfire from the students’ company and Captain Semyrozum, who appeared unexpectedly on the left flank, at the Chermihiv-Kruty railway line.

Some time elapsed, and as Honcharenko anticipated, the Bolsheviks launched a major offensive on the right flank with the goal of occupying Kruty Station, blocking the path to the Kruty defenders’ base, and encircling them. But the Bolsheviks advanced too slowly, and the defenders of Kruty held out until 9:00 that evening.

Tension was growing. Honcharenko received a telegram informing him that the Shevchenko Regiment was marching from Nizhyn to join Muravev in order to strike the defenders of Kruty from the back. By sunset Honcharenko gave the students’ company the order to retreat. Four students’ companies left the battlefield, and the 1<sup>st</sup>

Reserve Company held off the enemy until nightfall, the Bolsheviks failing to encircle them.

Unfortunately, a great disaster occurred during the retreat. Twenty-seven students, who probably wanted to take a short cut, headed toward the lights of Kruty Station. There they were ambushed by Bolshevik troops, who bayoneted them. The battle of Kruty claimed the lives of 277 students and 10 officers. Bolshevik losses totaled around 300.

After reaching Kyiv, for nearly a whole month Muravev’s troops hunted down and executed “enemies of the revolution.” During the first ten days of the terror that was unleashed against the civilian population of Kyiv, more than 5,000 people were killed. Among them were not just Ukrainians but “White Russian tsarist officers,” who were hostile to both governments, the Ukrainian and Bolshevik.

By March 1918 Kyiv was once again in Ukrainian hands. Ukrainian patriots decided to bring the bodies of the heroes of Kruty to Kyiv. The Bolsheviks had thrown their corpses, riddled with bullet wounds and pierced with bayonets, into an open pit. After their remains were given a Christian funeral, they were transported to Kyiv. For two days relatives came to identify their loved ones. Some bodies could not be identified. The smashed skulls, missing teeth, and gouged eyes attested to the savagery of the Bolshevik troops.

The monument at the gravesite of the defenders of Kruty did not stand for long. After their return to Kyiv, the Bolsheviks leveled the grave and destroyed the small chapel.

Little is known about the survivors of the battle of Kruty. Three train cars of wounded fighters were transported from the battlefield. Some of them later fought in the ranks of the UNR army and ended up abroad. Some remained in Ukraine, where they were hunted down by the Bolsheviks and liquidated.

Eighty-eight years have passed since the battle of Kruty. On 11 February 1999 the front page of the newspaper *Literaturna Ukraina* featured a photo reportage entitled “Day of Glory and Sorrow.” It included a fragment from President Mykhailo Hrushevsky’s eulogy at the funeral of the heroes of Kruty, which took place in front of the Central Rada.

“At this very minute, when their coffins are being brought to the Central Rada, where during

the [past] year Ukrainian statehood was being forged, from the front of its building the Russian eagle is being torn off, the disgraceful mark of Russian rule over Ukraine, the symbol of slavery in which it lived for 260 years and more. It seems that the possibility of tearing it off was not in vain. It could not happen without sacrifices; it had to be earned with blood. And this blood was shed by these young heroes whom we are seeing off today!”

For seventy-three years Ukrainians walked that bloody path. Today independent Ukraine honors the heroic defenders of Kruty. In 1998, on the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the tragedy, a Barrow of Sorrow was constructed on the Kruty battlefield and a cross was erected. The name “Heroes of Kruty” has been given to a military school and several army units.

What conclusions may be reached from the events at Kruty and the many other tragedies that Ukraine experienced in the past? History attests to the savage cruelty and cunning of both the Whites and the communists. But throughout the centuries, beginning with Muscovy’s betrayal of Khmelnytsky, the massacre at Baturyn, the destruction of the Zaporozhian Sich, the enserfment of Ukraine’s peasantry, the Holodomor of 1932-1933, the destruction of the Ukrainian intelligentsia, and ending with the imprisonment of Ukrainian dissidents in psychiatric institutions, Ukrainian traitors had a hand in these black deeds. After studying the history of Ukraine, our national poet Taras Shevchenko clearly saw that all our misfortunes were caused not solely by our enemies but also by their Ukrainian helpers.

## **BAZAR**

Every year Ukrainians honor the memory of the Heroes of Bazar, marking the tragic events of November 1921.

The four-year-long struggle of the Ukrainian people in 1917-1921 ended with Ukraine’s enslavement by Russia and Poland. The Ukrainian army was forced to leave its native land.

But this was not the end of Ukraine’s struggle. Finding themselves behind barbed wire on the territory of Poland, Ukrainian soldiers did not abandon the fight. Bitterly watching from across the border the events unfolding in Ukraine, the

Ukrainian soldiers resolved to continue the fight to a victorious end or die a hero’s death in their native land.

In early November 1921 hundreds of volunteers led by General Yurii Tiutiunnyk set out on an insurgent raid known as the Second Winter Campaign, with the goal of reviving the armed struggle in Ukraine.

The raid, which lasted three weeks, was marked by daily battles, marches of hundreds of kilometers behind the Bolshevik lines, and severe physical deprivations, including cold and hunger.

On the morning of 17 November the insurgents arrived at the village of Mali Mynky, intending to rest there. But the enemy pressed hard, and General Tiutiunnyk ordered his troops to march beyond the Zvizdal River. Bolshevik cavalry and infantry, armed with cart-mounted machine guns, carried out wave after wave of attacks on the insurgents, tightening the circle around them. The fighting was savage, and the battlefield was covered with bodies. Wounded men on a few wagons, the cavalry, and a few infantrymen came out alive. Everyone was taken prisoner: 359 half-naked, barefoot, and bloodied insurgents were locked into the church in Mali Mynky.

The next day the prisoners were brought to the small town of Bazar near Korosten and again locked inside an unheated church. The Bolshevik Cheka sentenced all the insurgents to death and ordered them to dig a common grave.

On 21 November the captives were taken to the pit and the sentence was read out. A Cheka officer promised mercy to any insurgent who agreed to join the Red Army and fight the small detachments of Ukrainian soldiers that were still waging an armed struggle.

Suddenly the voice of a Cossack named Shcherbak rang out: “No!” All the condemned prisoners followed suit, proclaiming “Glory!” and singing Ukraine’s national anthem. Their voices were drowned out by the machine guns that began mowing down the prisoners.

## **THE SECOND BAZAR**

In 1949 Olzhych Publishers issued a book entitled *The Second Bazar* to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the deaths of the Heroes of Bazar. The book contains a description of a second catastrophe. In his article “The Second



*Monument to the Heroes of Bazar.*

Photo provided by S. Kot.

Bazar,” author Ya. Dedalevsky writes about the commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of Bazar in 1941 and the repressions of the German “liberators,” who in their war against the red Moloch had marched far beyond Volyn.

It was a sunny, colorful autumn. The anniversary of the mass execution of the 359 fighters at Bazar was approaching. Villages and cities were burning. Ukrainian churches were being bombed and blown up with dynamite. The two invading occupiers were destroying Ukraine from east to west. A third force began operating, a Ukrainian one, rising like a phoenix from the burned-out ruins of the country.

The leadership of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) in the central and eastern lands, under the command of Oleh Kandyba-Olzhych, decided to honor the memory of the knights of Bazar with a national holiday. OUN battle units were to stand on guard to defend the participants of the commemoration from any attacks by the Germans or the Bolsheviks.

People began arriving two days before the manifestation: from the Zhytomyr and Kyiv regions, and even from beyond the Dnipro River. More than 12,000 people, including young people and gray-haired veterans of the liberation struggle, assembled in Bazar.

The commemoration took place on 21 November. In his opening speech Petro Marchuk (Volynets) paid tribute to the fallen heroes, who for twenty years had waged a clandestine struggle against the Soviet government, and to those who had perished in prisons and labor camps or were executed in NKVD dungeons. After the speeches a liturgy was served by an elderly priest who had fought in the ranks of the army of the Ukrainian National Republic. He passed a chalice filled with the holy earth from the graves of the Heroes of Bazar to the first runner in the relay to St. Sophia’s in Kyiv.

No one had the faintest idea that the new “liberators” would immediately start hunting down

and arresting for imminent execution the participants of the commemoration, first and foremost the leading members of the OUN. Secret Bolshevik agents arrived to assist the Germans, as the Ukrainian nationalists were public enemy no. 1 for both the communists and the Nazis. Mass arrests took place in Korosten and the entire Korosten region. The arrested were brought to the prison in Radomyshl and from there to Zhovkva, where an investigation was conducted on Pushkin Street. From there they were transferred to the NKVD prison on Mykolaiv Street for further interrogation and torture.

After being tortured, group after group of the condemned were brought to the Maiovanka district of Zhytomyr, where the Germans shot all the Ukrainians. These executions became known as the Second Bazar. Only four people out of more than 200 survived the mass shootings. Two teenagers escaped from the prison and Volynets also survived, after escaping from the execution lineup.

The sacrifice made by the executed heroes was not in vain. The two tragedies in Bazar gave birth to new freedom fighters, who fought against both the Germans and the Soviets. There were painful losses, new graves appeared, but the struggle for liberty and independence continued.

Today a memorial to the Heroes of Bazar stands in this town. The unveiling ceremony was described in the newspaper *Vilna Dumka* (2-14 August 2000, nos. 38-39). Among those attending the event were Mykhailo Zelenchuk, the head of the All-Ukrainian Brotherhood of the UPA; Admiral Borys Kozhyn, the head of the Union of Officers and Member of Parliament; and Levko Lukianenko, the former Ukrainian dissident and prisoner of conscience. There were no representatives of the Ukrainian government.

**Hryhorii Vyshnevyy**



# THE UKRAINIAN AUTOCEPHALOUS ORTHODOX CHURCH (UAOC) ACQUIRES ITS OWN HIERARCHY

*(Based on the proceedings of the First All-Ukrainian  
Orthodox Church Synod of the UAOC on 14-30 October 1921)*

The dissolution of the Russian Empire, which culminated in the revolutionary crisis, began long before 1917 and embraced all aspects of public life. This particularly concerned spiritual life. Owing to many reasons, Orthodoxy was gradually losing its leading role in society. The primary reason was the complete nationalization of the church, which was transformed into a forcibly implanted ideology. Problems connected to the spiritual life of society began to be resolved in literary and philosophical works, and the influence of materialistic teachings increased.

Many statesmen in the Russian government understood where this state of affairs was leading. Count Sergei Witte, the Russian prime minister, proposed a reform of the church. His initiative received support from the Holy Synod headed by Metropolitan of St. Petersburg and Ladoga Antonii (Vadkovsky). However, the reactionary part of the Russian clergy, headed by the tsarist adviser, Konstantin Pobedonostsev, opposed the church reform.

This struggle resulted in the creation in 1906 of the so-called Pre-Synodal Meeting. Six sections were created to study the materials of the synod and draw up a constitution. The meetings were supposed to prepare a far-ranging program for church reform, revive the patriarchate in Russia, and resolve numerous questions connected with the future order of the Orthodox Church, the juridical status of sects and people espousing different faiths, etc.

Participating in this work were the future church statesmen of the autocephalous churches of Ukraine and Georgia. Ukrainian Bishop Parfenii (Panfil Levytsky, 1858-1922), who had been expelled for Ukrainophilism from Kamianets-Podilsky and sent to Tula, took part in the work of the Translation Commission concerned with the question of publishing the Bible in the Ukrainian language.

The Georgian representatives' position was revolutionary. The national-liberation movement,

armed clashes, and acts of anti-Russian terror forced the Holy Synod to create a separate commission to examine Georgian church problems. Its members included the Metropolitan of Kyiv and Halychyna Flavian (Horodetsky), who had served as exarch in the Caucasus in 1898-1901; Metropolitan of Moscow Volodymyr (Bohoiavlensky) and exarch of Georgia in 1892-1898; Bishop Leonide of Imeret (Okropiridze); and Bishop Georgii of Sukhumi (Sadzaglishvili).

The pre-synodal meeting of 1906-1907 did not lead to the convening of a local synod. The main reasons behind this failure may be sought in the counteractions on the part of the Black Hundreds-type Russian episcopate and the obvious disinterest of Tsar Nicholas II to institute fundamental changes in the church leadership.

But a more profound factor was Russian nationalism. Nikolai Berdiaev called Russia a country of unheard-of nationalist excesses, persecution, and Russification of its subordinated nationalities. Even the Universal Church of Christ is nationalized here, Berdiaev wrote, thus leading Russia to consider itself not only the most Christian church but the only Christian church in the world. Ecclesiastical nationalism was a characteristic Russian feature, and hence any changes to the existing order of the church were out of the question.

The situation of the church in Ukraine after 1917 was difficult. The church leadership and the episcopate consisted mainly of ethnic Russians, who naturally adhered to the view of the "single, indivisible Russia." After the Local Russian Synod of 1917 elected Tikhon (Beliavin) as patriarch, the administration of the church in Ukraine remained unchanged, and it continued to be subordinated to the church leadership in Moscow. During this period the Kyivan metropolitans continued to be appointed from the "center." Metropolitan Volodymyr, who was murdered in 1918 in the Kyivan Cave Monastery by

Muravev's troops, was replaced by Antonii Khrapovytsky. After he emigrated in 1919, the church's leadership functions were carried out by Bishop Nazarii Blinov, who held this post until Mikhail (Yermakov) was appointed metropolitan of Kyiv and Brest-Litovsk. In August 1921 Mikhail was appointed patriarchal exarch of Ukraine.

As a counterforce to the official Russian representation in Ukraine, the Synod of Bishops of Ukraine launched an ecclesiastical-liberation movement from the "grassroots" level, i.e., the representatives of the lower clergy, intellectuals, and peasants began a struggle for the creation of a national church in Ukraine.

During 1917-1921 this movement gained such strength that in October 1921, after the failure of efforts to create a national church through official means, it was transformed into the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church.

This extraordinary step to resolve church problems at the "grassroots" level was prompted by the constant delays in resolving the church question "from the top," i.e., by the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church, and later, from August 1917, by the patriarch and all the governments of the Ukrainian republic during 1917-1919 until the establishment of Soviet rule.

If not for these delays, an "internally powerful, hierarchically disciplined Ukrainian Orthodox Church headed by a Ukrainian patriarch as the most rational hierarchical form of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Church" may have been created earlier in a canonical manner.

But the national church movement, which was headed by the All-Ukrainian Orthodox Church Council (AOCC, created in April 1919), produced different results at the First Synod of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church, which took place in St. Sophia's Cathedral in Kyiv on 14-30 October 1921.

Reflected in the synod's work and its decisions were the revolutionary times and the new political regime that was fated to play a critical role in the further destiny of the UAOC.

The synod was convened on 14 October, and the first question naturally concerned the canonical nature of the synod and the obligatory attendance of Orthodox bishops. A delegate named Yakymenko (Romen district) proposed the first question on the agenda: to "renew the hierarchy," to which the head of the synod, M. N. Moroz,

replied that the autocephalous church did not have its own bishops; indeed, the church council had failed to enlist the help of Metropolitan Mikhail.

The All-Ukrainian Orthodox Church Council had expended great efforts to acquire its own episcopate. In August 1921 it had been decided that Ukrainian bishops were necessary for the synod, during which the metropolitan of the UAOC was supposed to be elected. A decision was passed to write to the Georgian church, which had proclaimed autocephaly in 1917 at a synod during which Kirion II Sadzaglishvili (1854-1919), a graduate of the Kyiv Theological Academy, had been elected the catholicos-patriarch. Killed under mysterious circumstances in 1919, Kirion II was replaced by Leonide, the bishop of Mingrelia, who had also received his religious education in the Kyiv Theological Academy. P. Pohorilko and S. Orlyk set out to visit Patriarch Leonide with the goal of obtaining the rank of bishop by canonical means. To this end they carried a letter written by Vasyl Lypkivsky. But the delegates only got as far as Kharkiv and had to turn back.

The synodal session of 14-15 October was devoted to a discussion of the state of affairs in local Ukrainian parishes. Delegates gave a thorough account of the persecution of the Ukrainian church movement by the pro-Russian episcopate, the hounding of the Ukrainian language in the church (disparaged as the "language of markets," etc.), denunciations of Ukrainian priests, which were sent to the Ukrainian branch of the Cheka and party leaders, complete with accusations of "Petliurism," etc.

At the 16 October session Moroz gave this response to a question about the episcopate: "There are two possibilities for obtaining it: 1) by creating a local episcopate and 2) finding bishops abroad." The latter option was expensive and difficult. Therefore, the church council expended every effort to acquire an episcopate in Ukraine by consecrating candidates from among Ukrainian priests who supported the autocephalous movement. But all the bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church categorically rejected this plan. The last hope resided in Antonin (Oleksandr Hranovsky) and Parfenii.

Before the revolution of 1917 Antonin, the bishop of Narva, was known for having stopped the practice of mentioning the tsar during the Holy

Liturgy after the Manifesto of 17 October 1905. For this he was forced into retirement. In early 1921 Antonin, who was living in Bogoiavlensky Monastery, had given permission to F. Kryzhanivsky, a delegate from the All-Ukrainian Orthodox Church Council, to head the Ukrainian church in the Kyiv region (22-26 May 1921). But after a conversation with Russian Patriarch Tikhon, Antonin rescinded his decision, recounting Tikhon's words: "They [the Ukrainians] do not need bishops. The Soviet government has a coin press. You will be that for the Ukrainians. You will rubber-stamp priests for them." The matter ended there.

In August 1920 Archbishop Parfenii of Poltava had welcomed a delegation from the church council and agreed to take the Ukrainian church movement "under his wing." Later he agreed to come to Kyiv and head the Ukrainian church during the May 1921 synod of the Kyiv region. However, after Tikhon issued a written ban and the bishops of Kyiv began to exert pressure, Parfenii refused to travel to Kyiv.

Thus, at the 17 October session it was decided to send another delegation to Exarch Mikhail with a request to consecrate Ukrainian bishops. I. Vlasovsky calls this move "clearly inconsistent," considering the fact that the church council had proclaimed the autocephaly of the Ukrainian church already on 5 May 1920. However, a Ukrainian hierarchy had not been formed before the synod was convened, and the question of consecrating bishops and a metropolitan was left hanging in mid-air. Thus, the All-Ukrainian Synod, convened after such great efforts, could have ended in a debacle, and the more than 400 delegates would have had to return home without having accomplished the main task of the synod.

Mikhail arrived in Kyiv in August 1921 after Tikhon appointed him metropolitan of Kyiv and Halychyna and patriarchal exarch of Ukraine. With access to certain information about events in Ukraine, Mikhail was hoping to establish contact with the leadership of the All-Ukrainian Orthodox Church Council and overcome the "church problems" peacefully. In September 1921 Mikhail sent a letter to Vasyl Lypkivsky, inviting him to visit. But when Lypkivsky arrived, there was no one at home.

Just before the synod was convened Mikhail sent a private letter to Moroz, explaining his reasons for not accepting the invitation to be a member of the impending synod: "...if I accepted your invitation, I would be recognizing that the All-Ukrainian Orthodox Church Council is the highest ruling organ of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and truly has the right to direct its own affairs, and also that the All-Ukrainian Synod has canonical force without the blessing of local bishops."

At the invitation of a delegation, Metropolitan Mikhail arrived at the synod on 19 October. But despite numerous tearful requests from various speakers, Mikhail gave the official reply that boiled down to the need to create a commission to look into this question. Any steps contravening the pastoral will would result in excommunication.

After Mikhail's departure, a storm of protest erupted at the synod. Commenting on the proposal to create a commission, Moroz said: "Dear brothers, I propose that we not elect any commissions now. They have all heard what we want. Let them think about it and give a reply, but if they refuse, then they are not worthy of our supreme synod and our nation... If we set forth on the revolutionary path, then we ourselves must elect an archbishop and ordain him on Sunday."

After protracted discussions of various issues, the synod broke off all relations with the Russian Orthodox Church and the possibility of establishing peaceful official relations with it.

On 20 October the synod heard a letter from Metropolitan Mikhail in which he called the synod a "self-styled assembly convened by a self-styled council." As for autocephaly, he wrote: "...you should submit a declaration about this to the All-Ukrainian Synod, then there will be an All-Russian Synod, and perhaps the Universal Synod [of Constantinople] will find it unnecessary to grant you autocephaly."

The All-Ukrainian Synod of the UAOC found itself in a difficult situation: all the Orthodox hierarchs refused to allow the canonical consecration of Ukrainian bishops. The possibility of reaching an understanding with the Patriarch of Constantinople under Soviet conditions was uncertain, and the synod could not wait for long.

There were two options open to the members of the synod: 1) to side with Metropolitan Mikhail or 2) end the synod and go home.

A third option was adopted: consecrations by the synod. This was proposed by presidium member Volodymyr Chekhivsky, the former prime minister of the UNR and the author of the Law on Autocephaly of 1 January 1919. Chekhivsky proposed that an archbishop be consecrated by means of chirotony (election by a show of hands), a method that existed in the Alexandrian Church until 240 A.D. This proposal saved the situation, all the more so as the synod was not proclaiming a new autocephalous church, but restoring the former autocephalic status of the Ukrainian church before its illegal and uncanonical loss in 1686, a topic that was widely discussed at the synod.

Explaining why he was proposing this solution, Chekhivsky pointed to the extraordinary circumstances and provided examples from the life of the persecuted early Christian church, when the Eucharist was created by lay people, including women. Indeed, during the synod speakers frequently referred to the early Christian communities of the 1st -3rd centuries A.D.

Most of the synod members eagerly supported Chekhivsky's proposal. On Friday, 21 October 1921, a detailed discussion was held about the procedure to elect a bishop. Chekhivsky proposed voting by a show of hands. The overnight vote ended during the morning session, with 253 members voting in favor (9 against, 12 abstentions).

After lengthy discussions of such questions as priest's garb and priests' right to marry, Moroz proposed appointing at least one bishop for each of the twelve gubernias in Ukraine. A delegate named Kviatkovsky proposed to create a list of candidates for the post of archbishop, which would include the oldest members of the synod. But all the proposed nominees waived their candidacy in favor of Archpriest Vasyl Lypkivsky, who won 232 out of 238 votes.

For the head of the church, Professor Danylevsky of Kyiv University proposed a title based on one that had been used centuries earlier: "Archbishop and Metropolitan of Ukraine and All Ukraine (Rus')."

Lypkivsky's consecration on 23 October 1921 sparked a harsh reaction from Russian Orthodox bishops, who immediately called this an

act violating the canons of the Universal Church. Some Ukrainian priests also left the UAOC, regarding the consecration as uncanonical. On 24 October more than eight men were ordained as bishops, and on 30 October, four more.

The Soviet government, which was not interested in the canonical nature of the consecrations, used the conflict between the newly created Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church and the Russian Orthodox Church in order to drive a wedge into the Orthodox Church, which by its very existence was preventing the Soviets from spreading their victorious ideology of Bolshevism among the masses. Indeed, the Bolshevik state was the main factor in the hounding of the newly ordained hierarchy of the UAOC.

As for the problem of the canonicity of the metropolitan's consecration, it should be noted that the Muscovite state did the very same thing in the mid-fifteenth century, when a Muscovite metropolitan was consecrated through the efforts of local bishops. This de facto consecration preceded de jure recognition by many years.

During the twentieth century every effort was made to destroy the Ukrainian church, first morally and then physically. Yet even the autocephalists underestimated the godless nature of the atheistic state, sincerely believing that the Soviet government would welcome their declarations of apoliticism. In congratulating the government for passing a law on the separation of church and state, they did not realize that when something is separated from a totalitarian state with an inhuman ideology, that which is separated is usually destined for destruction.

Nearly all the participants of the First Synod of the UAOC suffered a tragic fate. Almost all of them ended up in prisons or labor camps, accused of "counterrevolutionary activity against the Soviet government."

**Yaryna Prelavska,  
Chief Archeographer,  
Sources on the History  
of the Ukrainian Church,  
M. S. Hrushevsky Institute  
of Ukrainian Archeography,  
National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine**

# HOW THE BOLSHEVIKS IMPRISONED PRIESTS

I am a priest of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church, which was revived in 1921 and headed by two metropolitans, Vasyl Lypkivsky and later, Mykola Boretsky. The church suffered greatly at the hands of the Soviet communist regime. The UAOC had 36 bishops and more than 3,000 priests. All of them, as well as tens of thousands of the church's faithful died in the Solovky Islands, the concentration camps of DALLAG, SIBLAG, BAMLAG, the White Sea Canal, and Kolyma, and in far-away exile.

By 1942, when Ukraine was temporarily freed from the communist regime, there were only 270 registered priests who had returned from exile, their health destroyed, and bearing bitter memories of what they had endured. I was one of these returnees. In all of Europe I am the only living witness among all the priests of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church.

I was arrested by the secret police organs of the GPU on 8 September 1929; I had just completed my fourth year as a priest. On the day of my arrest I was twenty-six years old. They arrested me in the village of Pidvysoke in the Uman region. It was a rainy night when they brought me to the prison. For two nights and one day I sat in a cell with two men around thirty years old: one of them was arrested for killing his wife, and the other for stealing a peasant's cow.

Under convoy, the three of us were marched on foot to the city of Uman, a distance of some fifty or sixty kilometers. The whole time the guard made fun of me. According to him, priests were worse criminals than murderers or thieves.

After spending the night at the Uman militia station, I was brought to the Uman branch of the GPU and put in a corridor, where a few arrested people were sitting. Later I was harshly interrogated. They tried to force me to renounce my priestly vows. When I refused, they beat me. Then they confiscated my documents: my pastoral certificate, my diploma of higher education, etc.

While I was sitting in the corridor before my interrogation by the GPU, through the window I saw agents driving up in cars and on motorcycles, bringing a constant flow of new prisoners to our

group. After lunch there were more than 100 of us. All those who had been interrogated by the GPU were then brought in large groups under convoy to the prison. In the prison courtyard they carried out a meticulous search and then brought us to the cells. During the search they confiscated knives, razors, belts, lengths of rope, and anything else that they saw fit to take. They took my folding knife, a belt, and a silver chest cross that was never returned to me.

They threw me into a 24-square-meter cell that already contained 34 people. My place was near the communal toilet.

This was the daily schedule in the prison: in the morning they gave us some kind of hot, muddy broth, which they called tea. During the day we were given 200 grams of black bread that was often unbelievably clayey and some very thin and watery prison soup. After lunch we were taken outside, for ten to fifteen minutes a day. After our walk, the prisoners sat around killing lice. This was our greatest misery. In the humid cells jammed with people lice quickly proliferated and stung our flesh unbearably, leaving wounds.

I was in the Uman jail only for a week; then I was transferred to Poltava, because I had worked in the parishes of Poltava and had only moved to the Uman region two weeks before my arrest. So the Poltava GPU was in charge of my case.

In Poltava I was placed in the GPU jail, where a few of our priests were already incarcerated: Rev. Hryhorii Kononenko, who lost his sanity; Rev. Fedir Stryzhak, who was shot; Rev. M. Nesterovsky; Rev. Volodymyr Slukhaievsky, and other priests from Poltava.

Baturyn, the GPU official, conducted the investigation of all the priests. He was a brutal man. He tried to force me to renounce the priesthood, beat me, and sawed at my genitals. When he couldn't get anything from me, he sent me to prison.

Prison construction dramatically increased in Poltava under the Soviets. Whereas in tsarist times there was only the prison on Kobylianska Street, under the Bolsheviks there were many



*Metropolitan of Kyiv and all Ukraine Vasyl Lypkivsky.*

more besides the prison on Kobylitska Street: one on Pushkin Street, and another on Koloniiska Street. The building of the Religious Seminary was converted into a large prison, and besides the jail at the region militia, there were a few other prisons scattered throughout the various raions of Poltava. Most of the time I was imprisoned in the jail on Koloniiska Street (a former seminary), but I was also incarcerated in the jail on Kobylitska Street.

The large, three-story building of the former religious seminary was packed with prisoners, most of whom were Ukrainian peasants — farmers, who didn't have a clue about politics, but had been accused under "political articles." Among the prisoners were many Ukrainian intellectuals: professors, schoolteachers, doctors, and many clergymen, all of whom had been charged under political articles.

There was hardly a prison cell without a priest. I was in cell no. 67, together with two other priests. Both of them were shot, but I was sentenced in absentia by the GPU collegium to seven

years' imprisonment in USLON (Administration of Northern Special-Purpose Camps).

Between October 1920 and February 1930 the prisons of Poltava held twenty-eight priests of the Ukrainian Church alone. Five of them were shot, one went mad, and the rest received sentences ranging from five to ten years' imprisonment and sent to distant camps to serve their terms.

Instead of USLON, I was sent to the concentration camps of DALLAG (distant camps in the remote reaches of the USSR): first to the 1<sup>st</sup> Department (6<sup>th</sup> verst) near Vladivostok. Later I was transferred to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Department to work in the coal mines, where I dug coal for more than six years.

There were a few chains of concentration camps in the Far East. Located on the shores of the Sea of Okhotsk and Sea of Japan were the concentration camps of DALRYBSOIUZ (Far Northeast Fishing Union) — this was the first chain. The second chain was the concentration camp of DALVOENSTROI (Far Northeast

Military Construction), the third, DALLESSTROI (Far Northeast Timber Construction). The fourth chain was DALTRASUGOL (Far Northeast Coal Route). Among the Kolyma concentration camps was DALZOLOTO (Far Northeast Gold), and others.

Between 1930 and 1935 the following concentration camps were located in the Vladivostok region alone: 6<sup>th</sup> verst, Bukhta Deomid, Egersheld, 1<sup>st</sup> river, 2<sup>nd</sup> river, Sidanka (SIDANSTROI), 6<sup>th</sup> kilometer of the Suchan arm, the 17<sup>th</sup> kilometer of the Suchan arm, and Komandirovka in Suchan. I knew these eleven camps well; there may be some others that I have not listed.

These were the living and working conditions in the concentration camp: the prisoners dug coal for ten hours; then they emerged from the mineshafts for a so-called break. Upon leaving the shafts, each prisoner had to stand in a long lineup, first for bread, then for soup or tea. This cost a lot of time and nerves. The bread ration was based on completed work quotas: 1,000, 800, and 600 grams. Those who did not complete their quotas were given the same amount of bread that was issued to farm workers — 500 grams. More or less good quality hot food was issued in accordance with the amount of bread.

We slept on wooden bed boards in wooden barracks, each containing between 200 and 250 people. In the middle of the barrack stood a large stove made out of an iron mining trolley. Washed clothing, rags, and socks always hung near the stove. It was constantly dirty and smelly in the barracks. Prisoners who lay farthest from the stove and closer to the door would come to

warm themselves at the stove, and when they left the stove to go back to their bed, especially in the winter, they would catch cold and soon die.

Priests were always given the worst work: sanitation workers, miners assigned to working faces, drivers, etc. This was a category of people called “the silent ones.” Priests had it bad: no matter what people said, good or bad, we were obliged to stay quiet and apart from those who were talking. In the camps prisoners continued to be subjected to court trials. Thus, in 1932, the GPU troika (panel of three judges) in our camp selected the best people in the camp: school-teachers, engineers, priests, and peasants, a total of 300 people. Eighty-seven of them were shot in Vladivostok, and the rest were sentenced to ten years each in special purpose isolators.

There were cases of people being burned at the stake. In Bukhta Siziman, the commander of the DONALIS concentration camp, together with his wife, burned people on bonfires, shot them with pistols, and sicced dogs on them. The terror wreaked by this commander was known far and wide.

I was released after completing my term in 1936. After my imprisonment I was deprived of all civil rights and the possibility of finding a full-time job. I wandered from place to place: I was in the Donbas and every region in Ukraine, working at various jobs, especially manual labor.

Under the Soviet regime I lived in Ukraine and outside its borders from 1919 to 1941, nearly twenty-two years. During this time I was a priest for sixteen years and a prisoner for seven.

**Very Rev. Archpriest M. Yavdas**

**“The Polish journalist Adam Krzewiński (the co-editor of the Warsaw weekly *Polityka*) notes that in the 1990s the French press analyzed the concept ‘Nazism’ 480 times, ‘Stalinism,’ 7 times, ‘Auschwitz,’ 150 times, and ‘Kolyma, 2 times.**

**...But the great famine caused by dekulakization in Ukraine, which claimed the lives of ten million people, is not mentioned at all, even though the state system that caused it had collapsed...”**

*(Yurii Semenko, Natalia Pavlushkova, Moscow-Leningrad, 1999; VV, 33/13.8.1998).*

# HOW THE COMMUNISTS TURNED CHURCHES INTO PRISONS

*(Reminiscences of a member of the UAOC)*

I am the son of a Ukrainian peasant. After completing a few years of schooling, I went to work on the railway, where I was employed for twenty-three years. I worked conscientiously and lived quietly with my family, devoting most of my energy and attention to the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church.

I was not destined to live a quiet life for long. In 1923, when the Russian Bolsheviks began to feel like masters in Ukraine and set about gaining control not only over property but peoples' souls, that year the railway commissar invited me to join the Communist Party. Since I did not sympathize with the communists and was particularly opposed to their anti-religious propaganda, I categorically refused the railway commissar's suggestion, which went completely against my conscience and religious feelings. As a result of my refusal, I was instantly fired. Although I quickly got another job on the railway, I was hounded and persecuted for seven years, until 1930.

In February 1930 I was arrested by the GPU and thrown into their dungeon. I was detained for approximately two months, and every day I was interrogated, threatened, and tortured. Then they released me with a receipt obliging me never to reveal how they had treated me. I was free during the summer of 1930, but lived under the constant threat of being rearrested.

In the winter of 1931 the GPU rearrested me. Again I was detained in the same GPU dungeon, and for two months they interrogated and tortured me, hounding me especially for my religious activity in the UAOC, which they regarded as political counterrevolution against the Soviet government. I stood firm. Then the GPU agents deprived me of sleep for ten days. I was

brought to such a state of exhaustion that in order to end my torments, I finally signed the indictment written by the investigator.

Then the GPU sentenced me under art. 54, pt. 10 (counterrevolutionary agitation) and sent me to the northern camps in the Kotlas-Arkhangelsk region, where I spent six difficult years working in the forestry industry.

From the GPU investigation cell I was transferred to a prison, where they put me into a cell designed for 25 people, but which contained 140 prisoners. The cramped quarters and heat in this cell were unbelievable. Every night one or two men would be taken away to be shot, and in the morning new prisoners would be thrown into the cell in place of the executed ones. As a result of these conditions, prisoners who were unable to endure the physical and psychological tortures would commit suicide.

From this prison in Dnipropetrovsk I was transferred under convoy to Kharkiv, where I was placed in a small cell in which there were no beds or even straw for sleeping. There were eighty men in this cell. By the time two weeks had elapsed, they had removed a total of 400 prisoners from this cell, including me, and transferred us to a concentration camp in Kharkiv, where we were forced to work under guard, constructing an annex to a building and the GPU special-purpose prison. We, prisoners, were building a new jail for ourselves.

After we finished building the prison, on Christmas Day, 25 December 1931, we were transported under escort from Kharkiv to Arkhangelsk region to cut down trees. We were housed in a barrack that was completely unfit for habitation. But we regarded this barrack in the forest as a stroke of luck.





*Episcopate of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church in 1921.*

*(Photo from the archives of the UAOC).*

Other prisoners ended up in Arkhangel'sk, where they were imprisoned in a former church that served as a transit jail for prisoners and deportees. During the time that this church functioned as a jail, approximately 30,000 prisoners died of cold and hunger.

Our work in the forests was extremely difficult. The daily quota for each man, working by hand and without any mechanical aids, was six cubic meters. If the quota was fulfilled and the foreman agreed, the prisoner would get 600 grams of bread with his prison soup. If the quota was not fulfilled, or if the foreman was dissatisfied, the prisoner would obtain 400 grams of bread. Prisoners who were punished received only 200 grams of bread a day.

In a few days we learned that Soviet prisoners were not allowed to be sick,

because those who said they were sick were sent to the hospital from which they would never return.

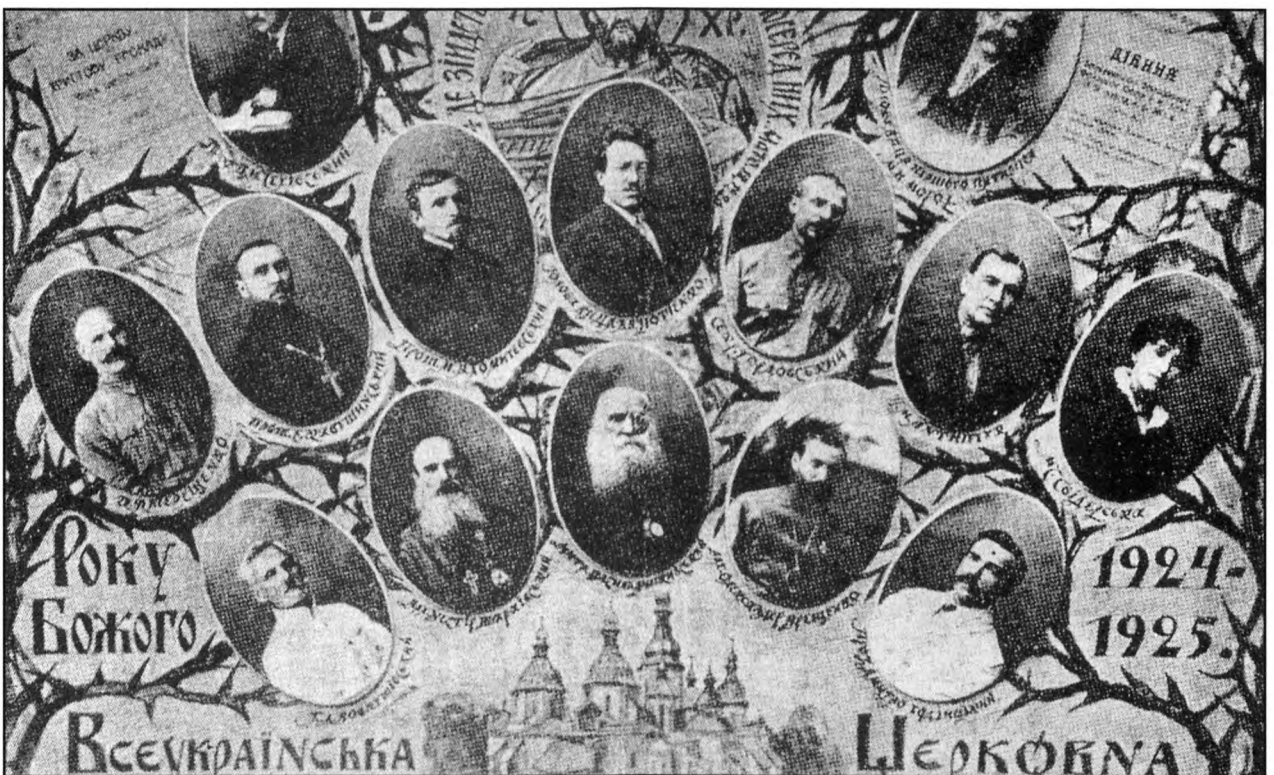
In the camps I saw prisoners from all the nations inhabiting the USSR. But I noticed that Russians comprised the smallest minority of prisoners, perhaps because this nation was the most submissive to the communist government. The preponderant majority of the prisoners were Ukrainians and people from the Caucasus and Central Asia.

I thank God that He helped me to endure Soviet penal servitude. When I returned home, I was not allowed to live in my native city of Dnipropetrovsk or in any other large city of the USSR, because I was suspect in the eyes of the Soviet government and remained under NKVD surveillance.

**I. Matiushenko**



*St. Nicholas's Military Cathedral in Kyiv, built in 1690-93 and financed by Hetman Ivan Mazepa. In 1919 Rev. Vasyl Lypkivsky served the first Holy Liturgy in the Ukrainian language in this church, for which he was suspended by the Russian church hierarchy. In 1934 this Cossack baroque church was demolished by the Soviet authorities.*



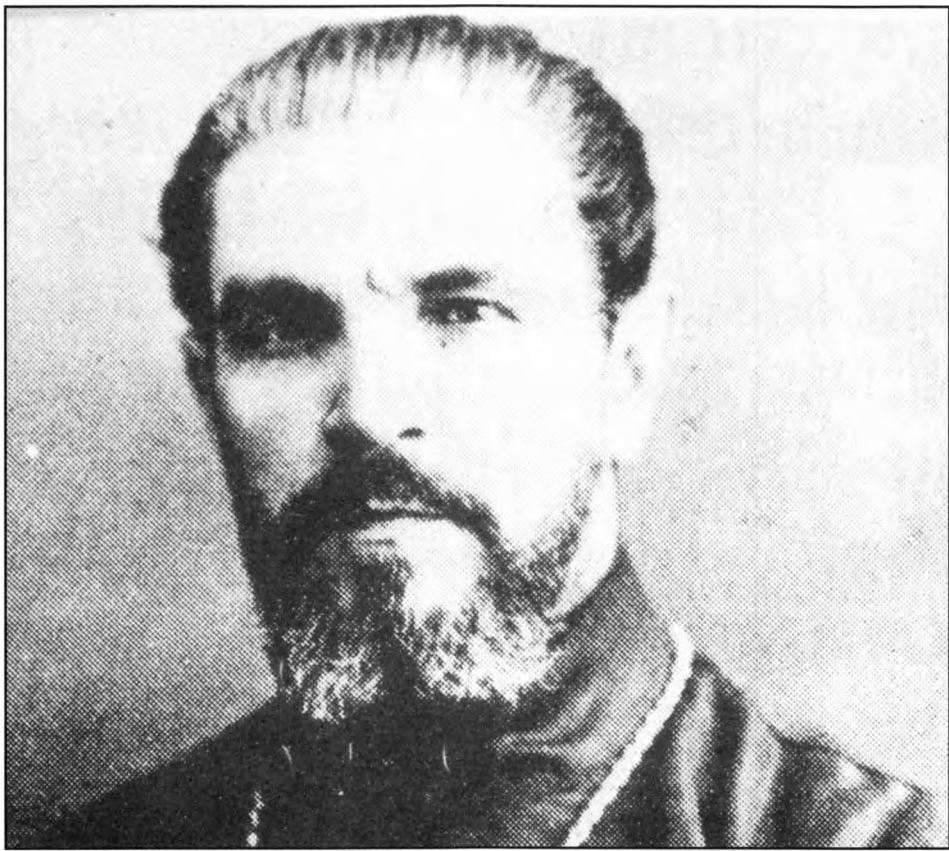
*The All-Ukrainian Orthodox Church Council in 1924-1925.*



*Archbishop Yurii Zhevchenko, the organizer of the All-Ukrainian Synod of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church; Archbishop of Poltava and later, Odesa-Mykolaiv. Arrested in 1929 and deported to a labor camp in Karaganda, where he died after being re-sentenced.*



*Cathedral of St. Michael's Golden-Domed Monastery as it looked in 1911. The cathedral was built in 1108-13 during the reign of Sviatopolk, the grandson of Yaroslav the Wise.*



*Metropolitan Mykola Boretsky of the UAOC. A native of Volyn, he completed his studies at the Kyiv Theological Seminary. Former military chaplain, and Bishop of Haisyn. Elected metropolitan of Ukraine at the Second All-Ukrainian Synod. Arrested in 1930 and sent to Medvezha Hora, where he died in exile.*



*The ruins of a Ukrainian cathedral demolished by the Soviet authorities in 1936.*

# THE THORNY ROAD OF THE UAOC AND ITS APOSTLE OF TRUTH

By proclaiming autocephalic status for the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, the Synod restored many features that were germane to the early Ukrainian church. Harking back to the days of the apostles, it restored equality and fraternity in Christ's community, which was characteristic of that age, revived ancient traditions and holidays, and introduced the living Ukrainian language in sermons and all church liturgies, thereby elevating the native language as a sacrifice to God and the devout Ukrainian nation's finest gift of union with Christ. Within two years of obtaining autocephaly, the church expanded rapidly.

By 1923 the UAOC had 26 bishops, more than 2,500 priests, and over 2,000 parishes. The Russian religious hierarchy looked askance at the expansion of the UAOC. Thus, the Russian Orthodox Church, in the person of the KGB agent, Russian patriarch Aleksei II, sought to discredit the UAOC as a "self-ordained" church, a reference to hierarchs who ordain themselves without being elected by a community of believers. (It should be noted that the same tactics are being applied today against the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate.) The accusation of "self-ordination" thus exposes the Russian church's hypocrisy and ignorance. In reality, this state of affairs has never existed in the UAOC or in the UOC (KP). The Russian church has always tendentiously regarded the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of all eras from the imperialist-political standpoint, not out of ecclesiastical-canonical considerations.

The restorers of the UAOC realized that they would be investigated, hounded, and executed. The following Ukrainian hierarchs fell victim to Moscow: Vasyl Lypkivsky, Mykola Boretsky, Ivan Pavlovsky, Konstantyn Maliushkevych, Oleksandr Yareshchenko, Nestor Sharaivsky, Yosyp Oksaniuk, Stepan Orlyk, Yurii Zhevchenko, Yurii Mikhnovsky, Konstantyn Krotevych, Volodymyr Dakhivnyk-Dakhivsky, Professor Volodymyr Chekhivsky, as well as

thousands of priests and millions of the church's faithful.

For six years Metropolitan Lypkivsky bore the weight of supreme service to the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church. The great metropolitan left a rich legacy of ecclesiastical literature and sermons. The profound essence of his spirit — what may be called his genius — earned him the title of Apostle of Truth.

The literary scholar and academician Serhii Yefremov wrote: "Few nations of the world have been forced to endure the tragic, unfortunate fate during their historical life as the Ukrainians. . . It will take more than one generation to make a thorough study of the tragic pages of our history. We have no right to forget a single name that was sacrificed to the bloody and barbarous totalitarian system."

Vasyl Lypkivsky, the apostle of the Ukrainian nation's national and religious renaissance and the first metropolitan of the restored UAOC, was born on 20 March 1864 in the village of Popudnia, in Lypovets county, the son of a priest, Konstantyn Lypkivsky, from Halychyna (near Zolota Lypa). He studied in the Uman Theological School, and later in the Kyiv Theological Seminary and the Kyiv Theological Academy, which he completed in 1889, graduating with a doctorate in theology.

In the years 1917-1921 Lypkivsky became the ideologist and chief figure in the religious liberation movement in Ukraine. He was destined to become the first metropolitan of the restored UAOC, which championed the spiritual essence of the Ukrainian nation during the horrific era of godless, communist terror and the persecution of the Ukrainian nation.

The imperialistic Russian Orthodox Church regarded liturgies in the Ukrainian language as a sin. Metropolitan Lypkivsky affirmed: "Every language must be regarded as holy, if only because each language is a gift from God, the finest and most perfect gift." These and other state-



*Destroyed churches.*



*The bodies of executed Ukrainian priests of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church during its liquidation.*

ments served as the basis of the Soviet government's accusations against the metropolitan, who was eventually arrested and sentenced to death.

With the collapse of the Soviet empire of evil, the once secret archives of the Cheka, GPU, NKVD, KGB, and MVD began to be opened, their contents revealing a multitude of facts pertaining to the tragic fate of millions of Ukrainians — peasants, workers, intellectuals, and various distinguished figures, such as Metropolitan Lypkivsky. This is how the metropolitan spent his last day on earth:

“...In Kyiv one late November night in 1937 two men led the metropolitan from his cell and brought him across the courtyard to another building, where three executioners were waiting. One of the men, dressed in the uniform of an NKVD captain, asked him:

“Surname, name, and patronymic?”

“Lypkivsky, Vasyl Konstantynovych.”

“You scum, why didn't you tell the truth to investigator Goldfarb?”

“I only told the truth,” replied the metropolitan. After this they told him to kneel. As soon as the metropolitan carried out their order, a shot rang out. The metropolitan's case file contained an act stating that the sentence was carried out in Kyiv on 27 November 1937, signed by Captain Shashkov of the NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR.”

On 23 July 1989 a note appeared in the Ukrainian press that Metropolitan Lypkivsky had been posthumously rehabilitated owing to the absence of material proof of his guilt.

On the 68<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the metropolitan's death, it should be noted that he never hid in a monastic cell, nor did he ever seek any understanding with the executioners of the Ukrainian people. His undying spirit will always be remembered.

**Fedir Habelko**

(Based on source materials published in newspapers, journals, and an anthology of the UAOC)



*Destroyed churches in Pryluka Monastery.*



*Destroyed churches.*



*Priests shot to death.*





*Hundreds of thousands of churches were damaged or completely demolished.*



*Thousands of priests were executed or deported to slave labor camps in Siberia.*

# TESTIMONY ON THE DESTRUCTION OF THE UKRAINIAN PEASANTRY

With the goal of destroying the Ukrainian peasantry (with the peasants' own hands) the Bolsheviks divided the peasants into groups, announced the linkage of workers with *bidniaks* [poor peasants] and *seredniaks* [peasants of average means], and declared war on the *kurkuls* [well-to-do peasants; Rus.: *kulaks*].

In the winter of 1925 the Bolsheviks arrested the Khanin brothers — Serhii, Havrylo and Semen — and a man named Klosov in the village of Petrivske in Petrivske raion of Kharkiv region. Each of the arrested men had his own farmstead and family. They were detained in the village soviet for nearly three days, and then brought to the Donets River. They were forced to chop a hole in the ice and then were pushed into the water. This crime, carried out by the head of the raion executive party committee Y. A. Shcholokov, was abetted by local communists and poor peasants from the village.

Tymofii Denysenko from the village of Dmytrivka revealed the hiding place of Havrylo Khanin and helped Shcholokov to destroy the "kurkuls." Serhii Khanin's farmstead was located two kilometers from our village, near our boundary line. After Serhii Khanin was drowned, this Bolshevik band arrived at his house and killed his entire family. The next day Denysenko arrived at Serhii's home and began hauling out the family's property. The corpses of the murdered family members were still lying in the house. Denysenko had not warned anyone that he would be taking the murdered people's belongings because he was afraid that if the poor peasants found out, little would be left for him.

When the villagers learned that Serhii Khanin's entire family had been killed, his relatives obtained permission to bury the bodies. Tymofii Denysenko, Anton Skorokhid, Havrylo Skorokhid, and Mykhailo Lehky, all residents of the village, were responsible for the deaths of this eight-member family, branded as kurkuls.

In 1922 the peasant Terentii Kolosok, another resident of the village of Dmytrivka, was traveling with his son Mykola and nephew Andrii to the city of Krasnopavlivka. En route they encountered a detachment of communists and poor

peasants, who were forcibly confiscating food throughout the villages. They robbed peasants traveling to the market and even killed them. The gang arrested Kolosok and his son and nephew, and confiscated their wagon ostensibly for their work. When the peasants began protesting, they were shot on the spot. Kolosok's son, who was only wounded, crept unnoticed into a field of rye and saved himself. However, he was forced to abandon his home because he knew that if he were found, he would be killed.

In the hamlet of Zmiivski, located in the same raion, a Bolshevik gang operating with the permission of the local communist authorities destroyed the family of the peasant Svyrydon Zmiivsky. One night the members of this gang broke into the home of an unnamed peasant and with iron rods beat to death all the occupants of the house: father, mother, son, daughter-in-law, two grandchildren, and two farmhands.

When their neighbors learned of this horrific killing, they thought criminals were responsible. But an investigation of the footprints in and around the house, as well as eyewitness testimonies, revealed the exact identity of the killers. When the neighbors informed the local militia about the murders, they were told "to mind their own business." The killers went unpunished and continued their punitive activities. This fact proves that the Bolsheviks organized special terrorist "detachments of Soviet justice" against the so-called kurkuls.

In the village of Kamyshevakh (same raion) a "worker and peasant" militia found a peasant named Myly in the hamlet of Morokyna. Myly, who was afraid that he would be branded a kurkul, had been hiding in the home of his relative Oleksii Zhurba. His fears were not unfounded. When the militia found him, he was arrested and tied to the tail of a horse and dragged for fifteen kilometers to the raion executive party committee. When Myly's family saw his broken body, they asked Fedir Hrybnyiuk, the head of the raion executive party committee, for permission to call a priest to administer the Last Rites to the dying man. Hrybnyiuk replied: "The same thing will happen to the priest!"

## DEKULAKIZATION

That year there were huge snowdrifts on the railway. We were mobilized to clear the snow at Zverevo Station, where we spent two days on the job. When we returned home, it looked as though there had been a fire. There was nothing left in my house; there was no place to sit. We had been dekulakized. They left us one small pot, one bowl, and one spoon each. They also took the cow, but left behind the oxen and a horse. They also confiscated all our grain and flour. That same day, 5 February 1931, approximately thirty families were dekulakized, but each family was treated differently.

I went to the village soviet and said:

“If you’re going to take away the rest of what I own, then take it quickly. Don’t torment me!”

They replied:

“Start making your fortune now by yourself, without hired help! We will give you seeds from that grain that you poured into the grain fund, so you will sow!”

## ROBBING WHAT WE EARNED

Then I found work transporting rocks from the quarry. The wage was eight pounds of grain per wagonload and a bit of money for each cubic meter of rocks. I was earning approximately fifteen-sixteen *karbovantsi* [karbovanets: equivalent to the Russian ruble] every day, as well as sixteen pounds of grain. I thought that we would be able to survive on these earnings and would not be in dire straits. But as soon as I received my first wage, the village soviet sent me a message: “You are ordered to pay 200 karbovantsi into the coffers of the village soviet within three days. In the event that you do not comply with this order, you will be severely punished.” So I had to give back everything that I had earned with my hard labor. At least they didn’t confiscate my worker’s ration for the whole family.

One day I came home from work and saw my family crying again. The authorities had confiscated the grain (barley) that I had received for my wagonloads and was preparing to grind. I had to give back my second wage to the village soviet, but from that time I no longer brought the earned grain home, but gave it to friends, who ground the grain for me.

## INDEPENDENT FARMERS

Spring arrived, and all those who had not joined the collective farm were forced to sow. We were given the worst land and seven *poods* [one pood=16.4 kilograms] of seed grain per hectare. Assisting me was another poor peasant, who at least had a pair of horses. I convinced him to save one pood from every hectare so that we would have something to eat. Then they sent us to plough a so-called suburban farmstead with some oxen. I lasted two days on this job.

## COLLECTIVIZATION IN BORYSIVKA

Collectivization, dekulakization, and peasant deportations were in full swing throughout Ukraine, but in the village of Borysivka, Nykopol raion, collectivization was proceeding slowly. Hardly anyone had joined the collective farm, except for a little group of “leading village activists.” The collectivization process in the village of Borysivka was headed by a Bolshevik, a sadist named Antin Bulany, who was a mine worker. He was from the village and knew the local people. The reason behind the failure of collectivization was the resistance of one peasant, who had the support of all the other peasants. This was V. Trubchanynov, who at one time had narrowly escaped being shot by the Whites. He then organized a small detachment and began fighting the Whites behind their lines. With the arrival of the Reds, he was lauded as a hero. Trubchanynov had a nice farmstead and refused to join the collective farm. The raion authorities did not dare use force against him, fearing both a peasant uprising and criticism from the center. So they decided to do away with Trubchanynov secretly.

When Bulany was unable to make any more headway with collectivization, the raion authorities remembered I. M. Mokha, who was instantly summoned to Borysivka. He was ordered to “do away with Trubchanynov quietly” and complete collectivization by 100 percent.

Mokha arrived in Borysivka toward evening and instantly convened a meeting of red partisans and other activists. Mokha made a propagandistic speech in which he attacked Bulany for “distorting the general line.” After the meeting Mokha spoke for a long time with Trubchanynov behind closed

doors. Trubchanynov came home around midnight and told his wife to prepare some food for the road, because in the morning he was going to the raion to attend a meeting of the leading party activists.

In the morning a sleigh and driver were waiting for Trubchanynov. The driver took him past the village, explaining that there was a lot of snow. After a few kilometers, the sleigh stopped and a few activists fell on Trubchanynov, tied his hands, and took him to the raion branch of the GPU.

The driver had a prepared arrest warrant that Mokha and Bulany had fabricated during the night. The protocol stated that the general meeting of the village of Borysivka had requested the party and the government to sentence Trubchanynov as an enemy of the people, “a Trotskyite in practice,” who is conducting anti-government propaganda in the village and sabotaging collectivization. Thus, the GPU had “grounds” to finish off Trubchanynov, who then disappeared without a trace.

Mokha later dispatched a brigade to confiscate Trubchanynov’s property. When the brigade appeared in his yard, Trubchanynov’s wife immediately realized what was happening and began scolding them for the underhanded action against her husband. Mokha, infuriated, attacked her, but she managed to grab an axe. Bulany ran up to help Mokha. Trubchanynov’s wife was holding her seven-month-old baby son whom Mokha tried to pull away from her. Bulany was trying to push her into the vestibule, but she gave him such a punch in the face that Bulany was covered in blood. Beside himself with rage, he yanked the child from her and threw him with all his might into the snow. As a result, the child’s colon descended and he died soon after. Mokha ordered an act to be drawn up, and the entire brigade and “witnesses” confirmed that the wife of the counterrevolutionary Trubchanynov had thrown her child into the snow in a rage, because he was preventing her from killing comrade Mokha. Within a few hours all of Trubchanynov’s property was looted, while the mother with her dead baby remained in the house.

That same day Mokha ordered everyone who refused to join the collective farm to prepare food for three days and get ready for the transport. In order to avoid deportation, the peasants, terrified by the events of the last few days, quickly joined the collective farm. Within two days all of

Borysivka was collectivized, and Mokha was honored in the raion as a victor.

Bulany was promoted. Adopting Mokha’s “brilliant” methods, Bulany continued working on grain requisitions in Dmytrivka and other villages. Things were going well for him. People were handing over grain “voluntarily,” because whenever anyone balked, Bulany would instantly put him on a hot frying pan or apply other savage tortures against the intractable peasant. The authorities knew all about this but ignored it, because the Bulanys and Mokhas were their executors.

## **BULANY AND MOKHA’S CAREERS**

After the completion of collectivization and the end of the famine, Mokha became the head of the transport division and the Maksimov Depot of the Ore Directorate in Horodyshche. As for Bulany, that blockhead was not fit for any serious position, because he could barely write. But the Soviet authorities always needed people like Bulany to do their dirty work. That is why he was always given the kind of work that gave him enough time to work as a *seksot*, a secret collaborator of the NKVD.

During the wave of terror in the 1930s, known as Yezhovshchina, Mokha and Bulany once again appeared on the horizon with their band of cutthroats, including Antypov, Pitlevsky, Novikov, and other “tested sons of the Communist Party.” They joined the persecutors of Ukrainian peasants, such as Sudakov, Velikanov, Fursov, Hilkevych, and Klochkov. Just like Mokha, these strangers from the Muscovite north suddenly appeared out of nowhere at the mine, terrorizing the population. Everywhere this gang went, arrests and repressions followed. When people were arrested, Mokha and Bulany usually carried out the searches. In 1940 Mokha became a “transport engineer,” although no one knows where he acquired his engineering education.

## **THE UNENDING STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM**

The great famine of 1932-1933 in Ukraine, which was engineered by the Soviet government, failed to break the resistance of the Ukrainian

population. The peasants composed and sang satirical songs about the collective farms and made fun of the Bolsheviks.

But there were other, more significant, methods of resistance. Although they did not have a mass nature, they were nevertheless a thorn in the side of the Soviet government, particularly the NKVD. Among the tens of thousands of workers living in the large industrial city of Kryvyi Rih were many peasants and people who had come there to escape the watchful eyes of the NKVD. In the spring of 1934 an NKVD investigator was murdered in his home. Although the government kept the murder a secret, soon rumors began to spread about the existence of an anti-Bolshevik terrorist group.

One day an important Soviet dignitary was supposed to arrive in Kryvyi Rih by train. But when this carefully guarded train was approaching Karnovotka Station, it derailed on a curve. It turned out that the railway tracks had been loosened. The NKVD then realized that this was no accident and that an anti-Soviet organization was active in the city.

As a resident of Kryvyi Rih, I was interested in learning more about this accident after I returned

from the labor camps. It was only during World War II that I found out there was indeed an anti-Soviet fighting group in the city. It was led by a talented young man, a fine poet whose poems were published in the city newspapers. His comrade in arms and participant in the struggle for Ukraine's freedom was a homeless man by the name of Andrii Zahreba whose parents were liquidated in Tauriia by the Soviet government in the 1920s. Zahreba had a code name and was a veritable wrath of God for the high-ranking communists and the NKVD.

Zahreba's life ended tragically. One day on the railway route Verkhovtsev-Piatykhatka he entered the compartment of a high-ranking NKVD officer, grabbed his pistol, and shot him. At this moment the controller entered the train car. Knocking on the door of the compartment and receiving no reply, the controller opened the door with his key. In order to escape arrest and imminent execution, Zahreba jumped through the window of the moving train and was killed instantly.

**Yurii Sherestiuk**



*Collectivization. On Stalin's orders everyone was obliged to work on collective farms, which had been forcibly created.*

# TESTIMONY FROM A VILLAGE ON THE DNIPRO

*This detailed account by Pavlo Shynkola is a typical one. He writes: "Before I started to write, I swore to God that I would write only the truth, although I cannot describe the whole truth."*

I was born in 1907 in the village of Novopavlivka in Nykopil raion of Dnipropetrovsk region in a family of ten. My father had a homestead and was engaged in farming. From 1923 he was deprived of the right to vote.

Our large, well-to-do village had more than 2,000 homes and two churches that were demolished in 1931. The village is located right on the Dnipro River, five kilometers from the city of Nykopil. On the other side of the Dnipro lies the village of Vodiana in Kamianka raion of Zaporizhia region.

On the first day of Pentecost in 1920, when I was fourteen years old, an anti-Bolshevik uprising exploded in Nykopil and our village. The uprising in Nykopil was led by Andrii Kalashnyk, and in our village, by Oleksandr Buhaiets. The entire male population, from fifteen-year-old boys to gray-haired grandfathers, armed with rifles, sawed-off shotguns, pitchforks, scythes, and sharpened stakes rose up and headed east. The uprising spread unabated, engulfing more villages. Near the village of Harbuzivka the rebels were met by regular Bolshevik troops and an armored train. The armored train was put out of commission by a locomotive that was sent headlong into it on the bridge. But the rebels were unable to stop the army's advance and had to retreat. Kalashnyk was killed defending Nykopil, and Buhaiets, refusing to hide, went to his home, where he died courageously, killed by the Bolsheviks in his own front yard. More than 300 rebels were arrested in our village, and 18 of them were shot.

After the Red Army crushed the uprising in our village, order was restored by strangers: Volniansky, Khramov, Sysoev, Meshkov, and Fedorov, together with their village helpers, drunkards and ne'er-do-wells. Some of them were former convicts: Yastreba, Malynovsky, Yakymets, Kutash, and Yarko and Nastia

Vorysok. Volniansky, who was always drunk and armed with a revolver and a sword, was appointed as the head of the village soviet. He was later replaced by people from our village: Serhii Yastreba, S. N. Malynovsky, and Levko Kutash, as well as by strangers that had been sent here from God knows where: Kiselev, Morgunov, and Molchansky. This board ruled the village as it saw fit.

I will recount some of the most significant incidents from Yastreba's rule. I have first-hand knowledge of various incidents that characterize the activity of all the other heads and activists.

During a village assembly in 1921, the peasants wanted to discuss the problem of thievery that was spreading in the village. They accused a resident of our village named Spyrydon Vecheria, who was summoned to the meeting and asked for an explanation. Vecheria replied: "Do you think that I am robbing all 2,000 homes?"

As soon as Vecheria uttered these words, Yastreba hit him twice over the head and killed him on the spot. The meeting ended.

My father walked to his brother's house, taking a shortcut through the gardens. Yastreba, who had come out on the street with his village activists, saw my father and began shooting at him.

I saddled up the horse and rode to the village soviet to do my guard shift. Yastreba came outside, climbed into a wagon, and said: "Let's go to Hordii Buhaiets's place." When we arrived, Yastreba said to Buhaiets: "By 12:00 noon make sure there are a pair of oxen and a wagon standing next to the village soviet." Buhaiets said that he couldn't do that today because his oxen were fifteen kilometers out in the steppe. Yastreba fired his gun over his head and said: "Get on the wagon, you counterrevolutionary!" He arrested him and took him to the village soviet.

Another incident involved the village thief, a communist named Levko Kutash, who lived next to Vasyl Yakymets. One night, when Kutash came into Yakymets's yard, the latter chased him away. Two days later, Yakymets was passing by Kutash's house. Kutash was standing outside with his fourteen-year-old son Volodymyr, who was

holding a sawed-off shotgun. Kutash told his son: "See if you can hit him while he's walking" and pointed to Yakymets. The boy missed the first shot, but killed him with the second.

I could provide many more facts, but these are enough to indicate the kind of people on whom the Soviet authorities relied in Ukrainian villages. There was no one to complain to. Respectable farmers were deprived of their right to vote, while cutthroats, drifters, criminals, and drunkards were given positions. In these conditions, in 1920-1922 middle-aged people were afraid to attend village meetings and sent their teenaged children or seventy-year-old grandfathers.

In our village dekulakization began in 1928. Before it was launched the authorities levied wave after wave of high taxes on the peasants. People would sell off some things and pay them, and finally went to the village soviet to complain. At this time the head was Levko Kutash, who sent people with complaints to Zverev. Speaking in Russian, Zverev said:

"I did not come here to take pity on you, but to bring order. If you have received taxes, this means that you must pay."

Households that had a lot of taxes to pay were soon dekulakized. At first they were cleaned out of all their money, if there was any, and then all their property and belongings were confiscated.

In 1928 thirteen households were dekulakized. The owners were between forty and seventy years old. Together with their families, fifty people were affected. Out of these thirteen households, four families managed to escape from the village. One day the other nine families, or thirty-two people, were taken away and deported to the Far North. During the dekulakization, which took place in the winter, they were robbed so thoroughly that they were deported hungry and dressed in the clothes in which they were standing, together with their small children.

Dekulakization and forced collectivization led the villagers to abandon farming and become industrial workers. The rest of the villagers were chased into the collective farm by force and terror. At this point I left the village and became a truck driver in Zaporizhia.

After the first round of deportations to the Far North, early in 1929, in the winter, a second group of twenty-eight households (128 people) was dekulakized. The farmers ranged in age from thirty to seventy-five years old. Having witnessed

the first round of deportations, most of the villagers slated for the second round of deportations simply fled. The remaining seven households (twenty-two people) were deported to the Far North in 1930. When they were deporting the second group, I accidentally wound up with the deportees.

After I fled to Zaporizhia, I would sometimes secretly visit my family. My mother and youngest sister were still living in the village, but they could not tell me where the rest of the villagers had gone. During one visit my mother told me that two weeks earlier my father had disappeared from home, and she didn't know where he was. She told me: "I suggest you do the same thing, son. Run away before they find out you're at home." I said goodbye and went to the station, where I was arrested and imprisoned in Nykopol.

On Friday, 28 June 1930 (such dates cannot be forgotten) the GPU officer (I don't remember his name) told us in Russian:

"Listen, you dekulakized peasants! Tomorrow we are sending you from here to the Far North with your families. Don't be afraid: we are not sending you to be shot, but to work. The party and government have decided to introduce total collectivization, and so that you do not impede this great matter, we are deporting you as an unreliable element."

On the morning of 28 June 1930 we were transported from Nykopol to Pavlopillia Station. The men were kept apart from their families until right before we were shipped out by train. We arrived earlier, and the women and children were brought later. There were many tragic scenes. As it turned out, many of the women were leaving without their children, refusing to bring them to certain death.

I cannot begin to describe the horror of seeing these unfortunate mothers and fathers, who had to abandon their small children. They were forced to do this after hearing news from the members of the first group of deportees. Some of them had managed to escape and told people about their experiences. Others sent letters in which they described that almost all the children had died en route, and after the convoy arrived, were simply tossed into the snow. The survivors walked hundreds of kilometers through forests, where they built themselves barrack-type houses. Many adults also died, but particularly children: from hunger, cold, and disease.

After three days and two nights of travel I decided to escape no matter what, and I abandoned those unfortunate people. I managed to reach the city of Zaporizhia and got a job as a truck driver again.

In November 1932 I received instructions to drive my three-ton truck to the village of Boburka, Zaporizhia region, to pick up the director of the Repair and Mechanical Plant, Lev Rabinovych. When I drove him to the collective farm, the peasants were re-threshing the straw. Rabinovych stayed on the collective farm, and I had to return to Zaporizhia. But since it was already evening, I decided to spend the night in the village.

All the grain was transported to the station. Then a second batch of grain was transported out of the village. The collective farmers were starving, living off vegetables mixed with husk, mashed corncoobs, etc.

At this time in Zaporizhia, in late 1932, every day between fifteen and twenty peasants would stand outside houses begging for food. All day starving peasants would scabble in the garbage cans that stood next to houses, looking for food scraps, of which there were none, because even the urban population was living off ration cards.

Around early March 1933, I came to work one morning and saw a group of workers next to the cafeteria. I was curious to know why the workers were standing there, when the cafeteria was shut at this time of day. When I came up to the doors of the cafeteria, I saw the bodies of two peasants: a man about forty years old and a boy, around ten or twelve. The workers stared at them, silent and stunned.

Shortly afterwards I was at the hospital, when a truck drove up. A medical team brought out a stretcher with a swollen, unconscious forty-year-old man. "When the doctor came out to see him, he said: "No doctor or drugs will help him: he is dying of starvation." When the doctor asked the driver where he had found him, the driver replied that when he came to work, he found the unfortunate man lying unconscious. From that time this incident became a daily occurrence.

That same month (March 1933) my boss seconded me with my truck to the 13<sup>th</sup> militia district of Zaporizhia. There, peasants swollen from hunger, who could no longer walk, were loaded onto the truck. After fifteen people were

loaded, a militia man got into the truck and told me to drive to the BUPR (Forced Labor Building, i.e., the prison). He told me:

"Comrade driver! Don't drive fast. Have mercy on these people." Surprised, I asked him why they were being sent to jail and what kind of criminals they were. The man answered:

"It's an order. I don't know what will happen to them after this."

Later I decided to go to my village to visit my family. Gathering up some food, I drove off. When I arrived at the train station and was walking to my house, on the way I decided to stop by my sister's house. She was not at home, so I asked her children:

"Where's your father?"

"Father's at work," the children replied.

"And where's your mom?"

"She went to Moscow."

"Why?"

"For bread," they replied.

"She went all the way to Moscow for bread?" I asked in surprise.

"Yes! Our mother has already brought us baked bread, millet, and buckwheat groats from Moscow, and that's what we live on."

I said goodbye to the children and went to my oldest sister's house with thoughts of bread from Moscow.

My oldest sister's situation was worse: her six-year-old son Stefan was starving to death right in front of his parents' eyes. When I was leaving, my sister said: "Let's say goodbye, little brother, because we won't be seeing each other again." A short while later her son and husband starved to death, and she died soon after.

I found my father and mother swollen from starvation. When we sat down to eat our meal, consisting of millet, a tall swollen man entered the house. He sat down at the table and said to my father: "Uncle! I am dying of starvation. Give me something to eat."

I asked: "Who is this?"

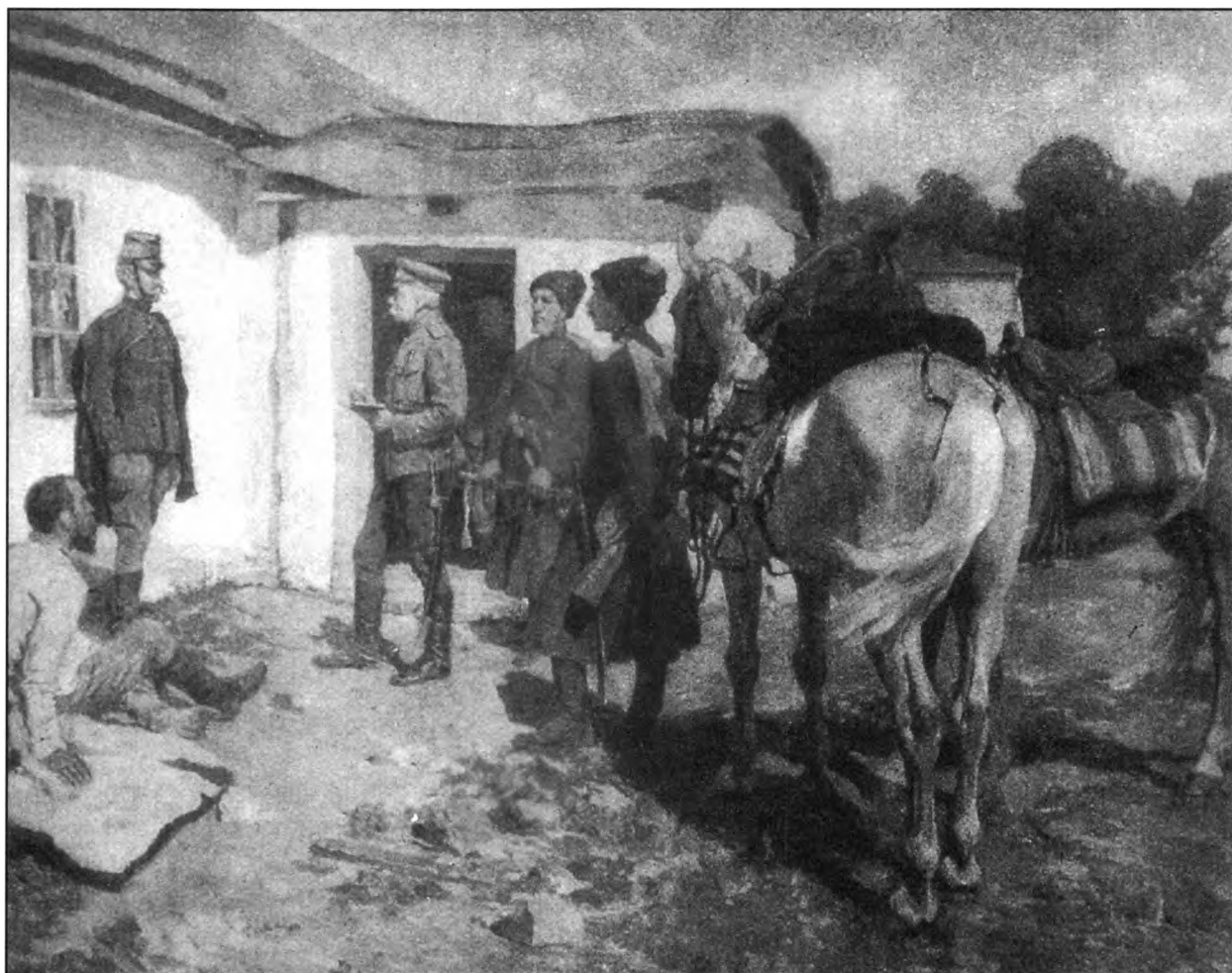
My father said that this was Herasym Onysko whose three children had already died; only his wife was still alive. I knew him well, but I didn't recognize him. Turning to me, Onysko said: "Listen, Pavlo! I fought for the revolution, and I am starving to death."

During this time fourteen families starved to death in our part of the village.





*Dekulakized peasants had to leave everything behind. Evicted from their homes, they were sent to an uncertain fate.*



*Arriving at a house, Bolshevik commissars would forcibly evict the owners and then loot their property.*

Toward the end of April 1933 I was sent with my truck to Vodiana, the village right across the Dnipro opposite ours. I was told to pick up a Russian and bring him to Zaporizhia. He was a communist worker from the city.

On the road from Zaporizhia to Vodiana, a distance of 120 kilometers, I kept seeing peasants walking along the road and some who could no longer walk. At a certain point I was stopped by a woman with a five-year-old daughter.

“Do you have a small piece of bread?” she asked me. “My daughter and I are the only ones left of our family. I can no longer walk.”

“I’m sorry, I don’t have any bread,” I replied. “Where are you going?”

“To Zaporizhia. Maybe I will find some work there.”

“Why don’t you want to work on the collective farm?” I asked.

“There is nothing to eat on the collective farm. As long as we had strength, my husband and I worked there. My husband starved to death two weeks ago, and my son, a week before him.”

The woman began to weep. I saw that she would not make it to Zaporizhia, and so I offered to drive her back to her village, promising to pick her up that day or the next and drive her to Zaporizhia. At the same time I told her that there was nothing to eat in Zaporizhia either, and that she might not find any work.

Crying, the woman said she would not be returning to her home and began pleading with me to take her where I was going and from there to Zaporizhia. The only thing left at home for her and her daughter was death.

I could not refuse and agreed to take her, but I didn’t know what Ivanov would say.

The woman’s name was Maria Slipchenko and her daughter’s name was Kateryna; they were from the village of Ivanivka in Zaporizhia region. I told her who was going to be driving with us and said that I would tell Ivanov that she is my cousin whom I would be driving to my place in Zaporizhia.

After we arrived in Vodiana and I located Ivanov, he told me that we would be returning the following day. I spent the night at the collective farm and ran into a man who was a good friend of my father’s. We could speak freely with one another. To my question about the situation in Vodiana, he replied that he was powerless to describe the state of affairs. His father, mother,

and uncle had recently died of starvation. People in the village are “dying like flies in the fall.” All the grain had been shipped out straight from the mill. Then the village was thoroughly searched; they took everything away, even food cooking in pots: beans, peas, lentils, even seeds of watermelons, cantaloupes, and cucumbers. During the winter the windows and doors of many houses had been smashed in and chimneys were demolished. Anyone who had something to eat ate at night, hiding, so that no one would see.

My acquaintance recounted the following incident:

The peasant Prokip Mostovy was dukulakized. He wanted to join the collective farm, but was refused. In December 1932 they came a second time to confiscate his grain. They smashed all the windows and doors in the house, as well as the stove. He disappeared from the village. Two weeks later the brigade came to his house again and told his wife, who was alone with three children: “Give us your grain — you’ve hidden some.” The woman started crying and said that she and her children have nothing to eat and that all of them are dying of starvation. Then they dug a pit, put her inside, and started throwing dirt on top of her. The woman went insane and her three children later starved to death.

My friend told me about the Nova Vodiana settlement, which had around 100 households, and said that there was hardly anyone alive there.

The next day, before we set out, I cautiously told Ivanov that I would be driving my cousin and her child to Zaporizhia, and asked him if he would mind.

Ivanov replied: “No, I don’t. Take a full truckload.” After this kind of reply, I struck up a conversation with him.

“Comrade Ivanov. What new things did you see and hear in the village?” I asked him.

“Ah, comrade Shynkola! There is much to tell, and I don’t know how it will all end. Look at these people. They still have the strength to walk. But how many are there that can no longer walk? And how many are lying in the cold earth?”

On the road ahead a woman raised her arm.

“Stop the truck, comrade Shynkola!” Ivanov said, and when the truck stopped, he asked the woman:

“Citizeness, what do you want?”

“I want to ask you: would you give me a lift?” said the peasant woman.

“And where are you going?”

“I am going to Zaporizhia.”

“Get in,” Ivanov said.

When the woman got in and we drove off, Ivanov said to me:

“Comrade Shynkola. Don’t spare the truck, but have pity on the people. If people beg for a lift, take as many as the truck can hold.”

He continued: “I have known you by your work for more than three years. You know that I am a communist. I was sent from the factory to this village as the official responsible for the spring sowing campaign, in order to assure that the spring sowing of all crops is carried out. I was given orders that I cannot fathom. But that’s not important. What is important is that every day I am issued a ration consisting of one kilogram of bread, one liter of milk, two eggs, groats and other kinds of food, while people are dying like flies in this village. Even though I voluntarily waived my full ration, I was still not able to save people from death by starvation.

Leibenzon, the secretary of the Zaporizhia party committee, came to the village ‘to inspect the implementation of the spring sowing campaign.’ A luncheon with a variety of food was prepared for him, and he also brought various tins of food and drinks. First, he summoned us together with the local village activists (altogether eight people). During the meeting Leibenzon said a lot of disgusting, empty words that the workers and the collective farmers have had their fill of, and he finished his speech with the appeal:

‘The task of the ‘party, government, and comrade Stalin’ must be completed with honor, and the hostile class enemy that is standing in the way must be destroyed without mercy!’

After the official part ended, we sat down. During the first toast ‘in honor of the party, government, and comrade Stalin,’ I looked at Leibenzon and thought: you’re a communist and I’m a communist. You’re well fed and I’m well fed, but just you go out and see how many people are lying dead from starvation in this village.’

Comrade Shynkola, I have known about your socialist origins since the first year that you came to work. That is why I know that what we are talking about will stay between us. Not just you and I know about the current situation. Everyone knows, but the times are such that we have to keep quiet.”

This was the end of my conversation with Ivanov. When we reached Zaporizhia, twenty-two people got out of my truck. I was able to help Maria Slipchenko get a job.

At the factory I knew a worker (of peasant origins) named Andrian Kyshka. He was a communist and during the revolution had been awarded the Order of the Red Flag. In the spring of 1933 I happened to see him warming himself in the sun. I walked up to him and said the standard phrase: “How are you?” Instead of replying, he pulled his pants up over his knees and touched all the pits on his legs. “What is that?” I asked.

“I am swollen from starvation. Once I fought together with a Bolshevik band in order to starve to death with my family today.”

In 1933 between 1,000 and 1,200 (10-15 percent) of the population died in the village of Novopavlivka in Nykopol raion of Zaporizhia region, only owing to the fact that it was close to major industrial centers.

**Pavlo Shynkola**

# THREE EYEWITNESS ACCOUNTS

## VERKHNIODNIPROVSKE RAION, DNIPROPETROVSK REGION

During collectivization in late 1929 our hamlet of twenty-two households was forcibly hounded into the collective farm. On 24 February 1930 two messengers from the village soviet came to the hamlet and ordered all the men between the ages of seventeen and sixty to appear at the village soviet. The men went, but only a few of them came home that evening. The rest were arrested and, with no explanations, sent to the raion center, i.e., to Verkhniodniprovske. The next day, 25 February, fifty people arrived in the hamlet, half of them armed with rifles; the others probably had revolvers in their pockets. Among them were a few strangers, Russians; they were obviously *25-tysiachnyks* [collectivization shockworkers]. The rest were communists, Komsomol members, and activists, who lived in a commune seven kilometers from our hamlet. The head of the commune was “comrade” Medvedev, who was later accused of some “deviation.”

The entire hamlet was surrounded. For seven days, day and night, three men were stationed in each house slated for deportation. Finally “comrade” Makharin arrived from the raion center and ordered the people to be loaded on wagons and brought to Verkhniodniprovske Station. All the families were jammed into the trains and shipped out. More cars were added to the train in Dnipropetrovsk and Synelnykove, after which the train was completely filled and headed for the Far North. The train was escorted by GPU troops. During the entire journey the doors of the train cars were opened only twice at deserted stations.

On 14 March 1930 we arrived in the city of Vologda, Russia. At the station all our documents were inspected. The men were called out separately and taken somewhere. Later we learned that they had been transported 230 kilometers to Totma raion to cut down trees. The rest of us, considered unfit for labor, were settled in the center of town, in the Church of St. Andrew the First-Called, where four-tiered bed boards

had already been built. The exhausted people were barely able to clamber onto them. Any food that people had managed to bring with them was confiscated. Prison soup was cooked once a day, and each person was allotted 200 grams of bread. Children were issued the same ration, and within one or two months half of the children had died. On 20 May 1930, the rest of the people who had not died or escaped were loaded onto barges and brought to the town of Totma.

I escaped and made my way back to Ukraine, where I was captured and brought under convoy to the Dnipropetrovsk GPU. At first I denied that I had escaped from exile, but the investigator brought out a card catalogue, found our family on a card, and said: “You see? We know everything about you — everything.”

I was shipped back to my parents in Totma. By then my father had died. The deportees were living in a mud hut carpeted with moss and covered with wood. Every day they were chased out to work all day. Each person was issued 300 grams of bread and a small quantity of groats. The people were divided into sections, each headed by a commandant, two militia men, and three foremen. All of them were hired laborers, and they did as they pleased with the Ukrainians. The commandant opened letters and held back most of the letters and packages. This was the highest and lowest authority: there was no one with whom complaints could be lodged.

I looked at this situation and reached the conclusion that we would not survive here, but perish. So I decided to escape again. One night my mother gave me and two other boys her blessing and said: “Go. Maybe you can save yourselves. It looks as though we will end up dying. No one will help us here because everyone is weak. Go, boys, don’t forget about us.”

According to information that I received later, during the next half-year more than half of these unfortunate, hounded people died, some escaped, some committed suicide, and the rest somehow survived.

What happened to our hamlet? Out of twenty-two households, seven were deported to Vologda, and thirteen were dukulakized: their owners were evicted and they scattered to places

unknown. Three of them, who had managed to set themselves up in new places of residence, were exposed as former kurkuls and sent to labor camps. Out of two families that remained in the hamlet, one householder was tried and deported, and three members of the Starchak family died in the famine of 1933. Our houses in the hamlet were gradually taken over by people from neighboring villages, and in 1937 the residents of the hamlet were resettled in a village, and the hamlet was demolished and ploughed over.

**P. V. Volohodsky**

*(The hamlet described by the author was called Hanno-Tomativka in Pavlo-Hryhorivsk raion. It was later renamed Novo-Mykolaiivska.)*

## **PAVLOHRAD RAION, DNIPROPETROVSK REGION**

In late August or early September 1929 “comrade Serov” was sent to our village along with collectivization shockworkers. He instituted grain deliveries and urged the villagers to join the collective farm. They refused. Around November 1929 the village was divided into four sections, the villagers were forcibly summoned to a meeting, where they were registered as members of the collective farm. Then an agitator spoke (I don’t recall his name): “According to the resolution passed by the Central Committee of the All-Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) on the implementation of full collectivization, all villagers are obliged to join the collective farm. Whoever refuses to join is an enemy of the Soviet power.”

Regardless of the options proposed by the speaker, notwithstanding the pressure and terror, in all four sections of the village, only four communists and ten poor peasants out of 2,000 households voted in favor of joining the collective farm. Naturally, no one voted on the question, “Who is against?” Then the leaders of the meeting announced that the list of collective farm members had been confirmed, and if someone did not want to be in the collective farm, he could submit an application about leaving.

Nothing worked out in the four collective farms that were formed in the village. In the winter of 1931-32 collectivization shockworkers,

activists, and the GPU swarmed into the village, carrying out mass arrests of active peasants, confiscating all grain in all the households, and forcibly converting the four collective farms into one.

The current heads of the four collective farms were dismissed, and a Russian named Makhonin, who had been sent to the village, was named the head of the collective farm.

In 1933 a large number of people starved to death in our village. Whole families died and lay decomposing until the springtime. Then they were transported to huge common graves. I cannot say how many people died. After the famine approximately 100 families from Russia were brought to our village.

**M. Kulish**

*(Peasant from the village of Viazivok.)*

## **VELYKYI TOKMAK RAION, ZAPORIZHIA REGION**

*The following account was written by a resident of the village of Nyzhnii Kurkulak, renamed by the Soviets as Voroshylivka, Tokmak raion, Zaporizhia region.*

During the liberation struggle there was an uprising in our village. After it was crushed, 100 rebels were taken from our village. Some of them were shot, including the village priest Oleksii Didovych. The insurgent movement was liquidated only in 1924. That year approximately 100 people starved to death in our village. Before collectivization there were 300 households in our village, of which sixty were dukulakized. Of these, fifteen households were deported to the Ural region, and eighteen families were evicted from their homes. Thirty heads of households that had not completed the state food deliveries were tried, and eight of them disappeared without a trace, i.e., they were either executed or they died in exile.

Since it was impossible to deport all the dukulakized families, they were rounded up from all over Tokmak raion and sent into the unpopulated lands of the Soviet state grain-growing farm, the barren steppe between three villages: Kharkove, Solodka Balka, and Sorochyne. There they were under the command and guard of the Russian collectivization

shockworker Sobolev. Some of the families were deported, and no one knows what happened to the rest. This place lay eighteen kilometers from our village, and in 1934, when I was working on this grain-growing farm, hundreds of large and small human skulls were turned up by the ploughs. There were no fewer than 300, and the entire area was covered with human bones.

The villagers were forced into the collective farm by terror. At first the heads of the collective farm were people from the village: Pylyp Mukha and then Ivan Khylo. But in 1933 a Russian named Zabolotin was sent to the village.

Not only well-off peasants were abused but poor widows. On orders from the collectivization shockworker, Sofia Ovcharenko, the mother of seven children, and Stepanyda Yaroshenko, the mother of five children, were evicted from their homes together with their children. The smaller children then caught cold and died.

A seventy-three-year-old priest was arrested in 1931. After four months he died in the Melitopil

prison. Fedir Zhuk was sent to the labor camps, and he disappeared without a trace. The church was closed and later converted into a club. The village schoolteacher Leonid Didovych (the son of the executed priest) was also arrested, and all traces of him vanished.

I cannot say how many people starved to death in our village. I have a list of six families that I knew well. Every single member of these families perished. Many people left the village in search of bread.

In June 1933 Khataievych, the secretary of the Dnipropetrovsk region party committee, passed through our village. He knew perfectly well what was happening here, but instead of helping, he demanded a good growing season for corn and vegetables, a fine harvest, and more grain for the state.

**Kuzma Duda**



*Kurkuls being evicted from their homes.*

# THE KUBAN REGION

*The author of this text, the Kuban Cossack Fedir Selihor from the village of Poltavska, briefly recalls the history of the Kuban region.*

In 1775, on the orders of Tsarina Catherine II, Russia destroyed the Zaporozhian Sich. Some Zaporozhian Cossacks were forced to head beyond the Danube, while Russia used others to protect the Black Sea coastline. These Cossacks were renamed the Black Sea Cossacks. In 1792 they were settled in the Kuban region and were soon joined by the Cossacks who had settled beyond the Danube.

In 1813 the Cossack regiments of former Hetman Ukraine were transferred to the Kuban, and in 1832 tens of thousands of girls were taken from Ukraine and sent to the Kuban. Within 100 years the Kuban Cossack Army, the direct descendants of the Zaporozhian Cossacks and peasants who had fled serfdom in Ukraine, settled this land all the way to the Caucasus Mountains.

During the revolution of 1917 the Kuban proclaimed its will to statehood and formed the Cossack Council. But the region was cut off from the Ukrainian mainland and fell under the influence of Denikin's Russian forces, the Whites. The Whites persecuted the Kuban independence movement and executed the head of the council, Mykola Riabovol, and others. Thus, to a great degree Denikin's forces aided the Bolsheviks' victory.

Despite the Ukrainian character of the Kuban, this land became part of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (RSFSR). During the 1920s, the period of Ukrainization in the Ukrainian SSR, Ukrainian schools and newspapers were established in the Kuban, but this movement was quickly suppressed by Moscow.

Russian atrocities in the Kuban were on par with dekulakization, collectivization, and the genocidal famine of 1932-1933. "I remember the winter of 1930 in the 6<sup>th</sup> Division of SLON OGPU on the Kolsk Peninsula, which lay beyond the polar circle. We were building a railway from the Bily passing track section of the Murmansk Railway to that place in the Khibiny Mountains, where the city originally called Khibinogorsk and later re-named Kirovsk now stands. Although the railway was not finished, dekulakized peasants were already being transported to the 16<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> kilometer.

One day, on the very spot where we were pouring track ballast, a train stopped in the middle of the forest (a locomotive with two train cars in front). It was a convoy.

The majority of the prisoners were Ukrainians, including many from the Kuban. One day, during the short polar summer, we were working in the forest, not far from the barracks housing the dekulakized deportees from the Kuban. During our lunch break we built a bonfire to chase away the mosquitoes. Our convoy was sitting nearby, at another bonfire. One of our prisoners was a man from the Kuban, who had a voice that would have been the pride of any opera house. He was sitting lost in thought. Then, in his silky voice he began to sing, "Hey, Kuban, our native land."

Other people from the Kuban began to sing, as well as others who knew the words and melody. The powerful song flowed out and people started coming out of the barracks. Invisible threads reached out to all the people from the Kuban. During the singing, all thoughts were on the history and travails of their native land. The prisoners had tears in their eyes. There is physical torment, but this was spiritual torment, which is even worse.

The Soviets banned this song, which is regarded as the national hymn of the Kuban.

The GPU officer opened the doors of the train cars and ordered the people to detrain. Outside, the snow lay 1.5 meters deep and no one disembarked. Then the officer jumped into the car and began pushing the men, children, and women with infants in their arms into the snow. The husband of a woman who had been thrown out of the train with an infant in her arms attacked this executioner. Two GPU soldiers speared him with their bayonets and threw him off the train. The whole day and for many days afterwards two train cars at a time would arrive from the Bily passing track section with these unfortunate people from the Kuban. They were ordered to cut down the forest and build barracks. Before they had finished their work, dozens of people had died, mostly children. There was nowhere to bury them: there were huge rocks everywhere beneath the snow.

**Fedir Selihor**

# IN THE PRISONS OF POLTAVA

During 1930 trials of innocent Ukrainian peasants took place every day in the Reshetyliv raion court. The court handed down various sentences to the peasants, depending on how communist “justice” regarded the accused. But no one was ever found innocent.

Our family’s turn came. We got a knock on our door on Christmas Eve.

“Who’s there?”

“Our people!”

Those “people” were Zelensky, the head of the Reshetyliv search brigade, two militia men, and two civilians. Two wagons from the neighboring collective farm were already standing in our yard. Zelensky announced:

“We are conducting a search of your home!”

They searched our chest, cupboard, and various storage places, as well as my father’s wallet and the niche behind the holy pictures on the wall. We sat without moving a muscle. The civilians were obviously terrified but kept quiet, because they knew perfectly well that their turn would come.

In about a week there was another search of our house. This time they found money. Zelensky was overjoyed.

“Why were you hiding this money? You have a lot of debts to the proletarian state! I am arresting this money. We will draw up an act at the militia station. And now, get dressed! We’re going.”

I was searched again at the militia station; they confiscated a few kopecks and my documents.

The third cell of the Reshetyliv raion militia station was designed to hold seven people at the most. Now it was packed to the rafters with

thirty-six prisoners. When I entered the cell, I was hit with the stench of the reeking toilet.

A trial took place in the Reshetyliv courthouse on 7 January 1931, and I was sentenced to four years in prison and deprived of all civil rights. On 15 January I was sent under convoy to the city of Poltava, to the prison located on Kobyliatska Street. I spent only five out of the normal fourteen days in the quarantine cell because the prison was overfilled. The kurkuls as a class were being liquidated. The communist construction sites in the Far North required incredible numbers of cheap slave laborers, who had to work for 300 grams of black bread and water.

After the quarantine period ended, I was transferred to cell no. 67, downstairs. Unbelievably, this cell turned out to be nearly empty, because during the night a convoy had left for the Far North. I sat on the bed boards near the window.

“Do you have anything to smoke?” a peasant asked me.

“Yes, help yourself.”

“Tell me, what raion are you from?” he asked me. When I answered, he said: “I’m from Rublivka raion. Our raions are equidistant from Poltava. How did collectivization take place in your village?”

I told him that not everyone had joined the collective farms: some chose instant death or deportation, and others — a slow death in the collective farms.

The peasant said: “In Rublivka we were hounded into the collective farm by all kinds of terror. A pit was dug in the front yard of the

*“In a letter to Molotov Stalin writes: ‘I also agree that 698 million centners [69.8 billion kilograms] must be gathered for the gross collection of grain for [19]31. No less.’ (Kommunist, no.11, 1990). In justifying the engineered Holodomor in Ukraine, apologists of the Stalinist regime explain that the government was forced to speed up the exports of grain abroad in order to cover the rising currency expenditures for the purchase of foreign equipment. Today we have access to these figures that attest to the amorality of this statement: in 1930, 48.4 million centners were exported out of a total of 835 million; in 1931, 51.8 out of 695 million centners. Calculate what proportion of grain was exported. It is clear that the disastrous expropriation of grain from Ukraine in 1932 was not dictated by the tempos of the much-lauded Stalinist industrialization...”*

**Volodymyr Maniak, writer.**  
*(Famine: How and Why? National Memorial Book. '33: Famine, Kyiv, 1991)*



Rublivka village soviet. During collectivization, when there were people who could not be terrorized into joining by any means, a representative of the Soviet power, some collectivization shockworker, got the idea to bury those peasants up to their armpits. Good God!”

We did not sit for long in the deserted cell. Late in the evening of that same day a huge convoy from Romen arrived at our prison: twelve cargo cars packed with people. According to the new arrivals, all of them were our peasants, who had received sentences ranging from seven to ten years.

Our cell was designed for no more than twenty people. Now there were eighty-three of us. Later the entire Romen convoy was sent to the Far North.

The following year I was transferred to the prison on Pushkin Street, which held prisoners who had already been sentenced; there were very few prisoners under indictment. Everyone worked either in the prison or outside under armed guard. The food ration was very meager. Prisoners who worked in the prison’s many workshops received a daily ration of 150 grams of clayey black bread. Other prisoners received only 100 grams of bread. No fat was issued. The prison soup, made of frozen beets and rotten potatoes, was the same for everyone.

When the prisoners were taken out for some fresh air, they grazed like hungry cattle, eating everything they found in the garbage dump: potato or beet peelings, etc. They even ate all the grass growing in the prison yard and beneath the fences; they didn’t leave a single blade of grass.

All the prisoners were black from hunger and very weak. Many of them were swollen from starvation edema. When the swelling subsided right before a prisoner died, all the water would drip out of him. The mortality rate was very high. Every day thirty people of various ages died; at this time there were nearly 2,000 people in the prison. The prison doctor filled out death certificates for each prisoner, stating that he had died of “heart paralysis.” Then the death certificate would be added to the case file and stored in the archives.

One day the guards at the prison gates brought in the corpses of people found dead on the roads. They were piled in two rows, like sheaves of grain. One of the corpses was that of a fifty-one-year-old man named Makarushka, who was still alive.

“Don’t bring me to the pit! I’m going to live!” the man begged. But his voice was very weak, as though it were coming from beyond the grave. The prison administration ignored his pleas.

The warden of the Poltava prisons was the great landowner Zabelin. He was a beast, not a



*Slave labor on the collective farms.*

man. He looked like a pile of meat, spoiled on Ukrainian bread and fatback. He devised various ways to torment the inmates. He was the head of the corrective-labor colonies at Bozhkova Station, its branch in Petrashi, and other locations throughout Poltava region.

In July 1932 we were taken to Bozhkova Station to gather the harvest. That year the harvest in Ukraine was above-average. We were loaded off train cars at the colony. For a distance of some two kilometers we were escorted under armed guard with dogs. The commandant of this colony was a former prisoner. At the colony we were arrayed in two rows. The commandant declared:

“Those who work well and obey and do not try to escape will complete their term of punishment quickly!”

But each prisoner had his own plans: some worked well even without the convoy, while many others escaped. They were caught and given an additional sentence. There were many patrols, but I noticed that their rations were inadequate, and they would often ask us for vegetables: cucumbers, onions, cabbage, tomatoes as well as berries. At the time the agricultural colony of Bozhkova cultivated a mass of vegetables and fruits. All this was under the control of the former tsarist landowner Zabelin, who was now in charge of 7,500 desiatinas of land and nearly 1,000 slave

laborers, mostly Ukrainian peasants. These good, humble, and industrious people had been sentenced for nothing. With their calloused hands they patiently cultivated these 7,500 desiatinas of land, worked at the dairy, which had 150 milk cows and 675 calves, and the stables for 175 horses. They tended 500 sheep, a chicken farm, and a pig farm with 4,000 pigs. They also worked on five steam mills, etc.

This colony was located in a village, but there were no villagers left. All the residents had been deported as kurkuls, and all their land, cattle, horses, equipment, and belongings were transferred to this work colony. Zabelin lived in the city of Poltava, but he also had a house here, which had been confiscated from a well-off peasant. Zabelin frequently visited the colony with great pomp, and all the workers had to welcome this tsarist-turned-Soviet dignitary.

Work in the colony lasted until late autumn. When the rains began, these bedraggled, half-naked, and barefoot people were packed off under convoy to the Far North. Why should these slaves be without work? There were fewer agricultural jobs now, and only some 500 people were allowed to remain. New slaves would be captured in Ukraine next spring.

**P. Reshetylivsky**



*Work on the newly formed collective farms.*

# THE UNION FOR THE LIBERATION OF UKRAINE (SVU)

On 22 November 1929 Vsevolod Balitsky, the head of the GPU of the Ukrainian SSR, published an article in the newspaper *Chornomorska komuna* [*The Black Sea Commune*], under the rubric “From the State Political Administration of Ukraine.” In his article Balitsky reported that a counterrevolutionary organization called the Union for the Liberation of Ukraine (SVU) had been exposed. Its members included “former ministers, officers, bishops, and members of criminal bands,” headed by Academician Serhii Yefremov. The aim of the “conspirators” was allegedly to restore capitalism in Ukraine and form a bourgeois-landowner regime.

The next day, the same newspaper devoted its entire front page to the SVU, with the headline: “The proletarians of Odesa demand the highest degree of punishment for the agents of world counterrevolution.”

On 23 November 1929 the republican newspaper *Komunist* announced that countless meetings had been held in Kyiv in connection with the SVU, and its editors called for the death sentence to be meted out to the “corrupt scrapings of the Ukrainian counterrevolution.”

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Session of the All-Ukrainian Central Executive Committee [VTsVK] of the CP(B)U took place on 22-27 November 1929. On the first day of the session, the chairman of the VTsVK, Hryhorii Petrovsky, declared:

“While the workers and peasants are working hard to rebuild their enterprises, the conspirators are sharpening a knife to stick it into the back of the workers’-peasants’ government. But the proletariat, poor peasants, peasants of average means, and the working intelligentsia will group together more powerfully around the Communist Party and the Soviets, mercilessly destroying counterrevolutionary groupings.”

The die was cast. Attacks and threats against the SVU and its “leader,” Academician Yefremov sounded in practically all official speeches. Most characteristic was the participation of academicians in a session organized by the CC CP(B)U and the GPU. In their speeches they accused their former colleagues of being “accursed enemies” of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The delegation included the permanent secretary of the All-Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, Korchak-Chepurkivsky, a distinguished public health expert whose field was far removed from politics; Academician Semkovsky, and many others. In his speech the seventy-three-year-old Korchak-Chepurkivsky stated:

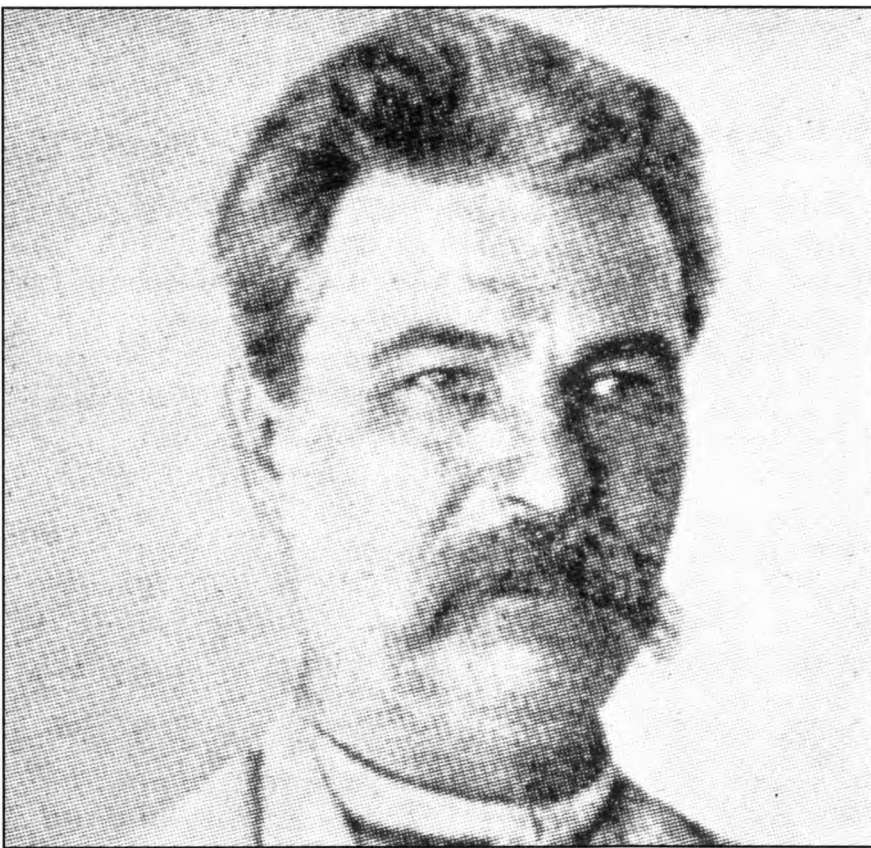
“In the name of the Academy, as its permanent secretary, I express a decisive protest and indignation against this attempt by counterrevolutionaries to conceal the interests of hostile forces and criminal work by means of the interests of scholarship, culture, and national liberation.”

Academician Semkovsky, who gave his speech in Russian, went even further: “. . .they seek to raise a clamor around the alleged fact that in Soviet Ukraine ‘the intelligentsia is being persecuted.’ This is a shameless lie. The history of mankind has never known the possibilities that exist in Soviet Ukraine for scholarship and culture. . .”

The trial began on Sunday, 9 March 1930, at 5:30 p.m. Presiding over the trial was the so-called Special Group of the Supreme Court of the Ukrainian SSR, headed by Antin Prykhodko. The presiding judge was not a professional judge but the deputy People’s Commissar of Education. The second member of the tribunal was Hryhorii Volkov, the only member with a law education. Volkov would eventually become the deputy head of the Supreme Court of the Ukrainian SSR for criminal affairs. The third judge was I. Sokoliansky, an educator by profession. Alternative judges were selected according to their social origins: workers, peasants, and intellectuals.

From the legal standpoint these judges were characterized by a low professional level, and the Soviet authorities were relying on their ignorance of how to conduct a trial.

The public prosecutors were the secretary of the CC CP(B)U Panas Liubchenko, the well-known writer Oleksa Slisarenko, and two minor writers named Kravchuk and Sokolovsky. The defendants had a total of fourteen lawyers. Each defendant had the right to change his lawyer by



*Serhii Yefremov, the distinguished political figure, journalist, and literary scholar, was born into a priest's family in the Kyiv region. He was arrested by the Soviet authorities in 1929 and sentenced to death in Kharkiv, having been accused of heading the Union for the Liberation of Ukraine. In 1930 the Soviet court commuted his death sentence to ten years' imprisonment. Academician Yefremov died in prison in 1939.*

choosing from another, officially restricted, list. Choosing a lawyer not on the prescribed list was forbidden. This was a gross violation of the law.

There were forty-five defendants from eight cities in the republic, including twenty-six scholars, two writers, two students, and a priest. The rest were schoolteachers and staff members of various institutions.

What a powerful and ramified organization this must have been if it had created its "centers" in the largest cities of the republic! Kharkiv was an exception. Who would have dared create a counterrevolutionary nest in Kharkiv, under the very nose of the vigilant republican GPU headed by Balitsky himself? The trial was given a lengthy title: "The case of the counterrevolutionary organization that was called the 'Union for the Liberation of Ukraine' and planned the downfall of the Soviet government by means of an armed uprising." Typical of the times, the court's ruling was built into the title. The declarative, yet vague, accusation determined the tone of the entire trial.

According to the prosecutors, after the rout of Petliura's army, Serhii Yefremov, Volodymyr Durdukivsky, Osyp Hermaize, Andrii Nikovsky, Hryhorii Holoskevych, and Kostiantyn Tovkach had formed a clandestine counterrevolutionary organization called the Brotherhood of Ukrainian Statehood (BUD). From 1920 to 1924 the organization headed by Yefremov, allegedly

conducted work in preparation for an armed uprising. Yefremov was supposedly the leader of kurkul banditry and sabotage in Ukraine, in collaboration with other "bandits" associated with BUD. This organization was accused of carrying out mass and individual terror against workers and peasants and organizing a network of counterrevolutionary fighter cells throughout Ukraine.

The prosecutors argued that after BUD disbanded in 1924, Yefremov and his associates set about creating a clandestine anti-Soviet organization consisting of people opposed to the Soviet government: former Socialist Federalists, Social Democrats, Socialist Revolutionaries, et al.

Investigators had determined that the process of creating the organization known as the Union for the Liberation of Ukraine was completed in 1926. According to the indictment, the SVU had ties with an identically-named émigré organization and a Petliurite center abroad, their goal being to destroy the Soviet government by means of an armed uprising with the assistance of foreign intervention, and to restore a capitalist-bourgeois order with a military fascist dictatorship.

The SVU had a program and statute designating the functions and structure of the organization. In keeping with its conspiratorial nature, the organization was divided into "clandestine fighting groups of five people each, and sections: academic, public education,

pedagogical, medical, publishing, cooperative, ecclesiastical (autocephalous), as well as INARAK, the International Association of Worker-Activists, which the GPU singled out as a separate section of the SVU. The Union for the Liberation of Ukraine also allegedly included the Ukrainian Youth Association (SUM). The head of the SVU's presidium was Yefremov, and the secretary was Durdukivsky. The armed uprising "was slated" for 1930-1931.

A key role in the indictment was assigned to the program and statute of the SVU. However, there were no such documents. Accordingly, they had to be fabricated, as the following extract from a top-secret memorandum to the GPU attests: "We think that not only the insurgent and terrorist acts of the accused should be brought out during the trial but also medical focuses, their goal being to murder responsible workers. We have no reason to conceal from the workers the sins of their enemies. In addition, let 'Europe' know that the repressions against the counterrevolutionary part of specialists seeking to poison and butcher communists-patients, are completely 'justified' and in essence [these] acts pale before the criminal activity of those counterrevolutionary villains. We request that the plan of conducting the cases during the trial be coordinated with Moscow. No. 8/sh 2.1. [year 19]30, 16-45. J. Stalin."

This document answers most, if not all, questions arising from this case. The main issue is

why the court included unsubstantiated accusations to the sentence that were never properly investigated: accusations of terror, including terror of a medical nature, and attempts to launch an armed uprising.

The "soft" sentence was a tragedy for all the accused. Few managed to return from their places of imprisonment after completing their sentences. Those who did were subjected to constant GPU surveillance.

Who were the people involved in the infamous SVU case? Short biographical sketches of the main personalities follow.

**Serhii Oleksandrovykh Yefremov** was born into a priest's family on 6 October 1876 in the village of Palchyk in the county of Zvenyhorod in Kyiv gubernia. He completed theological studies in the city of Uman in 1891 and entered the Kyiv Theological Seminary, which he was forced to leave in 1896 after being accused of "unreliability." He then enrolled in the Faculty of Law at Kyiv University, completing his studies in 1901.

Instead of pursuing law, he chose the field of literary studies and journalism out of a desire to assist the national renaissance and foster radical democratic changes in society.

Yefremov actively participated in the creation of the Ukrainian Radical Party, the Ukrainian Radical Democratic Party, and later the Ukrainian Party of Socialist Federalists. He

*Mykola Pavlushkov, the founder of the Ukrainian Youth Association (1925). Accused of membership in the SVU, he was arrested in 1929 and sentenced to death in Kharkiv in 1930.*

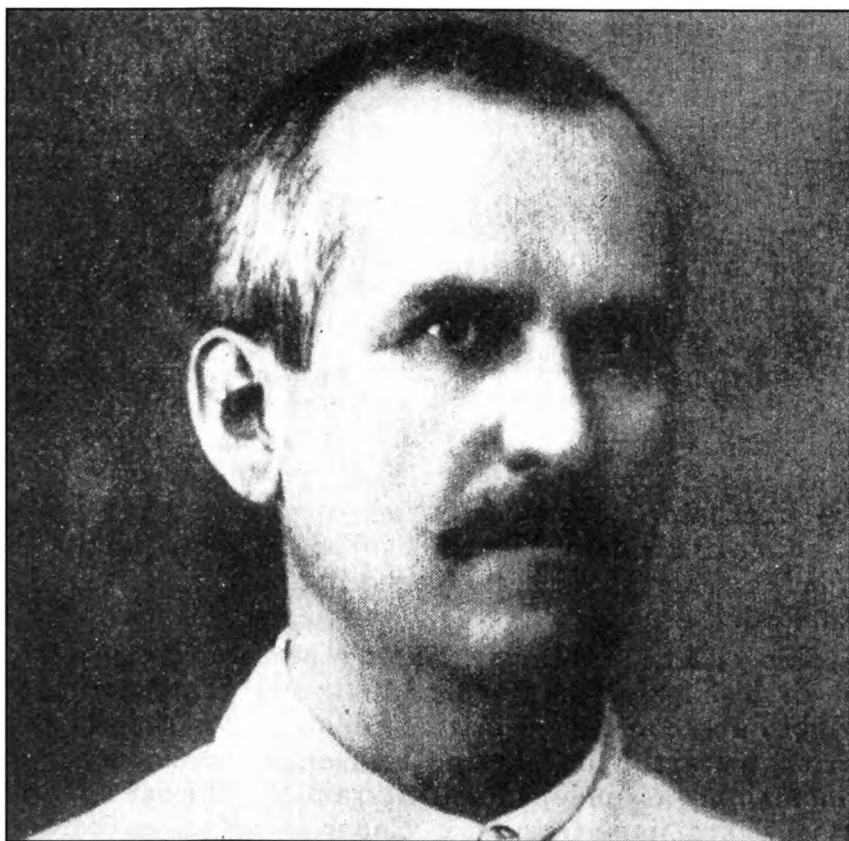


worked with the Society of Ukrainian Progressives and edited Ukrainian newspapers. He authored a number of monumental works on Ivan Nechui-Levytsky, Panas Myrny, Mykhailo Kotsiubynsky, and Ivan Karpenko-Kary, as well as works on literary and civic life in Ukraine, including *The History of Ukrainian Writing*. After the February revolution of 1917 Yefremov was elected to the Central Rada and appointed secretary for international affairs. He became one of Ukraine's first academicians and in 1922, the vice-president of the All-Ukrainian Academy of Sciences (VUAN).

After Soviet power was established in Kyiv, Yefremov was arrested. His life was saved thanks to the intercession of the VUAN presidium and its president Vladimir Vernadsky. For some time he hid under a pseudonym in the village of Budaivka (near Boiarka), and after being amnestied, he returned to Kyiv, where he resumed his work at the Academy of Sciences. Despite Yefremov's rather harsh, frank nature, he was constantly surrounded by scholars and writers to whom he offered advice, assistance in finding employment, and financial help.

Yefremov's turbulent relationship with Mykhailo Hrushevsky led to the former's dismissal from his post as vice-president of the VUAN, while his persistent conflicts with the People's Commissar of Education, Mykola Skrypnyk, resulted in persecution, the fabrication of a criminal case against him, and finally his arrest in July 1929. A ten-month detention and physical and spiritual tortures broke this highly educated and proud man. He was forced to admit his guilt as the leader of the SVU. On 19 April 1930 the Supreme Court of the Ukrainian SSR handed down its ruling, and Yefremov was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment and loss of civil rights for five years.

Yefremov died on 31 March 1939 in the Yaroslavl solitary confinement prison for political prisoners three months before completing his term.



*Volodymyr Chekhivsky.*

**Volodymyr Moiseiovych Chekhivsky** was born into a priest's family in 1876 in the village of Horokhovatka in Kyiv gubernia. After completing studies at the Kyiv Theological Academy, he taught in theological seminaries in Podillia and Kyiv. He was the first to introduce Ukrainian-language instruction and liturgies in the Podillia seminary. During the rule of the Directory he headed the Council of National Ministers of the Ukrainian National Republic, and in spring 1919 he became the head of the Committee to Defend the Republic.

Chekhivsky played a significant role in the founding of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church. In early February 1918 he was the initiator and principal ideologist of the SS. Cyril and Methodius Ukrainian Orthodox Brotherhood.

Volodymyr Chekhivsky, one of the most fascinating figures of Ukrainian national life, is still awaiting his biographer. He was arrested on 17 February 1929 and sentenced to ten years' imprisonment and loss of rights for five years. He served his term in the Solovets Islands. In 1936, on NKVD orders, he received an additional sentence of ten years. On 9 October 1937 the Leningrad region troika [three-person tribunal] of

the NKVD Directorate handed down a death sentence and Chekhivsky was shot on 3 November 1937.

**Volodymyr Fedorovych Durdukivsky** was born on 17 September 1874 in the Kyiv region. After completing his studies at the Kyiv Theological Academy, he was appointed principal of the T. H. Shevchenko 1<sup>st</sup> Ukrainian Labor School. Durdukivsky was a distinguished literary critic and pedagogue whose articles were published in the Ukrainian periodical press. Before his arrest on 3 July 1929 he was the head of the Scientific-Pedagogical Commission of the VUAN.

The SVU investigation assigned Durdukivsky the role of secretary-treasurer of this organization, and he was sentenced to eight years' imprisonment and loss of civil rights for three years. Some eyewitnesses reported that he was released because of ill health. In 1937 he was rearrested. On 31 December 1937 the Leningrad region tribunal of the NKVD Directorate sentenced him to death. He was posthumously rehabilitated on 25 January 1967.

**Volodymyr Oleksandrovych Shchepotiev** was born into a government official's family on 25 October 1880 in Poltava. In 1904 he completed the St. Petersburg Theological Academy. He was a professor of the Poltava Institute of Public Education. A distinguished literary scholar, ethnographer, translator, and music specialist, Shchepotiev was also the compiler of a number of anthologies and the author of literary monographs.

After his arrest on 15 November 1929, he was sentenced to a three-year term of exile. After completing his sentence, he lived in the village of Vepryk in Hadiach raion. He was rearrested in 1937 and sentenced to be shot on 19 November 1937. The sentence was executed on 29 November 1937. His family was informed that he died in the corrective-labor camps of heart failure on 20 May 1941. A decision of the presidium of the Poltava regional court of 5 July 1958 abolished the 1937 ruling of the Soviet troika [tribunal of three] and closed Shchepotiev's file for lack of evidence.

**Hryhorii Kostiantynovych Holoskevych** was born in 1885 in the village of Suprunkivtsi in the county of Kamianets-Podilsky. A research

associate of the VUAN and distinguished linguist, Holoskevych was the editor of the *Dictionary of the Living Ukrainian Language*. Arrested on 17 August 1929, he was sentenced to five years' imprisonment. He served his term in the Yaroslavl solitary confinement prison for political prisoners and was later sent to Tobolsk.

In a letter to the author of this chapter the Munich-based scholar Ihor Kachurovsky provides the following information: "[Holoskevych] was living in exile in Tobolsk. According to information widely circulated in the Ukrainian émigré press, he was found hanging by the neck in a city park. To this day it has not been possible to determine the exact date of his death. We also do not know if this was a suicide or murder. His dictionary was republished in New York."

**Vsevolod Mykhailovych Hantsov** was born on 7 December 1892 in Chernihiv. He studied at the Chernihiv gymnasium and from 1907, at the Pavlo Halahan Collegium, from where he graduated with a gold medal. In 1916 he completed his studies with distinction in the Faculty of History and Philology of St. Petersburg University. On the recommendation of Academician Alexei Shakhmatov, Hantsov was awarded a professorship at this university. In October 1918 he moved to Kyiv, where he taught at the university. In February 1919 he was appointed secretary of the VUAN commission charged with compiling the *Dictionary of the Living Ukrainian Language*. He headed this commission from June 1920 until the day of his arrest on 28 August 1929. At the same time he taught at the Institute of Public Education. In 1927-1929 Hantsov worked in Berlin, Hamburg, and Paris and took part in the 1st International Linguistics Congress in The Hague.

Hantsov was arrested and sentenced to eight years' imprisonment and loss of civil rights for three years. Although his term of imprisonment in the Solovets Islands ended in August 1937, on 15 April 1938 a special session of the NKVD of the USSR handed down an additional eight-year sentence. He served his sentence in a labor camp in the Komi ASSR and was released on 20 December 1946. He was rearrested in December 1949, and on 19 April 1950 a special session of the Ministry of State Security of the USSR exiled him to a special settlement in Krasnoiarsk Krai.

From there he was transferred to Yenisei raion of the Taimir National District, where he lived until September 1956 as a special settler. Later he worked as a bookkeeper for the local raion office of food deliveries. In late 1956 he returned to Chernihiv. Hantsov was partially rehabilitated in 1958, and at age sixty-six he finally received a pension. He died in 1979.

**Viktor Hryhorovych Dubrovsky** was born in 1876 in Fastiv, Kyiv gubernia. He was a lexicologist and research associate of the Institute of the Ukrainian Scientific Language of the VUAN. He is the author of the widely used *Russian-Ukrainian Dictionary*, *Russian-Ukrainian Phraseology*, and *Russian-Ukrainian Technical Dictionary*, which are now bibliographic rarities.

Dubrovsky was arrested on 15 September 1929 and sentenced to three years' imprisonment. During the investigation of his alleged involvement in the SVU, and the trial, no concrete accusations were levied against him, and by law he should have been found innocent. He served his sentence in the Yaroslavl solitary confinement prison for political prisoners. After his release he settled with his family in the Kazakh capital of Alma-Ata [Almaty], where he worked in the local sugar trust.

On 1 December 1937 Dubrovsky was rearrested and sentenced to ten years' imprisonment. On 16 December 1942, by a decision of a special session of the NKVD, his sentence was reduced. He was released on 22 February 1943 from the "Free Camp" of Amur region. According to the writer Borys Antonenko-Davydovych, not even Dubrovsky's own son knew where and how his father died. To date no documentary evidence has been found.

**Andrii Vasyliovych Nikovsky** was born in 1885 in the village of Malyi Buialyk in Kherson gubernia. He was a renowned literary specialist, journalist, and editor of the Ukrainian newspaper *Rada* in 1913-1914, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the UNR in 1920, and the first head of the Ukrainian National Union. After returning to Ukraine from emigration in 1924, he became a research associate of the VUAN and one of the editors of the *Dictionary of the Living Ukrainian Language*.

Nikovsky was arrested on 23 July 1929 and sentenced to ten years' imprisonment and loss of rights for five years. Released on 21 April 1940, he went to live with his daughter in Leningrad, where he starved to death during the blockade.

**Mykhailo Yelyseiovych Slabchenko** was born in 1882 in the Odesa region. He graduated from Novorossiisk University in 1910 and later studied in Paris. Slabchenko was a distinguished Ukrainian historian, professor of the Odesa Institute of Public Education, academician, and head of the Odesa branch of the All-Ukrainian Academy of Sciences. He is the author of numerous historical works, including the Russian-language *Essays on the History of Law in Little Russia during the XVII and XVIII Centuries; Feudalism in Ukraine, Materials to the Economic and Social History of Ukraine*, the five-volume work *Organization of the Economy of Ukraine (from the Khmelnytsky Era to the World War)*, and many others.

During the First World War Slabchenko held the rank of captain, was the commander of a battalion, suffered a number of injuries, and was awarded several medals. He was the last of the SVU defendants to be arrested: on 20 January 1930. Sentenced to six years' imprisonment and loss of rights for two years, he served his term in the Solovets Islands. In 1936 he was allowed to settle in Yoshkar-Oli, but for unknown reasons was exiled to the city of Kirovsk in Murmansk region. Stripped of all his academic titles, for some time Slabchenko taught in Arkhangelsk region. After World War Two he was denied permission to return to Kyiv or Odesa. He taught geography in a village school in Kyiv region and later taught French in the city of Pervomaisk, where he died in 1953.

**Yosyp (Osyp) Yuriiiovych Hermaize** was born on 23 July 1892 in Kyiv. According to other sources, he was born in the county of Vilnius into a family of a Christianized Jewish petit bourgeois. He graduated from the Faculty of History and Philology of Kyiv University. Hermaize was a distinguished historian, journalist, and professor of the Kyiv Institute of Public Education. He was the secretary of the historical-philological division of the VUAN and the head of its Archeographic Commission.



Hermaize is the author of historical works, including *Essays on the History of the Revolutionary Movement in Ukraine*, *Koliivshchyna in the Light of Newly Discovered Documents*, as well as articles, historical essays, and countless introductory essays to literary works on historical themes, which were distinguished by their meticulous research and historical objectivity.

Hermaize was arrested on 27 July 1929 and sentenced to five years' imprisonment and loss of rights for two years. On 26 July 1934 he was released from the Solovets corrective-labor camps and by a decision of the OGPU Collegium was exiled for two years to Saratov region. On 8 December 1937 the troika of the NKVD Directorate of Saratov region sentenced him to ten years' imprisonment. On 5 January 1944, while serving his sentence, Hermaize was given an additional ten-year sentence. The distinguished scholar died in prison. On 22 September 1958 the Presidium of the Saratov regional court rescinded the troika's decision of 8 December 1937 and closed the file for lack of evidence.

**Liudmyla Mykhailivna Starytska-Cherniakhivska** was born in the village of Karpivka in the county of Mohyliv-Podilsky (according to other sources, in Kyiv) on 29 August 1868. She was the daughter of the famous writer, poet, and theatrical figure Mykhailo Starytsky whose wife was the sister of the distinguished Ukrainian composer, Mykola Lysenko. She was taught in a private gymnasium run by Mykhailo Vashchenko-Zakharchenko. Beginning in her teens, she took part in civic and literary life, was active in publishing affairs, and was a member of the Society of Ukrainian Progressives.

During the First World War Starytska-Cherniakhivska helped organize the Society to Aid War Victims in South Russia, a Ukrainian hospital, and Ukrainian shelters for children of refugees. The society helped save the lives of 40,000 exiled residents of Halychyna (Galicia). Her civic work took her to various parts of Siberia.

In late October 1919, during the Denikin intervention, she worked on a commission created by the Red Cross to provide assistance to Ukrainian POWs, who were living in inhumane conditions in Polish camps. The work was difficult and dangerous. Despite threats, sabotage, the

negative attitude of various Polish government agencies, and the outright resistance of the Polish branch of the Red Cross, the commission fulfilled its objective to inspect POW camps in Warsaw, Crakow, Poznan, and Lviv, and provide Ukrainian prisoners with food, clothing, and money.

Later, on orders of the Central Rada, Starytska-Cherniakhivska traveled to many Ukrainian gubernias, giving lectures on various writers, and organizing schools and teachers' centers. Later, as a member of the Soviet Red Cross, she provided help to penitentiaries and refugee centers, and monetary assistance to families in need.

Starytska-Cherniakhivska was arrested on 15 January 1930. During the SVU show trial she was frequently the butt of sarcastic jibes from the prosecutors, who dubbed her the "lady patroness" (for her work with POWs), and the "last little cloud of a dispersed storm that produced neither rain nor thunder." She was sentenced to five years' imprisonment and loss of rights for three years.

Owing to the fact that the imprisonment of the renowned Ukrainian writer and civic activist could cause problems for the Soviet authorities, the sixty-two-year-old Starytska-Cherniakhivska was released and the family settled in Stalino (Donetsk).

A new tragedy befell the family. On 8 January 1938, Starytska-Cherniakhivska's daughter Veronika was arrested on espionage charges. Despite her parents' efforts to intercede on her behalf, she was executed on 22 September 1938. The place of her burial is unknown.

On 20 July 1941 Starytska-Cherniakhivska was rearrested and deported first to Kharkiv and then Akmolinsk. According to one version of events, she died en route of heart failure. Her final resting place is unknown.

**Petro Oleksandrovykh Yefremov**, the brother of Academician Serhii Yefremov, was born in 1883, in the village of Palchyk, in the Kyiv region. He was a professor of the Dnipropetrovsk Institute of Public Education and the editor of the journal *Zoria [Star]*. Arrested on 9 September 1929, he was sentenced to five years' imprisonment and loss of rights for two years. He served his sentence in the Yaroslavl solitary confinement prison for political prisoners.

According to the eyewitness testimony of the Ukrainian writer Borys Antonenko-Davydovych (published in Yu. Khorunzhy's 1992 book *The Opera SVU — muzyka GPU* [The Opera SVU — Music by the GPU]) Yefremov returned to Dnipropetrovsk after completing three years of his sentence. Antonenko-Davydovych helped him find a job as a proofreader in Alma-Ata. Eventually, he brought his wife and two children to the Kazakh capital. In 1937, when the purges began, Yefremov was rearrested and disappeared without a trace.

**Valentyn Dmytrovych Atamanovsky (Otamanovsky)** was born in 1893 in the Kyiv region. He graduated from the Law Faculty of Kyiv University. During the UNR he was a member of the Central Rada. Before his arrest on 26 August 1929 this well known legal historian, ethnographer, bibliographer, and research associate of the VUAN lived in Vinnytsia. He is the author of several works on ethnography.

Sentenced to five years' imprisonment and loss of rights for two years, Atamanovsky served two years of his sentence and was then exiled to the Tatar ASSR, where he worked in the library of Kazan University. From 1935 he was constantly on the move in order to avoid being rearrested.

In 1956 he defended his doctoral dissertation and headed the Department of Latin at the Saratov Medical Institute. He returned to Kharkiv in 1958, where he wrote a number of works on history and outlines of the pharmaceutical history of Ukraine. He died in Kharkiv in 1964, having published more than thirty scholarly works.

**Vadym Viktorovych Sharko** was born in 1882 in Kyiv. He was a research associate of the VUAN, a professor of mathematics at the Kyiv Cooperative Institute, and an editor at the Institute of the Ukrainian Scientific Language. Arrested on 20 August 1929, he was deported from Ukraine for three years.

In his memoirs, Yu. Vynohradov remembers Sharko from Voronezh, where he taught mathematics in a rather prestigious technical aviation school. "Maybe this became etched on my memory because of the fact that he wore a high-collared tunic with propellers on the buttons. I socialized more often with V. V. Sharko than with the others. My wife's brother took

mathematics classes with him. At the time [my brother-in-law] was working as a technician and taking correspondence classes at an institute. He needed lessons on higher mathematics; Sharko was a brilliant lecturer (according to my relative).

I don't know anything about the further fate of all those who were serving their terms of exile in Voronezh except Sharko, who returned home to Kyiv. After some time (I think the capital of Ukraine had just been transferred from Kharkiv to Kyiv) he was summoned to the Kyiv GPU, where he was told approximately the following: 'We are not exiling you anywhere. But now that the capital is in Kyiv, we ADVISE you to leave.' V. V. Sharko went back to Voronezh, where he worked for some time. Later he moved to the large rural raion center of Anna, where he taught mathematics in a local high school. I don't remember why he moved to Anna; it was obviously the fact that the food situation in 1932 and 1933 was extremely difficult. Although there was no famine in Central Chornozem region like there was in Ukraine, it was still bad. I do not know what happened to Sharko."

**Mykhailo Yevdokymovych Ivchenko** was born in 1882 in the village of Nykonivka, the county of Pryluka. From 1917 Ivchenko was a regular contributor to the *Literaturno-Naukovyi Visnyk* [Literary Scientific Herald]. The author of the famous novel *Robitni syly* [Working Forces], Ivchenko was arrested on 24 September 1929 and was given a three-year suspended sentence and then released. In order to avoid a rearrest, he pretended to be mentally ill. After moving to Moscow, he could not find employment and went to Vladikavkaz, where he found work as an agronomist. He died in October 1939 (exact date unknown).

**Kostiantyn Tymofiiiovych Turkalo** was born in 1892 in the Khmelnytsky region. A chemical engineer by profession, he worked as an editor at the Institute of the Ukrainian Scientific Language. During the UNR he was a member of the Central Rada. He was arrested three times as a socially "foreign element."

When World War Two broke out, he went underground. During the German occupation he worked in the municipal executive. He emigrated to Germany and later to the US, where he

published a volume of memoirs entitled *Tortury* [Tortures] about life in Ukraine during the 1920s-1930s. He died in the US in 1979.

**Volodymyr Mykhailovych Strashkevych** was born in 1875 in the village of Vyshnevychi in the Kyiv region. A member of the Old Hromada [Community] of Kyiv, he worked for the Vik publishing house. In the UNR government he was the deputy director of a department in the Ministry of Religious Faiths. He headed the Professional Language Section at the Institute of the Ukrainian Scientific Language and compiled the *Russian-Ukrainian Dictionary of Professional Language*.

Arrested on 15 September 1929, Strashkevych was sentenced to three years' exile in Voronezh. His subsequent fate is unknown.

**Mykhailo Vasyliovych Kryvnyiuk** was born in 1871 in the village of Hnyinytsi, Shepetivka district in Volyn. A biologist by profession, he was a research associate of the VUAN and an editor at the Institute of the Ukrainian Scientific Language. He was the husband of Olha Kosach, the sister of the poetess Lesia Ukrainka.

Arrested on 15 September 1929, Kryvnyiuk was given a three-year suspended sentence and released. Unable to find employment, he began working as an accountant at the Bessarabsky Market in Kyiv. Before WWII he moved to Sverdlovsk. Returning home from his suburban garden plot, he fell beneath a locomotive and was killed.

**Hryhorii Hryhorovych Kholodny** was born in 1886 in the Tambov region of Russia. He was a research associate of the VUAN, the head of the Institute of the Ukrainian Scientific Language, and a lecturer at the Kyiv Institute of Public Education.

Arrested on 23 August 1929, Kholodny was sentenced to eight years' imprisonment and loss of rights for three years. He was sentenced to death on 14 February 1938. The date of the execution of this sentence is unknown.

**Hryhorii Mykytovych Ivanytsia** was born in 1892 in the city of Shostka in today's Sumy region. He was a professor of the Kyiv Institute

of Public Education, secretary of the VUAN Pedagogical Commission, and coeditor of the journal *Radianska osvita* [Soviet Education]. He is the author of articles and textbooks on Ukrainian language and literature.

Arrested on 18 August 1929, Ivanytsia was sentenced to six years' imprisonment and loss of rights for three years. According to eyewitnesses, he served part of his sentence in the Solovets Islands.

On 21 February 1938 a troika of the NKVD Directorate of Krasnoïarsk Krai sentenced him to ten years' imprisonment. According to data of the KGB USSR, Ivanytsia died on 24 August 1938 in the North-Eastern camp of Magadan region. In his book *Pered viltarem nauky* [Before the Altar of Scholarship] M. Ivanchenko writes: "Not all the defendants in the SVU case perished. After twenty-five years Hryhorii Ivanets (Ivanytsia) returned from the camps and exile." However, this claim has not been substantiated.

**Volodymyr Vasyliovych Udovenko** was born in 1881 in Kyiv. He was a professor of the Kyiv Medical Institute and member of the presidium of the VUAN medical section.

Arrested on 22 November 1929, Udovenko was sentenced to eight years' imprisonment and loss of rights for three years. On 25 November 1937, three days after he completed his term of imprisonment, a troika of the NKVD Directorate of Leningrad region sentenced him to be shot. The sentence was carried out on 8 December 1937.

**Oleksandr Hryhorovych Cherniakhivsky** was born in 1869 in the Kyiv region. He was a professor of the Kyiv Medical Institute and member of the presidium of the VUAN medical section. He was the husband of another SVU defendant, Liudmyla Starytska-Cherniakhivska.

Arrested on 27 December 1929, Cherniakhivsky was sentenced to five years' imprisonment and loss of rights for two years. After his release in June 1930, he was forced to seek work in the city of Stalino, where he lived until 1935. He later returned to Kyiv. The execution of his daughter, who was falsely accused of espionage, undermined his feeble health. He died on 21 December 1939 and is buried in Kyiv.

**Arkadii Oleksiiovych Barbar** was born in 1879 in the village of Popivshchyna in Romen county, Poltava gubernia. During the UNR under Hetman Skoropadsky he was the deputy director of a department at the Ministry of Health. Later he was the senior assistant at the Kyiv Medical Institute and a research associate of the VUAN.

Arrested on 18 August 1929, Barbar was sentenced to eight years' imprisonment and loss of rights for three years. He served his sentence in the Solovets Islands. On 9 October 1937 a troika of the NKVD Directorate of Leningrad region sentenced him to be shot. The sentence was carried out on 3 November 1937. In his book *The Opera SVU — Music by the GPU*, Khorunzhy cites the testimony of members of Barbar's family, who speculate that he and many other political prisoners may have been drowned on the barge *Klara Tsetkin* in the White Sea.

**Mykola Musiiiovych Chekhivsky** (brother of SVU defendant Volodymyr Chekhivsky) was born in 1877 in the village of Horokhovatka in Kyiv region. In 1902 he graduated from the Chuhuiv Military Cadet School. He was dismissed from the army in 1906 as a politically unreliable person. During the Civil War he went over to the side of the Central Rada and served as a lieutenant-colonel in the Ukrainian army. He was the military commandant of the city of Kyiv.

At the time of his arrest, official documents stated that he was unemployed. In fact, he was a priest of the UAOC in Sviatoshyn.

Arrested on 24 July 1929, Chekhivsky was sentenced to three years' imprisonment and loss of rights for two years. On 4 December 1937 a troika of the NKVD Directorate of Kursk region handed down a death sentence. There are grounds to suggest that the sentence was not carried out.

In 1990 Halyna Khotkevych, the daughter of the Ukrainian writer Hnat Khotkevych, wrote a letter from France to this author, saying that Mykola Chekhivsky lived in Paris in 1945-1950. According to V. Mykhalchuk, the director of the Symon Petliura Library in Paris, this information was confirmed by Chekhivsky's nephew.

**Volodymyr Yakovych Pidhaietsky** was born in 1889 in the city of Kamianets-Podilsky. After graduating from the St. Petersburg Military-Medical Academy, he served as a military doctor

in the Amur and Baltic fleets. He was a professor of occupational hygiene at the Kyiv Medical Institute, research associate of the VUAN, and director of the Institute of Physical Culture in Kyiv. He is the author of many articles on hygiene and physical culture and was a member of the Central Rada.

Arrested on 19 October 1929, Pidhaietsky was sentenced to eight years' imprisonment and loss of rights for three years. He served his sentence in the Solovets Islands. On 9 October 1937 a tribunal of the NKVD Directorate of Leningrad region handed down a death sentence. He was shot on 3 November 1937. However, there are grounds to suggest that he was in the group of political prisoners who were drowned on the barge *Klara Tsetkin* in the White Sea.

**Taras Mykhailovych Slabchenko**, the son of Academician Mykhailo Slabchenko, was born in 1904 in Odesa. As a young scholar, he was a lecturer at the Odesa Medical Institute and Odesa Workers' University, and secretary of the Odesa Scholarly Society at the VUAN.

Arrested on 20 December 1929, Slabchenko was sentenced to three years' imprisonment. On 27 October 1937 the military collegium of the Supreme Court of the USSR handed down a death sentence. The date of the execution of the sentence is not known. On 23 March 1959 the sentence was overturned and his file was closed for lack of evidence.

**Mykola Dmytrovych Lahuta** was born in 1895 in Mykolaiv. He was a lecturer at the Mykolaiv Institute of Public Education.

Arrested on 11 October 1929, Lahuta was given a three-year suspended sentence and released.

On 15 November 1937 the NKVD Directorate of Odesa region sentenced him to be shot. The date and place of the execution are unknown.

On 21 June 1957 the sentence was overturned and the file was closed for lack of evidence.

**Petro Stepanovych Blyzniuk** was born in 1880 in the city of Pereiaslav, in the Kyiv region. A former member of the Central Rada, he worked as a laboratory assistant of the State Grain Inspection in Kremenchuk.

Arrested on 5 September 1929, Blyzniuk was sentenced to six years' imprisonment and loss of rights for three years. He was given an additional sentence on 22 November 1933 and exiled to Kazakhstan. His subsequent fate is unknown.

**Kyrylo Mykhailovych Panchenko-Chaplenko** was born in Odesa in 1888. He was a lecturer at the Industrial and Milling Technical Schools in Odesa.

Arrested on 10 September 1929, Panchenko-Chaplenko was exiled from Ukraine for three years. His subsequent fate is unknown.

**Liubov Yevheniia Bidnova** was born in 1882 in Odesa. She taught in the Dnipropetrovsk Labor School.

Arrested on 10 September 1929, Bidnova was given a three-year suspended sentence and released. Her subsequent fate is unknown.

**Mykola Pavlovych Bily** was born in 1897 in Dnipropetrovsk. He was a schoolteacher and a student at the Dnipropetrovsk Institute of Public Education.

Arrested on 12 November 1929, he was sentenced to three years' imprisonment. His subsequent fate is unknown.

**Mykola Antonovych Kudrytsky** was born in 1883 in the village of Novoselytsia in the county of Chyhyryn in the Cherkasy region. He was a professor of the Kyiv Medical Institute, research associate of the VUAN, member of the presidium of the VUAN medical section, and a former member of the Central Rada.

Arrested on 15 September 1929, Kudrytsky was given a three-year suspended sentence and released. His subsequent fate is unknown.

**Maksym Nychyporovych Botvynovsky** was born in 1888 in Tarashcha, in the Kyiv region. He was a member of the executive of the Dairy Union. During the UNR he headed the executive of the Union of Cooperative Organizations of Kyiv gubernia.

Arrested on 17 August 1929, Botvynovsky was sentenced to three years' imprisonment and loss of rights for two years. On 21 September 1932 the OGPU Collegium exiled him to Kazakhstan for three years. On 1 December 1937 a troika of the NKVD Directorate of Alma-

Ata region sentenced him to death. He was shot on 2 December 1937.

**Oksentii Avtomonovych Bolozovych** was born in 1887 in the village of Yasenivtsi, in the county of Bila Tserkva. He was a lecturer at the Kyiv Cooperative Institute. During the UNR, he was one of the founders of the All-Ukrainian Teachers' Union and its publishing society, and later, the organizer of two Ukrainian sugar cooperatives.

Arrested on 5 March 1928 in connection with another case, he was exiled to the Solovets Islands. He was indicted in the SVU case and sentenced to five years' imprisonment and loss of rights for two years. He served his sentence in Siberia. His subsequent fate is unknown.

**Borys Fedorovych Matushevsky** was born in 1907 in the village of Budaivka, in the Kyiv region. At the time of his arrest he was a student at the Kyiv Institute of Public Education.

Arrested on 18 May 1929, Matushevsky was sentenced to five years' imprisonment. He served his sentence in the Yaroslavl solitary confinement prison for political prisoners and the Solovets Islands. He was given an additional four-year sentence by the Leningrad regional court. He was released in 1940. He fought in World War II in 1943-1945. He died in Kyiv in 1977.

**Yosyp Romanovych Karpovych** was born in 1887 in the village of Tymkiv, in the county of Kamianets-Podilsky. He was a teacher at the M. Kotsiubynsky School in Chernihiv.

Arrested on 16 September 1929, Karpovych was exiled for three years. His subsequent fate is unknown.

**Oleksandr Zinoviiovych Hrebenetsky** was born in 1874 in the village of Fursy in the county of Bila Tserkva, in the Kyiv region. He was a schoolteacher and assistant to the principal of the Shevchenko 1<sup>st</sup> Labor School in Kyiv.

Arrested on 4 July 1929, Hrebenetsky was sentenced to five years' imprisonment and loss of rights for two years. He served his sentence in the Yaroslavl solitary confinement prison for political prisoners. On 7 December 1937 a troika of the NKVD Directorate of the Mari El ASSR sentenced him to death. He was shot on 8 December 1937.

**Andrii Petrovych Zalesky** (also known as **Zalysky**) was born in 1885 in the town of Horodyshe in Kyiv gubernia. He taught at the Shevchenko 1<sup>st</sup> Labor School in Kyiv.

On 6 March 1928 Zalesky was arrested on charges of conducting “counterrevolutionary propaganda,” and later indicted in the SVU case. He was sentenced according to the new charges to five years’ imprisonment and loss of rights for two years. He died in prison.

**Vasyl Mykhailovych Doha** was born in 1866 in Zlatopil, in the Kyiv region. He was a professor of the Kyiv Institute of Public Education and research associate of the VUAN. He is the author of school textbooks and articles on methodology, particularly on the methodology of teaching the Ukrainian language.

Arrested on 25 September 1929, Doha was sentenced to three years’ exile outside the borders of Ukraine. His subsequent fate is unknown.

**Zinovii Hryhorovych Morgulis** was born in 1880 in the village of Pohreby in Tetiiv County. He was a member of the College of Lawyers and a legal consultant to the Dairy Union.

Arrested on 30 October 1929, Morgulis was sentenced to three years’ imprisonment. He died in prison.

**Kostiantyn Stepanovych Shylo** was born in 1879 in the village of Orlovsk in Amur region. He headed the editorial division of the Kyiv branch of the State Publishing House of Ukraine and was a research associate of the VUAN.

Arrested on 29 September 1929, Shylo was given a three-year suspended sentence and released. His subsequent fate is unknown.

**Kostiantyn Ivanovych Tovkach** was born in 1882 in the village of Rudivka in the county of Pryluka. He was a member of the Poltava College of Lawyers.

Arrested on 15 September 1929, Tovkach, who was an invalid, was sentenced to five years’ imprisonment and loss of rights for two years. His subsequent fate is unknown.

**Nina Serhiivna Tokarevska** was born in 1888 in the village of Kochubeivka in the Podillian county of Kamianets. She was a

Ukrainian-language teacher at the Shevchenko 1<sup>st</sup> Labor School in Kyiv.

Arrested on 23 July 1929, Tokarevska was given a three-year suspended sentence and released. Her subsequent fate is unknown.

**Yurii Kostiantynovych Trezvynsky** was born in 1886 in the village of Samorodnia in the county of Kaniv. She was a teacher at the Shevchenko 1<sup>st</sup> Labor School in Kyiv.

Arrested on 3 July 1929, Trezvynsky was given a three-year suspended sentence and released. His subsequent fate is unknown.

**Mykola Petrovych Pavlushkov** was born in 1907 in the city of Tula, in Russia. He was a student at the Kyiv Institute of Public Education.

Arrested on 18 May 1929, Pavlushkov was sentenced to ten years’ imprisonment and loss of rights for three years. On 9 October 1937 a troika of the NKVD Directorate in the Solovets Islands sentenced him to death. The sentence was carried out on 3 November 1937.

The list of condemned prisoners also included public prosecutor O. Slisarenko. There are grounds to suggest that both Slisarenko and Pavlushkov were drowned on the barge *Klara Tsetkin* in the White Sea.

\* \* \*

*Among the defendants who were directly involved in the SVU show trial were quite a few individuals whose fabricated association with the case was minimal. There were several categories of such individuals. The first consisted of so-called witnesses, who should not have been arrested under any circumstances. Even the very fact of their short-term arrest elicits doubts as to the objectivity of their testimony. But in arresting these witnesses, the GPU was creating “ideal” conditions for influencing their testimony. According to the “legality” of the times, at any moment such witnesses could be turned into defendants. No justification for illegal arrests was necessary. But, just in case, the GPU found a solution even for this.*

*Elementary logic, not the law, was at work here. If a person was giving testimony, this meant that he knew something, and if he knew something, why did he not report it? These logical steps thus led to the arrests of many witnesses, including D. Bobyr, P. Nechytailo, H. Slobodianyuk, I. Mandziuk, Yu. Yurkevych, V. Dymnych, V. Shemet, Yu. Vynohradov, and others.*

**Anatolii Bolabolchenko.**

# WE ACCUSE MOSCOW

The independent Ukrainian republic founded as a result of the struggle for national liberation was unable to withstand Moscow's onslaught and ultimately fell. But the momentum of Ukraine's renaissance continued. Although the democratic Ukrainian government was replaced by a Bolshevik government imposed by Moscow, after the introduction of the New Economic Policy (NEP) in 1923 the national life of the Ukrainian people began to revive in all spheres of the economy, culture, and education.

Thousands of Ukrainian writers, poets, and scholars were the engines of the revival of Ukrainian literature and the arts. Ukrainian was introduced in schools as the language of instruction. Although the leaders of Soviet Ukraine considered themselves communists first and Ukrainians second, they began to Ukrainize the press, institutions, and public education. Life in Ukraine began to have a Ukrainian face.

As in the period of the national-liberation struggle of 1918-1921, the Ukrainian national spirit began to revive under these conditions, as formulated in the slogan of the Ukrainian communist writer Mykola Khvylovy: "Away from Moscow!"

The revival of the Ukrainian spirit troubled imperialist Moscow whose leaders resolved as quickly as possible to put an end to Ukrainization and all Ukrainian national manifestations.

Dekulakization began in 1929. At first, the property of well-to-do peasants was confiscated, and later poor peasants were also dekulakized. These expropriations often took place in the winter months. Families, including small children, were simply evicted from their homes, and their neighbors were warned that the same fate would befall them if they gave shelter to expropriated peasants.

On 17 November 1929 Moscow sent a directive to Ukraine to begin collectivization. In early 1930 an order was issued to complete the collectivization of the Ukrainian peasantry as quickly as possible. The notorious show trial of the defendants in the Union for the Liberation of Ukraine (SVU) began that spring.

The year 1929-30, known as the "great turning-point," was marked by forcible collectivization and the liquidation of the *kurkuls* as a class. Moscow ordered the Soviet Ukrainian leaders "at all costs" to collectivize at least 80 percent of farms and to complete collectivization by 1932. Accelerating the

pace of collectivization in Ukraine, Moscow increased the plan of grain deliveries to the state by two and a half times more than in preceding years.

In 1932 nearly all the Ukrainian peasants had joined collective farms. At the beginning of that year the Ukrainian communist leaders Mykola Skrypnyk, Vlas Chubar, and Hryhorii Petrovsky requested the Kremlin to reduce the pressure on Ukraine, citing the critical state of agriculture and warning about the threat of famine.

Although Ukraine was only a small part of the Soviet Union, more grain was demanded from it than from Russia and the other Soviet republics combined.

In the summer of 1932 the 3<sup>rd</sup> All-Ukrainian Conference of the CP(B)U was convened in the Ukrainian capital of Kharkiv to discuss the situation in the countryside. Moscow dispatched to the conference the chairman of the Council of People's Commissars Viacheslav Molotov and Stalin's first deputy Lazar Kaganovich. At this conference Skrypnyk told the Moscow representatives that everything that could be taken had been requisitioned from the villages of Ukraine. But in response to the Ukrainian communists' requests to spare the peasantry, Molotov and Kaganovich replied: "There will be no concessions or vacillations in the question of implementing the tasks set for Ukraine by the party and the Soviet government." The Ukrainian peasants, ensnared on the collective farms, were doomed.

On 7 August 1932 the Soviet government passed a law establishing the death sentence for anyone found guilty of "violating socialist property," including those caught gathering ears of grain during or after harvests.

The Soviet government abolished the resolution passed by the puppet government in Kharkiv concerning the distribution of grain to collective farmers for completed workdays. On 20 November 1932 Moscow ordered a stop to the issuance of grain for completed workdays until such time as Ukrainian collective farms carried out the unachievable quota of grain deliveries. An order was also given to requisition all grain and other foodstuffs from the Ukrainian peasants.

To implement this directive, Moscow assigned officials known as *tysiachnyks* [also 25-*tysiachnyks*] to oversee this process. Initially, 60,000 Russian communists were dispatched to Ukraine,

where they were installed as the heads of collective farms. Later, 112,000 more communists and Komsomol members, mostly from Moscow and Leningrad, were sent to help with the grain requisitions. Together with local village activists, these executioners went from household to household confiscating all foodstuffs from homes and searching gardens and secret hiding places for concealed stores of grain, beets, potatoes, and other foods.

On 8 December 1932 Moscow ordered a blockade of all raions in Ukraine. The Soviet government banned deliveries of consumer goods and halted all trading and credits in those raions that had failed to carry out the grain delivery plan. Orders were issued to remove all hostile elements from administrative and agricultural positions, as well as from collective farms.

Famine was already raging in Ukraine in the fall of 1932. Despite the mounting fatalities, Moscow dispatched Pavel Postyshev and his associates to Ukraine “to bring order.” On 1 March 1933 Postyshev dismissed Chubar from his post as the head of Soviet Ukraine and Skrypnyk from his post as People’s Commissar of Education. In no uncertain terms Postyshev told Ukrainian communist leaders, who were pleading with Moscow to adopt measures to ease the famine, that there was no question of giving any assistance to Ukraine. “Moreover,” Postyshev declared, “the government will not issue the peasants a single kilogram of sowing grain for the spring planting.”

Postyshev’s task was to crush the nationally conscious Ukrainian peasantry by means of a famine, as well as to destroy the Ukrainian national revival, the Ukrainian intelligentsia, and even those who faithfully served the Bolsheviks, the leaders of Soviet Ukraine.

The Bolshevik campaign against the Ukrainian peasantry had a clearly national and political character. Moscow wanted to break the back of the Ukrainian nation. While Ukrainian peasants were dying en masse, arrests and executions of Ukrainian intellectuals began in the cities.

We state clearly and unambiguously that the nation-killing famine in Ukraine, which was engineered by Moscow, is no different from the killing of the Jews by the Nazis.

While millions of peasants were starving to death in Ukraine, there was no famine whatsoever in Russia, which was dependent to a large degree on food from Ukraine. According to the *Small* and

*Large Soviet Encyclopedia*, we find Ukrainian population statistics for 1926 and 1939. In 1926 the population of Ukraine stood at 31,194,976. Thirteen years later, the population had declined to 28,070,404. Factoring in the normal birthrate, the figure should have been *at least* 35 million. Those missing seven million people were those who had perished in the tragic years of the Holodomor — death by starvation.

Between 1926 and 1939 the percentage of Ukrainians in the USSR declined by 10 percent, while the percentage of Russians increased by 27.2 percent. These demographic statistics clearly attest to the fact that the famine in Ukraine was not the result of any agricultural crisis in the Soviet Union but an organized plan to liquidate the Ukrainian people.

During the 12<sup>th</sup> Ukrainian Party Congress in January 1934 Postyshev arrogantly declared that 1933 was the year the Ukrainian counterrevolution was decisively routed, and that the party had carried out the Herculean task of liquidating nationalist elements in Ukraine.

While millions of Ukrainians were starving to death, Moscow was brazenly denying the existence of any famine. When news of the catastrophe unfolding in Ukraine reached the Ukrainian community in North America, Ukrainian activists found a spokesman in the person of US Congressman Herman Paul Koppelman, who issued a protest to the Soviet government. In his reply, Soviet Foreign Minister Maxim Litvinov wrote: “Thank you for the letter sent to me and for directing my attention to the Ukrainian pamphlets. There are many such pamphlets, full of lies, being circulated by counterrevolutionary organizations abroad, which specialize in this. They have no other recourse but to disseminate false information or fabricate documents.”

The Western world, which was convinced that the enslaved nations of the USSR had a good life, believed Moscow whose current leaders are still concealing the barbarous crimes that were perpetrated against Ukraine and the other enslaved nations of the former Soviet Union.

Today we bow our heads in mourning before the victims of Russian terror in Ukraine. But at the same time we remind Moscow and the free world that our remembrance of Moscow’s crimes is not fading. We know who is guilty. We accuse Moscow of causing the Ukrainian tragedy of 1932-1933.

**Oleksii Konoval**



# MY LIFE IS A TESTAMENT TO THE UKRAINIAN GENOCIDE

I consider it my duty to share my reminiscences of the tragedy that befell my family.

It is extremely difficult for me to remember all this, but in observing how the communists, socialists, and “our homegrown Ukrainian internationalists” are seeking to deny the terrible famine and repressions in Ukraine, I have decided to write.

For generations our family had lived in the village of Oliyantsia in Trostianets raion, Vinnytsia region. We lived well, and our family consisted of my parents, two daughters, and three sons. Our farmstead was average-sized: five hectares of land, two horses, a cow, pigs, sheep, and domestic fowl. Our family had a good-sized house with a veranda and all sorts of outbuildings.

We worked from dawn until late in the evening. Our farmstead drew the attention of the heads of the village soviet and the Committee of Poor Peasants, who frequently came to our house and invited us to join the collective farm. But my mother and father were categorically against this.

One Sunday in late August 1932 four wagons drove up to our farm. It was a brigade of fifteen people dressed in leather jackets and armed with Mausers. Among them were three or four people from our village soviet. We were evicted from our house, and the members of the brigade announced that they were confiscating all our property. They seized two chests of clothing — every last article. They took eight icons that had been in our family for generations, piled them on the veranda, poured gasoline over them, and set them on fire. My mother fell on her knees and began crying and pleading with the leader to take everything but the icons. They dragged her away and threw her into the yard.

The icons were burned to a crisp, and my mother fainted. My father, brother, and elder sister helped carry my mother into an earthen hut that became our refuge.

That day and for the next few days our cattle, fowl, grain, and forage were confiscated. They dismantled the house and all the outbuildings and

brought the pieces to the collective farm. They took everything from the root cellar and the pantry, dooming us to death by starvation. We were forbidden to use the garden and our land. Within a day my father and brother were arrested and sent to the prison in Trostianets. My father was released in a few days, but my brother Levko was tried and deported to Siberia, where he perished.

Our relatives helped us secretly with food. We began to starve in the spring and summer of 1933. My parents, my younger brother Vasylo (eight years old), and I became swollen from hunger. Realizing that we were starving to death, my parents took me and my brother to the Ladyzhyn railway station and put us on the train. We arrived at Vapniarka Station. The militia threw us off the train, and my father and I hunkered down on the square opposite the train station. Although I was swollen, I could still walk a little. My father lay on the ground murmuring and crying, his legs swollen. I asked people for bread, but nobody had anything, and the entire square was filled with starving, swollen people. Within a day my father stopped talking, but tears continued to flow down his face. I sat next to my father and wept. He died the next morning, and I began to wail. People heard me and called a militia man. He began calming me down and said that soon wagons would come to pick up the people who had starved to death, and they would take my father. Completely worn out, I stopped crying. I sat and stroked my father’s thin, whiskered face. His black eyes were open and they were staring at me.

In a while, a wagon came filled with dead men and children. They threw my father on top of them. Tears were pouring from my eyes. The wagon left. The militia man put me on the Odesa-Moscow train and told the conductor: “His father starved to death, he’s all swollen. Bring him to Moscow, maybe he’ll survive.”

The conductor took me to a car and said: “Crawl under the bench and lie quietly, or else the inspectors will throw you off and I’ll get it.” From that moment I became homeless.

This is only a small part of my difficult life. I have remembered my family’s tragedy my whole life. My mother also starved to death in that earthen hut, and my brother was taken to an orphanage.

**Opanas Nakonechny, war invalid**

# THE FIELDS WERE BURSTING, BUT DEATH WAS IN THE HOUSE

Independent Ukraine bows in mourning to the millions of victims of the Holodomor and those few who managed to survive those terrible years of 1932-1933. What was the cause of this unprecedented tragedy?

For decades Bolshevik propaganda told us that the famine was caused by kurkul uprisings, political terrorism organized by “enemies of the people,” and a poor harvest.

But despite efforts to conceal the famine, time is revealing the long-kept secret. The archives containing documents on those terrible years are now open. Research on these documents is leading to the incontrovertible conclusion that Stalin and his henchmen committed an act of genocide against the Ukrainian nation. As these documents attest, the main hope for carrying out this crime was placed on administrative-repressive methods.

I will focus only on one aspect of the general onslaught against the Ukrainian countryside: the grain delivery campaign of 1932-1933, as it was carried out in Okhtyrka raion of Sumy region (formerly Kharkiv region).

The agendas of every meeting of the communist fraction of the raion executive committee, raion party committee office, and plenums contained questions that were focused on one single issue: the state of the grain deliveries. However, the plans that had been ratified on orders “from the top,” which did not factor in actual possibilities and were neither deliberated or discussed with the heads of collective farms, were unachievable. The 1932 grain delivery plan for the raion was set at 25,000 tons. This figure was confirmed on 3 January during a meeting of the Okhtyrka raion party committee and acknowledged as completely realistic.

However, as the first crops and threshings on collective farms indicated, harvest projections turned out to be lower than anticipated. Pylypenko, the head of the Chupakhiv village soviet submitted a report indicating that the yield was only 5.5 centners per hectare of wheat instead of the projected 12; the yield per hectare of rye was 6.5 centners instead of 10.

An emergency session of the Okhtyrka raion party committee concluded that the heads of village soviets were deliberately lowering harvest projections. Commissions to implement farms’ true yields were immediately created.

Life was steadily worsening. On 7 November 1932 the participants of a meeting of the Okhtyrka raion party committee acknowledged that “the course of implementing the grain delivery plans in the raion is completely unsatisfactory.” In keeping with a decision of the region party committee, the plan for collective farms and Soviet state farms was reduced. Now it stood at 12,760 tons. A resolution was passed to ensure the implementation of the plan by 1 December 1932.

Even the new plan was not carried out, and the failure led to a flurry of resolutions and decisions. Sometimes they resembled reports from a battlefield.

In addition to the blitz of documents that were sent to the villages, officials from the raion party committee, *udarnyky* [shockworkers], and brigades of *buksyry* [helpers] were dispatched to the raion. Groups of activists from the Komsomol and schools were organized, and transport brigades were created to take the grain directly from the threshing machines. Collective farms were not permitted to create any kind of grain funds, even for sowing. “Malicious individuals who were refusing to deliver grain” were sought everywhere, and decisive measures were taken against them: confiscations of grain, prosecution in the courts, the sale of their property, deportations to Siberia, etc.

Thus, at a meeting of the raion party committee on 12 January 1933 a list of villages was drawn up, in which the property of individuals who were resisting the grain deliveries was slated to be sold: Okhtyrka, 50 households; Kyrykivka, 15; Yabluchne, 15; Rozsokhuvate, 15; Oleshnia I, 20; Oleshnia II, 5; and Stara Ivanivka, 10, etc.

Officials responsible for grain deliveries in the independent farm sector were split into groups of five people, some of whom were responsible for

the implementation of contractual obligations. In addition, an activist would be assigned to three or five households for the systematic implementation of grain deliveries.

A meeting held on 22 January 1933 passed a resolution on completing all of the above: "It is considered imperative to organize helping brigades today to step up the grain deliveries... 300 people, who will be dispatched to assist those village soviets in the independent farm sector that are lagging." The resolution included a list of villages to which those helping brigades were assigned: Okhtyrka, 70 people; Khukhra, 30; Kyrykivka, 25; Yabluchne, 25; and Rozsokhuvate, 30, etc.

The GPU organs, the prosecutor's office, and the raion party committee were directed to devote all their attention to implementing the grain delivery plans. "For the speedy exposure and elimination of counterrevolutionary elements and ringleaders in the matter of the wrecking of grain deliveries, GPU [officer] Pandorin should organize 5 operational groups, dispatch them to the following village soviets: Oleshnia I, Kyrykivka, Yabluchne, Stara Ivanivka, Stara Riabyna, Okhtyrka," along with a directive from the prosecutor's office: "Compel the prosecutor's office to ensure the timely deliberation of criminal cases (on site) [initiated] against malicious individuals refusing to deliver grain."

We see therefore that very real repressions were instituted against "saboteurs," an accusation that was applied to entire villages that were then entered on "blacklists," which spelled cash fines or confiscations of cattle. In addition, the delivery of manufactured goods was halted to such villages, while peasants were forbidden to leave their villages. Take, for example, the village soviet of Stara Riabyna. As of 8 December 1932 it had fulfilled only 47 percent of the grain delivery plan, and only 53 percent of the plan in the independent farm sector. After this village soviet was placed on the blacklist, the following resolution was immediately passed at a meeting of the raion party committee:

"The independent farm sector has buried almost all the grain in pits. According to declarations made by collective and independent farm activists, grain was found in 116 pits.

The prosecutor's office must be advised to ensure material for the session of the regional

court as soon as possible; a much-publicized trial must be conducted in Stara Riabyna. In order to smash the sabotage of grain deliveries, a brigade of responsible workers led by comrade Denysenko must be dispatched."

Despite these measures, the peasants fought for their survival and thought about the next harvest. Under the existing conditions, it is only natural that they were hiding one or two poods of grain. But the merciless, repressive, and inhumane methods of the "grain delivery machine" led to the confiscation of every last kernel of grain. Search brigades ripped up floors in peasants' houses, dug up yards, poked in gardens with metal prods, re-sifted chaff, re-threshed straw, searched every nook and cranny, and prosecuted the "guilty."

The monthly failures to carry out the grain delivery plans forced the raion party leadership to study the reasons behind these breakdowns. Stalin's notorious theory about the exacerbation of the class struggle during the building of socialism created the conditions for the onslaught against "hostile elements" in all village soviets. This accusation was applied even to court and prosecutorial investigators, while heads of collective farms, secretaries of village soviets, and other leaders were accused of their "opportunistic attitude" to the issue of grain deliveries and their inability "to organize the masses." Individual peasants were tried as malicious opponents of the grain deliveries. One of these was a female resident of the city of Okhtyrka, Paraska Maslova, at whose farmstead a barrel of grain was found buried in the ground. She was sentenced to six years' imprisonment.

During the grain delivery campaign the brigades that were dispatched to a village would carry out unwarranted confiscations of fatback, butter, money, and other valuables. Members of search brigades would organize summary trials. In one case an official from the raion party committee, by the name of Yeliseev, shot the peasant Davydenko from the village of Khukhra for refusing to carry out "obligations" to supply the last of his grain. Meanwhile, people who found hidden grain would be awarded a premium amounting to 25 percent of what was found.

However, not all party officials and activists toed the line, as several resolutions of the raion party committee attest. In the village of Oleshnia II comrade Vynevetsky was recalled for failing to

ensure the implementation of the grain delivery plan. The secretary of the Oleshnia party division, Saienko, was dismissed from his post for inactivity. Comrade Kroshchenko, the head of the Oleshnia village soviet, who fled the village, was expelled from the party and prosecuted. In the village of Kyrykivka the head of the Red August collective farm committed suicide.

The raion party committee was working furiously. For grinding grain, collective farms, Soviet state farms, and independent households were credited a certain quantity of flour against the completed grain delivery plan. But in order to grind their grain, the peasants needed permission, which was granted only if the plan had been fulfilled. The authorities instituted strict control over this, and the raion party committee office ordered windmills to be closed.

The system of taxes, grain delivery plans, and various requisitions was eviscerating the countryside. While the famine was claiming hundreds and hundreds of victims, the Kharkiv region executive committee for Okhtyrka raion also introduced a meat delivery plan amounting to 544 tons for the third-quarter of 1932 and 1933. "For failure to complete the tasks of delivering meat to the state by the designated deadline a first fine is levied in the amount of the market value of the cattle, while cattle that was not supplied is immediately confiscated," stated a document issued by the raion leadership. "In the absence of cattle and domestic fowl, in addition to the levying of a cash fine, failure to carry out obligations is considered as arrears, and the debtor is assigned a new deadline during the current quarter, and in the event of failure to comply, he will be prosecuted."

As the sowing campaign of 1933 approached, the situation in the raion became more exacerbated, as there was no reserve of grain seed. A resolution passed by the Sovnarkom of the USSR and the CC of the All-Russian

Communist Party (Bolshevik) on 23 September 1932 stated:

"First: reject all proposals concerning the issuance of sowing assistance. Second, issue a warning that in the current year neither Soviet state farms nor collective farms will be issued grain seed loans either for the winter or spring plantings."

Thus, there was no seed for planting. Sowing campaigns sometimes dragged on until harvest time, with only 40 percent of the plan completed in raions and only 23 percent in individual villages.

By the spring of 1933 the situation in the raion was horrific. Entire families were starving to death. Nearly all the residents of the villages of Khukhra, Rozsokhuvate, and Polohy died in the famine. The total number of Holodomor victims in the raion has not yet been determined.

The famine affected every single family. Adults, elderly people and especially children suffered, and not just children with families. Between 21 April and 19 August 1933 alone the commission for the struggle against homeless people recorded the deaths from starvation of 814 homeless children.

The impossibility of surviving this catastrophe is reflected in the case of Hryhorii Lohvynenko, a resident of the village of Lytovky. After completing 761 workdays on the collective farm, he did not earn a single kilogram of bread and even ended up owing the state 42 kilograms of grain. Lohvynenko's fate was shared by thousands and thousands of people in our fertile land, where the fields were bursting, but death was in the house.

**Oleksandr Halkin,  
Writer, member of the National Writers'  
Union of Ukraine,  
director of the Okhtyrka Municipal  
Ethnographic Museum in Sumy region**

# SOUL PAIN

Before the start of collectivization the population of the village of Polohy in Okhtyrka raion of Sumy region stood at 2,141, a total of 425 households. In 1930-1931, 67 of them were destroyed by the criminal communist government, and 335 households were dekulakized and deported to the northern regions of the Bolshevik empire.

In 1932-1933, 455 residents of Polohy, including 262 children, starved to death. Thus, within the space of four years, more than one-third of the population of Polohy was destroyed as a result of collectivization and the requisition of grain and other foodstuffs.

The largest number of people in Polohy died in early spring 1933. Particularly hard times came when the crops of rye, wheat, and oats began to ripen. People tore off the unripe ears, crushed the grain, and boiled gruel. After eating this, they would die in terrible torments. There was absolutely no medical assistance. No one even visited doctors, as hospitals were helpless in the face of this calamity.

When spring arrived, the people had to get ready for field work. On the collective farm they began cooking meals for those who came to work. For lunch they gave each person a tiny piece of bread, which helped save them from death. But those who were no longer able to work were doomed.

The collective farm's grain fields were carefully guarded. Special towers were built on which mostly adolescents stood guard. If a guard noticed anything suspicious, he would raise the alarm and summon patrollers, who would instantly set out in pursuit. Woe betides those who were trying to cut some ears of grain that they would dry and grind in hand mills, which, incidentally, were strictly forbidden.

In the case of Odarka Dulaska, she had cut some ears of rye that she had planted in her

garden at home. Someone spotted it and denounced her to the village soviet. The militia came and took the unfortunate woman to the city of Okhtyrka, where she was sentenced to two years' imprisonment. In the meantime, four members of her family starved to death, including two children.

A brick factory was built near the premises of today's Polohy Public School. The bricks were made by hand and fired with straw and logs, and they were of good quality. A twelve-meter-long pipe stood there. Inside were metal cramp irons, so a strong, brave person could reach the top. On the collective farm they decided to place a person on top of this pipe to watch the field from above. A piece of railway tie was attached to the pipe from which hung an iron coupling bolt.

From morning until late in the evening a man would sit there, watching the field like a hawk. If anyone approached by the field road and happened to bend down in order to grab a handful of grass or a wildflower (there were many at the time) the guard would give a signal that he was watching this person. After a certain time a patroller would ride up on his horse, and then it was impossible to avoid a whipping. This punishment was meted out even when no cut ears of grain were found. If any were found, the peasant was doomed. There was a special law that the peasants called "the law of five ears of grain."

The Bolsheviks were quick to react and mete out punishment. Sometimes a person would be caught during the night, and by morning a sentence would have been handed down: eight to ten years' imprisonment in camps, confiscation of property, and loss of rights.

This is the bitter truth of the Holodomor of 1932-1933. This is the truth about only one village. But how many of these perished throughout Ukraine?

**Mykhailo Popilniukh,  
Teacher of Ukrainian language and  
literature at Polohy Public School,  
member of the Union of Journalists  
of Ukraine**

# **RESOLUTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM “HOLODOMOR-‘33”**

**(Kyiv, 5-7 September 1990)**

*We, the participants of the international symposium “Holodomor-33,” bow our heads in profound sorrow to the memory of the tens of millions of dead and unborn victims of the people-hating policy of the Stalinist communist regime that systematically engineered an artificial famine in Ukraine in 1932-1933.*

*We believe that, according to international law, this policy should be defined as a crime against humanity and people, not only because it led to millions of violent deaths, undermined the physical and spiritual health of the Ukrainian people for many generations, but also because the attempt to destroy the age-old moral principles and spiritual experience of an entire nation was implemented by the most brutal means of instilling abject fear and terror in the population.*

*We support the findings of the US Congressional Commission on the Ukraine Famine and the International Commission to investigate the famine of 1932-1933 in Ukraine, both of which recognized this terrible Holodomor as an act of genocide against the Ukrainian nation. The USSR brutally violated Article 46 of the Hague Convention of 1907, as a state that was implementing an arbitrary war against its own people, as well as the principles that were later enshrined in the 1948 International Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. Responsibility for these crimes lies with the government of the Soviet Union and the Communist Party as the ruling, one-party state system.*

*We appeal to the international community, the United Nations Organization, the participants of the Paris meeting of heads of governments and states to prepare an all-European meeting on security (Helsinki II) with a demand to conduct a thorough investigation of the genocide against the Ukrainian nation and to prosecute this crime in the International Criminal Tribunal in The Hague. In accordance with generally accepted legal norms, the International Tribunal should punish the guilty and designate the kinds and scopes of material and moral compensation to the Ukrainian nation.*

*We consider it crucial to create an international research center on the history of Ukraine and the determination of all crimes against its people throughout the twentieth century, including the Chornobyl tragedy.*

*An important aspect of the activity of such a center would be the study of the demographic, medical, spiritual, culturological, economic, and political consequences of the policy of genocide. We believe that the Ministry of Education of Ukraine should introduce the study of the horrific tragedy of the Ukrainian people — the Holodomor of 1932-1933 — into school curricula.*

*We express non-confidence in those pseudo-historians and officials from the Institute of History of the Academy of Sciences of the Ukrainian SSR and from the Institute of Party History of the CC CPU, who, in keeping with instructions from the higher party organs, consciously falsified the causes, course, and consequences of the Holodomor of 1932-1933. Accordingly, they should bear moral responsibility for this.*

*We consider it crucial to establish a museum of national mourning, which would contain all the materials and eyewitness testimonies on this great tragedy, to serve as a remembrance and warning to our descendants. In building its future, the Ukrainian nation will never forget the violent deaths of millions of their brothers and sisters!*

*May their memories be eternal!*

# THE NATION'S UNHEALED WOUND

(Open letter to the Prosecutor-General of Ukraine, Mykhailo Potebenko\*)

Dear Mr. Potebenko: We, Ukrainians, have too heavy a burden of history on our shoulders, and this is splitting society in two and not allowing it to move forward. I am talking about the 1932-1933 genocide against the Ukrainian nation. This unhealed wound in our consciousness is festering all the more because various kinds of Ukrainophobes argue that the Holodomor was invented by nationalists. There will be no peace until the courts establish the truth. And you, as the chief state defender of justice, should immediately initiate a trial with respect to this epochal crime, while there is still time to locate living witnesses, because everyone who was recounting this tragedy to me yesterday is dying today. We should not be appealing to international human rights organizations now that we have our own state! After all, who needs us besides ourselves? In 1933 the US recognized the USSR, even though the American government knew about the genocide. But one's own affairs are closest to one's heart. When an article appeared in the US about the famine in Ukraine, the entire press run of the newspaper instantly disappeared. This leads one to think that powerful world forces are involved in this criminal act, which is not limited to Stalin, Kaganovich, and Moscow.

The famine was carefully concealed from the international community. Humanitarian aid organized by the Diaspora was not allowed to enter Ukraine. A whole army of state liars, the entire state machinery, worked to disorient international opinion — and they succeeded.

Ivan Prykhodchenko, a resident of the village of Yastrubyn, in what is now Sumy raion, tallied up the number of people who died on his street: 98. If you multiply this by the village's 10 streets, you get 980 people, one-third of the population at the time. For the purposes of comparison, take the number of people from this village, who died in the war: 219. This village was not among those hardest hit: there were villages whose entire population starved to death.

I am presenting you with the book *Holodomor na Sumshchyni* [The Holodomor in

the Sumy Region]. Get a supply of Validol pills and read it. You will learn, e.g., that almost all of the residents of the large village of Boromlia — 12,000 — starved to death. The village was jammed with corpses. There was no one to bury them, so students from Kharkiv were brought in to do this. Before the famine there were 2,400 households in the village; after the famine only 800 families were left. The number of victims may have reached 10,000. Afterwards, the village was settled by Russians, and classes with Russian as the language of instruction were introduced in the local school.

During the war the village, including the new settlers, lost 468 men. Usually only men die in wars; women and children are mostly spared. But the famine took everyone, above all children. In 1933 all the children died or were eaten by adults crazed with hunger. You will also read about this in the book, which recounts the destiny of only a few villages whose inclusion was determined not by intentional selection but the availability of eyewitnesses. Everyone who survived in the 1,728 villages of the Sumy region experienced the same tragedy, and how many people disappeared instantly from the face of the earth! Ukraine is filled with the lost names of former villages, and the whole country, down to the last village, experienced this Golgotha.

My large family should also have perished, but my grandfather Makar Petrenko, who was intelligent and quick-witted, was somehow connected through an intricate network of relations, in-laws, and godparents to Hryhorii Petrovsky himself. Our family consisted of peasants of average means, and they did not want to join the collective farm because they instantly saw through this ridiculous business. They dispatched one of their relatives to Petrovsky for advice. When he returned, everyone assembled:

“What did Hryhorii Ivanovych say?”

“He said: ‘Drop everything and flee.’”

They did so. Their property was transferred to the collective farm, and all of them ended up in the Donbas (where I was born). My mother

---

\*Appointed in 1998 and resigned in 2002.

experienced the famine in Kharkiv, where she was engaged as a servant girl in a Jewish family, where her father set her up. Later, when she visited her village Hnylytsia in what is now Okhtyrka raion, she found it devastated, and most of her acquaintances were dead. It was said that among the corpses that were brought to pits for burial were those who were still breathing. They would beg not to be pushed into the pit. At first I thought that this only happened in that village. But throughout my life various eyewitnesses told me the same thing. You will find such accounts in the book. After the famine that village never truly revived. It is still dead, like all the surrounding villages. Farmsteads disappeared. During the war the members of Committees of Poor Peasants, who were perpetrating this outrage, were appointed as policemen, in keeping with their habit of serving the government. It is easier than working.

Our family was finally affected by the famine of 1947, when people swollen from starvation roamed the village. Our whole family became swollen, but it was already springtime. We saved ourselves with the leaves of linden trees that we, village children, ate like locusts. To this day I still nibble linden leaves every spring. Later I learned that during this time our grain was being exported to the Soviet satellites in Europe in order to confirm the “superior traits” of the socialist order. This hurts, but not so much as during 1933, when the Holodomor was aimed at the destruction of the very foundations of the Ukrainian nation. Much data attest to the fact that the famine was planned and carefully prepared. Ukraine was encircled by military detachments that did not allow people to escape death. Train tickets were sold only upon presentation of written permission from the authorities. Those who did not have permission ended up under guard in a reservation and all their baggage was confiscated.

Moscow began to prepare for the resettlement of Russians in Ukraine long before the mass famine in the Ukrainian lands. First, the local authorities readied sufficient numbers of metal prods with blades, which turned out to be a diabolical weapon in the hands of the organizers of the famine. “Helping brigades” were dispatched to various regions of Ukraine, armed with a single directive. They not only looked for grain but also carried out acts of wanton

destruction: they smashed stoves, spilled pots of food, snatched bowls of food out of the hands of children and smashed them on the ground. They not only confiscated grain but every other kind of food. Then black flags with the offensive inscription: “Plague. Do not enter,” would be hung in villages that had completely died out.

On all official levels the government treated the starving populace like criminals. The peasants had no passports and could not leave Ukraine, but some managed to leave nonetheless, riding or walking, abandoning their children at train stations, paving city streets with their corpses, thus spoiling the façade of the “happy Soviet reality.” Dying people were placed in railway cars and shunted to dead-end sidings, where they ended up dying not only without food but also water. Abandoning their children, naïve mothers believed that the state would be forced to save them, but they too were placed in railway cars on dead-end sidings. When there was no more whimpering coming from the railway cars, the corpses were brought to the city outskirts and buried, and more starving people took their place. Gravediggers were exhausted, and a struggle was always waged among their brigades for “light” railway cars (full of children) because it was easier to unload them.

Borys Tkachenko’s book *Pid chornym tavrom* [Branded in Black] is based on documented materials and eyewitness testimonies. The author states that all children over twelve years old were shot. But there were very many children, and some of them ended up in orphanages, where they starved to death.

A new stage of persecution was launched: Ukrainian intellectuals were hounded, Ukrainian books were removed from libraries, and Ukrainian theaters were closed. The following note from Stalin to Postyshev has been uncovered: “We are appointing you, Pasha [dim. of Pavel] in the role of Glavgol [commander in chief of the famine] and with that weapon you will do more than Semion (Budenny) did with several cavalry armies. Stasik (Kosior) has lost his head a bit, but you have an iron hand, don’t pay attention to those sluggards (Ukrainian communist leaders).”

While Postyshev brought 112,000 “staunch Bolsheviks” from Russia to Ukraine, the Ukrainian “sluggards” were crawling out of their



skins to carry out the most savage whims at the expense of their people. For the majority of the top leaders of the Communist Party of Ukraine, the destruction of their own people, at first physically and in the following years spiritually, became the most convenient item they could barter in exchange for advancing their careers.

Information to Moscow about the consequences of the famine was sent in coded form to the head of the OGPU USSR, Genrikh Yagoda. The phrase “number of purchased cattle” stood for the number of dead, while “got sick from foot-and-mouth disease” referred to cases of cannibalism. As we can see, the statistics on cannibalism, including the eating of children and necrophagy, had its own column in this data, which pleased the Moscow leadership.

Certain pseudo-academics, who attempt to portray the famine as a natural disaster, state that the “famine also affected certain raions of Kursk region” and other regions. This is an absolute lie: the famine ended on the borders of Ukraine. The residents of border regions know this. I spoke with a peasant from the Kursk region, who remembers with sorrow how starving Ukrainians would run to them, digging up potato peelings out of pits. Residents of Ukraine’s southern regions did not have even this possibility and they suffered more. They traveled to the south and stopped at the sea; they could not go further. The Russian journal *Ogonek* once devoted an article to this subject, written by an eyewitness, who described the situation in Odesa. The city was swamped by people dying of starvation and they were lying everywhere. “Sometimes it seemed that all of Ukraine had come here to die.”

Until 1930 Ukrainians in the Soviet Union numbered over 81 million and thus comprised the largest nationality in the USSR (excluding Western Ukraine and Western Belarus, which

were not part of the USSR at the time). Both small and large villages in Ukraine were densely populated, and families were large. Perhaps it was this that troubled the Kremlin leaders, who eventually declared: “The ethnic material must be recast.” Entire families, streets, and villages disappeared into oblivion, and no graves or crosses mark their remains — it is as though they had never existed.

Today only villages with a thinned-out population are reminders of their unhealed vacant grounds and the place names of villages that have disappeared. I will list at least the villages in Lebedyn raion, Sumy region: Svitailivka, Oliinyky, Ivanivka, Pyshcholy, Vechirky, Parfyly, Shumyly, Semyrotivka, Kliusy, Lozova, Ruske, Khorol, Korinne, Hrunka, Myrne, Tyrlo, and Tymofiivka.

After this blow the Ukrainian nation survived, but only because of its numerical strength. There was no help from anyone, and our leaders turned out to be superfluous because the wiser ones were destroyed, while the fools worked to their self-destruction. This is what it means when a nation entrusts its destiny to foreign hands. Those who ordered this crime must be investigated and tried, and I accuse the Ukrainian nation itself, for everyone is alike in the eyes of God. Every nation deserves the destiny that it has. Shame on the nation that allowed such a thing to be perpetrated against it! The new generations should know the truth of their history in order not to repeat the mistakes of their predecessors, and so that they will choose their guidelines correctly. Only the truth will save us!

**Volodymyr Tovkach,  
Village of Yunakivka, Sumy region**

# THE STORY OF A VILLAGE IN THE KYIV REGION

One hundred kilometers from Kyiv, above the Rostavytsia River lies the once large and picturesque village of Shamraivka in Velyko-Polovetsky raion of Kyiv region. Before collectivization there were nearly 3,000 households in the village. Almost the entire population of the village took part in the national-liberation struggles of 1917-1921, which led to harsh reprisals after the arrival of the Bolsheviks.

A small Ukrainian insurgent detachment of some twenty men led by Shkarbaniuk was active in the vicinity of the village. Whenever necessary, the size of the detachment doubled and tripled, instilling great fear in the communists of the entire Bila Tserkva area. This lasted until 1928, when, according to one report, Shkarbaniuk was killed in Skvyra by the GPU organs. According to other reports, he left the country.

For many years the head of the village soviet was a resident of our village, R. Vynnychenko, who was elected in 1926 to the All-Ukrainian Central Executive Committee (VUTsVK) headed by Hryhorii Petrovsky with whom he corresponded. But the Moscow communists kept an eye on the head of the village soviet by appointing the secretary of the village party organization as the supervisor of the community mill. From 1922 to 1929 this post was held in turn by Churikov, Zholtov, and Fursov, and the militia man of the village was a man named Zhukov — all of them Russians. While Shkarbaniuk was still active, these four quietly feared him. Zholtov, who organized an ambush against Shkarbaniuk, was killed when Shkarbaniuk shot him twice in the face with a double-barreled shotgun.

Collectivization in our village began in 1929. At this time the GPU searched the home of the head of the village soviet, Vynnychenko, who was then reportedly transferred to another job. All traces of him vanished, and he was replaced by a Russian. Fursov, the Russian secretary of the party center was replaced by Kovalev, another Russian. He was a degenerate and a sadist. He always laughed while he was abusing one of his victims. During the first round of dekulakizations

he took pleasure in throwing half-naked children into the snow. He was a refined executioner, always smiling.

In March 1929 the first convoy of fifteen dekulakized peasant families was deported to the northern regions. After this the peasants were forced several times to attend meetings that lasted all night. They would be released for a few hours and then forced to return for more meetings. In less than a year approximately 300 families were deported from our village. By early 1930 the village was 100 percent collectivized. It seemed that the enemy should have been satisfied, but no. There was groaning, crying, and fury in the village, but no resistance. It was hopeless.

In addition to waging mass terror against the peasants, the GPU destroyed the entire village intelligentsia. Immediately after their arrival in 1920, the Bolsheviks summarily executed the priest, Naum Kharchenko, in his own yard, right in front of his family. Fedir Severynenko, a priest of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church was arrested and deported; he disappeared without a trace. Lev Sydorenko, a priest of a church with a Russian orientation was ordered to leave the village, and he took his family to Siberia. Vovk, the principal of the public school, and the teachers Vyshnivsky and Nezabutovsky were shot during the SVU show trial in Kharkiv. Novokhatsky, one of the SVU defendants was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment. In the prisons and concentration camps Novokhatsky contracted tuberculosis and was released in such a state that he died at the Bila Tserkva railway station, a mere eighteen kilometers from his home. Three other individuals were deported, but their subsequent fate is unknown.

A foreign force consisting of Russian tysiachnyks reigned supreme in the village. I don't remember any of their names, but the official representative of Moscow was a man named Ivakhin, who was in charge of the grain deliveries in 1931. He was short and obese, with the face of a well-fed hog. He conducted searches of peasant homes. During one search he found a pot of cooked millet at the back of the stove and

ordered it to be confiscated as grain for the sowing fund!

After Ivakhin's concerted efforts, spring 1932 was very difficult. There were many people with swollen faces and legs. Sometimes in the village you could see the body of dead person lying twisted underneath a fence. But there were no mass deaths yet: to save themselves people ate beets and frozen potatoes, mixing them with dry grass or woody feathergrass.

The village was destroyed: the granaries and other outbuildings had been dismantled, fences were broken; houses stood half-demolished and roofless, and weeds were growing in the streets.

The most horrific year of 1933 arrived. From March of that year every morning a desiatnyk would go around from house to house, asking if there were any dead people. The corpses were loaded onto wagons and transported to mass graves at the cemetery.

The mortality rate peaked in mid-April, when one kilogram of buckwheat each was distributed to the residents. People devoured it without grinding it (they had no implements) and many people ate it raw. After eating this buckwheat 300 people died every day for a week.

One day people began gathering at the guarded granary that belonged to the Shamraivka sugar refinery in order to get at the grain. The administration of the sugar refinery immediately summoned the fire brigade, which began conducting exercises near the granary. Within half an hour a GPU detachment from Bila Tserkva arrived, and the people had to disperse.

In the neighboring village of Pustovarivka was a distillery that made potato-based alcohol. The potatoes lay in huge piles near the distillery. One morning, nearly 4,000 people from neighboring villages arrived at the distillery. As the crowd approached the piles of potatoes, the guards did not know what to do. But suddenly the secretary of the local party organization, whose name I do not recall, charged toward the crowd on his horse. According to eyewitnesses, within one minute no trace was left either of him or his horse. Later, about a hundred men from Pustovarivka were shot for this.

On our collective farm there was a stableman (I won't mention his name, he may still be alive) who shared whatever he had with people during the famine. There was no fodder for the horses, and the horses were dying or could not get up. He was sentenced to five years' imprisonment for sabotage.

During 1932-1933 between 2,500 and 3,000 people starved to death in our village. A total of 32 out of 280 households were dekulakized. The rest were forced to join the collective farm called Morning Star. Soon this name was recognized as being "Petliurite" and the collective farm was renamed Broad Field. Later it was renamed Bolshevik.

The church was closed back in 1927, and the priest left the village. The deacon was deported to the Far North. The Soviets turned the church building into a grain warehouse and later, a club.

**V. Nestor**

## LYSIANKA RAION, KYIV REGION

*The following account was written by Taras Yakymenko, a resident of the village of Budyshchi.*

Before the revolution there were 260 households in our village, totaling 1,330 people, who worked 1,200 desiatinas of land. Pavlo Yenko, a hereditary landlord in our village, owned 1,500 desiatinas. After the land was redistributed Yenko was given five desiatinas and he turned into an exemplary farmer.

After the defeat of the national-liberation struggles of 1917-1920, an anti-Bolshevik

insurgent movement continued to operate for a long time around our village. There was a raging famine in 1921, and the peasants were swollen from hunger. Twenty-eight people starved to death [in our village].

Dekulakization and collectivization began in the winter of 1929-1930. Yenko, the landowner, was the first to be dekulakized, although the entire community stood up for this honest farmer.

I remember two Russian tysiachnyks: Shlykov and Lomakin. As the leaders of the local village activists, they were known for their extreme

brutality. I cannot recount everything that happened in the village, so I will give only one example, the case of the peasant Hrytsko Norenko.

The forty-year-old Norenko was an exemplary farmer. He had a wife and five children, and he farmed on five desiatinas of land. During the January frosts a group of village activists led by Shlykov, the Russian official, came to his home. After entering the house, he gave the following order to the activists: "Everything, including baking." This meant they were to confiscate everything, including baked bread. The family's cries and tears were to no avail: they took everything from the house and ordered the father to remove his children, ranging in age from two to thirteen, from the house. When he refused, Shlykov took the children and one by one threw them out of the window into the snow and locked the house. An order was circulated throughout the village: "Those who let them into their house will experience the same thing tomorrow." The mother and father took the children into the forest near the village, and there in a ravine the father started excavating a cave, although this was forbidden.

After a couple of days the GPU took Hrytsko Norenko away. Soon all the children died of cold and hunger. Left completely alone, the grief-stricken and exhausted mother was later found dead on the frozen river. This was the end of the family of this splendid, honest farmer. For what? How many families like this were destroyed in Ukraine? You know their names, Lord.

Everyone who was considered a kurkul was dekulakized. Peasants of average means were also dekulakized; they were called subkurkuls. Even peasants who until recently had been considered poor were dekulakized.

My grandfather was a lord's serf. My father was a worker-builder, and he passed this occupation on to me. Regardless of my poverty, after the government of the UNR went into exile, I remained an enemy of Muscovite Bolshevism, and because of this I was not able to find either room or peace in my beloved motherland. On 28 October 1932 I was warned that I was slated for repression as an "unreliable element." I immediately left home. That night a group of people led by the Russian official Sinelnikov broke into my house. All my property was

Really FINE In Used Car VALUES  
The AMERICAN WANT ADS

# CHICAGO AMERICAN

CHICAGO, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 6, 1935

SECOND SECTION  
NEWS, FEATURES

## DELIBERATE STARVATION OF PEASANTS



This typical peasant of the Ukraine spent two years in jail, suffering untold tortures, and since his release has been fighting starvation.



This corpse is that of the father of the boy pictured at the right. The orphaned child was unable even to bury his parent. There were no shovels in the village since the last raid of the GPU, and the boy could only cover the body with straw. (All photos copyright, 1935, by American Newspapers, Inc.)



This 15-year-old boy, a veritable skeleton, his stomach aching from lack of food, could get no relief at a Bolshevik hospital because his parents were Ukrainians.

### Villages Depopulated by Hunger in Ukraine as Soviet Punish Their Opponents

STARVATION walks through the Ukraine, victims of Soviet Russia leaving a ghastly trail of death and agony. The Ukraine is the most fertile grain producing district in Russia. The first mentioned in the picture at right, of which this is the fifth, were obtained by Thomas Walker, a noted journalist, traveler and student of Russian Affairs, who has spent several years touring the Union of Soviet Russia.

BY THOMAS WALKER, Noted Journalist, Traveler and Student of Russian Affairs, Who Has Spent Several Years Touring the Union of Soviet Russia.

## JUST BABIES!

BY

An article in the newspaper *Chicago American* on the famine in Ukraine.

AMERICAN WANT ADS  
for the best APARTMENT  
values!

# HUNGER, DESPAIR, DEATH IN UKRAINE AGONY



Through the hunger-ridden Ukraine tramps this man seeking his wife and child. He was torn from them and sent to Siberia in 1930. He walked back—1,000 miles—to find that they had vanished.



Wary of the struggle, a mother sought rest by a roadside in the Ukraine. She slept and did not wake. Her baby crawled a few inches before death touched it also.



Death came to this peasant woman months spent in the futile search for food.

## Soviet Starving Tell Own Stories; Jailed for Eating Dogs

STARVATION stalks through the Ukraine section of Soviet Russia, leaving ghastly trail of death and agony. The "aim is the most fertile grain producing district. The facts contained in the series of articles, of which this is the fourth, were obtained by Thomas Walker, an American newspaperman, now a resident in London, at the peril of his life. When Mr. Walker entered Russia last Spring he smuggled in a camera. While photographs shown with these articles were ob-

...which had been lost...  
...a peasant was...  
...hard labor...  
...the GPU...  
...sentenced...  
...years...  
...the law...  
...imprisonment...  
...that I stated had recently lost the

CONCENTRATION L A B O R CAMPS.  
For eating seed wheat in the process of a Spring planting on a Collective Farm a peasant was tried and sentenced to five years' hard labor on a Forced Labor Farm.  
For having a few grains of wheat in his pockets after the day's work another was sentenced by three years' hard labor.  
The peasant is not allowed to leave the village without the GPU. The peasant is not allowed to leave the village without the GPU. The peasant is not allowed to leave the village without the GPU.  
I asked these peasants why they...

The newspaper *Chicago American* published several articles on the famine in Ukraine.

confiscated: a cow, a pig, the rest of my grain, and all my simple peasant belongings. My mother was left in an empty house, and she died soon after.

Before and after I left the village, hundreds of peasants fled to avoid the terror and famine. In the winter of 1932-1933 everything down to the last kernel of grain was confiscated both from the collective farm and peasants' homes. The government took the grain as well as beans and millet, whether you had joined the collective farm or not.

It is difficult to determine the exact number of victims of the 1933 famine. The population of our village was reduced by approximately one-third.

Right in the middle of the famine in 1933 the government of occupation began converting the narrow-gauge railway to the Buzhanska and Pochapynska sugar refineries to wide-gauge tracks. People who had not seen any bread for six months and had lived on "God's dew" rushed to do this work, because each worker was given 500 grams of bread and 30 grams of sugar every day. But the work quota had to be completed, which meant that everyone had to dig eight cubic

meters of earth. A person who was half-dead could not complete such a quota. There was no bread in the evening because it was delivered in the morning. The starving people died at work, day and night. In the morning a wagon would come and collect all the corpses and deliver them to huge pits. The corpses were thrown in just like they had been found: some prone, some sitting up. Once the pit was full, it was covered with earth; sometimes a head would be sticking out. Many people in the village who had helped to plunder us also died: H. Melanchenko, H. Babchenko, and others. There was no one to bury them, so the members of the village soviet had to bury the dead themselves.

When the green ears of grain began to fill out, people would cut and dry them to get the grain and save themselves from the famine. Many people who did this were sentenced according to the law passed on 7 August 1932, and no one ever saw those people again.

I swear before God and the people — those who were tortured to death and those who are still being tormented — that this is a true account.

**Taras Yakymenko**

# MYRONIVKA RAION, KYIV REGION

*The following account was written by a resident of the village of Zelenky.*

After the retreat of the Ukrainian army the Red Army troops arrived, followed by a food requisition group that simply looted the village, confiscating grain and cattle. In response, an insurgent detachment led by P. Mykytenko was formed in the neighboring villages and hamlets. The insurgents waged a brave struggle until late 1922.

Dekulakization and collectivization began in the winter of 1929. At this time our village numbered 1,189 households, of which 356 were dekulakized. Of these, 21 people were arrested by the GPU, 181 families were deported to the Far North, and 140 families were evicted from their homes. The rest were hounded and terrorized into joining the collective farm.

In the spring of 1930 the newspaper *Pravda* [Truth] published a long article by Stalin, entitled “Dizzy with Success,” in which the Soviet leader made accusations against local government organs. When the peasants learned about this article, within one day they took back their property and left the collective farm whose membership fell by about 90 percent. The government reacted with a wave of repressions and forced everyone to return to the collective farm: there was no truth in *Pravda*.

A branch of the Union for the Liberation of Ukraine was [allegedly] uncovered in our village, and the GPU arrested twenty people whose subsequent fate is unknown.

In spring 1930 tysiachnyks arrived in our village. Their leader was a Russian official named Veretin, who was in charge of grain deliveries. Veretin had unlimited control over the village and its inhabitants. The village was divided into eleven

sections, each with a so-called “headquarters” and brigades of local communists and activists. Each of the headquarters assigned “specific tasks” to individual households, which were called “tverdozdachyky.” These people were ordered to deliver quotas of grain, meat, and vegetables, which they were unable to do. If someone somehow managed to carry out this “special task,” the next day he got another task, and was thus never able to get out of debt to the state. They requisitioned grain without leaving any sowing material, but still could not carry out the task. Then Veretin ordered the “brigades” to swing into action. The members of these brigades turned everything upside down in the houses and dug up yards and vegetable gardens. For example, at Harasym Sushko’s place they found two kilograms of groats that his wife had hidden for their children. For this he was sentenced to five years’ imprisonment. Even people in whose homes nothing was found were tried and punished for their “malicious refusal to supply food to the state.” People were taken to the headquarters and detained there all night, their interrogators haranguing them to carry out their tasks. They were beaten, stripped half-naked, placed into freezing rooms, and splashed with water. Two respectable peasants from our corner of the village, Levko Kovalenko and Marko Pluzhnyk, died after being tortured in the headquarters.

During the famine of 1933, 850 people in our village starved to death, including 80 families. Approximately 1,500 people fled the village. Some of them died somewhere, while some survived. Half of the village activists also starved to death; one activist named Ovrarn Bezshanny resorted to cannibalism. A teacher from the village school also starved to death.

**N. Bohuslavsky**



*American newspapers reported on the famine in Ukraine, which was engineered by communist Moscow.*

## TESTIMONY CONCERNING THE RECENT PAST

Every party congress in Moscow was a harbinger of the next calamity for the citizens of the USSR. One of these was the XV Party Congress of 1927, which decided the fate of the working peasantry in Ukraine, having christened it the “capitalist element in the countryside.” All nationally conscious peasants were proclaimed “kurkuls.” If a peasant’s property status did not fit the category of “kurkuls,” he was branded a “kurkul by ideology,” or designated by a newly created communist epithet like “subkurkul,” “whisperer,” “opportunist in practice,” etc.

When the Civil War ended, the word “partisan” acquired a derogatory meaning. All kinds of disorder in state institutions were labeled *partyzanshchyna*. Every drunkard or vagrant was also called a “partisan.” But after the XV Party Congress the situation suddenly changed: searching for cadres to implement the thuggish

resolutions of the congress, the Communist Party and the government in Moscow now counted specifically on former Red partisans and other rejects whom they now elevated and praised for their “heroism” in achieving the victory of the October Revolution, etc. These cutthroats were mobilized into a band of 25-tysiachnyks and dispatched to the countryside to smash and punish the innocent and defenseless peasantry: to “pump out” grain and organize collective farms and “liquidate the kurkuls as a class.” This pogrom lasted from 1929 until the completion of collectivization. Eventually some of these “heroes” lost their lives within the walls of the GPU-NKVD for the sins of the Communist Party and the Soviet government, or perished in concentration camps as “enemies of the people,” for distorting the “general line,” or for insufficient “class vigilance,” etc.

However, many of them were promoted and awarded various party benefits and other privileges, including medals, for destroying the peaceful peasantry of Ukraine.

**O. Kushnir**

# THE DESTRUCTION OF THE CHURCH IN HORODYSHCHE

Everyone knew Ivan Musiievych Mokha in the village of Horodyshche in Nykopol raion on the Dnipro River. This man was reckless in his savage actions against the recalcitrant peasantry. Mokha was always sent to those places where no one else could straighten out Bolshevik affairs. He always came out the victor, even though this victory came at the cost of human victims. When the Communist Party and the Soviet government launched their offensive against the peasantry in 1928, many people perceived God's Divine punishment in this and began attending church en masse, seeking God's mercy through their prayers. The church in the village of Horodyshche was always filled with the faithful. The local authorities did not like this one bit and decided to close the church.

Mokha was ordered to deal with this matter. He resolved the question very simply: in the middle of the night he summoned the local priest to the village soviet, where Mokha and his gang were "in charge."

When the priest failed to come, Mokha broke into his house and gave him the following order:

on Sunday, when the church would be full of parishioners, the priest was to announce that religion was a fraud and God was a bourgeois invention that was helping the kurkuls and other counterrevolutionary elements. Mokha declared that if the priest obeyed his order, he would obtain a good position in a state institution or at least the position of accountant at the raion bank, or wherever he desired. If he did not comply... Showing his revolver, Mokha said:

"Here are seven bullets, priest! I will send all seven into your head one dark night, and no one will ever know or investigate because you know who you're dealing with!"

The priest humbly listened to Mokha's ultimatum. He knew that all resistance would be futile, because Mokha was the eyes and the arms of the Soviet government. But the priest could not abandon his people, who needed him so much. So he asked Mokha to give him a couple of days to think it over. Mokha agreed.

The priest immediately consulted with his leading parishioners, and they decided that in order to avoid inflicting an even greater calamity



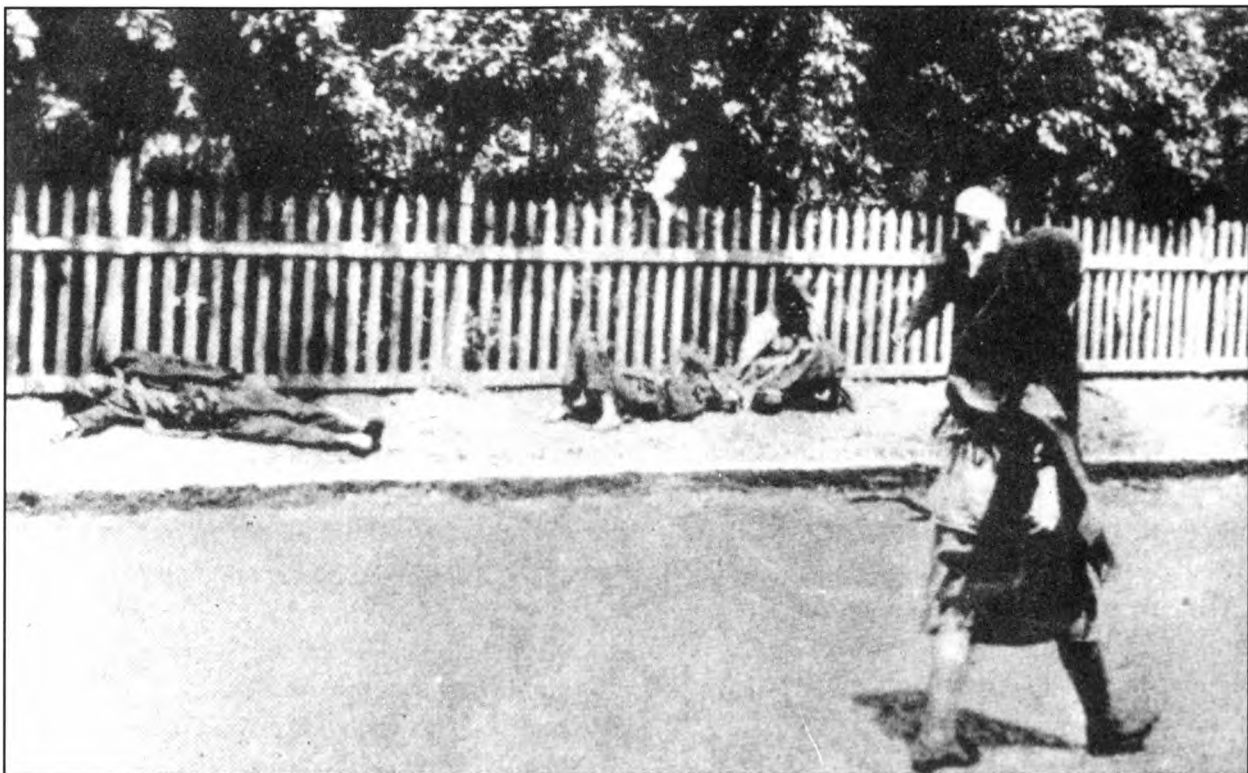
*A crowd of people in front of a food store in the city of Kharkiv. Photograph from the US newspaper Chicago Tribune.*



on the villagers, who were already terrorized by Mokha, he would accept his ultimatum, because the Lord could see that this was not being done according to their will but under pressure from the satanic government. So when Mokha came to the priest again, the latter calmly accepted his proposition, but asked to be allowed to move to

the Volyn region. Mokha celebrated his victory. As the local raion newspaper *Shakhtar manhanu* [Manganese Miner] later reported, the church in Horodyshe was closed at the request of the working masses at the Maksimov Pit Mine and the collective farmers in the village of Horodyshe.

**O. Kushnir**



*Famine victims lying on the streets of Kharkiv.*

## HOW MOKHA “PUMPED” GOLD

When Moscow got the urge to acquire gold in order to build the global fifth column, a black Muscovite cloud crept over Ukraine. The authorities began to “pump” gold from the peasantry and the intelligentsia — there was no salvation for anyone. At this time the schoolteacher N. M. was working in the village of Horodyshe. Many people sought her advice, and on their behalf she wrote grievances to government bodies complaining about the activities of local “bigwigs.” But this displeased the “local power,” which, in order to put a stop to her activities, sought to compromise this schoolteacher in the eyes of the population. Once again the government used Mokha, who already had his eye on the schoolteacher, who was young and beautiful and had rejected his advances. He now had a chance to take his revenge during the “gold-pumping” process. In the middle of the

night the schoolteacher was summoned to a house where the “pumping” was headquartered. When N. M. entered the house, Mokha ordered her to be taken to his office. Two searchers accompanied her. Mokha ordered them to search her. Naturally, when they didn’t find any gold on her, Mokha screamed at the searchers:

“You don’t know how and where to search! Don’t you know who you’re dealing with?” And they violated her in the most disgusting fashion. Mokha had to kill her morally not only because she was trying to take care of the peasants but in order to avenge the insult to his honor. N. M. could not endure this savagery. Sick and morally destroyed, she wrote a complaint about Mokha’s crime. But her efforts were in vain. In the meantime N. M. moved to another area, and as usual Mokha once again came out the victor.

**O. Kushnir**

# NOVOMOSKOVSKIE RAION, DNIPROPETROVSK REGION

*The author of the following account  
was born in 1919  
in the village of Znamenivka.*

I was between ten and fourteen years old in those terrible years. Our village was very large and had almost 2,000 households. I clearly recall only what was happening on our street of sixty-five houses, which was named after Taras Shevchenko. I was born and raised on this street. Dekulakization and collectivization, which began in 1929, was carried out for the most part by tysiachnyks together with local leading activists, who were few in number. Among the 25-tysiachnyks I remember well only one Russian from Moscow, a man named Bolotov, who headed the group that dekulakized my father. Seven families on Shevchenko Street, with its sixty-five households, were immediately dekulakized, i.e., everything was confiscated and the families were evicted from their homes (a list of names is available). The dekulakized peasants were stripped of everything and were not even permitted to take a single item.

Everyone was refusing to join the collective farm, despite the assorted pressure methods. The men were assembled into a building, where they were detained for many nights and forced to sign a declaration on joining the collective farm. This took a long time, until the arrival of the GPU. Then the heads of six households (a list of names is available) were sentenced to various terms of imprisonment, and three were sentenced to be shot: Antin Malyshko, a veterinarian, Khoma Lopata, the church choir conductor (one of the dekulakized), and Trokhym Myrshavka, a poor peasant and Ukrainian patriot.

As a result of this terror, the rest of the peasants were forced to join the collective farm.

In late winter 1929-1930 the women of the village, arming themselves with pokers, scythes,

and pitchforks, expelled the authorities from the village and liquidated the collective farm. Two men were killed during these events; I don't remember if they were tysiachnyks or leading village activists. Again the GPU arrived and arrested many men and women. After they took them away, no one ever saw them again. The collective farm was reformed. There was no order on the farm, and the heads were replaced frequently. Some of them were our own villagers, like Bobut and Lebid, and some were sent in from who knows where.

There were three churches in our village. The wood church was dismantled, and the two stone churches were turned into granaries. The priests were arrested and they disappeared without a trace.

During the engineered famine of 1932-1933 all or some of the members of eleven families on our street starved to death (detailed list available). Children whose parents had died were taken to a shelter at the collective farm, where they were fed exclusively on gruel made of rotten corn. Almost all of these orphans died in the shelter. This same gruel made of rotten corn was issued to the village schoolteachers.

Those who survived the famine were on their last legs and many people had swelled up from starvation. In an effort to save their lives, they sold all their belongings. Some people traveled all the way to Russia to exchange their belongings for food. Many people left the village in search of bread and never returned. The corpses of people who had starved to death were brought to mass gravesites.

Out of sixty-five households (counting only heads of households) seven people were dekulakized, six were deported, three were executed, and ten starved to death.

My testimony is authentic. I swear on my life.

**I. Lisovsky**

# THE STORY OF ONE HAMLET

Five peasants, including my father, purchased land in the hamlet of Husarske and settled there. Before dekulakization, the hamlet had grown to nineteen households as a result of the land distribution and assignment of plots. This was their future destiny: in 1930 ten households were dekulakized and deported. Five were dekulakized later and evicted from their homes. The rest — four households — were resettled in the village of Vesele in Mezhoval raion (Dnipropetrovsk region), where they were hounded into the collective farm. Half of them starved to death there in 1933.

In February 1930 all the heads of the ten dekulakized households in the hamlet of Husarske were arrested. After five days they were brought to the Demuryna railway station and put on trains. Cargo trains were already waiting there, the closed windows bound with barbed wire. Soon the doors were opened and the authorities began loading our families onto the train. It was so crowded that you could not move freely or squeeze through. Three pails were put inside the car: one was for the toilet, the second one was for soup, and the third was for water.

The women and children cried all the time, but the men were silent, gloomy, and lost in thought. Sometime around 10:00 in the evening our train started moving, and the darkness was rent by the hysterical wailing of women and children and the hoarse crying of the men. On the brake platform, the escort furiously hammered on the wall of the train with his rifle butt and shouted (in Russian): “Stop that noise!” This order was accompanied by a volley of abusive Russian epithets.

We arrived at the Prosianna railway station, where a few more cars were attached to our train. The train now stopped only at large stations, on sidings, far away from people.

Finally, after a long journey, we were brought to the Mezhdudvore railway station and told to disembark. Then the men were ordered to line up several meters away from the train. The head of the GPU convoy was Zaitsev, a man of average height, dressed in a

black sheepskin coat, with a Nagant revolver tucked into his belt. Limping on his right leg, he came up to the two rows of men and said:

“I am the representative of the Soviet government and the head of the convoy. My assignment is to bring you to your designated place, where houses have already been prepared for you and where you will live very well.”

Then Zaitsev asked if anyone had any complaints. Since there were none, he continued:

“The distance from the railway station to the designated place is 150 kilometers. Whoever steps off the path will be shot. Only those under ten years old will ride on the wagons.”

After a ten-day walk through deep snow, sleeping with our children on brushwood spread over the snow, next to bonfires, we finally arrived in the village of Kuzminka in Niandomsk raion, Arkhangelsk region (Russia). The population of this village had been settled elsewhere earlier. The village was surrounded by three rows of barbed wire, and the two gates were topped by an armed GPU guard. In the village center two houses were for the commandant's office. In order to enter the office you had to approach the guards, who conducted a search and questioned everyone about the reason for the visit. Five or six families were assigned to each house, depending on the size of the house and the family.

The next day 300 grams of bread were issued to each adult and 150 grams to each child, as well as some fish — and nothing more.

Three days later all the men, including me and my father, were sent seventy-five kilometers away to work on timber float operations, and our families remained in the village.

At work each of us received 450 grams of bread and one herring for two men; there was no other food. We were promised more food. I waited for this food until May 15. When I saw

that I was losing my strength, I decided to escape.

While I was still on the timber float, news came from the village of Kuzminka that seven people from our hamlet had already died; two of my fellow workers had also died. Many people were dying both in the village and at the timber float, but I was counting only the people whom I knew from our hamlet. Later I received a letter saying that three other people from our hamlet had died.

In 1933, when I was serving in the Red Army (3<sup>rd</sup> Rifle Division in the Crimea), a soldier named V. S. asked me for permission to go to the unit's political commissar. He showed me a letter from home in which his mother informed him that she was the only survivor in the family. His father, sister, and brother had starved to death. I gave him permission to go to Verkhovsky, the political commissar, who brought him to the commissar of the division. The soldier never returned to my subunit, and

in three days his personal belongings were taken away.

Many years later I couldn't stand it any more and decided to take a look at my hamlet. I went to the area where the hamlet used to stand with its pretty little white houses with huge gardens surrounded by tall poplars. I didn't find a single trace of it: all around, on both sides of the road, lay the steppe ploughed by tractors.

I stopped by the village of Vesele, where I used to go to school and attend church. The village, whose name means happy or jolly, did not look happy: everywhere stood sad, unfenced houses. Many houses that were once covered with iron had been stripped of all their metal, which had been carted off to the collective farm. The church had been dismantled, and the wood was used to build the collective farm's piggery.

**S. Mezhovy**



*Starving Ukrainian children, victims of the Holodomor, waiting for death.*

## MOLOCHANSKE RAION, ZAPORIZHIA REGION

*During the famine of 1933, the author of the following account, the former schoolteacher, Yu. Pysareva, lived in the village of Molochanske, or Halbshtein, the center of an area once known as a German national raion.*

This village was populated by Germans, the descendants of German Mennonites who had settled here during the reign of Catherine II. Until 1928 none of them had fewer than thirty desiatinas of land. Dekulakization began in 1928, followed by collectivization, during which nearly half of the Germans were deported to the Far North. The rest were “voluntarily” hounded into two collective farms. Half of the Germans’ houses stood empty and were gradually occupied by Ukrainian peasants, who had been forced to leave their villages for various reasons.

In 1932 the famine began right after the harvest. The collective farmers kept body and soul together with vegetables, but teachers and workers from the local agricultural machine-building factory were left to their own devices. Every day each of them received 200 grams of the worst-quality bread and one liter of cabbage broth. Even before the New Year people became swollen from starvation. Then the factory workers and the members of their families began dying.

My husband, our two children, and I were all swollen and would have starved to death if not for my relatives, who sent food from abroad through the Melitopil *Torgsin* [Russian contraction for “torgovlia s inostrantsami,” i.e., hard-currency Soviet shop for foreigners]. Many nameless peasants, who had come north from the Crimea, the shores of the Azov Sea, and the Kuban in search of bread were dying in all the orchards.

The German collective farmers from Molochanske and other German colonies were starving and swollen, but they were not dying en masse because all of them, including German communists, were receiving food packages from Germany, from the Bryliant Charitable Society.

At this time I often traveled to Melitopil. People who were dying or dead lay scattered on the streets of this wealthy area. The village of Terpinia near Melitopil, whose population was mainly engaged in market gardening, was completely deserted: the villagers had either died or fled to parts unknown. In 1934 Russians from Orlov region of the RSFSR were settled here.

In 1937-1938, during the period of “Yezhovshchina,” all the Germans and their families from the village of Molochanske who had received help from the Bryliant society were deported. My husband and I were arrested and deported for having received relief aid from abroad. The NKVD interpreted the receipt of aid as a crime — espionage on behalf of a foreign state.

**Yu. Pysareva**



*These horrific scenes were often encountered on the streets of Ukraine’s cities, towns, and villages.*

# FAMINE IN THE ZHYTOMYR REGION

After everything settled down in the early years after the revolution, taxes were still somewhat manageable. But gradually more taxes were levied. As soon as the grain was harvested, people would race to farmsteads with orders to bring the tax to the station.

People are still working; they have to get ready for the sowing season, but there's no time. Give it now; the state does not wait! A "black" list and a "red" list are introduced. Those who do not pay the tax are placed on the blacklist and tried by a troika (judge, prosecutor, and secretary). They hand down a ruling that you must comply within three days, and if you do not, they sell your farm, everything, including clothing! People thought that maybe the "state does not wait" and needs grain right away. But under increasing pressure they gradually became convinced that this impatient state needed to turn owners into proletarians so that they would have nothing and would be dependent on the state for their daily piece of bread.

At the beginning of dekulakization, and particularly after the deportation of expropriated

peasants to the Far North, many peasants abandoned their farms and fled the village. In order to leave they needed an official document, which the village soviet refused to issue. People ran away if they could. All the people who were slightly better off and remained in the village were deported to Siberia.

You had to give up everything: your land, horses, and equipment. You had to go to work on the collective farm, "voluntarily." But very few agreed to do this of their own free will. The government levied tax after tax, in kind and cash. Money went to pay for the tax, and later for the loan.

The 25-tysiachnyks conduct a propaganda campaign during village meetings. Then they go from house to house with activists inviting people to join the collective farm "voluntarily": they invite, yell, bang their fists on the table, frighten the people with Siberia, bring them to the village soviet, and detain them for several days. They say: "Join, and you won't have to pay taxes. You will be free. Just give up everything you own."



*There were no more men left in the village. This woman and her children were evicted from their house.*

A group like this comes to a house. Some of the people are armed; others have some sort of iron prods or drills to dig through the earth. They ask the owner:

“Well, are you going to sign up for the collective farm?”

The man does not know what to do or answer.

“Did you take out a loan?”

“Did you comply with the state delivery?”

[In Russian:] “Why are you asking him? Check the receipt!”

“Your neighbors have all signed up, but you refuse.”

“Why are you asking him? If he doesn’t want to, let’s get started!” And terrible things would begin.

“What does he have in the granary? Open it up!”

“If you’ve buried anything, we’ll find it!”

And they would begin to search everything with those iron prods: in the granary, the threshing barn, inside the house, in the attic, and the stables. They go around the garden and the yard shoving their drills where the earth shows signs of having been moved. When they find something, they immediately conduct a trial, as though the farmer is an enemy. There was no escape: they took everything — grain, flour, groats, and potatoes — everything that they could get their hands on. Sometimes they would raid the house: they smashed windows, doors, ovens, and chimneys. Some people could not be called *kurkuls* at all. So they would be dubbed *subkurkuls* and the activists would ravage their property the same way. They would leave a man and his family, including small children, with nothing.

They took everything by force to the collective farm. The village was totally devastated. Unattended horses roamed the fields and the village. Little signboards were tied to their manes, saying: “No master, no food, no one to tend me, nowhere to sleep,” or “They did as they pleased.”

Even before the famine began, the village looked like a wilderness: the village soviet had dismantled the barns, stables, and granaries, shipped the wood to the city, and sold it as firewood. People caught horses, which they butchered and ate. The government captured some of the horses and brought them to the collective farm, where they were guarded. They were now “socialist property.” People slaughtered

their chickens and sheep, or the government confiscated them. Dogs and cats were shot for their furs or people ate them. People who had finally “voluntarily” joined the collective farm were fed during the workday with *burda*, boiled water muddied with a trace of flour. New sheepskin coats would be traded for five cups of peas, and a kilim for a loaf of bread. Whoever had clothing would sell it for almost nothing. At that time bread cost 150 *karbovantsi* [the Ukrainian *karbovanets* was equivalent to the Russian ruble] kilogram. People dried buckwheat or millet chaff, crushed it in a mortar, and baked biscuits. Mortars and hand-mills were confiscated by the authorities or destroyed. Those who had a cow kept it inside the house and lived off the milk. When spring came, people boiled and ate nettles. There was no salvation: people swelled up and died, whether they had joined the collective farm or not. While they were still alive, their skin was yellow, almost black. The skin of people who had starvation edema burst and a watery discharge flowed from their wounds, which became infested with maggots. There was no salvation until death came.

The first to die were healthy men. Three families in our village ate people. They were arrested and nobody ever heard of them again. Dead people lay everywhere, right where they had dropped dead. In the springtime the head of the cooperative and two other activists were ordered to collect the corpses and load them on a wagon.

The government paid for each corpse with bread and gave each corpse-collector one bottle of vodka per day. Every day, from morning until night, they would collect corpses from houses and bodies lying next to fences. Some of the corpses had already started to decompose, their ears and other parts of the face gnawed by mice.

Sometimes the corpse-collectors picked up people who were still alive, so that they wouldn’t have to come back the next day, because this would be the last living person in a house. The corpses were loaded onto a wagon with pitchforks and brought to a huge excavated pit into which the corpses were dumped like manure. The pit was kept uncovered for a few days until it was full.

In our village a man was thrown into the pit alive. When he regained consciousness among all those corpses, he got out of the pit and crawled

to the farthest house in the neighboring village. The owner of the house recognized him: he was the carpenter who had built his house. The owner had a milk cow. He brought him some milk and for the next three weeks fed him only milk, and thus saved his life. When he regained some of his strength, the carpenter went somewhere to dig potatoes that had been left in the ground for the winter, and he lasted on them until the summer.

When the grain began ripening in the fields, surviving children would pick the green stalks, which they dried, boiled, and ate.

“For the protection of the socialist harvest,” the authorities built high wooden towers in the

field, placed a guard on them and mounted patrols that caught people tearing off unripe ears of grain.

Sometimes a person would just be walking through the field. He would be tried, as were the parents of captured children caught stealing “socialist property.” In accordance with a law passed on 7 August 1932, a circuit court consisting of tysiachnyks (troika) would hand down sentences of no fewer than five years for picking unripe ears of grain.

During the famine of 1932-1933, 813 out of 1,532 people starved to death in our village.

**P. Pisny**

## ZINKIV RAION, POLTAVA REGION

*In the following account the villager R. Suslyk writes about the hamlet of Severynivka, which is separated from the village of Zinkiv by a row of black poplars and willows.*

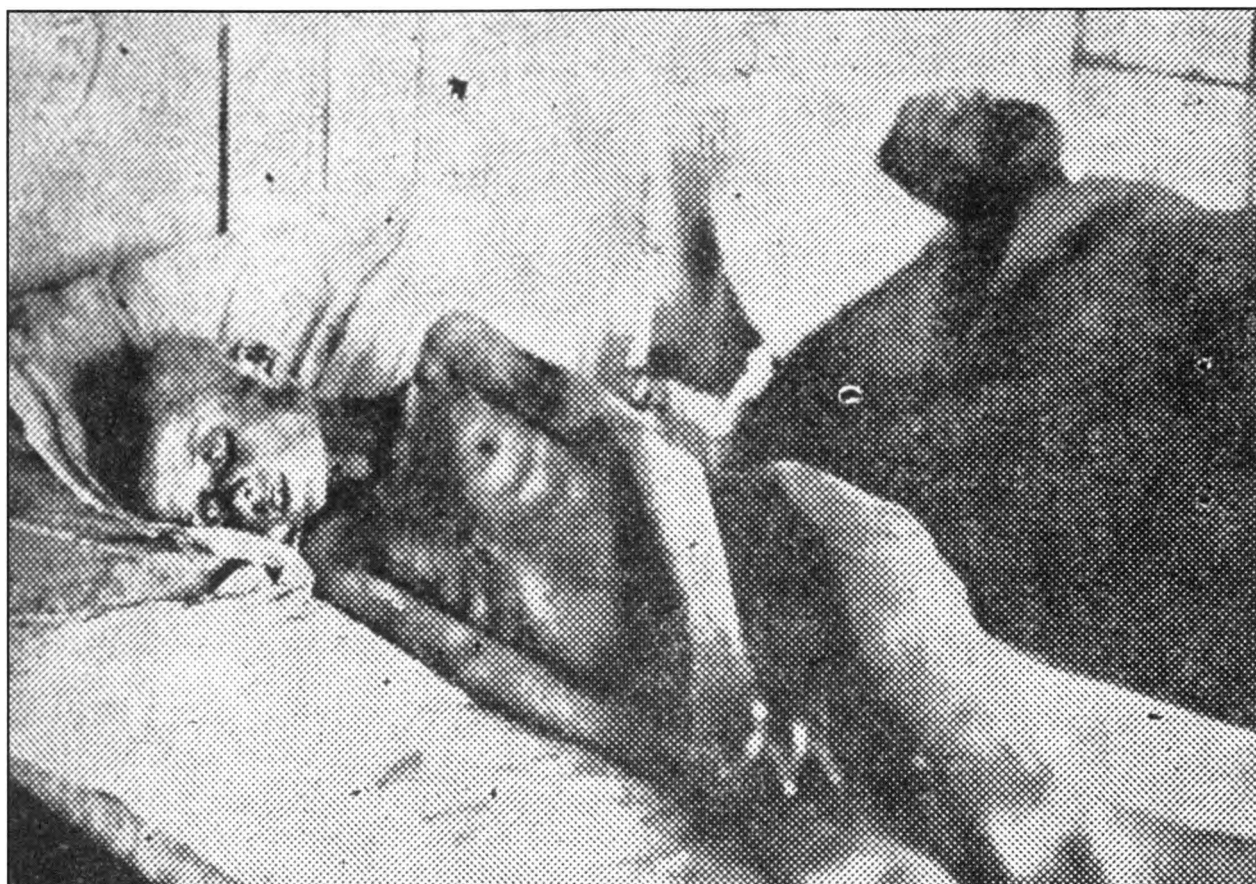
During the Liberation struggle a wave of uprisings swept through the county of Zinkiv.

Later an otaman partisan movement led by Khrystovy, Maliuta, Kundii, and Mandyk operated there. On 20-22 July 1920 they engaged the 14<sup>th</sup> Red Army in a great battle for the town of Liutenka. The Bolsheviks managed to recapture only half the town and out of helpless spite set fire to this large town and burned it to the ground. Otaman Maliuta was killed in the battle.



*Nothing to eat and nowhere to live: this fatherless family was evicted from their house.*





*Entire families starved to death in their houses or yards.*

Khrystovy was killed in 1921. Kundii and Mandyk believed in the Russians' amnesty and both were executed by the GPU in 1921. The people composed epic songs called *dumas* and other songs about Liutenka and those otamans, which have been preserved to this day.

There were 124 households in the hamlet of Severynivka. Before the revolution, because of land hunger, the residents of the hamlet earned a living as hired hands. Despite their poverty, the residents of Severynivka were not thrilled about the Soviet government, and there was no party or Komsomol organization in the hamlet until 1930, when all-out collectivization was being introduced.

The poor peasants of Severynivka were hostile to collectivization. During one of many village meetings Fedir Lysniak openly declared: "My grandfather was a serf, but I, his grandson, will never be a serf. I would rather hang myself than join the collective farm." Either because he wanted to keep his word, or perhaps he sensed that there was no escape, Lysniak went home and hanged himself, leaving behind his wife and six children, five of whom starved to death in 1933.

Finally, several cars filled with GPU troops were sent from Poltava to Zinkiv raion in order to

carry out full collectivization. Severynivka's turn came and the GPU arrived in the hamlet, going from house to house, breaking the locks on closed doors and confiscating poor peasants' horses and equipment. They brought them to the Joint Land Cultivation (*Spilnyi obrobitek zemli*), the first phase of collectivization. This is how the hamlet "voluntarily" ended up in the collective farm. According to the raion authorities, there was no suitable man in the hamlet to head the SOZ. Therefore, a candidate, who was appointed to this post, came with the following recommendation from the raion official: "This is a hardened Red partisan and a model communist, comrade Liberman."

Beginning in spring 1931 handwritten patriotic, anti-Russian, and anti-Soviet leaflets were circulated from hand to hand. A leaflet finally ended up in the hands of the GPU in the neighboring raion of Opishnia in 1932. But its author had been captured by the GPU earlier, because the underground was exposed in spring 1931. The harvest had just begun in 1932 when the grain delivery plan arrived at the collective farm in Severynivka, which was already known as the Voroshilov Collective Farm. The harvest was threshed, with some grain left over for the winter

planting, and the rest of it was shipped to the elevator in the town of Hadiach. One hundred grams of chaff was issued to each peasant for completed workdays. The plan was still short many dozen tons of grain, and the raion authorities insistently demanded that the deliveries continue. They dispatched a commission that inspected the empty grain bins and forced the peasants to rethresh the straw, which produced between twenty and thirty kilograms of chaff a day. The commission also conducted searches in all the houses and confiscated several sacks of grain from last year's harvest or the garden plantings. These results did not please the raion authorities. Soon a brigade of activists arrived in the hamlet, which carried out more thorough searches resulting in a few more sacks of confiscated grain.

In late autumn 1932 a few dozen people armed with pokers and prods arrived in Severynivka from the neighboring raion of Hrunske. This rabble split into groups, each led by a tysiachnyk. They went from house to house, sticking their prods everywhere, poking inside floors and ovens. If they found something suspicious, they would smash the ovens, smash holes in walls, and tear up the floor. The first thing they did was to check if there was any cooked food and then inspect its ingredients, because this would be proof that the collective farms had access to food. As the brigade moved through the village, the wagons started piling up with pots, clay bowls, little bags, and chests filled with grain, millet, beans, peas, corn, flour, as well as various types of hand-mills.

None of these "successes" satisfied the party and the government, so the authorities continued to hound the residents of the hamlet until springtime. Every two weeks brigades of activists made the rounds of Severynivka and all the other villages and hamlets in the raion. It is interesting to note that these village activists were dispatched to raions where they had no relatives or friends, so they could carry out this "government work" with the utmost brutality. These searches netted only a few miserable kilograms of grain and food, but they enabled the government to achieve its vile goal: to keep the population in a state of constant fear, fear that the food they had managed to hide or obtain could be confiscated at any moment. People had to cook and eat at night and keep their ovens cold and empty in the daytime.

This terrible winter was followed by an even more horrific spring: the spring of 1933. The party and the government "granted a concession" to the collective farmers and loaned them sowing grain that had to be transported from the town of Hadiach. The peasants and horses were barely able to walk. Somehow they managed to sow the collective farm field, but most of the vegetable gardens were not dug: the people had no strength to dig and no seeds for sowing. Many people were swollen from starvation, and they ate anything they could get their hands on: fish, birds, frogs, snails, acorns, leaves of linden trees — they "grazed" in the meadows.

Under the Soviets, the former county town of Zinkiv was transformed into a large village: out of eight churches, six were dismantled, and the other two were used as temporary grain warehouses. There was hardly any food for sale at the market, but throngs of people would gather there in the hopes of buying or stealing something. If there was something for sale, it was measured in glassfuls or even spoonfuls. Cutlets, made of dead horses or human flesh, were sold. It was very difficult to buy and sell anything: starving people would throw themselves at the goods, knock people down, and grab everything. Groups of little boys would make lightning strikes and snatch everything up; thanks to this, many survived. Individuals who got their hands on some gold could sell it at the Torgsin. Other people traveled to Russia, where there was no famine, and brought back a few loaves of bread.

I think the village activists that conducted searches in the fall and winter received a portion of what they confiscated from the population. In the springtime, when the searches were halted, many of them also starved to death. Adequate rations of food were issued only to the members of the raion party apparatus, the GPU, the militia, and communists. Important workers also received care packages from Poltava, depending on their rank. These packages were delivered by a special GPU courier, the "Secret Military Courier of the OGPU."

When people were already dying in the hundreds every day, news arrived that the raion hospital was accepting people weakened by starvation and would be feeding them millet cereal. People instantly started bringing their relatives who could no longer walk in the hopes

of obtaining a place in the hospital and saving them from death.

I will cite a case that I know first-hand. Yavdokha Kobzar, who lived on Solovianivka Street in Zinkiv, brought her husband Dmytro in a hand cart and left him at the hospital. She also wanted to bring her twelve-year-old daughter, but she was so weak that she barely managed to bring the empty cart home. The next morning she brought her daughter, who was swollen from starvation, but there was a long line of waiting people. In order to avoid the lineup, Yavdokha spoke to a friend, who was working in the hospital. After listening to her request, he told her: "Take her back home: they're poisoning people here."

"How? What about my Dmytro?" she asked in despair.

"He has already died. They gave him some supper, and in the morning the morgue and the barn was full of corpses."

Stricken with grief, the woman left the hospital and told the people, who were standing, sitting, and lying in line, about the poisonings in the hospital. There was little reaction: some people said that they would die anyway. At least they

would eat some cereal before dying. Other people said that those people ate too much at once and that's why they died.

From the hospital wagon after wagon filled with corpses drove to the cemetery. They were not even covered, although many of the corpses were naked. The starving people looked on apathetically, while some merely asked where all those wagons were coming from. Rumors about the poisonings began to spread, and from day to day the numbers of people wanting to eat cereal in the hospital shrank.

July arrived. There were vegetables in the gardens. In the fields the not quite ripened rye was being harvested and the mortality rate fell somewhat. The harvest came, but the collective farmers were unable to work. The state made another "concession" and loaned them grain to feed themselves. The peasants ground it into flour and baked bread, and the authorities announced throughout the collective farms that lunches would be cooked in the steppe and bread would be distributed. There was no choice. They went there slowly, those who could still walk. Making the sign of the cross over the piece of bread and wiping their tears, they began to eat.



*People looked for food everywhere and often fell dead in the places where they were searching.*

In the hamlet of Severynivka 125 people starved to death during the famine of 1933. Hundreds and hundreds of people died in Zinkiv. When it came time to register school-age children, it turned out that the network of village schools in the raion had to be reduced by one-third. The school in Severynivka was shut down. Some time in August orphanages were opened on the collective farms, where children whose parents starved to death were placed. These were children with initiative, and mature beyond their years. They realized their parents' helplessness and went off to search for food. Some children even managed to save their parents or their orphaned brothers and sisters.

In the summer of 1933 the first parties of settlers from Kalinin, Kaluga, Riazan, and other regions of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic began arriving in the villages and hamlets of Ukraine, emptied by the famine. These settlers grabbed the best farmsteads complete with the vegetable gardens and homes that had belonged to Ukrainians murdered by starvation. The Ukrainians' cold, hostile attitude to the Russian newcomers put an end to the wave of settlers. Some of the newcomers took the hint and headed back to Russia. After the horrific year of 1933 there were no more songs, joking, and laughter in the villages. Ukraine fell silent.

P. Suslyk

## OPISHNIA RAION, POLTAVA REGION

*The following account is by a peasant from the village of Vilske.*

Our village of approximately 5,000 people had about 1,000 households. During the first stages of dekulakization the village was in the hands of a five-man rural party center led by a 25-tysiachnyk named Sharov, who often repeated: "I am a Muscovite worker, who has been sent by the government to create collective farms."

On 27 September 1929, at 10:00 at night, a jealous local communist named Yakiv Suprun shot and wounded Maria Ivanets, a Komsomol member and the head of the village soviet. That night seventy men were arrested in the village. The GPU interrogated all of them and later moved thirteen of them to the prison located on Kobylitska Street in the city of Poltava. Three days later the Poltava newspaper *Bolshevik* announced: "An extraordinary session of the Poltava District Court examined the case of former Petliurite bandits and sentenced nine of them to be shot and four of them to ten years' imprisonment. As for those sentenced to be shot, the sentence has been carried out."

In spring 1930, shortly after the peasants' cattle and equipment were confiscated by force and collective farms were created — despite the peasants' decisive resistance — a few hundred women armed with "women's weapons" demolished the storehouses and took back their

property. The women did not allow their men on the "front line." The GPU instantly swooped down on the village, arresting both women and men, and deporting many of them.

Our village was considered to be short of land. Ninety families out of 1,000 households were dekulakized — evicted from their homes and later deported to the Far North. Young, unmarried people fled the village illegally. It was not possible to leave the village legally with one's family because the authorities did not issue any documents.

In order to intensify the terror, the government adopted the following methods. Peasants who had been dekulakized and evicted from their homes had nowhere to live because the authorities had announced that the same fate would befall those who gave shelter to dekulakized peasants. In order to save themselves and not live with their children outside in the winter, dekulakized peasants would dig an earthen hut in the ground and live in it. Then the village authorities would burn down their stables, conduct a show trial, and sentence them to be shot or imprisoned for ten years as a wrecker. Only a few individuals became defendants at show trials. Hundreds and thousands of peasants were sentenced without a trial according to the Political Representation of the OGPU.

During the famine of 1933 around 700 people died in our village. It had become unrecognizable:

none of the fencing was left. All the metal roofs had been torn off and used for collective farm buildings. Bushes and weeds now sprouted in the orchards. The large stone church was destroyed, and a school and collective farm piggery were built from the bricks!

The famine forced people to scrounge for food at night by stealing from the collective farm.

One night Nastia Slipenko, a young mother with three small children, whose husband had been sentenced, went to the collective farm's field to dig up potatoes. The armed guard shot her in the field and threw her body into a nearby well. Her three children starved to death.

Many children in the village were orphaned and only a few survived. Domna Havrysh, who was eleven years old in 1933, recounted that she

was saved by her nine-year old brother Vasyl. He was very quick-witted, and life had taught him how to find food.

A cultured and hardworking peasant named Shvedchenko brought a bag of bread from Kharkiv and found his wife Maria and five children between the ages of two and ten dead from starvation.

Zakhar Chornohir, who was ordered by the authorities to dig a pit for the corpses, died in that same pit.

A starving peasant named Vasyl Voniarkha, who had been roasting a cat in the oven, was found dead in his house, along with the half-roasted cat.

**V. Vasiuta**

## CHUTOVE RAION, POLTAVA REGION

*The peasant Ivan Melnychenko was born in 1903 in the village of Nova Kochubiivka. His father was a hired hand, who worked for a landowner named Durnov, the proprietor of several thousand desiatinas of land. As soon as his father earned some money, he purchased eight desiatinas of land.*

When the revolution ended, some of our villagers as well as some married and single outsiders founded a "commune" called Pervomaiska on Durnov's estate. These people lived by Lenin's slogan: they worked according to their capability and ate "according to their need." They worked eight hours a day, had a common cafeteria, and acquired everything without money. Before dekulakization and total collectivization Pervomaiska commune was liquidated.

Even before dekulakization began, various "proletarian helping brigades" and "brigades of light cavalry" were constantly bustling around the village. In 1930 25-tysiachnyks were sent to the village. Their leader was Akulov, who convened meetings on every street, demanding that the peasants carry out the "counter-plan" by delivering an average of fifteen poods from every household. He summoned each householder individually, verified the previous delivery, and asked everyone in turn: "So, comrade

Melnychenko, how many poods of grain will you give to the state?" The peasants were detained until midnight and many slept sitting up.

When the "delivery" was completed, Akulov convened a village meeting, expressed a "Bolshevik thank you," and concluded the meeting with these words: "Every household must give another ten poods of grain, because the plan has not been fulfilled."

In 1930 less than half the village had been forcibly collectivized. The rest were dekulakized peasants, workers, independent farmers, or those who had fled the village. Peasants who resisted were prosecuted, their property was sold off, and they were deported. The term "sold" meant a formal auction, but in fact no one went to these auctions, and the collective farm or occasionally one of the leading village activists would purchase everything for a song.

At this time my father and mother were still independent farmers, and I had left for Kazakhstan. In 1932 my father was tried and sentenced to three years' imprisonment for not fulfilling the grain delivery. His house and farm were sold for 300 karbovantsi and he was sent to prison in Poltava. When my father asked during his trial what kind of kurkul he was, since he had worked as a hired hand all his life, the judge



*A whole family is dying of starvation.*

replied: “Even though you are not a kurkul, your house looks like a kurkul’s house.”

My ailing seventy-one-year-old father was released from prison after three months. When he returned to his village, he and my mother went to see their house, which was standing empty. The militia came to chase them away. My father refused to come out of his house. They tore his pants up to the waist and dragged him and my mother outside. My parents lived like vagrants until I brought them to Kazakhstan. Their legs had already started to swell from starvation.

The heads of the village soviet changed frequently. They were our people or outsiders. Some were better than others. The people particularly feared the head of the village soviet in the neighboring village of Pervozvanivka, a communist named Mykhailov. If he wrote a report on someone, that person “would be gone.” When the Germans came in 1941, he was killed.

During the famine of 1933 my sister, who was living in the tiny, ten-house hamlet of Bedraty, some three kilometers from our village, already had legs swollen from starvation. But she didn’t die because she cleverly hid grain in thatched roofs. Whenever her neighbors died, my sister would drag their corpses to the cellar and cover

them with earth, so that they wouldn’t lie around outside. Later this hamlet was destroyed and ploughed over.

The families of those who were sentenced to deportation were transported from our village to the hamlet of Butskivka, where there were five empty houses. They brought many people to those houses; all of them starved to death later. There was not a single soul left in that hamlet.

During the famine in our village the grain was stored in the collective farm’s granaries protected by armed guards. The manager of the granary had been sentenced to five years’ imprisonment because he had secretly given grain to starving people.

In the field of the neighboring Soviet state farm the sugar beets had not been dug up for the winter. The field was protected by armed guards, who fired on people, caught them, and handed them over for prosecution. Nevertheless, people from the neighboring villages would go at night and dig up the frozen beets.

Many people simply abandoned everything and went to search for help. Later these people returned to the village. The peasant P. returned in 1935, after his house was sold by the village soviet. P. went to the prosecutor to get his house

back. The prosecutor asked him: “And where were you?” The peasant replied that he and his family went to the Donbas to save themselves from the famine.

Then the prosecutor began yelling:

“People were starving to death, but you ran away, and now you want your house back?”

Then P. said: “Comrade prosecutor, did you want me to starve to death too?” The prosecutor did not reply. For a long time the peasant fought for his house and finally won it back through the courts.

The Russians didn’t want to hear a thing about the famine. In 1938, I once had a conversation with a Russian woman named Pashcheva at the research station of the Petrivska Soviet state farm. When I told her that many people had starved to death in Ukraine in 1933, she replied angrily: “I will never believe that. And if they died, it means they deserved it.”

We are convinced that the day will come that everyone will know about this catastrophe.

**Ivan Melnychenko**

## **KOLOMAK RAION, KHARKIV REGION**

*In the following account the peasant P. Rud describes events that took place in his native village of Chutove\*.*

Our village had around 1,200 households. Dekulakization took place from 1928 to 1930, and collectivization began in 1929. A total of 160 households were dekulakized: 151 of these families were evicted from their homes, 15 were deported to the Far North, and 90 families were dispersed to parts unknown. In addition, thirty-four people were tried and deported during collectivization.

As a result of this terror, unremitting pressure, and force, the rest of the peasants were hounded into the collective farm in 1929. At some point that year, the women of the village took back their cattle and property.

No scare tactics or persuasions on the part of the authorities convinced the women to return their property to the collective farm. Then the GPU arrived, carried out arrests, and restored the collective farm.

The village priest was arrested in 1931, and the church was closed and later demolished.

After the famine of 1933 it was determined that more than 700 people had starved to death in our village. Many strangers passing through our village also died: some had been heading to Kharkiv, others to Poltava. More than 1,000 people left the village to save themselves, and some of them most certainly starved to death. Fifty or more corpses, villagers and strangers alike, were buried in one huge pit.

**P. Rud**

*\* One of the preceding accounts contains the testimony of a peasant from the village of Kochubiivka in Chutove raion, Poltava region. We must explain this apparent contradiction. Both Kolomak and Chutove are located between Kharkiv and Poltava. At various times people abandoned their native villages, but they still used the old names. In Soviet practice various villages were transferred from one region to another, which resulted in the creation of new regions and raions. People who did not live there permanently had no way of keeping track of these changes.*

## DERKACHI RAION, KHARKIV REGION

The village of Pidhorodnie is situated near the city of Kharkiv. Before collectivization there were over 400 households in the village. After dekulakization and forced collectivization the peasants, mostly women, dismantled the collective farm and beat the village activists, killing one of the tysiachnyks. The GPU responded with mass arrests and executions. My father and two of my uncles were arrested at this time. No one was able to learn what happened to them, but since then we never had any news about them. The families of both my uncles starved to death in 1933. The church in our village was closed in

1931 and eventually torn down. The GPU arrested the priest.

I cannot say exactly how many people died in our village in 1933, but it was a few hundred. Many houses were deserted. Among the dead were some Red partisans from our village: Tkachenko, Zorchenko, and Prysada together with their families. A lot of people that were just passing through also died. The corpses were buried in huge common graves. Many people died in the steppes, where they were buried and ploughed over.

**V. Prokopenko**

## KRASYLIV RAION, KAMIANETS-PODILSKY REGION

*In the following account the author recounts events that took place in his native village of Veremiivka.*

In our village of 120 households, 31 families (list available) were looted and evicted. Seven families were deported to Siberia, and four heads of households were tried and sentenced.

Despite their resistance, the peasants were forcibly hounded into the collective farm. Afterwards, they tried to take back their property. Collectivization was carried out by Martyniuk, a representative of the raion GPU; Bezmertnyi, an official from the raion party center; and Hryhorii Kovalchuk, the head of the village soviet. Mykhailo Velychko was appointed the head of the collective farm. There were also

tysiachnyks — Russians — whose names I cannot recall.

The church in our village was dismantled, and the priest died.

Accused of membership in the Union for the Liberation of Ukraine, the following people were shot: Rohoza, the head of the raion party executive committee, the chief doctor of the raion hospital (I don't recall his name), the peasants Kost Ivanchuk, Ivan Tomashivsky, and others whom I did not know personally and thus cannot recall their names.

**P. Deineka**

*The author lists the names of fifty-one people, including village activists, who starved to death in 1933. He adds: "Another 100 people died, but I do not recall their names."*

## ZNAMIANKA RAION, KHERSON REGION

*The author of the following account was born in 1914 in a hamlet near the village of Trybunove, which belonged to the Donino-Kamianska village soviet.*

My father had a large farm and many children: seven sons and one daughter. When I was still very young, I remember Red Army soldiers arriving at our hamlet. They shoved my father against a wall and put a Nagant revolver in his

mouth. Then they took my father to prison. I also remember that there was a great famine in 1921. In 1926 I was expelled from school as the son of a kurkul.

In March 1928 four families out of a total of eight households in our hamlet were dekulakized. One evening my father was summoned to the village soviet, where he was arrested. The next day some strangers arrived — tysiachnyks and activists from a neighboring village. I only



remember two of them: Andrii Shulika and Ivan Shulika.

They loaded all our belongings onto wagons and brought them to the village soviet. The man in charge even ordered me to remove my boots. One of the Shulikas held me while the other took off my boots. Then, dressed only in the clothes that we were wearing, we were brought to the Korystivka railway station and put on a train. After a long journey we arrived at the Hriazovets railway station, somewhere near Arkhangelsk, and housed in military barracks fitted with ready-built four-tier bed boards. They packed the people in like herrings in a barrel, while other groups of Ukrainian peasants were led right into the forests, where they had to build barracks for themselves. All the men and boys were marched twenty kilometers into the forest to chop down trees. We were issued only a bit of bread and some rotten herring. It was never enough and everyone was always hungry.

One of my brothers and I fled the work site and following the tracks of wild animals, we began making our way back to Ukraine on foot. Sometimes we would hop cargo trains, but would jump out of the moving train before it reached a station. We arrived in our native area some time in the summer. I began to work at the Havryliv Soviet state farm, and my brother was allowed to join a collective farm. After a few weeks my brother was summoned to the village soviet, and the GPU took him away. He then disappeared without a trace.

After some time I was summoned to the collective farm. There was nowhere to hide, so I had to go. There, a GPU representative asked for the documents with which I had returned home. I said that the children were let go and that I had lost the certificate during my journey. He asked where my father, mother, and brothers were. I replied that they had not been released and they had stayed there. He told me: "Go!" I left the

village soviet and decided to leave the Soviet state farm.

Right away I moved to the Donbas, where I worked in Makiivka and enrolled in a factory technical school. Soon the Komsomol organization found out about my origins. The Komsomol secretary called me a "kurkul mug" and said that I had been exiled without the right of return and that he would have me arrested and sent back.

I left the school, moved to Kadiivka, and worked on railway construction and in the Zelenyi Hai mine. I spent three years in the Donbas (1929-1931) without documents. There was always someone who would hire me, but after a while the "special section" would find out about me, and I had to run away. In 1932 I moved to Central Asia and worked at the Tadzhikgosstroj Trust on the Melkombinat construction in Yangibazar, some twenty kilometers from the city of Stalinabad, near the Iranian border. They finally learned about my origins even there and sent me to the rear irregulars (forced labor instead of military service for political unreliaables).

I was in the 900 and something battalion (I don't remember the exact number) stationed at the Chernovka mines at the Chernovka railway station near Chita, past Lake Baikal. The work in these mines was very difficult, and on top of it, various political commissars demanded two work quotas from us. If you didn't complete it, you were an enemy of the people and would work for five years instead of three.

In 1933 I was in the Tadzhik SSR. There was also a famine there, and people were swollen and starved to death. The only people who survived were those who caught turtles, ate turtle eggs, hedgehogs, and dogs.

I was in my native area during the war and heard that in 1933 very many people died in my village and all other villages.

**H. Shumylo**

## **TRYKRATY RAION, MYKOLAIV REGION**

In 1929 there were forty-seven households in the hamlet of Novyi Stavok. During 1929-30 all forty-seven families were dekulakized. Two peasants, Yosyp Holovko and Tymish Liashko,

were shot. Three families were deported to the Far North, and the rest — forty-two families — dispersed in all directions, mainly to the Donbas.

**Panas Obruch**

# BOBROVYTSIA RAION, CHERNIHIV REGION

*The author of the following account was born in the town of Bobrovytsia, located 78 kilometers east of Kyiv.*

In 1933 I was only ten years old, and I only know what took place on our street, called Dvirnia. When I was going to school in the winter of 1932-1933, many schoolchildren were already swollen from starvation.

In 1933 the collective farmers were not issued a single gram of food for completed workdays. On top of it brigades of tysiachnyks were going from house to house, searching for hidden grain with iron prods. If five or ten kilos of grain were found, the head of the household would be tried and sent to a concentration camp. Among the neighbors who died on our street were Semen Makarenko, Pylyp Makarenko, Ivan Drobiazko, and Leonid Drobiazko and his wife.

The husband of one of our neighbors starved to death. Realizing that her children were also

going to starve to death, the widow brought her three children to the city of Nizhyn and abandoned them on the street so that they would be taken to a children's shelter. Afterwards, the woman cried all the time and searched for her children, but she never found them.

Many people would come to the marketplace in Bobrovytsia to look for some food, and many of them died there or at the railway station. One woman died on our doorstep. You could not buy anything anywhere except at the Torgsin, which opened in Bobrovytsia in 1933. You could buy anything there, but only for gold. Many people left our town, even though the authorities were not issuing documents, and no train tickets for travel outside Ukraine were being sold at the railway station. Approximately 300 people starved to death in Bobrovytsia and were buried 30-50 at a time in common graves.

I remember all this myself or my father told me.

**Semen Cherednychenko**

## SUMY REGION

### OKHTYRKA RAION

*The author of the following account, who was born in the village of Yabluchne, says that he only heard about the famine of 1921-1922 from his mother, because he was too young to remember.*

*In the village of Yabluchne dekulakization and collectivization were accompanied by mass arrests and deportations of families to the Urals and Siberia. The author has compiled lists of the deported families and those who were arrested, but notes that he does not remember all the names.*

The peasants were not joining the collective farm, and they didn't vote in favor of joining it. But they could not vote against joining the collective farm. They refused to bring their property to the collective farm until the GPU arrived. After this, all the equipment and cattle ended up on the Ilich Collective Farm. At the time many peasants were arrested. Some peasants were beaten, stripped of

their clothing and shoes. Everything was confiscated, down to the last bean.

During a subsequent wave of arrests the priest, deacon, and several evangelical believers were taken from our village, and the church was turned into a club.

In 1933 the famine was raging in our village, but I cannot give even an approximate estimate of how many people died. [Mykolenko attaches a list of eleven families with whom he was acquainted; all of them starved to death: a total of seventy-eight people]. But this number is far from the real one. Many people left the village, walking to the neighboring Ivanivsky and Ulianivsky Soviet state farms.

I was swollen from starvation. I ate presscake made from the dry, fibrous residue left from sugar beets, and chaff.

There were rumors that Postyshev, the secretary of the CP(B)U had visited some neighboring villages, but he didn't come to ours.

The corpses of the peasant victims of the artificial famine were transported to mass graves and buried there, forty to fifty people at a time.

Children whose parents had starved to death were taken to the children's shelter at the collective farm.

**A. Mykolenko**

## NEDRYHAILIV RAION

*In the following account the peasant K. Dibrova recounts events in his native village of Vilshana.*

In 1919 a communist food delivery detachment from Russia was raging in our village, carrying out requisitions and abusing the population. The peasants, led by Danylo Pylypenko, armed themselves with village weapons and attacked the detachment in order to disarm it. A punitive detachment of 100 men arrived from Lebedyn and shot eleven peasants who had not even taken part in the uprising. They tied twenty-year-old Stefan Roseiko, who came to his father's defense, to the tail of a young, three-year-old, unbroken horse, and sent him into the street. Roseiko and the pieces of his son's body were buried in a single coffin.

There were nearly 2,000 households in our village. Of these 152 were dekulakized and 72 people were deported to the Far North. Many people were tried by troikas consisting of tysiachnyks and sentenced to prison terms. Nothing was ever heard from them again, and none of them returned.

Our village was hostile to the government, and until 1929 there were no communists here, except those who would arrive from elsewhere, usually Russians. The peasants refused to join the collective farm, despite the terror wreaked by the tysiachnyks from Russia, whose names I cannot remember. People were evicted from their homes in the middle of winter, along with their children. All their property was brought to the collective farm, and their houses were boarded up. There was an order in the village: anyone caught sheltering dekulakized peasants would suffer the same fate. Despite this threat, the peasant Dmytro Kryshstopa sheltered a dekulakized family. He too was evicted along with his small children, and his belongings were confiscated. The peasants were forcibly hounded into the collective farm. But all

efforts to appoint a Russian, Pavel Deev, who was specially sent to the village as the head of the collective farm, were to no avail: the peasants elected a man from our village. Then Deev was appointed to head the cooperative, and the director of the collective farm was soon tried on charges of "sabotage." Afterwards, another villager was elected to head the collective farm, but he too was tried and sentenced. From then on, only people sent in from outside the village were appointed to head the collective farm. The villagers became convinced that resistance was hopeless.

There were two churches in the village. The stone church was demolished and its bricks were used to build a road. The wooden church was dismantled and burned by the village authorities.

During the artificial famine 714 people, including 62 families, starved to death in the village. Among them was the family of the priest, Rev. Pavlo Bondarenko. People were swollen and exhausted. One villager named Panko Shevchenko went to the forest next to the village to pick a bagful of linden leaves. He became so tired that he sat under a tree and died there. The corpses of famine victims were buried in mass graves. Orphaned children were taken to children's shelters at the collective farm and later sent to parts unknown. In 1934 the village soviet conducted a census, but I think they could not determine anything, because it was not known whether a person had died or left to save himself.

**K. Dibrova**

## HLYNSK RAION

*In the following account the author talks about his native village of Nastasivka.*

One hundred and five households out of 675 were dekulakized, looted, and evicted from their homes, and then deported to Siberia.

The rest of the peasants were forcibly hounded into the collective farm. The church was destroyed, and the priest disappeared from the village. Many people perished during the famine of 1933. The collective farm formed a burial brigade that collected and transported corpses to mass graves. I cannot say how many people died.

**I. Ivanenko**

## LEBEDYN RAION

*The author recounts events that took place in his native village of Hudymivka.*

In 1919 nineteen men from our village were shot for resisting the Bolsheviks. An insurgent detachment led by Marfenko operated from 1920 to 1928. During this period nearly seventy communists were killed in the area.

Our village contained nearly 1,000 households, about 150 of which were dekulakized and evicted from their homes. One hundred of these families were deported to the Far North. The terrorized peasants were forcibly hounded into the collective farm. During this entire time the heads of the collective farm were people who had been sent here from Russia. They were frequently replaced. Only one Russian, a man named Romanov, held onto his position in the last years before the war; he was killed when the Germans arrived.

During and after dekulakization and collectivization, officials from the center, called tysiachnyks, kept arriving in the village, where they headed the “work” of the local activists.

In 1933 nearly 300 people, including 25 families and some activists, starved to death in the village of Hudymivka. The corpses of people who had starved to death were buried in mass graves. Orphaned children were brought to the children’s shelter at the collective farm.

**I. Perepelytsia**

## TALALAIV RAION

*Panas Nechypailo, from the village of Havrylivka, recounts the same methods.*

Approximately 90 households out of a total of 800 were dekulakized. Seven families were deported to the Ural region. In 1929, 25-tysiachnyks and village activists created a collective farm by means of threats, pressure, and force. A Russian named Fateev was appointed as the head of the collective farm.

Many people starved to death in 1933. Their corpses were thrown into pits, like animals, and covered up. Those who survived had swollen legs, i.e., swollen from starvation. Many people tried to save themselves by escaping from the village without documents, because the village soviet did not issue any.

**Panas Nechypailo**



*This man, who starved to death, lay in the field for nearly ten days until some people found him and removed his body.*

## BILIAIVKA RAION, ODESA REGION

*The author of the following account says that he came to Biliaivka raion after completing his education*

In February 1930, about a month before I arrived, the women from the large village of Hradnytsia, located on the banks of the Dnister River, some forty kilometers from Odesa, organized an uprising against dekulakization and forcible collectivization. They expelled the local authorities and took back their property from the

collective farm. These actions spread to the neighboring villages of Biliaivka and Yasky. GPU detachments from Odesa brutally crushed the women's rebellion and arrested the women, but even more men, even though they had not taken part in the uprising. Many people fled across the Dnister River to Romania, with the exception of a few individuals, who were hidden by their relatives. The Romanian authorities handed over all the fugitives to the Soviet government.

**S. Yushko**

## MAKIIVKA RAION, STALINO\* REGION

*The author of the following account says that in 1933 he was working on the railway in the vicinity of the Khanzhonkove railway station, servicing the Kapitalna, Shmidt, Kosior, No. 13, No. 17, and No. 17-II mines.*

The situation in the villages around the mines was the same one that existed throughout Ukraine: dekulakization, collectivization, grain delivery plans, evictions from homes, tysiachnyks, searches, arrests by the GPU, and trials. People went to the mines in search of work and a bread ration card in order to save themselves. Approximately one-half of those who arrived in the Donbas were on their last legs, days or even hours away from death. They were completely swollen and did not resemble humans. People who were swollen from starvation were not hired. Every day long lines of people guarded by the militia snaked around the bread shops. A short distance away stood crowds of starving peasants, who often died where they were standing. Occasionally, someone would sell his daily ration — 800 or 1,000 grams of bread — for forty karbovantsi per kilogram. Few people could purchase bread at this price: workers repairing the railway, switchmen or train couplers were paid between 120 and 125 karbovantsi per month.

From those times I remember the remarks of a drunken Russian miner: "There is now a linkage between miners and villages in our country. I have just sold my bread ration. Even though I am hungry, I have money to buy something to drink. And it's good for him [the starving peasant] too: my ration will keep him living another day."

At all the train stations in the Donbas and near railway tracks lay corpses of peasants; some were

still alive, but they could no longer stand, and the authorities did not have time to pick them up. Starving peasants walked or lay about the railway tracks. They were completely apathetic and did not react to the signals of approaching steam locomotives. I witnessed several peasants falling under the wheels of passing trains.

Some 400 meters from the Khanzhonkove train station, at mine No. 17, where the cable carts dump the rocks, lay a naked corpse whose left arm was raised upwards. I saw this corpse lying untouched during February and March of 1933, until gradually — first the body, then the arm, then the palm of the hand — was covered by rocks.

The authorities regarded this case and all others as a normal phenomenon. In the meantime the government was issuing hysterical propagandistic slogans: "Break the resistance of the class enemy!" "Destroy the kulaks as a class!"

I will briefly describe the situation of the workers. I received 800 grams of bread and 300 or 400 grams (I don't remember exactly) for my wife. For an entire half-year during the worst period of the famine, I did not receive anything for my mother. During this period the government did not increase the workers' food ration cards to include their families.

I worked with a peasant, who lived in a village some thirty kilometers from Khanzhonkove. His situation was particularly serious: he had a large family to support. But he did not receive a single ration card for the members of his family. He told me that nearly half of the people in his village had starved to death.

**Maksym Kochur**

\*In 1961 the name of Stalino region was changed to Donetsk.

## MEDZHYBIZH RAION, VINNYTSIA REGION

*In the following account the author talks about his village of Shrubkiv, which had approximately 200 households, and the neighboring village of Mytkivtsi, which had over 150 households.*

In both villages collectivization was introduced by means of terror and force, and was accompanied by dekulakization, looting, evictions

from homes, trials, and the activities of tysiachnyks.

According to records kept by the village soviet, in 1933, 700 people starved to death in our village and were buried in mass pits. In the village of Mytkivtsi not a single person out of 150 households survived. Everyone died, except for those who may have fled.

**P. Bezruchko**

## STAROBILSKE RAION, VOROSHYLOVHRAD\* REGION

*The author of the following account says that in 1933 he passed through Starobilske raion. This northern part of the Donbas was one of the richest areas of Ukraine. The villages were now almost depopulated, and yards and streets were overgrown with weeds. Fields of winter wheat lay unharvested.*

Later, I had occasion to travel again to this area. Russians had been shipped into the depopulated

villages, but many of them went back [to Russia]. One of their reasons was that both men and women had to work hard here, and the Russians were not used to this in their forests.

**Semen Martyniuk**

\*Renamed Luhansk region in 1990.



*During the terrible famine starving people fell on the streets, where they died.*

# PLASTUNIVSKY RAION, KUBAN

*The following account was written by a  
Kuban Cossack from the village of  
Starokorsunsk.*

During the uprising against the Soviets in 1920 the Red Army fired on the village from an armored train and after expelling the insurgents from the village, they shot twenty-four men whom they buried in manure for added humiliation.

Among the men who were executed were Storozhenko, Harhulia, Babansky, and others whose names I do not remember.

The village of Starokorsunsk had a population of nearly 14,000. Muscovite tysiachnyks, with the help of activists sent from other locales, carried out dekulakization and collectivization. In addition, a GPU cavalry detachment was sent to the village, where it was constantly on battle alert. I only remember the name of Mukhomorov, who was the leading figure. This killer was both the court and executive authority. The village population suffered inhuman repressions for its resistance to collectivization. Mukhomorov arrested people and in several waves deported between sixty... a hundred villagers at a time. The heads of collective farms were replaced

frequently, which is why I cannot remember their names, because they were strangers, who had been sent there.

Stalin's "closest companion-in-arms," Lazar Moiseevich Kaganovich, who spent a long time in Rostov, where he was in charge of all the crimes in that area, was dispatched from Moscow to break the resistance to collectivization.

In 1928 the priest and the deacon were arrested, and the church was destroyed. Mass arrests, especially of Ukrainian activists, took place in 1932.

Dekulakization, mass arrests, and deportations were followed by the artificially created famine of 1932-1933, as a result of which approximately 1,000 half-dead people from our village survived out of a total of 14,000. The engineered famine claimed collective farm members and non-members alike, as well as village schoolteachers and even collectivization activists. Russians from Tula, Kursk, and other [Russian] regions were shipped to the village. The neighboring villages of Voronizka and Dinska ended up on the blacklist, and they suffered the same fate as our village.

**Dmytro Fesenko**

## FAMINE IN THE CRIMEA

*The author of the following account says that in early 1933 he ended up in the Crimea while hiding as a dekulakized peasant without documents. In the northern steppe part of the Crimea, for the most part settled by Ukrainians, the villages were just as devastated as in Ukraine. The author frequently encountered people swollen from starvation edema. Later the author went to the Crimean city of Sevastopol\*, where he was shocked by the high food prices and the huge lines of people waiting to buy bread.*

From Sevastopol I moved to the city of Yalta, where I worked as a carpenter fixing doors and floors. I traveled around from place to place.

Finally, I got a job rebuilding the Yalta coastal railway station, where I was issued 500 grams of bread a day and some dried fish.

The Crimean Tatars were also swollen from starvation, and although there was no mass mortality among them, I often saw the swollen corpses of Tatar peasants.

I am only recording what I saw, because even in those days, and subsequently, I avoided conversations with people so that I would not be questioned and denounced to the authorities.

**Pavlo Loza**

\* From 1935, access to Sevastopol was restricted to people with special permits.

# HOW THE FARMERS OF FERTILE UKRAINE BEGGED FOR BREAD

I come from a peasant family that lived in Bohodukhiv raion, Kharkiv region. I was born on 26 October 1920, so I was a teenager during the famine of 1932-1933.

I clearly remember the year 1932, particularly the autumn, which was marked by the total destruction of Ukrainian villages as a result of the complete victory of imperialist Moscow. In December 1932 my family was totally looted by the Soviet government. All our property from the yard and building was confiscated, down to the smallest item. The following year, 1933, was a catastrophe for my family. My uncle, who had been dekulakized and thrown into the street, starved to death.

I recall that this tragic period in the life of the Ukrainian countryside began with the first trainload of arrested peasants, who were being deported to Siberia. That year, 1932, the so-called "plenipotentiary" 25-tysiachnyks (i.e., those 25,000 communists who were specially dispatched from Russia to Ukraine to loot and plunder the Ukrainian peasants) together with

brigades of local village activists, looted all the peasants' grain, justifying this crime with the phrase, "the government needs bread." These brigades thoroughly looted the wealthier peasants, who were derogatorily dubbed kurkuls, confiscating all their property, evicting them from their houses, and deporting many of them to Siberia. After the kurkuls another category of peasants, "subkurkuls," was created in order to persecute and rob them too. Included in the subkurkul group were all those who were the slightest bit disloyal to the Soviet government, including poor peasants, who had refused to join collective farms. These peasants formed a huge majority.

My father was included in this group of subkurkuls. After being dekulakized, my dispossessed father asked an official in charge of the grain deliveries why he had been dekulakized. The official replied [in Russian]: "Because you live well. Go, make a complaint against me to Soviet justice!"



*A woman looking for spikelets of grain on a field fell and died in the furrow.*



The situation in the cities and industrial centers was not much better. Whereas the peasantry had been deprived of all food resources for their survival, half-starved workers and bureaucrats in Ukraine were able to obtain between 200 and 400 grams of bread each with ration cards. Several times in 1933 I had occasion to travel to the city to get a kilogram of so-called “commercial bread.” However, almost always I had to return home without having bought bread or any other food; on my back I bore a number written in chalk, indicating my place in the line: it was either 900 or over 1,000. I always arrived in the city on the morning train in order to get one of the first places in the line near the doors of the shop that sold “commercial bread.” Many people in the line, having spent the entire day waiting without getting anything, would disperse in sadness, and the empty shop would close its doors.

It is characteristic that during the famine of 1933 and afterwards, once the new harvest time arrived, the Soviet press did not mention a single word about this horrific terror by starvation. Only occasionally you could read a phrase in the newspapers, that the “Soviet fatherland had experienced great difficulties,” or you could hear something similar from the communist propagandists and history teachers in schools.

Beginning in 1941, my memories of the terrible year of starvation, 1933, in Ukraine are closely linked to a conversation I had with a woman in a village in Smolensk region, where I was stationed with the Soviet army.

“So you’re not Russian?” asked the Russian woman at whose house we had stopped to spend

one night in autumn. Since we had not had supper, we were discussing whether to go in search of our field kitchen, which had also stopped for the night somewhere in this village, or to skip supper. In order to calm down my fellow soldiers, because it was difficult to locate our field kitchen in the autumn darkness in the strange village, I told them: “In the year 1933 we, boys, lived for months without a scrap of bread, and even then not everyone starved to death. So we can somehow spend one night without food!” The boys agreed with me. It was at this point that the landlady asked about my nationality.

“No, I’m Ukrainian,” I said.

“Yes, in 1933 very many people came through our villages from Ukraine, begging a bit of bread,” she said.

Her words instantly sparked terrible memories, and I became very upset, because after the Muscovite-Bolshevik government devastated the villages of Ukraine, our peasants were forced to go to this poor Smolensk region in Russia, where only potatoes, rye, and oats are cultivated, in order to save themselves from death by starvation — to beg throughout the villages of this impoverished Russian land.

Utterly amazed, I asked:

“Wasn’t there a famine in your country in 1933?”

“No, dear, in our country the year 1933 was better than ever,” replied the Russian woman. Afterwards, she changed the topic of conversation and invited us to share her supper.

**B. K**

## FAMINE IN ZAPORIZHIA

I remember how the famine began. I remember wagons going around and confiscating everything, like a broom. We had a small quantity of beans. Mama had mixed them up with some garbage, so that if you took a handful, you could only pick out two or three beans, but the executioners confiscated even that.

The Sahych family lived across the estuary from our house. They used to be well-off, and I don’t know why they had not been deported to Siberia. People like them were always being

deported. They had two daughters, real beauties. I always admired them and dreamed of becoming like them when I got older. One time I was walking past the Sahych’s house. The doors and windows were wide open. I look, and the father is sitting at the table, with his head in his hands, and his daughters are lying on the floor. Hunks of flesh had been carved out of their bodies.

**S. Lymar**

City of Zaporizhia.

# FAMINE IN THE DONBAS

I witnessed the famine of 1933 in Ukraine in the Donbas, at the Khartsyzke railway station (Stalino region) to be exact, which is located on the Dnipropetrovsk-Rostov railway line.

From February 1933 this railway station began filling up with men, women, and children who were fleeing death from starvation and traveling to the Donbas from various regions of Ukraine: Kyiv, Vinnytsia, Poltava, etc. Every day on my way to work I would walk past this station and see people holding sacks: they were dressed in rags, swollen from starvation edema, and black with dirt. They would come up to me and ask for bread or something else to eat. From time to time the militia would chase those people from the station, but they would always flock back. Some of the starving would hang themselves out of despair in sheds belonging to local residents, railway workers, or from trees.

In spring 1933 the influx of starving people continued to increase. Black like shadows, these people wandered around the station and throughout the city of Khartsyzke. There was no more any room in the station building or on the platform for the starving people, who covered the entire floor. Others lay sleeping and dying in the city squares and on the streets. Every morning I

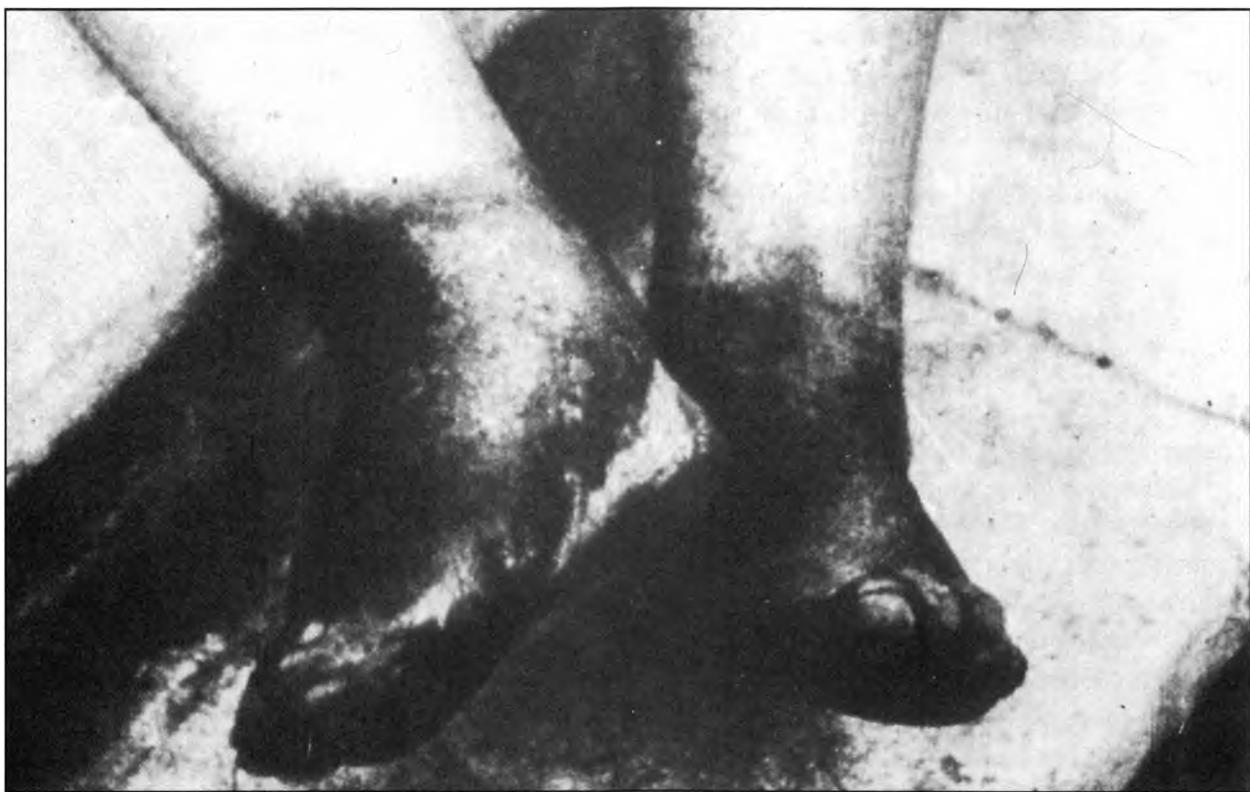
saw piles of uncollected corpses, their families often sitting next to them, unable to react to their surroundings.

The militia dispersed local workers, so that they would not stare at the dead people or talk with those who were starving. They would collect the corpses and take them away somewhere. Every day many people who had starved to death would be unloaded from train cars.

In April starving people flooded the city. They lay in the streets and intersections, stretching out their emaciated arms, begging for alms.

They said: "You can see for yourself why we are begging." They had to speak very carefully, because the militia and secret collaborators of the GPU monitored what these starving people were saying and who was giving them assistance.

People would die on the streets, clutching the coins collected through begging. Outside the city of Khartsyzke was the Horniak Soviet state farm no. 5. One day I was going to the farm and heard a man groaning in some bushes on the left side of the road. I crawled into a patch of nettles and began to track the sound of his voice. Then I saw a handsome, gray-haired man of about sixty-five lying on the bare ground, covered with a warm peasant jacket. His mouth was open



*This person with swollen feet can no longer walk in search of a scrap of bread.*

and his eyes were closed. His whole face was covered with flies. I chased away the flies, looked around carefully, and asked him:

“Who are you, grandfather?”

He whispered:

“I am from the Vinnytsia area. I heard that there was bread in the Donbas. I came here to save myself from death. Don’t give me bread now but some thin broth, because I will die from bread.”

I went to the state farm’s administration office and told them what I had seen and heard. They promised me that they would send soup to the starving man. But in fact no one did anything, because everyone was afraid of helping the starving man. The next morning a militia man arrived from Khartsyzke. All that was left for him to do was determine the death of the old man from the Vinnytsia region in the nettles next to the road.

Some starving people were lucky to find a job. But they continued to starve: the “employed” continued to wander the roads, digging in garbage dumps in search of scraps of food.

One day I was walking to the city of Makiivka, and next to the pipe plant I noticed people peeking out from behind various hillocks. I saw a dead horse lying in the ditch. I realized that these people were sitting in wait to steal the horse and not be spotted by secret collaborators of the GPU. The horse carrion would serve as food for them. When I was going home that same day after sunset, I saw that the only thing left of the horse was the skeleton. The men and women had chopped up the horse with their axes, hidden hunks of meat in their sacks, and brought them to the plant.

Later I often saw such incidents on the road to Makiivka.

But at meetings or in conversations the communists did not mention a single word about these scenes of the horrific famine or about the deaths from starvation. All of them had to uphold the official directive of red Moscow, according to which “Ukraine is a blossoming and happy country”; there is no famine nor “can there be one.”

**Mykhailo Vyzr**

## **STARVING PEOPLE ON THE SQUARES OF KHARKIV**

My parents were peasants, who starved to death during the black year of 1933. That year, in addition to my father and mother, my three sisters and two brothers died. I became homeless and wandered throughout the USSR.

A few facts are engraved in my memory, and I will recount them here.

It is the spring of 1933. Famine is raging throughout Ukraine. Peasants are abandoning their homes and villages. Swollen from starvation, they head for large cities in the hope of finding a scrap of bread and saving their lives. But in the cities they are rounded up by the militia, loaded on vehicles, transported out of the city, and dumped into a ravine. People were dying in huge numbers.

In Kharkiv, which was then the capital city of Ukraine, I saw a starving woman being eaten alive by maggots on Kinna Square. Passersby gave her bits of bread, but the unfortunate woman did not eat it, because she was close to death. She was crying and asking for medical help, which no one gave her.

Many people who had starved to death were lying on the streets of Kharkiv. They lay near fences and on the banks of the Zhuravlivka River.

A militia man arrested me in Kharkiv’s 8<sup>th</sup> district and brought me to the raion militia administration, where I was put in a cell. The next morning, all the prisoners, including me, were waiting for the bread ration, but we did not get one. The cell was filled to overflowing; everyone was exhausted and hungry. That morning we were let out for some fresh air. In the courtyard stood a red brick building. I walked past this building and saw a metal chute going through the frameless window down to the basement. I thought that maybe food for the militia was being loaded here, and I peered into the basement. It was sunny, and I clearly saw that the basement was packed with murdered people — women and men. I saw no elderly people among them; these were exclusively younger people. It was obvious that they had not been murdered in the basement, but had been brought here and dumped through the window without frames and the metal chute. I

was gripped with horror. I fled from that place, because I was afraid that I would be spotted by the militia. I would certainly have paid with my life if some militia man had realized that I had seen that horror in the basement.

Somehow I managed to extricate myself from the prison in the 8<sup>th</sup> militia district. Leaving Kharkiv, I made my way through Bilhorod, Bilyi Kolodiaz, Vovchanske, and other cities, heading for Russia. No matter where I went, everywhere I saw my fellow countrymen — Ukrainians — starving, swollen, and dead. Dead Ukrainian peasants lay at every Russian railway station.

In my homeless state I roamed various places in Russia, Ukraine, and the Caucasus, and everywhere I saw the same picture: my countrymen, swollen from starvation or dead.

I did not die only because I was helped by a man who was in charge of the supply department at an arms plant in Kharkiv. He was a Jew named Shnaider.

When I returned to Kharkiv from Russia, starving and dressed in rags, I ended up homeless at the arms plant on Iskrynska Street. There was a kitchen there, and I found myself a place to sleep at night.

One evening I went outside and bumped into a director dressed in a white suit.

“What are you doing here?” he asked me, putting his hand on the Browning in his holster.

I told him that I was homeless, that my whole family had died, and that I was sleeping in the attic above the kitchen.

“And do you know that patrols come around here?” he asked me harshly.

“Yes, I know,” I replied. Then he told me to go and sleep, warning me to avoid being spotted. He told me to come the next day to the building that he indicated with his hand, to room no. 9, at exactly 9:00 a.m.

The next morning at 9:00 I went to see him. When I entered his office, he asked me:

“Would you like to work for us?”

“Yes,” I replied.

“Be careful, work well, because you know what these times are like!” he said in parting, after hiring me to herd cows for the plant.

Later I found out the name of my benefactor and the post that he occupied in this arms plant.

**M. Kozka**

## CANNIBALISM IN THE POLTAVA REGION

Very many villages in the Poltava region suffered at the hands of the communist government. I will discuss only one, the village of Shylyvka in the county of Khorol, which is known today as Reshetylivka raion. It was not a large village; there were only 640 households. An equal number of peasants lived in various hamlets. All these farmers worked the land by themselves, without hired help.

The communists began preparing for the famine as early as 1929. They spewed out a lot of venom until they had poisoned the people. Grachev, and Voronov, and others, who came from all over the USSR to Ukraine, brought things to such a pass that only ninety-seven households were left in the village. There were thirteen people in Ostap Metelyk's family, and all but three died. There were thirteen people in Ivan Pikulia's family, and all but three died. In many families there was only one survivor.

What did they do in the hamlets? All the residents died in the hamlets of Levchenko,

Zemlianky, Lohvyna, Horobets na Plavniakh, Horobtsi na Solomyiakh, and Horobtsi na Hori, which had eleven windmills. All the residents of the hamlets of Feshchenko and Khodiienko-Kuzmenko also died. A collective farm was created out of the remnants of the hamlet of Tereshchenko. Only one house remained in the hamlet of Shkuraty. The hamlets of Lukash and Onyshchenko were turned into a collective farmyard.

In Shylyvka in the hungry year of 1933, it got to the point that people began to eat people. People began to swell from starvation edema and dozens died every day. The village soviet formed a brigade to collect the corpses of people who had starved to death: in the morning they collected those who had died during the night; and in the evening, those who had died during the day. One day sixteen people died right next to the cooperative. They wanted to buy something and had given up their souls to God right there. They were collected and dumped like sheaves of wheat

onto wagons and brought right to the cemetery, where people were already digging pits, and huge ones at that, designed to fit twenty to thirty corpses at a time. They placed the corpses in several rows and layers. The dead were buried without a priest or incense censer, because where could you find a priest? They had all been deported either to the Solovets Islands or Kolyma, and the holy churches had been destroyed.

But some people noticed that not everyone ended up in the cemetery. Today they would see a man or woman walking, swollen with hunger, and the next day they had disappeared. There were many cases like this. The brigade that transported dead people often reported on this to the village soviet, to no avail. The members of the brigade argued at the village soviet that these people could not have fled because they were so swollen.

One evening the secretary of the village soviet, Andrii Vasyliovych Khodiienko, was walking home when he was attacked by cannibals. Naturally, the secretary was a young man, healthy and well fed. Even though he had been seized by three men, he managed to shake them all off, together with his coat. Before running away, he recognized the three men. They were Kindrat Lukashenko, and Hnat Kinash, and Kysil. Later,

the secretary telephoned to Reshetylivka raion, and the next morning the GPU arrived and went to the people whom the secretary had identified. In Lukashenko's house they found a lot of human bones, heads, and hands, and human flesh was roasting in two cast-iron pots in his oven. Many human bones were also found in Hnat Kysil's house, including the recently murdered Hanna Chalenkova, parts of whose flesh were being cooked. At Kinash's house they found a pit underneath the bed, which was full of human bones and the cut-up bodies of two children. When the GPU asked the cannibals whose children they were, they replied that the children were theirs. When the children had become feeble, they ate them.

There were many incidents like this in the village. But the GPU only tried six captured people, i.e., the guilty parties that had started the cannibalism. People said that they were sent to Kharkiv for trial. Even later, there were many other horrible incidents in the village. When parents became weak from starvation, their children would disperse throughout kitchen gardens to pick and eat weeds or knot-grass. They were taught to do this by their late mothers, who had crawled around with them until they went to their eternal rest. Few survived.

**K. Horobets**



*A starving man lying on his deathbed.*

# INDUSTRIAL GIANTS AND “PARKS OF CULTURE” BUILT ON HUMAN BONES

I am recounting events that I witnessed with my own eyes. The facts and names are listed truthfully, without distortions and exaggerations. If these facts must be notarized, I am ready to do this.

The city of Zaporizhia grew from the former county town of Oleksandrivsk whose population before the revolution numbered between 20,000 and 25,000 people. It is located six kilometers downriver from [the electrical power plant of] Dniprelstan on the left bank of the Dnipro. The construction of Dniprelstan began in 1927, and its main installation was the aluminum industrial complex and Zaporizhstal. The city of Zaporizhia grew up around Dniprelstan, on both banks of the Dnipro River, and before the war, in 1941, its population was over 150,000.

In 1933 I was working as a digger at Sotsbudivnytstvo [Socialist Construction] in Zaporizhia, digging foundation pits beneath the blast furnaces and Marten's furnaces of the Zaporizhstal complex. The earthworks were always bursting, and just like on all socialist construction sites, here too the system of socialist competition was widely applied. I was working in the so-called Kyiv cooperative, which was engaged in socialist competition with the Nizhyn cooperative. This was not a real cooperative; it was just called that way. The head of our cooperative was a man called Lutsyk (I don't remember his first name). When he hired workers, he never asked about documents or inspected them. He would simply ask: “You have papers? What's your name?” He would write down the surname and say: “Go to this group.” Eventually he was fired and prosecuted for giving shelter in his cooperative to all the hounded and persecuted kurkuls.

Lutsyk was replaced by a new head, “comrade Andrei Litvinov,” who, as he later said, was one of the 25-tysiachnyks.

The head of the Nizhyn cooperative, Ivan Sydorenko, was fired at the same time and replaced by Mai Abramovych Henzel.

Litvinov knew exactly how Lutsyk had been hiring workers, and he began to check up on all his workers. He handed some over to the GPU,

and dismissed others. Many workers, realizing the risks awaiting them, left to find another “socialist construction site.”

Within a short time, only 215 diggers were left in our cooperative out of the 500 who had worked under Lutsyk. But they were not reliable in Litvinov's eyes, and he often said [in Russian]: “This was scum hiding under Lutsyk's wing.”

In our cooperative there was a group leader, who went by the false name of Siry. He had been dekulakized and did not have the right documents. Litvinov was aware of his uncertain situation, but he also knew that Siry had a lot of work experience and was a valuable worker. He decided to exploit Siry, knowing that the latter would not be able to refuse, because he had a family. Litvinov often said: “You will not leave our hands.” Sometime in June 1933 Litvinov summoned group leader Siry and offered him a “socialist assignment”: in addition to his own group of twenty-five people, he had two days to organize and lead another group of sixty people (sixty people and wagons).

Siry had no choice and could not refuse. He asked: “How can I organize a group when there are no people?” Litvinov burst out laughing and said: “We have 170 million people, and whenever we need people for socialist construction, the party and government will send us as many as we need. A work force is coming to us, and within two days the first party of sixty men will arrive, which must be immediately included in the socialist competition, because we are falling behind in implementing the duties that we took on.”

On the evening of the third day after this conversation sixty men arrived. They were peasants who were recruited for work in the area of Bila Tserkva in the Kyiv region. They had been assembled in a church building in Bila Tserkva, where they waited for transport for some three or four days. Many of them died before being shipped out. Many also died en route. The survivors, those sixty men, were brought to us. They were not even able to walk. A few were exhausted and half-swollen from starvation, but the majority of them were so swollen that they

looked like a blister filled with air. Their entire bodies were swollen. Their skin had cracked in places, and instead of blood some sort of fluid poured from those wounds. When group leader Siry saw those unfortunate people, he grabbed his head and went to the manager of the cafeteria, who was a humane sort of man. Ignoring government orders, the cafeteria manager gave these people some supper: a bowl of broth, a spoonful each of millet cereal, and fifty grams of bread to each man. That same evening he managed to obtain bread ration cards for them, got bread for the next day, and that evening distributed 300 grams to each man, leaving 500 grams for each one for the next day. By the next morning eight of those sixty men had died. Five more were unconscious, and they died that day.

The dead did not cause comrade Litvinov any trouble. On the contrary, he had problems because of the living. He needed ninety new diggers to leave for work, but only twelve were left. Thus, his plans for a successful socialist competition were ruined. He blamed everything on group leader Siry, who was “unable to organize a 100-percent work attendance.” When Litvinov learned that a bread ration had been issued to all those people the previous evening, he began to scream hysterically and swear, and then confiscated all the food ration cards, including Siry’s. Then he returned the cards and gave an order that bread would not be issued in the morning but the evening, after the workday. For illegally issuing supper and bread to the newcomers the cafeteria manager was issued a “severe reprimand with a warning” (third from the bottom on the list of Soviet disciplinary punishments).

Group leader Siry and the original group of twenty-five men decided to save these people: they harnessed the horses for them, loaded all of them, except the unconscious ones, onto the wagons, and drove them out to the quarry, so that they would not be left without a ration card. They were completely unsuited to the work, and thirty-seven men died during the first five days alone.

Along with the construction of industry, the city of Zaporizhia was also being built. I lived in the Telman settlement. Between this settlement and Zelenyi Yar a plot of land measuring approximately 2.5-3 hectares was designated for a cemetery. I lived some 120-150 meters away

from it. Before 1933 only a small chunk of this land had been used to bury people who had died a natural death. Throughout 1933 this entire plot of land was filled with the bodies of people who had starved to death during the artificial famine.

Huge pits for the mass graves were dug above single graves because it was easier to dig here. No one knows how many people are buried in this horrible burial ground — not even the “genius of all geniuses” Stalin, the soul-killer, because day after day wagons traveled all around the city and its outskirts, collecting corpses, which they transported to the waiting pits and dumped like logs. When the pit was full, it would be covered with earth. No one recorded or kept a tally of these victims.

Who is buried here? They were Ukrainian peasants — men, women, and children, who had been recruited to these “socialist construction sites,” as well as people from Bila Tserkva and other parts of Ukraine, near and far. Some managed to reach Zaporizhia alive, but were in such a state that they could not work. Even when someone helped them, this help came too late. Also buried here are people who were sent, exhausted and half-swollen from starvation, to the Home Guards to perform their labor service. There were also convicts, who had been sentenced by circuit troikas consisting of tysiachnyks: these were peasants swollen from starvation edema, sent to work under convoy every day from the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> settlements.

I will recount the story of a female convict buried in this cemetery, whom I knew personally.

The family of Ivan Dibrova lived on the Prohres collective farm in the village of Zhrebtsi, in Orikhiv raion of Zaporizhia region. In 1933 he starved to death right before the rye crop started to ripen. He left behind his wife Priska Dibrova and six small children; all of them were swollen from starvation. In her private garden near the house she had sowed 0.10 of a hectare of rye.

Hour by hour the mother waited to harvest the rye. As soon as the grain appeared, she cut four sheaves and put them out to dry in the sun. Then she spread a cloth in the vestibule of her house and began to thresh it. At this very moment the head of the village soviet, Maksym Naumov, the head of the collective farm S. Mykhailychenko, and the agricultural technologist, Pavlo Hrabko, entered her house. The head of the village soviet

forced her to continue threshing and winnowing. Then they weighed the rye to see how much was produced by four sheaves, and drew up an act preventing her from continuing to harvest without permission. In a couple of days, when the rye had completely ripened, these three individuals returned with two collective farm members and gave an order to cut four sheaves and thresh them. They weighed the grain and drew up an act that indicated a difference of nearly half.

In a couple of days Priska Dibrova was prosecuted. The court established that she was a member of the Savchenko kurkul family that had been deported God knows where in 1930. The “proletarian court” sentenced this mother of six children for her own rye to three and a half years’ imprisonment as a “foreign element [charged with] wrecking and sabotage.” She was sent to the Zaporizhia labor colony, to the 13<sup>th</sup> settlement, where she died within two weeks and was thrown into one of the mass burial pits.

When the mass deaths from starvation stopped, the entire territory of the cemetery was dug up and filled with graves. In 1935 the city council passed a resolution to close the cemetery

and open a new one, one or two kilometers away, around Kapustiana Balka, opposite the 13<sup>th</sup> settlement.

One night, approximately one month after the city council’s resolution, tractors began to roar, and when I went outside the next morning I saw that the entire cemetery had been plowed and leveled. By the time I came home from work, the entire plot of land had been prepared for planting trees. My wife told me that convicts had been working there the whole day. In a couple of days a “Park of Culture and Recreation” had risen on the site of the cemetery, on the corpses of people who had been murdered through starvation.

Right until the war in 1941 this park was always kept tidy, but it was always deserted: everyone knew and avoided this horrific place. In order to accustom the people to it, the city authorities held a lot of concerts here. The situation reached such a cynical point that Ukrainian concerts and performances by banduryst capellas, which Ukrainians so love, were specially held here. But all these efforts were in vain: no one went to this park.

**I. Sukhar**



*Compulsory delivery of grain to the state. The peasants are relinquishing their last scrap of bread.*



# BY TRAIN THROUGH UKRAINE

Around March 1933 I had to travel by train from Kyiv to the southern part of the Donbas.

Everyone in the villages knew about the catastrophic famine, but this was not discussed. I was carefully watching everything through the train window. Particularly noticeable at junction stations, like Hrebinka, Romodan, Poltava, Kharkiv, Lozova, Synelnykove, and Chaplyne, were peasants swollen from starvation, who were selling all sorts of items: peasant clothing, women's kerchiefs, *plakhtas* [women's skirts], embroidered towels, comforters, lambskins, cloth, and any other sellable articles that can be found in a peasant's chest. They were selling everything for a song, but there were no buyers. The goal was to get enough money for a train ticket to go somewhere. In the stations, grain was being loaded onto the trains under armed guard to be shipped "far inland," to Russia. At the Hrebinka train station two peasant women with their children entered our car. With an expression of fear or horror on their exhausted and clearly swollen faces, they closed the door behind them uncertainly and stood in the entryway.

This was the fast train from Shepetivka to Baku, and it did not stop at small local stations. Because of this, and also because the train car was already full in Kyiv, no starving peasants had appeared in our car until now.

Although it was crowded in the car, everyone in our section shoved over on the benches and invited the women to sit down. They were holding their children by the hand. Both women had nothing but their little sacks. They sat down timidly, and in answer to questions about their destination, they said that they were heading for the Donbas, where there were a few people from their village. Maybe they would be able to get some bread and find a job, but they didn't know what would happen to their children.

The little boy, who was about four years old, was sitting on his mother's lap. He said: "Mummy, I want to eat!" The woman glanced at her child with a look filled with pain and began

untying her sack. She removed something black that was roasted like a dried cake, broke off a couple of pieces, and gave them to the children. The passengers began to stir. They went into their suitcases or baskets, and everyone gave whatever they had.

"Look, mama, bread!" the little girl cried, when someone offered a quarter of the standard loaf of clayey Soviet bread issued through ration cards.

The children threw themselves at the bread, as though they wanted to snatch it all for themselves, and just eat and eat. Their eyes gleamed like those of hungry beasts. This lasted for about a minute. From every section of the train car passengers were bringing food, and the children ate greedily, looking enviously at what the people were bringing their mothers. Someone said that it was not good to eat a lot at once. The mothers held the food they had been given on their knees. Tears were rolling down their faces, and suddenly both women burst into unrestrained sobbing. The children started crying and were then joined by all the women in the train car. Unable to endure the scene, the men turned away, wiping their painful tears.

A kind of psychological release had taken place. Something had snapped. The thoughts that everyone had been thinking were transmitted from person to person and overtook the entire train car.

I turned away and looked through the window at the moonlit night. The train was rushing through the steppes, hurtling past hamlets that had once been happy and well off. Now they were destroyed and dead, with no signs of life. I thought about those women and their children and about those thousands of other farmers, who had made a dried cake out of their last beet and chaff, and then abandoned their homes and native villages to head into the unknown, only to die in agony at a distant or nearby railway station, or on city sidewalks, or in special, nameless places where the militia transports them half-dead, having collected

them throughout the city. They bring them there not in order to save their lives but to let them die away from the public eye.

Finally the women calmed down a bit. One of them began to recount her typical horrible tragedy. The GPU had taken her husband away. All winter they lived in an unheated house and ate cucumbers, cabbage, and beets. They added chaff to the beets and baked flat cakes. They began to swell up from starvation. In the last two weeks her parents and three of her children had died. She had no strength to bury them. She dragged the bodies out of the house and tried to bury them in the frozen ground. On their street were families in which every member had died and was lying inside their houses. Realizing that their days were numbered, she took the children and went to the station. She still had some money, but she was not issued a train ticket because she had no permit from the village soviet. Feeling that she was on the verge of collapse, she thought she would die at the station. But a railway worker brought her a small piece of bread, got a ticket, and put her in this train car.

I don't know who was in this car. I only saw that for a short time all these people, who had been brought together on this journey, who would go their separate ways within one hour or ten and never see each other again, had removed the obligatory mask of Soviet loyalty. People were openly expressing their indignation at the fact that before their very eyes you could see trains being loaded with grain at this very station, while peasants, who had sown and harvested that grain, were lying swollen or dead of starvation in the station.

In Lozova I transferred to another train, and before dawn I arrived at the Prosiana railway station. When day was breaking, I reached the village of Mala Mykhailivka in Vasytkivka raion of what was then Dnipropetrovsk region. I knew this village before it was destroyed. This is the rich steppe part of Ukraine, with heavy *chornozem* [black earth] that normally produced over 200 poods of wheat on every desiatina. Before, the village was awash in

orchards, glistening with neat, white, and spacious houses, with a beautiful, large church in the middle of the village, with huge piles of stooks standing next to every house. Instead, I saw destruction everywhere: the houses were scruffy, partially dismantled, and often roofless and without windows. Everywhere around the houses it was deserted. There were no fences, stables, barns, piles of stooks, or orchards — nothing. Here and there stood a tree or a bush. There was dead silence everywhere. You could not hear any dogs, roosters, lowing cattle, or neighing horses. You could not hear the squeak of well pullies, human voices, or any of those characteristic village sounds that one heard every day. It was a dark Soviet night. In the entire village smoke was rising into the frosty air only from about five chimneys. The rest of the houses were standing with no sign of life. I did not see any people on the streets.

I heard the same stories in the village. The 100-tysiachnyks had arrived during the harvest and confiscated everything that could be taken away. Arrests began. There was no organized resistance, and in some households tragic scenes took place. One day GPU troops surrounded the village. They drove up to the houses on trucks, bearing special lists. They allowed the villagers to take only a few of the most crucial items and then drove them to the Prosiana railway station, where train cars were waiting. They deported around one-quarter of the village. People began swelling up from starvation before Christmas. After Christmas they began to die. At first the corpses were brought to the hospital and stored in a shed, because there was no one to bury them. Then they stopped bringing them, and corpses lay inside houses. There were cases of entire families committing suicide by smoke inhalation. Many people had left the village earlier. Some left in search of bread when they were already swollen with hunger. Now there were still some people in the houses, and they were half-alive. Their days and hours were numbered.

**R. Bilenky**

# MOLOTOV'S RAID ON UKRAINE

*The following account was written by a bureaucrat employed at a raion institution in Kozelshchyna raion of Poltava region.*

At first the raion was called Bryhadyrivka, and its center was based in the village of Hannivtsi, later renamed Bryhadyrivka. Kozelshchyna was a small village situated on the slope of a hill, on top of which was a convent. Naturally, with the arrival of Soviet rule the nuns were chased out. Since there were many buildings and monastic hostels around the monastery, the raion center was transferred to those buildings, and the raion was renamed Kozelshchyna.

The village of Kozelshchyna lies on the railway line between Poltava and Kremenchuk, but there is no station. When the monastery was still open, some 300 meters away on the railway tracks a platform had been built with a small cashier's wicket for selling tickets. The Kharkiv-Odesa, Kharkiv- Kherson, and Odesa-Milerove passenger trains stopped here.

In the winter of 1932-33, Kozelshchyna and other neighboring raions — to use Soviet jargon — “demonstrated criminal indifference to

implementing the most important tasks of the party and the government — grain deliveries.” In these raions everything was carried out according to the same scheme as everywhere else in Ukraine: freshly threshed grain was delivered to the train station, and arrests and other kinds of repressions were carried out, but that year they did not carry out general searches in the villages, and the grain delivery plan was far from complete.

Sometime in November or December 1932 an inter-raion meeting of the party leadership from the surrounding raions was convened in Kozelshchyna: a meeting of “plenipotentiary officials of the C[entral] C[ommittee]” (“from the tysiachnyk apparatus) as well as raion party committee secretaries. I don't know what they discussed at that meeting, but suddenly there was an extraordinary bustle in all the raion institutions.

I have already said that there is no station in Kozelshchyna or any switches, simply two railway tracks. At around 10:00 in the morning, an auxiliary train, or wreck train (used at the scene of railway accidents) pulled up opposite Kozelshchyna. In half an hour a railway signal was installed, and a railway dead end was built.



*Children swollen from starvation waiting to die.*

Then the train disappeared in the direction of Kremenchuk. Within half an hour a special train arrived, consisting of a locomotive and platforms with special cars on it and three saloon cars. All traffic heading to the railway was halted. On this train arrived Viacheslav Molotov, the “Chairman of the Council of People’s Commissars of the USSR,” later the People’s Commissar of Foreign Affairs and member of the Politburo of the CC AUCP(B). Through the window of the office I could watch this “supreme” train and all the traffic around it. The distance was no more than 300 meters. A GPU detachment of bodyguards surrounded the train. Two people at a time, probably the raion “plenipotentiary representatives of the CC” and the raion party committee secretaries, entered the rear car, where two guards were stationed. The audiences lasted between ten and fifteen minutes. Stalin’s “closest companion-in-arms” did not even leave the train. After ninety minutes, the train disappeared in the direction of Poltava. In its place came a wreck train and within ten minutes the railway signal and the dead end were removed.

That same day the “plenipotentiary representative of the CC” and the secretary of the Kozelshchyna raion party committee and other officials disappeared. Unfortunately, I do not recall their names, because I only worked there for a short time. The next day, new “leaders” of the raion arrived in their place, and the numbers of tysiachnyks were greatly expanded.

After this incident, there was much credible talk that the raion leaders who had been dismissed from their posts had tried to tell Molotov that there was no more grain in the raion, and that the population was already starving. Thus, in the presence of the “closest companion-in-arms” they had shown a lack of “Bolshevik vigor” and they instantly disappeared.

Wired up by Molotov, the party apparatus raged throughout the villages, carrying out intensive searches, confiscating even small bags of garden seeds and baked bread, and throwing out cooked food. Circuit sessions of the regional court (comprised of tysiachnyks) prosecuted peasants, activists, and heads of collective farms and village soviets. They were tried for “maliciously failing to carry out the plan, for sabotage, for wrecking, for counterrevolution,” accused under the “law of 7 August 1932.” Obviously, the grain delivery plan was not completed, but the success of the engineered famine was ensured: throughout the villages of Kozelshchyna raion in 1933, people starved to death in just as “planned” a fashion as everywhere else in Ukraine.

It is difficult to trace the movement of Molotov’s special train. But it is a fact that he was not just in Kozelshchyna. This train was also seen in the vicinity of Pryluka. There Stalin’s “closest companion-in-arms” even disembarked from his armored saloon car and drove around in his armored car.

**E. Barabash**

## FAMINE IN THE KYIV REGION

...One day a brigade from the raion came to our village and after digging a huge pit in the cemetery, it began delivering dead bodies there. The members of the brigade came to my neighbor. They dumped the entire family on the wagon and were dragging out the mother, Melanka, too. She says: “Mytrofan, are you crazy? I’m still alive.” The driver thought a bit and replied: “I am not going to race the horse through the entire village just to pick you up.” And he dragged her onto the wagon and brought her to the heap of corpses.

With his old gray horse Mytrofan delivered half the village to the pile of corpses that was never

covered with earth but was quickly filled up with dead and nearly-dead people.

In the fourth house from ours lived a young couple with their three-year-old daughter Marusia. The couple died of starvation right in their own front yard, where they lay all swollen. Their little daughter was sitting on the cot, crying hysterically. I ran to the window and reassured her that her mother would come soon, and begged my mother to take Marusia to our house. There was a terrible famine and my mother hesitated. In the morning, when we went to pick up Marusia, she was lying face down, her tear-soaked hair frozen to the cot. She was dead.

**N. Oryshchenko**

# FAMINE AS A POLITICAL TOOL

*A bad harvest is from God,  
but famine is from people.  
(Folk saying)*

In 1929 the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences in Kyiv published a jubilee anthology on the occasion of the 70<sup>th</sup> birthday of the historian Dmytro Bahalii.

Our distinguished literary historian Serhii Yefremov contributed an article to this collection about famine in Ukrainian literature. The scholar showed how misery and the semi-starved life of the bulk of the Ukrainian nation — the peasantry — is reflected in Ukrainian literary works. Amid the fertile nature of Ukraine masses of Ukrainians barely eked out a living, ate poorly, and often simply starved. The cause of this misery was outright land hunger and a shortage of arable land. Landowners — owners of large landed estates — sold masses of grain to the countries of Western Europe, but Ukrainian peasants barely made ends meet because what they had earned with their hard labor had to be given back to the tsarist state in the form of taxes. Rescuing themselves from the land shortage, Ukrainian peasants headed to areas beyond the Volga and the Ural Mountains, traveling all the way to the Zelenyi Klyn area on the Pacific Ocean.

For obvious reasons Yefremov could not describe the starvation of people in Ukraine under the Soviet regime. In his article he mentions a book published in Kharkiv on the famine of 1922 in Ukraine, entitled *Pro holod*. Yefremov quotes from this book whose author states that a number of starving people in Zaporizhia became cannibals.

The book names a peasant named Khatsenko from the village of Blahovishchenka, who became a cannibal because of starvation. It also quotes residents of villages in Ukraine's steppe regions, which had been devastated by famine: "If no help arrives, they will be eating their children... They butchered [them] like animal carcasses, and from one part of the murdered children they made a meat aspic, and from the second part, a roast, and they ate without any kind of sorrow, like primitive savages..."

Foreigners who were able to visit Ukrainian regions devastated by the famine also reported starvation-related cannibalism, which was widespread in Ukraine at the time. This was the subject of a telegram sent by Fridtjof Nansen, the representative of the Aid Committee in Ukraine, to Geneva, Switzerland, in spring 1922.

What was the cause of the famine in Ukraine in 1922, which claimed millions of Ukrainian victims? In 1921 a severe drought in the steppe regions of Ukraine destroyed the harvests. But it is also a fact that the peasants living in the drought-affected regions of Ukraine always had stores of grain in their pantries, in case of a bad harvest. Every village had such grain reserves in order to help the peasants in the event of a poor harvest.

However, all these reserves of grain and other food products were confiscated by the Russian army of occupation, which had captured the territory of Ukraine in 1920. Owing to this, and the drought in 1920 and spring 1921, the harvests in the steppe regions of Ukraine were destroyed, and millions of Ukrainians found themselves on the brink of a precipice. At the same time, there was a very bad harvest in Russia's Volga region, with an ensuing famine.

What was the reaction of Lenin's government? (Even now certain journalists in the emigration portray Lenin as a "saint" and friend of Ukraine.) Lenin appealed to the remnants of the bourgeoisie in Russia as well as foreign governments and relief organizations in the free world to organize assistance to the starving population in the Volga region. In Moscow an aid committee was formed, headed by the well-known liberals S. Prokopovich, Ye. Kuskova, and N. Kishkin. In response to Lenin's appeal, European and American relief organizations began operating in Russia in the fall of 1921. The Geneva-based International Committee for Russian Relief, headed by High Commissioner Fridtjof Nansen and the American Relief Administration (ARA) were particularly active in assisting the starving population of Russia and succeeded in saving millions of Russians in the Volga region.

What was the attitude of Lenin's government to the famine in Ukraine? An answer to this question is provided by foreigners who were in Ukraine. Nansen, who was in Ukraine in early 1922, reported the following: "Eight million people are starving in the south of Ukraine; of this number, two and a half million have absolutely nothing to eat. Another two and half million are eating hay, dried plants, etc., but do not have normal foodstuffs. Three million have some reserves, but such small quantities that soon they will join the first and second categories. It may be stated that by late April seven million people will pass over to those two categories. Approximately 700,000 small children, transferred to public shelters, receive no more than one-fifth of a normal portion.

The mortality rate among children is extremely high. It has reached 50 percent. In Zaporizhia millions of people are literally starving. Sixty percent of them are children. Every day 10,000 people die in Zaporizhia." (*See La Famine en Ukraine*, Geneva, 1922).

During this catastrophic famine, which was mowing down thousands of victims in Ukraine every day, Moscow did not move a finger to help the Ukrainian nation. On the contrary, something frenzied was taking place: Moscow was confiscating food in Ukraine's starving regions and shipping it to Russia. In Nansen's April 1922 report to the committee we read:

"At the beginning of this year you could see the following slogans in raions of Mykolaiv region, which were devastated by famine: 'Workers of Mykolaiv! Help the starving of the Volga region!' This was taking place at a time when this region had 700,000 of its own starving people, i.e., nearly half the population... The scope of the catastrophe here exceeds everything that could be seen in the starving regions of the Volga region," noted the author of the report.

Nansen's observations were supplemented by the American professor Harold H. Fisher, who wrote a book about the famine of 1922. In his book, published in New York in 1927, Fisher writes that the policy of the Communist Party concerning the famine in Ukraine reveals many interesting aspects. The Moscow government not only did not ensure that the situation in Ukraine was brought to the attention of the American

Relief Administration, as it had done in connection with other regions much farther removed, it tried to prevent the Americans from making contact with Ukraine. Before ARA began its operations in Ukraine in January 1922, Moscow and the so-called Kharkiv government did not do anything significant to help the starving people of Ukraine.

Prof. Fisher confirms that trains loaded with food were being sent from Kyiv and Poltava to Russia instead of the short distance to Odesa and Mykolaiv, where a terrible famine was raging. Fisher saw how the communist Russian administration was shipping food products to Russia from the starving regions of Ukraine: Odesa and Mykolaiv. Moreover, during the famine in the steppe regions of Ukraine, Moscow was selling grain from Kyiv and Podillia regions to Western Europe. Fisher writes that grain surpluses from Podillia were not sent to save the lives of peasants in the nearby Odesa region, but were shipped through the starving regions, loaded onto steamboats, and sold in Hamburg. (Harold H. Fisher, *The Famine in Soviet Russia*).

The main goal of Moscow's inhuman policy in Ukraine was to destroy the resistance of the Ukrainian people to Russian communist occupation. It should not be forgotten that in 1921, before the famine began, an "organized force" of Ukrainian insurgents was operating in Ukraine. According to Soviet estimates, it numbered up to 40,000 men (*Zbirnyk spravozdan uriadu Ukrainskoi RSR* [Collection of Reports of the Ukrainian SSR], Kharkiv, 1921). The bad harvest and famine in Ukraine was like a windfall for Moscow. Lenin's government not only did not try to help the starving but through his governance sought to expand the famine in Ukraine to the utmost degree. After all, people who are starving will not fight, and the dead will not protest.

After the first famine in Ukraine, ten years elapsed. Ukraine had barely healed the wounds that Moscow's criminal hand had inflicted on our nation when a new and even more ferocious calamity befell our land: forcible collectivization followed by another famine. Moscow ordered the deportation of millions of Ukrainian peasants to the northern regions of Russia and to Siberia, and unleashed mass terror in order to compel the peasants to accept a new serfdom of collective

farms. The greatest resistance to communist violence against the peasantry was seen in Ukraine. After breaking this resistance and hounding the peasants into collective farms, Moscow decided that Ukraine could be stripped clean. In 1932 and 1933 the last scraps of food were confiscated from our peasants and shipped to Russia or sold to other countries.

As a result of these measures, a famine even more devastating than the one in 1922 was unleashed. In 1922 Moscow had informed the free world about the famine in Russia. Yet, about the famine of 1933 Moscow was stubbornly silent and remains silent to this day. Ukrainian farmers from Canada, upon learning that there was famine in Ukraine, offered the Soviet Red Cross their grain for the starving population of Ukraine, but the reply from Moscow was: there is no famine in Ukraine.

But the truth could not be hidden. Foreign journalists managed to reach Ukraine during the famine and informed the free world about what was happening in our country. One of them, the American William Henry Chamberlain, wrote in his book *Confessions of an Individualist* about his visit to the Poltava region in 1933 [back-translation from the Ukrainian]:

“Poltava had a particularly bad reputation: in Moscow we heard more than once about wagons that passed through the city early in the morning, collecting the bodies of dead people. . . In Moscow, it was easy for quick-witted bureaucrats to bring home to gullible foreigners that there was no famine. The famine in Poltava could not be denied, but its scope was minimized. . . When we inspected the village of Zhuky, near Poltava, two local bureaucrats painstakingly guided us into homes of petty officials from the local collective farm. On the spur of the moment we decided to enter the outermost house. There we found a fourteen-year-old girl hunched over on a bench next to the wall.

‘Does she have a father?’

‘Yes, he’s working in the field.’

‘And her mother?’

‘No, her mother, brothers, and sisters died last winter and spring.’

As we learned later, her father was still an independent farmer, a peasant who works on his own land. Strange was the fatalistic stubbornness of a man who had witnessed the death by starvation of nearly his entire family, but still refused to submit to the new servitude on the collective farm!”

Chamberlain calls the famine of 1933 in Ukraine and the Kuban, where Ukrainians formed the majority of the population, a “political famine.” Moscow’s ultimate goal was to break the last resistance of the Ukrainian people and establish its rule on the millions of corpses of our peasantry. To this day we do not know the exact number of victims of the 1933 famine in Ukraine. Western correspondents who spent time in Ukraine in 1933 were able to determine how much cattle of various kinds perished in Ukraine: horses, cows, sheep, and pigs. Half of all the horses in Ukraine died. In 1932 there were three and a half million pigs in Ukraine, but there were only 1,390,000 left in 1933. Yet Moscow did not provide any data on the number of people who starved to death in Ukraine in 1933. It may be assumed that more than seven million Ukrainians starved to death.

It should be noted that in 1933 Moscow sought to ensure the provisioning of its lands by condemning the Ukrainian people to death by starvation. One Western eyewitness of the famine was a correspondent of the British newspaper *Manchester Guardian*, who spent time in Ukraine and the Kuban in 1933 [back-translation from the Ukrainian]:

On 14 October 1933 he wrote: “It must be stated firmly that not a single region within a radius of several hundred miles around Moscow experienced such a calamity as Ukraine and the Northern Caucasus.”

For a long time Ukraine’s losses from the famine of 1933 were not replaced, although Moscow resettled Russians in the depopulated Ukrainian villages. The census showed that between 1933 and 1938 the population of Ukraine not only did not increase, but fell.

Famine was the most terrible weapon in the policy of Russian communist colonialism.

**O. Zelensky**

# TESTIMONIES OF VILLAGERS FROM THE DNIPROPETROVSK REGION

RECORDED BY THE JOURNALIST MYKOLA CHABAN

**Sophia LOIKO,**

*born in 1920, resident of the village of  
Natalivka, Solone raion:*

My father Andrii Mykytovych Karpenko had beautiful horses. Was it my father's fault that the mare gave birth to two stallion foals? They were so beautiful: one was gray and the other was black. We also had a straw-thatched house; the house did not have a vestibule but a stable. There were five of us. My father was hounded into the collective farm. My father went. They acknowledged that he was a poor peasant of average means.

Not far from us was an individual threshing floor. One night we saw a fire glowing inside the house. You could see something was burning. My father sprang up:

"What is that big shining light?" he said and ran to the window. Then he yelled: "The threshing floor is on fire!"

He rushed out to harness the horses and to go for water. He brought water and began putting out the fire. People began talking: "You're the one who set the fire!" That's how my father was taken away in 1933, and he never returned.

In 1933 we had a harvest. They took everything away. And we had a good yield in our garden. They even took our jarred beans. Mama had poured the beans into jars, thinking that maybe she could hang onto them this way. But no: they confiscated everything. Who came? Our people, from Natalivka: Aryvon Shtefan, brigadier Ivan Korzh...

My mother and I went to work: I carried the stooks and mama tied them up. If you worked until evening, you would get one liter of milk per person and 100 grams of flour. I went for my share, and Korzh says:

"There is nothing for kurkuls!" And he didn't give me anything. I came home and began crying: there was nothing anywhere! Mother says:

"What can you do, daughter? Now that they're after us like this, what can you do?"

When my father was taken away, my mother was grief-stricken and soon died. Five of us [children] were left. They took everything out of the house, including spoons and bowls. We slept

on straw, like piglets. There was nothing to eat — nothing! We waited until spring. The pigweed would start growing, and I, being the oldest, would go and pick some. I poured water into our one remaining pot and steamed the pigweed and other weeds, which we would then eat.

I had just turned thirteen, and the youngest child was five years old. We didn't seek help from our relatives because they were afraid, and they were being hounded too. The wife of our uncle Mykyta had left him and gone to live with her daughter. The authorities didn't bother our uncle because he had gone blind after the 1905 war with Japan. Sometimes my uncle would take my middle sister by the hand and go off to beg for food. They would gather some food and bring us a few scraps.

Many, many people died that year. They would simply be wrapped in some sort of cloth, thrown into a pit, and covered with earth. That's it. Entire families were dying then.

**Odarka MELESHCHENKO,**

*born in 1911 in the village of Natalivka:*

There was grain in 1933, but it was all shipped out, and people had nothing to eat. In the place where Lukeria Bila lived, five people died in one year in her family! Two girls, a son, and the two parents starved to death. The father was a war invalid: he had been concussed and could not work. Many people died then.

I worked on the collective farm delivering grain to the Nezabudyne railway station on horse-driven wagons. You're riding along and you pilfer some grain, because you want to eat so much! I brought it to my relative Tetiana Meleshchenko, because I was living with her. Officials came to the house. There was a grain bin in my relative's house, and they took all the grain out of it. After that her two children shriveled up and starved to death.

That year our father Andriian Kindratovych starved to death. I was working on the collective farm and later worked for a teacher, who lived near Bozhedarivka. In the morning you're walking or herding a cow, and a dead person is lying right on the road. I saw this with my very own eyes.



They would throw the dead person on a wagon, the corpse's legs dangling off it. They would throw it into a pit, cover it up, and that's it. Do you think they were burying people like today?

Collective farm horses were given barley straw as fodder. I began to sow in the spring of 1933; I had four horses. Two of them starved to death. They were walking along, and all of a sudden, bang! They fell down and died. And I stood next to them and cried. But forget about the horses: at that time nearly half the people in our village died.

***Hryhorii OMELCHENKO,***

*born in 1911, from the village of Lots-Kamianka in Dnipropetrovsk raion (today the village is part of the region center):*

'Thirty-three was a good harvest year. But the largest number of people starved to death in the springtime. The authorities were confiscating every last thing from the people.

Since I had enrolled in preparatory courses at the Institute of Professional Education, I was assigned to a grain delivery brigade. We go from house to house and ask: "Have you hidden any grain?" We poke our noses everywhere — in attics and sheds. We carried iron prods. We search until we are sure there is nothing.

I clearly remember the following case. There was a widow with four children. They were nearly naked; they had no clothes. The belly of one was exposed because his shirt was too short for him. The widow had four sacks of rye. She had sown it in her garden for herself and then harvested it. And we took away all four sacks.

"People," I say, "what are we doing? How will she feed the children?"

"That's not our business."

"What do you mean, not our business?"

I insisted on leaving her the rye. But three days later they came and took it away. A year later, after becoming a student, I was curious to find out about this family. I was told they had all died.

There were five or six men in the grain delivery brigade. It was headed by a party member, a worker. Look at the terrible stupidity of the authorities in those days! They would tear workers away from their work and send them to the villages. For a long time these "25-tysiachnyks and 30-tysiachnyks" were regarded as heroes. But in essence, they were criminals, who went around confiscating grain. Thousands of these representatives were dispatched to the villages.

What did they do? They ravaged villages and ravaged people. Entire families perished in villages and raions.

Here is another case. Pylyp, a man on our street who lived opposite us, was awarded a piglet. He fed this piglet, butchered it, and salted it in a barrel. It was a small piglet, five or six months old. And the members of the brigade were ready to confiscate this meat.

"This is not part of the grain delivery," I say. "And on top of it, it's a prize."

At that moment everyone started shouting at me. "You are an enemy of collective farm construction!" That man had been sick for a month. Obviously, he was in poor health. I insisted that they not confiscate the meat. Still, they came the next day and took it away.

The year 1933 affected our family too. My mother and youngest brother were swollen from starvation. Our family was large: my father, mother, seven children, and my father's sister. It was no easy task to feed such a family in those difficult years. After working as a pilot, my father worked at the post office, delivering mail. At the place where I worked as a hired hand, I was given a calf after I completed my service. She grew into a beautiful cow. The fat in her milk reached 4.8 percent, a rare phenomenon. Our milk never went sour, only in hot weather, and then only after certain period of time. We were living off that cow. During collectivization everything was taken away, including the cow. Our family was left without our only source of sustenance. By the springtime my mother was swollen, and she barely survived, like my brother.

As a student, I was receiving 200 grams of bread a day. Sometimes I would be able to endure and eat my soup without anything so that I could bring bread to my family.

My neighbor, who lived down the street from us, had a daughter named Fedora; she was four or five years old. When I would come home, she would ask me:

"Uncle Hrysha, give me some bread!"

I would often give her a little piece of bread from my portion. Then one day I was walking home, but I didn't see her. I asked: "Where's Fedora?"

"She died."

These were terrible times!

When all-out collectivization began, Lots-Kamianka had 960 households. A few dozen

households were dekulakized. But over 900 were already in the collective farm. The people had given up their horses, cows, equipment — everything — and literally everything was lost during that year of starvation. At home a person could somehow feed a single cow. But once it was brought here, no fodder was issued. Cows died en masse, but especially horses.

There were many horses in Lots-Kamianka: a few thousand. It was a rare household that did not have horses, like ours, for example, because we did a lot of fishing. But everyone else had horses. And here these horses were falling down, because they had become so emaciated in 1932-1933. People would walk around with poles, picking the horses up by their bellies. They would put them on their feet and feed them a bit. After a short while the horse is falling again. Almost all the horses died this way.

After five years, when I was completing university, I was curious to learn about our collective farm. I found out that only fifty-four households remained! The rest of the villagers had turned into workers (it was a good thing that there was a city nearby). Those who remained on the collective farm were not able to cultivate all the land. Weeds had grown taller than a person. These were the consequences of “all-out collectivization.”

***Oleksandra SYPALO,***

*born in 1913, resident of Dnipropetrovsk:*

I was born in the Poltava region in the village of Viazivok, in Lubni raion. We moved in 1930 and established a commune in Lazirky raion (today: Orzhytsia raion). After 1933 the commune gained the status of a cooperative and was named after Stalin.

In 1933 many people from everywhere flooded into the village. The cows were removed from the stable, and a pen was built for them outside. People were put in the cow barn, because there was nowhere else to house them. Then our rations started to be reduced. At first they issued 1,200 grams to each man and one kilogram to each woman every day. Adolescents were given between 400 and 700 grams, depending on their age.

People from other villages, who were coming to ours, said that in their villages people were burying some ten to fifteen bodies in one pit. They had starved to death. Famine was raging in Viazivka and in the village of Khoruzhivka, about a kilometer away. It was said that in Khoruzhivka starving people had begun eating their own children.

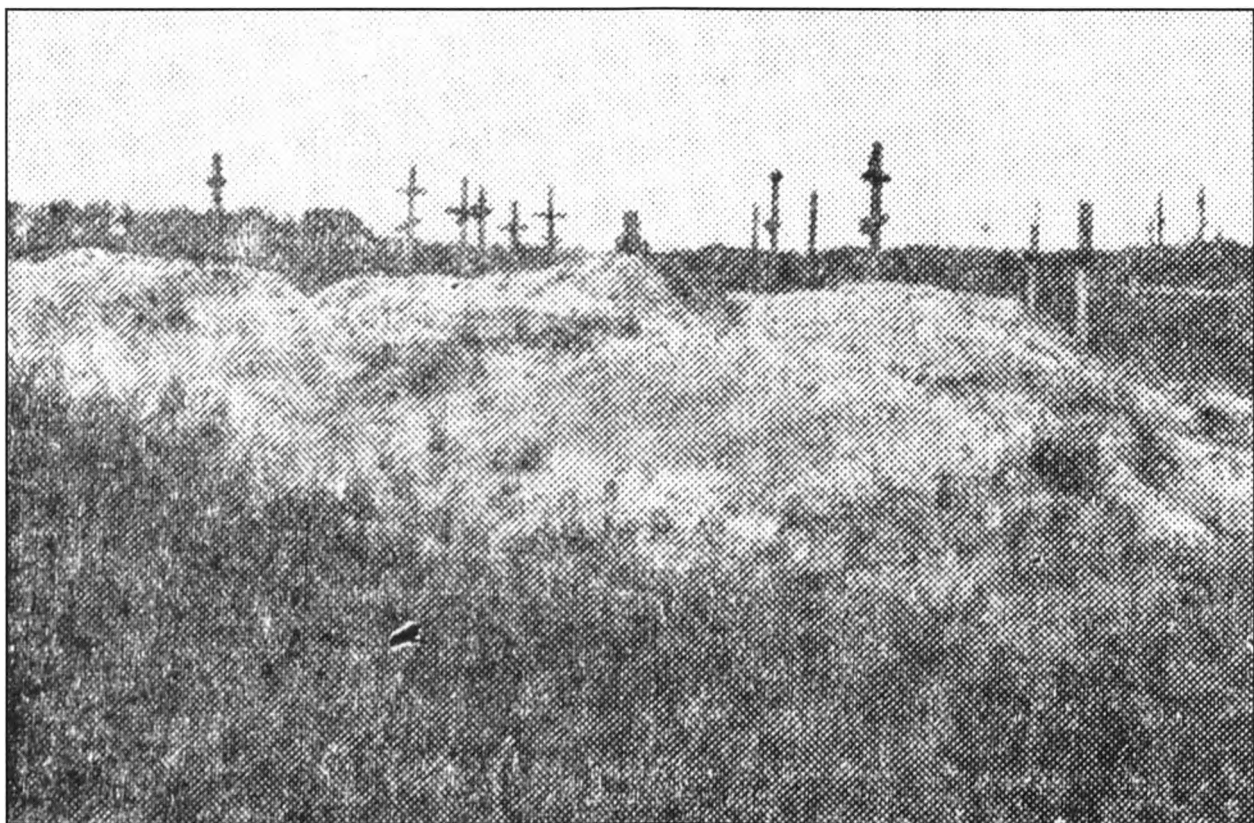


*Adults' legs were swollen, and little children awaited death by starvation.*



*(Above and below): Ukrainian children, victims of the Holodomor of 1932-1933 in Ukraine.*





*There was no room to bury people in cemeteries. Huge pits were dug and countless numbers of corpses were dumped in them. There were many mass graves in every cemetery.*



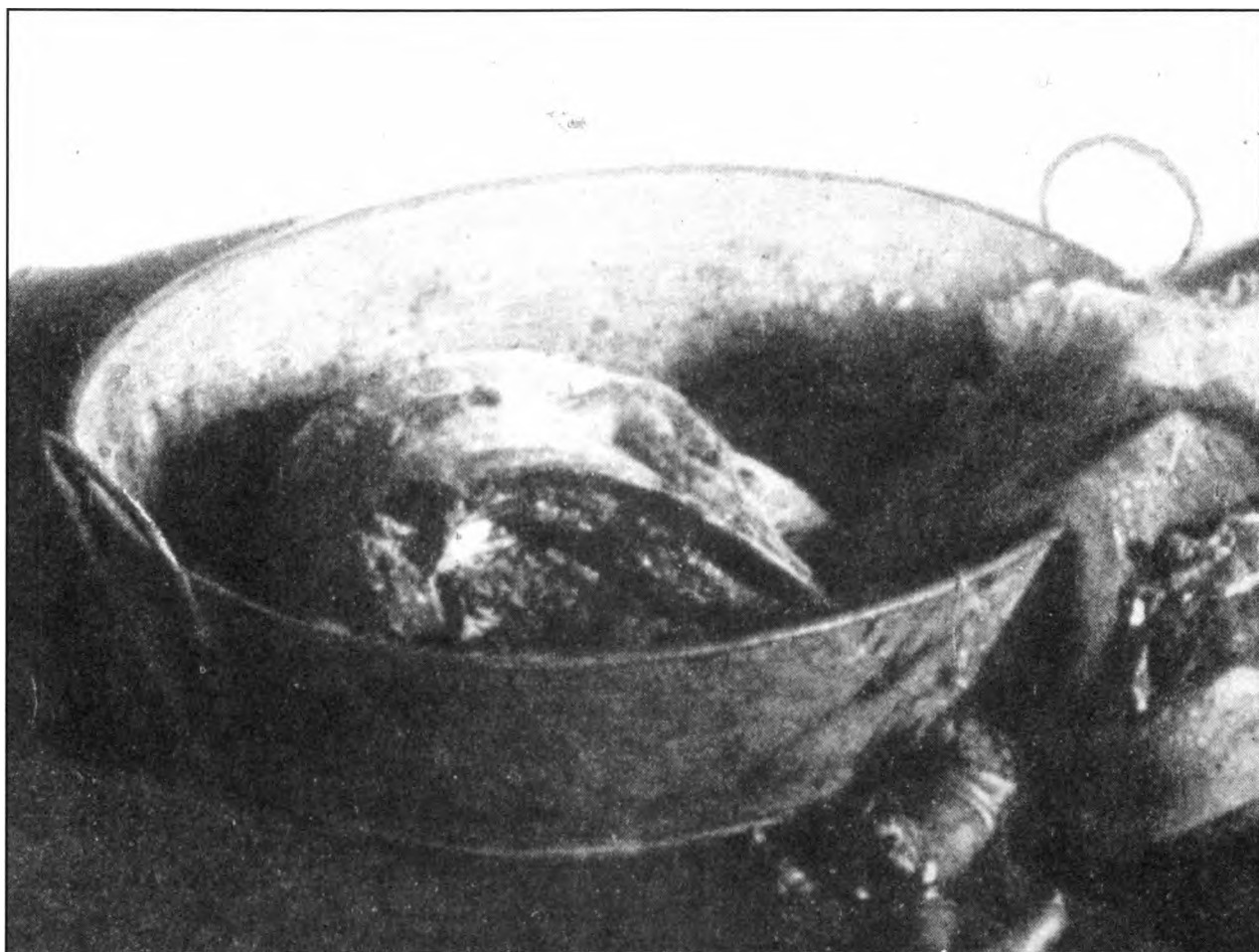
*Starving orphans eating food given by strangers.*



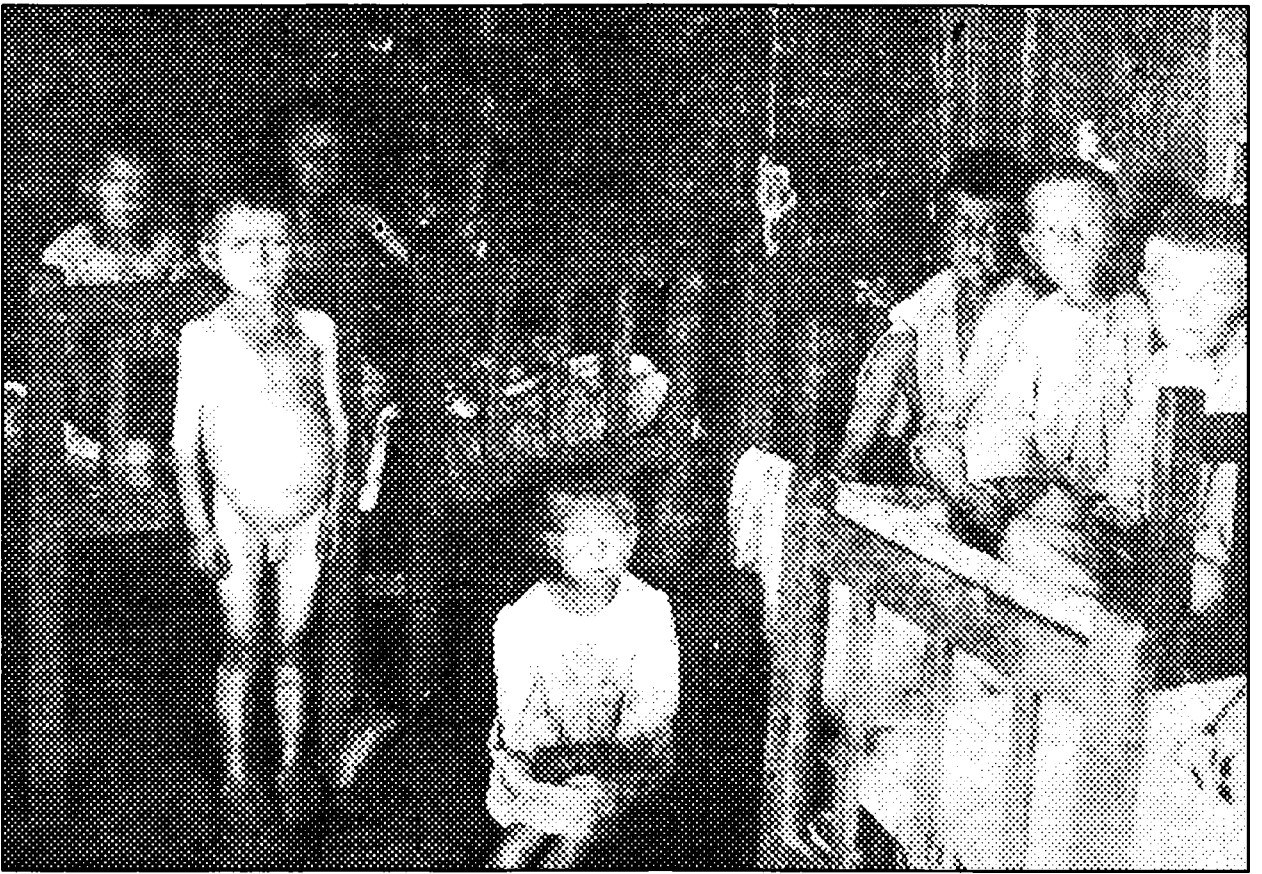
*A woman with legs swollen from starvation searches for bread.*



*A person with starvation edema on the verge of death.*



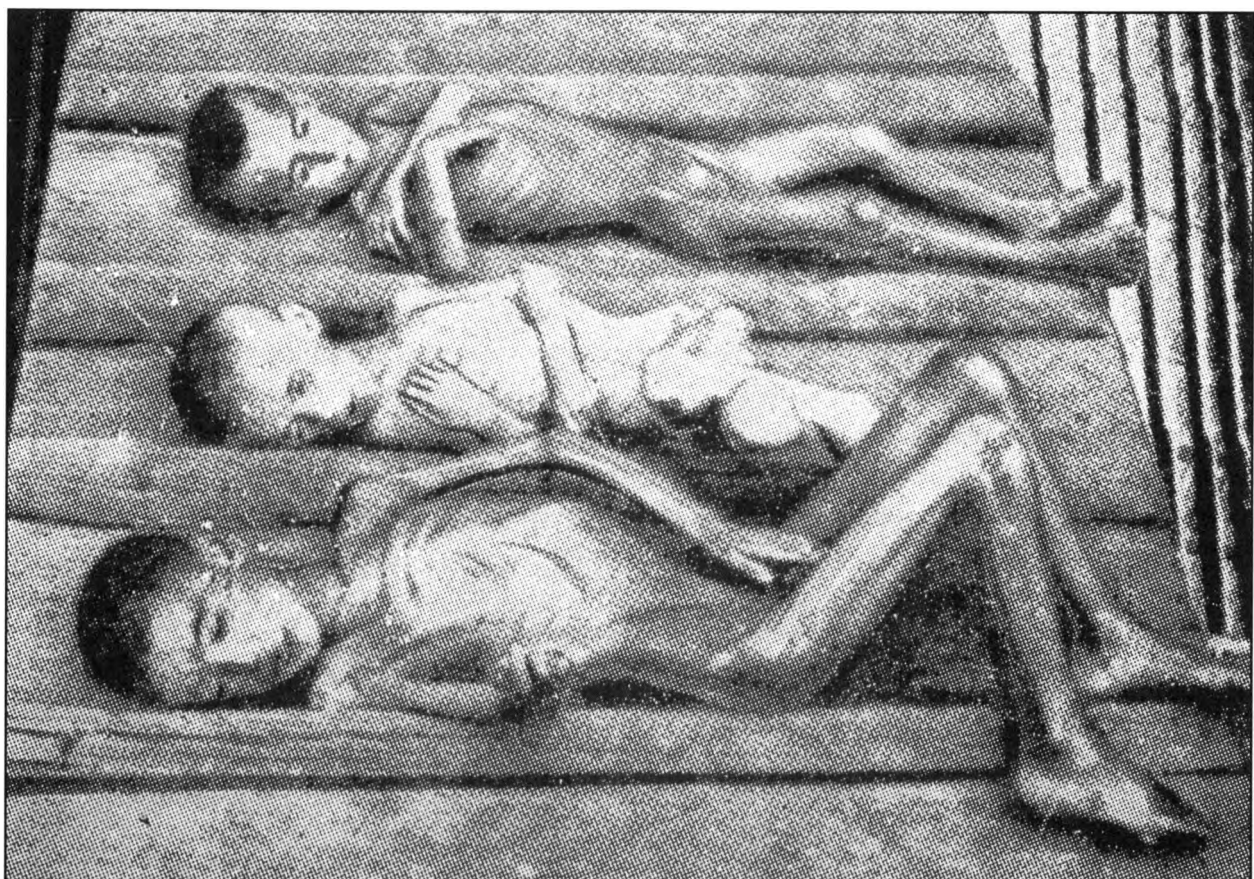
*There were many cases of cannibalism. Pictured here are hunks of human flesh ready for cooking.*



*Orphanages like this housed hundreds of starving and swollen children.*



*There was no food in orphanages either, and swollen and starving children died en masse.*



*The bodies of children who starved to death before their burial. There were cases of people being buried alive.*



*This is how cemeteries looked in Ukraine during the Holodomor of 1932-1933. Frozen bodies before burial in Kharkiv*

# BEETLES ABOVE THE CHERRY TREES

## (SHORT STORY)

*Dedicated to the victims  
of the Holodomor of 1932-1933.*

Moving to and fro in the garden that was overgrown with pigweed and sow-thistle, little Mykhas poked the crumbly soil with a rusty spade. Yesterday Yurko told him that you could find quite a lot of last year's potatoes. Although they were bad, you could eat them. In the hope of finding even something rotten to eat, Mykhas stubbornly poked about in the garden. Putting his swollen foot on the spade, he slowly stuck it into the juicy earth. He was thinking about food. His stomach growled, and saliva trickled, as if in anticipation of mother's once-promised candies. With his tiny fingers he sieved the soft soil. He stared with his large, sunken black eyes. He would dig a while and then sit down. He spotted something gray and swept away a small lump.

'May you croak,' he mumbled under his breath and picking up a healthy-sized toad by the leg, threw it away from him. It looked just like a potato... Suddenly he did find a potato.

He tore off its rotten skin, and a slimy white mass was left in his grubby hands. He licked it with his tongue...

He scabbled in the garden until noon, but he didn't succeed in assuaging his terrible hunger with the rotten potato. He wandered off on his short, bare legs to the house. He didn't go inside: it stank of desolation. On the porch he found his cup, his faithful companion, and tossing his long, uncut hair from his eyes, went out of the gates. Every day at this time Mykhas visited the collective farm cafeteria. The cook, a gray-haired man named Pavlo, always gave him something to eat. And when no one was looking, he would pour him a whole cupful of *kulesha* [boiled corn-flour]. Sometimes he would give him a crust of bread.

Mykhas ran into Yurko on the dam. He was fishing, monitoring the float on his fishing rod like a cat watching a mouse.

"Are they biting, Yurko?" Mykhas asked him, walking past.

"Not at all," he replied, without tearing his eyes from the barely visible speck on the

transparent water. "I've been sitting here since morning. I only caught two small perch. What about you? Off to the cafeteria?"

"Yep."

"I'm not going. The director hit me with a stick."

Mykhas was hurrying. He was propelled by hunger. He squeezed himself through a hole in the fence to the collective farm garden, and there were the office and the kitchen. People were crowded in a long lineup, everyone looking as if they had just been taken down from the cross. Their rags were patched, and they held containers in their feeble hands. Some had pots; others carried bowls, while



*Starving children in an orphanage waiting for food.*



others had dirty copper quart containers. Shoving their way to the window, they took their food, and sitting on the ground beneath the apple trees, ate their lunch. Mykhas stared greedily at their every gesture, which made him want to eat even more. But he couldn't stand in line. The people either chased him away, or the head of the collective farm, who was now loitering around the kitchen, would lead him out by the ear, because the food was only meant for those who worked on the collective farm.

He hung around for a quarter of an hour, walking up to one little group of people and then another, looking into their bowls while sharp pains tore at his stomach. But who cared? By now everyone had received their skilly. Mykhas crept to the window. He stood on tiptoe and looking inside, put his cup on the wide, spattered window frame.

"Uncle..." he said in his squeaky voice, when someone poked his bald head out. "Give me some kulesha, uncle, give me some."

The man flashed an angry look at him, like a werewolf.

"Get lost! There's nothing left for idlers. Go herd pigs on the collective farm, and maybe then you can come for lunch.

"Uncle," Mykhas said, his eyes glistening with tears. "Just give me half a cup, just a little bit."

"Go away, boy!" the head of the collective farm barked, his red eyes flashing. "Get out of here before I smash you with a ladle."

Mykhas wanted to say something else, but the wicket thundered and the window closed.

The little boy's face contorted with tears that gripped his throat with iron pincers. He wandered off to the cemetery. There, beneath a huge cherry tree that was as old as the world, was a fresh grave, his mother's. The neighbors had recently buried her. Mykhas was in the house when his mother was dying. He looked at her for the last time to remember her dear image forever.

He wandered along the road covered with a thick layer of dust. To his side a sharply delineated shadow followed him, and behind him trailed the twisted track of his bare, tired feet. He walked as though he were going to confession. He wanted to tell his mother how hard it is for him, a helpless little orphan. Why

is there no place in this world for him? Why is he useless? Why does everyone not even want to look at him, as though he were a stranger?

'Mama...'

Grief exploded from his weak chest.

He cried for a long time at the grave. Tears poured from his sunken eyes, which were marked by the sunset of death, and fell on the earth that had hidden his mother. He cried and recalled recent events, the days when his mother was still alive, when they would eat supper in the evenings on the clay bench next to the house. Cows would be lowing, and from far away a song could be heard in the night. Mama would look at him lovingly, and those beetles...Oh, how beautifully they buzzed!

She was alive so very recently, so recently: three weeks ago. Having cried his fill, Mykhas felt better. But his body became heavy, and his weak muscles seemed to be filled with lead. He put his tiny, emaciated hands on the grave and lay his damp cheek on it. He watched the air stirring above the green cherries.

Finally Mykhas's heavy eyelids closed over his exhausted eyes. The sun was setting, scattering the last diamonds of its rays over the mute, deaf earth.

*Dear readers! This short story is not invented. I took it from the history of our Ukrainian Golgotha, and I have related it just like it happened.*

*Those who were feeding us with their blood were dying without a scrap of bread; we are their sons and daughters. They were not mentioned by a single word in Moscow-occupied Ukraine.*

*With their deaths the Kremlin satraps of Moscow built the modern system for the exploitation of the Ukrainian peasants, and collective farms arose on the bones of our relatives.*

*I dedicate this short story, based on factual material taken from the once beautiful Podillian villages of Khmelnytsky region, to my peers — the Mykhases, Hrytskos, Yurkos, Fedias, and to this great, tragic drama of the Ukrainian people, which we must never forget.*

**Mykhailo Dobrydenko**

# PASTORAL LETTER

## UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS OF GALICIA PROTEST AGAINST THE FAMINE

### TO ALL PEOPLE OF GOOD WILL

*Ukraine is in the throes of death!*

*The population is dying of starvation. Relying on injustice, deception, atheism, and deprivation, the man-eating system of state capitalism has brought a recently wealthy land to utter ruination. Three years ago the head of the Catholic Church, the Holy Father Pope Pius XI, energetically protested against everything in Bolshevism that runs counter to Christianity, God, and human nature, warning about the terrible consequences of such crimes. And the whole Catholic world was with him, and we joined in that protest.*

*Today we see the consequences of the Bolsheviks' ways; the situation worsens daily. The enemies of God and humanity have rejected religion, the foundation of the social order; they have deprived people of freedom, the greatest human good; they have turned peasant citizens into slaves; and they lack the wisdom to feed them in return for their slave-like work and the sweat of their brow.*

*Human nature grows mute at the sight of those crimes; blood cools in the veins.*

*Powerless to provide any kind of material aid to our dying brothers, we appeal to our faithful with prayers, fasts, nationwide mourning, sacrifices, and all possible good deeds of Christian life to ask heaven for help, since on earth there is no hope at all for people's help.*

*And before the entire world once again we protest against the persecution of the young, poor, weak, and innocent, and we accuse the persecutors before the judgment of the Most High.*

*The blood of laborers, who during the famine ploughed the black earth of Ukraine, cries to heaven for renegeance, and the voice of the starving harvesters has reached the ears of the Lord God of Hosts.*

*We ask all Christians of the entire world, all those who believe in God, and particularly workers and peasants, and first and foremost all our countrymen to join this voice of protest and pain and circulate it to the farthest countries of the world.*

*We ask all radio stations to transmit our voice to the whole world; perhaps it will also reach the poor little houses of the peasants, who are dying of starvation.*

*Before their terrible death amid the fierce sufferings of starvation may they take at least some small consolation from the thought that their brothers knew about their terrible fate, grieved for them, and prayed for them.*

*And you, suffering, starving, and dying Brethren, appeal to our merciful God and Savior Jesus Christ; you are enduring fierce torments — accept them for your sins, for the sins of the entire nation, and say along with Jesus Christ: "Thy will be done, Father in Heaven!" Death accepted for God's will is a holy sacrifice, which joined with Jesus Christ's sacrifice will bring you the kingdom of heaven and salvation for the entire nation.*

*Our hope is in God!*

*Issued in Lviv on the feast of St. Olha, the 24<sup>th</sup> day of A.D. 1933.*

Signatures:

Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky, Bishop Hryhorii Khomyshyn, Bishop Yosafat Kotsylovsky, Bishop Nykyta Budka, Bishop Hryhorii Lakota, Bishop Ivan Buchko, Bishop Ivan Liatyshevsky.

*Ukrainians in the free world honourably championed  
their brothers and sisters in Ukraine.*

*In 1933 Ukrainian organizations lodged protests with Western governments,  
requesting them to warn Moscow about the destruction of innocent people  
in Ukraine. The response was that it was all slander and lies.*



*Demonstrators marching in New York in 1933 to protest against the extermination of Ukrainians in Ukraine by means of an artificially engineered famine. Leaflets about the famine are being distributed.*

Dr. Ewald Ammende, the general secretary of the European Congress of Nationalities, issued a report about the famine in Ukraine. He ended his report on the mass deaths of the population of Soviet Ukraine with a question addressed to the civilized world [back-translation from the Ukrainian]: “Will it continue to gaze upon the millions of people who are starving to death in Ukraine, or will it want to offer help for the unfortunate victims and thereby remove accusations of heartlessness and disgrace?”

After discussing the situation in Ukraine, the appeal ends with the following words:

“Let us try to interest the American government, and American political and humanitarian institutions in Ukraine, which is starving to death. From all our assemblies let us send resolutions to

the American Red Cross and request that aid to the starving of Ukraine be organized.

And since the issue of recognizing the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics by America is current today, let us appeal as citizens of this world to the government in Washington with a request, before it resolves the question of recognizing the Soviets, to send an American Commission to the Soviets, which would scrutinize Moscow’s policies toward those states that are part of the USSR. In particular, let us demand that America scrutinize Moscow’s policies toward Ukraine, the largest part of the USSR, the richest nature-endowed country in Europe, on whose lands official Bolshevik reports state that there is no drought nor mass uprisings, but where such a famine is raging that it is already leading to cannibalism.”

# EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE UNITED UKRAINIAN ORGANIZATIONS OF AMERICA

*Omelian Reviuk, chairman; Mykola Murashko, deputy chairman; Dr. Luke Myshuha, secretary; Volodymyr Kedrovsky, financial secretary; Mykola Danylchenko; treasurer.*

The Union of Ukrainian Women of America has founded the Committee for Urgent Assistance to Starving Ukraine. Newspapers have published numerous appeals from that committee, which is calling for fund raising to assist the starving. The appeals were signed by Dr. Neonila Pelekhovych. Artists are donating their works to a lottery in aid of the starving. A work by Alexander Archipenko tops the list of prizes.

Those newspaper clippings are one source of information. But we also have the valuable correspondence of Yelysaveta Skoropadska, the daughter of Hetman Pavlo Skoropadsky. This correspondence was handed to us by the founders of literary and scholarly competitions, Lesia and Petro Kovaliv. The attaché case contains two sets of letters from the hetman's daughter Yelysaveta Skoropadska to Petro Kovaliv. One set of letters concerns the famine of 1933-34 [sic]. The other, with a later date, concerns the relief action for Transcarpathian Ukraine of 1939. We are now examining those letters that concern the Committee for Urgent Assistance to Starving Ukraine. In the first letter dated 30 November 1933, Yelysaveta Skoropadska requests Dr. Kovaliv to become a member of that committee and be its representative in Switzerland, and to make efforts to present the facts of the famine to the League of Nations in Geneva.

From other letters we have learned about the membership of that committee whose head was Yelysaveta Skoropadska. Below is the draft of a leaflet published by the committee in various languages:

### **To Your Hearts, Brothers and Sisters!**

*A high-ranking church representative from Western Europe, who has just returned from the land of famine, says that if immediate relief is not organized for the unfortunates, twelve million people may die this winter.*

*Do not put off until tomorrow what you can do today.*

This correspondence attests to the participation and profound devotion to the cause not only of Yelysaveta Skoropadska but an entire range of distinguished Ukrainians. In an upcoming issue of *Nashe zhyttia* [Our Life] an article will appear about Yelysaveta Skoropadska, who is a highly talented sculptress as well as an activist in the hetmanist movement and other causes to which she renders assistance. Today we mention Yelysaveta Skoropadska in connection with our topic of the famine in Ukraine, because her actions cannot be passed over.

Famine is a terrible word, but not everyone can imagine it. In American magazines we occasionally see advertisements appealing for help for starving children in economically underdeveloped countries. These ads include pictures of starving children, which move us. Perhaps we turn the pages as quickly as possible, because we are sensitive and do not like to look at unpleasant pictures. But the famine whose victims we see in those photographs is the result [n]either of natural disasters, like a flood or drought, or overpopulation, devastation of countries by war, [n]or lack of food in economically underdeveloped countries.

But the famine of 1933 in Ukraine was artificially engineered as a tool in the struggle against the population and aimed at its destruction; as a tool in the struggle “for the good of the working people.” This was taking place in the land traditionally called the breadbasket of Europe. Its wealth and natural treasures were frequently the cause of invasions, because it was a choice morsel for invaders. And in that very place where wheat was turning golden, those who sowed it — those who cultivated the rich black soil down through the generations — were starving to death.

Every death is terrible. The death of a child is particularly horrific. And there, they were slowly perishing in the agonies of starvation.

# AN EYEWITNESS TO UKRAINE'S SIEGE BY FAMINE

(Arthur Koestler, *The Invisible Writing*, New York: McMillan Co., 1954).

Arthur Koestler, the author of the famous novel *Darkness at Noon*, was born in Budapest. In his autobiography he recounts that during the Crimean War his paternal grandfather traveled through Russia, crossed the Carpathian Mountains, and settled in Miskolczy, Hungary. Later he moved to Budapest. Unfortunately, the writer does not know his grandfather's real name and does not mention the name of the place in Russia from which he came. On his mother's side Koestler is a descendant of the famous sixteenth-century Rabbi Leib of Prague, who supposedly built a giant clay Golem to protect the Jewish ghetto from pogroms.

After completing his studies, Koestler found a job in a German publishing house and at the same time joined the German Communist Party. The party ordered him to carry out intelligence assignments. But a colleague at work, who was inadvertently supplying Koestler with information he had collected in the home of his influential father, suffered pangs of conscience and told his employer everything. The publishing house hushed up the affair in order to avoid a scandal. Nevertheless, the party severely reprimanded Koestler, which he considered unjustified. He then began critically scrutinizing communism and communists, although he did not break off his relations with them.

In 1932 the publishing house sent Koestler on a trip to the USSR to note down his impressions and observations in a series of articles. Koestler's communist "bosses" eagerly supported this plan, viewing it as a marvelous opportunity to conduct propaganda in the bourgeois press about the "achievements" of the Bolshevik revolution. Koestler exposes the crafty way that the communists were infiltrating the bourgeois press and institutions with their own people in order to promote Marxism and communism. Readers of the "free" press in the West should always remember this fact.

Fortunately for Ukrainian history, Koestler had decided not only to scrutinize the Soviet Union with critical eyes but to begin his journey in Ukraine, which at this very time was gripped by starvation. This happened because one of Koestler's friends from Vienna, a communist and renowned physicist, was living with his wife in Kharkiv, then the capital of the Ukrainian SSR. At the very first border station of Shepetivka the

writer was struck by what he saw. Bolshevik customs officials were not only conducting a very close inspection of passengers and their baggage, but also searching the train cars, which the passengers had to vacate. Koestler, who had traveled over all of Europe and Asia Minor had never undergone such an inspection. He was also struck by the fact that the citizens of the USSR, who were returning from "rotten" Europe, were transporting mostly food; but especially by the faces of the customs officials, who looked hungrily and with resignation at the rings of sausages, canned foods, sugar, and fats that were heaped on the dirty tables and even dirtier floor. "I recognize the look of starving people," explains Koestler.

Along the railway line, all the way to Kharkiv, throngs of bedraggled peasants gathered at every station. They wanted to exchange icons and pictures for a piece of bread. Mothers held their emaciated children with swollen bellies up to the windows of train cars. Interestingly, these same passengers, who were dragging suitcases filled with Western food with them, mendaciously explained to Koestler that those were only rich peasants, who had resisted collectivization and had been expropriated for their opposition.

At the time the writer did not know the truth, but already from the train window he saw that the country was experiencing a catastrophic famine. What he didn't know was the real cause or its scope; the government was carefully concealing the truth from the world.

After arriving in Kharkiv, the writer also did not immediately grasp the situation because he was buying goods in special shops designated for foreigners. But from the very first day he was immediately struck by the lack of food. Later, in the winter of 1932-33, the main electrical station stopped operating because of a lack of oil, and the city sank into darkness during the winter months.

Koestler's descriptions of the Kharkiv bazaar make the reader's blood run cold. Dante's hell was less horrific. In Dante's hell sinners were being punished, but there were no tiny corpses of starved infants, who "seemed to be sucking not milk but bile" from their mother's dried up breasts.

The author confesses that in twenty years he has not been able to forget the scenes at the Kharkiv bazaar. Officially, these people were

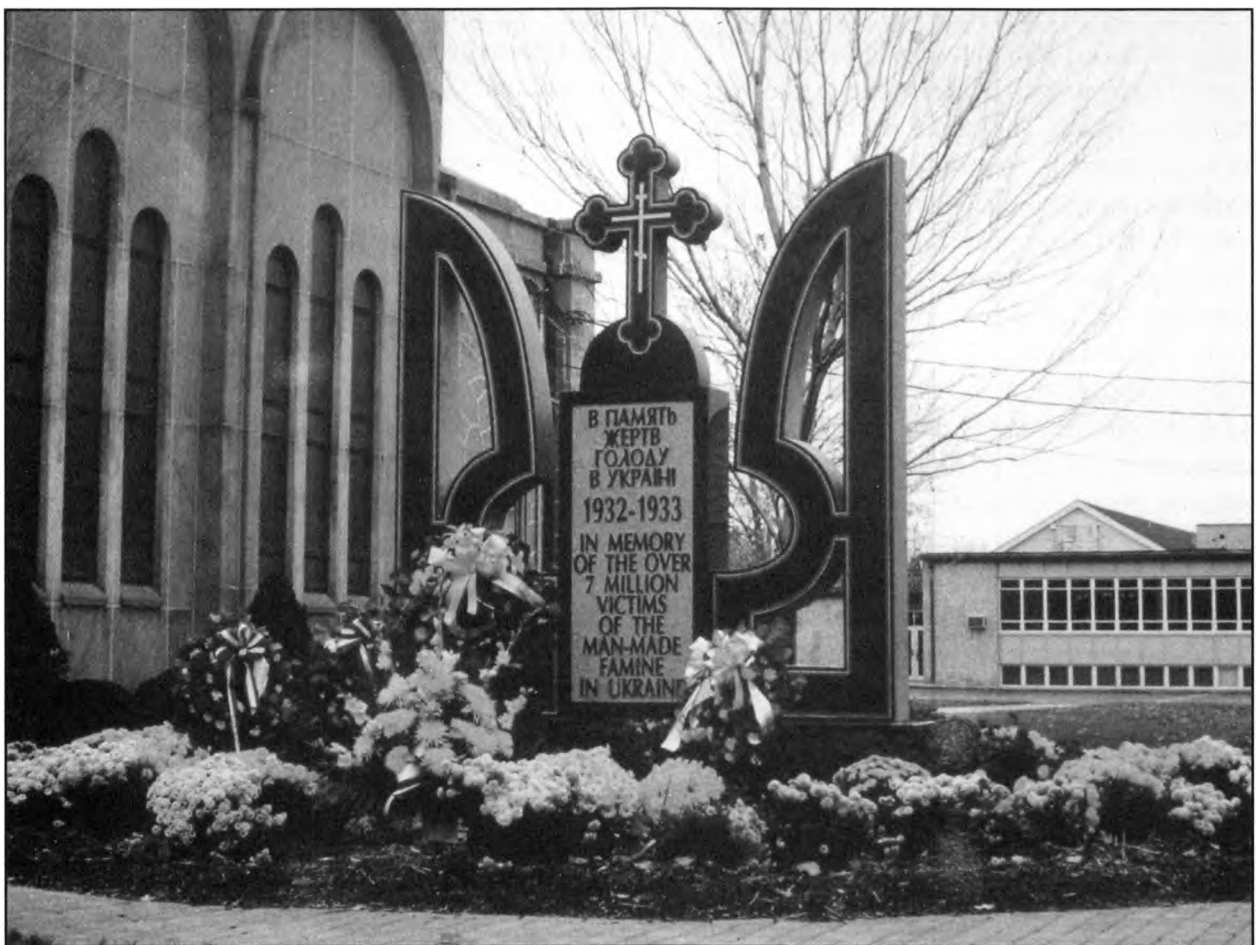
“kulaks,” who had been punished for resisting collectivization. But later he learned that they were ordinary peasants forced by starvation to leave their villages. During the preceding harvests the party functionaries, trying to obtain the planned delivery, confiscated grain down to the very last kernel. Even collective farms were deprived of their sowing seed. The villagers butchered their cattle and fowl, and once they had eaten their last scrap of food, they abandoned the land. Entire raions had been depopulated. In addition to five million “kulaks,” who had been officially deported to Siberia, many millions of people were roaming around homeless, besieging railway stations, and dying on the streets. The numbers of homeless people were never publicized, and Koestler doubts that any statistics were kept. But there were certainly more homeless people than in the times of migrations of nations. Officially there was no famine, only “difficulties.” Koestler writes that

everyone knew what the word “difficulties” means in Soviet terminology. Every Ukrainian, particularly young people, who have grown up in normal conditions, should read Koestler’s books, particularly *The Invisible Writing*.

Many foreigners visited the USSR in 1932 and 1933, but they “did not see” the famine in Ukraine. One of those who did not see it was Prime Minister Edouard Herriot of France. He did not see because at the very time that Ukraine was being besieged by starvation, France and the USSR had signed a trade agreement, according to which the Soviet Union paid France for its deliveries with grain — Ukrainian wheat.

In his memoirs Koestler writes that there are quite a few leaders like Herriot in the free world, who shamelessly devised the slogan: “Better red than dead.”

Arthur Koestler’s testimony is a warning to all.  
**N. Stryiska**



*In October 1993, on the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the artificial famine of 1933, the parish of the Ukrainian Orthodox cathedral of St. Volodymyr in Parma, near Cleveland, Ohio (USA) erected and consecrated a monument to the victims of the Holodomor. The monument was built by the firm of Andrii Zeleniak. A photography exhibit depicting the tragedy of the Ukrainian nation in 1932-1933 is on permanent display in the local cultural center.*

(Photo supplied by: **Vasyl Lishchenetsky**)

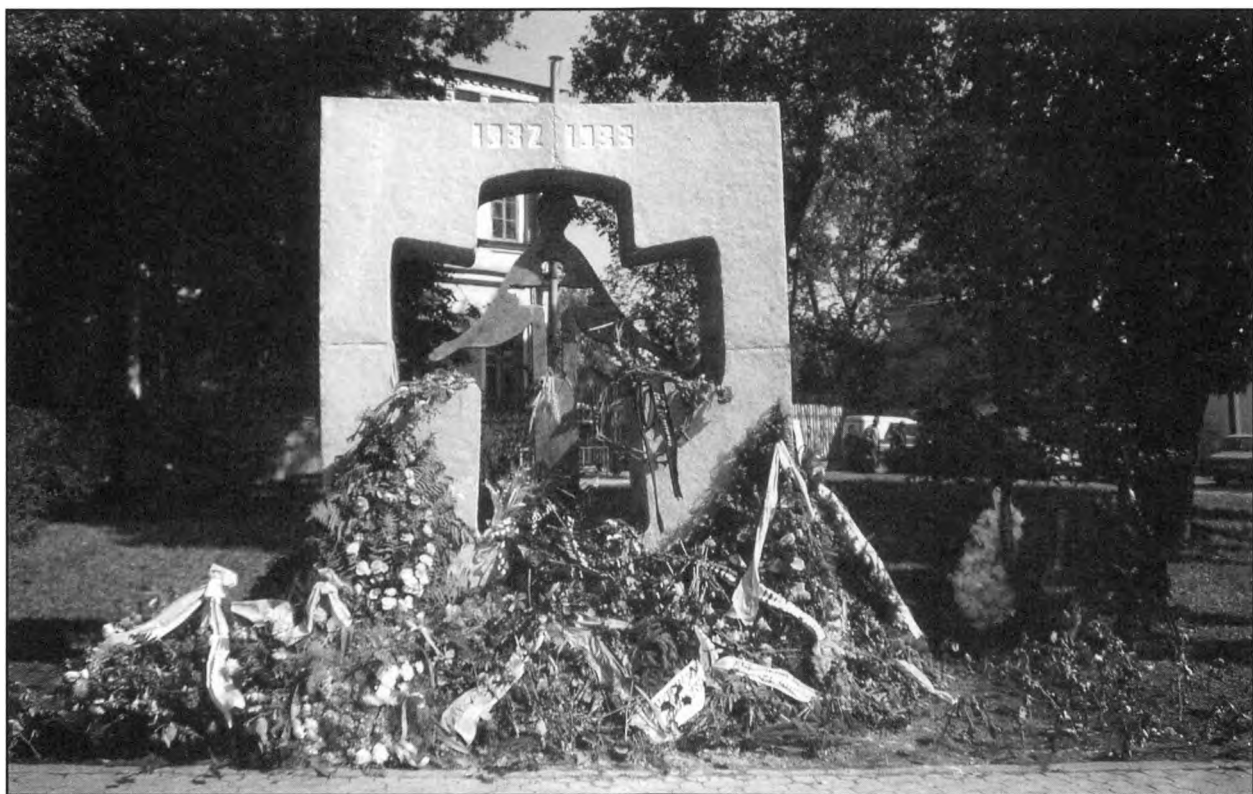


*A demonstration in 1953 in memory of the Holodomor ends with speeches in Armory Hall in Chicago by members of the presidium and various American dignitaries. At the microphone: Roman Smyk, committee head. Seated next to him: Yurii Stepovy, the keynote speaker.*



*Dobrus, an organization of former Ukrainian political prisoners, marks the anniversary of the Holodomor in Chicago in 1953. Holding the banner (at left): Vasyl Brazhnyk. Among those walking behind the banner are Anatolii Makoviichuk, Yosyp Ruban, Yurii Stepovy, and Stanislav Dmytrenko.*

*Ukrainians in the free world honorably defended their brothers and sisters in Ukraine.  
Monuments to the victims of the Holodomor stand in various countries of the world.*



*Monument to the victims of the Holodomor of 1932-1933, built and consecrated in 1993 on St. Michael's Square in Kyiv, Ukraine.*



*This monument to the victims of the Holodomor of 1932-1933 in Ukraine was built on the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the tragedy. It was erected by the Ukrainian Orthodox parish in Bloomingdale, Illinois (USA) and consecrated on 4 December 1993.*



*This cross is dedicated to the eternal memory of the victims of the Holodomor of 1932-1933. The monument, erected in 1983 by the Ukrainian community of Great Britain, stands on the grounds of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox church in London.*



*This monument to the victims of the Holodomor in Ukraine was built on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this unprecedented tragedy. It was unveiled on 24 June 1984 by the Winnipeg branch of the Ukrainian Canadian Committee.*



*This monument to the victims of the Holodomor of 1932-1933 was erected in 1963, next to the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox church in Melbourne, Australia.*



*Unveiling of the monument "Ukraine's Sorrow," built in the form of a kurhan (barrow). It was unveiled in 1993 by President Leonid Kravchuk of Ukraine near the city of Lubni, in the Poltava region.*



*This monument to the victims of the Holodomor of 1932-1933, located near the city of Lubni in the Poltava region, is called "Hill of Sadness." The large bell represents Ukraine, while the twenty-five smaller bells represent all the regions of Ukraine.*

Photo: Volodymyr Bilous (Lubni, 1996)

# THE FAMINE OF 1933 IN UKRAINE

The famine of 1933 has been documented by many eyewitnesses. A reader cannot familiarize himself with them without unbearable pain. But even once this pain is assuaged, it is impossible to fathom this unprecedented crime against humanity. Even the melodic, mellifluous Ukrainian language cannot convey all the pain, horror, and torments of the starving peasants of a nation that was being destroyed by the famine. Mothers, who are granted the miracle of producing life, ate the children to which they had given birth, driven to cannibalism by the torments of starvation.

The leaders of the CPSU, who had every institute of psychology and physiology at their beck and call, were aware of the effects of starvation on people. Despite this knowledge, they organized the famine. These experienced communists, educated theoreticians, and leading activists, who were constantly lauded as wise geniuses by progressive Western writers, were indictable criminals. Replying to Winston Churchill's question concerning the famine of 1933 in Ukraine, Stalin declared that it was worse than the war — up to ten million people had perished.

The organizers and implementers of the famine of 1933 do not recount their activity in those terrible times. They remain monsters and do not suffer any pangs of conscience or feelings of remorse.

The Ukrainian community in the West has incorrectly interpreted the causes of the Ukrainian tragedy in repeating that the

organizer of the 1933 famine was Pavel Postyshev. This Russian communist was appointed first secretary of the CC CPU at the plenum of the Politburo of the CC AUCP(B). Therefore, the decision to appoint him was approved earlier, before the meeting, by the top leaders of the Communist Party. Meanwhile, Postyshev arrived in Ukraine to carry out his tasks only in late January 1933, when the famine was at its peak.

The Soviet communists punished people who talked about the famine of 1933 even more harshly than those who engaged in anti-Soviet propaganda. Meanwhile, the Soviets circulated nonsensical arguments designed to justify the famine: the need to transform the USSR into an industrial state, which, in their view, eventually ensured their victory over Nazi Germany and saved the Soviet peoples from enslavement and destruction. Therefore, the Soviet state needed a work force to build industry. Those who were implementing the dictatorship of the proletariat did not grasp that the peasants would willingly have flocked to construction sites if their work would have been remunerated. But peasants who had been starved to death could not work.

The peasantry, which formed the broad base of society and the foundation of the state, had always lived according to the rule of the people; its very existence was confirmation of this popular rule. That is why the communists destroyed the peasants whom they viewed as their implacable enemies.

**Yurii Semenko**

# HOW THE KOBZARS OF UKRAINE WERE LIQUIDATED



*The luminary of Ukrainian kobzars\*, Ivan Kuchuhura-Kucherenko.*

Vasyl Yemets provides the following eyewitness report:

“In 1920, about a month after Pentecost Sunday, the kobzar, **Lytvynenko**, was executed in Odesa by the Bolsheviks. The sole crime of this kobzar was that he frequently played during Ukrainian soirees and for various societies. He was arrested and shot after one month in a Cheka prison cell. His belongings, including his *bandura* [a Ukrainian musical instrument similar in construction and appearance to a lute, with 32–55 strings] were confiscated.”

Lytvynenko’s fate was shared by quite a few other traditional singers of Ukraine:

**Petro Skydan**, a kobzar from the village of Velykyi Burluk, in Kharkiv region. He was murdered by the Bolsheviks in mid-January 1920 on Moskalivka Street in Kharkiv for singing songs considered “counterrevolutionary” by Red Army soldiers.

**Iosyp Hlyvky**, a lira player from Kharkiv region, was murdered by Red Army soldiers during the battles in 1919 for the town of Lozova.

**Antin Mytiai**, a well known kobzar from Kyiv region, was murdered by the Bolsheviks in Kyiv in 1921.

During the Civil War the following sighted bandurysts were killed:

**Svyryd Sotnychenko**, a banduryst from the Kuban region, was killed in 1920 in the village of Pashkivska near Katerynodar.

**Andrii Sliidiuk**, a member of the First Artistic Banduryst Capella, was killed in 1919 in Starokostiantyniv.

**Fedir Dibrova**, a member of the First Artistic Banduryst Capella, was killed in 1919.

**Antin Petiukh** was killed in 1920 in Medvyn.

**Hamaliia**, a banduryst from Kyiv, was killed in 1921 in Kyiv.

In 1918 the banduryst **Fedir Doroshko** was arrested for “counterrevolutionary agitation” and imprisoned in a concentration camp.

What led the Soviet regime to exterminate the kobzars and bandurysts?

In the opinion of the Ukraine-based American ethnomusicologist William Noll, one reason was the social role of these blind singers, who over the centuries were traditionally under no one’s control. They were dangerous to the ruling ideology because they were sources of moral authority in society, and by their singing they were in effect resisting the totalitarian order. Sighted bandurysts were generally perceived as carriers



*Ukrainian kobzars who gave a concert during the Congress of Archaeologists in Kharkiv in 1902.*

of the Ukrainian national idea. They formed a significant “part of the rising national consciousness,” which also impeded the swift entrenchment of the ideological principles of the communist system. The Soviet government was also troubled by the traditional orientation of the kobzar and lira players’ repertoire, which often had a “counterrevolutionary” coloring, according to the Soviet authorities. In view of the fact that certain traditional singers and sighted bandurysts had taken part in political activities and combat actions, as well as the growing popularity of the kobzar art, it may be firmly stated that the kobzar and banduryst arts (both traditional and amateur varieties) represented a genuine threat to the authority of the Soviet regime of occupation.

From the beginning of Soviet rule the Bolsheviks’ repressive measures against these folk singers had a clear-cut, consistent nature, and may be divided into two categories.

The first category includes all measures of physical pressure on the singers, ranging from a simple “ban on singing and playing,” to execution by firing squad. The legal basis of such actions was provided by accusations of “counterrevolutionary agitation,” which were levied against these traditional singers and amateur bandurysts.

During the Civil War period the Soviet regime passed several resolutions targeting “counterrevolutionary agitators,” which were in effect until 1923.

Among them are: Lenin’s decree of 21 February 1918, entitled “The Socialist Fatherland in Danger,” ordering the punitive organs to carry out summary executions of “enemy agents and counterrevolutionary agitators”; the 22 February 1918 resolution “On the Summary Executions of Enemies of the Soviet Power,” which emphasizes that counterrevolutionary agitators, regardless of the form of agitation, “will be mercilessly shot at the site of the crime by detachments of commissions”; and the 5 September 1918 resolution (based on the preceding directive of the All-Union Central Executive Committee) signed by Dmytro Kursky, Hryhorii Petrovsky, and Vladimir Bonch-Bruевич, entitled “On Red Terror.” The resolution states: “The security of the home front by means of terror is a real necessity to protect the Soviet republics from class enemies by means of isolating them in concentration camps... and by executions.”

The second category includes measures that were aimed at discrediting the art of the kobzars and bandurysts in the eyes of the Ukrainian public

by forcing these singers to collaborate with the regime. The most characteristic measures were: forcible recruitment, i.e., so-called “mobilization” of kobzars to Bolshevik agitation brigades (as in the case of the famous Kharkiv kobzar Ivan Kuchuhura-Kucherenko); the forced creation of pseudo-kobzar ersatz for the glorification of the occupiers (e.g., “Oh, in the City of Petrograd,” “The Song of Shchors” by the kobzar Pavlo Nosach; “Who Is That Falcon, Comrades” and “Father Lenin,” by the kobzar Fedir Kushneryk; “The Year 1917,” “The Song of the Rebellion,” by the kobzar Ivan Zaporozhchenko, et al.); the falsification of kobzar works created during the revolution (e.g., P. Huzio’s song “About Otaman Khrystovy”); and a ban on performing the traditional kobzar-lira player repertoire.

All these measures had to carry out the function of a “delayed-action bomb” whose goal was primarily to disorientate society with respect to the historically determined role of these folk singers. Eventually this would lead to the gradual

alienation of Ukrainian society from the bearers of traditional culture.

The sharp sword of post-revolutionary repressions touched not only the kobzars and bandurysts but all those representatives of the creative intelligentsia who were safeguarding the phenomena associated with the kobzar art. Among the victims of persecution and repressions were the folklorists Mykola Domontovych and Porfyrii Martynovych, and the artist Opanas Slastion. In 1922 the Ukrainian composer Yaroslav Lopatynsky was arrested in Kyiv, and in Nizhyn, the music historian Mykola Hrinchenko. During a one-year period (1921-22) three giants of Ukrainian music “mysteriously” disappeared, one after the other: Yakiv Stepovy, Mykola Leontovych, and Kyrylo Stetsenko.

**Kost Cheremsky**

\*A kobza player, or minstrel, usually blind.



*A trio of kobzars: Mykhailo Kravchenko, Terentii Parkhomenko, and Petro Drevchenko. Darnytsia district of Kyiv, 1909.*

# THE PERSECUTION OF THE KOBZARS

Much has been written about the great destruction that Bolshevik Moscow inflicted on Ukraine. This was not just occupation but brigandage. In order to simplify the process of exposing “foreign thinkers” and instituting consistent repressions against them, the Bolshevik government resorted to appalling measures. Thus, on the basis of orders issued to “the militia and investigation” of the republic, no. 196-37 of 1924 and no. 151-34 of 1925, a directive was formulated, placing informers “in every alleyway,” “courtyard or house,” tearooms, cafeterias, restaurants, hotels, inns, and bazaars. Informers were instructed to report everything they heard and from whom they had heard statements against the Soviet government. This instruction of 1 October 1925 was circulated to all the raions in Ukraine’s Sumy region.

The Bolshevik’s brigandage in Ukraine encountered fierce resistance from the peasantry. These uprisings were brutally crushed, and their participants were dubbed bandits for many years. The peasants’ resistance was eventually broken. The people were terrorized and only the kobzars, who remained steadfast in the face of despair, still carried the word of truth and the people’s wrath. At this point the government began hunting down

the kobzars. The apogee of this manhunt and the ensuing executions was the notorious congress of kobzars and lira players in Kharkiv, where the government assembled singers from every region of Ukraine under the pretext of holding a kobzars’ forum. All the participants were later brought to the outskirts of Kharkiv and shot at a garbage dump.

I heard about this in 1968 from kobzars living in Krasnohrad and the village of Nataline in Kharkiv region. According to my information, the hunt for the kobzars began in 1926, as attested by archival documents (e.g., a letter from the head of the Sumy district division of the GPU). According to another document, that year a kobzar named Liashenko was arrested in the village of Vorozhba (Lebedyn area) for singing a song called “About the Food Tax.” This song, which resembled the “Duma\* about the Famine” by Yehor Movchan, was also sung in later years.

In the 1960s I found an ancient lira in the village of Mezhyrich. It had belonged to an itinerant lira player, who starved to death near the village church during the famine of 1933. Unfortunately, his name has been forgotten. This lira player also sang a song that contained the following words: “But the great head does not



*Sich Riflemen listening to the “Duma about Cossack Glory.” Kyiv, 1918.*



hear a damn thing.” The day that I met the kobzar Yehor Movchan, he adamantly refused to answer any questions about the tragic fate of the kobzars and lira players: “I don’t know, I don’t know, I didn’t hear any such thing.” But then he took his bandura and asked me: “Do you want me to sing you a *duma* about Lenin?”

Suddenly I understood: he didn’t trust me. Much later Movchan explained that songs like that were written so as not to end up rotting in the “Kharkiv pit.” I didn’t have a chance to ask him about that “Kharkiv pit,” but I tape-recorded his account of the trials and tribulations of the kobzars. Below is a short fragment from this taped account:

“The persecution of the kobzars never stopped during the entire rule of the Soviet government. In order to themselves rid of this misfortune, people had to compose songs commissioned by the authorities. And people did compose them, because who relished the thought of rotting in Siberia?”

During the war a government informant denounced Movchan as the kobzar who had written the “*Duma about Lenin*.” And the fascists put the blind man into a cell. The kobzar escaped from it one freezing, snowy night. Blind and all alone, he headed into the world, traveling from village to village, from house to house. Among ordinary people he found warmth, bread, and a bowl of mash.

After the war, the same informant reported to the authorities that the kobzar Movchan, who had played for the [German] occupiers, had returned to Pysarivka. “It often happened that young people would get together in a club and ask me to play for them. But can I see who is listening to me? Maybe a German came into the club; do I



*Monument to the murdered kobzars, erected in 1997 in Taras Shevchenko Park in Kharkiv. Architect: Oleksander Morus.*

Photo: Rostyslav Rybalchenko

know? That’s when they began to hound me again. I barely managed to get away from them. And then they started bothering me again: you’re singing religious psalms; you’re poisoning the Soviet people with the opium of religion. I said: I sing and I shall continue to sing. You’re teaching future priests in seminaries, and nothing happens, but I sing some sort of psalms, and all hell breaks loose.”

Movchan’s persecution ended after Maksym Rylsky [the eminent Ukrainian poet] interceded on his behalf. During one of our meetings Movchan casually let drop while playing a mournful song on his bandura that the Kharkiv congress of kobzars culminated in the “Kharkiv pit.” That was what people had told him. He said: “Praise God that He saved me from that terrible death.”

**Borys Tkachenko**

\**Dumas*: Lyrico-epic works of folk origin about events in the Cossack period of the 16th–17th centuries.

# “I WOULD TAKE MY BANDURA”

*“And they will also drive you like bulls to the slaughterhouse, and you will thrash and shoot at each other, since you did not know how to respect yourselves. You will be scattered throughout Germanys and Turkeys...”*

(Alexander Dovzhenko, *Ukraine in Flames*)

People are streaming by with baskets, bags, sacks, and modern suitcases. “Christ is risen!” “Indeed He is risen!” But these greetings and responses are not uttered with the same joy as on Easter Sunday. On the first Sunday after Easter they sound sad and mournful. The souls of our dear ones and friends, having celebrated Easter with us, have departed to their domain, leaving us behind with our earthly problems. All around, carefully tidied graves are adorned with flower wreaths. Here and there are neglected graves. There is probably no one to tend them. There is no one to say “the Kingdom of Heaven” in their memory.

How many people have been leveled with the ground all over the world, and not a marker or cross over their graves! Memory scorches the heart, and it shudders and cries from helplessness. How many children and grandchildren are whispering “the Kingdom of Heaven” to those who were suddenly destroyed or those who disappeared without a trace? For what? Why? Who needed their deaths and whose life was made easier because of them?

I am talking to Anatolii Salohub, the former head of the collective farm “For Peace,” about his father, one of the dearest people in his life. Salohub, who is over sixty years old and has adult children and young grandchildren, blinks his eyes in perplexity when he recalls his orphaned childhood, as the son of an “enemy of the people.”

“The only souvenirs that I have of my father are these photographs and his concert posters. I am saving them so that his great-grandchildren will remember him.”

Tolyk [diminutive of Anatolii], the youngest of eleven children, asks his mother: “Mama, tell me what my Dad was like.” The constantly exhausted mother wipes away a bitter tear, hugs her youngest child, and tells him again: “That day Dad

attended a meeting at the collective farm. Like every day, he washed, got dressed, and was sitting at the table when they came for him. Everybody already knew that when the “black Maria” takes a person away, it is the same thing as being placed alive in a grave. He got his things together and hugged his family. You were sleeping like a dolly in the cradle. He bent down to kiss you, and his tears fell on your face — so heavy, like drops of rain during a storm. He covered his face and left the house without looking back. ‘Farewell,’ is all he said.”

Every night Anatolii would fall asleep with a picture of his unknown and irreplaceable father. Days, months, and years passed, and still he believed and hoped that one day the door would open and his Dad would appear, and his whole life would change.

What wrong did the collective farmer with a talent for the bandura commit against the state? Why was he called an enemy of the people? Was it because of those concerts that Viktor Salohub and his four sons organized in all the districts of the Chernihiv and Sumy regions, or because he grew grain? When Anatolii was a soldier in 1957, he got the courage to trace his father’s steps. That year information on the Soviet camps, where millions of people who were inconvenient to the Leninist society had rotted, became public knowledge. But the reply from the Sumy regional court did not calm the son’s heart. The information note simply stated that, according to a ruling of the NKVD troika of Chernihiv region, dated 19 November 1937, the case of Viktor Hryhorovych Salohub was closed for lack of evidence. The defendant died of anemia on 2 December 1944.

This is how the life of the talented banduryst Viktor Salohub, the father of eleven children, ended. Few of today’s residents of Yurkivtsi remember him because no effort was spared to eradicate his memory as quickly as possible. Viktor not only played the bandura and taught his four sons how to play; he also made string instruments, while local bandurysts from Sokyriany helped him string his banduras. Every member of the Salohub group had his own bandura, and all of these instruments disappeared. Since they were the property of the defendant,

they were quickly confiscated and became the “people’s” property. But no talented person was found for Salohub’s banduras, and they disappeared without a trace.

The ruddy blond-haired Salohub family stares out of an old and yellowed photograph. Their faces are serious and concentrated on their difficult task. The caption on the other side of the photograph says that it was taken in 1932, a souvenir of the family’s concert in Dmytrivka. Anatolii has kept a 1935 poster of his father’s concert, on which the following is written in large red letters:

“A concert by kobzars from the capella of the Chernihiv Region Theater named in honor of the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Komsomol, under the direction of V. H. Salohub.” There is another example confirming the esteem in which the large family was held. In its 11 June 1936 issue the newspaper *Bilshovytski tempy* [Bolshevik Tempos] wrote: “The Yurkivtsi and Lypa musical groups played nicely. The bandurysts under the direction of Mykola Salohub played particularly masterfully. Salohub Mykhailo and the nine-year-old banduryst Salohub Petia stood out. Their marvelous playing thrilled all the listeners.”

Talent is truly immortal. Afterwards, the father of the Salohub brothers paid for his talent with his life, when the “carriers of culture” snatched the instruments he had made from his sons’ hands.

Mykola Salohub never abandoned his art. Although he received many hard knocks during his life, he was able to become a professional artist. In 1941 he began his creative work at the Kirghiz Philharmonic in Frunze. Then the war

came, along with contusions and wounds. After all these travails, Ukrainian songs and melodies performed on the national instrument, the bandura, began to ring out with renewed force from the stages of various concert halls of the former Soviet Union. Everything that had spiritually nourished the Ukrainian people throughout the centuries was concentrated in these songs, and no matter what chains were clapped on them, no matter how their creators were destroyed, they continue to live.

Time has arranged everything in its proper place, and there is no longer any need to tell people who truly created culture, and who destroyed it, who faked love for his fatherland, and who truly loved Ukraine and its people.

Tugging painfully at the heart, the torn strings of his father’s bandura have resounded throughout Anatolii Salohub’s life. His eighty-three-year-old mother Varvara Nykyforivna, who lived with him, spent her life with her children in permanent mourning.

The old family home that still stands in Anatolii’s courtyard contains the memories of his bitter childhood. His father’s footsteps can be heard in the quiet of night.

It is regrettable that there was no one to teach Anatolii the art of bandura playing. Otherwise, he would have picked up the bandura and played what he knew, like his father. It would be a very long *duma* about the tragic fate of a great family, and people would listen with bowed heads and wipe away their tears.

**O. Hostra**

(*Trybuna khliboroba* [Farmer’s Tribune] Talalaivka raion center, Chernihiv region).

# THE DEPORTATION OF THE UKRAINIAN INTELLIGENTSIA

## Representatives of “Bourgeois” Ideology

The conditions for creative work in Ukraine were significantly more limited than in Russia. The main reason for this was that nearly all Ukrainian intellectuals were included in the category known as the “Petliurite-Vynnychenko formation.” Hence, members of the Ukrainian intelligentsia were considered not only as carriers of a “bourgeois” world perception but as representatives of a “nationalist” ideology, which was much more dangerous for the Bolsheviks. Therefore, immediately after the switch to the New Economic Policy (NEP), which spelled a certain liberalization of civic life, in a telegram to the CC CP(B)U Molotov and Dzerzhinsky emphasized the crucial need to boost vigilance twofold.

First and foremost, the authors of the telegram proposed setting up a “militant apparatus for the struggle against counterrevolution and local organs,” which would enlist the services of the “most staunch party comrades with experience in this struggle.”

Already in May 1931, on direct orders from the CC CP(B)U, the punitive organs fabricated one of the first political show trials, the “case of the Central Committee of the Ukrainian Party of Social-Revolutionaries.” According to P. Shubin, the author of an article published in *Kommunist* on 5 May 1921, after the trial the Ukrainian intelligentsia “should feel like after a cold, not very pleasant, but refreshing bath.” Thus, “the sword of Damocles” was always suspended above creative people, who at any moment could be accused of nationalism with attendant consequences.

Compared to Russia, the restricted nature of the liberalization of civic life in Ukraine is illustrated by the state of the publishing industry. Whereas in early 1922 there were 220 private publishing houses in Moscow and 99 in Petrograd, there were only 7 in all of Ukraine. The reason behind this phenomenon was not so

much objective circumstances as a subjective factor: the state party was creating all kinds of obstacles to the development of the creative spirit in Ukraine. Thus, at a party conference A. Verkhoturysky, the director of the Kyiv regional party committee’s propaganda and agitation department [*gubkom*], reported on his section’s achievements: “Even before the announcement of the slogan ‘the political offensive continues,’ the *gubkom* was conscious of this line and did not allow any private publishing house in which bourgeois ideology would find its reflection.”

In particular, the party leadership paid close attention to the political situation in higher educational establishments of the Ukrainian republic, above all the social sciences and how they were being taught. The old professorial staff, which as a rule did not wish to change the character, style, and methods of teaching, did not meet the demands of the new government. Thus, in late 1921 the Chief Directorate of Professional Education [*Ukrholovprofos*] organized a network of scholarly-research chairs in Kharkiv, Kyiv, Odesa, and Katerynoslav to engage in scholarly work and prepare future professors. In 1922 plans were drafted to enlist 1,000 graduate students, who would be financially supported by the state. “It is completely understandable,” wrote deputy People’s Commissar of Education Ya. Riappo to the CC CP(B)U, “that these candidates should be vetted from the political side as thoroughly as possible by *Ukrholovprofos* and its regional branches; furthermore, it is crucial to mobilize as many communists as possible to the scholarly-research chairs.”

Since the question of preparing “red professors” would take a few years, the Soviet government could not crush the old cadres immediately. Neither were the communists prepared to tolerate an independentist position on the part of the teaching personnel. In order to curb, control, and make professors and lecturers compliant, the government instituted the position of political commissar in institutions and technical colleges, who was responsible for the work of a

teaching establishment. At a meeting of the Politburo of the CC CP(B)U on 20 February 1921 the Central Committee's Organizational Bureau, together with the People's Commissar of Education, was instructed to designate the "commissarial composition for institutes of higher education and to boost it."

The preponderant majority of lecturers did not welcome such innovations, and some even left Ukraine because of the new regime. For the most part, however, the old cadres began actively protecting their rights.

In March 1922 lecturers in Kyiv's higher educational establishments went on strike in protest against the reduction in the numbers of teaching institutions. The People's Commissar of Education regarded discussions of the candidate for the position of rector of Kyiv University as an attempt to "overwhelm our top communist leadership in higher schools and the introduction of authoritative principles." There was also unrest in higher educational establishments in Kharkiv, Kamianets-Podilsky, and Odesa.

The "professional revolutionaries" did not succeed in achieving ideological uniformity in institutions of higher education. A memorandum written by communist students at the Novooleksandriisk Institute of Agriculture in Kharkiv to the Politburo of the CC CP(B)U stressed the fact that "in the sphere of Soviet policies on agriculture the institute may lead to thoroughly negative results, in terms of their organization being a state within a state and a center for the scholarly substantiation of Social-Revolutionary ideology. . . . Social-agronomical sciences are being taught in the spirit of the past, without changes and additions arising from the three-year proletarian revolution and the new state of affairs. . . . Future agronomical activists of the proletarian republic are being raised in this kind of reactionary atmosphere."

The situation in higher educational establishments in the Katerynoslav area resembled that in Novooleksandriisk. Thus, Rubach, the director of the Katerynoslav regional party committee's propaganda and agitation department, reported to his leadership that "during lectures on the most innocent apolitical topics lecturers revealed their political face, with a clear shade of Menshovism and Social-Revolutionarism and Cadetism." Since communist

centers did not have enough forces to neutralize these "negative phenomena," communist students proposed during a session of the large collegium of the regional party committee's propaganda and agitation department to liquidate all party organizations in higher educational establishments, thereby avoiding their assimilation, because "they have no influence on the non-party mass of students; on the contrary, they are falling under the petty bourgeois influence of the old professorial staff and student body, the greater majority of which are petty bourgeois in their social composition and their ideology."

However, the collegium decided to retain party structures within higher educational establishments, while the regional party committee resolved to launch an offensive.

The intensification of forcible administrative methods vis-à-vis higher educational institutions was positively assessed by the leaders of the republic. On 17 March 1922 the Politburo of the CC CP(B)U ordered the propaganda and agitation department to circulate a directive banning all open debates because they provide the opposition with an opportunity to freely challenge the Soviet government.

On 23 June 1922, following a speech "On the Political Statements of the Professorate" by People's Commissar of Education Hryhorii Hrynko, the Politburo of the CC CP(B)U passed the following resolution whose text reads in part: "To propose that the People's Commissariat of Education implement a planned transfer of those professors who are introducing the greatest upheaval in academic life. To propose to regional party committees to ensure that local economic organs in no way impede this transfer, which should be implemented with maximum steadfastness. To propose to the People's Commissariat of Education and the State Political Directorate [GPU of the NKVD] to apply deportation outside the borders of the federation, as one of the repressive measures against activist elements in the professorate. To propose to the People's Commissariat of Education and the State Political Directorate to act by mutual agreement during the liquidation of the professorate's statements and actions, by informing the Central Committee ahead of time. To propose to the People's Commissariat of Education that it pay particular attention to

Kamianets-Podilsky University and reform its teaching staff.” These directives were sent as a secret circular to regional party committees “to acquaint themselves and implement [them].”

Thus, on orders from the Politburo of the CC CP(B)U, from this moment the People’s Commissariat of Education and the GPU were instructed to closely monitor the conduct of the professorate and in general “with a firm hand put an end to attempts by any means whatsoever to harm cultural development,” especially when such attempts originate from “Ukrainian nationalists.”

### **The GPU’s Crucially Important Task**

Whereas the theoretical underpinnings of the “operation” to deport the Ukrainian intelligentsia were developed by the party leadership, the entire responsibility for the preparation and practical realization of the plan was placed on the GPU organs.

After the reorganization of the Cheka Soviet secret police in early 1922, the prestige of this organization somewhat diminished because of the limitation of its functions and the difficult material situation of its staff. According to the new legislation, the responsibilities of the GPU included crushing open counterrevolutionary actions and adopting immediate measures aimed at exposing them in a timely fashion; combating espionage; protecting railway and sea routes; protecting borders; combating contraband and illegal border crossings; and carrying out special tasks assigned by the Presidium of the VTsVK and the Radnarkom to protect the revolutionary order.

In view of the need to arrest individuals involved in counterrevolutionary activities, banditry, espionage, etc., the GPU and political departments, as well as their plenipotentiary representatives at the raion level, were granted the right to conduct searches and arrests. Arrests of suspects by members of the punitive organs could be conducted without a special resolution from the GPU or special orders issued by political departments, but it was mandatory to obtain the sanction of the head of the GPU or political department within forty-eight hours. An arrested individual had to be indicted no later than two weeks after his arrest. Within two months from

the day of the arrest, the GPU was obliged to release the detainee or request the presidium of the VTsVK to prolong the term of arrest, if circumstances so demanded. Unlike the Cheka, the GPU did not have the right to hand down sentences. All cases, both political and civilian, were transferred to the courts.

At the same time, the material security of employees of the punitive organs deteriorated in early 1922. Under the existing system of economic accounts, enterprises could not pay large sums to the state treasury owing to the fact that a financial crisis had completely exacerbated the lack of means for circulating currency. At this time the majority of Ukrainian citizens were starving. During the Civil War period the Chekists had grown used to their privileged position and thus had a more negative reaction to material shortages compared to other social strata. Masses of people began leaving the organs: during 1921 the number of employees dropped from 34,000 to 18,000 (as of 1 April 1922). These trends alarmed the Soviet leadership.

On 4 July 1922 Felix Dzerzhinsky requested the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) (RKP(B)) to ensure that GPU personnel received appropriate financial remuneration and foodstuffs. In order to underscore its significance within the political structures of the Soviet system, it was crucial for the GPU to conduct a large-scale operation, which turned out to be the deportation of the Ukrainian intelligentsia. Thus, the interests of the GPU completely coincided with those of the ruling party.

The Chekists quickly began preparing lists of candidates for deportation. As of 3 August 1922 seventy-seven individuals in Ukraine were on these lists, including Serhii Yefremov and Volodymyr Chekhivsky. But the largest group was comprised of lecturers at institutions of higher education in Kyiv, Kharkiv, Katerynoslav, and other cities of the republic.

Now, the Chekists were merely waiting for a signal from the Central Committee. The order came at the XII Party Conference of the RKP(B), held on 4-7 August 1922. Grigorii Zinovev gave a speech about anti-Soviet parties and trends. The gist of his speech was that under the conditions of the NEP the party cannot make political compromises, as it did in the economic

sphere. It followed that the political offensive in the sphere of ideology should continue, and the party has no grounds to renounce repressive measures.

Ensuing discussions showed that most of the delegates agreed with Zinoviev's philosophy. As a result, the conference unambiguously declared in its resolution that since anti-Soviet parties "are seeking to exploit Soviet legality in their counterrevolutionary interests," the conference considers that "it is also not possible to abandon the use of repressions not only against Social-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks but also 'intriguers' in the leading elites of the would-be nonparty bourgeois intelligentsia, which for the sake of its counterrevolutionary goals is abusing the fundamental interests of entire corporations, and for which the genuine interests of science, technology, pedagogy, cooperation, etc. are only empty phrases and a political cover. Repressions... are dictated by revolutionary advisability, with respect to crushing those reviving groups seeking to capture the old positions that were seized from them by the proletariat."

Three days after the conference ended, the VTsVK issued a decree on 10 August 1922 "On Administrative Exile," which provided the legal

basis for deportation. This legislative act led to the creation of a special NKVD commission with the right to deport without trial people involved in "counterrevolutionary acts... abroad or to certain locales of the RSFSR by administrative means."

Mass arrests of candidates for deportation began in the second half of August 1922. Almost every day the Soviet Ukrainian leadership informed Moscow about the scale of "operations" in Ukraine. Whenever a report was delayed, the reaction from the center was instantaneous.

In the meantime, the selection process continued. On 4 September 1922 the Politburo of the CC CP(B)U instructed the secretariat of the Central Committee as well as Balitsky to recheck the lists of arrested individuals subject to deportation.

During these busy days the Chekists once again felt they were playing a significant role in the political structures of the new regime. It had become obvious that, in capturing power by force, the communists would not be able to maintain it without expanding violence to all spheres of social and state relations. This spelled rosy prospects for the punitive organs, at least until there was a change of power.

Viktor Adamsky

**In his book *Holod: chomu i iak? Narodna knyha memorial. 33-ii: holod* [The Famine: Why and How? National Memorial Book. '33: the Famine] (Kyiv, 1991), the writer Volodymyr Maniak recounts the contents of a letter from Viktor Burbela, a research associate of the Taras Shevchenko Institute of Literature:**

**Burbela writes: "I am informing you of a fact that incontrovertibly attests to the artificial nature of the famine in Ukraine." He then cites a fragment from a book written by N. Chikera, entitled *Sluzhba osobennogo naznacheniiia* [Emergency Service], which was published in Moscow in 1975: "An even worse accident befell the steamship *Kharkiv*, which was sailing with a cargo of 8,900 tons of grain and agricultural implements from Odesa to London. On 8 March 1933, the ship was caught in fog on the approach to the Bosphorus as a result of the navigator's mistake and ran aground on the Turkish coast... Shortly afterwards a strong wind came up, the waves rose, pushed the ship back to the sea... The swelling grain caused a deformation of the steel cross-partitions and the deck... On the morning of 11 March the *Kharkiv* began to break apart..."**

**Approximately 9,000 tons of grain ended up at the bottom of the sea, in the very days of March, when the famine was mercilessly ravaging Ukrainian villages. Grain was transported by sea and railway, heading for Western Europe in accordance with agreements, as a present to the unemployed in the rotten capitalist West from the wealthy Soviet peasantry that had come to know the joys of collective work. What would [the Soviet leadership] not do in order to shut the gobs of the bourgeois propagandists about some kind of famine in verdant Ukraine?**

# THE THORNY ROAD OF THE UKRAINIAN LANGUAGE

*"O language! The Blessed Virgin Mary of my nation! Born of the chornozem, lovage... of the Dnipro's water, the stars and the moon...captured in the steppes by janissaries... Sold into slavery in the marketplace for naught...Return to our home from where you were expelled..."*

Kateryna Motrych

It would be difficult to find a more eloquent description of the historical reality of the Ukrainian language than the quotation above. Although many languages have disappeared from the face of the earth, not a single one of them was subjected to such savage persecution and terror as the Ukrainian language was for long centuries. Every foreign occupier had his own methods for persecuting the Ukrainian language, including outright bans on its use.

The thorny road of the Ukrainian language began shortly after the notorious Treaty of Pereiaslav (1654), long before the Battle of Poltava. Here are a few landmark dates in the history of the persecution of the Ukrainian language:

1690: The Russian Orthodox Church bans "new Kyivan books" written in the Ukrainian language and proclaims "a curse and anathema" against Ukrainian authors, including Petro Mohyla.

1720: Tsar Peter I bans the publication of Ukrainian-language books, "so that there will be no difference between Russian and a separate dialect."

1753: The Ukrainian language is banned at Kyiv-Mohyla Academy.

1769: The Russian Orthodox Church bans the publication of the *Primer*.



*The historian, literary scholar, and poet Mykola Zerov. Born in the Poltava region, he was arrested and sentenced to ten years' imprisonment in the Solovets Islands in Russia's Far North, where he died. The Mykola Zerov Centre for Ukrainian Studies at Monash University (Melbourne, Australia) was named in his honor.*



1775: After the destruction of the Zaporozhian Sich Ukrainian schools are closed in all colonels' offices.

1784: The language of instruction at Kyiv-Mohyla Academy is changed to Russian.

1786: All churches and schools are ordered to read prayers exclusively in Russian.

1789: The Polish *Sejm* [parliament] closes all Ukrainian schools and completely bans the teaching of Ukrainian in all schools.

1809: The Ruthenian Institute of Lviv University is closed.

1811: Kyiv-Mohyla Academy is closed.

1817: A resolution is passed on the exclusive use of the Polish language in all schools of Western Ukraine.

1847: The Cyril and Methodius Brotherhood is crushed.

1862: Free Ukrainian schools organized by the Ukrainian intelligentsia are banned.

1863: Petr Valuev, the tsarist minister of internal affairs (also responsible for press censorship) issues a ban on all Ukrainian-language publications, declaring: "No separate Little Russian language has [ever] existed, does exist [now], and can [ever] exist."

1864: A "statute" is passed, requiring all teaching in elementary schools to be conducted in the Russian language.

1876: The Ems Ukase is passed: this secret decree issued by the Russian tsar Alexander in the town of Ems, Germany, was aimed at halting the printing and distribution of Ukrainian-language publications within the Russian empire, including books and music notes, and the staging of plays.

1881: The Russian Orthodox Church bans church sermons in the Ukrainian language throughout Ukraine.

1884: Ukrainian theatres are banned in all gubernias of Ukraine.

1892: The translation of Russian books into Ukrainian is banned.

1895: Children's literature in Ukrainian, including books favorable to Russia, is banned.

1908: An ukase is issued on the harmfulness of Ukrainian culture and education, regarded as a threat to the Russian empire.

1914: After the "liberation" of Halychyna and Bukovyna from "Austrian enslavement" by Russian armies, the Ukrainian press is banned, and the library of the Shevchenko Scientific Society is destroyed. Meanwhile, German, Polish, Jewish, and other institutions remain unscathed.

1932: Stalin orders the abolition of Ukrainization [Ukrainian version of indigenization].

1933: The Polish government passes a law restricting the Ukrainian language in government administration, courts, schools, etc. As a result, only 749 schools are left out of a total of 2,532 schools that existed in 1922 and 1929.

1938: Russian as the mandatory language of instruction is introduced throughout Ukraine.

1958: A law is passed on the non-obligatory teaching of the Ukrainian language in the Ukrainian SSR ("according to desire").

1960-1980: The Leninist nationality policy in Ukraine is aimed at the complete liquidation of the Ukrainian printed word by 2005-2010.

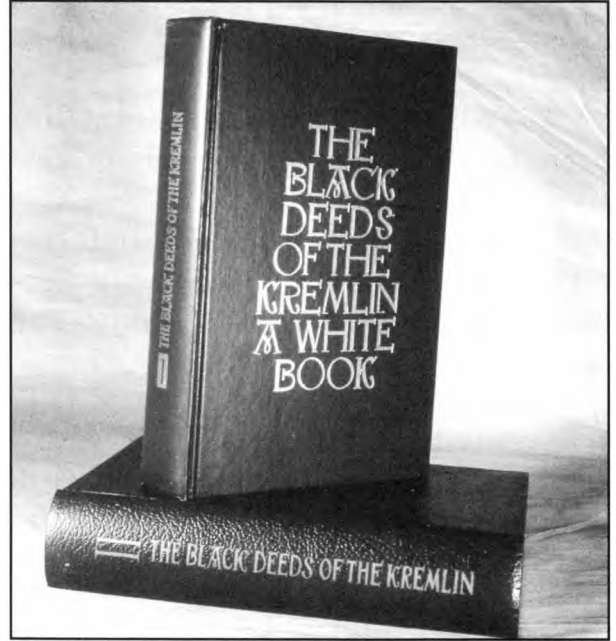
In Poland the number of Ukrainian schools drops from 152 to 29.

In Czechoslovakia the number of Ukrainian schools drops from 300 to 20; the Ukrainian population falls from 200,000 to 40,000.

In Romania Ukrainian elementary schools and high schools are closed; the Ukrainian population falls from 840,000 to 159,000.

**Yevhen Roslytsky**

# PURGED UKRAINIAN INTELLECTUALS



*The Ukrainian scholar Ivan Dubynets. After immigrating to the US, this former associate professor of Kyiv University published a two-volume work entitled **The Black Deeds of the Kremlin: A White Book**. Before his book appeared, the author died tragically under mysterious circumstances in his New York City apartment, apparently as a result of a gas leak.*



**Pavlo Fylypovych** (1891-1937). Poet and literary scholar born in the Kyiv region. Studied at Galagan College and graduated from the Faculty of History and Philology at Kyiv University in 1915. From 1920 until his imprisonment, Fylypovych was a professor of Kyiv University, where he taught the

history of modern Ukrainian literature. His first, Russian-language, works were published under the pseudonym Zorev in 1910. He began writing in Ukrainian in 1917. Fylypovych belonged to the Neoclassicist group of poets whose positions he championed during the Literary Discussion of 1925.

His two collections of poetry: *Zemlia i viter* [Earth and Wind, 1922] and *Prostir* [Space, 1925] are noted for their profound thought and sophisticated form. At the philosophical heart of his poetry are man and his place in nature and history. Hence, the poet's clearly defined universalism and his yearning for limitless cosmic spaces. A key feature of Fylypovych's poetic thinking is his ability to confront

contemporary times with the distant past and future. He is the author of over 100 scholarly articles and reviews. He was arrested in 1935 and deported to the Solovets Islands, where he died under mysterious circumstances. He was rehabilitated after the XX Congress of the CPSU. His collected poems were published in Munich in 1957.



*The distinguished theatrical director Les Kurbas, who worked in the theaters of Kyiv and Kharkiv. In 1933 he was forbidden to direct plays. Accused of nationalism, he was deported to the Far North in Russia, where he disappeared without a trace.*

### **Les Kurbas** (1887-?)

Highly talented actor and theater director born in the Ternopil area of Halychyna. He completed his studies at the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Vienna and later studied theater in Germany. In fall 1917 Kurbas organized the Molodyi Theater whose repertoire included plays by Volodymyr Vynnychenko and Oleksander Oles. After a summer in Odesa, the theater opened its season in Kyiv, where Kurbas staged plays by Hauptmann, Shaw, and Lesia Ukrainka. After Soviet power was established in Ukraine, Kurbas's theater was forced to merge with the State Dramatic Theatre. When Denikin's army entered Kyiv, all the city theaters were closed, forcing some members of the theater community

to relocate to Kamianets-Podilsky and other cities. The Berezil artistic association was founded in January 1922, and Kurbas became its director. He remained at this post until his arrest and deportation.

In his memoirs published in *MUR* [The Artistic Ukrainian Movement (1946, bk. 1, pp. 99-103)] the prominent actor, director, and theatrical figure Volodymyr Blavatsky writes that Kurbas "created a theater that was on par with the leading theaters of the world and [who] sought new forms and new content for the expression of his creativity; who finally led Ukrainian theater out of the backwaters of ethnographism onto the broad paths of world-class creativity."

**Yevhen Onatsky**



### **Mykola Kulish**

The celebrated playwright Mykola Kulish, who collaborated with Les Kurbas. He was arrested in 1934 and sent to the Solovets Islands, where he died.

### **Hryhorii Kosynka** (1899-1934).

Writer born in the Kyiv region and member of the Kyiv-based literary organizations Lanka [Link] and MARS [Workshop of the Revolutionary Word] His first short story was published in 1919 in the newspaper *Borotba* [Struggle]. Kosynka was often the target of attacks from official Soviet critics, who accused him of “kulak ideology,” “counterrevolution,” and “banditry.” In 1934 Kosynka was sentenced to be shot in accordance with a ruling handed down by the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court of the USSR.



Kosynka was one of the most celebrated prose writers of the 1920s Ukrainian literary revival. His works reflected the movements and moods of the peasantry during the national-liberation struggle of 1917-1921. While continuing the tradition of Ukrainian

impressionism (Mykhailo Kotsiubynsky, Stepan Vasylychenko, Vasyl Stefanyk), Kosynka was linked through his ornamental style and elements of expressionism to contemporary Ukrainian writers, like Mykola Khvylovy.



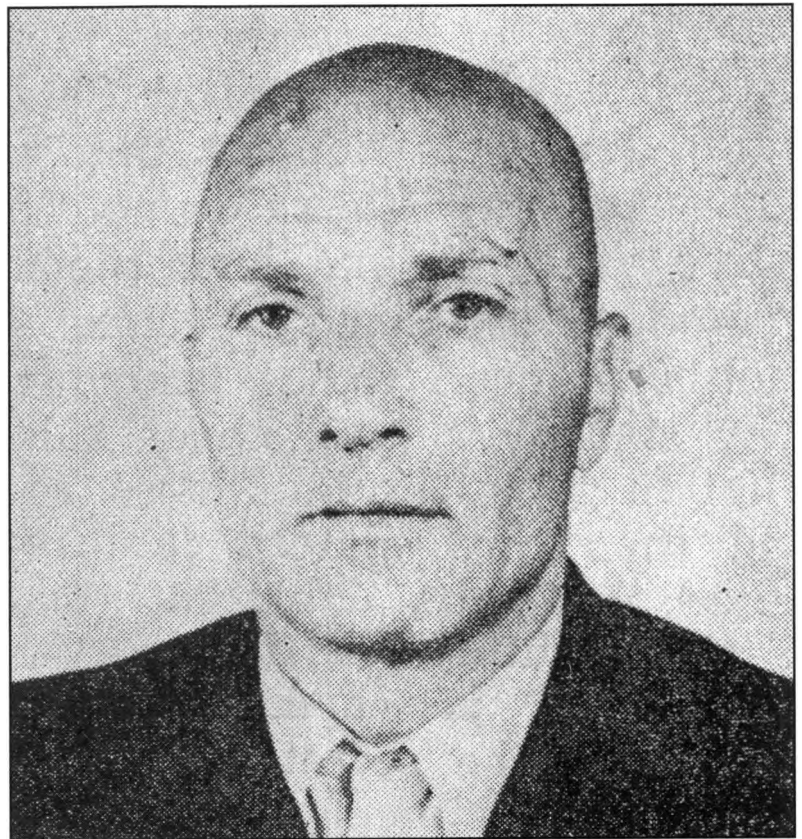
### **Ivan Kulyk**

Ivan Kulyk, writer, political activist, and diplomat based in Canada and Poland.

Kulyk, one of the founders of the Union of Writers of the Ukrainian SSR, was accused of “nationalism” and executed in 1934.

### **Luka Kelembet**

After he was accused of anti-Soviet agitation and being a supporter of Ukrainian independence and Petliura, and a glorifier of Hetman Mazepa, he was arrested and deported to Yakutia.



**Volodymyr Yaroshenko**  
(pseudonym: Voliar)  
(1898-1937).

Symbolist poet and prose writer born in the village of Yakhnyky, Lohvytsia county, Poltava region. Studied at the Kyiv Commercial Institute and taught school in 1921-1923. Member of literary organizations Lanka, MARS, and Pluh [Plough]. Began writing in Russian and later switched to Ukrainian. Yaroshenko is the author of six collections of poetry and two collections of short stories (1918-1928). Arrested and executed in 1937.



**Geo (Yurii) Shkurupii**  
(1903-1937).

Poet and prose writer from the city of Bendery (Bessarabia). One of the organizers of ASPANFUT [Association of Panfuturists, later known as Nova generatsiia [New Generation]]. Shkurupii's works were published in journals, newspapers, and almanacs. He is the author of several collections of poems and short stories (1922-1934). He was arrested in 1934 and died in prison under mysterious circumstances.



**Yevhen Pluzhnyk**  
(1898-1936).

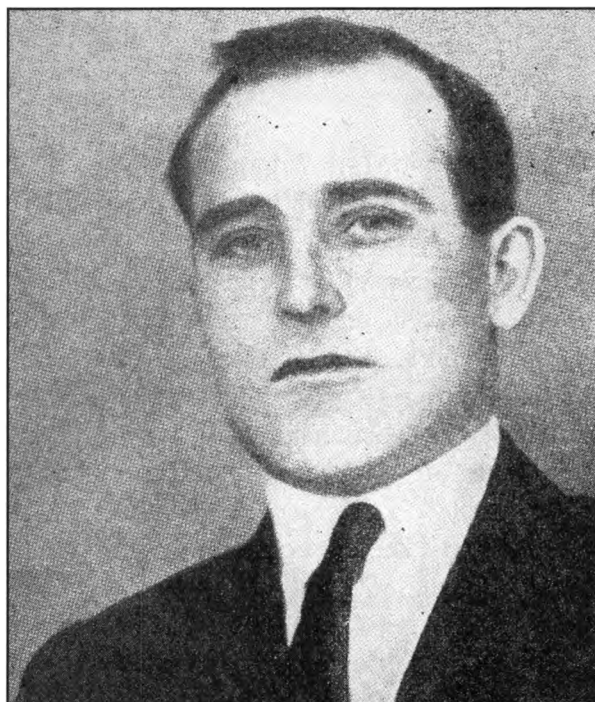
Poet born in a peasant's family in the Voronizh region. Studied at the Kyiv Veterinary-Zoological Institute and the M. Lysenko Theatrical Institute. His first poems were published in 1923 in the journal *Globus*; later in *Chervonyi Shliakh* [Red Path] and *Zhyttia i Revoliutsiia* [Life and Revolution]. Member of the literary organizations ASPIS [Association of Writers], Lanka, and MARS. He is the author of two collections of poetry and one posthumous collection published in Augsburg in 1948. Pluzhnyk's poetry is profoundly intimate and contemplative, with touches of pessimism and skepticism. Official Soviet Ukrainian critics called his poetry "lyrics of pain and helpless faith," while his novel *Neduha* [Illness] was harshly criticized for its "confusion" and "motifs and moods of moral decline." He is the author of three plays, the last of which was never published. Pluzhnyk's impressionistic poems, marked by sincerity, masterful poetic language, and sophisticated form, place him in the top ranks of Ukraine's finest poets of the 1920s-



1930s. Arrested along with other writers in 1934, he was sentenced to be shot. The death sentence was commuted to ten years' imprisonment in the Solovets Islands, where he died on 2 February 1936.

**Oles Dosvitnii**  
(1891-?).

Writer born in Slobidska Ukraine. During World War One he was supposed to be court-martialed for conducting revolutionary propaganda among the troops. He escaped from prison and fled to Mongolia and China, from where he immigrated to the US. After returning to Ukraine via Japan in 1918, he supported the Bolsheviks. He began writing in 1920 and was one of Mykola Khvylovy's closest colleagues in VAPLITE [All-Ukrainian Academy of Proletarian Literature] from which both of them were subsequently expelled on charges of nationalism. Dosvitnii is the author of several poetry collections and four novels. Although his works are not particularly artistic, they introduced a new element of exotica and adventure into Ukrainian literature of the 1920s.





**Oleksa Slisarenko**  
(real name: Snisar) (1891-1937).

Poet and prose writer born in the village of Shypovate, Kharkiv region. After working as an agronomist and completing a stint in the army, Slisarenko moved to Kyiv in 1917.

In the 1920s he moved to Kharkiv, where he worked as an editor in a publishing house and the

journal *Universalnyi Zhurnal*. He was a member of the associations of symbolist poets Bila Studiia [White Studio] and Muzahet.

His first collection of symbolist poetry, published in 1919, reveals Slisarenko's attention to the poetic word and form. Later he joined the panfuturist associations ASPANFUT and Komunkult [Communist Culture] and published a collection of futurist poems in 1923. Between 1924 and 1932 he published twenty collections of novellas, short stories, and novels in the criminal-adventure genre. His themes are taken from pre-revolutionary and revolutionary life in Ukraine, and his heroes are "gray little people" confronted by revolutionary events. He is also the author of poems and stories for children. The complete collection of his works (six volumes) was published in 1931-1933. Slisarenko's association with the symbolists and futurists, his active participation in the literary organizations Hart and VAPLITE, and especially his sharp response in 1927 to the Russian writer Maxim Gorky for refusing to allow the Ukrainian translation of his novel *Mat* [The Mother] led to repressions. Arrested in 1935, Slisarenko was deported to the Solovets Islands and shot in 1937.

**Maik Yohansen**  
(1895-1937 or 1938).

Poet, prose writer, script writer, literary theoretician, and linguist. Member of VAPLITE. He is the author of seven collections of poetry (1921-1933). As a prose writer Yohansen was an interesting experimenter, applying the techniques of "estrangement" and humor. His theoretical works include *Elementarni zakony versyfikatsii* [The Elementary Laws of Versification, 1922] and *Yak buduvaty opovidannia* [How to Construct a Short Story, 1926]. In the field of linguistics Yohansen specialized in phonetics and the compilation of dictionaries. Arrested during the period of "Yezhovshchina," Yohansen died in exile.





**Yakiv Savchenko**  
(1890-1937).

Poet and literary critic born in the vicinity of Lohvytsia. After his studies in Kyiv University, he taught school in the Sumy region. He began writing symbolist and neo-romantic poetry in 1913, and his poems were published in many newspapers and literary journals. Savchenko is considered one of the founders of Ukrainian symbolism. The author of two poetry collections (1918, 1921) Savchenko switched to literary criticism in the mid-1920s. He is the author of two collections of literary criticism (1927, 1930). As a leading member of the literary organizations Zhovten [October] and VUSPP [All-Ukrainian Union of Proletarian Writers] he held to the official government line and was highly critical of the Neoclassicists and the members of VAPLITE. He was arrested in the mid-1930s and shot.



**Dmytro Zahul**  
(1890-1944).

Poet born in the Bukovyna region. After moving to Kyiv in 1915, he joined the symbolist poets grouped around Muzahet. Zahul began publishing in 1907. He is the author of four collections of poetry (1918-1927) as well as translations of Goethe, Schiller, Heine, Balmont, Byron, et al. His textbook *Poetyka* was published in 1923.

**Ivan Mykytenko**  
(1897-1937).

Poet, prose writer, playwright, journalist, and civic activist born in Kherson region.

One of the organizers of Soviet literature of the 1920s and 1930s. Mykytenko was the head of the Odessa branch of Hart, a leading member of VUSPP, and a participant of several international communist congresses.

He began writing poetry in 1922, while still a student at the Odessa Medical Institute, from which he graduated in 1927.

He is the author of several collections of poetry, short stories, one novel, and several plays.

His play *Dyktatura*, about the collectivization of Ukrainian villages, quickly entered the repertoire of all Ukrainian theatres and many theaters in other parts of the USSR.

Thereafter, all of Mykytenko's plays were written to order and were a dramatic illustration of the latest party resolutions: the training of new Soviet cadres, raising coal production in the Donbas, and the construction of Dniprelstan.

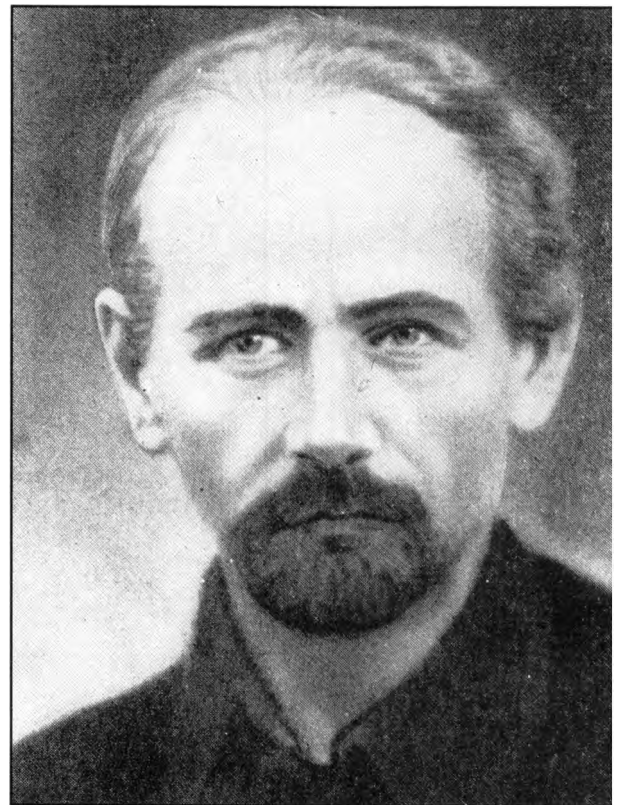


Regardless of the fact that Mykytenko never deviated from the party line, he was arrested and shot during “Yezhovshchina,” and all his works were removed from circulation.

**Mykola Leontovych**  
(1877-1921).

This distinguished Ukrainian composer was the creator of classical arrangements of Ukrainian folk songs, and thus occupies a place of honor in the history of Ukrainian music and global choral literature. His legacy consists of over 150 choral works based on the lyrics and melodies of Ukrainian folk songs, as well as four original choral compositions. In world music he is recognized as the creator of the genre of sophisticated choral miniatures. An important part of his legacy is his religious works, including chants, *shchedrivky* [New Year's songs], prayer services, and a complete Holy Liturgy. His “Shchedryk,” known as the “Carol of the Bells,” is the most recognized carol in the world.

Leontovych conducted the first Ukrainian-language Holy Liturgy on 22 May 1919 in Kyiv's St. Michael's Cathedral, built by Hetman Mazepa. He also took an active part in political and church affairs during the Ukrainian national revolution of 1917-1921, and was therefore a thorn in Moscow's side.

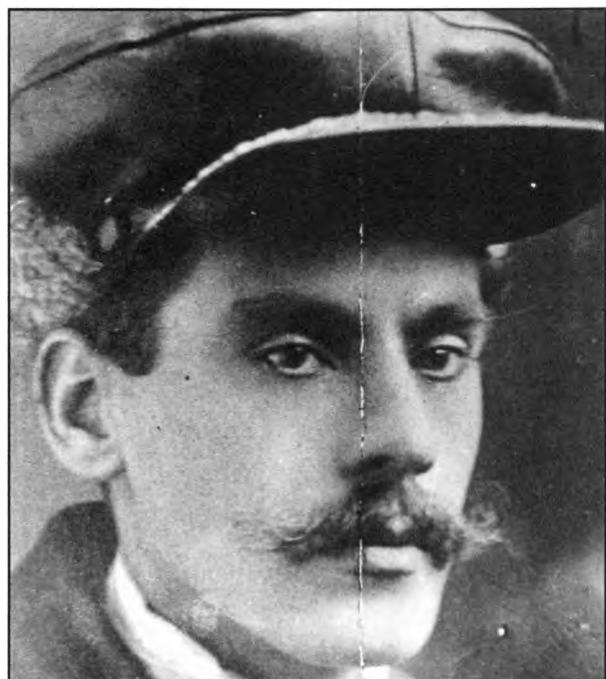


Leontovych died tragically in the home of his father, Rev. Dmytrii. During the night of 23 January 1921 he was murdered by a Cheka agent.

## THE MELNYK FAMILY

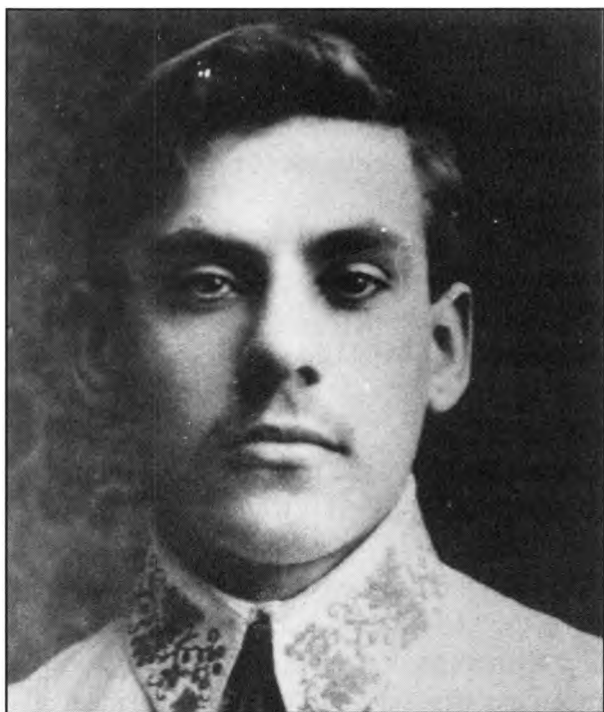


**Vasyl Melnyk** was a fifteen-year-old Grade 7 student at the *gymnasium* [classical lyceum] in Malyn, Zhytomyr region, when he was arrested in the summer of 1920. He was tortured to reveal the whereabouts of his older brother Ivan Melnyk, a former colonel in Denikin's army, whom Vasyl had not seen for eight years. He was executed without being investigated or tried. There is no information in the archives about his case, but there are still living witnesses of his torture and execution.



During the arrests of his father and brothers in 1930, **Oleksander Melnyk** hid with some friends. His younger brother Kostiantyn obtained

false documents for him, which enabled Oleksander to work at various jobs and study at the *Robfak* [Workers' Faculty] and later at the Institute of Railway Transport in Kharkiv. After graduating in 1939 he was sent to work as an engineer in Kremenchuk, at the Kriukiv Wagon Repair Plant. When World War II began, he was not evacuated and continued to work at the plant during the German occupation. When the city was liberated by the Soviet army, he was arrested as a "traitor of the Fatherland." Sentenced by a military tribunal to seven years' imprisonment, he served his sentence in a concentration camp north of the Polar Circle, building a railway in the city of Dudinka. After his release, he returned to Kyiv, where he worked for the Ministry of Culture. He died in 1988. His son Harii Melnyk, lives in Kyiv and works in the Paton Institute of Electric Welding.



**Kostiantyn Melnyk** was the youngest and most talented member of the Melnyk family. He was fifteen years old at the time of his father and brothers' arrests, and like Oleksander, he hid with some friends. He forged documents for himself and began working at a soap factory. In 1938 he graduated with honors from the Odesa Polytechnic Institute and was sent to the military plant in the city of Romen, where he was the chief engineer. When World War II began, he was mobilized as an officer and later killed in action. His son lives in the city of Feodosiia.



**Oleksii Melnyk** was an inspector of a network of milk-processing plants. On 18 May 1930 he was arrested by the GPU in the Volyn region in connection with the fictitious Union for the Liberation of Ukraine (SVU). When he was taken into custody, his hands were bound and a dog collar was placed around his neck, hooked to a chain.

A GPU troika handed down the death sentence. Melnyk and other defendants in the SVU show trial were finally rehabilitated after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

**Petro Melnyk** was a priest of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church (UAOC), who was arrested on 13 April 1930 in connection with the SVU. During the process of rehabilitation in 1961, the KGB questioned the former investigators and witnesses in Rev. Melnyk's case. One witness, Ivan Chepurny, a resident of the village of Brazhentsi, in Khmelnytsky region, stated: "After his arrival in the village of Brazhentsi, Melnyk Petro Kalistratovych appealed in his sermons to his parishioners to reject the [Russian] Orthodox Church. He wanted Ukrainians to believe in their own faith, separate from the Russian one."

Rev. Melnyk was rehabilitated in 1989.



When her father and brothers were being arrested on 20 April 1930, **Maria Melnyk** escaped from the house and hid with friends. She married in 1935 and changed her name. Her husband Fedir Maksymenko was a member of the Communist Party, which helped protect her from repressions. During the German occupation her husband was arrested by the Gestapo in 1942 and sent to Dachau. He returned to Kyiv in 1945, but as a former POW, he was considered a traitor and barred from living in Ukraine's capital. Maria Melnyk died in 1986.



**Panteleimon Melnyk**, a farmer, was arrested on 20 June 1930, on charges of being a member

of a counterrevolutionary insurgent organization aimed at toppling the Soviet government in Ukraine and establishing an independent Ukrainian state. On 20 October 1930 a GPU troika sentenced him to eight years' imprisonment in concentration camps. He was sent together with his father to a camp from which they escaped in 1931. An all-Union A.P.B. was announced in connection with their escape. After the fugitives reached Kyiv, they lived there illegally until the beginning of the war (1941). Panteleimon's father had no documents, while he had forged ones prepared by his youngest brother Kostiantyn.



Until World War I **Ivan Melnyk** was a schoolteacher. When World War I began, he was

called up for army service and sent to a military institute. After graduating as an officer, in 1916 he was sent to the front, where he was wounded twice. That year he was commissioned out of the army and enrolled in the Trading Institute in Kyiv. When the Civil War broke out, Ivan, now a colonel, fought against the Bolsheviks in Denikin's army. After it was routed, he spent time in Romania and Poland. He returned to Ukraine in 1919 and was appointed the head of a partisan detachment under otaman Zakusylo. In 1920 he met the military figure and political activist Andrii Melnyk in Lviv and subsequently joined the ranks of Ukraine's freedom fighters. In 1921 Ivan Melnyk took part in the "second campaign against the Bolsheviks" under the command of Gen. Hulenko. In late November 1921 Ivan was sent to Kyiv to establish contact with the underground movement and was arrested by the Chekists in a secret house.

A telegram sent on 30 December 1921 from the Kyiv Military District to the VChK [Cheka] in Moscow calls Melnyk a "Petliurite agent."

On 6 February 1923 an extraordinary troika sentenced Melnyk to death on charges of counterrevolutionary activity against the Soviet government.

He was posthumously rehabilitated on 13 April 1993.

# THE RETURN OF VASYL STUS



During the twentieth century Ukrainian culture suffered inestimable losses under the Soviet system, which liquidated such distinguished writers and cultural activists as Mykola Khvylovy, Valerian Pidmohylny, Mykola Zerov, Mykhailo Drai-Khmara, Les Kurbas, Maik Yohansen, Mykhailo Semenko, and Valerian Polishchuk. Other Ukrainian writers, like Bohdan Lepky, Volodymyr Vynnychenko, Todos Osmachka, and Yevhen Malaniuk, were forced to live in exile, and until recently their works were banned in their native country.

A new group of writers emerged during the long rule of Leonid Brezhnev (1964-1982) now referred to as the “period of stagnation.” Imprisoned or forced into silence, these writers were prevented from participating in civic and literary activities. Some died in the camps, while others suffered from psychological and physical traumas after their release from the camps.

In the late 1960s until the end of the “period of stagnation,” the following Ukrainian writers were persecuted for various “crimes”: Ivan Svitlychny, Yevhen Sverstiuk, Yurii Badzio, Ihor Kalynets, Valerii Marchenko, Oles Berdnyk, Borys Manaisur, Vasyl Ruban, Yurii Lytvyn, and many others. The gifted poets Vasyl Holoborodko and Kost Shishko, as well as the talented literary

historian and critic Mykhailyna Kotsiubynska, were prevented from taking part in literary life.

The personality of the distinguished poet Vasyl Stus (1938-1985), who died as a political prisoner in the GULAG, shone like a beacon in those dark days of stagnation.

Stus was a graduate student at the Taras Shevchenko Institute of Literature at the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences when he was expelled for his protests against the arrests of Ukrainian intellectuals in the 1960s. Circumstances forced him to seek all kinds of jobs, and at one point he was a worker in the Kyiv subway. He was arrested in 1972 on charges of writing fourteen poems and ten documents of an “anti-Soviet nature,” including two letters addressed to Petro Shelest, First Secretary of the Communist Party of Ukraine. He was sentenced to five years’ imprisonment in a labor camp and three years’ internal exile.

His next arrest, this time for his membership in the Ukrainian Helsinki Group, took place in May 1980, less than a year after the completion of his sentence. This time he was sentenced to ten years’ hard labor and five years’ internal exile. He died a few months before the Soviet Union began releasing political prisoners and when espousing different political opinions was no longer considered a crime.

Stus did not live to see the amnesty or the publication of his poems. For the first time in 1989 the journal *Ukraina* and the newspaper *Molod Ukrainy* [Youth of Ukraine] published a selection of Stus's poetry, accompanied by anonymous commentaries justifying his repressions. In due course the Kharkiv journal *Prapor* [Flag] published Ivan Drach's brief afterword to a large collection of Stus's poetry, which was followed by the publication in the journal *Zhovten* [October] of the largest collection of his poems, with an afterword by Mykhailyna Kotsiubynska.

All of Stus's poems were published far earlier in the emigration. Many poems were irretrievably lost, despite the constant efforts of the poet's wife and son to preserve Stus's creative legacy. The Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Ukrainian SSR always gave the following response to their queries: all the manuscripts confiscated from the prisoner were destroyed.

In the eyes of the Soviet authorities Stus's love for Ukraine and its language and culture was his greatest sin. The directives of Stalin and Beria were so persistent that "enemies of the people," who fought for human rights, continued to be rooted out for many decades after the death of the "fathers of barracks socialism."

Stus knew what awaited him, but he continued his activities, which led him toward his Golgotha, almost consciously submitting himself to self-

destruction. He reached the frontiers of real freedom, which infused his poetry with its inner power to resist being vanquished. His poetry crosses the limits of national consciousness to the point that its profoundly national structure encompasses the main features of man's collective awareness.

In rejecting social themes, Stus departed even further from the restrictions that were so long and so persistently defined as the socialist realist method, the sole permitted form of creative thinking in the Soviet Union.

Having attained inner freedom, he submitted to his conscience and conviction to continue the struggle for the future of his nation, for its liberation, and for democracy.

On 4 September 1985, at the age of forty-seven, Vasyl Stus died in a penal prison cell of Camp VS-389/36 in the city of Chusov, Perm region, Russia.

Today Ukrainians face a mass of problems and difficulties that must be resolved. But everything taking place today in Ukraine was for Stus only a dream, and possibly the only reality. He believed that the day would come when he would shout and that his voice — the voice of a poet — would be heard in his native land. Ukraine has heard his voice.

**Yurii Pokalchuk**

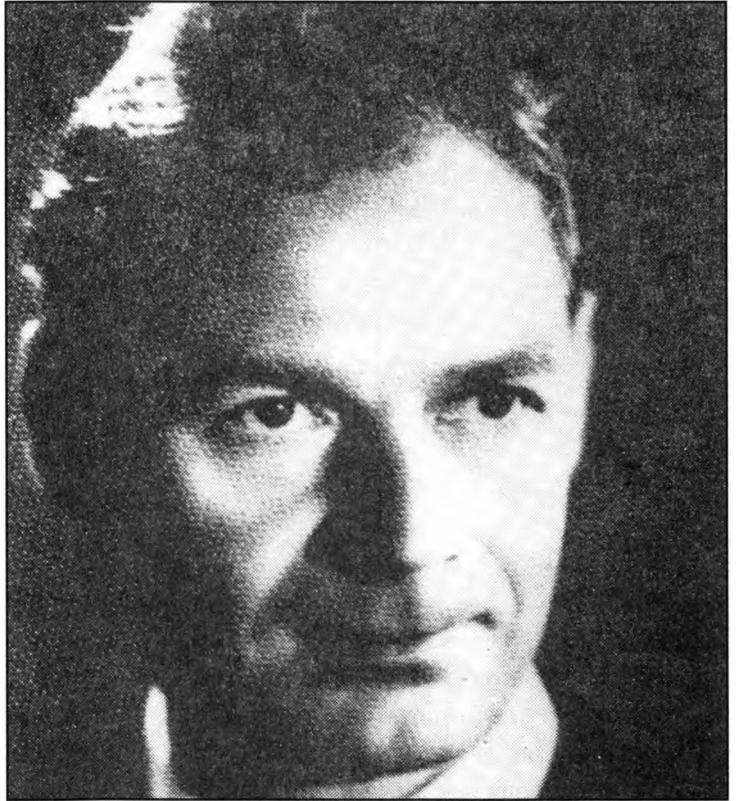
# THE MORTAL REMAINS OF VASYL STUS, YURII LYTVYN, AND OLEKSA TYKHY A RE RETURNED TO UKRAINE

On the evening of 18 November 1989 a plane flying the Perm-Kyiv route transported the mortal remains of Vasyl Stus, Yurii Lytvyn, and Oleksa Tykhy.

At the Kyiv airport a crowd of people holding dozens of Ukrainian flags met the incoming plane. The former Ukrainian political prisoner Mykhailo Horyn gave a speech welcoming the return of the mortal remains of these Ukrainian heroes and thanked them for their struggle for our freedom. A Ukrainian Greek Catholic priest conducted a brief liturgy, with the participation of choirs from the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church. The coffins were then transported to St. Mary the Protectress Church on Mostytska Street.

On Sunday, 19 November, at 11:00 a.m. many young people gathered near the Central Stadium for a brief meeting in memory of Stus, Lytvyn, and Tykhy. The militia, which interrupted the unsanctioned meeting twice, did not dare to break up the gathering and procession, complete with flags, which began at 11:30. The procession followed the route down Chervonoarmiiska Street and Taras Shevchenko Boulevard onto Volodymyrska Street, where people stationed themselves between St. Sophia's Cathedral and the Shevchenko monument.

Around 1:00 p.m. three buses arrived at St. Sophia's Square, bearing the mortal remains of Stus, Lytvyn, and Tykhy. Regardless of the authorities' ban, nearly 30,000 people accompanied the buses moving at a funereal pace. More than 100 Ukrainian flags, church banners, and crosses tied with black ribbons soared above the crowd. Choirs sang religious and patriotic songs. At the head of the procession was a banner with the words: "Shame on the executioners of the Ukrainian nation!"



*Oleksa Tykhy.*

The procession snaked around the Shevchenko monument and then headed for Baikove Cemetery, where priests of the UAOC and the UGCC conducted a solemn liturgy accompanied by choirs from both churches. Among the speakers eulogizing the three political prisoners who died in the GULAG were Viacheslav Chornovil, Ivan Drach, and Levko Lukianenko, who read a message from the World Ukrainian Liberation Front and from the friends of Vasyl Stus: the poet Oleh Orach, Atena Pashko, Zynovii Krasivsky, Mykhailyna Kotsiubynska, Vasyl Ovsienko, a representative of the Donbas miners, and Yurii Lytvyn's mother.

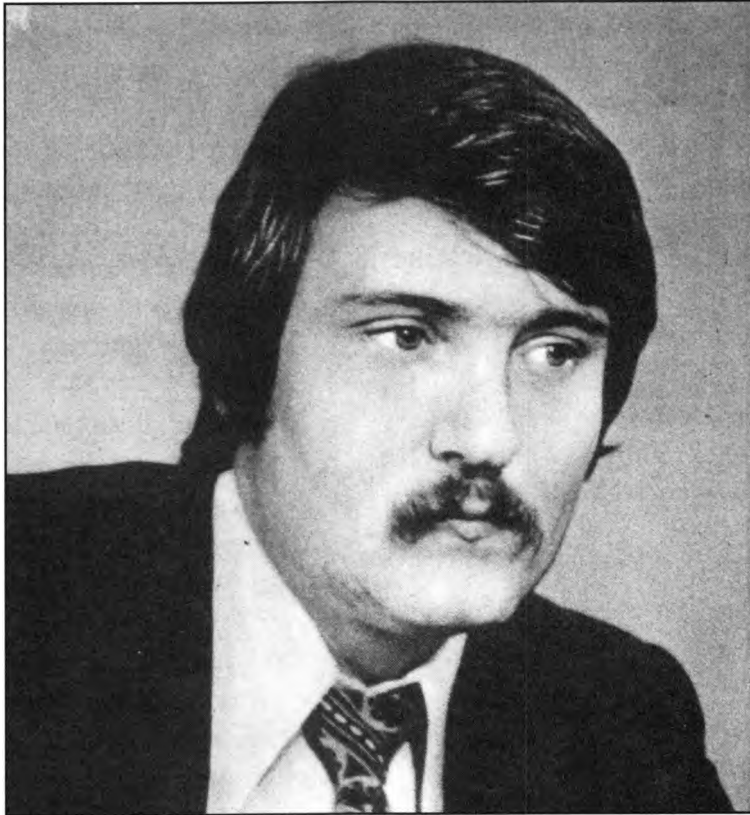
At 7:00 p.m., despite the militia's protests, a memorial sign was erected on Lviv Square, on the spot of a planned monument to Vasyl Stus. Erected next to it was a stand with information about the three Ukrainian martyrs who perished in the Soviet GULAG

**Marichka Halaburda-Chyhryn**



# THE MURDER OF THE COMPOSER VOLODYMYR IVASIUK

(APRIL 1979)



The Golgotha of this young Ukrainian composer and creator of unforgettable songs began in the warm, sunny days of April-May 1979. Like wild animals, KGB agents tortured Volodymyr Ivasiuk and left his mangled body hanging from a tree deep in the forests of the Lviv suburb of Briukhovychi.

The tragic news of Ivasiuk's death spread throughout Ukraine. The Ukrainian skies darkened, and the blue Carpathians grew silent. Shadows crept over the mountain paths. The red ruth faded on the high mountain plain. Ivasiuk's mother wept bitterly, as did his friends and all of Ukraine.

Volodymyr Ivasiuk was born on 4 April 1949 in Kitsman, Chernivtsi region (Bukovyna). His father was a professor of Ukrainian literature at the University of Chernivtsi, and his mother was a Ukrainian-language teacher at a high school. When Volodymyr was a little boy, his father would take him to the Carpathian forests and teach

him how to listen to the songs of the ancient fir trees and the music of the rushing mountain creeks. The melodies of the verdant Carpathians became deeply engrained in the soul of the young genius and were later reflected in his songs. Volodymyr recalled: "I never thought that I could write songs. True, I loved music and I heard it everywhere. I think everything sings. One time my father and I were walking in the forest and he asked me: "Do you hear the trees singing?" At first I didn't believe him. Then we entered the deep forest. The rain stopped and the sky cleared, and the drops falling from the fir trees sang their ancient, familiar melody."

Volodymyr loved children and wanted to be a doctor. He graduated with honors from the Chernivtsi Medical Institute, and moved to Lviv, where he ended up enrolling in the Department of Composition at the Lviv Conservatory. He began composing the first of his sixty wonderful songs: "Vodohrai"

[Fountain], “Myla moia” [My Beloved], “Dva persteni” [Two Rings], and “Dvi skrypky” [Two Violins].

Ivasiuk’s songs, born in the heart, are filled with beauty and poetry. While patriotic Ukrainian songs, including works of classical music, were banned in Ukraine, Ivasiuk’s songs, which had distinctly Ukrainian features, acted as a magnet, drawing young Ukrainians back to their national roots.

Ivasiuk became a legend in his own time. Like Taras Shevchenko in the nineteenth century and Vasyl Symonenko in the 1960s, he awakened the sleeping spirit of Ukrainian youth both in Ukraine and abroad. Ivasiuk’s songs were magnetic and thus attracted the attention of the communist authorities in Moscow and Kyiv, who recognized that he was a nationally conscious Ukrainian, who avoided all contacts with state representatives.

During a visit to Moscow Volodymyr declared that he did not write lyrics to Russian songs because he was a Ukrainian. Although his songs were wildly popular and won international music awards, Ivasiuk was never named People’s Artist of Ukraine.

Moscow wanted to use the young composer to further its goals. On the 325<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the so-called reunification of Ukraine with Russia, the Soviet security organs summoned Ivasiuk to a meeting during which they alternately flattered, cajoled, threatened, and ordered the composer to write a musical work that would sing the praises of “happy Ukraine, which had united forever with Moscow.”

In that jubilee year of 1979 the Soviet press was filled with servile praises of the 325<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Treaty of Pereiaslav, created by various poets and writers: “We glorify you, dear Russia, for your truth, for your loyalty, for your fraternal love!” That Volodymyr Ivasiuk would agree to write music to such words was unthinkable. The authorities fully expected that he, like many others before him, would pay tribute to Moscow. Like no one else, Ukraine’s favorite composer could “ideologically” influence youth.

But Volodymyr was uncompromising and wished only to serve the Ukrainian people.

Time passed, and he did not write any music praising the notorious “reunification.” Instead, he began writing an opera set in the Cossack age. Volodymyr’s friends reported that every time he left the house, he told his parents and his sister where he was going, because he had noticed that the KGB was following him. Soon he was being summoned to the militia.

On 23 April 1979 Volodymyr grabbed some music notes and left his house for the last time. He went in the direction of the Lysenko Conservatory located at 5 Boiko Street. Soon after, someone summoned him and he left the building. He was grabbed and shoved into a waiting car. According to eyewitnesses, it was a KGB car.

Volodymyr disappeared. A few days after his disappearance, his parents went to the militia, asking them to start a search for their son. There they were mocked by the militia, who told them that their son would soon be found.

On 18 May 1979 Volodymyr’s mangled body was found in a forest near Lviv. His eyes had been gouged out, the fingers of his hands were broken, and there were wounds all over his body.

The wounds were filled with twigs of the *kalyna* [red highbush cranberry]. Five forensic examiners declared that Volodymyr had committed suicide.

The family and friends of the composer are positive that he was murdered by the KGB, which did not even try to cover up the traces of its crime. In murdering Volodymyr Ivasiuk, the KGB wanted to frighten young Ukrainians, who were increasingly championing Ukraine’s national rights. But the KGB’s goal misfired and the young people of Lviv were not scared off. Their reaction was the opposite of the one that the KGB expected. Ivasiuk’s funeral on 22 May 1979 — the very day that Shevchenko’s body was brought from St. Petersburg to Kaniv — turned into a huge demonstration. On this symbolic day 10,000 people gathered in Lviv’s Lychakiv Cemetery to bury their beloved composer.

**Marichka Halaburda-Chyhryn**

# OPEN LETTER TO THE HEAD OF THE KGB

Citizen Andropov!

I, Vitalii Lekhter, appeal to you, the head of the KGB of the USSR, to order your employees in New York to stop persecuting me.

On 2 February this year [1981], at 8:00 p.m., not far from my apartment building, I encountered two young people, who asked me for a light. They asked me in Russian to stop writing my book about the composer and poet Volodymyr Ivasiuk of hallowed memory and to stop speaking about him. When I came home, I immediately told the police about this incident.

On 26 February someone telephoned me from California, saying that Radio Liberty wanted to speak with me. I was very surprised because I had changed my telephone number to an unlisted one. When I agreed to speak to Radio Liberty, the female operator apologized and said they were having difficulties with the line, and that the call would be made later. When I hung up, I remembered that Radio Liberty does not have a branch in California. Mr. P. L. Lyman, an editor at Radio Liberty, confirmed that this station had never had a branch in California. As it turned out, my mother had given my telephone number to an unknown “representative of the radio station.” Again I informed the police and the FBI.

Two days later, on 28 February, I went to see my doctor, and on a quiet street near my building, where there are only private homes, a stranger hit me on the head from behind, obviously with a metal pipe. I fell the ground and lost consciousness, and some people called the police. The police took me to St. John’s Hospital, where I was given medical treatment for my bleeding head. I had 160 dollars in my pocket and some important papers in my briefcase, but they had not been stolen. This was the KGB giving me another warning. In my opinion, the criminals should be sought on 67<sup>th</sup> Street, the location of the Soviet consulate.

Citizen Andropov! Your people are persecuting me only because I am spreading the truth about the poet and composer Volodymyr Ivasiuk whom I knew for sixteen years and studied at the same school with him.

In 1979 terrible news arrived from Ukraine that the Moscow KGB headed by you, citizen Andropov, murdered Ukraine’s beloved composer. His body was found on 18 May 1979 in a forest near Lviv. The executioners from your KGB gouged out his eyes, and his body was covered with wounds. He was tortured by your employees. Tens of thousands of people flooded the streets of Lviv to honor this blessed person. Volodymyr Ivasiuk became the national Hero of Ukraine — the symbol of clear-cut devotion and incorruptibility in the face of the occupier.

Writing in the Lviv-based newspaper *Vilna Ukraina* [Free Ukraine] a group of doctors under the leadership of your KGB stated that Volodymyr Ivasiuk suffered from mental illness. No! Volodymyr was a cheerful person whose only crime was his refusal to write songs to Russian lyrics. After Volodymyr Ivasiuk, your KGB in Kosiv tortured to death the painter Viktor Kindratyshyn and the ballet master of the Kirovohrad Ensemble “Yatran,” Anatolii Kryvokhyzha.

Citizen Andropov! On 22 May of this year I am launching a hunger strike near the UN building in New York against the Russian genocide in Ukraine, against the destruction of Ukrainian culture and its activists. During the hunger strike, we will honor Alla Horska, Rostyslav Paletsky, Volodymyr Ivasiuk, Viktor Kindratyshyn, Anatolii Kryvokhyzha, and all Ukrainian political prisoners, who are being punished in the concentration camps of the Muscovite empire. I appeal to all young Ukrainians to launch a hunger strike together with me on 22 May 1981 in defense of national and human rights, in defense of all those who fell victim to the Russian KGB!

**Vitalii Lekhter**

17 May 1981.

# UKRAINE'S HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL LEGACY, AND THE NATIONAL ELITE

The intellectual and creative elites of every state are a kind of national aristocracy that functions as the bearer of the national idea. It is impossible to build a state without such elites.

An underdeveloped intellectual elite is one of the main features of underdeveloped nations. Today, this condition is a characteristic of Ukraine's society, which lost its elite during the period of totalitarian rule.

The cultivation of a national elite — a lengthy, painstaking process — is first and foremost a question of cultivating individuality. An important role in cultivating individuality is played by historical-cultural values and traditions. Owing to the prolonged absence of a Ukrainian state, the fate of our national-cultural values (and the Ukrainian elite) was tragic. For more than 300 years the finest things that Ukraine had to offer were carried off to Russia: monuments of the Trypillian Culture, Scythian treasures, Ukrainian icons from the princely era, splendid examples of Ukrainian manuscripts, artifacts and insignias of the Ukrainian Cossack state, and even entire museums, e.g., the Stauropigial Museum, which was shipped from Lviv to Russia. For a lengthy period of time Ukrainian historical and cultural treasures of Halychyna (Galicia) were shipped to Poland, and after 1939, to Russia. After the First World War Austria returned cultural-historical valuables to Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Poland, but not to Ukraine, although most of these treasures were taken from Halychyna. During the Soviet period various important regional museums of this region were destroyed in such cities as Sambir, Yavoriv, and others.

All the artifacts that Germany returned after the Second World War bypassed Ukraine and wandered off to Moscow and Leningrad: among them were 100,000 items and 620,000 books from Ukraine. Every time Ukrainians became stronger, they issued demands for the return of their treasures. But these efforts were fruitless.

Starting in May 1917, the First Ukrainian Military Congress passed a resolution declaring that all ancient Ukrainian flags and military insignia stored in Moscow, Petrograd, and other cities, must be immediately returned to the Ukrainian

National Museum in Kyiv. However, the efforts of the UNR government, and later, of Soviet Ukrainian leaders and scholars, were unsuccessful.

For a long time it was assumed that during the German occupation only the Nazis had destroyed or looted the spiritual treasures of our nation. But special units of the Red Army also engaged in this plundering, while Polish collaborators of the German occupation authorities in Halychyna carried out two large-scale operations to confiscate various literary and artistic works. During this period precious numismatic collections were seized, as well as 1,255 manuscripts, 2,226 decrees, and 1,167 ancient books. In contravention of international laws, the confiscation of Ukraine's historical and artistic valuables by Poland took place on six different occasions. As a result, only 46 out of 450 Lviv incunabula remain today. During the fifth confiscation operation, thirteen train cars and platforms were used. The looted items weighed a total of 124 tons.

The year 1944 was a real bacchanalia marked by the looting of Halychyna's spiritual valuables. That year the unique library of the Shevchenko Scientific Society [*Naukove Tovarystvo im. T. Shevchenka: NTSh*] was destroyed. This library contained the immense riches of Ukrainian studies: priceless manuscripts, archival materials, a cartographic collection, and collections of postcards, posters, and photographs. At the time, every Ukrainian book published before 1939 was considered a foreign work and marked with the Russian letter "I" [i.e., *inostrannaia*]. Russian books, which were not marked, were to supplant Ukrainian-language ones. This may be one of the reasons why today Ukrainian books are of secondary importance to many Ukrainians.

In 1945-1946 the archives and library of the distinguished writer Ivan Franko, who had bequeathed them to the NTSh, were forcibly removed from Lviv, as were the archives of the Ukrainian writers Lesia Ukrainka, Olha Kobylanska, Olena Pchilka, Osyp Makovei, Vasyl Stefanyk, Hnat Khotkevych, and many others.

The library of the NTSh enjoyed great prestige throughout the world, and its research associates maintained contact with the most distinguished libraries and scholarly institutions on every continent; it was also a repository for every book published in Poland.

The “cleansing” of the repositories of the Lviv Historical Museum began in 1950-1952. National flags, folk costumes, the uniforms of the Sich Riflemen, particularly the uniform of the national heroine of Ukraine Olena Stepaniv, and monuments connected to the Ukrainian scouting movement *Plast* and cooperative movements were either burned or shipped to salvage plants.

Art valuables stored at the National Museum were cynically destroyed during this period: graphic art works and paintings were burned, sculptures were smashed to pieces and carted off to the dump, while books were shredded and shipped to paper plants. The museum lost a total of 2,115 items, including 122 portraits of political figures, and the works of famous painters, graphic artists, sculptors, and masters of decorative art.

The “cleansing” of Ukrainian historical valuables from Ukraine’s museums was one way of depriving the nation, particularly its rising generations, of the possibility to learn about its history. These actions were accompanied by mass repressions of the most nationally conscious segments of the Ukrainian nation, particularly the

intelligentsia. During this period the Soviet punitive organs brutally destroyed the family archives of distinguished Ukrainian activists. Their destruction was a tremendous loss for Ukrainian culture.

Various distinguished Ukrainians are connected to the city of Lviv, but today there are only a few commemorative museums. Over five years ago a museum in honor of Olena Stepaniv was supposed to be established in the building where she lived after her return from the GULAG, but there is still no sign of the museum today.

The repatriation of Ukraine’s looted treasures is one of the most crucial questions of our day. Russia has the archive of the Zaporozhian Army, Ukrainian national-state monuments, military insignia, etc. The Zbruch Idol (*Svitovydy*); a huge archive on Halychyna; valuable collections of manuscripts and ancient documents of the Peremyshl and Kholm eparchies; archival materials of the Prosvita Society and the NTSh; valuable documents on Metropolitan Ilarion (Dr. Ivan Ohienko) and Yurii Lypa; the priceless correspondence of Ukrainian political figures like Yevhen Petrushevych and Symon Petliura; and an immense number of Ukrainian periodicals are stored in Poland.

Ukraine, which suffered the greatest losses during the Second World War, should demand the return of its treasures. Where it is impossible to carry out restitution, the national appurtenance of these Ukrainian cultural valuables must be established.

**Hanna Kos**

Sources:

Blahodir, O. *Ukrainski kleynody* [Ukrainian Insignia]. Kyiv: Dovira, 1992, 1<sup>st</sup> ed., pp. 120-29.

Dashkevych, Yaroslav, “Yak nyschchylы neznyshchene” [How Undestroyed Artifacts Were Destroyed]. *Dzvin* 1 (1991): 114-20.

Krushelnytska, Larysa. “Zbirky Ossolineumu restyutsii ne uliahaiut” [Collections of the Ossolineum Not Subject to Restitution] *Universum* 3-4 (1997).

*A memorial cross erected in Babyn Yar (Babii Yar) in Kyiv, where mass executions took place during the Nazi occupation of Ukraine. Thousands of Ukrainian patriots, including the poet Olena Teliha and her husband, as well as thousands of Jews and gypsies, were shot here.*





## OLENA TELIHA

(1907-1942)

Olena Teliha (née Shovheniv) was born in St. Petersburg. This talented writer, whom literary critics placed on par with Lesia Ukrainka, came from a Russified Ukrainian family. Teliha acknowledged her Ukrainian heritage only at the age of seventeen, when she became an émigré in Czechoslovakia, and began associating with young Ukrainians who were studying at the Ukrainian Economic Academy in Podebrady.

Like her Ukrainian peers, the young Teliha dreamed of Ukraine's freedom and soon joined the ranks of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN). As a member of the OUN, she was one of the first émigrés to return to Ukraine. Eventually, she was arrested by the Gestapo in Kyiv, the city that she had left as a young girl.

The life of Olena Teliha was turbulent, fascinating, and full of adventures that were typical of her times. Her childhood years were joyful and free of worry. She came from a wealthy family and grew up with her older

brothers and a governess, who taught her foreign languages. Above all, she enjoyed the devoted love of her parents. Every summer the family traveled to the Caucasus, Finland, and other foreign lands. These travels made a strong impact on the young girl's imagination, while the highly cultured milieu in which she was raised formed her soul and personality.

Teliha's father, Prof. Ivan Shovheniv, was a Ukrainian activist, who worked to restore Ukraine's statehood. He came from a landowner's family living in the vicinity of Slavenske [Dnipropetrovsk region], which for centuries had maintained and protected their Ukrainian lands with the sword and the plough. Shovheniv was a professor of hydrotechnical engineering at the Polytechnic Institutes of St. Petersburg and Kyiv. Teliha's mother came from an old family based in Podillia.

Before the national-liberation struggles of 1917-1921 the family moved to Kyiv. Olena was ten years old when she first saw the capital of

Ukraine, the city that later played such a tragic role in her life. During the period of national liberation, Prof. Shovheniv became a minister in the government of the Ukrainian National Republic. Universals, flags, and parades — all these new, incomprehensible, and extraordinary events made a deep impression on the young girl.

The old world, with its peacefulness, sense of security, and happiness, was dying before her very eyes. She was now confronted by a new world, one that was indistinct and even dangerous.

As the “wife of a Petliurite,” Olena’s mother could no longer remain in Kyiv, and in 1925 she took her children and went west, first to Tarnow in Poland, and later to Czechoslovakia, where Ivan Shovheniv began teaching at the Ukrainian Economic Academy in Podebrady. Olena enrolled at the Pedagogical Institute in Prague, which marked the beginning of her Ukrainian life.

In Czechoslovakia Olena found herself in a Ukrainian émigré milieu. At the time Prague and Podebrady were the largest Ukrainian hubs, and besides acting as the center of Ukrainian studies, these cities were the base of a large community of people, who until recently had played significant roles in the history of Ukraine.

The Ukrainian nationalist milieu was becoming psychologically closer to Teliha, who eventually joined its ranks. The Second World War began on 1 September 1939, and by this time Olena and her husband were in Warsaw. In December they moved to Kracow, the new center of Ukrainian émigré life. Like Prague and Podebrady before it, Kracow was now the hub

of Ukrainian political, literary, and artistic émigré circles.

The German-Soviet war began on 22 June 1941. Two infernal forces rose up against each other, and their lethal duel gave rise to the enslaved nations’ hopes for liberation. Meanwhile, Ukrainians, particularly Ukrainian nationalists, were rushing back home to Lviv, Vinnytsia, and Kyiv.

Despite the war and the harshness of German rule, life began to burgeon in Kyiv. Schools opened, and businesses, institutions, and theaters began operating. Kyiv became another example of the vital yearnings of the Ukrainian nation for independent life.

Cultural life began to thrive, and Olena became the head of the Union of Ukrainian Writers. She edited the literary weekly *Litavry* [Kettle-Drum] and with her irrepressible energy and enthusiasm threw herself into a whirlwind of activity.

The Germans quickly perceived independentist tendencies in Teliha’s activities. First, they shut down *Litavry*, and then began encroaching on the writers’ union. On 9 February 1942 the Gestapo organized an ambush at the writers’ union and arrested everyone entering the building, including Olena and her husband Mykhailo. A few days later they were both shot in Babyn Yar, Kyiv, together with the poet Ivan Irlivsky [pseudonym of Ivan Roshko] and four other poets.

The city of Kyiv and all of Ukrainian society were shaken by the tragic death of the talented young poet Olena Teliha.

**Lidiia Hladka**

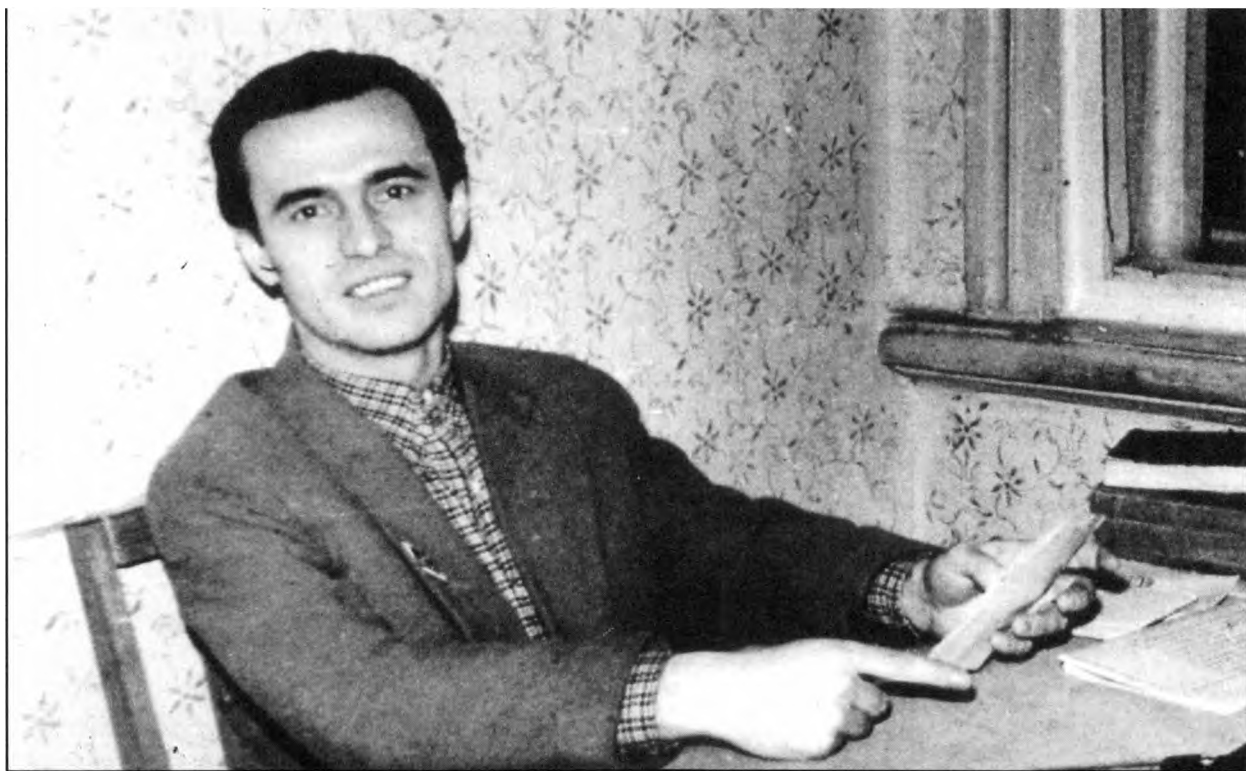
## **A CELEBRATED POLTAVAN** **(THE LIFE OF VASYL SYMONENKO)**

Vasyl Symonenko was born on 8 January 1935 in the village of Biivtsi, in Lubni raion, Poltava region. His life has often been compared to a flash of lightning. Indeed, it was cruel, short, and brilliant.

Symonenko was nourished by the Ukrainian soil of his native land. In the Lubni area he grew up amid the delightful loveliness and marigolds of his mother’s garden, broad, grassy meadows, and

the enchanting rustle of the green groves of the Sula and Udai Rivers. There he bedewed his soul with the life-giving waters of his grandfather’s well, where he felt the first stirrings of a profound filial love for his native land.

Vasyl graduated from the high school in Tarandyntsi with a gold medal. In 1957 he graduated from the Faculty of Journalism at Taras Shevchenko University and began working for a



number of regional newspapers in the city of Cherkasy. Later, he was a correspondent for several republican newspapers.

*Vasyl Symonenko.*

His first poems enchanted readers, and the extraordinary confidence, accessible form, profound content, and the unexplored thematic and national-ideological spheres of his collection *Tyshcha i hrim* [Quiet and Thunder] attracted much attention. The ideas reflected in his poetry, which was both healthy and powerful, proved that a poet of considerable strength and potential, and with a philosophical bent, had entered Ukrainian literature.

Symonenko was a poet with a national-civic voice, acute vision, and meaningful ideas. He was uncompromising, courageous, open, and gentle, but at the same time wrathful. Fear of decoding masked foreign ideas and tendencies was alien to him.

But Symonenko did not restrict himself to literary creativity. He was also interested in the secret behind the mass graves of people in the Bykivnia woods, and together with his friends Alla Horskha and Les Taniuk he set about exposing this terrible NKVD crime.

The Soviet authorities were displeased by Symonenko's activity and his sharp, passionate verses. But the poet did not renounce his convictions, and his stance led to the censoring of his poems and police persecution (despite the fact

that he was a Communist Party member). These persecutions, especially the vicious beating, hastened his tragic death in the early morning hours of 14 December 1963.

As the heirs of Symonenko, we have set ourselves the task to sow the ideological-spiritual field of Ukraine with his seeds of love for his native land, goodness, and conscience vis-à-vis his nation. Symonenko's mother, Hanna Shcherban, revealed that Vasyl's first friend and teacher was her father Fedir, who related the history of Ukraine to Vasyl. The poet also learned much from his widowed mother to whom he paid tribute in his poem "To My Mother."

Although Symonenko wrote on many subjects, he was especially devoted to Ukraine. As the writer Oles Honchar wrote in his eulogy, Symonenko "concluded his short lifespan in Cherkasy, in the land of Shevchenko... He is linked to the very heart of the Ukrainian earth not just biographically: Ukraine gave birth to him... in a propitious moment. And following the example of our finest poets, with filial love he repaid [our country] through the honest blazing of his soul."

**Fedir Habelko**



# ZONES OF PENAL SERVITUDE AND IMPRISONMENT

In the Soviet Union the republic of the NKVD had a special administration carefully ramified and constructed down to the lowest links. The fifteen-million-strong population of this republic required vigilant supervision, isolation, and special measures to prevent even the smallest bit of information from reaching the outside world, especially abroad. But no matter how hard the Soviet secret police tried to conceal its crimes, it was not completely successful. I will describe the structure of the NKVD camps. Moscow was the headquarters of all prisons, corrective-labor camps, places of administrative exile, special resettlements, and political isolators. This main center had a huge apparatus of several thousand employees and was called the GULAG [Main Administration of Corrective-Labor Camps and Labor Settlements]. Subordinated to it were several dozen administrations and camps that often occupied a larger territory than many a European state. The largest of these administrations, each of which contained several million prisoners and operated huge state construction sites worth millions of rubles, were:

1. BAMlag: USSR NKVD corrective labor camps for the construction of the Baikal-Amur Mainline in the Soviet Far East.
2. BBK, *Belomorsko-baltiiskii kanal*: construction of the White Sea-Baltic Canal.
3. Siblag, *Sibirskie lageria OGPU*: OGPU Siberian forced labor camps for developing coal reserves in the Kuznetsk Basin and felling timber.
4. Moskkanal, construction of the Moscow-Volga Canal, formerly the Dmitrovlag camps.
5. SEVVOSTlag OGPU, OGPU Northeast Forced Labor Camp, Kolyma: excavation of gold and lead.
6. Dallag, *dalnye lageria SSSR*, distant camps in the remote reaches of the USSR: construction.
7. Oneglag: timber felling.
8. Temnikovskiy camps: timber felling.
9. Volgodon: construction of the Volga-Don Canal.

10. Astrakhlag, forced labor camp in Astrakhan region located on the islands of the Volga River delta: fishing.

11. Viazemlag: construction of the Moscow-Viazma highway.

12. Kaluglag: construction of the Moscow-Kaluga highway.

13. Ukhtpechlag, *Ukht-Pechorskie lageria*, Ukhta-Pechora camps: oil excavation, forestry, fishing.

14. Southeastern camps in Mongolia: military construction.

15. Karagandalag, a large camp in Kazakhstan: coal, cotton.

16. Gorlag: mining and the construction of the Tashtagol-Stalinsk Railway.

17. Yaroslavl political isolator, a huge special isolator and special-purpose prison, where prisoners were kept in solitary confinement and forbidden to work.

18. Mariinsk Special-Purpose Prison, also a political isolator with a special penitentiary regime. (Karl Radek, sentenced in the Bukharin case, was jailed here.)

This list, which is far from complete, does not include the administrations, hundreds of smaller special prisons, and thousands of small Corrective Labor Colonies that were subordinated to the region at administrations of Places of Confinement Sections. There prisoners served their sentences by working on various construction sites. For the most part, the prison population consisted of petty criminals serving a sentence of two years or less.

All those who received terms longer than two years and were sentenced under article 54, i.e., a political charge, were dispatched to distant corrective-labor camps.

The administration of a camp was located several thousand kilometers away from Moscow, and it conducted trials and meted out punishment to prisoners in their places of confinement. Occupying a territory of several thousand kilometers, each administration was transformed

into a small city and had anywhere from ten to twenty separate camp administrations, each bearing its own number, e.g., 14 OLP Siblag NKVD [14 Separate Forced Labor Camp Sub-Sector Siblag NKVD]. In its turn, a separate “Forced Labor Camp Sub-Sector” had more than a dozen “road-construction forced labor camp sub-sectors” or “remote camp sectors.”

Prisoners, anywhere from a few hundred to more than 12,000, were grouped in a road-construction forced labor camp sub-sector, the lowest cell of a camp administration. Their task was to work in some kind of industry or construction.

The appearance of the camps themselves depended on the continuity of industry. In permanent camps, where industry was constant, more durable barracks were built. Conversely, on short-term building sites, e.g., the construction of a railway, flimsy, temporary buildings were erected.

The NKVD loved things on a broad scale. Its “republic within a republic” extended tens of thousands of kilometers across the entire breadth of the Soviet Union. Its buildings were the most modern in this police state. In keeping with the policy of “peaceful construction” of the socialist fatherland, real palaces were built for NKVD region at administrations in Khabarovsk, Rostov, Novosibirsk (Russia), and Vinnytsia (Ukraine).

### A TYPICAL DAY

A typical day begins at 5:00 in the morning. A bell wakens the prisoners. Those who oversleep are woken up by the yelling of brigade leaders, “work assigners,” orderlies, and other camp administrators whose main occupation is to ensure that all prisoners capable of working go to work.

A crowd of them runs through the barracks with lanterns and wooden sticks, barking like savage dogs:

“Let’s go! Let’s go! Let’s go!”

All verbal exchanges in the camp are accompanied by vile, filthy language. A terrible bustle starts in the poorly lit barracks. All 1,500 men are rushing to dress as quickly as possible and take their places in the line to the dining hall,

where the daily bread rations are distributed to the sound of arguments and shouting.

Dressing quickly, the men carry bowls or small cauldrons and run to their breakfast. A long line has formed in the freezing darkness of night. With the -40-degree temperature the men hop up and down to keep warm. The lucky ones, who have already received their ration, rush to the dining hall, a dingy, long room resembling a collective farm’s sheep barn. It is freezing cold, and spikes hang from the ceiling. The room quickly fills with the steam from the soup.

People are yelling: “I’ll swap my *balanda* [watery prison or camp soup usually made from sour cabbage] for a tart, a *balanda* for a cigarette made of *makhorka* [the worst and cheapest smoking material]!”

The prisoners eat quickly, scalding their lips on the vile broth made of rotten or salted fish heads or sea ruff, which have an unpleasant odor. Food is issued at three wickets. “Stakhanovites” [Soviet workers honored and rewarded for exceptional diligence in increasing production] (they exist in the camps, too) receive tastier food. Their soup is made of fish, not fish heads. Once or twice a month they receive a meat-based soup. Naturally, the word “meat” does not mean that the meal contains meat. Meat is issued to the Stakhanovites, but it is consumed with the assistance of the prison cooks appointed by the camp administration, the so-called *pridurki*, i.e., prisoners assigned cushy jobs, who steal the food meant for prisoners. So the Stakhanovites are left with the bones that are used to cook the broth. Nevertheless, this type of food is a luxury and it is edible.

The soup is issued together with a baked bun made of rye flour and a potato. The second course is porridge. Shockworkers get soup and porridge, but no bun. A general lunch is issued to everyone who has fulfilled the work quota by 100 percent. Lunch consists only of soup. (These norms were valid for 1937. During and after the war the food situation was much worse.)

At the third wicket prisoners receive a “penalty food ration,” issued to those who have completed 75 percent of the work quota as well as those who refused to work. This breakfast is a terrible abuse of prisoners’ stomachs: the soup is dirty hot water with one or two groats floating in it or fish

scales. You cannot even look at this soup without revulsion.

Although breakfast is not finished, the bell rings at 6:00. The “division” is starting. At this time the entire camp administration assembles on the square in front of the camp gates: the camp head, doctor, foremen, and barracks heads. The prisoners form brigades of thirty to forty men and led by their brigade leader and two or three guards, a roll call is taken. Then the prisoners leave for the work “zone.”

Today I have a terrible headache and I feel sick, so I stay in camp.

Finally, the “assembly and dispatch” ends. All the brigades have been dispatched, and only a few sick prisoners released from work duty remain in camp. A signal sounds and all movement in the camp comes to a halt. Then the on-duty camp head, a medical assistant, and a work assigner run from barrack to barrack ferreting out *FILONS* [special NKVD acronym meaning “shirkers”], i.e., prisoners evading work duty or simply “refuseniks,” who refuse to work.

The Russian language was used everywhere throughout the NKVD system: in Ukraine, Kazakhstan, the Caucasus, etc.. The attitude of the camp organs to *FILONS* is ruthless. A prisoner whose ID card is marked *FILON* is headed for trouble. If such a notation is accompanied by the phrase “no measures for correction,” the prisoner is marked for death. But a desperate prisoner is indifferent to this, believing that death is the only salvation.

Six well-fed cutthroats race into my barrack. Only one of them is in uniform: this is the NKVD official. The others are “socially close,” i.e., non-political prisoners, as the NKVD officially calls thieves, profligates, con artists, etc. Stopping at my bed, they begin interrogating me:

“Why aren’t you at work?”

“I’m sick.”

“There is no discharge,” replies the medical assistant, and looking me over, he adds: “There are no external signs of illness; he can work!”

“But I have a fever!”

This does not prevent the cutthroats from dragging me off the sleeping board, punching me in the ribs, and dragging me off to the punishment cell. A few other prisoners who have not gone to

work are dragged there. Some of them are there every day, regularly refusing to work.

I am lying in the cold isolator. This is a rectangular tower constructed of thick cedar posts with a tiny grated window. Despite the -40 degree weather outside, there is no heater here. The prisoners warm the cell with their own bodies: there are forty of us here, and within an hour the air is filled with steam and it is a bit warmer. People are shouting, as though they are at the market; they sing, play cards, and boast.

A tall and bony young criminal, with rough yellowed skin, is boasting:

“I haven’t worked for a year. I haven’t worked a single day for them and I will not work for two more years,” he declares.

“But it will be hard for you to sit out two years on 300 grams without cooked food,” says another prisoner.

“I may die, but I won’t submit,” proudly says the *FILON*, who is famous throughout the camp.

I feel a surge of respect for his decisive stance. Here in the camp, where people are sacrificing their lives and are indifferent to death, the value of a human being is very low. I have direct experience of this. One day at work I caught a cold, and after spending three days in the cold cell, I got pneumonia. I would have died if that *FILON* had not chewed out the medical attendant during the administration’s visit to the punishment cell.

“You, devil’s doctor! Why don’t you examine that sick man to see if he has a fever!”

I don’t even remember being carried out of the punishment cell to the sanitary barrack.

## QUARRIERS AND TREE-CUTTERS

Millions of prisoners in the USSR under armed guard and the threat of starvation are exploited on various state construction sites.

Prisoners work in remote areas, where ordinary workers refuse to go even for a higher salary. They cut down forests, dig for nickel ore beyond the Polar Circle, excavate gold in godforsaken Kolyma, and build railways between mines and new plants located past the Urals and in the Siberian taiga.

What are the living conditions like, and how can you force people to work through hunger? I had to build railway embankments, where the prisoners had to complete a daily work quota: they had to smash seven cubic meters of rock from a cliff and transport it 200 meters to the embankment. This was unbelievably exhausting work. During the ten-hour workday I could not always complete my quota. If I didn't, I would receive an incomplete bread ration and no second course. Within a few days I was so exhausted that, barring a miracle, I would have died.

No one in the camp will help a starving prisoner. The political trainer starts talking about "socialist competition," the foreman will put your name on the blacklist, and the manager of the supply section will not issue you clothing for your low work performance. Every day I grew thinner. I was assigned to the "weak contingent" [unit of physically incapable prisoners], and got out of the job of smashing the cliff. Instead, I was sent to the forest, supposedly for lighter work. But the foreman announced the work quota: we had to cut down twelve cubic meters of wood. If not for the food package that my wife sent to me, I would have died.

What happened to me once I got back some of my energy? I worked and worked like the devil in order to receive my daily ration of 800 grams of sticky, under-baked rye bread, half-filled with fish bones and chaff. Before my very eyes a guard shot M., a student of a Kyivan institute, for refusing to work.

In keeping with the GULAG directive, the administration of the Soviet corrective-labor camps set a course aimed at weakening prisoners and turning them into lifelong invalids. Theoretically, the food issued for a 100-percent completed workday totalled 1,900 calories, but the energy expended on fulfilling the work quota required no less than 4,000 calories.

Thus, after a year or two of systematic malnutrition, prisoners were brought to a state of complete exhaustion and illness, culminating in a trip to "Abyssinia."

"Abyssinia" was the name given to barracks housing the sick, the weak, and invalids, who had been released from work duty. The majority of them suffered from the typical camp illness, pellagra, resulting from constant malnutrition and

lack of vitamins. People with this disease had a ghastly appearance: they were real skeletons covered with earth-colored skin.

It is difficult to image the horrible situation of these doomed people. Any usable clothing was ripped off their bodies, and they were left half-naked in their underwear.

Even the barracks for this category of former quarriers and tree-cutters were the dirtiest, with holes in the roof, chinks in the walls, and broken windows. The "Abyssinians" received a daily ration of 400 grams of bread and a serving of fat-free balanda once a day. Theoretically, they were supposed to receive two grams of fat a day, but it was eaten by the cooks and the camp administrators.

Dirty and swollen, these dying prisoners sat all day in their stinking barracks. Only a few were able to go outside, where they roamed around hoping to find a scrap of food. Their favorite foraging spots were dirty washbasins. Sitting on their haunches around these washbasins and garbage pits, they scabbled for scraps of food. Sometimes they were lucky and found a tasty morsel, like a fish head or potato peelings. Then battles would break out among them: they would beat each other, fall on the ground and continue thumping and biting each other, with blood dripping from their scorbutic gums.

The investigators of the camp's State Security Third Department used these prisoners, who had lost all interest in anything but food, for various provocative eyewitness testimonies, whenever the NKVD representatives tried to fabricate a new case against a prisoner. For a scrap of bread these unfortunates would agree to anything. Many prisoners who had been driven to the state of "Abyssinia," realizing the utter hopelessness of their situation and knowing that they would not last their full sentence, would take the step of ensuring that they would never again have to work by cutting off all their fingers or maiming themselves some other way.

In 1937 there were 136 cases of self-maiming in the population of 10,000 prisoners in the Akhpun sector of Sibltag NKVD. But these prisoners' hopes were in vain, because they were later charged with self-mutilation under article 58/14, i.e., for sabotage.

**Ivan Khmelnytsky**

# UKRAINE'S LOSSES DURING 1939-1945

## I. UKRAINIAN LOSSES

Civilian population	9,120,000
a) Deported to eastern Russia,	5,950,000
Incl. those deported from Halychyna to labor camps in 1939-1941	300,000
“Evacuation” of peasants to Russia in 1941	2,500,000
“Evacuation” of industrial workers from the Donbas, Kharkiv, and Zaporizhia to the Urals and Siberia in 1941-1942	1,500,000
Deportation of “repatriants” from Germany: POWs and young people who were conscripted by the Germans in 1941-1945	250,000
Destruction of the population during military operations in the Crimea and Transcarpathia in 1944-1945	1,400,000
b) Deportation to Germany and executions by the Germans, incl.	3,170,000
Deportation of young people for forced labor during 1941-1943	2,300,000
Executions of patriots in Lviv and Kyiv; losses from starvation in Kharkiv, destruction in other cities during 1941-1943	370,000
Deaths during German military operations in 720 cities during 1941-1945	500,000
c) Losses during the war 1941-1945	3,550,000
Incl. at the fronts	1,700,000
In German captivity, 500,000 of whom were saved and enlisted in new “Western military formations,” and remained in the West	1,100,000
TOTAL DEATHS:	12,670,000
d) Emigration losses	725,000
Incl. those in Ukrainian military formations in Ukraine and the German armed forces as autonomous military units, 1943-1945	300,000
Political emigration concentrated in Germany and Austria, 1944-1946	240,000
New political emigrants in the Baltics (Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia)	185,000
e) General losses among Ukrainians during the six war years	13,395,000

## II. LOSSES AMONG MINORITIES

The nearly total destruction of six main national minorities (Jews, Poles, Germans, Hungarians, Romanians, and Czechs)	4,508,000
Deportation of five nationalities (primarily from the Crimea and Transcarpathia): Greeks, Bulgarians, Armenians, Hungarians, and Slovaks	224,000
This number was compensated by the resettlement of Russians from Russia (until 1953)	3,800,000

## III. POPULATION LOSSES

General losses	21,627,000
Ukrainians	11,395,000
Minorities	8,233,000
Reduction of the civilian population	15,927,000
Military element	5,700,000
Incl. Ukrainians	3,550,000
Other nationalities	2,150,000

## IV. SOME CONCLUSIONS

In 1946 Ukraine should have had a population of 53 million. According to the statistics, there were only 32 million, i.e., the same as in 1910. In 1946 the Ukrainian population should have stood at 39,720,000. According to the statistics, there were only 26,328,000 Ukrainians, i.e., approximately the same number as in 1918.

**Dr. Volodymyr Trembytsky**

# THE NORILSK UPRISING

I first heard about Norilsk and met some former prisoners from there in early September 1945, in the Taishet transit forced labor sub-sector of Irkutsk region in the Far East, where we had been brought from the Bukhta-Nakhodka transit forced labor sub-sector, also in the Far East. Their clothing was zebra-like [i.e., striped], while some prisoners were dressed in colored pea jackets (white sleeves and black jacket, or the reverse). This clothing was devised by the camp authorities so that the prisoners would be obvious targets if they tried to escape. They were being transported to various prisons, where investigations into new cases would be conducted.

The Bukhta-Nakhodka transit forced labor camp sub-sector was the largest camp in Moscow's empire, and contained between 70,000 and 80,000 prisoners. From there they were transported by ship over the Seas of Japan and Okhotsk to Kolyma, Kamchatka, and Sakhalin. They were transported by train throughout the Far East, to Yakutia and Mongolia.

The camp was built at the gulf of the Sea of Japan. After the gulf was blocked by a high dam, nearly ninety barracks were erected at the bottom of the dam. Each barrack was eighty meters long and twenty meters wide, and housed 1,000 or more prisoners. The post monitoring the sea level stood on a hill above the camp and was even with the upper part of the barrack roofs. Everything was planned like this so that at any moment the Chekists could destroy everyone who had the misfortune to end up there. Only twenty minutes were needed for a bulldozer to destroy the dam, and then the entire camp would be under water.

To facilitate the upkeep of such a large number of political prisoners, the Chekists had thought of every last detail: hunger, illness, and the main element — terror. Scurvy and dysentery claimed an average of eighty prisoners a day. Twice a day a Studebaker truck would transport corpses from the camp.

The process of bringing corpses out of the zone had its own ritual. All the dead bodies were brought to the morgue and stripped naked (there were cases where a naked "dead prisoner" would return to the barrack). Near the camp gates at the

entry point the dead prisoners were stabbed with long iron shafts and their skulls were smashed with a large hammer. When the authorities were convinced that all the prisoners were dead, the truck was sent out of the zone. I remember an incident when orderlies (criminals) were taking some dead bodies from the morgue. One of the prisoners turned out to be alive. The orderlies said: "The doctor knows best whether you're alive or dead," and threw him among the corpses.

The Soviet-Japanese War was still going on, and a Soviet submarine had been sunk in the Bay of Nakhodka. The camp administration received an order "from above" to evacuate the political prisoners immediately. Two freight trains consisting of fifty Pullman cars each were brought in. One hundred people were packed into each car. No medical assistance was given en route. In my car only forty-two prisoners were left; fifty-eight bodies had been thrown off at train stations. The food was unbelievably bad and meager: 170 grams of moldy crackers a day and half a liter of balanda (a broth made of seaweed, without potatoes or barley).

After seventeen days we arrived in Taishet, and in a few days three freight trains were loaded with 11,000 political prisoners and sent to the copper mines in Dzhezkazgan.

For the next three years we experienced the entire gamut of the Chekists' brutal arbitrariness, and we suffered especially at the hands of criminals mixed in with the political prisoners. Prisoners who were "inconvenient" for the NKGB disappeared from the camps without benefit of trial or investigation. In 1946 a Ukrainian prisoner named Volodymyr Kravchuk from Zdolbuniv raion in Rivne region, a Lithuanian prisoner named Jonas Kavardskas from Kaunas county, and a number of other transported prisoners disappeared from Camp No. 2 of the Dzhezkazgan mine.

The prisoners of 1945-1948 were participants of the national-liberation struggle waged by the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) as well as Balts, who had taken part in their own national-liberation struggle. Altogether, they comprised ninety percent of all prisoners. The

remaining ten percent consisted of Russians, Belarusians, Caucasians, and Central Asians.

The Chekist security service in the labor camps for political prisoners kept them in submission by means of terror and their secret agents. Prisoners who could not endure the tortures during their investigations broke down and became agents.

Thus, until 1 January 1947 it was easy for the Chekists to keep prisoners in submission. But as soon as the prisoners were permitted to correspond with their families and began receiving material assistance, the prisoners' morale and health immediately improved.

As of 1 August 1948 nearly all the political prisoners were separated from the criminals and concentrated in nine administrations. The Main Camp Administration, the GULAG, was then created:

1. Dubrovlag, Mordovia (50,000 prisoners)
2. Reclag, Vorkuta (210,000)
3. Minlag, Inta (60,000)
4. Gorlag, Norilsk (70,000)
5. Berlag, Kolyma (280,000)
6. Ozerlag, Taishet, Irkutsk region (205,000)
7. Kamyshlag, Kemerovo region (40,000)
8. Steplag, Dzhezkazgan, Balkhash, Kingir, Dzhezdi (220,000)
9. Peshchanlag, Karaganda region and the notorious Spassk camp (240,000).

I will focus briefly on the Spassk concentration camp, which was known as the "Valley of Death." This was the largest of the camps, occupying an area of nearly twenty hectares of rocky land and housing 16,000 political prisoners: 11,000 men and 5,000 women. The camp began filling up with political prisoners in 1948, after the Japanese POWs were shipped out.

Beginning in 1950, after the camp population increased with the arrival of new political prisoners, highly conspiratorial links in Peshchanlag were established with the OUN, which was operating on the territory of Karaganda region among the special settlers from Ukraine's western regions. Several times a year clandestine literature made its way into the Spassk concentration camp, particularly after a liaison officer arrived in our camp, who

maintained contacts between the Territorial Leadership of the OUN in Ukraine and the Far East. I remember his surname was Hliuza, and he was from Chornobyl raion in Kyiv region. Only a few individuals knew about these contacts and the underground literature. From this moment the decision was made not to strengthen the Bolshevik-Muscovite empire with political prisoners' work, but to refuse to work, preserve their health, and, wherever possible, to spread disobedience and strikes.

The most active participants of the OUN and UPA's national-liberation struggle were isolated, but no matter how hard the Chekist security officers and their agents in the camps tried to destroy the spirit of disobedience among the political prisoners, they did not succeed. From 1950 the prisoners began eliminating the secret collaborators mercilessly.

In early September 1952, 1,200 political prisoners were sent from Peshchanlag to Norilsk. Ten prisoners from this escorted transport were placed in the 3<sup>rd</sup> penal zone. I was immediately isolated in a disciplinary barracks. On 5 March 1953 I was sent to the prison in the 4<sup>th</sup> zone. The idea to stage an uprising crystallized here, because this prison housed a number of the most active political prisoners in Norilsk. On 25 May all the political prisoners in the prison were shipped to various zones. Twenty-five of us were transported to the 3<sup>rd</sup> penal zone. We were immediately taken from the guard shack and isolated in the disciplinary barrack. The camp administration fulfilled our quotidian needs, but this was not enough. After four days we learned that the political prisoners of the 5<sup>th</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 1<sup>st</sup> zones had gone on strike, and eventually women political prisoners in the 6<sup>th</sup> zone.

On 4 June 1953 at 10:00 in the morning Roman Bilen, a prisoner-orderly, came to the disciplinary barrack to examine the sick prisoners. He told us there were signs saying "Why are the hard labor prisoners not striking?" plastered to the freight trains that were arriving in the prison zone. Incidentally, the previous day the administration did not let the prisoners out to work. We launched the uprising without delay. Although the doors of the barracks were thick and framed with iron, we managed to break them with the help of a pillar bolting the sleeping boards

to the ceiling. Rushing into the corridor, we smashed the doors leading to the communicating courtyard. In one cell were two prisoners: one named Sokoliuk from Kamin-Kashyrsky raion in Volyn and Hryhorii Kudla from the Dnipropetrovsk region. The first one to reach the courtyard was Sokoliuk, followed by Ivan Vorobiov, a former Hero of the Soviet Union.

After cutting the barbed wire, about forty soldiers of the convoy armies rushed into the zone. They began throwing bricks at the political prisoners, which were lying outside the fence surrounding the disciplinary barrack, and injured Sokoliuk and Vorobiov, who were thrown onto the barbed wire of the forbidden zone. The political prisoners of the 3<sup>rd</sup> hard labor zone were standing behind the fence of the disciplinary barrack. Kudla yelled: "Prisoners, why are you standing there watching? The Chekists are killing people here!"

These words decided our fate. The prisoners rushed the fence and toppled it. The overseers ran away, and all of us broke out of the disciplinary barrack. I ran to the dispensary to bandage my hand, which was injured when we were battering down the cell door. General-Lieutenant Semenov, the head of the Gorny Camp administration, followed me in. At this moment machine guns started firing and cries rang out. I had no time to get bandaged because dead prisoners were already lying in the zone. One of them was Andrii Khomyk, my close friend and fellow villager from Druzhkopil, Horokhiv raion. A bullet cut him down when he was running to help me in the disciplinary barrack.

Six prisoners had already been killed: five Ukrainians and one Lithuanian, and fourteen others were wounded. Seeing that Sokoliuk and Vorobiov were dripping with blood and hanging on the barbed wire of the forbidden zone, I forcibly dressed the general-lieutenant and the KGB captain in medics' clothing, gave them stretchers, and we forced them to carry the wounded prisoners to the hospital. This was the beginning of the uprising in the 3<sup>rd</sup> hard labor zone, which lasted sixty-one days.

It is impossible to recount the uprising without describing the 3<sup>rd</sup> zone and its prisoners. When I arrived here in September 1952, I met Danylo Shumuk whom I had known from the [Ukrainian] underground, when I was returning from the

Kholm region to the Tsuman area. He told me that a clandestine OUN assistance structure was operating in the zone, and its core consisted of Shumuk, Sushkevych from Kyiv region, and Mykhailo Oros from Transcarpathia.

Toward evening, on instructions from the committee of assistance, most of the prisoners came to the club, where they decided to elect an official committee of fifteen prisoners to direct the uprising. The camp administration was removed. Vorobiov was elected the head of the committee, but since he was lying wounded in the hospital, his functions were carried out by his deputy Valentyn Vozhdiov.

Each of the fifteen committee members headed a division that operated in a clear-cut manner. When the Chekists decided to break our resistance by starving us and shutting off the water to the zone, the newly created propaganda division headed by Petro Mykolaichuk, who came to the zone with me on 25 May, prepared a letterhead. We printed thousands of copies of leaflets with appeals to the population of Norilsk, dropping them over the city by means of kites. Responsibility for the "kite aerodrome" was assigned to me. Today these leaflets are on display in the museum in Norilsk.

One week after the beginning of the uprising the provocateur Vorobiov left the hospital and devised a huge provocation: to blow up the camp boiler room, organize a mass escape of prisoners, disarm the division of guard troops, and use them as shields to protect the escaping prisoners from machine gun and mortar fire placed on the second and third defense lines that were created at the beginning of the uprising. A prisoners' meeting was immediately convened, during which Vorobiov was voted out and his plan condemned. On the ninth day a commission arrived from Moscow, consisting of Vavilov, the deputy Prosecutor-General of the USSR; Kuznetsov, the head of the prison administration of the USSR; General Sirotkin, the commander in chief of the Interior Troops of the MVD USSR; and Kiselev, a representative of the CC CPSU, who submitted the following demands to the prisoners:

1. Remove the flags and slogans (one of which was 5 x 2 meters and bore the inscription "Freedom or death!").
2. Return to work.



3. Bring out the buried bodies of prisoners shot on 4 June.

The committee members who were conducting negotiations with the commission rejected the demands, and the commission departed. During the next two months the Chekists organized a whole slew of provocations from behind the zone, but the prisoners were so united and disciplined that they endured everything.

On 4 August at 4:00 in the morning, the uprising was crushed with the aid of dozens of machine guns and hundreds of submachine guns. A total of 181 prisoners were killed, and several hundred were wounded. Forty of us rebels were singled out, and after being brutally tortured, we were thrown into Shyriaev Prison. After one month we were transferred to the KGB prison in Krasnoiarsk. Our case was investigated for four

months, and then we were jailed in Vladimir Prison.

Forty-five years\* have passed since the Norilsk uprising, which launched the collapse of the red Muscovite empire. Communist terror could not halt this process. Over the next three years uprisings spread throughout the GULAG, as a result of which more than a million political prisoners were released.

However, our release from the GULAG did not bring the expected results. Those of us who fought in the ranks of the OUN and UPA shed our blood during the camp uprisings. But we still have not attained recognition as freedom fighters. When will truth triumph?

**Meletii Semeniuk**

\*This article was written in 1998.

## *MEA VITA* — MY LIFE

*In implementing the Leninist "decree" calling for the confiscation of all property and its equal division, the Bolsheviks deprived Artem Ivanovych Sydorenko of a voice. Millions of people like him were evicted from their homes into the freezing cold, and doomed to death by starvation. The terrible acts perpetrated by the inhuman Bolshevik regime against the entire Sydorenko family are recounted by Artem Sydorenko's grandson Hryhorii, an invalid and victim of the satanic policies of Dzhugashvili [Stalin], the nation-killer.*

I was born on 15 April 1926 in the village of Horodnia, Ivanytsia raion (today: Ichnia), in Chernihiv region. My ancestors, all the way back to my great-grandfather, were farmers. My grandfather Artem Sydorenko was born in Horodnia in 1870. He and his wife Priska had a large family: three sons and two daughters. Everyone worked the land. The homestead consisted of ten desiatinas of land (eleven hectares) with a meadow and pasture land, two horses, a pair of oxen (used to cultivate the land), as well as sheep and domestic fowl. My grandfather had a metal-roofed house and stables for the cattle. The friendly family tilled the fields without hired help.

My father Pylyp Sydorenko was born in 1898. In 1919 he was living in Pryluka, where he was mobilized to the front, and together with Ivan Koval from the village of Obukhove he defended Ukraine from the interventionist forces. In 1924 my father married Sophia Mazepa, who was born in the village of Riabukhy in Talalaivka raion, Chernihiv region. In 1925-26 my parents, with the help of my grandfather Artem, built a house on his property. The thatched house was still unfinished by the time of collectivization.

In 1926-1928 my father worked at the sugar refinery in Parafiivka, because he had no land apart from a garden on his father's property.

In spring 1929 communist activists evicted my grandparents from their house and drove them out of the village to a wasteland known as Kholodna Hora, a local natural landmark. Their three sons were deported to the Far North, to the endless swamps of Arkhangelsk region.

We moved into our unfinished house. My grandparents were living in Kholodna Hora with many fellow villagers, who had also been evicted from their homes. They lived in huts made of bulrushes, and they were given permission to plough the wasteland. In the fall, after the harvest was gathered, the members of the Committee of Poor Peasants confiscated everything from them,

thereby dooming the people of Kholodna Hora to death by starvation.

My mother, youngest brother, and I were living in our house. Although we had not been evicted, every night so-called activists came to our house — idlers, drunkards, and thieves, like Savka Sydorenko, Mykhailo Hrabko, and Shynkarenko — and they confiscated everything from us, right down to the last potato. They took everything that our neighbors had given us so that we would not starve to death. This continued until January 1930.

Later we were expelled to Kholodna Hora, and for two weeks our family lived there in grandfather's bulrush hut in the freezing cold and snowstorms. A special guard did not let us into the village to our houses. I got sick there.

At this time a man came from Chernihiv to inspect the families that were being readied for transport under escort to Russia's northern territories. Our turn came, and when my mother showed me to that official, he shrank back in horror. I had open sores under my eyes, which were closed up from the swelling. My head was swollen. The official gave orders to bring us to the village. We ended up in our own drafty house without windows. Mother stuffed up the window frames with rags, gathered some kindling in the meadow, and lit the stove, and I lay down on the bench near the stove, unable to see anything.

A windmill stood on a hill beyond the village. The miller was a kindhearted man, who saved us from starving to death any way he could. But the merciless activists gave us no peace: every night they came to our house, shone lights in the window openings, and poked everywhere with their metal prods, looking for hidden food, even though we had none. Mother would wrap the food that our neighbors gave us in a rag and hide it under my head. The sores under my eyes were necrotizing, and there was a horrible stench in the house. The activists were afraid even to look at me.

It was impossible to go on living like this, and in late March 1930 my mother's sister Khrystyna moved us to the hamlet of Obukhove in Talalaivka raion to live in the house of my grandfather Hryhorii Mazepa.

Grandfather Hryhorii and grandmother Halia had a house (it is still standing near the Blotnytsia railway station), one cow, a horse, and some

sheep. His brothers Semen and Ilko lived right next to his property. The three of them got together and purchased a horse-driven threshing machine and straw-cutter, and built a windmill. Grandfather Hryhorii was very skilled with his hands and knew the blacksmith and miller's trades; he also made shoes for his whole family: five daughters and one son. Everyone worked on his own field.

We lived with grandfather Hryhorii until 1931, when the wave of brutality known as collectivization, reached us in Obukhove.

Grandfather was evicted from his house, and everything was confiscated — looted. The local idlers and drunkards, like Maksym Makarenko and his "redhaired gang," as they were called, were particularly conscientious.

Grandfather's son Ivan (born 1908) was deported to the Far North, where he perished in inhuman conditions. All of grandfather's property was transferred to the Red Partisan Workshop. The only remaining thing was a shoemaker's hammer with which grandfather saved us from starvation. I still have this hammer, which I keep as a precious memento of my unforgettable grandfather Hryhorii.

After that pogrom we went to live with my aunt Yevdokiia Petko, but even there the "redhaired gang" gave us no peace. Maksym Makarenko, who is still living in the village of Blotnytsia, confiscated our last little sacks of food that grandfather had earned with his shoemaker's hammer. One day Makarenko grabbed a sack of beans out of grandmother Halia's hands. He pushed her so hard that she fell on her back, hurt her spine, and died soon after.

The Holodomor of 1933 arrived. The famine was mowing down young and old alike. People walked around all swollen and simply died where they stood.

Grandfather's hammer could no longer help us because people had nothing to pay for his work. Grandfather lost weight, became sick, and died in early summer 1934. We buried him next to his windmill.

Grandfather often reminisced about his father, Artem Mazepa, who at one time had moved from the village of Riabukha into the steppes near the hamlet of Obukhove. Artem had a large family: eighteen people living together in one house. After his sons bought some land, they began setting up

their own homesteads. Grandfather also recounted that he spent four years working in Odesa. He worked at the wharves, loading ships in all kinds of weather. Whenever I look at Illia Repin's famous painting *The Volga Boatmen*, it's as though I see my grandfather among them: tall and well built, burned by the sun and the wind.

Working hard, grandfather Hryhorii earned enough money to buy some land. He built a house, got married, and started a family. His family was hard-working. The new decree on land gave him the strength to work by the sweat of his brow. At the time no one knew about the perfidiousness of that "decree." Lenin died, and for their hard work the peasants received the Solovets Islands, the White Canal, and the Far North. In the meantime, the popular slogan "Proletarians of all nations, unite!" grouped together all sorts of idlers, thieves, and drunkards in a struggle against the working peasantry. And the peasants began fleeing to the cities, abandoning their homes and the graves of their ancestors. How many of them ended up in Yaroslavl, Moscow, and other cities of Russia!

I remember grandmother Halia's funeral. It was springtime, everything was blooming. The nightingales were singing, and all around was an earthly paradise. Grief was squeezing my heart, the heart of a six-year-old invalid. Everything was enveloped in darkness and fog. Although the sky was clear and the sun was shining, it was not shining for me: all I saw in front of me was the coffin with my beloved granny and the chamomile flowers next to the road. That is all I remember of my granny's funeral. For a long time I could not get a grip on reality because I was unable to distinguish day from night. Even now, sixty years after my grandmother Halia's death, whenever I drive along the old Nizhyn-Romen road along which she was taken to her final resting place, I see those chamomile flowers that once bent their aromatic little heads in the wake of the wheels of the wagon on which my beloved grandmother lay. I stop and bow to the shadow of this person who was so dear to me.

No marigolds grow on her grave. Those heartless activists chopped down the cross. The little grave was leveled a long time ago, and garlic is now planted on this patch of land. All around are weed-infested fields. The homesteads of my unforgettable ancestors, tillers of the soil, innocent

victims of Bolshevik anarchy, are overgrown with weeds.

In 1935 I started first grade in the village of Zaimyshche, where I was living with my mother's sister Vira Hryhorivna. My first teacher was Zina Vasylivna. I have remembered her with gratitude all my life. I was a good pupil, but my illness prevented me from attending school on a regular basis. Nevertheless, I finished first grade in half a year. In 1936 my father returned from exile. We had no home of our own. We were living with neighbors. My father submitted an application to join the collective farm and for the rest of his life worked there as a builder.

In 1937 I was in the third grade at the Obukhove elementary school, but I completed only half the school year. I was sick in bed for six months. My two legs and one arm were affected by osteomyelitis, and for dozens of years I had sores that never healed. In 1939 I finished the third and fourth grades taught by Lidiia Yakubovska. May the memory of this good person be eternal! She helped me complete those two grades.

I continued to study well. After the fifth grade the teachers gave me a good report card and asked the raion department of public education to send me for medical treatment. I went to Talalaivka, where I was asked if my father is a party member. When I said no, they told me politely that authorizations were issued only to children of party members. I was very hurt. I began to understand that no one needs my high school marks and that I would never be cured.

I continued to attend school, but my legs were necrotizing. The sores smelled bad, and there were not enough bandages. Our doctor in Blotnytsia, Volodymyr Volkov (Merited Doctor of the Ukrainian SSR) treated me as much as he could, together with an orthopedic specialist named Ivanytsky in Romen and an eye doctor named Uhrumova.

It was now 1941 and the summer holidays began. I worked as a weigher at the hay harvest, and drove collective farm workers to the village of Lavirkove, where a road was being built. Then came the German occupation, and young people were being dragged off to Germany. People tried to save themselves however they could. A lot of people deliberately burned their arms and legs and then had to be treated for years afterwards.

My legs were covered in sores; the osteomyelitis was progressing.

In 1942-1945 I took to my bed again. I was then seventeen years old. My weight dropped to seventeen kilograms — the consequence of living on Kholodna Hora in 1930. My mother would carry me out to the street in her arms. For months I could not sleep because of the unendurable pain. But I survived, and began walking with crutches. A medical commission confirmed that I was an invalid, 2<sup>nd</sup> group. I worked at the collective farm, guarding the melon patch. For eight years of my life I was chained to my bed and was never without my crutches.

I began working as a photographer in Dmytrivka and Talalaivka. First I was a freelancer. Later I became a full-time correspondent for the raion newspaper *Trybuna khliboroba*, where I worked for thirty-five years.

The fate of my relatives was no easier. After the war, following many years of living in the swamps of Arkhangelsk, my aunt Liza and her daughter and infant grandchild were allowed to return to Ukraine. Two of my great-uncles died on the Leningrad and East Russian fronts.

This was the fate of my family, destroyed by those who wanted everyone to be equally poor, who wanted to live and grow fat at the expense of people's hard work and achievements.

Talalaivka, December 1990.

The following individuals-eyewitnesses confirm the authenticity of Hryhorii Sydorenko's autobiography:

1. Konstantyn Leshchenko (born 1909), resident of the village of Hrabshchyna.
2. Palazhka Romazan (born 1903), resident of the village of Obukhove.
3. Lida Vrachova (born 1914), resident of the village of Horodnia.

All these affidavits were authenticated by the responsible secretary of the local authorities.

Hryhorii Sydorenko's autobiography is supplemented by a document attested by eyewitnesses:

“The Bolshevik Terror of 1929-1930 in the Hamlets of Obukhove-Meluny (Steppe) of Talalaivka Raion, Chernihiv Region.”

The following individuals, who had no relation to politics, were looted, evicted from their homes,

and jailed in Bolshevik concentration camps by the Bolshevik executioners:

BAZHENOV, Prokop

BOIKO, Andriian

FEDIUK, Khoma

KHARCHENKO, Martiian. His sons Petro and Hryhorii both died during World War II. While they were fighting, their parents and younger brother were living in an earthen dugout.

KONDRATENKO, Fedos. His sons Dmytro and Petro fought in World War II. Dmytro was killed in combat.

KONDRATENKO, Ivan

KONDRATENKO, Kindrat

KONDRATENKO, Musii

KONDRATOVYCH, Denys

MAKARENKO, Petro (Khruliv)

MAKSYMENKO, Ivan

MAKSYMENKO, Mykyta

MAKSYMENKO, Oleksii

MAKSYMENKO, Petro

MAKSYMENKO, Viktor

MAZEPA, Artem (my grandfather)

MAZEPA, Demyd

MAZEPA, Fedir

MAZEPA, Hryhorii. His son Ivan died in the GULAG

MAZEPA, Ilko. His three sons, Ivan, Petro and Ihor, fought in World War II.

MAZEPA, Semen. After being evicted from his home, he lived in an earthen dugout for many years.

PETKIV, Yakiv. His son Hryhorii spent ten years in the GULAG and was posthumously rehabilitated.

PROKHOROVYCH, Mykhailo

SEREDA, Artem

SHEVCHENKO, Anton

STETSENKO, Pavlo

TOPCHII, Hryhorii

VASHCHENKO, Ivan

This documented was attested by:

Kondratenko, Polina

Kondratenko, Viktor

Leshchenko, Kostiantyn

Pivtoratsky, Ivan

Sydorenko, Hryhorii.

**Hryhorii Sydorenko**

# I WAS DYING AMID FIELDS OF GRAIN

When you travel in either a northerly or southerly direction from Kyiv through Poltava, Sumy, Kharkiv, and other regions, you see an endless plain of exceptionally fertile lands with ploughed fields full of rye, wheat, barley, and oats swaying in the wind. There was no bad harvest either in '32 or in '33. But there was famine...

Many reminiscences, essays, and books have already been written about this famine and its causes. I would like to write my own personal account of surviving this period, when death looked into our eyes every day and every hour.

I, Ivan Mykhailovych Brynza, was born on 9 October 1924 in Kharkiv, but when I was five years old my family moved to the Sakhnivka area in the southwestern raion of Kharkiv region. In contrast to other raions, Sakhnivka had its own industry consisting of two huge grain-milling factories. One was called the “white factory” because only wheat was milled there. This mill had seven floors, with five enormous grain storage facilities located all around it, like a fence. Each of these storage areas contained between 500,000 and 700,000 tons of golden wheat. The other milling factory had five floors and three grain-storage areas, and was used for milling rye. There was also a large butter factory, next to it a huge poultry plant where they slaughtered chickens, ducks, and geese. Next to it stood a huge incubator. I also remember twelve enormous cisterns for benzene, kerosene, etc.

The milling factories worked around the clock, and every day two freight trains loaded with flour, butter, and poultry meat, would leave the factories. All these riches were enough to feed not only the local population but also several regions. But despite this abundance, the violent Muscovite-Bolshevik government, with the aid of our homegrown lackeys, planned the Holodomor, the worst famine in the history of the world. At the same time people were issued ration cards with which they could not even buy a slice of bread. What a cruel joke!

There were five people in our family: my father, mother, two sisters, and I. One sister was two years older than me, and the other was ten years older. My elder sister Shura, loved me very much, and I loved her. When my sisters would sit

down to do their homework, and I had nothing to do, I would often bother them, because I was a born mischief-maker. Although Shura loved me, sometimes she would catch me and hit me hard on a soft spot. But this didn't help. So she thought of another way to keep me quiet. She would give me a bit of plywood and write some letters on it that I had to copy and re-copy — in other words, to learn them. When I got bored of this, I would ask my sister for permission to play outside, but she wouldn't let me. And so, in some eight or ten months I learned the alphabet. But it was harder to learn how to write. Even so, I overcame even these difficulties, and I no longer had any need for the ABC book.

Shura was not only intelligent but also beautiful. In school everyone loved and respected her. She was the class monitor and editor of the wall newspaper.

In 1931 my mother took me to the school, which was once a cathedral. The school officials told my mother that I was too young, because I would only be seven years old in six weeks. Then my mother revealed our family “secret”:

“He already knows how to read and write.”

This helped, and I was registered. My first teacher was Lidia Ivanivna Korshykova, whose husband was the vice-principal. He taught us singing and was the conductor of the school choir.

I had nothing to do in first grade. I paid no attention to anything and bothered the other pupils. One time the teacher came up and asked:

“Why did you come to school? If you want to learn, then you should study!” I replied that I had learned everything that was being taught in the classroom a long time ago, and showed her my copybook.

After recess I was summoned to the principal's office. I'm going to get it now, I thought. The principal decided to transfer me into the second grade, but warned me that I was to do everything like all the other pupils, adding that he would put me back into the first grade at my very first infraction.

There were six schools in the Sakhnivka area: two seven-year schools and two ten-year schools. Soon new accommodations were prepared for another school to make room for

children arriving from neighboring collective farms and Soviet state farms, where there were no schools. Altogether there were 2,000 schoolchildren studying in Sakhnivka, which was also the raion center.

Some children had begun to swell up from starvation already in 1932, and more and more children stopped going to school. Accordingly, in March of that year we were issued certificates attesting to the fact that we had completed the third grade. In September 1932 pupils from other schools joined our class. Autumn arrived, and children stopped attending school. Once again, we were given grade-completion certificates ahead of time — in January 1933, by which time two-thirds of the pupils had disappeared. The famine was in full swing.

In early springtime I became friends with a boy from another village. His name was Volodka. He was two years older than me, thin and taller than me. One day he said to me:

“Ask your mother if I can spend the night at your house.” The terrible famine had begun, and there were cases of cannibalism.

So Volodia and I spent entire days looking for something edible to steal. Before the famine broke out, the grain storage installations had been guarded by the militia. Now NKVD soldiers stood there, and judging by their language, they were Muscovites [i.e., Russians]. We noticed that in the place where the sacks were being loaded into the elevator, the loaders would often collapse beneath the weight and fall. The sacks would rip apart, but the keen-eyed NKVD soldiers would immediately surround the spot and shout:

“Don’t you dare touch socialist property!” The spilled grain was put into new sacks, but a dozen or so grains would always be left behind in the dust. Hungry children would throw themselves on the ground, trying to scrape up as much of it as possible. But in such a “battle” those children would be beaten and crushed. Weak from hunger, they never got up from the ground.

Volodka said to me:

“Let’s not come here anymore.”

I would like to say a few words about my sister Shura. She was only five years old when she witnessed the tragedy that befell her maternal uncle. He was a captain in the Tsarist army, and during the Revolution of 1917 he joined the army of the Ukrainian National Republic. One day he

was visiting his family, when a group of soldiers from Denikin’s army swooped down. They entered the house, and seeing a captain of the Ukrainian National Republic, they drew up an indictment, took him outside, and shot him. When Shura grew up, she went to live with our aunt, who was the manager of a restaurant in Zaporizhia. She found Shura a job in the restaurant, where she worked in the daytime; in the evening she studied at the Faculty of Physics and Mathematics of a local institute. She graduated with a teaching degree, which allowed her to teach in seven-year and ten-year schools. It was 1932.

What would we do now? How would we survive? The acacias were in bloom. Volodka and I hunted for wild sorrel. One day we were passing by a vegetable depot, when all of a sudden Volodka disappeared. Then I saw some people chasing him, but thankfully his pursuers didn’t catch him. He was clever enough to steal five potatoes and two sugar beets. But during the chase, he lost one of the beets.

My sister Motia traded our last beautiful Ukrainian embroidered towel for a cup of millet meal. After adding a handful of sorrel, we boiled up a delicious supper. But first we offered some to our mother. Our father had abandoned us to our fate.

In school there were fewer and fewer children. The huge grain storage facility loomed one hundred meters from our house. It stood right next to our neighbor’s cherry orchard. Volodka noticed that there were no sentries posted near the place where raspberries were growing. Late one evening he tore off two boards that were loosely nailed together and crawled through. After cramming his pockets with some 300–400 grams of wheat, he managed to return. But the next day he was caught and beaten. Groaning, Volodka said: “I’ll pay them back!”

He actually did what he said he would do. Late one evening he crept up to a soldier standing guard and bashed his head with a rock so hard that he croaked. In the morning a search began for the guilty party, but no one dreamed that a twelve-year-old could have done such a thing. However, four men were arrested, and no one ever saw them again.

A Torgsin was opened on the main street of the raion center, and anyone with gold or silver could exchange it for bread, meat products, etc.

Whenever people came out of the Torgsin, we would tearfully ask them for a scrap of bread. But people rarely paid attention to our tears. One day a man with a beautiful Cossack moustache came out to the street and said: "I'll give you some bread, but don't stand here, go to Russia. There is no famine there. I've just returned from there."

He gave each of us a piece of bread. We ate one piece and brought the other piece of bread to my mother and sisters.

We didn't tell anyone about our plans. We climbed aboard a cargo train car and traveled until Lozova, and then to Kharkiv. There were only forty kilometers left to the Russian border. Our dream and desire to eat our fill and return home with food spurred us on. At the border it turned out that it was really closed. The train stopped, and those who had no pass, were not allowed to travel further. No one asked us any questions; we were simply brutally pushed off the train. Guarding the border were NKVD soldiers with dogs. What were we to do? We started running alongside the border and saw a Ukrainian village from which an unpleasant odor was wafting. We looked across the border and saw a hamlet with several houses and not a single tree or bush growing near them. Russia was over there. Children were laughing and running — there was no famine.

I was in such a state that I was ready to drop and die. I said:

"Volodka, go back home. Tell mama that I died."

"No way!" Volodka yelled and ran off somewhere. It was hard for me to sit up and even harder to stand up. Fortunately, Volodka had found a half-rotten sugar beet and two potatoes. He forced me to eat, leaving only half a potato for himself. He helped me to stand up. It took us two days to walk back to Kharkiv. We saw many corpses being collected, and some people instantly chased us away. We managed to find the station and returned home with great difficulty. We just wanted to have a drink of water; I no longer thought about food.

My family rejoiced at our return. My sister Motia was working for some Russians, who paid her with a few scraps of food and a cup of some kind of grain. To this she added cherry tree bark and some kind of greens and cooked a "soup" that she shared with our mother.

One day Volodka said: "Let's go to the poultry plant. Maybe we'll find something there." Walking along Chapaev Street, we saw a lot of corpses; we saw the same thing on Kirov Street. We began looking for any kind of herbs. Suddenly, right in front of us someone dumped the guts of two chickens. Volodka grabbed them and said: "I'll bring them to Motia, and you look for some herbs. Maybe you'll find some." In fact, I found a clump of half-dried sorrel. I came to a house where some good people used to live. Volodka appeared at my side. Suddenly he shouted:

"Look, Ivan, there are mushrooms in the garden!"

Slowly we drew half a litre of water from the well and started cooking the "borshch." Volodka was stronger than me, and he ate hungrily and quickly. I ate four or five spoonfuls, when suddenly I was gripped by a terrible nausea and began to vomit. I remember nothing after that. It was a mystery.

At the very time when people who had been left to fend for themselves, began dying on the streets, I was taken to the hospital, where I lay unconscious for twenty-three days, as I was told later. When I regained consciousness, I heard voices. The chief doctor lifted up one eyelid and said: "Oh, if the poisonous mushroom doesn't affect him, he has to be released." I begged him to let me stay in the hospital. But they refused to listen and released me.

When I saw what I looked like, I was aghast. My whole body was covered with scabs. I looked like a mummy, the only difference being that a mummy is covered with a special material, while I was covered with scabs from head to toe.

They brought me my short pants, which were so big on me now. I asked the female doctor to tell me who had brought me to the hospital. "That's none of your business," she barked out in Russian, waving her hand as if to say she would be releasing me tomorrow if not today. "As you can see, you're alive." And with that she ended the conversation.

I went out on the street and looked around at the sunny day. Then I fell. Someone helped me up and sat me on a bench. Someone else gave me half a glass of milk. I drank it up and asked for more, but there was none. With great difficulty I managed to make my way home. My family

began crying when they saw me, but I had no strength left to cry or complain.

I started bleeding from the wounds I had received from falling near the hospital. I asked people if they had seen Volodka. No one had. "That means he's dead," I thought. I began to think about dying. I looked around for a rope, but didn't find any. Another idea came to me: in order to end my torments more quickly, I would not eat anything that my sister gave me. My sister probably guessed my intention, because she would sit next to me until I finished eating. My mother said: "Son, school starts the day after tomorrow." I said: "Whom are they going to be teaching if almost all the children have died?"

Obedying my mother's wishes, somehow I dragged myself to the schoolyard. There was no one there. Suddenly I saw someone running toward me. It was a pupil from my class who looked as though he had been at a resort. The principal came out and told him to go home. Then he came up to me and asked: "And who might you be?" "Ivan Brynza," I said. His wife saw the terrible state I was in and began to cry. She went off and returned with a glass of milk and some white bread. Slowly I soaked the bread in the milk. I couldn't chew because of the scabs and ulcers in my mouth, which tormented me. The principal said: "We won't give you anymore because you might overeat, and then what?"

A cart drove up, its floor covered with straw. The driver told me: "Get on the wagon." The principal said to him:

"You idiot, can't you see the state he's in? Get down and put him on the wagon yourself!"

Along the way we picked up eight more children, who were thin and swollen, their skin pulled taut. They drove us schoolchildren to the southern part of the city to a large building with beautiful tall poplars growing all around and surrounded by a two-meter high fence. The entire area consisted of some two hectares of orchard. It was hard to believe in such a miraculous sight. How had it been preserved? The cherries, which ripen in June, were now all dried up, but the rest of the orchard was untouched.

Forty-five children, between the ages of seven and twelve, were brought here in early September. The schools were closed for two months. They gave each of us a piece of clay-like bread and some sort of thin soup. I couldn't eat the sour-tasting bread. I went outside and stood

near a cherry tree and began eating cherries greedily. The cherries were tasty and sweet. Before we went to bed, they rubbed us with pomade that stank so much I couldn't stand it and became nauseous. The whole building reeked, and I couldn't sleep. I saw that the grass outside had been mowed, so I lay down on it and slept like a log. From then on, every morning I would go into the orchard and eat my fill of cherries. Eventually the gatekeeper fashioned me a type of small knife so that I could eat the other fruit — plums, pears, etc.

During the next two weeks twelve children died, but I was still "grazing" in the orchard. Everyone knows that fruits contain a lot of vitamins. When the doctor arrived in a month's time, he asked: "What have you been eating?" because my scabs had started to fall off. I said: "I'm grazing in the orchard." "Good," he said. "Continue grazing."

Another month went by, and ten more children died. During this time almost all the scabs disappeared. My new skin was very sensitive to cold and began to crack. Four schools were closed, but classes began in a fifth school containing a total of eighty-five pupils.

I had no gloves, and the cold wind went right through my thin clothing. The skin on my arms and legs began to crack. Our classroom contained three grades: second, third, and fourth. There were fifteen pupils, but there were only ten left by March 1934. I think that some of the pupils from the upper grades were able to leave, but of 1,400 pupils that attended this school, only some fifty or sixty survived. During the cold winter I did not attend school because my shoes were too flimsy. They would fill up with snow, and my feet would become cold and begin to ache.

More than 5,000 people were settled in the city, most of them Russians and some 100 German families from Russia. In 1935 the schools re-opened, and two-thirds of the classes were filled with pupils.

I had constant headaches, and the principal advised my mother to take me to the hospital. A new doctor carefully examined me and told my mother "to improve my diet." But my mother was absolutely unable to do this. As a result of my headaches, I became disillusioned with everything and started thinking about suicide again.

I probably would have killed myself. But soon we received a package of sweets from my sister



Shura to whom I had been writing letters describing our situation. I began to gain strength; the sweets were shoring up my weak body. Strange as it may seem, I was a pretty good student and came third or fourth in my class.

These are the horrors that the Ukrainian people experienced. The biggest mockery in Sakhnivka was the fact that everyday Bolshevik Moscow was shipping out trainload after trainload of grain, butter, and meat. Even the harvests from our beautiful orchards were being shipped to Russia.

This was the greatest murder by starvation in the history of mankind. And there is not the

slightest doubt that this Holodomor was planned in Moscow. While they were confiscating everything down to the last kernel in the villages, they did not seize anything in the cities, particularly ours, simply because there was nothing to take. But in the grain-milling factories, as I have already mentioned, there was so much grain that it could have fed several regions in Ukraine.

This is how I was dying of hunger in the midst of grain, and only God Himself was witness to my torments.

**Ivan Brynza**

## THE TERRIBLE YEARS

### FIRST ARREST

After we finished plowing one morning, we were heading home when the head of the village soviet and the head of the Committee of Poor Peasants drove up on a wagon. They put me and another man on the wagon and delivered us to the village soviet. From there they took us under escort to the hopper station, where they locked us up in an empty granary, which was already filled with many peasants from the entire raion. This was on 27 May 1931.

While we were in the granary, none of our relatives were permitted to see us, but parcels were allowed. We found out that our families had been sent to thresh on the collective farm, where they were told that we would be detained a while longer and then forced to work on the collective farm. We were there until 5 June. That morning they woke us up very early, before dawn.

We were told to get our things ready and come outside. What things did we have with us, when we didn't have any at home?

When we finally left the granary, we saw that the courtyard was full of escorts armed with rifles. We were placed in ranks and surrounded by the guards. Then a "representative" from the Urals made the following announcement in Russian:

"You are going to the Urals for reeducation. Here you did not want to be in the collective farm, so you will work not as you wish but the way we tell you. I am ordering the escorts to shoot if anyone moves two steps to the side!"

Finally, we reached the city of Perm. Our train arrived at the wharf and we were transferred to a steamboat. An armed guard stood on the brake platform of each train car. At night all the cars were lit up from the outside, which made escape difficult and risky. Nevertheless, in Perm unclaimed belongings were found, so some people must have escaped.

The steamboat was large enough to accommodate all the people and their baggage. We sailed for three days and three nights. Then we came ashore and were transferred to four smaller steamboats and barges that took us to our designated destination. We sailed for two more days on the Kama, Vishera, and Kolva Rivers. Finally, we landed in some village (I have forgotten its name), where we disembarked. The steamboats sailed on with the rest of the people. We were billeted with the residents of this village, who were hostile to us. They did not believe that we were honest people. At the time the Soviet government's true colors had not been revealed. But when calamity struck them that fall, they finally believed us.

We spent the night there, and the next day we were told to get ready for work: men between the ages of sixteen and sixty, and childless women between the ages of sixteen and fifty. Women with children stayed behind. We spent another night there, and the next morning we were driven into the taiga to build a settlement.



*The funeral of an exiled Ukrainian priest in Siberia.*

## DEPORTATION

We were hustled to the train station like bandits or murderers and locked in the blockhouse, where our families were imprisoned, after being rounded up from the whole county.

They began loading us into the train cars. There was a huge number of people assembled here. But my whole family was not there: the four youngest children were missing. When my family was being taken away during the night, my son-in-law (my eldest daughter's husband) happened to come home from work. Passing the house, he heard terrible screams coming from our house. He went into the house, where the authorities suggested that, if he wanted, he could sign for the four smallest children under ten years old and take them with him. But they didn't tell him that we were being deported to the Urals. So he thought the same thing would happen to our family that happened to two families in 1929, who were deported only 120 kilometers to some unarable land. Later, their relatives could travel to visit them.

Our son-in-law took our four youngest children to his house, leaving my elderly mother,

who was signed out to my sister. So we were left with our fifteen-year-old son and twelve-year-old daughter.

A crowd of people from all over the county gathered to see us off. After our seventeen-car train was loaded and then shunted to the main track, from behind the grates I saw my mother and my little children, who remained behind. My mother wanted to come up to my train car to give me her blessing, but she was not allowed to approach. My brother and his wife and children were in the same train car.

When the locomotive gave the whistle for departure and the train began moving, our daughter became so upset that she tore her dress from top to bottom. At this moment I swore to God that I would never forgive this abuse of us and never forget it as long as I lived.

At the Milerove train station more people were loaded on the train. It was a very hot day. The hatches in our train cars were shut. It seemed that we would suffocate from the heat. We were not given any water. Children cried from the torment. Every train car held around fifty-two people. The train left the station with fifty-five carloads of people and eight cars of baggage. On

the train were those people who had been deported to the unarable land in 1929.

We traveled for eight days. We were given hot balanda and some bread only in Sizran. For five or six days in a row we didn't have a chance to go to the toilet, and women especially suffered terribly from this.

### **URGED ON BY HUNGER**

While we were building this large village, life was not too bad because we were given enough food. When winter began and timber felling started, we saw trouble ahead. Five kilograms of flour, 900 grams of groats, one pound of herring, and 120 grams of sugar were issued every month for people who could not work. But all this had to be paid for with money. Working people were issued various amounts of food: between 200 and 800 grams a day. By early winter we were already experiencing hunger. Those who had brought food from home fared better. Our family was given only one pood of flour per person. That first winter we saw that people who did not fulfill the daily work quota would be locked for the night in a cold stable after work. There were no windows in this stable. It was terribly cold.

Later these tortures ceased, but something else began. So-called "seven dayers" were organized. After the completion of seven workdays, the completed work was tallied. If a brigade had failed to complete half of the quota, no food was issued — not a single gram. But you had to continue working. The work was considered completed when all the timber was brought to the river. Cut timber left in the forest was not considered completed work. There were brigades that fulfilled the quota (brigades consisting of the strongest people). No one paid any attention to the fact that one brigade had young fellows and horses strong as lions, while half of another brigade consisted of women working with horses that would lie on the ground as soon as they got stuck in the mud. People ate up whatever food they had, and then mashed moss, stripped the rowan trees of bark, and dried the pulp of old birch trees, ground it up, and ate it.

### **NO COMPLAINTS ALLOWED**

During the winter we heard that a raion commandant was coming and that there would be

a meeting. We hoped that we would be able to submit complaints about our bad treatment. Finally he arrived, but straightaway went to the forest to inspect the work brigades. If he saw workers wearing jackets over their sweaters, he stripped them of their jackets and hit them in the face.

In the evening we assembled for a meeting. The commandant instantly began talking about shockwork labor, a subject that we were heartily sick of hearing. The people were exhausted from their day's work, and some began nodding off. He began yelling at them, calling them "enemies of the people." He immediately sent twelve people to a penal company for two weeks. Everyone was afraid of the penal companies because few people would return. This penal company was based in the raion. After this, no one dared submit any complaints.

### **WORK AND REST**

The first winter was not as hard as later, because we were preparing wood for export, for domestic use, and simply chopping logs. Every tree that we cut down was used. But when the second winter arrived, we had to prepare wood only for export. Things got much worse for us. You would chop down a tree and see flaws. Then you would have to cut away one or more meters of the defective part of the tree. This wasted a lot of time. When the forestry work was based in our village, even if you came home wet through, your rags would dry overnight. But when we had to work at a pier (and there were many), there would only be one stove in the barrack for everyone. If you hung your clothing over the stove, you had to watch and make sure the other people didn't remove it or that it didn't burn.

We slept on two-tiered sleeping boards. Half of the windows in the barracks were broken and plugged with snow. Lanterns were lit but they cast very little light. We didn't even have lanterns in our village, only torches made of kindling. If you had to patch some clothing, someone would hold the burning kindling while you sewed.

In the winter of 1933 there was a real famine here. A special "funeral brigade" was formed to collect the people who had starved to death. Its members had to dig graves. Every morning the brigade would make the rounds of the hamlet from end to end, picking up dead bodies and

burying them. The more bodies the brigade members picked up, the higher their earnings.

### **A BROKEN LEG**

On 19 May 1933 I broke my leg at the timber float. I won't mention the difficulties involved in getting me to the hospital, where I arrived after nine days. I spent two months in the hospital.

When I was released, I could not walk without crutches. I did not receive any crutches from the state. It was a good thing that there was a carpenter living in the village, and lots of boards. The carpenter fashioned makeshift crutches for me and I walked "home," a distance of 80 kilometers. I was issued 1,600 grams for the journey. When I came "home," I was issued food for one month, based on 400 grams per day. When the month was over, I was sent for a checkup by a medical commission that declared I was fit for light work. But there were no light jobs. When I returned, the authorities did not issue any food to me, demanding that I start working. But I was still completely unfit for work.

### **NEWS FROM UKRAINE**

I received a letter from home, from my eldest daughter, who wrote that "your children have exhausted me. I have gone through all my food... Food cards are not issued to children. One of your daughters has been living at the railway station near the steam heat. She used to live with an old woman, but the old lady starved to death, and now she has nowhere to live..." My wife cried day after day.

Here real starvation had begun, which affected people as well as cattle. Barely half of the 85 horses of the so-called Forestry Agriculture starved to death. Fifteen horses were given to the workshop organized here. The rest were covered with scabs. Orders came from the higher authorities to butcher the horses that could no longer stand, and their flesh was used to feed the "shockworkers." Some horses had to be shot. Then gasoline was poured over them and they were buried, so that people would not eat the flesh. But they dug the carcasses up anyway and ate them. Old people who witnessed this said that the end of the world was approaching.

### **I WORK AS A STABLEMAN**

I could now walk only with one crutch. The deputy head of the workshop told me to start working as a stableman; otherwise I would starve to death. I took his advice and started working.

Soon we were transferred to the forestry industry near the Zharnivka pier, some twenty-five kilometers from our village. Men were separated from their wives and sent to various sectors. It was a rare, great happiness when a husband and wife ended up at the same pier. Husbands were deliberately assigned to one pier and their wives to another so that single people would die sooner, because a husband and wife together could still somehow help each other in every calamity.

### **HOW WERE THE HORSES TO BLAME?**

A new order was issued in the winter of 1933-34. If a brigade did not fulfill the quota, then oats were not issued either to the people or the horses. My God! That was when I began regretting that I had gone to work as a stableman. It was sad to look at the poor dumb animal whose sad eyes dripped with tears because it was starving. I had to employ various subterfuges to steal some oats from other horses and give it to the horse that had not fulfilled the work quota. I would have ended up in jail if they had caught me.

### **COLLECTIVE FARMERS USED AS FORCED LABOR**

That winter the collective farms in Verkhne-Kamsk raion, some 200 kilometers away, were also mobilized to the forestry industry. At first these collective farmers had some food from home. But later, once they too began to starve, they stole grain meant for the horses, cooked and ate it. Then they began dying. Some of them started escaping to their homes. But there were few roads and they were easily captured. Telephone calls were made and they were captured en route. Those fugitive collective farmers were returned to their work places, where they were tried by circuit courts and sentenced to ten years' hard labor. They continued to work here, but now as prisoners.

## RESETTLEMENT

On 24 June 1934 I came home and a ward official ran up to tell me to get all my things together because I was moving to another settlement called Pererozhdenie, forty-five kilometers away. People from the Kuban had been there before us; almost all of them had died. Then they sent people from the Ural region there, and few of them survived.

It was impossible not to obey the resettlement order. We quickly gathered our things, throwing our few belongings into sacks. We didn't even put on better clothing because we were told that our things would be brought by boat.

Half an hour later the ward official returned and told us to leave everything; our things would be delivered later. I had just received my monthly food packet. We took nothing but flour, our most valuable possession.

## TO DIE OR ESCAPE?

After we arrived in Pererozhdenie, we had three days to rest and were issued 400 grams of bread each. We went to the commandant to ask when our belongings would be brought. He said they would be delivered by sleds in the winter. The hay season was just starting and all his boats were being used.

This meant the end for us. When one of our bast shoes fell apart, we had to wrap our feet in rags and go to work. Now we had nothing, and if we didn't work, we would have nothing to eat. When a man died, his wife could not stay behind to bury him but had to go to work. If she stayed behind, then she would get no bread that day.

I decided to escape because we were risking death here. The next morning we would have to start harvesting the hay. Everyone over the age of twelve had to mow hay. So that last evening I decided to do what I had been planning for three years. A Cossack woman with whom we shared a house noticed my preparations and begged me to take her along.

## ESCAPE

In the middle of the night (although there is hardly any night in this part of the world) of 28

June 1934, after the guard had passed by with his wooden bell, we made the sign of the cross and ran to a nearby valley and from there into the forest. The day before I had asked where the various roads led.

After we covered some seven kilometers of forest at a run, two GPU officials rode up on their horses. There were five of us: my wife, daughter, and I, and the Cossack woman and her daughter.

"Halt, old man! Where are you bringing them?" they asked.

I stopped, and the women continued walking. I said:

"I came for food from the Zharnivka pier, where I work as a guard. I was told to escort these women to the hayfield."

Then I turned and left. The GPU officials stayed for a while, watching me leave and then rode off. Then I told the women:

"Let's turn into the forest!"

My prediction was correct: there was a posse after us.

## OUR TRAVELS

People who were once prisoners know what it means to flee without documents or weapons, especially in those places where even women herding cows always carry an axe tucked in their belts. For safety's sake we had to skirt the hamlets and spend our nights in the forest. We often got lost. When we turned off a road and headed into the forest, I would make notches on trees that we would later follow to get back on the road. One time I had to make a raft to ford a river. We crossed small rivers by chopping down a tree and walking over it to the other side. We ate mostly mushrooms because we had very little flour.

One time we met a group of GPU agents. I told them: "We would be glad if you took us with you, otherwise we will starve to death. We got separated from our freight train back in the raion because we are unfit for work and were assigned to the children's state farm at Kurgany station."

They looked at us and said: "Go on. They'll pick you up there."

I think they didn't take us with them because we didn't even resemble human beings anymore. I had no change of clothing, and I hadn't shaved

for three years. I looked like a real old man, even though I was only fifty years old.

## FROM PERM TO KOTELNICH

Along the way we earned a bit of money working for the locals. We were forty kilometers from Perm.

I had 110 rubles for the three of us, and we had to travel on this money. Naturally, we didn't have enough money to buy a ticket to our city. So we bought tickets only to Viatka. There I bought tickets to Kotelnich, because Viatka was a large, dangerous city. In Kotelnich we ran out of money. We went searching for work. It was early September, the beginning of the harvest season. But no one needed such exhausted workers like us. With great difficulty we found work at a Machine Tractor Station. Although there were GPU men there, the Lord protected us from them!

## HOME

I knew perfectly well that I couldn't show up at my house. But by this time I was not afraid of anything. I wanted to reach my home, see my little children, and die, no matter what shape death would take. Many tears of joy were shed when we arrived at our daughter's house, where our children were. But the youngest child no longer recognized us, because when we were deported he was less than three years old.

## PASSPORTIZATION

Our family's joy at seeing us so unexpectedly was short-lived. They found out that we had no documents. Our relatives' suburban house now belonged to the city, and the names of everyone who lived in the house had to be recorded in a "house registry book."

They had to record us as newly arrived residents. But to obtain a residence permit you needed a passport. In order not to cause our daughter and her husband any problems, after spending one day at home, I decided to go to the militia for a passport. I was told that I needed a form from my last place of work. I found a job, worked for a while, and with the form returned to the militia for a passport. Then I was told that I could only get a passport in the Ural region. I waited until Christmas. Although I hadn't been

arrested yet, the neighborhood militia man urged me to obtain a passport, or there would be trouble.

At Christmastime the head of the militia came to the village soviet, and I was summoned there. There were already about ten men there, who were working on the collective farm. The head of the militia told one of the men to leave within 24 hours; another, to pick up his passport; and me, to come see him tomorrow. When I arrived the next morning, he instantly handed me over to the NKVD located in the same building. I began to lie, saying that I used to have documents. But he interrupted me by saying that I had escaped.

I told him: "It's a fact that I have no document. You may consider that I escaped. Maybe I wouldn't have done this if you had not left my children without food rations. When I found out that they didn't have any, I was forced to flee here. Now do what you want with me."

The NKVD official told me to go home and return in six days and again in three days. He said: "Go home. We'll let you know what will happen to you."

## ANOTHER ARREST

When I came home, I didn't tell my family the whole truth so as not to distress them. In the meantime I found a job at the dairy.

On 5 February I came home from work all wet from the rain. My house was leaking because it was completely open. I lay down to sleep. At midnight there was a knock at the door. It was my daughter. When I opened the door, an NKVD official came inside. He had gone to her house first and forced her to bring him to my house. He ordered me, my wife, and my daughter to get ready.

All hell broke loose. My children kissed the NKVD official's boot, begging him to let us stay. I put on my wet clothing, while he looked around the house. We had no beds. We slept on a door that my son-in-law had managed to save when we were being deported, which was laid on a couple of low stools. Our bedding and blankets consisted of the clothing that we wore in the daytime.

I was brought straight to the NKVD building. The interrogation was brief and I was led to a cell. I waited nearly the whole of the next day

without being summoned. The NKVD officer had told me that I would be re-deported to the Urals, but there was no action being taken yet.

### **THE NKVD'S "HUMANENESS"**

Finally I was summoned to the NKVD official, who said that I was allowed to remain. But I had to come back with my daughter and bring all my children's birth certificates. It was difficult to obtain them because we had to travel far to get them. I was told I could get a passport from the head of the militia. It took the whole month of February to obtain a one-year passport. Finally, all my torments were over. I had found a place for my family to live and believed I had served my "punishment."

### **THIRD ARREST AND A NEW PUNISHMENT**

On 16 September 1936 I was re-arrested and brought straight to the NKVD. On the table I saw a piece of paper that read: "Vladimir Potapov [sic] was dekulakized and deported. He escaped from the settlement and was not punished." The words "TO BE PUNISHED" were written diagonally across the paper in red ink.

I served my three-year sentence in an NKVD agricultural colony near Rostov. This was a transit prison: every week a new convoy of prisoners was brought in, and another convoy shipped out.

### **RELEASE**

My term ended in December 1939, but I was released only in January 1940.

Fortunately, my wife remained at home with our five children and had found a job working as a cleaner in a bakery. This bakery was affiliated with the Armenian invalids' workshop. The manager knew me well, and when he heard that I was in prison, he offered my wife a job at the bakery. After my release she continued working there, because she could obtain bread without waiting in line. In those days people would start lining up for bread at midnight.

### **MY WIFE IS IMPRISONED**

This did not last long. In the fall of 1940 my wife was arrested and sentenced by an NKVD troika to one year in prison, because one day after work the baker gave her two loaves of bread. When the war began, my wife was instantly released. In prison she contracted tuberculosis and died during the German occupation.

### **IN MY OWN HOUSE**

During the German occupation I moved back to my old house, because it was standing empty. Under the Soviets it had been a collective farm office. I was evacuated to the west without my family, because the evacuation took place during the winter and none of my children had winter clothing. The evacuation was a rushed affair: the Bolsheviks were just twenty-five kilometers away. Only men left our hamlet; all the women and children stayed behind.

**Petro Marchenko**

# THE BITTER AFTERTASTE OF MINT

(Sketch)

*According to documented sources, the Soviet Ukrainian botanist Hnat Mykolaiovych Kuchmai was most likely shot in the Poltava prison in 1937. He was posthumously rehabilitated in 1961.<sup>1</sup>*

It was already after midnight when someone knocked at the door. The knock seemed different to the mother and her children. Oleksandra Petrivna went to the door and asked anxiously: "Who's there?" But she did not hear her husband's usual gentle voice. She heard someone say: "Open up!"

And out of the cold mist her husband Hnat came into the small, warm house, followed by a militia man.

The family didn't want to believe that misfortune had invaded their home. But when the militia man placed the arrest warrant, the search protocol<sup>2</sup>, and a revolver on the table, Kuchmai's wife understood that this was the end.

Included in the search protocol of the Poltava directorate of the NKVD was a list of confiscated items: a passport and several membership cards from various societies.<sup>3</sup> After Hnat refused to sign the protocol stating that all the information had been recorded accurately, the master of the house left his home forever.

Neither Hnat nor his family and colleagues could understand how he had wronged his fatherland and nation. From 1930 until his arrest in December 1937 he had worked at the Ukrainian Research Station of Medicinal Plants in the village of Berezotocha, near Lubni, which was subordinated to the All-Ukrainian Scientific-Research Institute of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (VILAR). Hnat Mykolaiovych was the head of the selection sector.<sup>4</sup>

At this time he was already well known in all-Union scientific circles. Immediately before his arrest this young scientist had been invited to Moscow to organize an agricultural exposition that was about to open.<sup>5</sup> On 2 September 1937 the All-Union Scientific-Research Institute for the Ethereal Oil Industry

(VIEMP) had invited Hnat Mykolaiovych to start studying genetics, a field that held bright prospects.

The invitation was no accident. Kuchmai had been a delegate to the All-Union Congress on Genetics, Selection, Seed Science, and Pedigree Animal Breeding, held in Leningrad in 1929. There he met many scholars, including N. Vavilov, S. Navashin, N. Gorbunov, and other founders of Soviet genetics and selection. Hnat was also a delegate to the 1<sup>st</sup> All-Ukrainian Congress on Genetics and Selection.

Having created a new variety of mint that was opening up broad opportunities in medicine and the perfume industry, Kuchmai was busily carrying out new projects, including in the field of genetics.

The times were uncertain. Among the victims of mass repressions were many scientists, who were imprisoned in labor camps or destroyed as "enemies of the people." A fierce struggle was taking place in science. Scholars like Vavilov and his colleagues rejected the erroneous theories of Trofym Lysenko. But Stalin believed in his theories, and Vavilov and other Soviet scientists were under a cloud of suspicion. Soon geneticists were accused of wrecking and fostering Goebbels-type racism.

Kuchmai also fell victim to Soviet lawlessness. His denunciation stated that he was allegedly selling the secrets of mint to Egypt. This nonsense was enough to bring charges against the Ukrainian scientist, who was quickly accused of being an "enemy of the people."

Hnat Mykolaiovych Kuchmai was born on 26 May 1896 in the city of Okhtyrka in the former Kharkiv gubernia (today: Sumy region). He was an avid learner, but after completing a local parish school, he was forced to start earning a living. At age twelve he began working as a typesetter in an Okhtyrka printshop. In 1912, against his parents' wishes, he went to Kharkiv and started private courses while working at night in printing houses. After he passed his high school exams, he was called



up into the tsarist army.<sup>6</sup> He returned to his home after World War I and the October revolution. In 1918-1919 he worked as a typesetter in the foreign department of the First Kyivan Printing House.<sup>7</sup> When the interventionist forces captured Kyiv, Kuchmai moved to Okhtyrka, where he found work in his profession and joined the Red Army. After the establishment of Soviet power, he returned to Kharkiv and resumed work as a printer. In the fall of 1923 the printers' union sent him for studies at the Agricultural Institute, which marked the beginning of his scientific career. He wrote many scientific articles and maintained constant links with scientists and various scientific research institutions, including the Ivanivka Research Selection Station near Okhtyrka, headed by Prof. Oskar Helmer.

As a renowned selectionist, Kuchmai created a number of plant varieties, including an annual form of caraway seed that did not shed its grain.<sup>8</sup>

In late 1935-early 1936 Kuchmai lived in the so-called "Academic Town" of Khimki in Moscow, where a brilliant career beckoned. It was then that the order for his arrest was issued.

Having lost all hope that her husband would return, his wife Oleksandra settled in Okhtyrka and began interceding fruitlessly on Kuchmai's behalf in various institutions. However, the outbreak of the German-Soviet war in 1941 put an end to her search.<sup>9</sup>

After the war ended, Kuchmai's wife and son Mykola renewed their efforts to learn about the scientist's fate. V. Yuriev, a deputy of the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR appealed directly to Nikita Khrushchev. The KGB soon sent a letter stating that the case of Kuchmai, who had been arrested by the NKVD in 1937, had never been examined.<sup>10</sup> But no information was given about his subsequent fate.

Kuchmai's son continued the search for his father. Finally, on 20 May 1961, nearly a quarter of a century after his father's arrest, the family was notified of Kuchmai's posthumous rehabilitation and the receipt of retroactive rights and benefits for the members of his family. Shortly after, the family received a death certificate stating that Hnat Kuchmai died of pneumonia on 17 September 1943.<sup>11</sup>

**Oleksandr Halkin**

(Partially based on the Kuchmai family archive).

---

1 Archive of the Directorate of the Security Service of Ukraine (USBU) in Sumy region, file no. 8324-S, fol. 51.

2 Ibid., fols. 6-7.

3 Ibid., fols. 7-8.

4 Ibid., fol. 1.

5 Ibid., fols. 9-11.

6 Ibid., fol. 8 and the Archive of the Okhtyrka Ethnographic Museum.

7 Ibid.

8 Archive of the Okhtyrka Ethnographic Museum.

9 Ibid.

10 Ibid.

11 Archive of the USBU in Sumy region, file no. 8324-S, fol. 16.

## SLOVIANSKY RAION, KRASNODAR KRAI (KUBAN)

The village of Poltavska in Sloviansky raion in the Kuban had 5,600 households and a population of 28,000. During the revolution both the Whites and the Bolsheviks carried out mass executions and burned down the homes of anyone who had been involved in the national-liberation struggles. An insurgent movement led by the Cossack captain Riabokin existed here until 1925, when it was liquidated. A smaller detachment of insurgents led by Milko Kalenyk lasted for 21 years, until the arrival of the Germans in 1942.

Dekulakization took place in 1929-1930. Out of a total of 5,600 households, 800 were dekulakized, of which 300 families were immediately deported to the Far North, and 300 other families were evicted from their homes. An additional 250 people were tried and imprisoned in concentration camps for failing to fulfill the grain deliveries. About forty men were shot. I remember the names of sixteen of them (list not included). Dekulakization and collectivization were carried out by Russian 25-tysiachnyks, GPU troops, and our own lickspittles from the village and elsewhere. I remember a few of their names: T. Kondra, M. Breus, A. Havrylenko, I. Chernyshov, P. Rutsky, P. Kushchevsky, P. Krutoholov, S. Shyshatsky, and P. Maltsov. Among the tysiachnyks were Lavrentev, Chertkov, and Silenkov.

The Cossacks refused to join the collective farm. The cattle and equipment were forcibly brought to the farms of dekulakized peasants, but in a couple of months the local women, under the leadership of the widows of red partisans, expelled the local authorities, liquidated the collective farm, and took away all their property.

A number of people were arrested in connection with the SVU show trial. I can only remember the names of two people, who were shot while being escorted to the raion: Mykyta Lubenets and Klym Selihor.

The churches were blown up with dynamite, and the clerics were taken away by the GPU. The church square was planted with trees and turned into a park. In 1932 the entire population of Poltavska was deported to the Urals. Over a period of three months tens of thousands of Kuban residents died of cold and hunger near Nizhnii Tagil in Russia's Sverdlovsk region. The corpses of the descendants of the glorious Zaporozhian Army were thrown into mass graves by the thousands.

Only 48 out of 5,600 households remained in the village of Poltavska. In place of those who were deported to the Nizhnii Tagil graveyard, settlers from central Russia were brought to Poltavska, which was then renamed Krasnoarmeiskaia [Red Army].

**Fedir Selihor**

## THE FATE OF ONE AMONG MANY MILLIONS

I am a Ukrainian elementary schoolteacher from the Northern Caucasus. The fate of my family under Soviet rule was indescribably tragic. My brother Vasyl was arrested by the GPU in 1930 and died in prison. My wife Oksana died in exile in 1938. My cousin Prokip was jailed for eight years and died in the Far North. Another cousin, Tymofii, died in an NKVD dungeon in 1937. My close relatives Mykhailo Kachura, Pylyp Kasych, and Stepan Alystratenko died in the NKVD prison. My uncle Yosyp was executed in the Urals, while my cousins Sofia and Fedir, and Fedir's son Mykhailo were executed in Semyrichia.

I am the only member of our large family to survive: I immigrated to the West, but only after my nearly ten-year imprisonment by the Soviets.

The GPU arrested me on 2 June 1930. I was charged under article 58, points 10, 11, and 14, and sentenced to ten years' imprisonment. I was jailed in eleven different Soviet prisons: the Stavropil GPU, Rostov GPU, the Rostov prison, Butyrki Prison in Moscow, and two prisons in Suzdal (old and new), Vladimir Prison, two prisons in the city of Orel, and finally in the Unzha corrective labor camp in the Far North.

In order to describe all my experiences, I would have to write a big book. But I do not have the strength for this because after everything that happened to me, I am exhausted and ill.

I will describe everything briefly. The GPU-NKVD investigation, so-called, is something that only Lucifer could have devised: terrorization, provocations, forcing the accused to lie about

himself and others, beatings, and other kinds of sophisticated torments. Transports under escort from prison to prison represented continuous torture by hunger, thirst, cold or heat, and dirt in cramped conditions. Transported prisoners were usually given only sardelle fish or herrings and 200 grams of bread. Water was rarely supplied, so the suffering people cried and groaned.

The torments of prisoners in Soviet prisons and camps markedly increased after the murder in 1934 of Sergei Kirov, the famous Bolshevik commissar, in Leningrad. The Soviet Politburo appointed Nikolai Yezhov to head the NKVD USSR, and under his rule the terror assumed insane forms and reached an unheard-of scale. The NKVD mercilessly destroyed the peasants and the intelligentsia of those nations that the Bolsheviks deemed unsuitable for their Soviet “paradise”: Ukrainians, the Turkic peoples, the peoples of the Caucasus, etc. The slogans “dictatorship of the proletariat” and the “building of socialism” were nothing but propagandistic lies. In reality, a band of Russian criminals and their collaborators — communists and NKVD officials — were waging a savage struggle to hang onto power.

During the terror known as “Yezhovshchina” I was imprisoned in the Yaroslavl NKVD special-purpose prison. At that time prisoners were forbidden to receive packages from their families, and the meager prison food worsened. The prison windows were boarded up with wood or metal shields, so daylight barely penetrated the cells. All the windows were fitted with opaque glass. The small openings in the window panes were closed and the air vents were plugged up; we barely had any fresh air. Our walks were shortened to fifteen minutes a day. You had to walk around in a circle with your head bent down and hands folded behind your back. This was not a walk but total abasement.

For some time I sat in a prison cell with Academician Serhii Yefremov, who was accused of organizing and heading the Union for the Liberation of Ukraine (SVU). Before and after we shared a cell, I would often meet him during our walks. In 1932 about thirty defendants in this case were brought to Yaroslavl Prison.

In Suzdal I was jailed in the old prison of the former Spaso-Yevfimievsky Monastery. This was a terrible prison: it was cold and damp, and had small, cramped cells and very low ceilings. The



*A funeral in Siberia. Funerals like this took place frequently, as people died of hunger, cold, and abuse.*

daily walks took place in an area measuring four-by-four meters. My cell, no. 2, held three other prisoners: a German named Reinhold Kurz from the Ukrainian town of Kostiantyniv, and two Russians. From this prison I was transferred to Vladimir Prison on the Kliazma River, which held many Ukrainian prisoners. After some time I was transferred together with a group of prisoners to the prison in Orel. My cell also had opaque glass, damp, mold-covered walls, and extremely heavy air. We complained to the prison warden and the doctor about the conditions and asked them to transfer us to another cell. Eventually they did, but the new cell had bare iron beds, i.e., no mattresses or covers. The cement floor was perpetually wet, as though someone had spilled water on it. Like fakirs, we had to sleep for many nights on these bare beds, i.e., iron rods. This was an added torment because the iron rods dug into our bodies. Finally, after much pleading, we were given mattresses, but they were so filthy and

encrusted with dried blood that it was horrible for the prisoners to lie on them.

The prison regime eased somewhat only in September 1939, after the end of “Yezhovshchina.” We were no longer obliged to place our hands behind our backs during walks or walk with our heads bent down. The day Beria, the new head executioner, came to power we received better food, the likes of which we had not seen for several years.

One night in November 1939, at around midnight, I was transported under escort to the Unzha forced labor camp. Forestry work was carried out in the 3<sup>rd</sup> sector of this concentration camp. This sector always had between 4,000 and 5,000 prisoners. The Unzha camp contained a total of 65,000 prisoners. To this day it is horrifying for me to recall how people perished from hunger, cold, and the labor that was beyond the prisoners’ strength.

**M. Tatus**

## **MASS DEATHS OF DEPORTEES IN VOLOGDA**

I am a Ukrainian peasant. I remember from my childhood that from time to time the Bolsheviks would terrorize my father whom they considered a kurkul. The persecution of our family by the communists ended in tragedy, because my father, mother, two brothers, and most of my relatives were murdered by in Soviet prisons, concentration camps, and exile. I was arrested in 1929 on suspicions of maintaining links with the renowned Ukrainian insurgent Ivan Klitka from the Poltava region. The GPU sentenced me to lifelong exile in Vologda-Kotlas raion in Russia’s Far North.

It happened this way. On 13 January 1929 armed local communists came for me. They arrested me and ordered my entire family to get dressed and take food supplies with them. Then we were brought to the village soviet, where we were locked up. Several families were already imprisoned there, including the village schoolteacher with his wife and eleven children, and a petty merchant and his family. The latter’s wife, who was bedridden with dropsy [edema], was brought there wrapped in a quilt. In two days she died.

Newly arrested people kept arriving. One rainy night we were moved to the desolate station of Yuzkovtsi, so that we would not be seen by

sympathetic villagers. People who had been arrested in all the villages of our raion were brought here. In a few days we were loaded onto a freight train consisting of fifty-one cars and headed for the Far North. This was the first of many trains. Each train car contained up to fifty-five people and their belongings. The windows were covered with barbed wire and the doors were locked. We were escorted by many armed guards. The train rarely stopped and no one was let off the train. We were given water only in Moscow. The train cars were filthy and people started getting sick. After four days we arrived in Vologda at around 1:00 a.m. We were ordered to disembark with our belongings and place them in a pile. The snow was two meters high.

Men between the ages of fourteen and fifty-five were ordered to get on the train again; they were to continue to Kotlas. Parents did not want to leave their children behind, and men did not want to be separated from their wives. Militia units and GPU troops summoned to the scene had to “work” for a long time before everyone was forced back on the train. By morning there were a few dead bodies lying in the snow, and wives and children were weeping over them. I managed to lose myself among the women and old people, and was able to stay with my family. Afterwards

freight trains continued to arrive from the Kuban, Ukraine, the Crimea, and the Don River region.

There were many churches in Vologda. Wagons mobilized from neighboring raions transported us to the various churches assigned as our housing. My family and I were brought to the church of Christ the Savior, which the local population dubbed the 'Church of the Savior in the Swamps.' The church was filled with six or seven tiers of sleeping boards made of thick planks, separated by narrow walkways. In a few days they brought our belongings.

Slowly we accustomed ourselves to our new surroundings. The commandant of our church dormitory was a local Komsomol member named Kopeikin. There were also several militia men, who guarded us and took us to the toilet in groups of ten to fifteen people. A kitchen was quickly organized, and once a day we received broth and twice a day, hot water. The broth was prepared from our own food that had been confiscated. Bread was delivered from the city, and 200 grams were issued to each person, with about 25-30 grams of sugar.

Barely two weeks passed before the prisoners' children, from infants to fourteen-year-olds, began dying. It was 40 degrees below zero and the ground was frozen to a depth of one meter. When only ten or twenty people a day were dying, burial pits were dug. But when 150-200 people a day started dying in the church prisons, their corpses were stacked at local cemeteries in piles of 200 bodies or more. Among the dead were increasingly more adults, particularly elderly people. Dozens of these stacks piled up that winter in Vologda.

By late April 1930 Vologda had a population of around 262,500. This figure was not only cited by the commandant and the militia, but could also be seen on lists for logs at wood storehouses. The churches and all sorts of large buildings in the city were packed with prisoners.

Spring was coming, and the frozen corpses began to thaw and soften. The risk of an epidemic alarmed the residents of Vologda. Most of the population consisted of workers from the paper and wood-processing plants. At first they did not believe that the Soviet government was implementing terror. Someone — probably the communists — spread a rumor throughout the city that we were volunteers heading for work in the Far North. Other communists said that we

were capitalists, saboteurs, landlords, bandits, etc.

But the longer we lived there, the clearer our identity became to the local population. The workers became upset when they realized that there were no criminals among us, that most of us were farmers. Although some of us were better off than others, we had tilled our land with our own hands. At meetings the workers began writing letters to various Soviet dignitaries in Moscow. A special delegation representing the workers of Vologda even journeyed to Moscow. In response to their petitions, Moscow issued the following instruction: 1) to return all the children to the places from where they had been taken; 2) to create commissions consisting of representatives of the Vologda workers and the GPU to verify who had been deported and for what reason. Several such commissions were formed.

But in order to prevent the prisoners from expressing themselves truthfully to the commissions, the commandants of our church prisons, assisted by the militia, searched the prisoners and their belongings, and confiscated documents that were never returned. Some prisoners managed to hide their documents and later showed them to the commissions. After the prisoners filled out questionnaires, answered questions, and had their documents verified, the commission divided the prisoners into three categories. The people in the first category were to be sent home, as people who had been unjustifiably deported. People in the second category were to be placed at various enterprises in the Vologda region. The third category was slated for work felling timber. This category was the smallest, but the fate of the people in this group was the worst. My family and I were assigned to the third category.

After the commission concluded its work, the GPU began removing children from their parents in preparation for sending them back south. Their parents objected to this and the children were forcibly removed. In our church some parents were beaten and others were injured. Two mothers went mad, and two hanged themselves. Some parents in the Church of Good Friday organized an armed resistance. Eight parents were killed, nineteen were wounded, and one child was crushed to death. One mother lost her sanity, and one father hanged himself. The siege of the church, organized by the GPU and the militia, lasted about ten days. The parents' resistance

was very strong and not all the children were seized. The children who were removed were sent back to their native land, but once they arrived, neither their former houses nor their confiscated property were returned to them. Some children died en route because they were being transported in unheated freight trains. Most

of the repatriated children became homeless, and without a roof over their heads or money they turned into underage beggars and petty criminals, who roamed the cities and villages. Then the government formed commissions for the struggle against underage criminals whom the authorities themselves had created.

P. Kryvobok

## BUILDING COMMUNISM WITH SLAVE LABOR

The destruction of people was carried out by various methods: genocide, execution, persecution, and terror. As former political prisoners incarcerated in Soviet prisons, special-purpose prisons, and concentration camps, it is our duty to inform the free world about everything that we witnessed and experienced.

The communist government was not capable of organizing a work force for its huge construction projects without forced labor. The task of mobilizing a cheap source of slave labor was assigned to the GPU-NKVD, and later to the MGB-MVD. The plan called for calculating the number of engineers, locksmiths, diggers, concrete pourers, etc. required for construction for the next year. On the basis of these calculations, “allotments” were assigned to region and raion levels of the GPU-NKVD: how many people in which occupations they must capture and how many of these slaves must be sent to which construction site.

On the basis of materials accumulated by the GPU-NKVD’s surveillance of all the empire’s subjects, these organs would conduct a “purge” of various sectors of the national economy. For example, one year the GPU-NKVD conducted a purge of industry; another year, agriculture. Other purges were carried out in the fields of culture and education, etc.

People seized at home during the night or arrested on the street would be “investigated” by the Soviet security organs. The fate of each prisoner was predetermined, and as a rule the sentence — how many years in a concentration camp he was to be given — was determined ahead of time. The prisoner only had to go through the “formality” of being charged under the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR (or the RSFSR, etc.). This meant that the prisoner would have to write a “sincere admission” in which he

accused himself of some political crime or to sign the interrogation report that had been drawn up beforehand. In order to achieve this “formality” the GPU-NKVD functionaries used all permissible means: deception, blackmail, provocation, mendacious denunciations of other prisoners, threats, cajolery, beatings, starvation, and sleep deprivation, known as “comrade Balitsky’s conveyer,” terrorizing the prisoner with death row, and the use of medical methods.

During my seven-month imprisonment in an NKVD pretrial prison in 1933-34, I realized, as did all my fellow prisoners, that the institution that had captured us like Negro slaves seized in eighteenth-century central Africa was nothing more than an office for recruiting a cheap labor force. This is what we unanimously called the huge five-storey GPU investigation building in which the work of processing white-skinned slaves continued day and night without pause. After the so-called “investigation” was concluded, a GPU troika sentenced me to five years in remote corrective labor camps, where people did not experience any sort of correction but only physical and spiritual crippling. It was a rare individual who could last ten years of forced labor in a Soviet concentration camp without dying prematurely or becoming an invalid at a young age.

Transported under escort in freight trains packed with prisoners, I traveled non-stop for twenty-four days in conditions that would have been unfit for cattle. By the time we reached the GPU Baikal-Amur camp, we were half-dead and could barely move. I ended up in the 2<sup>nd</sup> sector of BAMlag, at Urulga station of the Trans-Baikal Railway.

In 1933-1937 BAMlag comprised twenty-six sectors stretching from Karymsk station to Nikolsko-Ussuriisk, a distance of 3,500

kilometers along the Trans-Baikal and Amur Railways. The 1<sup>st</sup> sector had just begun to build another railway line through the taiga from Taishet station to Komsomolsk on the Amur River. In those years the population of this colossal Soviet labor camp reached 350,000-400,000.

Our sector, which covered a distance of more than 300 kilometers, contained between 25,000 and 27,000 prisoners split up into 50-70 phalanxes, or work groups. This was one of the largest sectors in BAMlag. All sectors were engaged in the speedy construction of other routes of the Trans-Baikal and Amur Railways.

Without a doubt, the work in BAMlag, as in all other Soviet labor camps, was the cheapest in the world. Each prisoner received a basic ration of bread: 800 grams for completing the work quota, and only 300 grams if a prisoner did not work. This was supposed to sustain prisoners forced to build earthworks, lay railway tracks, build concrete structures and houses, fell timber, and smash rocks. Prisoners who received less bread became more quickly exhausted from the bitter Siberian cold and heavy work, and were soon unfit for work. Such invalids, condemned by starvation to a premature death, were sent to separate phalanxes for the feeble, who were called "goners." There they quickly died. Their rag-covered corpses were thrown into huge pits, covered with chloride of lime and buried, and their names were struck from the catalogue of prisoners. The mass killing of people was regarded simply as an inevitable expenditure of building materials: cement, boards, or the like.

In order to accelerate construction, the system of Stakhanovites and shockworkers was introduced in 1935. A prisoner who completed no less than 130 percent of the work quota was considered a shockworker, while those who completed a double work quota were called Stakhanovites. Such workers were issued a proportionally larger bread ration and the balanda was of better quality.

The pace of construction did in fact increase. Prisoners were keen on being released quicker from their infernal imprisonment because larger completed work quotas reduced the number of days in their sentence. However, if a prisoner was needed on the construction, very often right before his early release all his extra days would be cancelled because of some transgression, usually fictitious.

The prisoners were paid a pitiful wage amounting to a maximum of four rubles and a few kopecks for twenty-nine work days (one day off). Prisoners used this much needed pocket money to buy necessities, like soap, thread, tobacco, or other items.

Technical engineering personnel earned up to forty rubles a month. An acquaintance of mine, a highly educated geodesist, was the head of a topographic unit with seventy topographers working under him. He earned seventy rubles a month. In freedom he would have earned a minimum of 900 rubles, plus half of that for working in a remote area, as well as a free heated apartment. It is clear that the system of forced labor in Soviet concentration camps, whose prison population in the 1930s stood at fifteen million people, was extremely convenient for the Moscow leadership.

In BAMlag I built earthworks without machines. The work was done entirely by hand with the aid of picks or crowbars, shovels, and wheelbarrows. The work quota was so high that a normal ten-hour day could only be completed in eleven to fourteen hours.

In 1935 I worked on building a riprap [a loose assemblage of broken stones erected in water or on soft ground as a foundation] for an embankment in front of the bridge spanning the Urulga River. We rose at 5:00 a.m. and had a cup of boiling water and some black bread for breakfast. It took an hour to walk to the work site; it was 25 degrees below. At first, we had to prepare the work site. This required using a pick or crowbar to smash a half-meter-thick crust of ice covering a layer of sand in the sandpit. Once the frozen crust was removed, the sand would steam in the frosty air. You had to quickly shovel this sand into the wheelbarrow and bring it along a mason's runway of boards a distance of 50-100 meters.

We usually worked in groups of three. Two would prepare the sand and shovel it onto the wheelbarrow and the third — the strongest — would take away the full wheelbarrow. The work was non-stop from 7:00 a.m. until noon. All the workers would sweat, despite the freezing cold, and worked without jackets — just in their shirts.

At noon there was a break for lunch. A huge cauldron of balanda was served with bread right there on the sand dunes. Lunch was followed by five more hours of backbreaking work until the

work quota was completed. A completed work quota was two to eight cubic meters of excavated stratum, depending on its hardness: from sand to rocks.

Lighter (but rare) work involved men working with horses. When the horses rested, so did the men. Horses were better taken care of than humans, because horses cost money, whereas the Soviet government got its prisoners for free.

One time I had to do work that would have killed a horse. This was in the summer of 1936, during the switching of a railway crosspiece on the double-track section of Ust-Natsigunsk. After prior coordination with the directorate of the

Trans-Baikal Railway in Chita to complete this work, all movement on this section of the railway halted for five hours. The switch had to be done at high speed and then restored before the railway line went back into operation. We worked non-stop without food for twenty-one hours, and then walked back to our camp, a distance of twelve kilometers. When I lay down on my bed, I was in such a state that I could not eat anything or fall asleep for two hours, until I calmed down from the excessive exertions. Horses die from such an insane work pace, but some people occasionally survived.

**Prof. V. Dubrovsky**

## IN THE SIBERIAN CONCENTRATION CAMPS

In 1934 I was imprisoned in two labor camps after a Moscow-based NKVD troika sentenced me in absentia to three years' hard labor, under article 58, points 10 and 11 (counterrevolutionary agitation and membership in a counterrevolutionary organization).

I was transported to Western Siberia, to the city of Mariinsk, the location of the NKVD camp administration of the Western Siberian krai. From there the central clearing house prison dispatched prisoners to various Siberian labor camps. This was a huge, gloomy building. The prison was always packed beyond capacity, and newly arrived prisoners were placed in the cold and filthy corridors. After two weeks I was placed in a construction unit of 300 political prisoners, who were sent seven kilometers outside of Mariinsk. The prisoners were from various walks of life: professors, high school teachers, lecturers at specialized schools, engineers, doctors, and economists. There were a few Germans in this unit, one of whom was a former member of the Comintern.

The unit was divided into brigades of twenty to twenty-five people. The next day we were issued our tools: crowbars, picks, shovels, axes, saws, and wheelbarrows, and we began building roads and drainage canals, and digging foundation pits for a new brick factory.

The daily work quota for every prisoner consisted of ten hours of work during which he had to dig six cubic meters of light soil, five cubic

meters of medium soil, and four meters of heavy soil, which had to be moved a distance of eighty to a hundred meters from the digging site. Thus, each brigade had to dig and remove 100-150 cubic meters of soil, depending on the type of soil. When the quota was fulfilled, each prisoner received 600 grams of bread, hot water, and sometimes 10 grams of sugar for breakfast, and balanda for lunch and supper.

After two months of this heavy work and bad food, I became weak. One day while I was working and sweating, a cold rain began to fall. I caught a cold, which turned into muscular rheumatism. This saved my life, as I was transferred to an agricultural labor camp. The prisoners viewed such camps as "resorts" because it was possible to obtain better food. Prisoners could surreptitiously eat a carrot, beet, or cabbage leaves, and pilfer a few potatoes, although stealing was severely punished.

The Arliuk labor camp, located on the Novosibirsk-Kuznetsk railway line some 200 kilometers from the city of Novosibirsk, housed exclusively prisoners: agronomists, doctors, veterinarians, zoo technicians, engineers, peasants, and workers. The prisoners were guarded by other prisoners, who were called "socially close to the Soviet government," i.e., criminals sentenced for robbery, murder, fraud, etc.

The majority (95 percent) of the prisoners in this camp were non-Russians: Ukrainians,



Caucasians, and Central Asians. The majority consisted of Ukrainians, 75 percent of whom were peasants who had refused to join collective farms or who had picked fallen spikelets of grain during the famine of 1932-1933 in Ukraine. For such crimes they were sentenced to between five and ten years in remote labor camps.

The Arliuk agricultural concentration camp was a new forced labor camp created at the height of Moscow's reign of terror against the peasantry during forced collectivization. The "pioneers" of this camp had a particularly difficult time because when they were first brought here, it was a wasteland. They had to live in tents in temperatures that dipped to 57 degrees below zero. The first structures to be built here were piggeries, cow stables, and other buildings. Barracks for prisoners were built later.

Many prisoners, particularly those from the Caucasus and Turkestan, who were not

accustomed to the Siberian cold, died of cold and hunger. I had to live in a tent for one year, but I survived. Since then I have always hated the Soviet system.

The concentration camp produced butter and bacon for export. The work quotas were very high, so it was no easy task to earn one's bread ration. In this camp prisoners' sentences were often prolonged for reasons that had nothing to do with the prisoners: e.g., low weight gain of piglets and calves, or cows' reduced milk production, or an epidemic resulting in animal deaths. The camp administration regarded all these agricultural shortcomings as evidence of wrecking, and the NKVD troika would issue additional sentences to prisoners. Thus, all the prisoners in this camp lived in a constant state of nerves, never knowing whether they would be released after completing their sentence.

**Ya. Vakulenko**

## **“MASTER OF HIS VAST NATIVE LAND”**

(From a Soviet Russian song)

In the years 1932-1933 I did not stay in any place for long. In early 1932 I was working on the construction of a textile industrial complex in the city of Barnaul in the Altai region of Siberia. Nearly half of the workers were Ukrainians from Ukraine, the Kuban, and Western Siberia. From my observations and conversations I learned that in the Altai krai, and particularly in the Barabinsk steppe (Slavgorod, Pavlodar, and Tatarska) where the population consisted mostly of ethnic Ukrainians who had settled here in the 1900s, communist tysiachnyks had rampaged as savagely here as in Ukraine.

Native Siberians, who spoke Russian, had a hostile attitude to the subjects of the "socialist rearrangement of villages." The situation of the Kirghiz people was difficult: you could see them everywhere, exhausted and starving. In Barnaul, besides the food obtained with ration cards issued to workers, you could not buy anything.

In May 1932 I had to leave Barnaul. After great difficulties obtaining a ticket, I left Novosibirsk and ended up at one of the construction sites in the city of Borisoglebsk, Voronezh region, where I lived for some time.

In early 1933, when the famine was raging in Ukraine, my sister came to visit me twice. The first time I took her to the market and bought her about twenty kilograms of rye flour and a sack of potatoes. She put the flour into her suitcases, but we sewed up the sack of potatoes, addressed it, and put it in the freight compartment. My sister never received it. After submitting about ten complaints, she was finally notified that the goods had been confiscated at the Povorino railway station. The second time, the railway GPU at the Kupianske railway station confiscated her flour and other food products.

My conclusion: during the famine in Ukraine in 1933 the Soviet authorities were confiscating food products on the Russian-Ukrainian border in order to ensure the success of the planned famine.

In early April 1933 I moved to the city of Bezhytsi, later renamed Ordzhonikidzograd, in Russia's Briansk region. I worked on the construction of a steel smelting plant. The building site was full of Ukrainians. Bread was issued with ration cards. There was no bread at the market, but there were potatoes and other things — as much as you wanted. My sister visited me here too, but there were heavily armed



*The construction of the White Sea canal by slave labor, which claimed the lives of 100,000 prisoners, 70 percent of whom were Ukrainians.*

troops of the railway GPU on the Ukrainian side of the border — at Zernove and Khutir-Mykhailivsky — who were not letting starving peasants leave Ukraine or letting in food from Russia.

In 1934 fate led me to the desolate raion of Poretskoe in Gorky region, Russia. Poretskoe is located far from the railway, and when I was walking in that direction, I saw churches with crosses in the villages. It was a Sunday and suddenly I heard church bells ringing. When I asked for an explanation, I was told that at one time Komsomol activists wanted to remove the bells, but the people did not let them.

There were many differences that instantly struck me here: the Russian *izby* [peasant homes] were fenced, and various outbuildings stood intact. The population had joined the collective farms, although without any particular enthusiasm. Those who refused remained “independent farmers.” From the very beginning the collective farms issued between two and three kilograms of grain per workday. During the “liquidation of kulaks as a class,” land and cattle were confiscated from the wealthiest peasants. No deportations of families took place. Only a couple of people were arrested, those “who had agitated

against the authorities.” None of the terror that I witnessed in Ukraine had taken place here. People knew about the tysiachnyk apparatus only from newspapers.

The psychology, customs, and daily lives of the Russian peasants differed significantly from the Ukrainian peasants. Owing to the “communal” system of land ownership, which was widespread in Russia, it was easier for the Russian peasants to reconcile themselves to this unnatural type of collective farming, all the more so as the communist authorities in the Russian republic applied a completely different policy of grain delivery plans with respect to their own nationals and used different methods.

The Kremlin clique headed by Stalin had no accounts to settle with the population of the central Russian lands. This is a very significant fact. It was in ethnographic Russia that Bolshevism found the soil onto which it was instantly grafted, and where from the outset it found its main support in the further struggle against the “separatist districts.” During the Civil War there were Chinese, Latvians, and even Ukrainians in the Red Guard and the Red Army, but these were only drops in the Russian sea.

**M. Lomaka**

# THE TRANSPORTATION OF CONVICTS

*Etap* [transport of convicts under escort] — this word flies like a bolt of lightning through the prison, noisily penetrating the meter-thick walls of former tsarist solitary confinement cells. For the prisoners it spells a breath of freedom. The prison starts to hum.

“He who enters, do not be sad; he who leaves, do not be glad.” This slogan is written by prisoners on the walls of each cell in the DPS [preliminary detention prison] and the GPU dungeons. Nevertheless, those who enter are sad, while those who leave are glad. They are even happy when they leave on a transport.

A transport represents the end of uncertainty, because whoever is slated for transport will probably not be taken to the GPU dungeon. Before being transported, a prisoner does not know what will happen to him. Sometimes a prisoner is taken to the prison office and shown a blank piece of paper.

“Sign this paper stating that your investigation has been completed. From today your case will be transferred to a GPU collegium (or troika).”

This is the beginning of the worst phase for prisoners. After their cases have been transferred to the GPU troika, few prisoners remain calm. The tensest moments are the hours from ten in the evening to midnight, when prisoners are led to their execution. Every time keys clank the prisoner thinks they’re coming for him. This situation can last for months.

Therefore, being designated for transport, even though this may mean a ten-year sentence, is a long-awaited joy. The prisoner can breathe a sigh of relief, because those whose cases have been transferred to the GPU collegium or troika face one of two paths: they are either brought by a black Maria to the GPU dungeon to be shot or transported to the place of forced labor.

On 1 February 1932 the latest transport of prisoners left the Luhansk DPZ. Transports departed from here every month. Each transport consisted of 1,500- 2,000 prisoners. Smaller, special, transports of prisoners sentenced up to three years left more often and were sent to various GPU labor colonies. The collegium and troika did not hand down a sentence of less than three years, even in those cases where the Criminal Code designated “from six months.”

Commanders of the guard run down the prison corridors, bringing prisoners in groups to the main courtyard, where the administration lines them up in ranks, checks their names against lists, searches their belongings, and dumps their clothing and dried biscuits into the muddy, trampled snow.

There are hundreds and hundreds of people in the courtyard — people and sacks. This was just one district, and there were forty districts in Ukraine. But the Luhansk DPZ was nothing compared to the prisons of Kyiv, Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Artemivsk, Odesa, and Vinnytsia!

Prisoners from the third floor — thieves and individuals with no fixed address or employment — are immediately brought to the prison bathhouse: they are half-naked and barefoot. In the bathhouse they are given the castoff rags of prisoners who went “irrevocably to the GPU,” i.e., shot.

There is another inspection. Some prisoners are told the article under which they were charged and their sentence: the ones whose files from the GPU were open when they arrived at the prison. Prisoners whose files from the GPU were sealed when they arrived at the prison will receive their sentences at their ultimate destination. There are many reasons why some files are sealed: so that a prisoner does not commit suicide; does not inform his family about his fate; he can be removed surreptitiously from the transport at some desolate railway station, where a new investigation will begin, or simply brought to the GPU dungeon. Thus, all traces of the prisoner are eliminated.

When the family of a disappeared prisoner turns to the GPU, this institution will claim that he was sent from the DPZ, while the prison administration will state that he was transported. The prosecutor responsible for supervising the GPU does not respond or replies that the family must ask the local GPU for an explanation.

From a smaller courtyard a convoy of GPU troops enters. They have orders to shoot any prisoner who strays from the ranks. A column leaves the prison. There is not a soul around, only militia men directing foot traffic onto side streets, chasing away women, children, and old men, who have come to say goodbye to a son, grandson, parent, husband, or brother.

Flanking the column of prisoners are rows of riflemen of the Internal Guard for the Protection of the Republic (VOKhR), while militia men patrol the sidewalks.

It is deserted at the Luhansk railway station. A single freight train is standing on auxiliary tracks, while smaller steam locomotives have arrived at the semaphores. There are no conductors on the railway platform, just a watchful official of the railway GPU, pacing up and down.

The column is lined up alongside the freight train. Who are these stony-faced people with glassy eyes standing next to the empty, cold cargo trains? One group consists of the Luhansk land administration. Among them is a former tsarist prisoner, a senior agronomist named Petro Mykhailiv, who is surrounded by agronomists and land surveyors. For having worked to develop agriculture in the Luhansk region they all received ten-year sentences, and now they are heading for Soviet agricultural labor camps in Kazakhstan and Siberia.

Scattered here and there among the prisoners are elderly priests, deacons, and church wardens. These are the “disorganizers of the financial system of the USSR,” because a few karbovantsi were found in their churches. They have been sentenced to five or eight years. Those found with fifty karbovantsi, like the barber at the Alchevsk railway station, were shot.

Most of the prisoners are peasants — not kurkuls but subkurkuls. There are quite a few “hereditary” workers from the All-Union Stokehold. One of them is standing next to me. As a worker of the former Hartmann carriage building works, in 1918 he voluntarily climbed aboard a train on which a red flag fluttered, bearing the slogan, “All power to the soviets!” and then set out to fight under Voroshilov’s command. He fought at Stalingrad and captured Rostov and Bataisk. In those days he was given a sendoff by workers from Luhansk, and girls sewed red ribbons on them. In 1930 he was seen off only by the party, when he was heading for the reconstruction of agriculture as a 25-tysiachnyk, even though he was not a party member, only an experienced locksmith.

Already at this time they knew in Luhansk that Ukrainian villages were greeting these “reconstructors” with sawed-off shotguns. In a village in the Kharkiv region, where the locksmith was dispatched to carry out this reconstruction, he ran into an old friend from the Hartmann

works, who had served with him in Voroshilov’s regiment. After the revolution he did not return to his factory but settled in a village, because land was being distributed.

The locksmith delayed the dekulakization of this former worker and soldier of the revolution, and went to see the secretary of the raion party committee about “instruction.” After he returned, he was forced to dekulakize this former worker. Shortly afterwards, the raion party committee sent the locksmith-turned-25-tysiachnyk to a factory in Luhansk. Two weeks later he was summoned to the building that stands next to Lenin Square. Now he is being transported — where and for how long, he doesn’t know. He leaves behind his wife, two children, and his elderly mother.

The head of the convoy reads out the surnames of prisoners, and the escorts lead groups of forty prisoners into each train car. As the doors slammed shut after the last group of prisoners, the sound of thousands of weeping and shouting prisoners is heard as the freight train departs.

## **TRANSPORTED PRISONERS REACH THE TEMLAG OGPU**

The Temnikov concentration camp of the OGPU was organized in the second half of the 1920s. Its main purpose, as the camp administration announced on a daily basis, was to “supply fuel to the proletariat of the city of Moscow.” In order to carry out this “honorable task,” the Temlag administration had the forests of Mordovia at their disposal. By 1932 there were approximately twenty large prison villages, or forced labor camp sub-sectors, in those forests. A minimum of 2,000-3,000 prisoners were held in each sub-sector. Some sub-sectors, e.g., the 4<sup>th</sup>, had over 8,000 prisoners. Every day shipments of logs and building material left these sub-sectors for the Potma railway station. This small station was connected to the railway track belonging to the Temlag OGPU. Potma was the gateway to Temlag, through which entered hundreds of thousands of prisoners.

## **THE GPU SHOWS OFF ITS PRISONERS**

After seven days our Luhansk transport stopped for the first time in front of the main

building of the railway station.

The commandant of the guards opened the doors of the train car, and two people dressed in jackets brought us boiling water in pails. This was the first time in a week that we had something hot to drink. The escorts were no longer standing near the open doors but walking on the platform. They were pleased: their mission was completed. The transport was delivered in full, with the exception of one corpse removed en route. This

was a half-starved prisoner (“homeless”), who ate the stearine candles used to illuminate the cars and never made it to Potma.

The men in jackets were dressed no worse than ordinary “free” workers under the Soviets. Their faces looked well nourished. But only an experienced person would have noted the color of their clothing and the absence of guards. These were prisoners with short sentences. Life was very different in the forests hidden from view,



*A priest illegally baptizes a child in exile. Baptisms took place secretly, as they carried the threat of an additional sentence.*

where the railway belonged to the GPU and its stations were individual forced labor camp sub-sectors.

The convoy quickly shut the doors, and the train moved out. At one of the next stops we were led outside. This was the 13<sup>th</sup> forced labor camp sub-sector. The large rectangular square, cleared of trees, was surrounded by a high barbed wire fence. Towers with armed guards stood in every corner. Armed riflemen with dogs led the prisoners through the entry point to a large barrack with a sign saying “Club.”

### **THE FIRST PARAGRAPH OF THE LABOR CAMP CONSTITUTION**

Inside the “club” were tables piled with papers. At one table was a Chekist, who was opening files and reading a list of information to each prisoner: where he was tried, under which article, the length of his sentence, and his case number. This was news to many prisoners, even though months ago the OGPU collegium or troika had handed down a sentence in absentia.

A doctor designated the category of work capability for each prisoner and listed observable diseases on a document. I got category two,

because after a stint in the GPU dungeons I was not strong.

Next the orderly of the sub-sector brought the prisoners to a dark barrack, where they were told to find a place. From neighboring sleeping boards hands stretched out to grab the sacks of the new arrivals and hand them to someone standing outside the window. This was why the barrack was dark; the orderly would get his cut of the prisoners' belongings. The camp administrator arrived and read out the first paragraph of the prison camp constitution: it was forbidden to leave the barrack at night dressed in underwear. The guards had orders to shoot on sight anyone caught outside in his underwear, because this was interpreted as an "attempt to escape." This order was valid during the winter, when there was snow outside. Then the administrator said that for the time being no food would be issued because our transport had not been recorded yet. It was also forbidden to light the stove because the day orderly responsible for the fire had not been designated.

The thirsty and frozen prisoners threw themselves at the hot water, only to find that it was slops. This was the usual sour groundwater in Temnikov to which the prisoners had to accustom themselves.

## THE WORKDAY

At 5:00 a.m. the camp railway tie was banged, giving the wake-up signal. After a spoonful of gruel, we were sorted into groups by the brigade leader. Those with better footwear formed groups of thirty-two men. Before the division of labor the criminals hid their footwear and were now sitting barefoot in the barrack, claiming that "someone had stolen their shoes during the night."

The poorly shod prisoners could not endure the cold. After a while we were led back to the barracks. When it was daylight, we were brought to the base to load logs. This was no easy task for prisoners weakened by months in prison and the transport, because the loading was done at a very fast pace. Five prisoners had to load two 20-ton train cars in three hours.

Whoever did not complete the work quota was brought to the forest to do harder work. Loading was every prisoner's dream because it was considered light work.

In the evening we were ordered to go to the bathhouse with our belongings. Our heads were shaved and we were issued labor camp clothing.

The next day we were brought to the forest. After the first ten minutes we were ordered to remove our jackets, which could be worn only for half an hour during the lunch break. This order was designed to ensure a fast work pace, so that the jacketless prisoners would work non-stop without freezing to death. When it was dark, an inspection was made of our stacks of logs. If the work quota was not completed, we had to work longer. Then we walked for an hour back to the camp.

The head of the labor camp sub-sector did not take into consideration the fact that the prisoners were exhausted from months in prison; that almost all of them had never held a saw in their life, and didn't know anything about cutting down trees. Each prisoner had to produce a daily quota of seven cubic meters of logs.

First you had to dig the snow out from under the tree, because it was forbidden to chop it down higher than twenty centimeters from the ground, strip the bark, pile the branches, saw the wood into logs measuring seventy-five centimeters, split, and stack them.

All this was demanded of people who slept no more than six hours on bare boards, who ate one kilogram of waterlogged bread a day, two spoons of gruel, and half a liter of balanda, i.e., water boiled with a rotten fish or veins from a horse that had been shot after breaking a leg.

That evening eight prisoners, who had failed to complete the work quota, were sent to the punishment cell after supper.

## UPRIGHT COFFIN

The punishment cell of the 13<sup>th</sup> forced labor camp sub-sector had a special construction unlike any I had seen until now. It had no grates because there were no windows. The walls were made of thin boards roughly nailed together. There was no guard next to the punishment cell. When prisoners were brought to the cell, they were warned that the guard on the tower would shoot without warning if he noticed anything suspicious, e.g., a prisoner accidentally bumping the cell wall. Who could prove that nothing suspicious had been going on? The prisoner would get a bullet, and the rifleman in the tower would get a reward.

There were two such cells in the 13<sup>th</sup> sub-sector. Each could fit four men. The floor of the cell measured one square meter. In the center stood a wide, round iron stove. When the orderly would push a fourth prisoner, who was stout, into the punishment cell, it seemed as though the walls would burst, because each of the four men would have put on every bit of clothing he owned.

### **BEHIND A DOUBLE ROW OF BARBED WIRE**

The women's barracks were in a separate area: it was a concentration camp within a concentration camp. This block was encircled by a double row of barbed wire, and besides the women prisoners, only the administration had access to this area. The administration punished all violations of this ban with a stint in the punishment cell, and the guards on the tower, with a bullet. There were several hundred women in other forced labor camp sub-sectors with auxiliary workshops, including tailor shops. There were no more than 100 women in the 13<sup>th</sup> forced labor camp sub-sector. Women also worked on repairing the railway and clearing the snow. When there were no snowfalls, they stripped bark from trees. They left for the worksites after the men, and after the workday the convoy brought them immediately to the camp.

The greatest trial for the women was that, unlike the segregation of criminals from other types of prisoners in the men's barracks, the women's barracks were mixed, and prostitutes and thieves ruled there as they wanted. The female criminals flirted aggressively with the "administrators" who had access to this block. For a respectable woman or girl, life in the women's barracks was much worse than for men in their barracks.

### **VETERAN PRISONERS RECOUNT THEIR EXPERIENCES**

When we rejoiced that the days were getting longer and the sun was stronger, the old camp inmates shook their heads sadly. They said that the real torments start once the snow begins to thaw. Then you had to work in water all the time,

shod in the worst type of footwear, usually bast shoes. In spring and summer the workday lasted until 11:00 p.m. The exhausted prisoners would develop night blindness. Brigades of prisoners returned from work like blind men, one with better vision leading the unseeing. The convoy of guards railed at these weak people and let the dogs loose on stragglers.

There were also clouds of mosquitoes. But the prisoners complained most about the water. In the winter you could at least heat up some snow, but in the summer the oily, sour liquid that passed for water here was disgusting to drink. The torment of thirst was worse than hunger.

Escape was out of the question, because in addition to convoys of guards, there were GPU soldiers with dogs. Prisoners savaged by dogs were frequently brought back to the sub-sector and displayed to the rest of the prisoners. The locals instantly recognized a Mordovian prisoner. The only salvation was ending up in another transport headed for a camp where conditions were easier. Life in the 13<sup>th</sup> sub-sector was endurable, but in a neighboring camp a certain Baraban shot a prisoner for failing to fulfill the daily work quota. He left his body lying on the ground for several days as a warning to the other prisoners.

### **FIRST CATEGORY**

One evening in early April the guards ordered us to line up: an unprecedented dream! Everyone was waiting for something extraordinary. We were marched into the club, where the camp head handed our files to the camp doctor. Prisoners who replied "healthy" to his question about their state of health were marked according to their old category (two or three). These were sent back to the barracks, and tomorrow would be sent to the forest.

At noon, prisoners designated to the first category, including me, were loaded onto a non-stop train. On the fifth day we arrived at the Zvanka train station. This was the gateway to the northern concentration camps, the border between the territories of the Soviet government and the "Solovets" government.

**Ivan Mykhailovich**

# AFTER THE VICTORY MARCH — TO A CONCENTRATION CAMP

I am a Ukrainian peasant from Western Siberia. In 1929 I was mobilized to the 1<sup>st</sup> Siberian Cavalry Corps and sent to fight against Japan in the Far East. There I took part in a campaign on Harbin and Mukden.

After peace was restored with Japan, our corps was transferred for demobilization to the city of Omsk. But in March 1930 a special GPU troika arrested all Ukrainians who were members of the 1<sup>st</sup> Siberian Cavalry Corps on charges of treason and anti-Soviet agitation and sent them to the GPU's Far-Eastern concentration camps.

This was imprisonment "without the right of correspondence." The Soviet administration informed my wife that I was killed during the war and even issued her financial assistance. The Soviet government did not want people opposed to its rule to tell their families and friends about what we had seen in Manchuria on this side of the Iron Curtain.

That was when I first escaped. But GPU agents captured me in Samara and sent me by transport to the concentration camps in the Nikolsko-Ussuriisk krai, where prisoners worked felling timber. I had no experience sawing wood, and the next day, for failing to complete the work quota, I received only 350 grams of bread instead of 800, and balanda. It seemed that I was doomed to gradual exhaustion and death by starvation.

Soon an order came to transport all political prisoners "without the right of correspondence" to more remote, isolated concentration camps. A group of political prisoners, including me, was driven in hermetically sealed black Marias to a waiting steamboat and locked in the hold, where we remained for the entire journey. We were brought to the city of Magadan, near Nogaev Bay. When we were being brought ashore, most of the prisoners were so feeble that, as soon as they got a whiff of fresh air, they fainted. They were driven to the camp half-dead.

Our new concentration camp in Magadan was an empty square on the shores of the Sea of Okhotsk. Towers with armed guards were in place, but there were no barracks. The prisoners lay right on the ground under the open sky in the cold, damp, and fog. Here I witnessed the full

gamut of horrors, including the deaths of many prisoners as a result of the inhumane conditions.

After a while I was taken to work as a stoker and locksmith on a Soviet fishing boat. At first I received six hours of training a day and six hours of practical work. When navigation was opened, I began working on this steamboat. The work was difficult and non-stop. I worked in the stokehole for six hours, and rested for six hours, on and off. We were not allowed to leave our living compartments, and I was escorted by NKVD soldiers from the stokehole to the crew's quarters. I suffered here without a break until 1937.

That year some prisoners and I were transported a few hundred kilometers further north, past the Polar Circle, near the estuary of the Kolyma River. A new period of torment began for us prisoners, dubbed "trans-polar Cossacks," who were digging for gold for the Soviet government. I lived in this concentration camp in Kolyma, whose prison population stayed at a constant 10,000, from 1937 until late 1940. Here the work was more difficult and more horrific than in any other concentration camp. During a workday lasting between twelve and fourteen hours each prisoner had to shovel ten cubic meters of gold-bearing soil in a quarry under permafrost and with a wheelbarrow carry this ore a distance of 200-250 meters. The work continued all year round, with few days of rest. For a completed work quota prisoners received 1,000 grams of clayey bread, often made exclusively out of beans. A kilogram of this bread was very little. Balanda and 100 grams of boiled, usually rotten, fish were also issued.

As a result of the terrible exhaustion and malnutrition, prisoners died like flies: out of the 10,000 prisoners who were brought here in 1937, only 500 were left by 1940. The rest died of hunger, cold, and the hard labor. They were quickly replaced by new prisoners. This concentration camp was exclusively for political prisoners without the right to correspond.

I escaped from this concentration camp in October 1940. After an eight-month trek through the tundra and taiga I reached an inhabited area, where I hid illegally until the war began in 1941. Then I broke through the Iron Curtain and reached the West.

**A. Fedoriv**





*A funeral in exile. This is a large funeral in comparison with others.*

## I STILL DREAM ABOUT THE MORDOVIAN CAMPS

Much can be written about the strict-regime Mordovian labor camps, because there were thirty-six of them. Everyone had been sentenced to ten, fifteen, and twenty-five years. Life in these strict-regime camps was very harsh. Many prisoners could not endure the conditions and died. Our camp, No. 1, housed 2,000 women of various nationalities. But Ukrainian women comprised most of the prisoners.

The camp was surrounded by three rows of barbed wire. Every ten meters there was a guard tower on which stood armed guards day and night. It was almost impossible to escape from the camp.

The regime was strict: everyone rose at 6:00 a.m. and went to the eating hall for breakfast. They fed us horribly. For breakfast we had porridge made of oats or barely, or millet-type gruel. The food often contained worms. We were also given tea and 200 grams of black, under-baked bread. Lunch consisted of two courses: cabbage borsch in which fish eyes floated. It smelled so bad that once you had a whiff, you didn't want to eat anything. Sometimes there were unpeeled boiled potatoes. The supper was similar to breakfast.

We worked from 7:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m. at a munitions plant. We were often



*(1) Standing, at right: Maria Chervinska-Matsiv (Lviv). (2) Standing, second from right: Natalia Shukhevych, the wife of UPA commander in chief Roman Shukhevych-Taras Chuprynka (Lviv). (3) Standing, third from right: Olia Sorohub, a priest's wife (Komarno). (4) Standing at the back: Hania Koniushko, Gen. Roman Shukhevych's secretary. (5) Standing, in checkered blouse: Natalia Khrobak, Hania Koniushko's sister (Pikulychi, near Peremyshl). (6) Sitting, at left: Hanna Kohut, a composer (Kosiv). (7) Standing, second from left: Stefka Soltys, a schoolteacher (Sudova Vyshnia). (8) Standing, far left: Maria Bordio (Lviv). (9) Foreground, sitting: a Basilian nun.*

brought to the forest to cut timber. The column marched to the forest with an armed escort and dogs. When we returned to the camp, we were kept for a long time in the square, where they counted us several times to see if anyone had escaped. We had to stand there and wait until the guards were satisfied that all the prisoners had returned.

Our wood barracks were very primitive, with double beds slapped together from boards. They were so close together that you could barely walk between them.

An amnesty was announced after Stalin's death, but not everyone was entitled to the amnesty. Some prisoners were not pardoned and remained in the camp. Many never returned.

It is terrible to remember those days.

The photograph above was taken in a camp in Mordovia in 1954, after Stalin's death. By then we were allowed to write one letter home a year.

**Maria Chervinska-Matsiv**

# MY REMINISCENCES ABOUT KOLYMA

Sakhalin, the Gulf of Tatarsk, the Sea of Okhotsk — I first encountered these names during geography class in the M. Shashkevych Ukrainian Public School in Lviv. Our teacher was an excellent lecturer, and we easily conjured up images of those distant lands that seemed so unbelievably far away. It was difficult to imagine that one day I would see them with my own eyes.

I was arrested in 1948 on charges of “betraying the Fatherland,” although I never betrayed my native land, Ukraine. After a lengthy investigation a Special Board in Moscow sentenced me under articles 54-1a and 54-11 to ten years’ imprisonment in Kolyma. After the sentence was read out to me, I was transferred to the Lviv transit prison, where transports of prisoners were formed for the various prisons in the Soviet Union.

My transport had been sent to Kolyma earlier, and I had to travel in a grated train car attached to a passenger train, and catch up to the transport. I ended up in the Kyiv transit prison and later, in the Kharkiv prison. Autumn was approaching, and navigation was ending on the Sea of Okhotsk. So I was sent to spend the winter in the Kyiv transit prison.

In early spring I was transferred in that same grated train car to Bukhta Vanino, a port on the Sea of Okhotsk, stopping in various places en route. The transit facility in Bukhta Vanino was huge, and besides political prisoners it also held *bytoviks* [nonpolitical prisoners], who had been sentenced for murder two or three times. We political prisoners succeeded in our demands to be housed in a separate barrack, but this did not save us. The criminals attacked us during the night with the intent to rob us. In order to keep some clothing for ourselves, we had to give them a ransom.

In late September the political prisoners were loaded into the hold of the cargo ship *Miklukho-Maklai*. Everyone settled in as best as they could: some on sleeping boards, others underneath them. What was the difference? Everywhere it was dark, dirty, and full of rats. The authorities treated us worse than cattle. Add seasickness to the torments. This was my first experience at sea, and the Sea of Okhotsk at that, the very one

about which my geography teacher had recounted such fascinating stories.

The journey lasted five days. The sea was unusually calm, but it was difficult for the hungry, exhausted prisoners to endure the swaying. They couldn’t eat anything. I remember the captain saying: “Girls, eat something, force yourselves. Otherwise, you won’t get there.” Out of 3,000 prisoners only one found a final resting place at the bottom of the sea.

On 3 October the *Miklukho-Maklai* reached the port of Magadan. We were so exhausted that we had no strength to climb the ship’s ladder and go ashore. It was already snowing, and a cold wind was blowing from the sea. We were loaded onto trucks and driven to the transit facility. The next day we were sorted like goods of better or worse quality. I was young and healthy, and by 5 October I was already at timber-felling site 23/15, i.e., 23 kilometers along the highway from Magadan and 15 kilometers deep into the taiga.

Our camp was small: one long wood barrack, a kitchen built of wood beams, a wood bathhouse, and two long tents. Our entire transport ended up in these tents, because the wood barrack had already been occupied by other political prisoners. Every tent housed 100 women. There were no floors. Sleeping boards were placed on both sides. They gave us mattresses, i.e., sacks that we had to fill with dried leaves and pine needles. But where were we supposed to find this, when there was snow everywhere?

Two 100-liter metal barrels were placed in each tent for heating. Every barrel had a window through which logs were thrown, and an exhaust pipe leading to the outside. This pathetic heating system gave so little heat that we would huddle together and put on every last piece of clothing in an effort to keep warm. Often by morning our hats were frozen to the sides of the tent.

The camp “uniform” consisted of cloth skirts and black blouses, quilted pants, padded jackets, pea jackets, hats with earmuffs, and felt boots shod with rubber from used automobile tires. This clothing was filthy, worn-out, and therefore not very warm. The felt boots were heavy, often the wrong size, and they deformed one’s feet.

A square of white cloth with the prisoner's number was sewn on the back of the padded jacket. My number was D2-530. During roll call we were called by number, and you had to reply with your surname, name, patronymic, the article under which you had been charged, and the length of your sentence.

We were brought to the bathhouse once every ten days. It contained huge cauldrons of heated water and small washbowls: so much for hygiene.

The next day the camp head informed us of our duties and the work quota that we were expected to fulfill. In winter the norm was 4.5 square meters per saw, i.e., for two people. The quota also included removing snow from the tree, so that you could have room to maneuver the 1.2-meter-long saw. After cutting down the tree, we had to remove the branches, saw two-meter-long logs, and pile them up one meter high, so that the brigade leader could measure them.

The summer norm was nine square meters, because we didn't have to remove snow. The saws were often dull. We were completely exhausted and starving, so we could not fulfill the quota. This had repercussions for our diet: the bread ration would be reduced by half.

Our diet was very bad. We would divide the bread ration issued in the morning into three portions. We ate one in the morning with the balanda, saved the second for supper, and took the third with us into the forest. We did not return to the zone for lunch, because the work site was far away from the camp. During the lunch break, when the guards allowed us to warm ourselves at the bonfire, we would take out the scrap of frozen bread and thaw it over the fire. How tasty that bread was — more delicious than the finest cake!

One time a tractor was bringing food to the kitchen for the camp administrators and guards. It had lost some beets en route: a sack must have ripped open. We found them on the road from the work site. Beside ourselves with joy, we scraped the snow off and ate them like rabbits.

I remember another incident. We were working near the zone, because the temperature was 40 degrees below zero. In this kind of weather the prisoners were not brought to the timber-felling site. They didn't feel sorry for us but for the guards, who might freeze. We returned to camp for lunch and sat down to eat the balanda with our bread ration. One of my friends said: "Look, girls, today there are cracklings in our

broth!" We looked at the "cracklings" and saw cockroaches floating in our soup. Prisoners who received food packages from home simply poured out the balanda. But what could I do? I wasn't receiving any packages from home. At the time my parents were in the Ukrainian underground. So we fished out the cockroaches, and shutting our eyes, quickly drank the broth to ease our hunger pangs.

It became worse in the spring. The snow began to melt, and we were given old, patched shoes. In the mornings when we went to work, there was still frost on the ground. Before we reached the work site, which was usually a couple of kilometers from the zone, the sun would rise and it would grow warmer. The waist-high snow would start to melt, so all day we would be standing in water, sawing trees. We would return to the camp wet up to the knees, with fountains of water shooting through the holes in our shoes.

We returned from the worksite under escort. Sometimes the guards were sympathetic and treated us in a humane fashion. But sometimes they were brutes, who yelled at us and called us names, even though we could barely walk. From morning until night we were hungry and cold, pulling at that hateful saw. But none of us complained. We endured for the sake of our lofty goal and believed that one day we would return to Ukraine, which would be liberated from the yoke and become an independent state; we believed that our torments would not be in vain. Returning to the camp, I always dawdled at the back. This was my only opportunity to fly in thought to distant Lviv, to my loved ones, because this was difficult to do in the zone. When we went to bed, we would fall asleep instantly, because we were so tired.

As a result of the poor food and the unendurable work I got dystrophy the first winter and spring. In the summer I was sent to the transit facility in Magadan. Since I still had some clothing from home, I traded it in the kitchen for bread and fat from a sea lion. The fat was not particularly tasty; it stank of fish. But I was still happy. At the transit facility I ran into Olenka Shvets, a girlfriend from my high school in Lviv. We were thrilled to see each other again. We bunked on the same sleeping boards and always had much to talk about. We shared the bread and fat. Olenka was the cook, melting the fat in a metal pan. We salted it and dipped our bread in

it. The meal was not tasty but nourishing. The fat helped me regain some strength, because I wanted to survive and return to my native land.

The nights in the barrack were awful. We were eaten alive by thousands of bedbugs.

After I was examined by a commission, I was sent back to the timber-felling site for the winter. I had to say goodbye to Olenka. It was difficult to part from her.

This time, the work in the taiga involved dragging felled logs six to seven meters in length back to the camp. We divided into groups of four girls of equal height so that the weight of the log

was evenly divided: two in front, two in back. An auxiliary group walked behind us. The longest distance we could cover before our legs began to wobble was 100-120 meters. Then the auxiliary group would take over from us. We alternated like this all the way back to the camp.

The whole forest of logs that we carried on our shoulders lay in the zone that entire spring and summer. No one took it away; no one needed it. All that was needed was our exhausting work, our torment, our bloody sweat.

But we never despaired. Like Lesia Ukrainka, “we hoped against hope.”

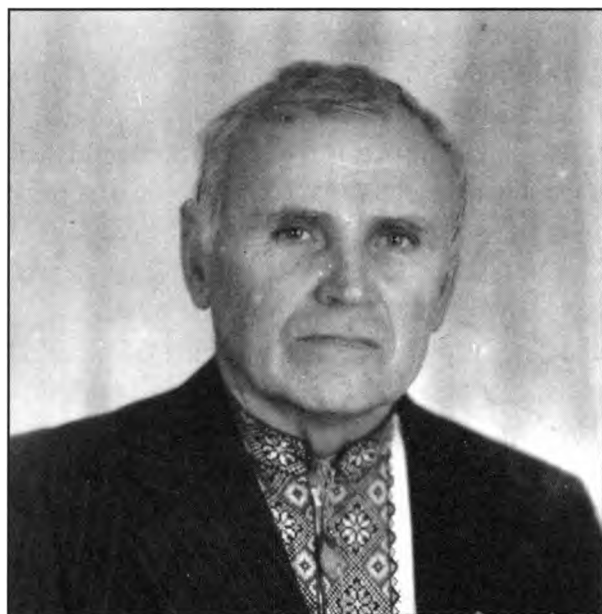
**Maria Duzha**

## IN THE CLAWS OF SATAN

I spent a significant part of my life in Soviet prisons, concentration camps, and exile. But I was one of the lucky ones, because my captivity coincided with the final period of the “empire of evil,” when the communist persecutors were no longer able to carry out mass murders and horrific tortures. But even in my day Soviet prisons and concentration camps were probably the most “advanced” in the world, and the life of political prisoners was extremely difficult. Not every prisoner was fortunate enough to endure his captivity with his health intact.

I first became acquainted with the Bolshevik penal system in the 1960s, when I was sent to the 7<sup>th</sup> Mordovian forced labor camp sub-sector after spending many months in investigation and transit prisons. At the time there were more than a dozen camps in Mordovia.

At first glance, the concentration camp looked like a fortified medieval town, with a palisade surrounding a rectangular square with a gate opening onto it. Behind the palisade and several rows of barbed wire lay black dingy wood barracks and the work zone, next to which people with shaved heads dressed in black clothing, with typical prisoners’ faces, milled about like ants. While prisoners in German concentration camps could see the outside world through the barbed wire, Soviet prisoners did not have this right, as our concentration camp was hidden from view by a huge wall. At any rate, I



*Volodymyr Andrushko.*

only saw these kinds of zones in the European part of the Soviet empire.

Armed German soldiers in concentration camps also walked freely among the prisoners. But in order to prevent the prisoners from seizing the guards’ weapons, this was not permitted in Soviet camps. In this respect, the Bolsheviks were more sophisticated than the Nazis.

In the concentration camp I quickly acquainted myself with the other inmates, the majority of whom were Ukrainians. These were former members of the OUN and the UPA, those who had “committed treason” during the war, and

people like me, who had been captured in the latest Soviet roundup.

In the camp hung a huge banner with the Russian-language slogan “Earn your early release with honest labor.” I had already heard a similar slogan: “Arbeit macht frei.” Had the Bolsheviks borrowed this slogan from Auschwitz? Indeed, for a certain period of time the camp authorities counted one day of heavy slave labor as two. But “early releases” were quickly abolished, although the slogan continued to promise freedom and appealed to the prisoners “to labor honestly.” During the entire period of my imprisonment I never once heard of someone being released because of his honest work.

In the zone there were many people of different ages, view, and other attributes. I remember a blind man, who had spent many years in the camp. There was a deaf prisoner as well as many other invalids.

Life in the strict regime zone was harsh. I felt this particularly acutely when I was first brought to Mordovia. Since I had been a student and then a schoolteacher, I had done little physical labor. Here I was placed in a brigade that loaded logs on trains. We had no mechanical implements; we did everything by hand. The work was difficult and dangerous. In one incident, a log fell on a prisoner’s legs and he sustained severe injuries. Then the winter came with its severe cold and heavy snowfalls. I realized that the work in this brigade could end catastrophically for me, but I was not given any other kind of work. I could leave the brigade only as a result of illness, but I was in good health. At our third concentration camp there was a central inter-camp hospital, where Vasyl Karkhut, a well-known doctor from Halychyna, worked. He was serving his twentieth year of imprisonment. With his help I was scheduled for an operation.

I suffered slightly from varicose veins on my legs, but this was not a life-threatening condition — merely grounds for spending time in the hospital. There was an intern who was quite capable of cutting my leg off with impunity. But I was lucky and I am still walking on my two legs today.

Exactly one week after the operation, I was released from the hospital, even though my legs had not healed. I was sent to a brigade that

unloaded various building materials brought by train. One day we were unloading quicklime without respirators or any other kind of protection. Shoveling the quicklime in a total white fog, I felt my chest start to ache. For some reason my feet were burning. I threw down my shovel, got off the train, and sat down on the track, feeling as though I had a high fever. All of a sudden I saw smoke coming out of my boots. Everything became clear. It was springtime, and the snow was melting. Water had leaked into my boots and on contact with the quicklime had caused a reaction.

I cannot forget the following incident that took place during my first imprisonment in a labor camp. Shortly before my release some prisoners and I were digging a trench for the foundations of a workshop. After we got a half-meter down, we found many human bones that lay scattered like logs in the yard. We were very disturbed and stopped working. The camp authorities came to see why the digging had stopped. We showed them the traces of a mass grave.

The bones were laid into a nearby pit and covered up with earth. We were not even permitted to mark the spot in any fashion. But the trench we were digging occupied only one side of the rectangle, the rest of which was untouched. How many other human bones were buried there? Today that workshop, located on the site of the former 3<sup>rd</sup> forced labor camp sub-sector in the village of Barashevo, is probably standing on the bones of dead prisoners. Who can say whether scores of Ukrainian writers and scholars, who preceded me into that foreign land, their only fault being that they had “Ukrainian feelings of a Ukrainian soul,” as Pavlo Hrabovsky once wrote, found their final resting place in those pits?

Incidentally, Soviet concentration camps emerged much earlier than German ones. The Mordovian camps were created in Lenin’s time, and were the first “establishments” of their kind in the world. So how many people had passed through them over a period of seventy years? Thousands, millions?

My first imprisonment was in the late 1950s and the 1960s, when there were significantly fewer political prisoners. After Stalin’s death a wave of prisoners’ strikes and uprisings took place in the camps. The uprisings in Norilsk,

Vorkuta, and Kazakhstan became known outside the limits of the Bolshevik empire. The communist rulers were forced to release a significant number of prisoners, but they intensified the camp regime for the remaining prisoners, and mass protests became impossible. However, protests took on other forms and did not cease. We often refused to work and organized hunger strikes. Each prisoner did whatever he could.

One of our unique protests was singing Cossack, Sich Riflemen, and UPA songs, as well as melodies composed in the camps. We sang surprisingly well, even though this was not a professional choir. Sometimes our singing would end badly. The camp guards would run up and drag someone off to the punishment cell.

The camp regime became increasingly intolerable. The regime in my second camp, in the Perm region, was so strict that we could neither sing nor assemble in groups. But even here we organized protests. The camp authorities' greatest fear was that the outside world would learn about the GULAG. Meanwhile, the Western media constantly broadcast our declarations and information about our protests, and information from the free world reached us, despite Soviet censorship and various bans.

Occasionally prisoners' protests were so unusual that they deserve to be described here in greater detail. Some time in the 1960s a prisoner in Mordovia cut off his ears and sent them in an envelope as a "gift" to the party congress then taking place in Moscow. In 1962, when I was in the hospital, I met prisoners who had carved these tattoos on their foreheads: "Slave of the USSR," "Down with the CPSU," and "Down with Khrushchev's band." These prisoners were operated on to remove the tattoos, but as soon as they returned to their zones, they would redo the tattoos. Later the camp authorities announced that they had been shot "for disorganizing the work collective."

There were other, more serious, protests. Despite the advanced nature of Soviet prisons and concentration camps, some prisoners still tried to escape. Only a handful managed to escape from the Soviet Union and recount their experiences.

In the summer of 1965 two Ukrainians — Anton Oliinyk and Roman Semeniuk — managed

to escape from their Mordovian concentration camp and return to Ukraine. However, they were quickly captured and sentenced. Oliinyk was executed. My friend Serhii Babych escaped twice, both times unsuccessfully. Seriously wounded, he was captured and jailed in Vladimir Prison. Later he was sent to a strict-regime camp, where he spent twenty-seven years. He remained an implacable foe of communism and a Ukrainian nationalist.

Among the Ukrainian political prisoners, many of whom had participated in the armed struggle of the OUN and the UPA, and postwar dissidents, there were also prisoners of conscience, who were being punished for their religious convictions. Naturally, I was interested in the Ukrainian Greek Catholics, who represented our banned church, then operating illegally. Josyf Slipyj, the metropolitan of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and the successor of Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky, was incarcerated for many years in a neighboring camp. This distinguished religious figure and great Ukrainian patriot played an important role in the history of the Ukrainian church and the Ukrainian nation. I remember the joy with which we greeted the news that Metropolitan Slipyj was being released and sent to Rome.

While the attitude of the political prisoners to the Soviet government never changed, the psychology of imprisoned criminals whom I frequently encountered in the camps, altered significantly. Earlier in the prisons and concentration camps they had been the bulwark of the administration, and they abused the political prisoners horribly. In time the political prisoners organized a resistance movement against the criminals and occasionally murdered them. The camp authorities would then transfer them to other zones. I remember that whenever the criminals would see us, they would yell: "Traitors, fascists, Banderites!" at us. For some reason they did not have any hatred for their "motherland." However, during my second camp imprisonment they stopped attacking us and demonstrating their love for the "motherland."

In the fall of 1964 I was released from my first imprisonment. I parted wistfully from my friends, feeling no particular joy at being released. At home I found my mother gravely ill (she had

waited for my release) and a whole slew of unsolvable problems. Even though I was formally a citizen with equal rights, there were many restrictions. I had trouble obtaining a residence permit and finding a job. I couldn't find a teaching job because apparently there was not a single vacancy in the raion or region — not even in the entire republic. My mother died. I worked on construction sites and on a collective farm, earning thirty karbovantsi a month. Then I heard of a vacancy in a school in Mykolaiv region to teach Ukrainian. A good person from the Ministry of Education interceded on my behalf and I began teaching there. But after a while work became impossible. I constantly felt the presence of the KGB. The same thing happened after I began working in Zhytomyr, Khmelnytsky, and Lviv regions. I was fired “at my own request” from schools in two raions in Lviv region. After the authorities began threatening to prosecute me for parasitism, I began working on the construction of the Yavoriv sulphur industrial complex. I lived in a dormitory and worked alongside criminals, who had been sent there to carry out coercive physical labor in industry. Some of them had not lost their human visage, but most of them were typical products of Bolshevism. It was very hard to live and work alongside them.

Then I got lucky and found work at a professional technical school in Ternopil region. This was my longest-lasting job.

In the summer of 1980 I was summoned to the region psycho-neurological clinic. The head of the Chair of Psychiatry at the Ternopil Medical Institute, a woman named Romas, who also worked at the clinic, “advised” me to check into a psychiatric hospital immediately because no one would be able to cure me in a few weeks. I refused “treatment,” but for some reason the authorities refrained from forcibly committing me.

Much is known about the KGB's abuse of psychiatry. When it was not convenient to prosecute an individual, they would forcibly commit a person to a special psychiatric facility for “treatment.”

I was lucky and avoided this fate. But in the camps I frequently witnessed another type of crime committed by the Soviets: people who were truly mentally ill would not receive any treatment and were kept together with other

prisoners. Whenever they “violated” the camp regime or failed to complete the work quota, which was even beyond a healthy person's capacity, the authorities would “re-educate” them in punishment cells with beatings, hunger, and cold. In the 35<sup>th</sup> zone in Perm I worked in the camp kitchen with a former Soviet army officer, who was convinced that he was Lenin's son and could talk to animals. Apparently, he had been sentenced for “slandering Illich” [Lenin].

It is a known fact that many victims of the Inquisition were mentally ill people. In the twentieth century the communists meted out savage treatment to prisoners with psychological problems. This is a little-explored subject.

After my release from camp, life was not easy. But the enslavement of my nation was even more difficult to bear. Therefore, I considered it my duty to continue the struggle for Ukraine's independence. I established links with the Ukrainian Helsinki Human Rights Group, typed its leaflets, circulated literature, and wrote anti-communist slogans. In the summer of 1981 I was arrested on a street in Kyiv, where I was distributing literature.

I was not brought to the KGB but the Leningrad raion militia division in Kyiv. Although it was a Sunday, two KGB agents quickly arrived and began interrogating me about which Ukrainian nationalists I knew. Realizing that I would not escape their clutches, I calmly replied that I would not give their names. Our “conversation” ended right there. I remember being asked that question during my first arrest. I had replied that I know so many nationalists that all of them would not fit into the prison, to which the investigator replied: “No worries, tell me who they are. We'll find a place for all of them.”

The KGB agents left, and my interrogation continued with Usatenko, the raion prosecutor, who accused me of robbery and hooliganism. I had allegedly tried to rob a store and then behaved like a hooligan when I was being arrested. When I denied this, the prosecutor “cheered” me up by saying that if it were up to him, he would have me shot. When I asked what for, he said: “Your boys, the Banderites, in the Lviv region killed two of my uncles.” I thought to myself: ‘If his uncles were like him, they did the right thing.’



I was transferred to Lukianivka Prison in Kyiv and jailed with criminals. The authorities continued to fabricate various charges against me. After a while the people at the top of the penal system realized that the charges against me were so ridiculous that no one would believe them. So the Prosecutor-General of the Ukrainian SSR changed the charge to anti-Soviet agitation, and my case was handed over to the Ternopil KGB.

One day I was taken from the prison in Kyiv and driven in a Black Maria to Ternopil. Somewhere past Zhytomyr, my escorts stopped for lunch, warning me against trying to escape. It was a beautiful autumn day, and I did not think of escaping — there was no escape. They would easily catch someone as weak as me. And where could I run? There was no more underground in Ukraine, and hiding out with friends was dangerous for everyone concerned. Suddenly, for the first time in my life, I contemplated suicide. It would be so easy to do. I chased away the thought, which nagged at me like an annoying fly. Ultimately I decided that I was still capable of carrying my life's burden.

When we reached Ternopil, I was investigated for six months, spent time in a pre-trial investigation cell and the prison in Chortkiv, where there were no political prisoners. I met a lot of different people, some of whom were real criminals; others had landed in prison because of poverty. All of them left their mark on me: some with their brutality, others with pity and sympathy. During the long, sleepless nights in prison I wondered when this injustice would end. Why were we being punished?

The investigation ended, and I was now a "Ukrainian bourgeois nationalist," charged with attempts to "undermine the friendship of nations, slandering the Soviet state with my statements about the famine in Ukraine, and the numbers of alcoholics and drunkards in the Soviet Union." For this slander I was sentenced to ten years in the Perm camps.

The camps in Perm were very different from the ones in Mordovia. The food seemed to be better here, but the camp regime was very strict. Prisoners were punished for the smallest infraction. For example, I was deprived of family visits because I had sat on my bed. For a while I worked in the camp kitchen peeling potatoes.

One day the potato peeler broke down, and I was accused of breaking it by overloading it with potatoes. I was sentenced to two weeks in the punishment cell.

The days in the concentration camp passed in difficult work, and at night I dreamed about Ukraine and recalled Shevchenko's words. Sometimes my soul was filled with such pride that with my modest struggle I was helping my nation on its path to independence, that I would feel a sudden surge of strength to endure my bitter captivity.

In the 35<sup>th</sup> zone I met many people. I remember the tragic fate of one Ukrainian from the Kyiv region. He had served fifteen years and was about to be released the next day. He came to the boiler room to take a shower. After a few minutes we came to check on him and found him dead of a heart attack.

I knew a Russian border guard named Diukarev, who fell victim to the phenomenon of hazing (*dedovshchina*) which was widespread in the Soviet army. One day he was brutally beaten, and fearing a repeat, he crossed the border into Iran. Later he lived in America, but constantly dreamed of returning to his country. Officials at the Soviet Embassy promised him a pardon, but when he reached the airport in Moscow he was instantly sent to prison and later sentenced to a term of some dozen or more years in the camps. One day he asked me if I would help him poison himself. I didn't give him any advice, because there was no poison available. A few days later he hanged himself. The tragedy is that a few months later he would have been released during perestroika.

Some of the prisoners in the 35<sup>th</sup> zone deserve special respect. Among them were Natan Shcharansky and Anatolii Koriagin.

Shcharansky was a Soviet political prisoner, who was frequently discussed in the Soviet and Western media. He was accused of espionage and sentenced to many years in prison. His "espionage" boiled down to the fact that he was active on behalf of Soviet Jews who wanted to immigrate to Israel. I was pleased to be able to talk with him not only because he knew the Ukrainian language, even though he had lived mostly in Moscow, but also because he was an intelligent person. I would lend him the works of

Mykhailo Kotsiubynsky, who condemned the Jewish pogroms in his works.

Shcharansky never accused Ukrainians of anti-Semitism, as certain people do in Israel today. All efforts to break him and force him to recant were unsuccessful. Even though he was physically weak, he showed the unbreakable might of his spirit and endured all his tribulations honorably.

My neighbor in the next bed was the well-known psychiatrist Anatolii Koriagin, who had collected materials on the abuse of psychiatry in the USSR and passed them to his Western colleagues. He was not only a highly educated and cultured individual but also a great humanitarian and a strong, honest person. We would often exchange stories about our homes: he would talk to me about Eastern Siberia and I would tell him about my Carpathians. We planned to meet in Ukraine, but life took us down different paths. I returned to Ukraine and he went to Switzerland.

In the 35<sup>th</sup> zone I met and talked with the famous writer Mykola Rudenko, who was the head of the Ukrainian Helsinki Human Rights Group. For my short conversation with Rudenko I was sent to the punishment cell.

In the same zone was a prisoner named Mykola Ihnatenko from Kaniv, who considered himself a true Orthodox believer. He was a religious fanatic, although he was indifferent to the fate of our nation. He had lived all his life near Taras Shevchenko's grave, but he had never read the *Kobzar* [the title of Shevchenko's first collection of poetry]. He read only late nineteenth-century Russian religious literature whose authors had hounded both Shevchenko and Tolstoy. He was also hostile toward the Banderites. This was the first time that I had ever met anyone who hated Shevchenko, Franko, and Lesia Ukrainka. He did not acknowledge them because the communists recognized them. It was impossible to talk or debate with him. When I think about him, I wonder: what other country in the world could have led a person to such stupidity. What a paradox! He was opposed to the criminal system and hated it with a passion, yet at the same time he was a terrible product of this very system.

There was nothing worse than Bolshevism in the twentieth century. Even before his trial, the Mordovian political prisoner Luka Pavlyshyn was a witness at a trial of cannibals. This occurred in the first years after the war. After arriving in "liberated" Lviv from the Soviet "jungles," several "workers" organized the production of sausages made of human flesh (they lured people and killed them). At the time these kinds of "meat factories" existed in other areas of the empire.

A political prisoner from a Perm concentration camp told me that in his city, Novgorod I think, the cemetery guard fed corpses to his pigs. Some may say that the Soviet state was not responsible for such monsters, which were tried and punished. But then how do you explain the fact that before the war political prisoners in the Drohobych prison were fed with the flesh of prisoners who had been tortured and shot? After the flight of the Bolshevik executioners, quantities of unused "meat" were found in the prison kitchen. These acts were no longer being committed by monsters but by the Soviet regime.

I am horrified whenever I meet people who dream of the restoration of the communist empire. Are they outright scoundrels or simply idiots?

The direct result of this criminal state was the punitive organs, particularly the KGB. I remember my investigators in Ternopil from the time of my first arrest. They, like I, were clearly aware of my innocence. They also knew that the Bolshevik punitive organs targeted the people. Nevertheless, for months they collected "material" against me in order to tear me away from Ukraine for many years. I don't know if the old Ternopil Chekist, Colonel Bediovka, has retired. He dispatched many an innocent person to the other world during the dozens of years of his work in the organs. How can a state grant a pension to a man who fought all his life so that there would be no Ukrainian state?

I served my full sentence in the strict regime Perm concentration camp. Once again I was transported on a prison train somewhere out east, where I was supposed to serve five years of exile. I disembarked in Tiumen and was sent to the prison's punishment cell. The windowless cell was constantly lit by a ceiling light bulb. I could only tell it was daytime by the noise. On the wall of the cell was a fold-out board: this was the "bed." A

small table and chair were chained to the cement floor. In the corner was a small hole, the “toilet,” from which wet rats emerged and stared at me with interest. From Tiumen I was transported to my place of exile in Nizhniaia Tavda, a large Siberian village near the identically-named river. I was struck by the shabby houses and the residents’ low level of culture. For the first time in my life I visited a hair salon where there was no eau de cologne: the staff had drunk it up. I was not permitted to leave the village and constantly had to register with the militia. I worked on a power-saw bench. The work was difficult, but dealing with the other people working here was far more difficult. People were always cursing and threatening me in foul language, and they could easily beat me up. Some people in Tavda were honest and intelligent, like the old granny in whose house I lodged. She remembered the Whites, the Civil War, and the Stalinist terror that penetrated even the most remote Siberian villages. She was amazed that I was a “Banderite,” because she had always imagined that such people were more terrifying than a horned devil.

The climatic conditions in my place of exile were extremely harsh: in the winter the temperature dipped down to forty below zero and there were huge snowfalls. The taiga began outside the village. In the summer we were invaded by hordes of mosquitoes.

However, compared to the camps, exile had its advantages. You could move freely within the confines of the village and had access to the post office and money. With my wages I purchased a transistor radio and finally tuned in again to Radio Liberty.

In exile I was still under surveillance: my letters were opened and telephone conversations were monitored. In the concentration camp I could only receive two letters a month and two five-kilogram packages every five years. Even then the camp censors did not always let through those two letters, and packages could be received only if there were no infractions. There was also a ban on purchasing sugar, chocolate, and tea.

Out of the blue I received a letter from the Germany-based [Ukrainian] writer Halia Horbach. Later, letters started pouring in from Canada, France, and Australia. Various people were concerned about my fate and sent me

packages. I could barely keep up with the correspondence. Earlier, letters from abroad were not allowed, but now Kateryna Zarytska, Odarka Husiak, Yevhen Proniuk, and other people were writing to me from Ukraine. Only those who have experienced “correspondence hunger” can understand how important letters were to prisoners living in a foreign land and deprived of freedom.

Strange things were happening in the country: perestroika was in full swing. I heard that most of the political prisoners had been released. A few months passed, and I received a pardon.

I prepared for my journey. I knew that Pavlo Hrabovsky, a well known Ukrainian poet, who was not fortunate enough to return to Ukraine, was buried in the neighboring raion. I went to nearby Tobolsk to bow down at his grave. Next to him are the graves of the Decembrists. I pay my respects to them too. I am proud of the fact that I was exiled to the same place as these famous fighters, who struggled against the tsarist prison of nations.

Again I traveled by train, but this time it was taking me westward. Finally, my long-awaited encounter with Ukraine! And like in the past, Ukraine greeted me with unemployment and homelessness. I could not find a teaching job because there were “no vacancies.” Again I encountered difficulties with obtaining a residence permit. But I had to live, so I found a job in a school as a cloakroom attendant. I sent protests to Chornovil’s *Visnyk* [Herald] which had started publishing in Lviv again. I also submitted a grievance to the United Nations, but it did not reach the UN. I sent copies of my grievance to various places, and after a while I learned that Radio Liberty was broadcasting news about my protest. After a few months, a teaching job was “found” for me.

I was a member of the Helsinki Human Rights Group and the Ukrainian Republican Party, the first independent party to fight for Ukraine’s independence during perestroika. My days passed in consultations, meetings, and demonstrations. I got married and moved to Chernivtsi, where for the first time in the postwar period I had my own house and the certainty that it would not be easy for the authorities to jail me a third time — not that they didn’t try.

Based on declarations submitted by the “working masses,” the authorities charged me with hooliganism because I had organized a counterdemonstration in Chernivtsi on 1 May 1991, featuring a symbolic coffin (we were “burying” the CPSU and the USSR). The investigation was halted with the proclamation of Ukraine’s independence on 24 August 1991.

Many of my memories are connected to the city of Chernivtsi. I began my studies at the University of Chernivtsi in 1951, but I was still in high school when I realized the importance of knowing my native language, literature, and history. This was a period of savage Bolshevik terror and intense Russification in Ukraine. I knew that the captive university would not be able to satisfy my hunger for Ukrainian studies. But what I saw there disenchanted me even further. At this institution of higher learning the Ukrainian language was being forcibly brought closer to Russian, and the works of Ukrainian writers were being either falsified or ignored. And what passed for Ukrainian “folklore” could be reduced to these two rhymed phrases: “There are as many stars in the blue sky as there are thoughts in Stalin’s head”; “There is as much water in the blue Dnipro as there is brilliance in Stalin’s head.”

The student body painted a very sad picture. The main people taking advantage of the Bolshevik “right to education” were first and foremost the children of communists and various people who had adapted to the times. In order to be admitted to the university I had to hide my parents’ family origins. There was also no question of cultivating different, unofficial, opinions. There were only a few students with whom I could talk freely. I remember how the students wept at the news of Stalin’s death. I couldn’t believe my eyes and ears.

It was then that I understood that, besides carrying out mass arrests and executions and engineering the famine in Ukraine, which had led to cannibalism, Bolshevism had drugged the people with a terrible poison, turning them into submissive slaves of the empire, ready to fight and die for their torturers.

I could not look calmly at what was happening in Ukraine in those days, as well as at the university. In the past I had had contacts in the armed OUN and UPA underground and I had

clandestine fighting experience, which I decided to continue at the university.

I could rely on no one but myself, and alone I wrote anti-communist slogans and circulated leaflets. But I wanted to do something more significant.

I had long planned my flag action. It was not easy to hang the Ukrainian flag above the university. I didn’t even have enough money to buy colored material. I bought some cloth and paints. Pretending to be sick one morning, I skipped my classes and fashioned a blue-and-yellow Ukrainian flag in the student kitchen. This was very dangerous, because someone could have caught me. The flag was painted blue and yellow, and so were my hands.

I decided to hang the symbol of Ukraine’s independence struggle above the university on 23 May 1952, on the fourteenth anniversary of the death of the OUN leader Yevhen Konovalets, who had been assassinated in emigration by a Bolshevik agent. I carried out my plan at the Faculty of Philology, and the flag was only taken down in the afternoon.

At that time the national flag flying over the university created the effect of a bomb. Later, on 1 November, I hung another flag on the university grounds, but few people noticed it, which means that it must have been removed quickly. A report was duly submitted to Kyiv and Moscow.

The KGB and its network of university-based secret collaborators [*seksoty*] sprang into action. But the guilty party could not be found. As one of the suspects, I was called in for questioning, but the authorities could not prove anything. The only thing they found out was that my father was a political émigré. But neither did I demonstrate any love for the Soviet government, and that was enough for them to expel me from the university, which I called a temple of falsehood and Philistinism.

I left the university with no regrets, thinking this was the end of my studies. But after Beria was arrested and the power of the Soviet secret police was somewhat weakened, I enrolled in the Pedagogical Institute in Stanyslaviv, which I succeeded in completing. The KGB became interested in me only after I graduated. During my first arrest the investigators reminded me of the flag incident in Chernivtsi, but I refused to admit

to anything. Even during the most difficult moments of my life I firmly believed that our national flag would one day freely wave over the university. The only thing that I didn't know was whether I would live to see that day. But on 3 November 1990 I was honored to receive an invitation to raise the Ukrainian national flag over the University of Chernivtsi during a mass meeting. This was one of the happiest days of my life. Later, I also raised the flag at Chernivtsi city hall. I climbed up to the top of the tower, looked down on the thousands of joyful waiting people gathered below and realized that my flag will never again be removed from Chernivtsi.

In summarizing my road of captivity and comparing it to the fate of other Ukrainian political prisoners who perished in Bolshevik slavery, I can say that I was lucky because I suffered significantly less than them. I will not say that I acted like a hero during my investigations,

and time in prison. No, I was afraid for my life and I really did not want to die in communist captivity. Often I silently endured all sorts of abuses and insults. But despite all my difficulties, I did not tell my persecutors anything they wanted to hear — not about myself or anybody else. I did not write any declaration that would have compromised the idea of our independence. I could have been released had I repented. This I refused to do.

The years are flying by. My turbulent youth and the years of captivity ended long ago. But I am happy that I was one of the last Ukrainian political prisoners who lived to see our free state. With my modest work I too am contributing my tiny mite to strengthen and consolidate the Ukrainian state. May its name be blessed!

**Volodymyr Andrushko**

Ivano-Frankivsk region.

**Number of UPA members, sympathizers, and family members, who remained in special settlements until the mid 1950s**  
(Based on data collected by M. Buhai, 1990)

Region, krai, RSFSR	Number of people
Kemerovo	22,624
Khabarovsk krai	19,703
Irkutsk	15,260
Krasnoiarsk krai	13,613
Omsk	10,152
Tomsk	7,881
Molotovsk	8,778
Kazansk	7,721
Cheliabinsk	5,168
Amur	4,392
Tiumen	5,128
Chita	3,724
Arkhangelsk	3,257
Komi ASSR	2,762
Yakut ASSR	1,528
Udmurtiia, republic in RSFSR	759
Primorskii krai	757
Others	452
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>133,659</b>

# SAD REMINISCENCES OF CAPTIVITY

## A NEW TRANSPORT

In the last days of October 1938 the Dnipropetrovsk transit prison began to empty. Trainload after trainload of prisoners headed to slave labor sites and death by starvation. Large transports of such “terrorists” were formed and sent to stationary strict-regime prisons: Solovets, Orlovsk, Yeletsk, and Vladimir.

The transports of convicts heading for these prisons were escorted by a militarized guard consisting of convoy troops, who were filled with loathing and hatred for the “malicious enemies of the Soviet people.” We did not hear a single humane word from them. They communicated with us only in the language of a rifle or pistol butt.

They stuffed us into the train cars. It was cramped in them, and we were suffocating from the filth and stench, and tortured by thirst and hunger.

The state machine was always an instrument with which the USSR harassed its population so that it would be submissive. To achieve this, the Soviet government constantly used terror. Stalin’s power lay in the exploitation of continuous terror.

## PRISON: A HOLY SHRINE IN YELETSK

Suddenly our train shook and came to a stop. Through the grated windows of our car we saw a sign reading: Yeletsk.

It was pitch black outside. The convoy troops, with the aid of dogs, hurriedly loaded the prisoners into waiting trucks covered with thick tarpaulins. The trucks sped to Yeletsk Prison, a former monastery.

At first we were put into the monastery catacombs — crypts inside tunnels. All our bags and sacks were taken away and placed on a huge pile.

Then Orlovsky, Polyn, Lysenko, and I were placed into one of the crypts. We were told to kneel down facing each corner of the vault, with our hands behind our backs. Two guards stood in the middle of the cell and forbade us to make a sound or turn our heads. The guards were

changed, but we remained there on our knees for two hours or longer.

We were on the verge of fainting from this nocturnal psychological torture. Our legs were trembling, and it seemed that we would fall over on the cement floor, which would be the end of us.

I glanced surreptitiously at Orlovsky and was horrified at what I saw: his face was yellow-green — a real corpse with bulging eyes. I realized that he was on the verge of a breakdown, but he was trying to keep a grip on himself and not show the guards what was happening to him. Later he admitted that he thought he would get a bullet in the head.

Suddenly the iron doors creaked and Polyn instantly disappeared through the doors. After about an hour the same thing happened to Lysenko, then Orlovsky. Then it was my turn. I was taken through the curving nooks of the monastery. At the end of the catacomb my escort shoved me into a large room with a medieval vaulted ceiling. I immediately noticed a pile of rags consisting of tattered coats, torn suits, and ripped underwear. All this rubbish had been roasted and steamed in various prisons many times over, together with its residents — bedbugs and lice.

I thought this was the place prisoners were stripped prior to their execution. Suddenly three people in white coats — big-faced dolts reeking of eau de cologne — rushed into the room. They yelled at me to strip and throw my clothes on the pile. I stood there naked and shivering, while the trio made me fill out a detailed questionnaire. When they reached the most important section — the charges against me, and my sentence — they started calling me a terrorist. “How is it that scum like you hasn’t been shot yet?” one of them asked.

After this I was taken for a body search by a female, who poked her fat fingers in my mouth, nose, ears, between my toes, in my armpits. . .

Then I was rushed naked down a dark corridor to the opposite end of the monastery. For many this was the last journey. Although prisoners were not shot here, many of them could not endure the stress of racing through the dim corridor, and they never reached their destination.

After this procedure Orlovsky spent a long time in the prison hospital and eventually went insane.

Suddenly my escort ordered me to stop. He opened a door, and I could not believe my eyes: I was in a bathhouse with showers. The cold water refreshed me and my hallucinations disappeared. After the shower I was shoved into a cell, where I saw Polyn, Lysenko, and Orlovsky. All three of them were dressed in prison clothing. My prison garb was there too.

### PRISONER NO. 3

The days in Yeletsk Prison passed monotonously: the harsh regime, prison soup, a ration of bread that some prisoners ate in a flash, while others divided it up into three or four portions. Everyone looked like a hungry wolf.

There were seven of us in our cell: three Russians, two Jews, one Georgian, and one Ukrainian. It was a real “International.”

At first we lived amicably, sharing our reminiscences, discussing books we had read, and reciting poems by Pushkin, Lermontov, Shevchenko, Tiutchev, and Nekrasov. Gradually, hunger and grief started affecting us. We turned increasingly inwards. Each prisoner started displaying the negative features of his character. We were becoming more nervous and irritable, like hungry rats imprisoned in glass cages, ready to gnaw each other to death.

Here the prisoners were numbered: the prison guards referred to us only by number. Eventually, we too began using our numbers instead of our names.

We learned that the surname of prisoner no. 3 was Korolkov; he was from Rostov-on-Don. We were disturbed to note that he was taken to the prison warden almost every other day. Returning to the cell, he would spout all sorts of nonsense that made us suspect that this gloomy man with small gray eyes was a son-of-a-bitch informer and provocateur. For the most part we didn't talk in front of him. But some time in April 1939 the dam of silence burst, and we started talking about the illegal arrests, disgraceful investigations, and unjust trials. Korolkov didn't utter a peep; he was pretending to be asleep. The Georgian, Buashvili, whom we respected for his intelligence, tact, genuineness, and education (he had graduated from two institutes), was also silent. Suddenly he exploded:

“You're all hypocrites! You think one thing, but say another! You accuse of treason second-rate people, who do not make politics but are blind executors or careerists, or conscious criminals who are dancing to the tune of the one who is making politics. It is on his orders that the finest sons of the fatherland are being killed!”

This conversation took place in the daytime. During the night Korolkov was brought to the warden. Then Buashvili disappeared from our cell.

Everything became loathsome to us. All we wanted to do was strangle that scum Korolkov, but we didn't want to soil our hands on him. As soon as Buashvili disappeared, we were overcome by a moral paralysis. When the threads of spiritual communication were broken off with other inmates, particularly sympathetic individuals who were dear to us, we were degraded and devastated.

I vowed that even in conditions where life seemed completely impossible I would fight to survive and resist the evil forces, if only so as not to forfeit the status of a human being and to prevent my soul from becoming corroded.

### PRISON LIFE

Thousands of prisoners suffered in Yeletsk Prison. They could communicate with each other only within the confines of their own cells — at least this was the way it was in 1938-1939. We did not see anyone from the other cells; we didn't even hear their voices — the prison was a real house of the dead. There was no question of setting up a prison telegraph [tapping a message on the prison walls] because the walls of the cells were covered with felt.

For our walks we were brought to wooden “dog pens” resembling a roofless building with individual cabins separated by walls two meters apart. The schedule of walks was designed in such a way that the prisoners never saw each other. Every “dog pen” had a number of guards, who kept order.

We had to walk inside our cabin with our hands behind our back and our heads bent down. One time I heard a plane and looked up involuntarily. The guard noticed and immediately suspended the walk. For my violation the entire cell was punished: no walks for three days. After

Buashvili's disappearance, we were monitored even more harshly. Meanwhile, the air in the cell was thick and foul. Whenever the jailers prepared to enter, they would douse themselves with eau de cologne and quickly leave.

Next to my sleeping area was that of a wonderful pilot from the Volga area, named Shchukin. One night we were talking quietly and I stretched out my hand to touch his bed. Suddenly the assistant warden and two of his adjutants burst into the cell. When they demanded to know what I had been doing, I explained that I had simply touched No. 4's bed with my hand.

"You counterrevolutionary scum! Since you weren't shot, I will make you rot to death in the punishment cells!" For the next ten days Shchukin and I sat in punishment cells, where we were given only water.

By spring 1939 we were completely weak, because we were on hunger rations. Scurvy was ravaging our bodies. Blood dripped from our gums, and our teeth fell out. Black spots appeared on our bodies. Our legs and joints ached, and we were terribly apathetic. We also suffered from night blindness.

## **TRANSPORT TO BEYOND THE POLAR CIRCLE**

In late 1939 the house of the dead, Yeletsk Prison, turned into a beehive of noisy activity. In the corridors the jailers were running, slamming cell doors, and shouting.

We were brought to the huge prison courtyard filled with sun and people. At that moment we understood why in the past two months the prison authorities had given us glycine [amino acid occurring in sugar cane] and vitamins, and begun feeding us better. We were being transferred to another master. Let them: it might be worse, but at least it would be different.

Officials in charge of selecting slave laborers ordered us to strip, felt our muscles, looked inside our mouths, and stamped the word "FIT" on our forms.

Goners dying of scurvy did not get this stamp and were returned to their cells. After the death of the "father of the peoples" [Stalin] I learned that all these goners were eventually imprisoned in labor camps, but maybe not in the permafrost regions.

From Yeletsk we were transported to Orel. A transport of prisoners also arrived from Vladimir Prison. We remained in Orel for two days. The news that trainloads of prisoners had arrived must have spread throughout the city and surrounding areas, because the next day there was quite a large crowd of people, mostly women and children, milling about the trains. The convoy guards and the militia tried unsuccessfully to disperse the crowd.

From a neighboring train car someone tossed a message through the grates. A young boy of about twelve grabbed it and ran off. A militia man noticed and the chase was on. Shots rang out, but the boy flew like a comet and hid in the crowd.

The locomotive whistle sounded, and the prison on wheels carrying "particularly dangerous state criminals," like a kilometer-long serpent, crept out of the station.

Underneath the train cars was a craftily constructed device with metal jaws, called a "cultivator." Thus, there was no question of escape, and in fact no one even considered escaping.

In our car were Russians, Ukrainians, Poles, Georgians, Jews, Armenians, Kirghiz, Turkmens, and Azerbaijanis. Most of us were communists, who had been sifted through the sieve of death, having experienced terrible torments in various prisons. It seemed that our common plight should have united us. But there was no common ground among us. We were disunited by fear and the presence of stool pigeons and provocateurs.

Unprincipled individuals among the prisoners tried to convince us that Stalin did not know anything about the mass arrests, that Yezhov was responsible for everything. They claimed that as soon as Stalin learned about Yezhov's abuses, he removed him from the post of People's Commissar of Internal Affairs. Proof that the government's policy was easing was our transport. We were being transported to camps in order to determine ultimately who was an enemy of the people. Now it was only a question of work, work, and work!

Those who had grasped the mechanism of repression had no hope of being released. We were not being transported to these permanently frozen places so that we would return one day.



## SIBERIA

En route to the Ural Mountains our train got the green light, but once we reached the endless Siberian territories we were often made to wait on sidings. We reached the mighty Yenisei River on the twentieth day. En route our captors had mercilessly tormented us with hunger, and for several days at a time we received nothing to eat or drink.

During the transport I was reunited with my former cellmate Ivan Khokhlov, who protected me like a father. One day he was watching me cleaning my ration of herrings. All of a sudden he threw our fish rations out of the window. I nearly fainted. He said I should think twice before eating any old garbage. "Mark my words. Already today you will see people in our train car suffering from the cramps of dysentery, which will wipe out many."

We stayed a couple of days in Omsk, and half the prisoners in our car got dysentery and were taken off.

In the third week of June 20,000 prisoners arrived at the sorting station on the right bank of the Yenisei. Thousands of half-dead, starving, and morally degraded communists and non-party members, generals and Red Army soldiers, academicians, agronomists, directors of factories, workers, and peasants were driven in column after column to the sorting station.

Women from Moscow were brought to the sorting station separately: Kosarev's wife, Yagoda's sister, and the wives of famous Red Army commanders. Their underage children were in another column. The teenaged sons of Liubchenko, Cherniavsky, Sarkis, Veger, and many other party and state figures were in our group.

After the formalities were completed, we were brought to a huge area surrounded by double rows of barbed wire and topped by guard towers. The barracks for the prisoners were worse than cattle barns. But the camp was set in the middle of the beautiful Siberian landscape of cliffs, mountains, and forests.

The camp authorities left us alone for five days, during which we went from barrack to barrack meeting prisoners from other transports and exchanging information with our countrymen. Some prisoners were still under the delusion that

they had been arrested and sentenced by mistake. They were confident that the authorities would soon sort things out and release them, with their rights restored. There were hardly any naïve people like this among the prisoners from Moscow and Leningrad, who recounted the acts of tyranny committed by the mythologized Lenin and his lackeys immediately after the coup of 1917.

The naïve prisoners were petty, self-confident people convinced of their sinless orthodox past, whose heads had been turned by their posts and privileges. These fanatical Stalinists called those who did not agree with their opinions hostile agitators. But gradually they became enlightened and realized that only death could release them from injustice, falsehood, and slander.

## NEW TRIBULATIONS

As soon as the stool pigeons reported our freethinking conversations, the camp authorities reacted instantly by bringing in a transport of 3,000 recidivists, i.e., murderers, robbers, and petty camp thieves ready to sell out their buddies, and introducing them into our comparatively peaceful camp.

It is difficult to describe the horror and calamity that suddenly descended on us. The criminals immediately began rooting around in our barracks and carefully monitored what and from whom they could steal something or take by force. Now we did not leave our barrack unattended and appointed a person on duty, who did not let strangers into the barrack. But our efforts were in vain, because the bandits ran around the zone in groups. If one of us encountered such a group, its members would immediately surround him, knock him down, strip him, and give him a severe beating. This kind of lawlessness could only take place with the camp authorities' blessing.

A gang of criminals, almost all of whom had a Finnish knife, would invade a barrack and do whatever they pleased. They would occupy strategic points in the barrack and threaten us with knives, while their teenage accomplices stole our belongings.

Some readers may wonder how thousands of prisoners could not stand firm against these

criminals. In the first place, we had not yet recovered our strength from the trials and tortures that we had experienced in the prisons and during the transport. Second, few of us had ever encountered criminals, so we did not know how to deal with these types. Third, we were disunited and still feared one another. Fourth, the majority of us suffered from night blindness, which helped the thieves to rob us.

It was paradoxical that both in the prisons and the camps criminals were like fish in water. It is no accident that they declared proudly that “prison is our home.” Criminals enjoyed all sorts of benefits and amnesties. Recidivists would barely finish tormenting people in the camps when they would be released into society, with or without an amnesty, to continue their criminal activity.

### THE EDGE OF THE WORLD

Despite all the unpleasantness, the Krasnoïarsk selection station was practically a resort. For more than a month we were given balanda made with fish fat, and pine needle tea. The fresh air and better food helped us regain our strength — it was not a sign that our cases would be reviewed — so that we would be fit for the heavy labor that awaited us. The first “buyers” arrived from Norilsk, selecting those prisoners who had been sentenced under articles 58-8, 58-9, and 58-11 (counterrevolutionary-Trotskyite-Bukharinite bloc), and thus branded “enemies of the people.”

In the port of Krasnoïarsk there was a whole squadron of barges for transporting prisoners on the Yenisei River, who would be developing the tundra and building an industrial complex near the Norilka River.

We were loaded onto a barge that turned out to be worse than any solitary confinement cells we had experienced thus far. Packed like herrings in a barrel, we suffocated in the stinking air of the hold for two weeks. Instead of balanda we were given bread and sugar.

Soon prisoners started coming down with dysentery, and their numbers rose catastrophically every day. After one week more than half the prisoners had developed dysentery. We yelled for help, but our pleas were ignored. Then we organized ourselves. A sanitary commission

divided the hold into two sections. Sick prisoners were placed closer to the hatch, while healthy prisoners occupied the rest of the space.

Two weeks later the barge moored at the port of Dudinka and we disembarked. Most of the prisoners who were considered healthy seemed to have paralyzed legs. Petty criminals then appeared with stretchers and swearing in virtuoso fashion, they began carrying out the nearly dead “enemies of the people.”

Norilsk, where we were being sent, was 100 kilometers away. After disembarking, we realized that we would croak here. A rumor was going around about a scientific experiment that was conducted here about five years before we arrived. A shipment of horses and pigs was brought here to determine whether domestic animals could be bred in the Far North. They could, so if animals could live here, people could too, and the Kremlin leaders thus decided there was no better corner of the world for political prisoners. The Soviet government also took into account the discovery of reservoirs of non-ferrous metals and coal along the Norilka River. Who better to excavate them than political prisoners? Thus, the Soviet authorities could kill two birds with one stone: they would gain economic benefits through cheap labor, and political ones by isolating prisoners and working them to death.

The year 1939 marked a tragic culmination. The regime in the camps became unbearably difficult and brutal. That year nearly all the prisoners from Orlov, Yelets, and Solovets prisons perished in the Norilsk camps.

The first head of our camp and the Norilsk industrial complex was A. Zaveniagin. On his orders every week a long list of names was displayed in the camp, indicating those prisoners who had been shot “for failing to fulfill the work quota.” The list included victims of denunciations: the camp was seething with informers.

Eventually, Zaveniagin was replaced by Paiukov, a total sadist, criminal, and profligate, who had packed off his son to the army and then proceeded to seduce his daughter-in-law. Other prisoners believed that he had simply raped her and forced her to become his mistress.

The third camp head was a man named Zverev, who resembled Homer’s Cyclops Polyphemus, and whose brutality surpassed that

of his two predecessors. The slave labor, hunger rations, excessively harsh regime, the brutal camp authorities, and unendurable climatic conditions helped to spin the camp's carousel of death.

I was assigned to a work brigade led by the former secretary of the raion party committee in the Urals, Ivan Matinkov. The next day we were brought to the high shores of the Yenisei on which floated a huge raft of timber. We were ordered to drag the logs onto the shore with ropes, pull them up a hill, and stack them.

It was no easy task to hook a log and loop a rope around it. The entire brigade had to pull the log out of the water and drag it up the hill. For those who had worked at white-collar jobs on the outside, it would have been easier to become an academician than deal with the enormously heavy logs. But there is a force that compels people to do the most strenuous labor, namely hunger. All thoughts of freedom and early release disappeared in the presence of the constant desire to eat and assuage the unbearable torments of hunger.

We prepared thousands of cubic meters of building material for the construction of the Norilsk metallurgical complex. In the space of three months eight members of my brigade died.

After we finished our work at the timber float, part of the brigade was transferred to Norilsk, and the rest was dispersed throughout the tundra to build the Dudinka-Norilsk highway.

## OUR NUMBERS INCREASE

Sometimes our brigade was sent to the port of Dudinka to unload steamboats. This was also difficult work, all done by hand. On our bony spines we had to carry fifty-kilogram bales and boxes.

The summer ended. The winter of 1939-40 was harsh, with many snowstorms that hampered efforts to complete the 120-kilometer road from Norilsk to Dudinka. Nevertheless, the prisoners were constantly dispatched to the work site, where they lived, worked, and froze to death in tents.

In 1940 our brigade was working in Norilsk, building a metallurgical plant. The engineers did not know how to construct buildings on the permafrost. The building of the newly-constructed

plant had started to crack. The administration was worried and decided to carry out some research. But the scholarly world had been decimated, the Academy of Sciences having been gutted during the Yezhov period. A group of half-dead academician-prisoners declared that the foundation of the building must stand on firm ground located beneath the permafrost.

How could they penetrate the permafrost to a depth of twenty meters when all the available mechanical tools were limited to picks and shovels? That was what slave labor was for. Many new buildings were constructed on the bones of prisoners whose numbers constantly increased thanks to the diligent work of the Stalinist security organs.

Shortly after Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania were annexed to the Soviet Union, the army officers of these countries were invited to come to Moscow for "pre-training." They were met hospitably at the train station, placed in cars, and then brought to prisons in Moscow from where they were transported to Norilsk. All of them refused to work in the brigades. They stood their ground steadfastly until they became completely weakened. Finally, starvation and psychological tortures broke their resistance.

In late 1940 our officers and soldiers, who had been captured by the Finns during the Soviet-Finnish war of 1939-1940, were brought to Norilsk. After the Finns nobly released them, Moscow sent the steamship *Rodina* to pick them up. The former POWs were dreaming of being reunited with their families in their homeland. But the steamship with those dreamers moored in the port of Dudinka, where they were driven into the stinking barracks, forbidden to associate with us, political prisoners of 1937-1938, and sent to hard labor. In contrast to the Balts, our former Soviet soldiers did not balk.

**Oleksii Trachuk\***

*\*The Vinnytsia-based scholar, Professor B. Buialsky, notes that in 1937 O. Trachuk (1905-1999) was the director of a model school in Vinnytsia: the M. Kotsiubynsky School No. 1. Arrested on fictitious charges, he was tortured in NKVD dungeons and spent ten years in various prisons and camps. Arrested a second time in 1949, he spent six years in Siberian exile.*

Vinnytsia, 1999.

# KINGIR (KAZAKHSTAN)



*This memorial in Kingir, Kazakhstan, erected by Ukrainian Americans, stands on the site of a former Soviet strict-regime labor camp, where hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian political prisoners died, particularly women. The inscription reads: "We bow our heads to the sons and daughters of Ukraine, who were tortured to death in intense slavery. Ukraine will not forget you."*

In Kingir, where “political” women were exclusively imprisoned, a secret committee was formed to organize a strike. If a guard shot a prisoner in front of everyone, the next day the camp would refuse to go to work. Eventually, the prisoners managed to gain control of the kitchen and a warehouse. In order to crush the prisoners, the camp authorities brought to Kingir seven train cars of criminals armed with cudgels, metal pipes, and hooks. But the political prisoners repelled them, and the criminals ran away, declaring that “the devil himself will not curb these female Banderites.”

On the fortieth day of the Kingir uprising, the Soviet authorities sent in tanks. When the attack began at dawn, the women clasped hands and went to meet them, expecting to stop the killers. But the tanks did not stop and mowed down over 900 female prisoners, trampling their flesh into the Kazakh steppe.

Cemeteries were always the favorite places of Soviet tank crews. In Spassk, for example, a tank unit was stationed on the bones of 800,000 prisoners in the 1980s-1990s.

The only Ukrainian-language newspaper in Kazakhstan, *Ukrainski novyny* [Ukrainian News] wrote about this: “The military unit still

had concrete underground solitary confinement cells whose walls were embedded with metal chains used by the executioners to shackle prisoners... Part of the cemetery (approximately four to five hectares) looked like a field of stubble. Instead of crosses protrude little boards from vegetable crates on which numbers have been seared. Among them are human bones and skulls. This is such a horrific sight — as though cattle, not people, are buried here, as though this is not a cemetery but an animal graveyard taken apart by wild beasts!”

The newspaper appealed to the Ukrainian Embassy in Kazakhstan to honor the murdered patriots in some way. Consul A. Kaliberda sent the following reply: “We do not know anything about this cemetery. In the archives of Kazakhstan there are no facts about it.” In a word: no document, no problem.

Meanwhile, when the Lithuanians and Japanese found out about this cemetery, they appealed to the Kazakh authorities for permission to allow them to transport the remains of their unfortunate sons and daughters back to their native lands. When Ukrainian Americans take up this mission, then ministers,

scholars, and writers will come from Ukraine, likely motivated by pangs of consciousness or political dividends.

It is difficult to read the true history of Ukraine without a sedative. It is even more difficult to witness it in Kazakhstan, because

here our history is represented by entire graveyards, where thousands upon thousands of our countrymen found their final resting place. Only God knows how many.

**Kateryna Kindras**

## THE KINGIR UPRISING

### *The life of Hanna Genyk-Skilska, a participant in the uprising*

After the war, in 1946, the pupils from our village, including me, began attending eighth grade at High School No. 2 in Kolomyia. This school was considered more prestigious than the pedagogical high school or the medical college. There was another high school in Yabluniv, but all the teachers there were from eastern Ukraine, and my father didn't want the "Soviets," as he called them, to teach me.

At this time the UPA was conducting its operations, and the MGB was carrying out raids, searches, and arrests in our villages. Battles with members of these Soviet raiding units often took place.

In our class there were a few special girls, who read widely and tried to understand the historical events taking place in our lands. We were particularly interested in reading banned books, such as the historical novel *Chorna Rada* [The Black Council], *Kholodnyi Iar*, and others. My roommate was a girl from Kosiv named Anna Lepkaliuk, the daughter of Mykola. She became the first victim of the MGB from our class. In January 1947 this sixteen-year-old girl was arrested and jailed in a freezing prison, where she suffered frostbite to her legs. Her interrogators tried to force her to tell them the whereabouts of her sister Irene and her parents. Her sister was in the underground, and her parents were hiding in the forests of Siberia. When they failed to obtain information from her, they threw her naked and barefoot on a train together with other unfortunates and sent to Siberia.

I was very affected by the sight of crowds of people being transported by wagons. It was impossible to listen to the wailing of women, the crying of children, the shouts of the convoy

guards, and the barking of dogs. The train cars were already packed to the rafters, but people were still being shoved into them. The despair, those cries, and farewells to family members raised many questions: Why was our nation being punished like this? What crime had these sixteen-year-olds committed? What were those gray-haired fathers and mothers and those underage children guilty of that they were being torn from their homes and imprisoned in the Siberian snows?

We knew that the OUN and the UPA were fighting for Ukraine's freedom. We got our hands on their appeal targeting young people, which had been clandestinely printed in the Sniatyn area. The authors of the appeal called for young people to unite and create youth organizations. One of us had contacts with the underground, particularly with the leaders "Vii" and "Mylyi," who were operating in Sniatyn raion. The leaders issued instructions to us and helped us by supplying literature and advice. Seven of us girls from the same class became members of the OUN's youth section. We swore the oath, received pseudonyms, and adopted the motto: "Freedom or death."

We held meetings in our apartments under the guise of birthday parties, and in the summer — in the students' park. We were supposed to conduct agitational-explanatory work among the students and the populace about the real nature of Bolshevism, prepare and circulate leaflets with appeals and addresses, and study the history of Ukraine as a counterweight to the history of the USSR, which we were forced to study in school. We tried to make our fellow classmates understand that the communist government had

not brought us freedom but a new captivity. Nazism had been replaced by communist slavery.

The insurgents instructed one of the members of our organization, Hanna Urbanovych, to go to the Voentorg shop and purchase the stars that Soviet soldiers wore on their hats. The saleswoman must have suspected something and obviously alerted the MGB. An agent instantly appeared and took Hanna for interrogation. In reply to his questions for whom she was purchasing the stars, Hanna answered that she was buying them for herself because she simply liked the stars. The investigator did not believe her, and ordering her to stand against the wall, he took out his pistol and began shooting around her head. But she did not change her answers. She was released, and probably from that time the government began its surveillance. In school she was pressured to join the Komsomol. There was only one member of this organization for young communists in Hanna's class: the daughter of a serviceman from eastern Ukraine.

The OUN continued its operations. Preparations were underway for six more girls to join the organization, and leaflets were being circulated; some were even pasted to the doors of the MGB and the militia. The young OUN members supplied the leadership with paper and carbon sheets, and later acquired and sent a typewriter.

It was 1949, and the end of the tenth grade was approaching. But that March our leaders were killed in a battle, and arrests began in April and May. (Recently, thanks to the newly opened archives, our assumptions concerning the circumstances behind the exposure of the organization were confirmed. But that is another topic.)

On 11 May 1949 my apartment was searched. I was living with Paraska Levytska from Serednii Bereziv. About a week before our arrest a boy from Bereziv brought us some underground literature as well as the Decalogue of the Ukrainian Nationalist, the forty-four rules of conduct, which had been printed by the underground. Naturally, the boy did not know that we were members of the organization and that we read such literature. The investigator found everything and read it. I gave a signal to Levytsky, indicating that I would take all the

responsibility (we were immediately forbidden to talk to each other) so that there would be no confusion during the interrogation.

He read through everything and asked: "Whose is this?"

"Mine," I replied. They put us in a truck, surrounded it with armed soldiers, and drove us to the MGB. They took us to separate offices, and the interrogation began with this question: "Where, when, and under what circumstances did you join the youth-nationalist organization at High School No. 2?" I realized that they knew everything, even our pseudonyms and motto. I kept thinking how to endure everything and not betray the boy whom they would torture and murder for those brochures and literature. I denied everything, silently repeating one of the commandments of the Decalogue: "Neither requests, threats, tortures, nor death will compel you to reveal a secret."

When I was very afraid that the boy would be arrested because of me, I recalled my father's words: "The worst disgrace and the gravest sin is betrayal." I wanted them to shoot me without an investigation or trial because I was not sure I would be able to endure the tortures without revealing anything.

I was interrogated day and night, but I endured. When an investigator went to sleep, another would take his place. He did not question me, but merely made sure that I would not fall asleep. This was very difficult to endure. Without sleep a person becomes a foggy-brained zombie. Yellow circles spin in front of your eyes, and the voice of the investigator seems to be issuing from underneath the earth. A sleep-deprived person becomes numb and apathetic.

After the interrogation ended, I was sent to the MGB dungeon, where my friend Iryna Zarytska and I composed a poem about our experiences. It wasn't very poetic, but I remember it to this day.

Until the last day of the interrogation the investigator refused to believe my story and constantly hounded me to reveal my links with the underground. But everything turned out like I wanted: the boy remained free, and they had enough to try me. The court handed down a sentence of twenty-five years. I ended up in a strict-regime camp in Kingir, which is in Karaganda region. This was in the fall of 1949.

In this camp of 10,000 prisoners, 3,000 of them were women. Every day long gray columns of prisoners walked from Kingir to their slave labor, surrounded by armed guards and dogs. We smashed rocks, dug foundation pits and trenches for smelting factories, constructed a dam, residential buildings, fired bricks, and unloaded trains arriving with cement, coal, rocks, pipes, steel, wood, and other building materials.

In exchange for our slave labor we received a bowl of thin balanda, a place in a barrack, and prison clothing consisting of a worn-out hat, quilted jacket, pants, and for the winter — shoes made of cotton warp or bast boots. The clothing had white patches on which each prisoner's ID number was painted in black. These numbers were written on our hats, shoulders, on the left arm, and right leg. My number was STs-427. We no longer had first or last names, and the guards called us only by our numbers. We were abused, harassed, humiliated, and called "bandits" and "traitors of the motherland." Sometimes we could not keep quiet and often spent time in the punishment cell.

In 1953 Stalin, the executioner, died. The overjoyed prisoners hoped that things would change for the better and the camp regime would ease. But this did not happen. On the contrary: the lawlessness of the camp authorities and convoy guards intensified. To make matters worse, we were constantly tormented by hunger. A bread ration was a great treasure. You had to fight with yourself not to eat it in one sitting and then have to wait all day for the next one.

I was always rescued by aunty Yustyna from Stopchativ, who would bring me scraps of bread. She was thin, pale, and exhausted, and could no longer eat. She did not go out to work — she was an invalid. I still remember her with gratitude. With every passing day the prisoners' rebellious mood, dissatisfaction, and mutinies increased. The convoy guards shot an innocent girl because at Easter time some fellows had shouted "Christ is risen!" to a convoy of girls.

The patience of the exhausted, abused, and starving prisoners came to an end. The uprising began on 16 May 1954. The prisoners refused to go to work and expelled the camp authorities and the guards from the zone. They refused to allow anyone into the zone but prisoners and demanded

that a commission be sent from Moscow. A meeting was convened to decide further action. At first some prisoners called for arming themselves with whatever they could get their hands on and attacking the guards, Chekists, and informers, and then escaping. Others suggested more reasonable measures by pointing out that all of us would be shot down in the steppe — escape was impossible.

We decided to elect a government in a democratic fashion, which would direct the uprising, compile our demands, and conduct negotiations with the camp authorities. The uprising was headed by a colonel named Kapiton Ivanovych Kuznetsov. The government instituted strict order and discipline in the camp. Various sections were created: security, military, propaganda and agitation, commandant's office and police, confrontational agitation, radio communications, and others.

A. Kostrytsky assembled a transmitter out of some medical apparatus as well as a movie projector. It was set up in a room in the third barrack of the women's zone. Kostrytsky quickly set about assembling a shortwave radio transmitter for sending messages abroad. When it was ready, he would sit late into the night and repeat the following words: "Tomorrow, tomorrow, we will be transmitting long-distance broadcasts." But at dawn the tanks entered the camp. Slava Yarymovska, Maria Pereshchuk, Anna Balashchuk, and I were working in the radio communications section. We worked from 7:00 to 10:00 in the evening, and did shifts during the day. We transmitted various appeals, messages, and announcements, e.g., the time and place of assemblies, meetings, and consultations, and in which barrack the Holy Liturgy would be held.

In June 1994 I attended an international conference in Moscow, dedicated to the fortieth anniversary of the Kingir uprising. There I learned that a few stenograms of our internal camp radio broadcasts had been preserved. One of them was addressed to the camp guards, who stood on the towers around the camp: "Soldiers! Do not shoot at us. Do not obey the orders of Beria's bands. We are not criminals. We are people like you. Don't sully your hands with the blood of innocent men and women, which your officers have on

their hands. We demand an end to violence. We do not believe the promises of the local camp directors, who are foul Beria trash. We appeal to you. Help us get a government commission to come here from Moscow. Soldiers! Do not enter the zone and do not provoke others. We will spell out our demands and conditions to a commission from the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Office of the Prosecutor-General. Better we should die than submit to Beria's foul degenerates.”

These were our demands: an eight-hour workday, the removal of numbers from our clothing, permission to correspond and have family visits, better food, the punishment of those who murdered innocent prisoners, the dismantling of grates from windows and locks from doors, and a reduction of sentences handed down to underage children, invalids, and others. Some sort of commissions arrived and negotiations were held, but no agreement was reached and we continued our strike. In the camp machine shop, located on the territory of the economic sector, weapons were being forged under Kostrytsky's direction. The metal came from the window grates.

In the State Archive of the Russian Federation the Italian historian Marta Craveri found file no. 228 in the formerly top-secret GULAG fonds, which contained documents on the Kingir uprising. The documents show that a large quantity of firearms and other weapons were produced there: 4,855 pieces, including homemade pistols, grenades, pickaxes, lances, swords, knives, and axes.

Thanks alone to the courage and determination shown during subsequent interrogations of two members of our camp government, Keller and Klopms (who accepted all responsibility) many of the participants in the uprising avoided punishment, and those who were arrested — execution. Among the latter were Kostrytsky, Mykhailovych, Zadorozhny, and others. Thanks to deep conspiratorial measures, the members of the Ukrainian underground's nationalist center, which had operated in the men's zone even before the uprising, were not arrested. Not even the many camp informers knew their names. They took an active part in the uprising, but officially were not members of the leadership. The uprising

was directed by prisoners who were operating in the open.

They were protected by the Ukrainian nationalists, who knew that there would be no way to avoid repercussions from the uprising. The Ukrainian nationalist center consisted of (I believe) Mykhailo Soroka and Yurko Furman. Soroka had spent time in Polish, German, and Russian camps, and he was loved and respected by the prisoners, who heeded his advice. In 1953 he, Petrashchuk, and Kubiovych were sentenced to be shot for organizing a clandestine organization known as the “Trans-Polar Falcons of Ukraine” in Komi ASSR. But after Stalin died, their death sentence was commuted to twenty-five years in a strict-regime camp. This is how Soroka ended up in Kingir. He is the author of the rebel hymn “In the hot steppes of Kazakhstan.”

Those who took part in the uprising will never forget the dawn of 26 June 1954. Orders were issuing from loudspeakers placed on the guard towers around the camp. “Attention! We are attacking the enemies of the people!” Through the breaches in the wall surrounding the camp tanks entered, followed by submachine gunners. Fighter planes flew over the camp. The first to fall were the boys guarding the barricades.

The prisoners woke up and rushed out of the barracks. The tanks were advancing on a group of women standing desperately in their path, believing that they wouldn't dare move against unarmed people. Their efforts were in vain, and beneath the tanks' caterpillar treads cracked the bones of those prisoners who did not step aside in time. People sought shelter in the barracks, but the soldiers threw grenades inside. The smoke blinded the prisoners, and they were forced out of the barracks. Outside, the tanks were steadily advancing, seeking new victims. The armor of the tanks was spattered with blood, and the caterpillar treads were dragging prisoners' entrails behind them.

At the beginning of the onslaught I wanted to run to the radio communications room because I was supposed to be on shift from 6:00 a.m. Approaching me was a tank, and next to it a fire truck. I turned around and ran to my barrack. A powerful stream of water hit me in the shoulder, and I fell down in the watery surge. The tank was coming closer. Suddenly Vasyl Brusturniak, a



fellow countryman from Akreshora, pulled me away. He saved me from being run over by the tank, which drove past me. On the ground I saw my girlfriend Paraska Antoniuk from Volyn with whom I spent five years working in the same brigade. She was dead: the tank had run over her chest and stomach. A tank had driven over the legs of a Lithuanian girl named Angiute, and she was screaming in agony: "Finish me off, finish me off!" A tank had run over the leg of a girl from Kyiv, Anna Prisman, and she was begging for help. All this happened very quickly.

The camp was filled with acrid smoke, shouts, and cries of pain. The barracks were on fire. The fighting lasted longest in the men's zone. The men resisted furiously. They threw homemade grenades, fired homemade pistols, and fought with the weapons they had made themselves. The largest number of fatalities occurred in the men's zone, but no one knows how many prisoners died. Suddenly the tanks ground to a halt, the shooting stopped, and the camp was filled with troops. The surviving prisoners were ordered to put their hands behind their heads, and we were marched under guard out of the zone into the steppe. There we were encircled by convoy guards and dogs.

All day we sat there in the burning sun, without water. Meanwhile, the soldiers were bringing order to the camp, washing off the blood, removing the traces of the crime, and collecting the dead bodies, which they loaded into cars and drove into the steppe to bury them. I saw blood dripping out of the cars. After everything that happened, I remember wanting to die in the steppe. This was the second time in my life that I felt this way. The first time was after the investigation and interrogations. My only thought was: "I don't want to live. I don't want to live."

While we were sitting in the steppe, the camp authorities were grouping us. They instantly arrested the members of our government and sent them to prison. The most active participants of the uprising, who had worked in the various sections — they knew perfectly well who we were because of all the informers — were sent to the Dalstroï and Ozerlag camps.

I was sent to Ozerlag, near Taishet. This was a camp with a prison regime, where the prisoners

processed mica. One of the consequences of the uprising was that special forced labor camps, like Kingir, were abolished throughout the Soviet Union, and prisoners' cases were being reviewed. At first they reviewed the cases of invalids, underage children, and those who had been given prison sentences. Some time in November or December 1955 I was summoned to a new trial as an underage prisoner. The judges whispered to each other and announced their decision: "Refused."

Why did they bother holding a new trial, if not to inflict more pain on me? Other people who had received a new trial had been released.

I think I was punished for Kingir. Nevertheless, in spring 1956 the Soviet authorities launched a massive review of cases, and again I was summoned. This time my sentence was reduced to seven years. I had just finished serving seven years. I was free. It seemed that all my torments were behind me, all roads were open to me. I hoped to study or at least find a job in Kolomyia. But when I was released, I was not issued a passport, like other prisoners, only a certificate. As soon as I flashed that certificate, all conversations about studies or working ceased.

I got married and changed my name. After great difficulties I obtained a passport and registered for residence in a private apartment in Kolomyia. When my children were older, I found a job at a sewing factory. I was no longer in prison but living in freedom. Still, I always felt the government's eye on me. Official and unofficial informers were always monitoring my movements.

My husband and I are now pensioners and have left Kolomyia to live in my parents' house. Despite everything that I experienced in my life and my devastated health, I consider myself fortunate because I lived to see a free Ukraine. I am not afraid of GULAGs or informers anymore. I awaken to the sounds of our national hymn. I love our flag and the trident, our national emblem. Isn't that enough? After all, so many people did not live to experience freedom.

**Hanna Genyk-Skilska**

Originally published in the Toronto-based newspaper *Homin Ukrainy* (Echo of Ukraine)

# THE DESTRUCTION OF ORTHODOX CHURCHES IN THE KHOLM AND PIDLIASHIA REGIONS

*In the following account the author, a Ukrainian Orthodox priest, recounts that in 1938 Catholic Poland systematically destroyed more than 150 Ukrainian Orthodox churches in two Ukrainian regions that had been annexed to Poland.*

The Ukrainian Orthodox churches on the territory of Poland were a thorn in the side of Poles because these churches reminded them of the fact that the local population was Ukrainian, not Polish. In 1918-1920 there were 370 Ukrainian Orthodox churches. The Polish authorities immediately seized 320 of them and converted them to Roman Catholic churches, and destroyed or closed the remainder. Only 50 churches were left at the disposal of 230,000 Orthodox faithful, a ratio of one church for 4,260 people.

The Polish authorities then launched efforts to convert the Ukrainian Orthodox faithful to Roman Catholicism, but the Ukrainian population refused even to countenance betraying their age-old faith. This led to the introduction of a policy of “revindication,” aimed at destroying the remaining functioning churches or those that were already closed, confiscating Orthodox church property, and placing it under the control of the Roman Catholic Church.

The Poles had long been preparing for this. In 1938 a coordinating committee was formed, and its head, General J. Morawinski was placed in charge of implementing the plans with the aid of military garrisons. The Polish clergy played an equal role in this committee whose existence was kept secret.

The Polish press began demanding that Ukrainian Orthodox churches start using Polish during liturgies and catechism classes, and introduce a new calendar for celebrating Ukrainian religious feasts. Calls were issued for Orthodox children to attend Mass in Roman Catholic churches. Public assemblies were convened with the participation of Polish priests, during which resolutions were passed to destroy Ukrainian Orthodox churches.

When the Polish government issued an order instituting the use of Polish during church sermons,

Ukrainian priests stopped giving sermons altogether. The Ukrainian Orthodox clergy was persecuted, arrested, and fined for saying liturgies in Ukrainian.

In July 1938 Ukrainian members of the Polish Sejm [parliament], including the Ukrainian Orthodox priest Rev. Martyn Volkov (Sarny), Stepan Skrypnyk, and the Ukrainian Catholic Stepan Baran, lodged a number of protests against the convention between Poland and the Vatican. Their protests were so sharp that some chauvinistic Poles — members of the Polish parliament — demanded that Skrypnyk and Volkov be prosecuted. Rev. Volkov was stripped of his parish in Sarny and was forced to hide in the residence of Metropolitan Dionisii.

In connection with the protests in the Polish parliament, the Lviv-based Ukrainian daily newspaper *Dilo* [The Deed] wrote on 9 July 1938: “Today in the Polish Sejm the representatives of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic and Orthodox population of Galicia, Volyn, and Pidliashia demonstrated their Ukrainian national unity and community in defense of national-religious positions.”

In his speech to the Sejm deputy S. Baran listed examples of the Poles’ acts of violence, declaring: “As a Ukrainian and a Greek Catholic who is subject to the Apostolic capital and the pope, I declare that the question of the defense of the Orthodox Church is a national issue for the entire Ukrainian nation, and therefore we, Ukrainian Greek Catholic Galician deputies will be voting against [the signing of an agreement between Poland and the Vatican] in defense of the Orthodox Church, which is dear to us, and in the interest of the Ukrainian nation, in the name of its historical and technical rights.”

The Ukrainian senators, Ostap Lutsky (Galicia) and deputy senator Mykola Maslov (Volyn) lodged similar protests in the Polish Sejm on 14 July 1938. The Sejm and the Senate ignored the Ukrainians’ protests, and the convention signed on 20 June 1938 came into force in the Rzecz Pospolita.

According to the convention, property that had belonged to parishes of the Orthodox Church and had temporarily belonged to the Ukrainian Greek



*A burned-out Orthodox church in Maidan Seniavsky, Kholm region.*

Catholic Church was to be transferred to the Polish state. The Vatican thereby renounced “its right” and received 2.5 million *zloty* as compensation. At issue were hundreds of buildings (churches, parishes, and agricultural structures) and thousands of hectares of church lands. The true worth of the lands alone was valued at seventy-five million *zloty*. Why the Vatican sold “its rights” so cheaply would be a mystery if not for the fact that those lands were being sold for the second time, because the Russian tsarist government had already paid the Vatican for this property.

The Polish government attained its goal, because it had ostensibly obtained the “legal right” to dispose of Orthodox churches and property by virtue of having purchased it from Rome. By this

convention the Polish government and the Vatican thus bear equal responsibility for these reprehensible actions.

After these preparations, in late June 1938 the Polish government launched the mass destruction of Ukrainian Orthodox churches in the Kholm and Pidliashia regions. Mobilized to this action were Polish policemen armed to the teeth, along with well-paid Polish workers, who began to destroy Ukrainian religious objects, holy pictures, and churches. During this action Polish policemen fired their weapons and used truncheons to disperse the crowds of faithful, who watched in horror as their churches were being destroyed. Often police dogs were sicced on the crowds. Once a church was dismantled, the building material was divided among local Polish residents,



*A ruined church in Nahorianky.*

while the bells were thoughtfully carted off to be converted into cannons. Churches slated for destruction were often set on fire by arsonists or were transferred to Polish Catholics.

A few examples of this action are listed here:

The church in the village of Holeshiv had existed for 400 years and had survived a number of wars. At 7:00 in the morning on 13 July 1938 arrived firefighters and policemen with dogs. When the villagers rushed into the church, policemen wearing caps entered the building with dogs and dispersed them. The church was taken apart, and the building material was sold to local Poles for 180 zloty.

On 14 July 1938 the Poles tore down the church in Mezhylyssia. Expecting trouble after hearing that the church in the neighboring village of Zahoriv had already been dismantled, the people of Mezhylyssia removed the most valuable items from the church and hid them. As a sign of farewell, the villagers rang the large bell three times when they were dismantling the bells. The assembled parishioners wept and spent the entire night at the church. Sensing disaster, all the dogs in the village bayed the whole night. At 7:00 the next morning, eight truckloads of police and workers arrived. Brandishing truncheons, the

police began dispersing the villagers. The workers began tearing off the roof and removing the icons and iconostasis. At noon the large church bell tower was torn down.

One of the oldest churches in the Kholm regions was located in the village of Roztoka. As soon as they came to power, the Poles closed this sixteenth-century church, where Ukrainians were permitted to attend Mass only three times a year. But on 8 July 1938 the Poles destroyed even this church.

Thus, throughout June and July 1938 a total of 112 churches were destroyed in the Kholm and Pidliashia regions. Ninety-eight of them had existed before the Union of Brest (1596), including the church in Shchebreshyn (1184), the church in Kornytsia (1578), the cathedral in Bila Pidliaska (1582), the church in Zamostia (1589) and others. All these gems of ancient Ukrainian architecture were utterly destroyed and irredeemably lost to civilization, as parliamentarian Stepan Baran noted in his interpellation to Poland's prime minister on 21 July 1938.

The Council of Bishops of the Orthodox Autocephalous Church in Poland vigorously protested against the destruction of the churches, and on 16 July 1938 issued an archpastoral message to the faithful. However, it reached only

a segment of the population because it was confiscated by the authorities.

On 16 July Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky, the head of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, published his archpastoral letter in which he strongly condemned the acts of vandalism committed by the Poles, who had shown themselves to be the enemies of the Christian faith. In his letter Metropolitan Andrei deeply sympathized with the misfortune that had befallen Orthodox Ukrainians.

The contents of the metropolitan's letter were known only to his closest associates because it too was seized by the Polish authorities. But word reached the Orthodox faithful, who were deeply touched by his gesture.

Ukrainian hierarchs abroad also protested. Among them was Archbishop Ioann

Teodorovych, the metropolitan of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in the USA, who condemned the destruction of churches, the forcible conversion of Orthodox parishioners to Roman Catholicism, and the Vatican's illegal sale to Poland of Orthodox church property, which it had never owned in the first place.

Despite the protests of several noble-minded Polish lawyers and journalists, Polish persecution of Orthodox Ukrainians and the destruction of their churches did not cease until the outbreak of the Second World War, when Poland was occupied. During the entire time the Polish Catholic clergy did not utter one word of protest against this profanation of the Christian faith.

**Very Rev. Archpriest V. Vyshnevsky**

## **KLUBOCHYN, ANOTHER UKRAINIAN LIDICE**

With every passing year we forget the facts connected to Hitler's planned destruction of the Ukrainian nation. As an eyewitness of our enslavement by the Germans, I have now begun to record for posterity what I still remember. Even though I remember few details today, I will never forget that horrible terror in the Volyn region and the dishonorable role that Polish colonists, settled there by the government of Poland, played in this action.

The village of Klubochyn was situated six kilometers south of the village of Zhuravych, next to the Olyka-Kolky highway in the Lutsk area (Volyn region). This village of 700 people was surrounded on all sides by the ancient forests owned by the Radziwills. There was only one Pole in this village, a man named Galicki, who had been the official responsible for military affairs in the *volost* [district] of Sylne during the Polish occupation. After the Bolsheviks arrived, the Soviet government appointed him as a schoolteacher in Klubochyn, renamed the *volost* as a raion, and transferred its center to Tsuman, in the southern part of the district.

The forested estate of Prince Radziwill, consisting mostly of oaks and pines, was located in Sylne district. The prince and his entourage always went there for their winter hunts. After the

Germans invaded, Reichskommissar of Ukraine Erich Koch inspected the old Radziwill holdings that the Bolsheviks had not managed to destroy, and with Hitler's permission, claimed it for himself. Accordingly, he instructed the *Kreislandwirt*, the German official in charge of Tsuman district, to liquidate all the Ukrainian villages on the territory of the former Radziwill estate. The first villages slated for liquidation were Klubochyn, my native village of Sylne, and Horodyshche.

The official informed all three communities that they had to move voluntarily beyond Lutsk to a colony of resettlers, indicating which village was designated for which colony. But the Ukrainian inhabitants, who were deeply attached to their area, refused to move. Koch then dispatched a unit of the *Sicherheitsdienst* [Security Police: SD] to Tsuman raion to compel the villagers to move. The Germans ordered Kishko, the commandant of the Tsuman auxiliary police, the *Schutzmannschaft*, to draw up lists of all Ukrainians and their families who were suspected of communist sympathies or anti-German feelings. Kishko was a base lickspittle, who eagerly carried out the Nazis' orders by accepting denunciations from all quarters without verifying them, and compiling those lists in German. He

handed over everything to the commandant of the SD unit.

Among the denunciations was one that indicted almost all the residents of Klubochyn. Its author was the above-mentioned Pole Galicki, who omitted certain peoples' names from the list. Kishko gave this list to the Germans. The SD was waiting for it and now had a formal pretext for executing the Ukrainians.

Some time in mid-1942 (I forget the month and day) an SD unit arrived in Klubochyn during the night and surrounded the innocent Ukrainian village. At dawn the Nazis locked all the inhabitants — from infants to old grannies — in a couple of stables. After removing a few families not on the list, they mowed everyone down with machine guns.

Then, without checking to see if there were wounded people and finishing them off, they set fire to the stables, watching as the wounded perished in the flames.

Then the Germans returned to Tsuman, assembled more than 150 people — entire families from the neighboring villages of Bashlyky, Tsuman, and others — all of whom were on Kishko's list. They were ordered to dig pits into which they fell after being machine-gunned by the Germans.

After the execution of the Klubochyn residents the Kreislandwirt seized all their property,

including animals and buildings, and brought them to Tsuman, which was crawling with former Polish servants of the Radziwills. The Poles were heard rejoicing, declaring, "Now you have your Ukraine. We will finish all of you off now." But their joy was short-lived.

Subsequent events in the Volyn region convinced the Polish colonists that what they were preparing for the Ukrainians would not bypass them. After Klubochyn, the residents of Malyntsi were burned alive in the village church. Similar pogroms of Ukrainians took place in Mylovytsi and other villages.

Galicki did not have long to live. About three days after the residents of Klubochyn were executed, the Ukrainian arm of vengeance reached him. Passersby found his corpse on the road near the liquidated village. The death of Galicki and his ilk served as the prologue for events subsequently known as the Volyn tragedy.

After killing Galicki, the Ukrainian insurgents killed quite a few Germans. Several attempts to assassinate Kishko ended in failure. Sensing his impending death, he fled to Lutsk, where he worked as a prison guard. He was never seen in public. Rumors circulated that he had been killed. But if they are not accurate, then just punishment still awaits him.

**Stepan Radion**

# LIST OF UKRAINIANS KILLED BY THE SOVIETS AND GERMANS IN THE VILLAGE OF SYLNE (VOLYN), 1941-1950

Bobyk, Ivan Volodymyrovych  
 Bobyk, Kateryna Andriivna  
 Bobyk, Zakharko Yukhymovych  
 Katsaman, Ivan Vlasovych  
 Kozak, Sydir Musiiiovych  
 Kulesha, Ivan  
 Kulesha, ? (Ivan's wife)  
 Nesterchuk, Kateryna Yurkivna  
 Nesterchuk, Semen Semenovych  
 Novak, Makar (Shotsia)  
 Podziobanchuk, Mykhailo Andriiovych  
 (Holovaty)

Podziubavnuk, Pavlo Andriiovych  
 Podziuvanchuk, Andrii Mykhailovych  
 Radion, Serhii Mykytovych  
 Roiko, Andrii Vasyliovych  
 Roiko, Dmytro Ulasovych  
 Roiko, Fedos Petrovych  
 Roiko, Fonia Yakivna  
 Roiko, Ivan Yakymovych (Yukhymovych)  
 Savula

Roiko, Makar (Shotsia)  
 Roiko, Mykhailo Andriiovych (Holovaty)

Roiko, Mykola Pavlovych  
 Roiko, Mykola Vasyliovych  
 Roiko, Vasyl Pylypovych  
 Roiko, Volodymyr Ulasovych  
 Roiko, Yakym Fedorovych  
 Romashkovets, Petro Hryhorovych (Severyn)

Tkachuk, Mykyta  
 Tkachuk, (Mykyta's wife)  
 Tkachuk, Nastia Mykytivna (their underage  
 daughter)

## *List of Residents of Sylne Killed by the Germans:*

Berky family (Jews) — six people  
 Blyzniuk, Maria Havrylivna  
 Blyzniuk, Roza Havrylivna  
 Blyzniuk, Taras Havrylovych  
 Maksymchuk, Volodymyr Stepanovych  
 Moshlakh family — three people  
 Paletsky, Petro Petrovych  
 Roiko, Ivan Makarovych  
 Shnyt, Petro Omelianovych  
 Yulyzniuk, Liuba Havrylivna

**Compiled by Ivan Shulha**

Village of Sylne, Kivertsi raion, Volyn region.

\* \* \* \* \*

Babyk, Mykhailo (1943)  
 Filoiuk, Ivan  
 Franchuk, Nina  
 Katsaman, Kateryna (1942)  
 Kovalchuk, Nina  
 Kuziliak, Pelaheia  
 Makhrynska, Liuda  
 Misko, Uliana  
 Olynovych, Oleksii  
 Olynovych, Volodymyr  
 Paletsky, Ivan (1944)  
 Pavliuk, Ivan  
 Radion, Serhii (1942)  
 Roiko, Fedos (1944)  
 Shnyt, Kuzma  
 Shnyt, Mykola (1943)  
 Shnyt, Oksana (1942)  
 Shnyt, Tereshko (1943)  
 Shnyt, Vasyl (1943)  
 Tsymbaliuk, Makar

**Compiled by Tetiana Perekhodko**

City of Lutsk.

# VILLAGES AND HAMLETS DEPORTED WHOLESALE

Babyna Dolyna	Kozalske	Richky
Balandiuky	Krasnyi Verkh	Riky
Banity	Kremianka	Semaky
Barsuchyn	Krushynyn	Semeny
Basy	Kumyky	Seredyna
Bereziaky	Kurnytsko	Shabelnia
Berezyna	Kushniry	Shchyrych
Berezyna Velyka	Kut	Shchyrets
Bidun	Kuty	Shkurkhanka
Bila	Lazy	Shypky
Bila Murovana	Lisy	Smali
Bila Piskova	Liutova	Starychi*
Birky	Luh	Staryi Dvir
Blazhky	Lutsyky	Stelmakhy
Boishche	Luzhky	Sydory
Borukhy	Madiasnia	Tartak
Bronky	Maidan	Trostanets
Chervenets	Maidany	Tyshyky
Debirky	Marky	Valddorf
Derevenka	Martyny	Verbliany*
Dily	Mazury	Vereshchytsi*
Dolyna	Melnyky	Vilka
Dumasy	Mykachyky	Vilka Kunynska
Gerusy	Mykhailenky	Volia
Halamy	Mysaky	Vulysko
Hanaky	Nemyriv*	Vyshenka Mala
Harai	Nove Selo	Vyshenka Velyka
Harakhy	Novynky	Yasynivka
Hora	Ozernia	Yupyyny
Horbovytsia	Papimia	Yusky
Hrabnyky	Parypsy	Zadily
Hremy	Peleny	Zakut
Huky	Peredmistia	Zapust
Hutysko	Peredmistia Male	Zhuky
Ivasky	Peredmistia	Zhurevshchyzna
Kalyly	Velyke	Ziavlennia
Khudyky	Pidstavna	Zinchuky
Kizlianka	Potichky	Zinky
Klepariv	Provallia	Zmyslyv
Korchmysko	Pustelnyky	
Kovali	Raby	

*\*Partially deported*



# A SYMBOL OF INVINCIBLE SPIRIT

*The Yavoriv military training ground is known throughout the world because of the international military exercises called Operation Peace Shield, which take place there every year. But few people know that here in 1940 the Bolshevik "liberators" began mass deportations of residents from more than 100 inhabited areas. Each deportation merits a separate historical study.*

The launch of this unprecedented destruction is revealed in secret documents dating to 1939. On 13 February 1940 the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR passed Resolution no. 41/IE, which was confirmed by the council's Resolutions no. 605/EE dated 30 December 1940 and no. 0042 dated 26 June 1945, Resolutions no. 5833/RE passed by the Council of Ministers of the USSR on 14 February 1953 and no. 1431-0080/RE passed by the Council of Ministers of the Ukrainian SSR on 12 December 1953. According to these resolutions, part of the raion's territory was to be designated for the building of a military training ground in Yavoriv. It was of no concern to the Soviet leaders that people were living in this area. As a result of the mass deportations, 150,000 residents were expelled, and 128 villages and hamlets covering an area of 40,000 hectares destroyed.

Hidden behind these terrible statistics are the sufferings, bloodshed, and death suffered by the residents in this part of Ukraine.

**Yevdokiia Parashchuk**, born 1919 in the village of Kurnyky: "On Christmas Eve in 1940 it was announced that we would be deported. Soldiers were walking through the village checking to see if the people were getting ready. A week later the people were loaded onto trains and sent to Moldavia. The train cars were cold, and children and adults died en route."

**Mykola Lutsiv**, born 1912 in the village of Trostianets: "The army surrounded the village, loaded everyone on carts and brought us to the village of Zymna Voda."

**Tetiana Chernyk**, born 1925 in the village of Pidlissia: "They deported us from the village of Mala Vyshenka in 1940. During the war we

returned. But in 1947 Soviet troops destroyed all the farmsteads, and we scattered to various areas."

**Mykola Salo**, born 1918 in the village of Monastyrok. "In 1950 my family was suddenly deported from Vyshenka to Monastyrok. The Soviet troops destroyed all the buildings: our house, stable, and pantry."

Like an elemental force, political storms swept over our land. The descendants of the victims are wandering the world, some like tumbleweed, while others are searching for their ancestors' roots. Is it possible today, after five decades, to locate what nourishes the national spirit of every person — the origins of their ancestry? Perhaps, but this is a difficult task, as the victims of the deportations were not issued any documents, no compensation was paid, and no property was restored.

Statistics indicate that during the deportation years NKVD agents and Soviet troops committed 500,000 criminal acts against the local population, each separate act representing a violation of human rights: 300,000 buildings were destroyed, 20,000 cultural monuments, schools, 8 churches, and 8 cemeteries were dismantled or destroyed. Archival documents on the deported residents, totaling 150,000, were also destroyed.

The village of Kurnyky has disappeared from the map of Ukraine. The writer and civic leader Pavlo Kyrchiv was buried there in 1916. Mala Vyshenka, the birthplace of the distinguished Ukrainian literary specialist and writer Volodymyr Radzykevych, has disappeared. Only memory remains.

The Church of St. Michael, located on the main firing position, stands as a symbol of invincible spirit. The church was built here in the village of Velyka Vyshenka in 1927, on the site of a former wood church. Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church took part in the solemn festivities when the church was consecrated.

According to a 1931 church record book, there were 2,803 Greek Catholics, 52 Roman Catholics, and 30 Jews in Velyka Vyshenka and

the adjoining hamlet of Gerusy. The parish priest of St. Michael's was Rev. Omelian Radzykevych.

This church, as well as thousands of local residents, experienced their first tribulations with the arrival of the Bolsheviks. By 1940 the church was in ruins. In 1953, when the first military exercises for aviation, artillery, and mechanized units began at the firing range, the first bombs and bullets landed on the walls of this great edifice. Eventually, models of churches with huge crosses painted on them were placed around the church ruins for target practice. The foreign occupiers were thus teaching new recruits to destroy our spirituality and national temples.

"In the language of military tactics this was called shooting, or area gridding," explains the village historian Yevhen Vozniak from Lviv. "In subsequent years the church served as a reference point for marking the locale and conducting firing, throwing bombs, and carrying out military exercises. All this stopped once Ukraine became independent."

Vozniak decided to find the church bells that local residents allegedly buried next to the church in 1941. After obtaining permission in 1991, he began excavations only to find the remains of executed people. Since no personal items were found, it was impossible to determine the origins of these human remains without the assistance of specialists. Exhumations were not carried out. There are two hypotheses: either these were Jews

executed by the Nazis, or POWs executed by the NKVD after the war. Perhaps one day this mystery will be solved.

In the nearby village of Vereshchytsia there was a POW camp until 1951. The Russian satraps burned down a wood church and buried German POWs there. Today a cross stands on this site.

Recently, Yevhen Vozniak and I, together with a group of servicemen and businessmen from Lviv and the Yavoriv area, spent time in that sanctified spot, where Metropolitan Sheptytsky walked in 1927. Mykola Boiko, the head of the Association of Farmers in the Lviv Region, and Ihor Mykytchak, the president of IROKS Company, resolved to restore St. Michael's Church, which may become a center for the spiritual education of soldiers being trained in Yavoriv, as well as a symbol of the return of the deported local residents to their family sources of eternity.

"As long as this church continues to lie in ruins beneath our sky, there will be no order in our land," says Vozniak. "St. Michael's Church, destroyed but unvanquished, is a testament to our helplessness and weak spirit. This is our shame, which cannot be hidden and will never be erased from memory. Therefore, it is our duty to our forefathers to restore this church and prove that we are the true heirs of the masters of this wonderful land."

**Volodymyr Datsko**

## THE BYKIVNIA TRAGEDY

In the late 1960s one of the compilers of this article [written in 1998] went on a Sunday excursion to the outskirts of Kyiv with some colleagues from the Institute of Philosophy at the Academy of Sciences of the Ukrainian SSR. During their walk they came upon an extraordinary scene in the Bykivnia woods. In the middle of a copse of slender pines, young trees, and ferns stood a group of sagging, half-rotten crosses covered with cobwebs, to which icons of various sizes were attached. The scene resembled a Ukrainian cemetery. We young people were completely unaware of what had happened here thirty years ago, but the people's memory had not forgotten those horrific events.

Twenty years passed, Gorbachev introduced his policy of perestroika, and finally the question of the Bykivnia tragedy came to the fore in Kyiv. On 27 December 1987 the newspaper *Prapor komunizmu* [Flag of Communism] announced that a state commission had been formed after it was learned that grave robbers were extracting gold from the jaws of people buried in the Bykivnia woods. The goal of the commission was identical to the aims of the first two commissions (1944-1945; 1972): to hide the crimes committed by the communist regime by blaming the Nazis. On 7 May 1988 the Ukrainian republican press reported that the day before, 6 May, the

secretary and the head of the Kyiv municipal executive party committee, K. Masyk and V. Zhursky, respectively, had officially unveiled a monument in the Bykivnia woods with the following inscription: "Eternal memory. Buried here are 6,329 Soviet soldiers, partisans, insurgents, and civilians tortured to death by the fascist occupiers in 1941-1945." In 1989, after finally acknowledging that these executions had taken place in 1941 a fourth (!) government commission suggested another figure: 6,783. But was this true?

The public reacted with fury at the cynicism of the government authorities, who were still spreading lies even during the era of perestroika. The furor is described in the book *Bykivnia: Zlochyn bez kaiattia* [Bykivnia: A Crime without Repentance], published in the city of Brovary (Kyiv region) in 1996. Included in the book is an article by S. Malieiev, entitled "Ikhni ostanky v Bykivnianskomu mohylnyku" [Their Remains Are in the Bykivnia Grave], which contains the first list ever to be compiled of victims' names as well as hundreds of names that were published in the *Book of Memory of the Kyiv Region*. The names were supplied by the victims' relatives, who came to Bykivnia to pay their respects to their murdered parents and grandparents, and to leave a small plaque about them on a pine tree.

The USSR collapsed, "Iron" Felix was toppled from his pedestal on Dzerzhinsky Square in Moscow, and the top-secret KGB archives became partially, if not completely, accessible. Now people could learn how those 6,329 peaceful Soviet citizens had died.

The goal of the compilers of this article was to identify the victims, their origins and numbers, and to determine which of them were partisans or underground activists, and when they were executed. This data was collected and catalogued in the chapters "Khronika Bykivnianskoho lisu 1936-1941" [A Chronicle of the Bykivnia Woods 1936-1941], "Rozstrilnyi spysok" [Execution List], and "Vnesok Kyivshchyny v Bykivnianskyi liudo-mohylnyk 1936-1941" [The Contribution of the Kyiv Region to the Bykivnia Human Burial Ground 1936-1941]. Another volume contains eyewitness testimonies of executed victims,

survivors, and their relatives, as well as testimonies of their executioners and findings of scholars, who studied investigators' files in the archives.

According to some eyewitness reports, the Kyiv Chekists started burying the traces of their crimes in the Bykivnia woods already in the late 1920s. However, Bykivnia became the main burial ground of executed victims in the fall of 1936, when other burial sites in the Kyiv region (Lukianivka Cemetery, Babyn Yar, Sviatoshyn, and Baikove Cemetery) were filled to capacity, and rumors had begun circulating among the population. In the spring of 1937 the Soviet security organs tested out the Bykivnia woods and then obtained official permission from the Kyiv municipal council. By the summer of 1937 the construction of this "special zone for the needs of the NKVD," begun in the spring of 1936, was completed in the form of a high, impenetrable green fence covered with barbed wire (the same kind as the one in the fruit orchard

in Vinnytsia, near the exit for Lityn) to which corpses of executed people were brought here and where in 1941 people sentenced to death in Kyiv were transported and shot on the spot.

Archival research revealed that people were not executed just in Kyiv (Bykivnia 1) but in other cities: Uman (Bykivnia 2), Bila Tserkva (Bykivnia 3), Cherkasy (Bykivnia 4), and Zhytomyr (Bykivnia 5).

No matter how stridently the current heirs of the Chekists in the Security Service of Ukraine declare that it is impossible to determine the exact burial place in Bykivnia (instead of breaking their ties with the KGB and telling people the truth about Bykivnia), the authors of this article maintain that people who were executed in Kyiv from fall 1936 to fall 1941 are buried in the Bykivnia woods. The 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> sectors of the Bykivnia woods should become the symbolic burial site of residents of the Kyiv region, no matter where they were shot by the Bolsheviks in the interwar years (1929-1941), and of all the sons and daughters of Ukraine who were tortured and executed in the GULAG.

The main source of information on these "enemies of the people," who were shot after

being charged under article 54 of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR (article 58 of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR) consists of files taken from the archival fonds of the KGB of the Ukrainian SSR, now stored in the Central State Archive of Civic Organizations of Ukraine (hereafter TsDAHOU).

The Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR, which includes the notorious article 54, was ratified in 1927. This article contained the following clauses:

- 54-1: state treason
- 54-2: armed uprising
- 54-3: counterrevolutionary assistance to another state
- 54-4: assistance to the international bourgeoisie
- 54-5: war propaganda
- 54-6: espionage
- 54-7: wrecking
- 54-8: terrorism
- 54-9: subversive activity
- 54-10: anti-Soviet agitation
- 54-11: counterrevolutionary organization
- 54-12: failure to report a crime to the organs

54-13: service in an enemy army, counterrevolutionary activity before and during the revolution.

On 2 November 1927, on the tenth anniversary of the October coup, the presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR passed a resolution “On Amnesty.” With propagandistic pomp the Bolshevik government proclaimed to the entire world that citizens of the USSR should not be prosecuted for crimes committed before 1 January 1923. But ten years later, on the twentieth anniversary of the “Great October,” people who were amnestied under article 54 were reminded of their struggle against the Bolsheviks and destroyed. To make their cases more convincing, Soviet investigators would mark down statements of the accused during their interrogations, e.g., their dissatisfaction with the Soviet government, collectivization, the Holodomor, etc. During interrogations the investigator would ask the accused: “Were you a Petliurite?” The accused would answer, “I was.” “Did you make statements against collectivization?” “I did.” The investigator would instruct the unwitting person to sign his accusation



*The Bykivnia monument stands at the entrance to the woods where thousands of Ukrainians were shot during the Bolshevik terror.*

Photo: Andrii Sharafdinov.



*A memorial cross erected in memory of the thousands of victims buried in Bykivnia.*

Photo: Andrii Sharafdinov.

under article 54-2-10, which was an automatic death sentence.

The mechanism of repressions involved detailed instructions sent from Moscow, indicating how many people should be repressed according to the 1<sup>st</sup> category, i.e., executed, or the 11<sup>th</sup>, i.e., how many years of imprisonment in a concentration camp. Stalin and Yezhov's orders and resolutions, as well as Politburo decisions, were marked "Top Secret" and then distributed to republican, territorial, and regional party committees and NKVD organs, who in turn circulated them throughout raions and villages. Separate instructions were issued on the numbers of nationalists to be removed (Ukrainian, Polish, etc.), Trotskyites, kurkuls, and other counterrevolutionary elements.

The implementation of these plans sometimes reached the height of absurdity. For example, the plan to liquidate the non-existent Polish Military Organization (POV) was carried out with the aid

of telephone books from which Polish-sounding names were selected. Then the bearers of these names were arrested and shot. This practice was confirmed by Stalin's brother-in-law Stanislav Redens before his execution (See *Nashe mynule* [Our Past], Kyiv, 1993, pp. 40-42). Redens knew what he was talking about because he was the head of the GPU of the Ukrainian and Russian SSRs, and Yagoda and Yezhov's deputy.

In Ukraine the POV plan targeted Petliura's associates, who had been interned in Poland in 1920 and then returned to their native land, Galicians, and all other individuals who had been born in Poland.

Now we come to the question of how many victims are buried in the Bykivnia woods: 6,329 or 6,783. According to Bykivnia researchers O. Deko, M. Lysenko, and L. Taniuk, between 50,000 and 150,000 people are buried in Bykivnia.

**Prof. Mykola Rozhenko**

# BYKIVNIA: IN THE ZONE OF SPECIAL SILENCE

The founding and continuing functioning of Soviet power in Ukraine was linked to the organization by the communist ideologues of preventive, permanent political terror against any signs of dissidence in society. The first people to experience the imposition of Bolshevik statehood in Ukraine and figure in the lists of the first victims of the “red terror” were the residents of Kyiv. The embodiment of the triumphant course of the new government became none other than Mikhail Muravev, who after his arrival in Ukraine’s capital on 26 January 1918, began resolutely to introduce “revolutionary order” by combating all manifestations of the Ukrainian nation. The first week of his sojourn in Kyiv cost the lives of at least 2,000 people.<sup>1</sup>

The period of lawlessness continued from February to August 1919. According to the calculations of the “Special Commission for Research into Bolshevik Crimes, Attached to the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces in Southern Russia,” which began its work immediately after Denikin’s troops occupied Kyiv, the number of people killed by the “Kyivan special organs” reached 1,000.<sup>2</sup>

In an interview with the correspondent of *Kievlianin* [Kyivite] court investigator S. Miliashkevych reported that in addition to carrying out sentences on Sadova Street, five executions were also carried out on 15 Katerynynska Street and Yelyzavetynska Street.<sup>3</sup> On Yelyzavetynska Street the shootings took place in a garage, where human skull fragments were found, as well as a block on which victims were tortured to death. Embedded in the walls were hooks on which the doomed were probably hanged, because the wall in this section was heavily spattered with blood. On Katerynynska Street the executions took place in a kitchen, on the floor of which were found traces of baked-on blood.<sup>4</sup> Later, Kyiv newspapers reported on new crime sites at the Cheka building located at 16 Katerynynska Street, in which executions took place in the basement of the building and a laundry room located in another wing. Traces of these tragic events were also found there. In his testimony to the investigative organs, an orderly, who was responsible for collecting corpses from the execution sites, noted: “...the executions took

place on 5 Sadova Street; 16 Katerynynska Street; and 25 Pushkin Street, and sometimes in the courtyard of the military-revolutionary tribunal. The Chekists would order carts to be brought in at night between midnight and 2:00 a.m. Based on the number of carts that had been ordered, the orderlies could tell roughly how many people had been shot.” The eyewitness gave a detailed account of the execution of 127 people on Sadova Street: “We were summoned at midnight. On arrival, we were told that carts were not necessary, but orderlies would be required to collect the corpses. The orderlies noticed a huge pit that had been dug in the left corner of the orchard. Near the entrance to the shed where the executions took place, I noticed a huge pile of clothing that had been removed from the victims. It was terrifying to enter the shed; there was a huge pile of dead bodies. All of them were lying with their heads against the wall and their faces on the ground. The corpses were piled up in stacks. The first one had five or six layers, and there were fewer layers the closer the stack was to the doors. Next to the doors the corpses were stacked in one row... Judging by these ‘layers,’ the unfortunate martyrs had to place themselves near an executed person, and they themselves were shot...<...>”<sup>5</sup>

Strangely enough, the Chekists themselves assisted the “commissions to investigate the activity of Cheka divisions,” headed by Lieutenant-General Rerberg. According to a report by the information division of the CC CPU of 1 November 1919, “The newspapers were constantly writing about the Bolsheviks’ horrors. There were many special fabrications by volunteers, but even more materials were provided by the unburied corpses left by our people and a huge mass of minutes of VChK [Cheka] meetings and letters. All this is being published and savored, and serving as a subject of provocations...”<sup>6</sup> The iron rule of “never leave any traces,” adopted by the VChK during the Civil War, would be followed most scrupulously by its heirs in the GPU of the NKVD in peacetime.

Despite the end of the Civil War and the proclamation of the New Economic Policy (NEP), the war against the people continued.

“Bourgeois who had not been killed off,” members of political parties, former officers, and intellectuals fell beneath the political and ideological guillotine. The machine of repressions began to function more energetically in 1929, with the announcement of the policy of the “great breakthrough.” In the years 1930-1936 alone, 834 people in Kyiv and its vicinities were sentenced to death for various counterrevolutionary crimes.<sup>7</sup>

Once again, just like during the Civil War, people began disappearing without a trace from Kyiv. At best, their families would receive a standard report on the death of their loved ones, with no indication of where they were buried. In March 1989, during the investigation into criminal case no. 50-0092, in connection with the discovery of a mass grave near the large village of Bykivnia, the head of the KGB at the Council of Ministers of the Ukrainian SSR, M. M. Holushko, acknowledged that “until 1936 individuals sentenced to the highest degree of punishment, both for counterrevolutionary and ordinary crimes, were held in Lukianivka Prison, and after the sentence was carried out, they were buried in the vicinity of Lukianivka Cemetery, according to indirect eyewitnesses.”<sup>8</sup>

Today it is difficult to determine the exact place where the victims were buried. As a rule, NKVD personnel did not leave traces of “their work.” As the researcher of the Kyiv necropolis L. M. Protsenko correctly notes, “contrary to the pre-revolutionary registration of deaths, when a priest would conscientiously record in the registry of births and deaths both the cause of death (as a result of execution or hanging) or the place where the remains were buried, the NKVD organs <...> did not record where their victims were buried.”<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, the administrators and technical personnel at cemeteries, who participated in the nocturnal burials, were eventually also liquidated. This happened in May 1938, immediately after the special services located and successfully “began operating” a new burial ground for “enemies of the people.” On 27 April and 7 May 1938 the entire staff (twelve individuals) of Lukianivka Cemetery was arrested on charges of membership in a counterrevolutionary insurgent organization. During the brief investigation it was determined that the [cemetery’s] director P. Vorobiov, and his colleagues P. Omelchenko, A. Tytarenko, P.

Forostovets, and others “conducted anti-Soviet agitation against the Soviet government’s measures [and] praised the fascist order in Germany.”<sup>10</sup> From the reminiscences of an eyewitness named Hryhorii Chorny we learn what, in addition to “counterrevolutionary crimes,” the NKVD organs were interested in during the interrogations of the gravediggers at Lukianivka Cemetery. Vorobiov and I were arrested the same night. Besides Vorobiov and me, the cemetery workers Syratsky and Kryvenko were arrested. I was detained for seven days, and during this time I was called for questioning several times. During the interrogations I was asked what kind of work I do at the cemetery. I don’t remember what other questions were asked. I was the only one released after my arrest!”<sup>11</sup> The others were shot as “dangerous witnesses” by a decision passed on 3 and 10 May 1938 by a troika of the NKVD Directorate for Kyiv region.

The final resting place of the workers of Lukianivka Cemetery and many thousands of innocent victims of the Stalinist terror — a plot of land near the village of Bykivnia — was approved for the special needs of the NKVD by a decision handed down by the Kyiv municipal council on 20 March 1937.<sup>12</sup> The residents of Bykivnia recall that construction began much earlier — in the summer of 1936. Within a short period of time a road was built in the vicinity of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> sectors of the Dniprovsky forest area of the Darnytsia forest-park farm, the construction of a staff building was completed, and a plot of land totaling four to five hectares was cordoned off by a green fence.

The designation of a significant part of the forest massif for the “special needs” of the NKVD was one of the top tasks in the Stalinist leadership’s preparations of a wide-ranging program aimed at the destruction of the Ukrainian nation. It did not take long for the scenario of the undeclared war on “kurkul-Petliurite elements” to be implemented. On 4 July 1937 the People’s Commissar of Internal Affairs of the USSR sent the NKVD organs the following telegram, no. 11926:

*“To all NKVD heads and NKVD directorate heads in territories and regions: Upon receipt of this, begin recording all kurkuls, criminals who have returned after serving their sentences, and refugees from*

*camps and exiles residing in your region.*

*Divide all the listed kurkuls into 2 categories:*

- 1) the most hostile elements, who are subject to arrest and execution through administrative examination of cases by troikas;*
- 2) less active but nevertheless hostile elements, who are subject to exile in raions according to the instructions of the NKVD USSR.*

*By 8 July 1937 report by telegraph on the numbers of people in category 1 and 2, with a separate note concerning kurkuls and criminals. We will issue a separate instruction about the timeframe of the operation and its order.*

*Yezhov.*”<sup>13</sup>

This operation was launched on 1 August 1937. As usual, it was carried out in a straightforward, organized fashion under the control of the newly appointed People’s Commissar of Internal Affairs of Ukraine, I. M. Leplevsky. As a result of the Chekist operation in the city of Kyiv and Kyiv regions, which included the territory of today’s Cherkasy region and part of Zhytomyr and Chernihiv regions in 1937-1938, 6,500 people accused of counterrevolutionary activity were shot.<sup>14</sup>

The terror stemming from the “execution quotas,” secret circulars, orders, and telegrams from the higher political leadership, as well as the impunity of those who personified the “punitive sword of the revolution,” placed murder on a conveyor belt and gave rise to a sophisticated industry of destroying people.

Here is how V. Muntian, Doctor of Jurisprudence, describes the mass repressions in Kyiv in 1937-1938 (based on the eyewitness testimony of former prosecutor M. Tabachny): “Tabachny told me that some time in 1937-1940 he was present in connection with his work during the execution of sentences handed down to individuals, who had been sentenced to death. From Tabachny’s words I remember well that this concerned the execution of sentences in Lukianivka Prison. All this took place in the room of the commandant in charge of special affairs. . . According to his statement, a person sentenced to be shot would be brought from the basement on some kind of elevator to the room for executions. As a prosecutor, he would attest

that this was the person sentenced to be shot. After this the person would be made to kneel facing the wall, with his head bent down, and the commandant would shoot him in the back of the head. The dead person would be brought downstairs, and the next condemned individual would be brought in. He did not tell me who else was present during the execution. From his words I understood that there was only some sort of auxiliary personnel present, because some people would go into hysterics before being shot and had to be calmed down with the assistance of these individuals. According to Tabachny, the sentences were carried out at night. On average, 100-150 people were shot in one night. Usually this did not take place every day, but according to Tabachny, over a number of years this procedure affected his health. I also remember he told me that the bodies of executed people were transported outside the city, past Darnytsia — to the forest.”<sup>15</sup>

The memoirs of Luka Husak help to fill in the picture of the crimes committed by the NKVD organs in Kyiv: “In carrying out the duties of section head [GPU technical liaison] I often saw how early in the morning the bodies of people were transported from the inner courtyard of our commissariat located on October Revolution Street; at the time there was an internal [pretrial] prison there. . . I was sitting on the third floor, and from the window I saw a truck filled with corpses standing in the courtyard. They were covered with an ordinary tarpaulin, so that people could not see what kind of cargo was in the truck. . . I also clearly remember that a doorkeeper of short stature worked in the courtyard where the internal prison was located. So when the truck was being loaded with dead bodies and covered with the tarpaulin, he would place a tire on top of it. . . he would sit down on it, and the truck would drive out of the courtyard. I do not know where they transported the corpses. This was kept very secret. It was forbidden to look through the windows. . .”<sup>16</sup>

According to the testimony of arguably the only eyewitness of those sad events, a retired NKVD official named M. Musorgsky, who had worked as a driver in a unit to combat counterrevolution in Kyiv region, the corpses of “enemies of the people” were transported to the vicinity of the village of Bykivnia, where to the right of the highway, in a forest, was a large fenced-off tract of forest land that was closely



guarded. “When I was bringing corpses to Bykivnia, pits had already been dug there. The corpses were dumped into the pits. People were shot in the basement of the inner prison (R. Liuksemburg Street) and at night they were loaded on trucks with special pincers that grabbed the bodies by the neck or legs and tossed them on the flatbeds of trucks. When a truck was completely filled. . . [the bodies] were covered with a tarpaulin and transported during the night to Bykivnia. . . As a rule, two or three trucks escorted by NKVD officials drove the bodies at night.”<sup>17</sup>

The procession of sealed trucks to the Bykivnia woods did not cease even during the partial political thaw. According to archival documents of the Security Service of Ukraine, during the period between 1939 and 18 September 1941 (on the eve of the Nazi occupation of Kyiv) the secret NKVD cemetery “expanded” by 2,563 more bodies of “bourgeois nationalists,” “spies,” and “terrorists.”<sup>18</sup> In the summer of 1941 eighty-nine soldiers who were executed for deserting the Red Army found their final resting place among the pines of the Bykivnia woods.<sup>19</sup>

For a long time the mystery of the secret site cordoned off by a green fence troubled the residents of Bykivnia. “When the Red Army retreated,” recalls Semen Dembovsky, “the residents dashed to this fenced-off place and began digging in search of valuables, but they found a cemetery there.”<sup>20</sup> In the fall of 1941 and the spring of 1942 exhumations in the Bykivnia woods were initiated on orders from the German administration and in the presence of journalists. Afterwards, on 8 October 1941 the newspaper *Ukrainske slovo* [Ukrainian Word], which was published during the occupation of Kyiv, printed an article entitled “Shliakhom morduvan. I v Kyievi lylas nevyynna krov” [By Means of Murder: Innocent Blood Also Flowed in Kyiv]. The article reported that “victims of Bolshevik terror” were buried near the village of Bykivnia. Soon after, on orders of the occupation authorities, work was begun to erect a memorial sign on the burial site, but it was never completed.<sup>21</sup>

Time passed and the zone, neglected by the new masters, began to lose its original look. Right after Kyiv was liberated from the Germans in 1943, the residents of Bykivnia dismantled the

green fence and the building to use as construction material and for renovating their houses damaged by the retreating Germans. New forest vegetation soon began growing on the site of the secret cemetery. It seemed that nature itself was trying to forget everything that recalled the Bykivnia tragedy; but not people’s memories.

The findings of the Kyiv regional commission to assist the State Commission in determining and investigating the facts concerning the crimes perpetrated by the Germans were supposed to help the restored Soviet government formulate “correct” public opinion on the mass burials in Bykivnia.<sup>22</sup> The Soviet government’s efforts to “convince” the public that behind the “green fence” were buried victims of the fascist regime entailed the arrest in March 1945 (and ten-year imprisonment) of S. Dembovsky, who “being hostile to the Soviet government, had reported to the German occupiers after their arrival and pointed out to them the invented NKVD cemetery, where, according to his declaration, executed Ukrainian people were allegedly buried.”<sup>23</sup>

The existence of the Ukrainian necropolis near Kyiv was broached only during the Khrushchev era by members of the Club of Creative Youth based in the capital. In the spring of 1962 the club founded a commission whose goal was to verify the rumors of the Stalinist-era burial place.

Through the efforts of Les Taniuk, Alla Horska, and Vasyl Symonenko, traces of the mass burials of the 1930s were found near the village of Bykivnia. The commission’s next step was to send the Kyiv municipal council a memorandum demanding that it publicize the existence of these graves and clean up the burial site. The authorities were quick to respond, and the Club of Creative Youth was closed.<sup>24</sup>

In April 1971 the party leadership was forced to break the lengthy silence around the Bykivnia burials by a large number of letters, grievances submitted by local residents, and “signals” from the KGB organs concerning numerous incidents of looting near the village of Bykivnia.<sup>25</sup> On 16 April 1971 the territory of the “green fence” was even inspected by the first secretary of the CC CPU, Petro Shelest. He would record his impressions of what he had seen in the pages of his diary: “I was personally on the spot — a horrible picture of human tragedy.”<sup>26</sup>

The following day, 17 April 1971, the Council of Ministers of the Ukrainian SSR passed resolution no. 272-rs, creating a state commission headed by Minister of Internal Affairs I. Holovchenko to investigate the crimes committed by the Nazis in the vicinity of the Dniprovsyky forest area. The very name of the commission already indicated the direction it was supposed to pursue. This is confirmed by extracts from the minutes (stenogram) of the commission's meeting on 19 April 1971, during which Holovchenko declared: "We should conclude this work in four-five days. We cannot generate discussions before the holidays [International Workers' Solidarity Day]. In five days we should also build a little grave mound there."<sup>27</sup>

As the minister predicted, on 22 April 1971, exactly in five days, the state commission concluded its work. The tight deadlines for the reburial of the remains made it impossible to launch a criminal case and question as many eyewitnesses as possible. The approaching May 1 festivities also affected the work of the forensic experts, who managed to determine only the number of bodies, types of injuries, and the approximate time of their burial. Other questions were not explored. A number of excavated items (e.g., a glass plate with the surname "Ivanovsky, M. H.," a comb stamped "Prokopovych") could have fundamentally influenced the determination of the circumstances behind the mass burials. The search activity of the operational-investigations group of the KGB Directorate at the Council of Ministers of the Ukrainian SSR for Kyiv region was steered along an intentionally false path. The members of the state commission constantly urged the representatives of the special services to focus on archival materials connected to the criminal activity of the German occupiers in the capital of Ukraine during 1941-1943, as well as on the localization of false rumors that were circulating among the population of Kyiv's Dnipro and Darnytsia districts.<sup>28</sup>

The results of the state commission's work were publicized in an announcement by the Radiotelegraph Agency of Ukraine (RATAU) which was published by all the leading newspapers in Ukraine. "In April 1971 another place was found in the Darnytsia forest massif, where the fascist aggressors carried out reprisals against Soviet people. A special state commission

has determined that here the occupiers savagely destroyed several thousand Soviet citizens — POWs, women, elderly people, and invalids. The discovered remains were buried in a common grave near the place of a "bloody reprisal against Soviet people."<sup>29</sup>

Despite the discovery of 207 grave pits and the reinterment of 3,805 remains, the Soviet authorities failed to put an end to the "gold seekers'" movement on the "green fence" territory. Looters continued to be active in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> sectors of the Darnytsia forest area from the mid-1970s to the end of the 1980s.

The democratization of civic life and expansion of glasnost in the 1980s gave hope to the Kyivan intelligentsia that the mystery of the Bykivnia graveyard would one day be solved in an objective fashion. In late 1987 the Kyiv branch of the Union of Writers of Ukraine sent a letter to the municipal party committee with a request to tidy up the burial site in the Darnytsia forest and erect a monument with the following inscription: "To the victims of Stalinist terror from the Ukrainian people." "Tidying the burial pits should serve as an example of the genuine restructuring of our society in the spirit of those decisions that the CPSU has proclaimed... The party should prove in fact that 'no one and nothing have been forgotten.'<sup>30</sup> The question of the "immediate cleanup of the burial sites by interior troops" was also discussed at the KGB Directorate of the Ukrainian SSR for the city of Kyiv and Kyiv region.<sup>31</sup>

The public's interest in the burials in the Bykivnia woods prompted the secretary of the CC CPU, Yu. Yelchenko, the first secretary of the Kyiv municipal party committee, K. Masyk, and the head of the KGB, M. Holushko, to broach the question of creating another state commission on the Bykivnia problem at a Central Committee meeting on 22 December 1987.<sup>32</sup>

On 24 December 1987 a second state commission headed by I. D. Hladush, Minister of Internal Affairs of Ukraine, began working at the burial site. During the thorough inspection of the site measuring four hectares, 68 more grave pits containing the remains of 2,518 people were discovered.<sup>33</sup>

Taking into account the previous commission's experience, the new commission did not initiate a criminal case into the mass burials, and there was

no investigation. Again, the members of the forensic medical experts' commission ignored the differences in the methods of destruction and burial of people in the Darnytsia concentration camp and in the vicinity of Bykivnia. Again the commission ignored the fact that only naked corpses of males were found near the concentration camp, and these graves did not reveal a single trace of personal items and gold objects. While some corpses had bullet wounds to the head, a large number of these victims had died as a result of infectious diseases, exhaustion, and blunt-force trauma to the head, all of which contrasted sharply with the method of killing the people buried in the Bykivnia woods.

These circumstances had no impact on the state commission's findings. The following inscription was engraved on the monument unveiled on 6 May 1988, immediately after the burial sites were cleaned up: "Eternal memory. Buried here are 6,329 Soviet warriors, partisans, underground members, and civilians executed by the fascist occupiers in 1941-1945."

The deliberate concealment of Stalinist crimes in Ukraine committed by the Soviet power structures and the unwillingness of the heads of the state commission to reveal the truth about the Bykivnia tragedy sparked a wave of protests in Kyiv.

In the summer of 1988 activists of the Ukrainian Culturological Club founded a seven-member initiative group whose goal was "to collect new testimonies concerning the suppressed Stalinist crime... appellations to the government of the Ukrainian SSR, which has made a deliberate mistake in the date and the identity of the guilty parties of the tragedy in the vicinity of Bykivnia."<sup>34</sup>

The question of conducting an objective study of the circumstances behind the mass burials in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> sectors of the Dniprovsky forest area was the subject of meetings attended by activists of the civic organizations Memorial, Spadshchyna [Legacy], and Hromada [Community], held on 6 December 1988 in the Republican Cinema Building. The activists' proposals to "create a memorial in the Darnytsia woods near Bykivnia, which would realistically correspond to historical truth," and to "lift the veil of secrecy from and publicize the appropriate archives of the CC CPU, the NKVD, and the KGB of the Ukrainian SSR with the goal of

restoring historical justice<sup>35</sup> were reflected in an order issued by the Council of Ministers of the Ukrainian SSR on 8 December 1988. The document called for the state commission to conduct additional research into the circumstances and documents connected to the mass burials near the village of Bykivnia. In early 1988 a decision was passed to launch a criminal investigation into the mass burials in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> sectors of the Dnirovsky forest area. An investigation group was created, more than 250 eyewitnesses were questioned, more than 60 archival-investigative files were examined, and an exhumation was carried out. On 21 March 1989 the remnants of personal belongings helped identify fourteen people who were repressed in 1937-1938. For the first time the state commission confirmed that victims of Stalinist repressions are buried near the village of Bykivnia. It will take another six years to build a memorial complex on this site, which will serve as a symbol of historical memory and justice.

## DOCUMENTS

*In the process of preparing the documents for this section of the study, the compilers utilized materials from the fonds of the Central State Archive of Civic Organizations of Ukraine (TsDAHOU), State Archive of the Security Service of Ukraine (DA SBU), and the State Archive of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine (DA MVSU). Of particular importance are the documents from criminal case no. 50-0092 concerning the mass burials of citizens in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> sectors of the Dnirovsky forest area, which are stored in the Archive of the Military Prosecutor's Office of the Northern Region of Ukraine (AVPPRU).*

*This section contains thirty-four documents. They are numbered chronologically, each with its own title that succinctly encapsulates its contents. Most of these documents are being published in full for the first time. Information with no bearing on the topic has been omitted from some documents and indicated in the endnotes.*

*The archeographic preparation of the documents was completed according to the rules governing the publication of historical documents. Each document is accompanied by search data listing the abbreviated name of*

the archive, the number of the fond, file, and folio, and the language of the original document.

The compilers are grateful to A. I. Amons, V. P. Lakyziuk, N. V. Platonova, O. M. Pshennikov, and F. V. Smirnov for their help in locating these documents.

### No. 1

#### **From the minutes of a meeting of the presidium of the Kyiv municipal council about designating a plot of land for the special needs of the NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR**

20 March 1937

39. Concerning the allocation and demarcation of land for special needs.<sup>36</sup> To confirm the draft of the resolution (in the secret section).<sup>37</sup>

(AVPPRU, file 50-0092, vol. 7, fol. 358; copy, Ukrainian)

### No. 2.

#### **Announcement in the newspaper *Ukrainske slovo* [Ukrainian Word] “Shliakhom morduvan. I v Kyievi lylasia nevyinna krov” [By Means of Murders. Innocent Blood Was Also Shed in Kyiv] about the excavations of mass graves in the village of Bykivnia**

8 October 1941

Published reports illustrated by original photographs from Lviv, Lutsk, Rivne, Minsk, Riga, and Tallin, have shown the entire world the barbaric, inhuman terror of the Bolsheviks whose victims are thousands of innocent children, women, and men.

We are seeing a completely analogous phenomenon also in Kyiv, about which eyewitnesses and German military correspondents are reporting. Past Brovary, a distance of two kilometers from the Kyiv-Chernihiv highway, German troops in the vicinity of Lake Rybne have found several large, freshly made sand mounds. Following exhumations, horribly mangled human bodies were found in them, at a depth of half a meter.<sup>38</sup> Further exhumations carried out in an area [measuring] approximately 15,000 square meters led to the same bloodcurdling result. It has been confirmed that this was a mass grave in which hundreds of women and men were buried on the orders of the head of the NKVD. This was

also confirmed by the manager of the building, who used to live near the Komsomol camp. The building manager, by the name of Symon Dembovsky,<sup>39</sup> declared that in the last days of the Bolshevik terror many NKVD trucks brought the bodies of murdered people to this place. This sheds a ray of light [on where] hundreds of distinguished Ukrainians, residents of Kyiv, and prisoners from the NKVD jails of Kyiv disappeared.

(*Ukrainske slovo*, 8 October 1941; Ukrainian)

### No. 3

#### **Leaflet published by the German occupation government, entitled *Nova Vinnytsia* [Another Vinnytsia] about the discovery of numerous burial places of repressed victims in various regions of Ukraine**

No earlier than 23 May 1943

The mass graves discovered in Vinnitsa have demonstrated with earthshaking clarity that Bolshevism mercilessly exterminated all segments of the population that firmly maintained their national customs and habits. Among the Vinnitsa victims of the NKVD were not kulaks, not large landowners, not well-to-do merchants, bankers, or officers, but collective farmers and workers, often the poorest of the poor. From this it is clear that it was not a specific class that was subject to extermination but all nationally conscious segments of the population.

That the Bolsheviks were carrying out that monstrous idea whose systematic implementation should have required millions of victims is not the fruit of fantasy but can be proved on the basis of a whole number of other mass killings. In the days of the discovery of the mass grave in Vinnitsa, where 10,000 innocent victims were buried,<sup>40</sup> similar sites of mass reprisals were discovered in other cities of Ukraine; an even significantly larger burial field was discovered near Kiev; an equally large field in Zhitomir, and a third in Kamenets-Podolsk.

All these graves appeared approximately at the same time: in 1937-1938. During this period the Soviet government was at the peak of its power. For this reason, Stalin the executioner decided to set about implementing his program: he sought to extirpate everything national from the milieu of the nations oppressed by the Soviet Union. The same

thing was happening in other regions of the Soviet Union: in Belarus, in the Crimea, in the Caucasus, and in the north of Russia. Those “purges” cost the lives of millions of people.

(DA MVSU, fond 3, list 1, file 740, fol. 61; copy; Russian)

#### No. 4

**Logbook note from the head of the KGB at the Council of Ministers of the Ukrainian SSR, V. Fedorchuk, to the Council of Ministers of the Ukrainian SSR and the CC CPU about known incidents of looting near the village of Bykivnia in the Dneprovsky district of the city of Kyiv**

16 April 1971. Secret.

On 13 April 1971 militia workers detained three teenagers, who were excavating a pit with remains of human skeletons and removing gold crowns and teeth from them in a forest in the vicinity of the hamlet of Bykovnia in the Dneprovsky district of the city of Kiev, approximately 2.5 kilometers from the highway to Brovary.

During the inspection of the indicated place 19 partially hidden pits were discovered, from which the teenagers had removed more than 100 remains of skeletons-skulls and bones. It was determined that sixteen teenagers from among the residents of a settlement attached to the Darnitsa steam-engine repair plant had taken part in excavating the pits.

According to external signs (depressions), more than 100 such pits were counted in the vicinity of the pits. On 15 April a commission consisting of the raion prosecutor, representatives of the MVD and the KGB at the Council of Ministers of the Ukrainian SSR, with the participation of a forensic medical expert, one pit was excavated, and twenty-five remains of human skeletons were removed from it.

On the majority of the well-preserved skulls are bullet holes attesting to the fact that the people buried in the pits were shot.

Items of clothing and toiletries were also removed from the pits: men’s and women’s footwear, toothbrushes, combs, as well as small metal pans and cups, glasses with plastic frames, wallets, a wooden snuffbox, belts, and other items.

Some of the men’s and women’s footwear removed from the pits (rubber galoshes, boots) as

well as combs, toothbrushes, metal pans, and cups, were of foreign make. In one of the pits two half-liter glass bottles with the date of manufacture, “February 1939,” were also discovered.

On the basis of the collected data, the following preliminary conclusion may be drawn:

— the events connected with the execution of people buried in the discovered pits date to the period of the Great Fatherland War;

— before their death the dead people were located not in a prison but in all probability they were kept in a camp;

— the number of executed people buried in the pits possibly stands at approximately 2,000 people;

— apparently, the majority of the victims were city residents.

The place with the discovered pits has been placed under guard by the militia of the city of Kiev. The organs of the Prosecutor-General’s office, the MVD, and the KGB are adopting measures to determine the circumstances of the mass executions of these people.

Chairman of the Committee of State Security at the Council of Ministers of the Ukrainian SSR, V. Fedorchuk

(DA SBU, file 518, fols. 163-64; Russian)

#### No. 5

**From the journal entries of the first secretary of the CC CPU, Petro Shelest, about the discovery of graves with buried remains of unknown people in the vicinity of the village of Bykivnia**

16 April 1971

In a forest near Kiev, in the vicinity of the hamlet of Bykovnia, 200 graves-hillocks have been discovered with buried remains. Forensic medical experts took part in opening the graves and issued findings. They determined that in this spot were shot no fewer than 500 people, including men, women, and teenagers. There are traces of violence; many were shot with their hands tied. Many personal items were discovered with the remains: metal cups, spoons, combs, purses, a few trinkets. I was personally at the site — a sinister picture of human tragedy. Investigative organs are conducting investigations [to determine] who those unfortunates are, when it took place, and who is responsible for that

tragedy. Many items have foreign markings and stamps. A reinterment was done; a common grave was dug with a steam-shovel, they placed [the remains] in wooden boxes, that's how they buried them — they simply scattered some earth over them. Who those people are, why they were executed, and who executed them — so far nothing is known, but after all, traces of even that crime can be found.

(P. E. Shelest, *Da ne sudimy budete.*

*Dnevnikovye zapisi, vospominaniia chlena Politbiuro TsK KPSS*, Moscow, 1995, p. 478, Russian)

### No. 6

#### **From the minutes-stenogram of a meeting of the State Commission to investigate the crimes committed by the Hitlerites in the vicinity of the Dniprovsky forest area in the city of Kyiv**

19 April 1971

Comrade Golovchenko, I. Kh. The government has issued the following decision: to create a commission to investigate the crimes committed by the Hitlerites in the vicinity of the Dneprovsky forest area of the city of Kiev, consisting of comrades Golovchenko, Skopenko, Primak, Lavrukhin,<sup>41</sup> Spiridonov.

The commission is to report to the Council of Ministers of the Ukrainian SSR on the results of the work carried out. Signatures: comrade Shcherbitsky. <...>

Skopenko, S. F. There should be experts. Exhumation itself should take place: on the one hand, there should be filming, the general view of the locale should be filmed; on the other hand, perhaps the exhumation of individual corpses <...>

Golovchenko, I. Kh. Should criminal proceedings be instigated? <...>

Primak, I. P. But is it necessary to instigate criminal proceedings?

Skopenko, S. F. It won't be a problem that there will be a criminal case.

Golovchenko, I. Kh. It will make the situation easier. It will even be easier to question some old woman about what she heard when they were shooting. It's not possible that they didn't hear anything in the village.

Skopenko, S. F. There was no forest then. That forest is young, 20-30 years old. That is a young planting <...> The head of the raion division

should take two good communists, so that they will be witnesses for the entire trial.

Zabavskiy, N. N.<sup>42</sup> Maybe from among the foresters?

Skopenko, S. F. That's not necessary. They might not be objective. After all, they knew about it, but they were silent. We have to take people of a solid age, maybe some pensioners, preferably communists. There should be two witnesses. They should be together with the investigators, to record.

Golovchenko, I. Kh. <...> We should complete that work in 4-5 days. We cannot give rise to talk before the holidays. In 5 days we should also do the little graves there.

(DA MVSU, fond 3, list 1, file 408, fols. 1-6, original; Russian)

### No. 7

#### **Report of the head of the KGB Directorate at the Council of Ministers of the Ukrainian SSR for Kyiv region, Major-General V. Fesenko, on the work completed to verify the facts pertaining to the discovery of burial sites of unknown persons in the vicinity of the village of Bykivnia, in the Dniprovsky district of the city of Kyiv**

19 April 1971

On 13 April 1971 burial sites of unknown individuals were found in the forest in the vicinity of the hamlet of Bykovnia, in the Dneprovsky district.

On 14 April of t[his] y[ear] an operational-investigative group consisting of 3 members was formed in the KGB Directorate at the Council of Ministers of the Ukrainian SSR, which carried out the following work:

- 1) An inspection was conducted of the burial site with the participation of a medical forensic expert, members of the Prosecutor's Office and the UVD [Directorate of Internal Affairs];
- 2) A plan of initial measures was drawn up to verify and explain the circumstances of the burial of the unknown individuals;
- 3) Archival materials about the outrages of the German-fascist occupiers in the city of Kiev in 1941-43 were broached and studied;
- 4) Talks with prewar associates of the former NKVD Directorate of Kiev

region, comrades Itsurova, Romanchuk, and Tsvetukhin, were conducted, as well as with the forest warden Grigorenko, V. K. on the plot where the burial places were discovered;

- 5) A talk was held with Boiko, L. L., who during the occupation period was working in the kitchen of a POW camp located five kilometres from the burial place;
- 6) The act of the Extraordinary Commission on the outrages of the German-fascist occupiers, which they committed in the Darnitsa POW camp was found and studied;
- 7) Further work is being conducted in the direction of localizing false rumors pertaining to this fact, which may be spreading among the population of the Dneprovsky and Darnitsa districts of the city of Kiev.

Head of the KGB Directorate at the Council of Ministers of the Ukrainian SSR for Kiev region, Major-General V. Fesenko (DA SBU, file 518, fols. 139-139 verso; notarized copy, Russian)

#### No. 8

#### **From the findings of the forensic medical experts' commission on the investigation into the remains of corpses discovered on the territory of the Darnytsia forest massif of the city of Kyiv**

28 April 1971<sup>43</sup>

On 20-27 April 1971, on the instructions of the Government Commission of the Ukrainian SSR of 19/1K-71 y[ear], the forensic medical experts' commission consisting of: the chief forensic medical expert of the Ministry of Health of the Ukrainian SSR, Assistant Professor Grishchenko O. A. (chairman), forensic medical experts of the republican office of forensic medical expertise, Vedrigan, G. I., Zubkova, N. I., Medvedovsky, V. G., Opanasenko, P. I., Rak, V. Ya., and Tsvigun, T. G., in the presence of witnesses Yeltsov, N. I., Soldatov, P. K. Babkin, Ye. A., and Kozlov, P. P., conducted a forensic medical examination of the remains of corpses dragged from pits on the territory of the Darnitsa forest massif of the city of Kiev.

The examination of the remains was conducted in order to determine the number of buried corpses, their gender, age, cause of death, and the time of burial.

The commission examined 207 pits.

Bone remains were discovered at a depth of between 1.5 and 4 meters. Pine trees were growing on the surface of the soil, where the pits with bone remains were excavated. The age of the trees is between 2 and 25. <...>

During the excavation of the pits the arrangement of the corpses' bones was disordered, in most of the pits they were positioned with their heads downward. In some pits were found the remains of clothing in the form of shreds of silk, viscose, wool, and broadcloth textiles, as well as pieces of leather clothing. In all the pits a large quantity of footwear, primarily men's, in sizes 39-40, 42-45, and one sole sized 50, were found.

The character of the footwear: flat shoes, laced boots, incl. work boots, mainly with a rubber sole; boots, galoshes. <...> The trademark of the Moscow and Leningrad factories "Krasnyi treugolnik" [Red Triangle] et al., was found on some of the preserved rubber footwear. In individual pits women's footwear was discovered in the form of rubber boots, leather shoes on high and low heels, women's boots, and women's leather laced boots. <...>

A large quantity of personal effects was found: ivory combs and women's combs, toothbrushes, cigarette cases, leather bags, cigarette holders, eyeglasses; enamel, porcelain, faience cups and saucers; milk jugs, an enamelled plate, clay pot, military-style leather map cases, et al. <...> Casings, bullets, and parts of firearms were found in individual pits.

In order to calculate the number of corpses found in the pits, the commission used the best preserved bones of skeletons: skulls, femoral bones, as well as their numbers in the pits. <...>

Following this principle of computation, the commission determined that unequal numbers of corpses were found in the pits. Thus, in pits 11, 82, 159, and 196 were found the bone remains of one person; in pit no. 16 were found the bone remains of 75 people; the remains of 150 people were found in pits 115 and 116. Altogether, bone remains of 3,805 people were found in 207 pits. In order to determine the gender, anatomical-

morphological features of the skulls and individual craniometric indicators were used. As a result of those investigations, it was possible to determine that in the indicated pits were found the bone remains of 3,049 males and 105 females. <...>

At the same time it was determined that the bone remains under consideration belong to individuals of the following age groups:

A. Males:

18-25 — 304

25-35 — 388

35-45 — 1,055

45-55 — 948

55 and older — 354

B. Females:

18-25 — 21

25-35 — 6

35-45 — 60

45-55 — 7

55 and older — 11

Owing to the significant degradation of the bones, it was not possible to determine the age of 651 people according to the bone remains.

During the examination of the bone remains, entry and exit wounds made by bullets from firearms were discovered on 1,171 skulls. On the majority of the skulls the entry bullet wounds were located in the occipital bones, and in some — on the frontal, temporal, and parietal bones.

The entry bullet wounds had a round shape with a diameter from 0.7 to 0.9 cm, with a characteristic skewness of the inner bone plate along the edges of the defect <...>

No injuries by other types of weapons or implements were discovered in the bones of the skulls. Neither were firearm injuries and injuries from other types of weapons and implements discovered on the preserved bones of the torso and extremities <...>

#### FINDINGS

On the basis of the examination of the bone remains removed from 207 pits on the territory of the Darnitsa forest massif and in correspondence with the posed questions, the commission has arrived at the following conclusions:

1. Bone remains belonging to 3,805 people were discovered in the indicated pits.
2. Out of the total of skeletal remains, 3,049 belong to males, and 105 to women. <...>

On the preserved bones of the extremities and torso, remaining bone fragments, the presence of

firearm injuries or other types of trauma were not discovered, which does not exclude the onset of death of those individuals from firearm and other types of injuries to the organs of the chest and stomach. <...>

6. The complete absence of soft tissues on the bone remains and the character of the preserved bones, the degree of decomposition of clothing fibers and footwear; the germination of the root system of growing trees (approximately 20 years old) among the bones of the skeletons, and the characteristic of the soil attest to the fact that the corpses have been in the pits for a long period of time. The time of burial of the investigated remains can be estimated within the range of 25-30 years. Commission: Grishchenko, O. A., Kovalenko, Yu. I., Filipchuk, O. V.,<sup>44</sup> Vedrigan, G. I., Zubkov, N. I., Medvedovsky, V. G., Opanasenko, P. I., Rak, V. Ya., Tsvigun, T. G. (signatures) (DA MVSU, fond 3, list 1, file 408, fols. 17-26; original, Russian)

#### No. 9

#### **From a memorandum of the head of the Government Commission, I. Holovchenko of the CC CPU, on the completion of the work to reveal the remains of executed citizens in the 19<sup>th</sup> sector of the Dniprovsky forest area**

29 April 1971

On 22 April the commission formed on the instructions of the Council of Ministers of the Ukrainian SSR, dated 17 April 1971, no. 272-rs, completed the work of revealing the remains of executed people in the 19<sup>th</sup> sector of the Dniprovsky forest area of the city of Kyiv.

Out of 207 pits 3,805 remains of corpses were removed. According to the data of the forensic medical expert examination, 3,049 were males, and 105, females. <...>

There are bullet holes in 1,171 skulls. In one pit, hands tied with a rope were found among the remains. It was determined that the corpses were buried 28-30 years ago.

Judging by the placement of the remains, the burial of the corpses was carried out in a disorderly fashion.

Found in the pits were the remains of Soviet army officers' map cases, stars for headgear, and buttons of Soviet soldiers. In addition, a significant number of items, remains of clothing



and footwear of civilian type, including hats, rubber galoshes, porcelain cups, enamelled tiles, eyeglasses, combs, shaving implements, women's toiletries, and leg prostheses were found.

Cartridges and spent shell casings of foreign make, 3 grenades, "lemons" of German fabrication, and shell casings from small-caliber cartridges were found in several pits. In one pit 2 sawed-off rifles, 2 rifle barrels, a revolver of unknown make, a bayonet from a German rifle, a signal pistol, a barrel from a Nagant revolver and Soviet-made ramrod sleeves, an old-fashioned trigger gun, and certain details of weapons were found.

During the removal of the remains, a significant quantity of gold crowns, teeth, and plates, one medallion, one ring, weighing nearly 1 kg., was collected in the pits.

The remains were collected in 29 containers and buried in a mass grave near the place where they were discovered. The grave was tidied up properly and fenced off.

According to the commission's decision, all the materials concerning this case and the substantial evidence were handed over for further investigation to the Committee of State Security at the Council of Ministers of the Ukrainian SSR, Minister of Internal Affairs of the Ukrainian SSR, Ivan Holovchenko (DA MVSU, fond 3, list 1, file 408, fols. 32-33, copy, Ukrainian)

#### No. 10

**Logbook note from the head of the KGB Directorate for the city of Kyiv and Kyiv region, Major-General Yu. Shramko, to the head of the KGB at the Council of Ministers of the Ukrainian SSR, Major-General M. M. Holushko, about the need to tidy up the site of the mass burials in the 19<sup>th</sup> sector of the Dneprovsky forest area in the city of Kyiv**

16 December 1987. Secret.

On 13 April 1971 the KGB Directorate for Kiev region received a report from the Directorate of Internal Affairs of the Kiev municipal executive committee about the fact that the militia organs arrested three teenagers, who were engaged in excavating an unknown mass burial in the forest massif of the 19<sup>th</sup> sector of the Dneprovsky forest area of the city of Kiev, with

the goal of removing gold dentures. On 16 April, after a preliminary inspection, a report on this matter was submitted to the republican KGB.

Based on that information of a commission consisting of representatives of the KGB and MVD of the Ukrainian SSR, with the participation of a forensic medical expert, it was determined that approximately two thousand people were buried on the indicated forest plot, killed by firearms, the majority of which, apparently, were city residents and before their death were found not in prison but in all likelihood held in a fascist prison camp. The events connected with the execution of those citizens date from the period of the Great Fatherland War of 1941-1945. On the merits of the commission's findings of 16 April 1971 no. 272-rs,<sup>45</sup> the Committee of State Security of Ukraine informed the CC of the CPU and the Council of Ministers of the Ukrainian SSR.

On 24 April of that same year the newspaper *Pravda Ukrainy* published an announcement by RATAU about the fact that in the indicated forest massif the remains of several thousand Soviet citizens — POWs, women, elderly people, and invalids destroyed by the fascist occupiers were discovered buried in a mass grave.

At the present time, the facts about the continuing discovery of burials by unknown individuals for the looting of gold dentures and other valuables have been submitted to the Directorate. Arrival at the site determined that within 800 meters from the highway going from the city of Kiev to Brovary, in the vicinity of the hamlet of Bykovnia of the Dneprovsky district of the city of Kiev a plot of land is located in a pine forest measuring 200 by 100 meters, bordered by earthen walls up to 2 meters in height, on which are numerous pits-depressions.

Parts of human skeletons — skulls, arm and leg bones as well as semi-decomposed remains of footwear and other clothing items lie in the pits and on the surface of the earth.

The inspection revealed a fresh excavation measuring 1.5 x 1.5 x 2.5 meters, around which human bones and remnants of articles were scattered, having been removed from it.

Located in the center of this plot of land is an earthen mound; however no traces of a well-ordered common grave have been found.

In order to prevent the use of the indicated circumstances for hostile aims, we consider it

crucial to entrust the Directorate of Internal Affairs of the Kiev municipal executive committee with the task of immediately organizing a guard for the grave of the citizens martyred by the German-fascist invaders and suppressing illegal excavations; the site of the burial of those who perished must be promptly tidied up by the forces of the Interior Troops.

Head of the KGB Directorate of the Ukrainian SSR for the city of Kiev and Kyiv region, Major-General Yu. M. Shramko  
(DA SBU, file 518, fols. 161-162; original, Russian)

### No. 11

**Information sent by the secretary of the CC CPU, Yu. M. Yelchenko, first secretary of the Kyiv municipal committee of the CPU, K. I. Masyk, and the head of the KGB at the Council of Ministers of the Ukrainian SSR, M. M. Holushko, to the first secretary of the CC CPU, V. V. Shcherbytsky, on measures in connection with the new discovery of burial places of unknown persons in the Darnytsia forest massif of the city of Kyiv**

**Masyk, and the head of the KGB at the Council of Ministers of the Ukrainian SSR, M. M. Holushko, to the first secretary of the CC CPU, V. V. Shcherbytsky, on measures in connection with the new discovery of burial places of unknown persons in the Darnytsia forest massif of the city of Kyiv**

22 December 1987

In the last while, definite interest has been shown in the circumstances of the mass deaths of Soviet citizens in the period of the Great Fatherland War in the Darnitsa forest massif; various conjectures are spreading in connection with this.

The Kiev organization of the Union of Writers sent a document signed by the chairman of the board, I. Drach, and the deputy-secretary of the party committee, O. Musienko, to the municipal committee of the CPU, with an attached letter that they received entitled "Pits," in which they suggest that the burial site in the Darnitsa woods must be tidied up, a common grave prepared, and a monument erected with the inscription "To the victims of the Stalinist terror from the Ukrainian people."

As evident from archival materials, more than 68,000 POWs and other Soviet citizens were shot and done away with in the Darnitsa forest massif in 1941-1942 during the period of the temporary occupation of the city of Kiev by the Germans.

In connection with the discovery in 1971 in the indicated spot of unknown mass burials, on the instructions of the Council of Ministers of the

Ukrainian SSR a commission was formed in the month of April [consisting] of representatives of the MVD, the Prosecutor's Office and the republican KGB, the Kiev municipal executive committee and the regional military registration and enlistment office under the chairmanship of the Minister of Internal Affairs of Ukraine, which conducted the unsealing of the burial places and the examination of human remains discovered in the 19<sup>th</sup> sector of the Darnitsa forest massif.

Two hundred and seven pits were discovered and unsealed, in which were found the remains of 3,805 people buried in a haphazard way, aged 18 to 55, and older, of which 3,049 were determined to be males, and 105, females. The skulls of 1,171 had bullet wounds.

The burial places revealed parts of officers' map cases, stars and buttons of soldiers, fragments of clothing and footwear of civilian and military type, as well as cartridges, spent shell casings of foreign make, three grenades of German make, etc.

The experts determined that the corpses were buried approximately 28-30 years ago. The commission came to the conclusion that the discovered corpses are the remains of POWs and civilians shot by the Hitlerites during the occupation of the city of Kiev in 1941-1943.

The remains of the corpses were placed in containers and buried in a common grave near the place where they were discovered. The grave was not tidied up; a memorial sign was not erected.

On 24 April 1971 the newspaper *Pravda Ukrainy* published an announcement by RATAU about the fact that during the occupation period the fascists destroyed 68,000 Soviet citizens — concentration camp prisoners in the Darnitsa woods (appended<sup>46</sup>).

At the present time an on-site inspection has determined that not all the pits with remains of killed people were discovered in 1971. As of 22 December of t[his] y[ear] 2,200 more remains have been removed.

We would consider it expedient:  
— to create a government commission from among the leading officials of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR, the MVD, the Prosecutor's Office, the republican KGB, the Kiev municipal committee of the CPU, and the municipal executive committee, which would be instructed to conduct further work on investigating the plot at the site where the remains of killed

Soviet citizens were discovered, carry out corresponding expert investigations, documentation, the organization of the reburial, and the submission of proposals to commemorate the memory of the executed Soviet citizens, victims of the fascist occupation;

— to announce in the republican and local press about the creation of the government commission and its functions;

— to publish the commission's findings in the press (if necessary, available archival materials of the investigation into the outrages of the fascist invaders during the years of occupation of the city of Kyiv, as well as the findings of the government commission for 1971, could be published beforehand).

The KGB of the Ukrainian SSR will implement measures to uncover the possible inspirators and suppress provocative conjectures aimed at linking the events of the fascist occupation period with the so-called "victims of the Stalinist terror."

We request that you examine [this].<sup>47</sup>

Yu. Yelchenko, K. Masik, N. Golushko.

(TsDAHOU, fond 1, list II, file 1704, fols. 146-149; original, Russian)

## No. 12

### **From the minutes of the review by the investigating prosecutor of the Dniprovsky district of the city of Kyiv, V. A. Hubriienko, of the remains of unknown human corpses found in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> sectors of the Darnytsia forest-park farm of the city of Kyiv.**

23 December 1987

<...> The examination began on 19 December 1987 at 09:00 and completed on 23 December 1987 at 17:00.

The examination took place on each one of the indicated days from 09:00 hours to 17:00 hours. In natural lighting, <...>

During the examination it was determined: the place of the discovery of the bone remains of the human corpses is the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> sectors of the Dneprovsky forest area of Darnitsa forest-park farm of the city of Kiev, located 800 meters to the right of the Kiev-Brovary highway, measuring approximately 200 meters by 260 meters of a general territory of 4 hectares. In the indicated boundaries the area, covered with grass and sandy soil, is traversed by a multitude of

coniferous trees — pines with a diameter of up to 60 cm, and in certain cases up to 70 cm in diameter <...>

In total, 2,158 skeletons were discovered on the indicated territory, the main part of which was situated in the central part of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> sectors of the forest area. Bone remains were discovered at a depth from 0.2 to 4 meters <...> The majority of skulls are represented by disconnected bones in which, like the intact skulls, were revealed bullet wounds mostly with a diameter of 9 mm. Entry wounds are predominantly located in the occipital and parietal bones of the skull. <...> However, among the mass of skulls there are skulls with two, three, and even four entry wounds. In addition, skulls were found in which there are no bullet wounds at all. Besides holes with a diameter of 9 mm, there are entry wounds with a diameter of 6.3 mm, 7.64 mm, 11 mm, and 13 mm, but they are found in isolated cases. According to the degree of the healing of the skull sutures, the age [of the victims] is determined in this order: 18-20 to 65-70. The main group is 25-45 years [old]. <...>

Together with the discovery of the bones a mass of various footwear was found: men's leather shoes sized approximately 41-43, some of which have a high bootleg of the jackboot type, rubber footwear <...> On some of the rubber footwear the number "38" has been preserved in addition to the number indicator of the size of the footwear. All the rubber footwear shows a high percentage of wear and tear <...> In addition, women's shoes, leather boots, fashionable women's shoes were found <...>

Everyday domestic items were also found in analogous places: enamel cups of blue, green, white, and brown colors, which are deformed and rust-damaged. <...>

Also found were plastic combs, mainly black, some of which are of Austrian make. On one the signature "V. Prokopovich," etched with a sharp instrument, has been preserved.

On the plot of the area numbered 90, 47 shell casings, 1 pistol cartridge, and 2 carbine shells were found.

Investigator of the Prosecutor's Office for the Dneprovsky district of the city of Kiev, V. P. Gubriienko  
(DA MVSU, fond 3, list 1, file 739, fols. 25-29, copy, Russian)

**No. 13**

**Order no. 672-r of the Council of Ministers of the Ukrainian SSR concerning the creation of a Government Commission to investigate the uncovered remains of Soviet citizens destroyed by the German-fascist invaders in the period of the Great Fatherland War in the 19<sup>th</sup> sector of the Dniprovsky forest area of the city of Kyiv**

24 December 1987

1. With the goal of investigating the remains of Soviet citizens destroyed by the German-fascist invaders in the period of the Great Fatherland War, uncovered in the 19<sup>th</sup> sector of the Darnytsia forest area of the city of Kyiv, to create a Government Commission consisting of:

HLADUSH, Ivan Dmytrovych — Minister of Internal Affairs of the Ukrainian SSR (head of the commission)

LAVRUKHIN, Mykola Vasyliovych — first deputy head of the Kyiv municipal executive committee (deputy head of the commission)

BURCHAK, Fedir Hlibovych — head of the justice division of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR

KOVTUN, Heorhii Kyrylovych — deputy head of the KGB of the Ukrainian SSR

KONDUFOR, Yurii Yuriiiovych — director of the Institute of History at the Academy of Sciences of the Ukrainian SSR

LYTVYNCHUK, Stepan Khomych — Deputy Prosecutor-General of the Ukrainian SSR

MYKHAILIVSKY, Viktor Ivanovych — secretary of the Kyiv municipal committee of the CPU

MITIUKOV, Oleksander Heorhiiiovych — head of the Main Archive of the Ukrainian SSR

MOKROUSOV, Anatolii Oleksiiiovych — first secretary of the Dniprovsky raion committee of the CPU for the city of Kyiv

PLOSHCHENKO, Volodymyr Dmytrovych — Minister of Housing and Municipal Economy of the Ukrainian SSR

SELEZNIOV, Leonid Fedorovych — Kyiv municipal military committee

SERHIIENKO, Petro Semenovych — Deputy Minister of Culture of the Ukrainian SSR

SERDIUK, Andrii Mykhailovych — First Deputy Minister of Health of the Ukrainian SSR (Current archive of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine)

**No. 14**

**Findings of the Government Commission of the Ukrainian SSR on the investigation of the remains of Soviet citizens in the 19<sup>th</sup> sector of the Dniprovsky forest area of the Darnytsia forest-park farm of the city of Kyiv**

31 December 1987

In compliance with the order of the Council of Ministers of the Ukrainian SSR of 24 December 1987, no. 672-r, on 30 December of t[his] y[ear] the commission completed the work of investigating the remains of Soviet citizens destroyed by the German-fascist invaders in the period of the Great Fatherland War, uncovered in the 19<sup>th</sup> sector of the Dneprovsky forest area of the Darnytsia forest-park farm of the city of Kiev.

The work to uncover the burials and the removal of the remains began on 18 December and were completed on 24 December 1987 in an area of 4 hectares, which was provisionally broken up into 121 squares with a side of 20 meters. Remains were found in 44 squares. The work of searching for remains was carried out with coordinated technology, using a method of planned excavations in each square and additional investigation with the help of metallic probing rods. During the removal of human remains in 121 investigated squares, 68 acts were drawn up.

During the exhumation process, the remains of 2,518 people were discovered, as well as remnants of clothing, footwear, and personal everyday items. According to the data of the forensic medical examination, most of the bone remains are from males, and some are from females. The approximate age of the bodies is between 18 and 70 years; the main group is between 24 and 45 years old. There are bullet holes in many skulls. The time of burial is determined approximately 45 years ago (1941-1943).

It has been determined that the burials took place by means of a disorderly dumping of the corpses into the ground. Bones were discovered at a depth of 0.2 to 4 meters.

In the burial sites 50 shell casings, 3 cartridges, various articles and remnants of uniforms of Red Army servicemen and civilian clothing (footwear, leather belts, combs, and eyeglasses) were found. In one of the burial places a round official seal of the special division of the Revolutionary Military

Council of the South-Western Front, 128 metallic plates of oval form, on part of which the stamped signature of the “KOU NKVD USSR” [Kiev Regional Department of the NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR], and two stamps of rectangular form were found.

The exhumed remains of males were placed in 34 wooden containers, the remnants of personal items — in 8 wooden containers (altogether 42 containers). Two skulls and fragments of two lower jaw bones with nine crowns of yellow metal, as well as one set of dentures with two holders and a denture with a bridge of yellow-colored metal were placed in one of the containers together with all the remains.

The reinterment of the discovered remains of the dead took place on 25 December 1987 in the presence of the Government Commission, next to the place of reinterment that took place in 1971. The place of reinterment was put to rights in a fitting manner, where in the future, work to maintain the gravesite will be carried out in keeping with the project of the main administration “Kievproekt.”

After the completion of the work the administration of the executive committee of the Kiev municipal council of people’s deputies was instructed to secure the maintenance of the state of this burial site adjoining the territory, the road leading to it, and to maintain public order on the given territory.

The commission has passed a decision ordering the Prosecutor-General’s Office of the Ukrainian SSR to carry out an investigation of the facts concerning the outrages perpetrated on the remains of the dead Soviet citizens, prosecute the guilty parties in accordance with the law. Chairman of the Government Commission, Minister of Internal Affairs of the Ukrainian SSR, I. Gladush

(DA MVSU, fond 3, list 1, file 739, fols. 6-7, copy, Russian)

#### No. 15

### **Appeal of the participants of public meetings in Kyiv to the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR, demanding an objective study of the circumstances behind the mass burials near the village of Bykivnia**

6 December 1988

The participants of public meetings that took place on 6 December 1988 in the Republican

Cinema Building, members of the Ukrainian Studies club Spadshchyna, the Hromada Society, the associations Zelene myloserdia [Green Mercy] and Nebaiduzhi [Concerned Citizens], and representatives of creative associations are disturbed by the publications “Taina Bykovnianskogo lesa” [Secret of the Bykovnia Woods] (*Literaturnaia gazeta*, 30 November 1988) and “Taiemnytsia Darnytskoi trahedii” [Secret of the Darnytsia Tragedy] (*Vechirnyi Kyiv* [Evening Kyiv], 1 December 1988). The old story around which passions have been boiling since the [19]60s have finally become the subject of glasnost.

We demand a full and truthful reply to all the questions that the press and the public have posed during our meetings. In connection with this we propose:

1. To halt in any aspect the construction of a railway station in Bykivnia regardless of who shot the people buried there.
2. For a more objective examination of the issue we insist on the replacement of the head of the Government Commission as well as on the creation of a working group to assist the commission consisting of individuals recommended by the civic organizations (Memorial, Spadshchyna, Nebaiduzhi, Hromada), the initiative group for the creation of the NRU [People’s Rukh Movement] for perestroika.
3. To create in the Darnytsia woods near Bykivnia a memorial that would realistically correspond to historical truth.
4. To remove the veil of secrecy and publicize the appropriate archives of the CC CPU, NKVD, GPU, and KGB of the Ukrainian SSR with the goal of restoring historical justice and honoring the memory of the unjustifiably repressed.
5. To compel the KGB of the Ukrainian SSR to become the initiator of revealing all the anonymous burials of the victims of the Stalinist regime.

(DA MVSU, fond 3, list 1, file 740, fols. 70-71, copy, Ukrainian)

#### No. 16

### **Order of the Council of Ministers of the Ukrainian SSR on the implementation by the Government Commission of additional studies of the circumstances and documents**

**connected to the mass burials of Soviet citizens in the 19<sup>th</sup> sector of the Dniprovsky forest area of the Darnytsia forest-park farm in the city of Kyiv**

8 December 1988.

1. The government commission formed on the order no. 672 of the Council of Ministers of the Ukrainian SSR of 24 December 1987 is to carry out additional studies of the circumstances and documents connected to the mass burials of Soviet citizens in the 19<sup>th</sup> sector of the Dniprovsky forest area of the Darnytsia forest-park farm in the city of Kyiv.

In keeping with the findings of the study, to submit appropriate proposals to the Council of Ministers of the Ukrainian SSR.

2. To include as members of the indicated commission:

C[omrades] YEFREMENKO, Oleh Makarovich — Deputy Minister of Culture of the Ukrainian SSR

IVANENKO, Borys Vasyliovych — head of the Main Archive of the Ukrainian SSR

KUZNIETSOV, Vladlen Mykolaiovych — administrative secretary of the Union of Cinematographers of Ukraine

MUSHKETYK, Yurii Mykhailovych — first secretary of the board of the Union of Writers of Ukraine

TARASENKO, Oleksandr Ivanovych — first secretary of the Dniprovsky raion committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine for the city of Kyiv

TOLOCHKO, Petro Petrovych — head of the board of the Ukrainian Society for the Protection of Historical and Cultural Monuments

CHEBYKIN, Andrii Volodymyrovych — head of the board of the Kyiv organization of the Union of Artists of Ukraine

To dismiss from the work in the Commission c[omrades] Mitiukov, O. H., Mokrousov, A. O., and Serhienko, P. S.

Vice-head of the Council of Ministers, Ye. Kachalovsky

(Current archive of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine)

No. 17

**From a report on the interrogation of witness  
A. S. Dembovska about the mass burials  
near the village of Bykivnia**

<...> In 1937 we moved to Kiev. Father<sup>48</sup> found a job working as a guard at a Pioneer camp of some shoe factory located in the forest massif opposite the h[amlet] of Bykovnia <...>

When we settled into the Pioneer camp, in the nearby woods there was already an area enclosed by a fence. The fence was significantly higher than a man. The boards were knocked together in an overlapping fashion so that there would be no chinks in it. <...>

A few days after the retreat of our troops, Germans arrived at the Pioneer camp on two motorcycles with sidecars. My father, mother, and I were at home. We understood that the Germans wanted us to take shovels and follow them <...>

We took some shovels, and they brought us to the area enclosed by the green fence <...> Near the entrance to that area graves had already been excavated, and you could see human corpses in them. <...> The Germans told my family to begin excavating in the place they would indicate. They pointed to a freshly loosened plot of land and told us to dig there. I dug my shovel in to the length of the shaft, but it wouldn't go any deeper because there was something there. After clearing the earth from that spot, suddenly I saw the body of a woman with a dead baby in her arms. The corpses had still not decomposed. Beneath them were other corpses. <...> I realized that the entire territory enclosed by the green fences was a mass grave where human corpses were buried.

The Germans photographed the whole procedure, and later one of the newspapers published a photograph of those excavations, with my father pictured against the background of the exhumed corpses. The newspaper was a Russian- or Ukrainian-language one, but not German.<sup>49</sup> This I remember well, because I kept that newspaper for many years, but later it started falling apart and I must have thrown it out.

Besides the photograph, there was an article saying that the Germans had found a place where the Bolsheviks had shot people. The Germans suggested that people come there and search for their loved ones. I remember that many Kyivites began arriving to excavate the burial site and search for their relatives. A woman who spent a night at our house had identified either her son or her husband. I don't remember what her name was. But in any case, the Germans did not have anything to do with his death. As a result, the

residents of nearby villages, including Bykovnia, Kniazhychi, and others, came to that place and carried out excavations in which they discovered gold objects, personal belongings, as well as items, clothing, and footwear that was still serviceable. All this was exchanged for food, and some people even made a fortune. This was in the period 1941-1943. During the occupation the Germans did not carry out any executions in Bykovnia or the nearby woods and had not used the area enclosed by the green fence for their own interests.

The newspaper I mentioned played a fateful role in my father's destiny. After the liberation of Kiev by our troops he was arrested. First he was imprisoned in Brovary, then in Lukianovka Prison.<sup>50</sup> Later, he told me that he was constantly beaten and bullied, e.g., individual hairs were pulled out of his moustache. In the final result, he signed the statement demanded by his captors, as well as a statement that he had made up the executions of Soviet citizens by the NKVD organs before the start of the war. The fact of the matter is that even though all the residents of Bykovnia already knew about this, my father had not talked about it and had not led them [the Germans] to that spot. They found out about it from other people, but he was the one in the photograph, so all the responsibility was placed on him. He was sentenced to ten years in prison and released only in 1954, after Stalin's death.

<...>

(AVPPRU, file 50-0092, vol. 3, fols. 9-14, original, Russian)

#### No. 18

#### **Testimony of P. Z. Kukovenko, a resident of the village of Bykivnia, about the discovery of mass burials in the 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> sectors of the Darnytsia forest-park farm of the city of Kyiv**

December 1988

In 1936 or early 1937 a high green fence was erected in the woods between Lake Rybnoe and the hamlet of Bykovnia. At night I often saw trucks covered with tarpaulin drive into the zone enclosed by the fence. I do not know what cargo was in those trucks. I never went inside the fence because there were guards with dogs there. In 1941 I was stopped by a German, who led me

inside that green fence and forced me to dig a pit. There were four of us men, but they are not in Bykovnia right now. We dug a bit of earth and corpses immediately appeared. We removed the corpse of a man in civilian clothing, and the German photographed us against the background of the corpses. This was some time in October 1941. After the Germans' departure, the residents of the h[amlet] of Bykovnia dismantled the fence for their own personal needs.

(DA MVSU, fond 3, list 1, file 740, fol. 83, copy, Russian)

#### No. 19

#### **Testimony of pensioner M. O. Nyzenko about the circumstances behind the mass burials near the village of Bykivnia**

December 1988

I saw a constructed green fence, two meters high. Then, near the fence, right next to it, they began building a small wooden house; local men were building the little house, including my father. I used to visit that little house... Blood stains were seen on the road that led to the gates of the fence. Many people saw those blood stains, but they were afraid to talk about it. Trucks covered with tarpaulins would arrive every night before dawn. This continued until the beginning of the war in 1941. Around summer 1942 two German soldiers came to our house; they took me and my father and brought us inside that green fence. They gave us shovels and told us to dig one of the pits that had fallen in. We dug it out and human corpses appeared there. The Germans looked and gave the order to cover it up. My father died in 1979. After the war the people from the h[amlet] of Bykovnia dismantled the fence and the little house.

(DA MVSU, fond 3, list 1, file 740, fol. 85, copy, Russian)

#### No. 20

#### **From a report on the interrogation of witness L. H. Husak about the mass repressions in the 1930s in the city of Kyiv**

10 January 1989

In the early 1930s I was working as a technician at the international telephone station located on Kreshchatik Street. In April 1934 I was

summoned to the GPU located in a building on R. Liuksemburg Street and was told to fill out a corresponding questionnaire for applying for work in the organs <...> I was hired to work in the technical subdivision of the GPU in keeping with my specialty — communications technician. I installed telephones, serviced the switchboard of the telephone network <...>

In carrying out my functions as the head of the division, I often had occasion to see how early in the morning dead bodies were driven out of the inner courtyard of the commissariat located on October Revolution Street. There was an internal prison there at the time. There was another prison like this on Korolenko Street, but I can only talk about the one that was located in today's October Palace. I worked there and personally saw this. Our technical subdivision worked under the operational department headed by Dzhirin.<sup>51</sup> I had to obtain his signature for various documents that came through our division. I would telephone Dzhirin's secretary and say that I need such-and-such document signed. He would give me an appointment to see Dzhirin at 22:00. I would come at the appointed time and could wait to be seen until 04:00 in the morning, and sometimes the secretary would tell me to come the next day, because the chief does not have enough time to see me today. At that time it was already light. In those days I was sitting on the third floor, and from the windows I could see an ordinary truck standing in the courtyard, with corpses loaded in the back. They were covered on top with an ordinary tarpaulin so that you could not see what kind of cargo was on the truck. I think that the bottom of the truck was covered with a tarpaulin too, so that the blood would not drip through the cracks. I still remember well that in the courtyard where the internal prison was located a man of short stature worked as a caretaker. Thus, whenever a truck was loaded with corpses and covered with a tarpaulin, he would place a wagon wheel on top, apparently to weigh the cargo down, and then he would get in the truck and it would drive out of the courtyard. This was kept in great secrecy. And it was forbidden to look through the windows, but as I have already said, sometimes I would have to wait for an appointment with the chief and I ended up seeing these horrific pictures. To this day they stand before my eyes, as though they took place very recently. I remember that this was in the period 1937-1938. (AVPPRU, file 50-0092, vol. 8, fols. 6-9, original, Russian)

## No. 21

### **Extract from the criminal case of D. P. Chestnieishy about the excavations of graves in the village of Bykivnia during the German occupation**

January 1989

<...> Questioned while under arrest on 12 October 1943, Chestnieishy, D. P. testified that during the entire period of the German occupation he worked as the head of the village of Bykovnia and carried out all the orders of the higher authorities <...> In addition, Chestnieishy, D. P. testified during the questioning: "...Dembovsky and I also found a grave where the NKVD organs shot the enemies of the Soviet government, and that grave was dug up and shown to the German authorities, who said, look how the Soviet government tormented the civilian population, where thousands of innocent victims fell at the hands of the bandit regime. The Germans wanted to erect a monument at that memorable site to those innocents who fell at the hands of the Soviet government; they photographed an exhumed corpse. I personally sent carts to haul material for the monument; the Germans wrote about that in the newspapers, but for some reason <...> they did not erect it. People from an undertaker's office came on a van to look at the "savageries" of the Soviet government and took a number of neighbors in order to show them the Bolsheviks' persecutions. Several times I also personally visited that place where a corpse was lying. There were black shoes on that corpse. All this was done in order to show the population the Bolsheviks' persecutions."

(AVPPRU, file 50-0092, vol. 11, fols. 251-52, copy, Russian)

## No. 22

### **From the minutes of a meeting of the Government Commission of the Ukrainian SSR to study the circumstances behind the mass burials near the village of Bykivnia**

31 January 1989.

**Kovtun, H. G.** <...> A number of eyewitness testimonies were found from that time, the immediate postwar [period], the investigation case against the Bykovnia village head<sup>52</sup> was partially disclosed <...> "Dembovsky and I found a grave" — that is his testimony, one of the testimonies —



“where the NKVD organs shot enemies of the Soviet government. That grave was dug up and shown to the German authorities, who said this is how the Soviet government tormented the civilian population. <...> The Germans wanted to erect a monument at that memorable site to those innocents who fell at the hands of the Soviet government; they photographed an exhumed corpse <...>

**Gladush, I. D.** And there is also another interesting document, in my opinion, comrades. “I request that the investigative group of the Republican Office of the Prosecutor-General, as well as the members of the Government Commission, familiarize themselves with the facts that the doctor of juridical sciences Vasiliï Lukianovich Muntian has at his disposal<sup>53</sup> <...> In the late [19]40s-early [19]50s he worked as the chief secretary of the presidium of the regional college of lawyers in Chernovtsy. The chairman of the presidium of that college was Nikolai Akimovich Tabachny. In certain confidential conversations after Stalin’s death and Beria’s denunciation, Tabachny informed Muntian that in the late [19]30s in Kiev he occupied the post of prosecutor attached to the NKVD troops<sup>54</sup> and by virtue of his position for several years, for more than 1,000 nights, he was present during executions in Lukianovka Prison. On an average night more than 130 death sentences were carried out. In response to Muntian’s question about where the bodies were taken and buried, without hesitation Tabachny replied: in the vicinity of Darnitsa near Bykovnia. At present Tabachny is no longer alive. However, inasmuch as Vasiliï Lukianovich Muntian, a famous lawyer with an international reputation, a representative of our country at the UN, then his testimony, which he is requesting to be passed on to the Government Commission, represents, in my opinion, substantial material for the good of the case. (DA MVSU, fond 3, list 1, file 741, fols. 21, 24-25, original, Russian)

### No. 23

#### **Summarizing report on archival-criminal case no. 39013 concerning the charges against V. A. Bryl**

February 1989

Criminal case no. 17643 (investigation number) in connection with the charges against Bryl

Vladimir Antonovich, according to article<sup>54</sup>, point 6, of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR was launched on 27 November 1937 by the raion department of the operational investigation group of the Directorate of State Security (UGB) of the Kiev regional directorate of the NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR in the city of Veliko-Polovetsky. One hundred and thirty-four corresponding available lists in the investigation case have been filed and numbered.

According to a decision of a troika at the Kiev regional NKVD directorate of the Ukrainian SSR, dated 28 September 1938 (extract from report no. 293) on 5 October of that same year the highest degree of punishment — execution — was handed down to:

Bryl, Vladimir Antonovich, born 1899, a native of the village of Zagore in Novogrudsk district, a citizen of the USSR, a Belarusian, non-party, animal husbandry education, married, until his arrest working as a manager of a department at the Vladislavka livestock farm of the Rudiansk Soviet Beet Farm, living at his workplace, not tried earlier, who was charged under article 54-6 of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR for his membership in the German intelligence service in 1928, having been recruited to it by citizen Berman. At the same time Bryl furnished information of an espionage character about the work of the livestock farm and conducted wrecking, subversive work aimed at the destruction of young pedigree animals.

A resolution on the initiation of an investigation of Bryl, V. A. under article 54-6 of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR was passed on 27 November 1937 by the head of the Veliko-Polovetsky raion department of the NKVD, Sergeant Sogolaev of state security. It is indicated in the resolution that Bryl, V. A. carried out wrecking, subversive activity aimed at the destruction of young pedigree animals. That very day Sogolaev passed a resolution on applying preventive punishment against Bryl, V. A. in the form of holding [him] in custody in the Belaia Tserkov prison, which the head of the Belaia Tserkov operational group, First Lieutenant Pivchikov of state security, approved for submission to the raion prosecutor’s office.

Thus, it is clear from the case materials that it was supposedly launched on 27 November 1937, nevertheless in the file on sheet 3 there is a handwritten copy of a resolution about applying

preventive punishment in the form of arrest against Bryl, V. A., carried out by the prosecutor of the V.- Polovetsky raion, Potienko, on 16 September 1937. The resolution indicates that Bryl, V. A. was questioned that day, after which the resolution about his arrest and confinement in the Belo-Tserkov prison was carried out. Missing from the materials of the case is the report on the interrogation of Bryl, V.A. for that date. The resolution itself indicates that in the period 1936-1937, the wrecking activity of Bryl, V. A. led to a 10-percent decrease in the offspring of pedigree livestock at the Vladislavka livestock farm, and including as a result of the fact that Bryl, V. A. "...allowed the copulation of pregnant cows, which led to incidents of abortions and deaths."

In keeping with order no. 16 concerning the search and arrest of Bryl, V. A., dated 27 September 1937, on that day a search was carried out by Sogolaev at the place of residence, during which nothing was discovered.

In the prisoner's questionnaire drawn up by Sogolaev, with no indication of the date when that document was filled out, besides the above-listed facts in the questionnaire, it is indicated that according to his social origins Bryl, V. A. is the son of a railway worker, and his social status is that of a white-collar worker. He is married to Bryl, Nadezhda Ivanovna living in the city of Odessa, supports a daughter and son. Among his relatives he has the following individuals: mother Anastasiia Ivanovna, brothers Nikolai and Mikhail living together with their mother in the village of Zagore (Poland) and a brother Ignat, living in Nikolaev region.

No investigative actions in this case were carried out before 26 March 1938, and therefore Bryl, V. A. was kept in prison for four months without being questioned a single time, without any legal foundations. On 26 March 1938 Sogolaev approved a resolution on the indictment of Bryl, V. A. under article 54-6 of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR, declaring that he was an agent of the German intelligence service and was engaged in espionage activity.

The file also contains a resolution signed by Sogolaev and Pivchikov, dated 29 March 1938, about the transfer of materials concerning Bryl, V. A. into a separate action, as he admitted that he is an agent of German intelligence, as well as a resolution with the same signatures, dated 25 March 1938, about the addition to the file of

Bryl's declaration in which he admits to his espionage activity.

During interrogations Bryl, V. A. admitted his guilt in that he is an agent of German intelligence and is engaged in counterrevolutionary espionage activity. His accusation is based only on satisfactory testimonies.

Bryl, Vladimir Antonovich, born 1899, was sentenced to be shot by a session of a troika of the Kiev regional NKVD directorate of the Ukrainian SSR, held on 28 September 1938. (Extract from report no. 293).

The sentence was carried out in the city of Kiev on 5 October 1938.

According to a ruling of the Military Tribunal of Kiev Military District of 8 March 1957, the criminal case of Bryl, V. A. was closed for lack of a crime in his actions.

Prosecutor of the investigative directorate of the Prosecutor-General's Office of the Ukrainian SSR and head of the investigative group, V. D. Kulik  
(AVPPRU, file 50-0092, vol. 11, fols. 19-21, original, Russian)

#### No. 24

#### **From the testimony of V. L. Muntian about the mass repressions in the 1930s in the city of Kyiv**

6 March 1989

<...> After completing the Odessa Law School with distinction in 1947, I went to Chernovtsy, where until 1949 I worked as a people's judge. Then, until 1954, I worked as the secretary of the presidium of the Chernovtsy Regional College of Lawyers until I was admitted for post-graduate studies at Kiev State University. The chairman of the presidium of that college was Nikolai Akimovich Tabachny. He and I shared an office. Until 1953 no conversations about his previous work ever came up between us, but after Stalin's death and his unmasking we had an interesting conversation. He recounted that in the prewar years he worked in the prosecutor's office in the city of Kiev. Right now I cannot remember exactly where he worked, maybe in the republican Prosecutor-General's Office. <...> Tabachny told me that some time during 1937-1940, he was present in connection with his work during the execution of sentences of people who had been condemned to death. According to

Tabachny, I remember well that this concerned the execution of sentences in Lukianovka Prison. All this took place in the room of the commandant of special affairs. Evidently, that was the accepted procedure. He didn't mention the surname of that man. He also didn't tell me whether other people carried out the sentence. According to his words, a man sentenced to be shot would be brought from the cellar on some sort of elevator into the room for executions. As the prosecutor, he made certain that this was indeed the man who was sentenced to be shot. After this the man was turned to face the wall, placed on his knees, with his head bent down, and the commandant would shoot him in the back of the head. The dead man would be brought downstairs, and in his place the next condemned individual would come up. He didn't say who else was present during the executions. From his words I understood that some other auxiliary personnel was present there, because, according to his words, before the execution of the sentence some condemned individuals would become hysterical, and those people would have to calm them down. According to Tabachny, the sentence was always carried out at night. On average, 100-150 people would be shot during one night. Naturally, this was not every day, but according to Tabachny, this whole procedure over a number of years affected his health. I still remember that he talked about the fact that the bodies of those who had been shot were transported out of the city, past Darnitsa, into the woods. But he did not name a specific burial place.  
(AVPPRU, file 50-0092, vol. 8, fols. 43-43 verso, original, Russian)

**No. 25**

**Letter from the head of the KGB at the Council of Ministers of the Ukrainian SSR, M. M. Holushko, to the head of the Government Commission of the Ukrainian SSR, I. D. Hladush, about existing information and documents of the special services connected to the mass burials of unknown individuals near the village of Bykivnia**

31 March 1989

The Committee of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR studied all the partially preserved

archival materials of the prewar period, which could contain testimonies concerning the uncovered burials of people in the 19<sup>th</sup> sector of the Dneprovsky forest area of the forest-park farm of the city of Kiev.

Employees who worked in the state security organs in the prewar period were identified and questioned. During the process of the indicated work, information was obtained about the fact that until 1936 individuals sentenced to the highest degree of punishment both for counterrevolutionary and criminal transgressions were held in Lukianovka Prison and after the sentences were carried out, according to indirect eyewitnesses, they were buried on the outskirts of Lukianovka Cemetery. In that period, death sentences for counterrevolutionary activity were rarely carried out. It was also determined that on 20 March 1937 a plot of land for the special needs of the NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR was allocated by the presidium of the Kiev municipal council.<sup>55</sup> It was not possible to confirm through documents where this plot of land was allocated, owing to the absence of archival materials. According to employees who worked in the prewar period in various subdivisions of the NKVD organs, the indicated plot of land was located in the forest massif in the direction of Brovary. However, they personally cannot point it out because they had nothing to do with that question. It was not possible to identify and question employees who were involved in conducting investigations, maintaining prisoners, carrying out sentences, and burying, since such individuals were themselves later repressed together with other employees of state security or tried and sentenced to the highest degree of punishment for violations of socialist legality in 1939, and some of them were killed on the fronts during the Great Fatherland War.

In the process of searching for documented materials, certain substantial evidence and other information were uncovered about the fact that the burial of people sentenced to the highest degree of punishment could have taken place in the 19<sup>th</sup> sector of the Dneprovsky forest area of the Darnitsa forest-park farm. All documented facts and substantial evidence with regard to the question were sent on 27 February 1989 to the investigative group of the Prosecutor-General's Office of the Ukrainian SSR.

For the evidence we are also informing that the Committee of State Security of the republic also carried out a search for documented materials in the central archive of the KGB of the USSR. However, such documents were unfortunately not located.

Committee chairman N. Golushko  
(DA MVSU, fond 3, list 1, file 740, fols. 79-80, original, Russian)

#### No. 26

**Logbook note of the deputy head of the KGB at the Council of Ministers of the Ukrainian SSR, H. K. Kovtun, to the investigative section of the Prosecutor-General's Office of the Ukrainian SSR in connection with file no. 50-0092 about the discovery of burials of citizens on the territory of the 19<sup>th</sup> sector of the Dneprovsky forest area of the Darnytsia forest-park farm of the city of Kyiv**

4 April 1989

On the instructions of the Government Commission and investigative group of the Prosecutor-General's Office of the Ukrainian SSR conducting an investigation into the criminal case in connection with the discovery of mass burials of people in the forest massif of the 19<sup>th</sup> sector of the Dneprovsky forest area of the Darnytsia forest-park farm, the Committee of State Security of the republic studied the partially preserved materials on the activity of the NKVD-NKGB of the Ukrainian SSR during the years of mass violations of socialist legality. During the course of this work all preserved materials of the prewar period were thoroughly examined, including those concerning the years 1936-1941, which could have contained information on mass burials of people in the indicated forest massif.

Employees who worked in the state security organs in the prewar period were identified and questioned. According to indirect eyewitnesses, until 1936, inclusively, in the city of Kiev people under investigation and sentenced to the highest degree of punishment both for counterrevolutionary and criminal violations were held in Lukianovka Prison. After the execution of sentences, burials took place on the outskirts of Lukianovka Cemetery. During that period such sentences for counterrevolutionary activity were rarely carried out. Thus, according to archival materials, during the period 1930-1936 in Kiev

city and region 834 people were tried on charges of various counterrevolutionary crimes, including those connected to the killings of Soviet activists.

It was also ascertained that on 20 March 1937 the presidium of the Kiev municipal council allocated a plot of land for the special needs of the NKVD. According to employees in those years, the term "special needs" as applied to plots of land meant burial places for people who had been sentenced to the highest degree of punishment. Documented facts about the location of the indicated plot of land have not been preserved. However, according to the fragmentary testimonies of veteran employees, such a plot of land is a section of the forest massif in the vicinity of the hamlet of Bykovnia, where in 1936 an unknown installation was built, guarded by sentries, i.e., on the eve of the beginning of the mass repressions.

The indicated mass lawless actions in the city of Kiev as well as on the territory of the republic as a whole began in June 1937, when Leplevsky, Izrail Moiseevich was assigned to the post of People's Commissar of Internal Affairs. During that period many Soviet citizens residing in the city of Kiev were repressed, including 1,199 employees of the NKVD organs of the Ukrainian SSR. Among the residents of the city of Kiev and Kiev region, which in 1937-1938 included the territory of today's Cherkassy region and part of Zhitomir and Chernigov regions, 6,500 people were sentenced to the highest degree of punishment for so-called counterrevolutionary activity.

According to the available archival data, capital sentences in regard to repressed individuals were executed by so-called inter-raion operational groups of the NKVD Directorate of Kiev region, and burials took place not in the city of Kiev but in the cities of Cherkassy, Belaia Tserkov, and Zhitomir. For this reason it is not possible to ascertain the exact number of burials in the allocated spot (in the vicinity of the hamlet of Bykovnia).

As evidence we are also informing that among those sentenced to the highest degree of punishment in 1939-1941, in connection with which the sentences were carried out in the city of Kiev, were 1,745 agents of German-fascist special organs. These were spies, subversives, terrorists, as well as fighters from among the members of foreign nationalist organizations in the

service of German-fascist special services. The indicated agents were thrown into the territory of Ukraine via a stream of turncoats from adjacent countries, which crossed the border en masse under the guise of Hungarian, Romanian, and Polish citizens. According to existing data, in 1939-1941 more than 100,000 border violators were detained on the western border. Discovered and exposed among them were spies, subversives, terrorists, and fighters: 385 in 1939, 841 in 1940, and 519 in 1941. <...>

Investigations into the cases of unmasked agents were conducted in the city of Kiev, where death sentences were also handed down and executed. Burials of that category of individuals could have taken place only in a place designated for those goals, i.e., in the forest massif in the vicinity of the hamlet of Bykovnia.

During the process of implementing the instructions of the Government Commission and the investigative group of the Committee of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR work was also carried out to identify former employees of the GPU-NKVD-NKGB-MGB, who could know about the tyranny committed by the NKVD organs in the prewar years. It has been ascertained that the principal organizers of the mass violations of socialist legality and those who had at their disposal a full range of information about the order of carrying out sentences and the burial places of the repressed, were first and foremost the heads of the NKVD, and in the city of Kiev — the heads of the Kiev regional directorate of the NKVD.

In part, the chairman of the GPU of the Ukrainian SSR, and then the People's Commissar of Internal Affairs of the republic, Balitsky, Vsevolod Apollonovich, born 1892, occupied the indicated posts from 1933 to 1937, and in 1938 he was repressed and shot for his so-called involvement in a military plot. Other people who were working at this time in leading posts in the NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR, including Deputy People's Commissar Karlson, Karl Martynovich, born 1888, were also repressed and shot or they perished in the camps. Replacing Balitsky, V. A. in the post of People's Commissar of Internal Affairs of Ukraine and working in that position from summer 1937 to April 1938, citizen Leplevsky, I. M., born 1894, was also sentenced in 1938 to the highest degree of punishment on charges of participating in a right- Trotskyite, anti-

Soviet terrorist organization. The same fate befell other employees occupying leading positions in Leplevsky's apparatus. The repressions acquired a particularly mass character after the appointment of Uspensky, Aleksandr Ivanovich, born 1902, in January 1938 as People's Commissar of the NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR. Saving himself from responsibility for the perpetrated lawlessness, in late 1938 Uspensky became an illegal, however he was found and in 1940 was sentenced by the Supreme Court of the USSR to the highest degree of punishment for violations of socialist legality.

For the unjustified repressions of Soviet citizens Meshik, Pavel Yakovlevich, born 1910, the People's Commissar of the NKGB of the Ukrainian SSR from 26 February 1941 and later Minister of Internal Affairs of the Ukrainian SSR, was also sentenced in 1953 to the highest degree of punishment. Also punished for violating socialist legality were Sharov, Nikolai Davydovich, born 1897, who was the head of the NKVD Directorate for Kyiv region from 1935 to 1938 (dismissed from the organs in 1939); Dolgushev, Aleksei Romanovich, born 1902, who was also working in the indicated post from June 1938 to January 1939 (sentenced in 1942 to ten years' imprisonment).

<...> In view of the absence of crucial materials in the archives, it is impossible to respond to the other questions posed by the Prosecutor-General's Office of the republic.

The search for possible eyewitnesses who might know details pertaining to the burials in the vicinity of the hamlet of Bykovnia continues.

Deputy chairman of the committee, G. K. Kovtun (DA SBU, file 518, fols. 289-92; notarized copy, Russian)

## No. 27

### **Explanation of M. S. Musorgsky, retired NKVD employee, to the Prosecutor-General of the Ukrainian SSR about the circumstances of the mass burials of citizens near the village of Bykivnia**

April 1989

With respect to the questions posed to me, I am explaining that I began working in the capacity of driver for the regional directorate of the NKVD, located on R. Liuksemburg Street, in 1936. I worked in the department of the struggle against

counterrevolution. The garage was situated in the same courtyard. I remember that located in the courtyard was an internal prison, where arrested people were held. I drove both trucks and cars. During the course of my work I had to transport corpses of executed enemies of the people. I transported the dead bodies only at night. I delivered the corpses to the vicinity of the hamlet of Bykovnia, where to the right of the highway in the woods a large plot of forest land had been fenced off and was closely guarded. When I would bring corpses to Bykovnia, pits were already dug there. The corpses were dumped altogether into the pits. People were shot in the cellar of the internal prison, and at night they were loaded onto trucks with special pincers. They were grabbed by the neck or the legs and tossed into the truck. When the truck was fully loaded <...> it was covered with a tarpaulin and then driven to Bykovnia at night. <...> The corpses were usually transported at night, accompanied by NKVD employees, two-three trucks. The trucks usually drove with their lights on low beam. Commandant Vorobev,<sup>56</sup> who was killed during the war, was engaged in executing the death sentences.

(AVPPRU, file 50-0092, vol. 12, fols. 88-89, original, Russian)

#### No. 28

##### **Testimony of eyewitness D. A. Makarenko about the mass burials of citizens near the village of Bykivnia**

20 August 1989

I was born and lived here during the war, and from here I went to the front. I first saw that green fence some time in 1936-1937, when I went to pick mushrooms. Next to it stood a little house. Two men lived in it. <...> No one entered that little house, and no one approached the fence because rumors were circulating that someone had been caught there and nearly shot. He barely escaped with his life. And those two also did not engage in conversations.

At the time I was working as a driver of a tram that went from Brovary to Mykilska Slobidka. I would often give those two men lifts.

I saw vehicles driving there, ZIS trucks, I think. They were closed, and cars drove in front and in back of them. Sometimes there would be three vehicles, sometimes four, sometimes even more. I

saw them often when I was working the night shift — every third day. And they drove out there for a few years, beginning in 1937 until the war.

No one was shot in the woods. There were no shots, because if there had been, then people would have heard. And the Germans did not execute there. It was our people who would bring killed people there to be buried. What do you expect? The times were such that if anyone said anything about Stalin, he would disappear. One of our Bykivnia residents, I don't remember his name, once called a ruddy-coloured sardelle a "Stalinist fish." Someone heard him, and they up and took him away. They gave him ten years, and then they sent a letter saying he had died. . . .

After the war people took the fence apart for construction. And they also dismantled the little house. And then some parasites began digging up skulls, and they would knock out the gold teeth from those that had them and pocket them. At the time there were as many skulls as you wanted lying about there. All of them had identical bullet holes. What were they shot with? Maybe there was a special contraption. No one took those skulls away. But fifteen years ago or more many soldiers arrived and surrounded everything. And these soldiers in masks began digging up only skulls and placing them in containers. There were many of those containers. They placed them one of top of the other, they sprinkled some earth on some, and that's all. Those remains lay like that in the containers, right in the woods. Many people here know about this. <...> And later they erected a monument and on it they wrote that people who were allegedly killed by the Germans are lying here. They erected it as though they had stolen it. Hardly anybody knew about it when it was being erected. <...>

("Bykivnia: vsia pravda," *Kultura i zhyttia* ["Bykivnia: The Whole Truth," *Culture and Life*], 20 August 1989)

#### No. 29

##### **Memorandum of Deputy Prosecutor-General of the Ukrainian SSR S. F. Lytvynchuk and the prosecutor of the investigative directorate of the Prosecutor-General's Office of the Ukrainian SSR and head of the inquiry group, V. D. Kulyk, to the Government Commission of the Ukrainian SSR about the preliminary results of the investigation of criminal case no. 50-0092**

**concerning the circumstances behind the mass burials of citizens in the vicinity of the village of Bykivnia**

No later than 31 May 1989

A resolution passed on 6 December 1988 by the Prosecutor-General's Office of the Ukrainian SSR created an inquiry group to investigate the criminal case into the circumstances of the mass burial of citizens in the 19<sup>th</sup> sector of the Dneprovsky forest area in the vicinity of the hamlet of Bykovnia in the city of Kiev.

During its work the inquiry group identified, questioned, and cross-examined more than 250 witnesses, conducted 15 reconstructions of the scene and circumstances of the event, 7 criminal forensic expert examinations, studied more than 60 archival criminal files, and analyzed archival documents and reports of various organs concerning the circumstances under investigation.

Used during the course of the investigation were materials of the work [done] in 1943-1944 by the Extraordinary State Commission to determine and investigate the outrages of the German-fascist invaders and their accomplices; of the government commissions for the reburial of the remains of citizens in the 19<sup>th</sup> sector of the Dneprovsky forest area, created by a decision of the Council of Ministers of the Ukrainian SSR in April 1971 and December 1987; letters; declarations; and workers' announcements. During the investigative actions photography, tape recordings, video recordings, cartographic surveys were used, and the services of scholarly specialists and experts from various institutions were engaged. [...]

During the study of the archival criminal cases against individuals who were subjected to repressions in 1936-1941 it was determined that

**Ivanovsky, Nikolai Genrikhovich**, born 1869, a Ukrainian, a native of the village of Koshkovtsy, Kamenets-Podolsk gubernia (Vinnitsa region), non-party member, a construction technician of the health resort directorate, resident of the city of Kiev, Kurenevka, 5 Petropavlovsky pereulok, apt. 1, accused of counterrevolutionary activity, in keeping with the order of the NKVD USSR no. 00485 was sentenced extrajudicially (by a troika on roll call) on 2 December 1937 to be shot. The sentence was executed in the city of Kiev on 10 December 1937;

**Prokopovich, Valentina Markovna (Makarovna)**, born 1897, a Ukrainian, a native of the village of Turia, Kiev region, non-party member, working as a bookkeeper at the Institute of Urgent Surgery, living in the city of Kiev at 3-a Irininskaia Street, apt. 14, was sentenced extrajudicially on 8 May 1938 to be shot for creating and participating in a counterrevolutionary military-insurgent organization and espionage. The sentence was executed in the city of Kiev on 10 May 1938; [...]

Deputy Prosecutor-General of the Ukrainian SSR, S. F. Litvinchuk  
Prosecutor of the investigative directorate of the Prosecutor-General's Office of the Ukrainian SSR and head of the investigative group, V. D. Kulik  
(DA MVSU, fond 1, list 1, file 740, fols. 10-17, copy, Russian)

**No. 30**

**From the resolution on closing criminal case no. 50-0092 on the discovery of mass burials of people in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> sectors of the Dneprovsky forest area of the Darnytsia forest-park farm near the village of Bykivnia**

31 May 1989

The prosecutor of the investigative directorate of the Prosecutor-General's Office of the Ukrainian SSR, Kulik, V. D., having examined the materials of criminal case no. 50-0092 [...]

HAS RESOLVED:

1. To close criminal case no. 50-0092 on the discovery of the mass burial of people in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> sectors of the Dneprovsky forest area of the Darnitsa forest-park farm near the hamlet of Bykovnia in the city of Kiev.
2. To forward a copy of the resolution to the Prosecutor-General's Office of the Ukrainian SSR and the Government Commission of the Ukrainian SSR for additional study of the circumstances and documents connected with the mass burials of citizens [...].
3. To inform the commission for the study of materials on the repression in the period of the 30s-40s and the early 50s of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR of the facts obtained during

- the course of the investigation into the burial of repressed individuals in Lukianovka Cemetery in the city of Kiev, as well as the list of identified people.
4. To issue material evidence of the criminal case to the relatives of identified individuals, at their request. To transfer the remaining evidence to the Ukrainian State Museum.
  5. To transfer material evidence made of gold and other precious metals to the financial service of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Ukrainian SSR.
  6. To transfer the remains of people (skulls, bones) removed during the exhumation and used as material evidence to the Republican Office of Forensic Medical Examination.
  7. To store the video cassettes, two in number, with the criminal file.

Prosecutor of the investigative directorate of the Prosecutor-General's Office of the Ukrainian SSR, V. D. Kulik  
(DA MVSU, fond 3, list 1, file 740, fols. 30-40, notarized copy, Russian)

### No. 31

#### **Conclusions and proposals of the Government Commission of the Ukrainian SSR concerning the commemoration of the victims of political repressions buried in the 19th sector of the Dneprovsky forest area of the Darnytsia forest-park farm of the city of Kyiv**

No later than 10 July 1989

[...]

On the basis of the above, the commission considers it crucial to introduce the following proposals:

1. To consider that the burials of remains of people discovered in the 19<sup>th</sup> sector of the Dneprovsky forest area of the Darnitsa forest-park farm is the place where the bodies of those repressed in 1936-1941 are buried. In keeping with the Ukase of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR of 16 January 1989, "On Additional Measures to Establish Justice with Regard to Victims of Repressions That Took Place in the Period of the 1930s-1940s and Early 1950s," to erect a monument to the victims of mass repressions in the 19<sup>th</sup> sector of the Dneprovsky forest area of the Darnitsa forest-park farm of the city of Kiev.
2. The Ministry of Culture of the Ukrainian SSR, Gosstroï [State Committee for Construction] of the Ukrainian SSR, the Kiev municipal executive committee together with the Union of Architects of the Ukrainian SSR, the Union of Artists of the Ukrainian SSR should conduct an open competition to design a monument and arrange the burial place, as well as to draw up the necessary documentation.
3. Gosplan [State Planning Committee] of the Ukrainian SSR and Gosstroï of the Ukrainian SSR should submit proposals about organizing the installation of a monument to the victims of repressions. [...] The Ministry of Finance of the Ukrainian SSR together with the Ministry of Culture of the Ukrainian SSR should submit proposals to the Council of Ministers of the Ukrainian SSR about the financing of costs connected to organizing the competition and erecting the indicated monument.
4. It should be suggested to the Prosecutor-General's Office of the Ukrainian SSR to continue the investigation of the criminal case with the goal of determining the identities of those who were killed and transmitting crucial materials on rehabilitated individuals to the Kiev municipal commission created in keeping with the Ukase of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR of 16 January 1989 to provide assistance to the relatives of victims of repressions through the implementation of their rights and lawful interests.
5. Before the monument to the victims of mass repressions is erected on the site of the reinterment of the remains of the 6,323 people, the existing plaque on the monument is to be removed.
6. Announcements of the Government Commission on the results of its work are to be published in the republican press.

Chairman of the commission, Minister of Internal Affairs I. Gladush  
(DA SBU, file 518, fols. 177-80, copy, Russian)



**No. 32**

**From a stenogram of an open party meeting  
of the Kyiv branch of the Union of Writers of  
Ukraine concerning the commemoration of  
victims of political repressions**

25 January 1990

Comrade V. Maniak:

Yesterday a decision of the Council of Ministers legalized the Ukrainian society Memorial (applause).

The Ukrainian society Memorial has planned a huge action — a Week to Commemorate Ukrainian Victims in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. This action is being proposed for 1-11 February in all cities and villages of Ukraine.

We hope to organize or hold the finale in Kyiv with a republican meeting attended by members of Memorial from all regions of Ukraine. It is proposed to hold the meeting near the October Palace. And to carry out the important action of reburying the remains of 19 victims of Stalinist terror.

In this connection we have approved a document that I would like to read out now. Since we are having this party meeting today, I would like to acquaint our friends with this document. And I would ask the People's Deputies of the USSR as well as the representatives of the People's Movement of Ukraine, the Memorial Society, and the T. Shevchenko Society of the Ukrainian Language to sign it.

This is the letter we have composed to M. V. Lavrukhin:

To the head<sup>57</sup> of the executive committee of the Kyiv municipal Council of People's Deputies, M. V. Lavrukhin:

Respected Mykola Vasyliovych!

We appeal to you in the name of the People's Movement of Ukraine for perestroika, the Ukrainian society Memorial, the Union of Writers of Ukraine, the Taras Shevchenko Society of the Ukrainian Language in the matter of reburying the remains of 19 unknown individuals, victims of Stalinist repressions of the 1930s-1940s. According to the testimony of the forensic-medical expert examination, these were people between the ages of 17 and 70 (including women), who were killed execution-style with a shot to the back of the head.

The reinterment should take place during the All-Ukrainian Mourning Rally — the joint action of the All-Ukrainian Week of Commemoration — on 17 February of this year, in the park next to the building of the October Palace, whose history during the prewar period is filled with bloody pages of the NKVD's criminal actions that took place in the cellars of this building.

We request a place to be designated for the common grave of the 19 sons and daughters of our nation, in order to bury them in keeping with the custom of our land, since their names and thus their relatives' are unknown; the public is taking on the responsibility for the burial.

The grave of the 19 will become the symbol of Stalinism and a guarantee that people will be protected in the future.

Respectfully,

People's Deputies of the USSR,  
first secretary of the board of the Union of Writers of Ukraine, Yu. Mushketyk; first secretary of the board of the Kyiv organization of the SPU and head of the People's Movement of Ukraine, I. Drach; vice-head of the Ukrainian society Memorial V. Maniak

This document has passed through our souls. Therefore, if you support it, then it must be entered into the resolution of our party meeting. The head: Who is in favour of supporting this document? The vote is unanimous. The document is passed.

(State Archive of Kyiv Region /DAKO/, fond 28, list 9, file 115, fols. 43-6, original, Ukrainian)

**No. 33**

**Memorandum of the deputy head of the  
state-legal department of the CC CPU, B.  
Vykhristenko, about the measures  
concerning the burial of the remains of  
victims of Stalinist repressions near the  
village of Bykivnia**

15 February 1990

[...]

On 26 January of t[his] y[ear] People's Deputies of the USSR O. Gonchar, D. Pavlychko, V. Yavorivsky, the heads of the Union of Writers of the Ukrainian SSR Yu. Mushketik, Rukh — I. Drach, the Memorial Society — V. Maniak, V.

Kuznetsov, requested the Kiev municipal executive committee for permission to bury the indicated remains on 17 February t[his] y[ear] in the park of the October Palace of Culture during the All-Ukrainian Mourning Rally.<sup>58</sup>

On 12 February of t[his] y[ear] the Kiev municipal executive committee examined that declaration and taking into consideration the opinion of the Prosecutor-General's Office of the Ukrainian SSR, approved the decision [...] Deputy-head of the state-legal department of the CC CPU, B. Vykhristenko (TsDAHOU, fond 1, list 25, file 2191, fols. 65-6, original, Russian)

### No. 34

#### **Order of the President of Ukraine L. D. Kuchma on the measures to commemorate the victims of political repressions, who are buried in the village of Bykivnia**

11 August 1994

With the goal of carrying out detailed and comprehensive research of the tragic pages in the history of Ukraine, restoring historical truth and

justice, commemorating the names of those killed, I decree:

1. To support the initiative of the scholarly community of the Academy of Sciences of Ukraine concerning the commemoration of the victims of political repressions, who are buried in the village of Bykivnia (city of Kyiv).
2. The Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, together with the Academy of Sciences of Ukraine is to draw up and within one month approve measures to honor the memory of victims of political repressions, who are buried in the village of Bykivnia; introduce in established order proposals concerning the announcement in 1994-1995 of an open international competition to build a memorial complex with an appropriate museum exhibition in the village of Bykivnia; secure material and technical support for the measures to honor the memory of the victims of political repressions, who are buried in Bykivnia.

President of Ukraine L. Kuchma  
(*Uriadovyi kurier* [Government Courier], 12 August 1994)

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup>Ya. Tymchenko, *Persha ukrainsko-bolshevytska viina (hruden 1917-berezen 1918)* [The First Ukrainian-Bolshevik War (December 1917-March 1918)] (Kyiv-Lviv, 1996), p. 336.

<sup>2</sup>*Kievskaiia zhizn* [Kyivan Life], 15 (28) October 1919.

<sup>3</sup>*Kievlianin* [Kievite], 1 September 1919.

<sup>4</sup>*Kievskaiia zhizn*, 15 (28) October 1919.

<sup>5</sup>*Kievlianin*, 7 September 1919.

<sup>6</sup>Central State Archive of Civic Associations of Ukraine (hereafter, TsDAHOU), fond 1, list 20, file 39, fol. 98.

<sup>7</sup>State Archive of the Security Service of Ukraine (hereafter, DA SBU), file 518, fol. 290.

<sup>8</sup>State Archive of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine (hereafter, DA MVSU), fond 3, list 1, file 740, fol. 79.

<sup>9</sup>L. M. Protsenko, *Pokhovannia represovanykh u Kyievi* [Burials of Repressed People in Kyiv] (Kyiv, 1998), p. 150.

<sup>10</sup>TsDAHOU, fond 3, list 263, file 49717, fol. 207.

<sup>11</sup>TsDAHOU, *ibid.*, fol. 187.

<sup>12</sup>Archive of the Military Prosecutor's Office of the Northern Region of Ukraine (hereafter, AVPPRU), file 50-0092, vol. 7, fol. 358.

<sup>13</sup>H. K. Kovtun, V. A. Voinalovych, and Yu. Z. Danyliuk, *Masovi nezakonni represii 20-kh-pochatku 50-kh rokiv na Poltavshchyni/Reabilitovani istoriieiu* [Mass Illegal Repressions of the [19]20s-Early [19]50s in the Poltava Region; Rehabilitated by History] (Kyiv-Poltava, 1992), p. 22.

<sup>14</sup>DA SBU, file 518, fol. 290.

<sup>15</sup>AVPPRU, file 50-0092, vol. 8, fol. 42-verso, 43.

<sup>16</sup>AVPPRU, *ibid.*, fols. 6-9.

<sup>17</sup>*Ibid.*, vol. 12, fols. 88-9.

<sup>18</sup>DA SBU, file 518, fol. 290; AVPPRU, file 50-0092, vol. 7, fol. 336.

<sup>19</sup>DA MVSU, fond 3, list 1, file 740, fol. 53.

<sup>20</sup>AVPPRU, file 50-0092, vol. 11, fol. 215.

<sup>21</sup>*Ibid.*, fols. 251-52.

<sup>22</sup>DA MVSU, fond 3, list 1, file 740, fol. 125.

<sup>23</sup>AVPPRU, file 50-0092, fols. 211 and 222.

- <sup>24</sup> V. Baran, *Ukraina 1950-1960-kh rr.: evoliutsiia totalitarnoi systemy* [Ukraine in the 1950s-1960s: Evolution of the Totalitarian System] (Lviv, 1996), pp. 240-41.
- <sup>25</sup> DA SBU, file 518, fols. 163-64.
- <sup>26</sup> P. E. Shelest, *Da ne sudimy budete. Dnevnikovye zapisi, vospominaniia chlena Politbiuro TsK KPSS* [And Ye Shall Not Be Judged: Diary Entries, Reminiscences of a Member of the Politburo of the CC CPSU], (Moscow, 1995), p. 478.
- <sup>27</sup> DA MVSU, fond 3, list 1, file 408, fols. 1-8.
- <sup>28</sup> DA SBU, file 518, fols. 139-139-verso.
- <sup>29</sup> *Pravda Ukrainy* [Truth of Ukraine], 24 April 1971.
- <sup>30</sup> DA SBU, file 518, fol. 268.
- <sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, fols. 161-162.
- <sup>32</sup> TsDAHOU, fond 1, list 11, file 1704, fols. 146-49.
- <sup>33</sup> DA MVSU, fond 3, list 1, file 739, fol. 6.
- <sup>34</sup> DA SBU, file 518, fol. 269.
- <sup>35</sup> DA MVSU, fond 3, list 2, file 740, fols. 70-71.
- <sup>36</sup> In the opinion of the deputy head of the KGB at the Council of Ministers of the Ukrainian SSR, H. K. Kovtun, the term “special needs” referring to plots of land indicated burial places of people sentenced to the highest degree of punishment, i.e., execution. AVPPRU, file 50-0092, vol. 7, fol. 331.
- <sup>37</sup> The documents of the secret section of the Kyiv municipal executive committee have not been preserved.
- <sup>38</sup> See, documents nos. 18, 19, and 21.
- <sup>39</sup> See, document no. 17.
- <sup>40</sup> The exhumations in Vinnytsia lasted from 24 May to 3 October 1943. The remains of 9,439 people were found in 95 graves (pits). For more details, see *Vinnytsia: zlochyn bez kary* [Vinnytsia: Crime without Punishment] (Kyiv, 1994).
- <sup>41</sup> I. Kh. Holovchenko: Minister of Internal Affairs of the Ukrainian SSR, head of the State Commission; S. F. Skopenko: Deputy Prosecutor-General of the Ukrainian SSR; I. P. Prymak: deputy head of the KGB at the Council of Ministers of the Ukrainian SSR; M. M. Lavrukhnin: deputy head of the State Commission, first deputy head of the Kyiv municipal executive committee.
- <sup>42</sup> M. M. Zabavsky: head of the Dniprovsky raion division of Internal Affairs for the city of Kyiv.
- <sup>43</sup> This document is dated according to adjoining documents.
- <sup>44</sup> The names of Yu. I. Kovalenko and O. V. Filipchuk are not mentioned at the beginning of the finding.
- <sup>45</sup> See document no. 8.
- <sup>46</sup> Not published here.
- <sup>47</sup> The document includes the following footnotes: 1. “Immediately! 1. For the consent of the Politburo members. 2. C[omrade] Yelchenko, Yu. M., C[omrade] Golushko, N. N. Inf[ormation] must be prepared for the CC CPSU. V. Shcherbitsky. <sup>23</sup>12.87;” 2. “Measures worded in the note of c[omrades] Yelchenko, Yu. N., Masik, K. I., Golushko, N. N., coordinated with c[omrades] Shcherbitsky, V. V., Kachalovsky, E. V., Kachura, B. V., Masol, V. A., Mozgovy, I. A., Sologub, V. A. Tytarenko, A. A., Shevchenko, V. S. A government commission has been created, information has been sent to the CC CPSU! H[ead] of the general division of the CC CPU, P. Musienko. 28 December 1987.”
- <sup>48</sup> Semen Ksenofontovych Dembovsky.
- <sup>49</sup> See document no. 2.
- <sup>50</sup> S. K. Dembovsky was arrested by the NKVD organs on 22 March 1945. The arrest warrant indicates that the manager of the footwear workshop in the village of Bykivnia, “having spent time on the territory temporarily occupied by the German-fascist invaders, was engaged in treacherous activity... Being hostile to the Soviet government, he libeled the organs of Soviet power and with the arrival of the German occupiers he informed and showed them the fabricated NKVD cemetery, where, according to his declaration, Ukrainians who had been shot were allegedly ‘buried’. As a result of which, the newspaper *Ukrainske slovo* of 8 October 1941, issue no. 25, published an article ‘Shliakhom morduvan. I v Kyievi lylas nevyinna krov,’ in which the hideous slander ‘about the Bolsheviks’ terror’ was expressed.” After Dembovsky’s nearly two-month-long detention in prison no. 1 of the NKVD Directorate of the city of Kyiv, on 16 May 1945 the Military Tribunal of the NKVD troops of Kyiv region sentenced S. K. Dembovsky to ten years’ imprisonment. AVPPRU, file 50-0092, vol. 11, fol. 211.
- <sup>51</sup> Davyd Izrailovych Dzhyryn, First Lieutenant of state security. Between 3 July 1937 and February 1938 he was the head of the 2nd Department of the NKVD Directorate of the Ukrainian SSR.
- <sup>52</sup> A reference to D. P. Chestnieishy. See documents nos. 17 and 21.
- <sup>53</sup> See document no. 24.
- <sup>54</sup> This statement is incorrect. From April 1937 to June 1938 Mykola Akymovych Tabachny held the post of prosecutor in the department of special cases of the Office of the Prosecutor-General of the Ukrainian SSR, and from July 1940 he was the prosecutor of Izmail region. AVPPRU, file 50-0092, vol. 8, fol. 55.
- <sup>55</sup> See document no. 1.
- <sup>56</sup> Mykola Illich Vorobiov, commandant of the NKVD Directorate for Kyiv region (from 1937). On the order of the NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR no. 129/ls of 12 March 1942 he was struck off the list of the Special Department as one who was declared missing in action during the Great Fatherland War.
- <sup>57</sup> Lavrukhnin was the first deputy head of the executive committee.
- <sup>58</sup> See document no. 32.

# THE PACIFICATION OF 1930

## The Beginnings of Polish Occupation in Western Ukraine between the Two World Wars

The year 1918 arrived and with it the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. The nations comprising the Austrian monarchy proclaimed the creation of their own national states. The Ukrainian nation of “Eastern Galicia,” “Northern Bukovyna,” and “Northeastern Hungary” (Transcarpathia) also decided to build the Western Ukrainian state within its own ethnic borders. On 18 October 1918 the Ukrainian National Council convened in Lviv, its members consisting of Ukrainian deputies of the Galician Sejm and the Austrian parliament, as well as representatives of all parties.

The council began its state-building work. On its instructions, small units of Ukrainian servicemen conspiratorially mustered from among the soldiers of the Austrian army that was based at this time in Lviv or its vicinities (nearly 1,200 soldiers and 60 officers), under the command of Captain Dmytro Vitovsky, gained control of the military city of Lviv on 1 November 1918. By a decision of the Ukrainian National Council the Western Ukrainian National Republic was proclaimed that day. On 22 January 1919 its government proclaimed its unification with Greater Ukraine (Eastern), which had begun to live its own independent state life after the collapse of tsarism, at the same time waging battles against the advancing Bolshevik hordes.

Unfortunately, the newly created Western Ukrainian National Republic was not fated to last long. The Ukrainian army was now battling imperialist Poland, a state that had also been under foreign rule for a lengthy period of time. After the restoration of its statehood in 1916, Poland now sought to capture the Western Ukrainian lands. In order to achieve this goal Poland obtained significant support from the Entente forces. After an eight-month-long heroic struggle against the numerically superior Polish forces, the Ukrainian army was forced to retreat from Galicia (Halychyna) to beyond the river Zbruch. On the basis of a decision of the Entente states, passed on 25 June 1919, Eastern Galicia was occupied militarily by Poland. The Poles' victory was ensured by the army of General Haller, which the Entente had supplied with modern equipment. Poland illegally used this army, which had been

created for the struggle against the Bolsheviks, against the Western Ukrainian National Republic. In this connection Clarence A. Manning, the author of *Twentieth Century Ukraine*, wrote: “Finally in the spring, the Polish divisions which had been in France under general Joseph Haller arrived; despite the orders of the Allied missions they were thrown into the struggle and they finally forced the Western Ukrainian Army to retire eastward” (p. 59).

It is clear that after the capture of Lviv on 21 November by the chauvinistic Polish army, a wave of unprecedented terror engulfed the city's Ukrainian population. This terror expanded spontaneously to all the lands of Eastern Galicia that had been occupied by the Polish army, ineradicably staining the flag of Polish statehood. Mass killings of POWs and civilians began, as well as sophisticated abuses and humiliations of the defenseless population, including priests, elderly people, and children. Ukrainian national and private property was looted, villages and churches were burned down, libraries and archives were destroyed, and Ukrainian schools were closed. Camps for prisoners and prisons were created in Wadowice, Strzalkowo, Pikulychi, Tuchola, Jalowka, Lancut, Jablonow, Wisnicz, and many other cities in which thousands of people suffered severe beatings, abuses, and humiliation, and died from hunger, cold, filth, and infectious diseases. Their only crime was that they loved their nation and desired its liberty. Thus Poland began its state life.

Rich historical materials supported by eyewitness testimonies about the methods of Polish rule in the Ukrainian lands in 1919-1920 may be found in *Kryvava Knyha* [Bloody Book] published in Vienna by the government of the Western Ukrainian National Republic, and edited by Dr. M. Lozynsky and Prof. Petro Karmansky. An incomplete roster of Ukrainians who were tortured to death in Polish prisons is listed in the book *Trahediia Halyskoi Ukrainy* [The Tragedy of Galician Ukraine] published in Winnipeg in 1920 by the Canadian journalist Osyp Megas, who had attended the 1919 Paris Peace Conference (pp. 224-35).

When Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky, who met with US President Warren G. Harding [1921-1923] during his visit to the US in 1921 and described the methods that the Polish government was using against Ukrainians in the occupied lands, the American leader responded: "Too bad." (See Rev. Petro Poniatyshyn, "Z moikh spomyniv. Mytropolyt Andrei Sheptytsky v Amerytsi," p. 23 [From My Memoirs: Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky in America] in the Jubilee Book of the Ukrainian National Association 1894-1954, *Ukrainians in the Free World*, edited by Luka Myshuha and Anthony Dragan).

It is unfortunate that Metropolitan Andrei visited the US during the lackluster presidency of President Harding. According to American historians, his administration was marked by an atmosphere of fear, suspicions, and doubts, and a number of major scandals, all of which led to the downfall of the Republican Party.

On 14 March 1923, despite the Ukrainian government's strenuous efforts, the Council of Ambassadors representing Great Britain, France, Italy, and Japan, gave Eastern Galicia to Poland. As Prof. George W. Simpson of the University of Saskatchewan wrote in his book *Ukraine: A Series of Maps and Explanations Indicating*

*the Historic and Contemporary Geographical Position of the Ukrainian People*, published by Oxford University Press in 1941, "It was the original intention of the Paris Peace Conference to give to the Ukrainians of East Galicia the right of self-determination and home rule" (p. 35).

Resorting to various ruses, Poland was instrumental in the passage of the Council of Ambassadors' decision, which flouted the humane ideas of President Woodrow Wilson. On 26 September 1922 the Warsaw Sejm had announced Poland's plan to grant autonomy to Eastern Galicia, at the same time promising to found a Ukrainian university and recognize the Ukrainian people's national rights.

Basing himself on this plan for autonomy, President Raymond Poincaré of France wrote the following to Metropolitan Sheptytsky: "We promised this to Poland, but this does not mean that the Poles will rule over you, you will obtain your rights" (*Velyka istoriia Ukrainy* [Great History of Ukraine] Winnipeg, 1948, p. 823).

The decision of the Council of Ambassadors put an end to the sovereignty of the Ukrainian National Republic. The resolution of the Warsaw Sejm on which the council had based its decision, had been devised only *pro foro externo* [for public use], because to the end of its state



This photograph of Hryts Artymiv from the village of Borynychy, Bibrka county, was taken on 30 October 1930. This is an example of how Polish punitive units dealt with Ukrainian patriots.



*The condition of the offices of the Spilna Pratsia [Joint Work] Society in the village of Kadlubyska near Brody after a Polish expedition.*

existence Poland never granted autonomy to the Ukrainian nation. The entire system of Polish rule in the Ukrainian lands from 1919 sought completely to eradicate the Ukrainian character of the enslaved country. This goal was served by such methods as banning the use of the Ukrainian language in government offices, courts, and schools, abolishing all Ukrainian chairs at Lviv University, and introducing wide-ranging and energetically implemented colonization of the Ukrainian lands by Polish settlers.

When all hopes for assistance or at least a modicum of justice from the Western world concerning the decisions being implemented on the Ukrainian problem evaporated, and once Ukrainians realized that Poland had no intentions of upholding its agreements and obligations that it had submitted to the Paris Peace Conference, a self-defense front was formed among the people to combat Poland's policy of extermination. One front, formed immediately after the Ukrainians lost the war in 1920, was uncompromising in its stand on the Poles' occupation policies. This was the Ukrainian Military Organization (UVO) founded by Colonel Yevhen Konovalts, who was its commander until 1928. The members of the

UVO were primarily former Sich Riflemen and later, other soldiers returning from the various fronts and prison, as well as nationally conscious young people. Over a period of several years the UVO was a thorn in the side of the Poles, thereby actualizing the Ukrainian problem in the corridors of the League of Nations in Geneva. The UVO united the Ukrainian masses and offered it moral support.

The next stage of the struggle was embodied in the activity of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN), which took over from the UVO in 1929, spearheading a resolute struggle against the Polish offensive by engaging in various kinds of sabotage and carrying out assassinations of Polish ministers and political leaders. For example, in 1921 a student named Stepan Fedak carried out an unsuccessful assassination attempt against the leader of the Polish state, Jozef Pilsudski. The Lviv school curator, Jan Sobinski, was assassinated in 1924; the Polish politician, Tadeusz Holowko, in 1931, and the minister of internal affairs, Bronislaw Pieracki, in 1934. The Polish government retaliated by carrying out mass arrests of underground members, who were sentenced to lengthy prison sentences. (See the

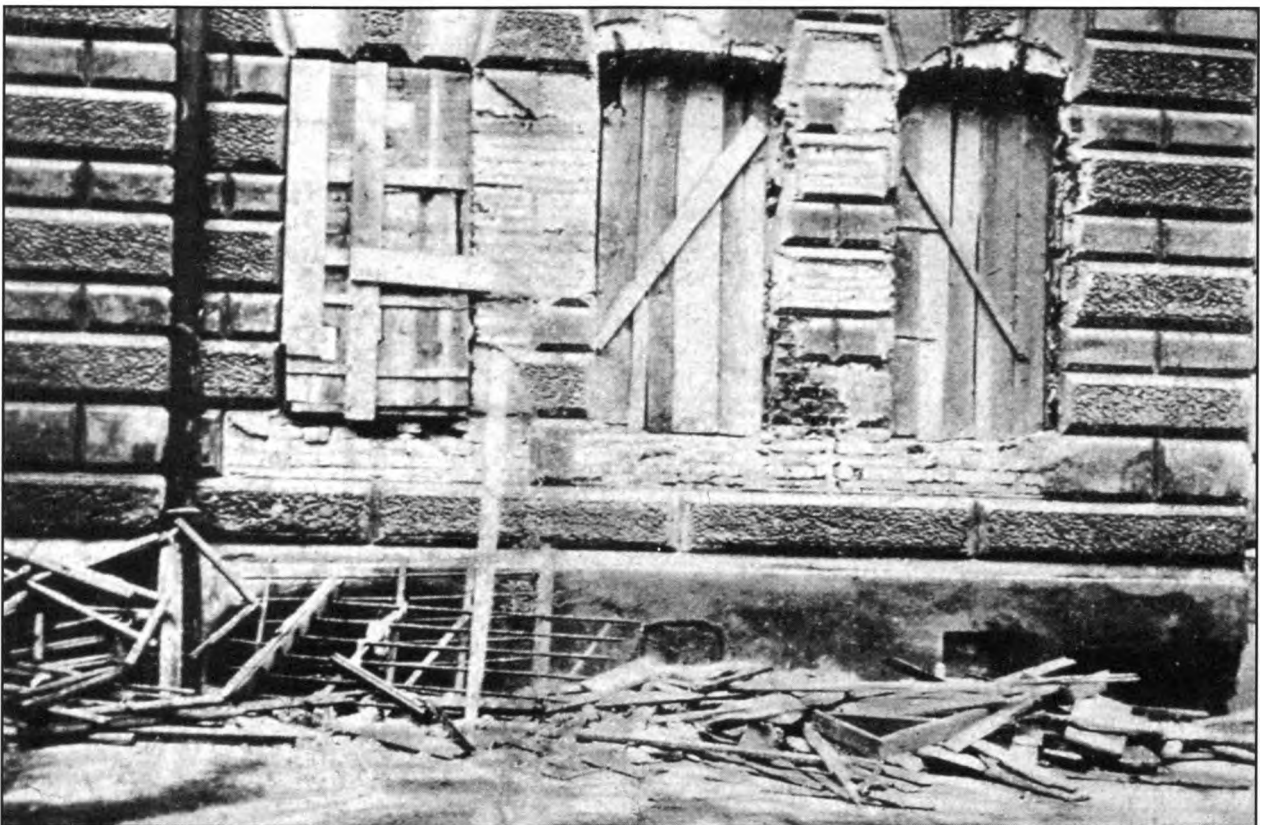
materials on these trials in *Dvanadtsiat ukraintsiv pered lvivskym sudom* [Twelve Ukrainians on Trial in Lviv] published in Lviv in 1926.)

But the acts of sabotage did not stop, despite the numerous losses. Then, with the aid of the police and the army, the Polish government began organizing pogroms of the Ukrainian populace, known as the “Pacification.” Besides the destruction of all private property belonging to Ukrainians and Ukrainian economic and cultural institutions, thousands of innocent people were tortured, some of whom were killed. The Polish “Pacification” elicited profound revulsion in the free world (See Manning, p. 111).

During the trial of Ukrainian nationalists in Warsaw, witness Marian Kukel, who was a Polish general heading a brigade that was temporarily resting, and an assistant professor at Jagiellonian University, declared: “... Late one night a messenger brought me a letter from Dr. Wladyslaw Kiernik [Polish minister of agriculture in 1925-1926]. He informed me that an acquaintance of his, a police commissar, had told him that masses of police from the entire state had been dispatched to several counties in Little Poland [Eastern Galicia]. The police action is to be personally directed by Minister of Internal Affairs Pieracki, who is now in Krynytsia (See

Zenovii Knysh’s *Varshavskyyi Protses OUN* [The Warsaw Trial of the OUN], Toronto, 1986).

In her memoirs about the events of 1930, Maria Lampika-Marichka presents a realistic image of a pacification action carried out by a punitive detachment of the 13<sup>th</sup> Ulan Regiment. “Policemen in navy-blue hats with white crowns forcibly assembled the people in the village and ordered them to dismantle the stack of grain sheaves and shake out each sheaf. The sheaves were turned into straw by shaking out and ruining all the grain. They ‘looked for weapons’ in the same way, by using sledgehammers to smash the cement stairs in front of our house. They smashed furniture, removing the drawers, which they threw at my father, and asking about every single piece of paper: ‘What is this?’ and beating him with a rifle butt. The pasture ground in front of the house and the buildings were covered with white feathers from torn down quilts and pillows. ‘They also looked for hidden weapons.’ A policeman shouted at a six-year-old boy, Volodia, who had come home from school: ‘Where are the weapons?’ We looked for the frightened child the whole day, until he was found sleeping in the potato patch. They beat and beat father... Under the ribs, on his shoulders; they aimed for his kidneys, and without a single word he shielded himself with his hand, out of experience. They’re



*The day after a bomb exploded at the Ukrainian Maslosoiuz Provincial Dairy Union in Lviv.*

beating him and saying: 'And those fifty truncheons are for Ukrainian politics!' 'And now you're getting it for suing the reeve on behalf of your wild boars [kabanie: derogatory Polish term for Ukrainians; here, a reference to the man's sons]!' 'And these fifty truncheons are for having been the head of Prosvita for too long!' 'And now you'll get 100 more for not loving the Polish government!' They continued to beat him... My father Mykhailo covered his ears with his hands, he clenched his teeth, yelled, cursed... Other people were praying and waiting for their turn... They poured water on father three times and beat him again. After 250 or maybe even more blows from their truncheons, they threw the unconscious man into liquid manure next to the stable, saying: 'And now drink some of this manure so that you will be 'an even better patriot!'

Milena Rudnytska, a former deputy to the Polish Sejm, has left an interesting description and statistical data on Polish pacification actions in Galicia, which took place between mid-September and late October 1930. "The plan of this pacification was thoroughly drawn up in Warsaw, and it looked like this: a military or

police cavalry unit numbering 100-200 people would suddenly attack a village, usually at night. The commander of the expedition, an officer, would ride over to the community leadership, and on the basis of a list from the county *starosta* [head] he would summon the most nationally conscious male and female peasants, mainly those who were active in local Ukrainian societies. Once they had assembled, the officer would inform them that within two or three hours the community had to collect a fixed contribution (agricultural products, cattle, domestic fowl, etc). Otherwise, the village would be 'leveled with the ground.' After the peasants delivered the 'contribution' to the community house, the village leaders were led to a stable or a threshing ground outside the village, where they were savagely beaten. The execution took place in such a manner that the peoples' clothing was torn off, and they were placed one by one on the ground or on a bench. Several soldiers would hold down the victim, while two others were stationed on each side. Then the person was beaten with a heavy truncheon until he lost consciousness. Then they would splash water on him and continue the beating until the person lost consciousness again.

*On 21 November 1930 the English newspaper Manchester Guardian published an article by its correspondent F. A. Voight about the Polish pogroms in Galicia, entitled "In the Ukraine. Peasants Burnt and Killed." Voight wrote his article in Lviv on 14 November, based on what he himself had witnessed. A fragment of his article is reproduced below [back-translation from the Ukrainian]:*

*"Lviv, Eastern Galicia, Friday"*

*Eleven Ukrainian villagers, mostly savagely beaten by the Poles, are lying here in a small, simple Ukrainian hospital. They are only a few of the many victims of what is officially called the "pacification of Eastern Galicia." One must be completely sincere in relation to one of the most horrible acts of savagery in modern times. Those eleven villagers were so massacred on the lower part of their naked bodies that the flesh was literally chopped to pieces.*

*With feelings of horror and revulsion, and at the same time with the justification that I cannot be horrified by the ultimately unquestioned proof conveyed here, I requested the polite clergymen who are caring for the tortured victims to show me their real injuries. Then the bandages and cotton pads were removed, and with my own eyes I saw a bluish living body that had been beaten four or five weeks earlier into one hideous mass. I have photographs of these injuries...*

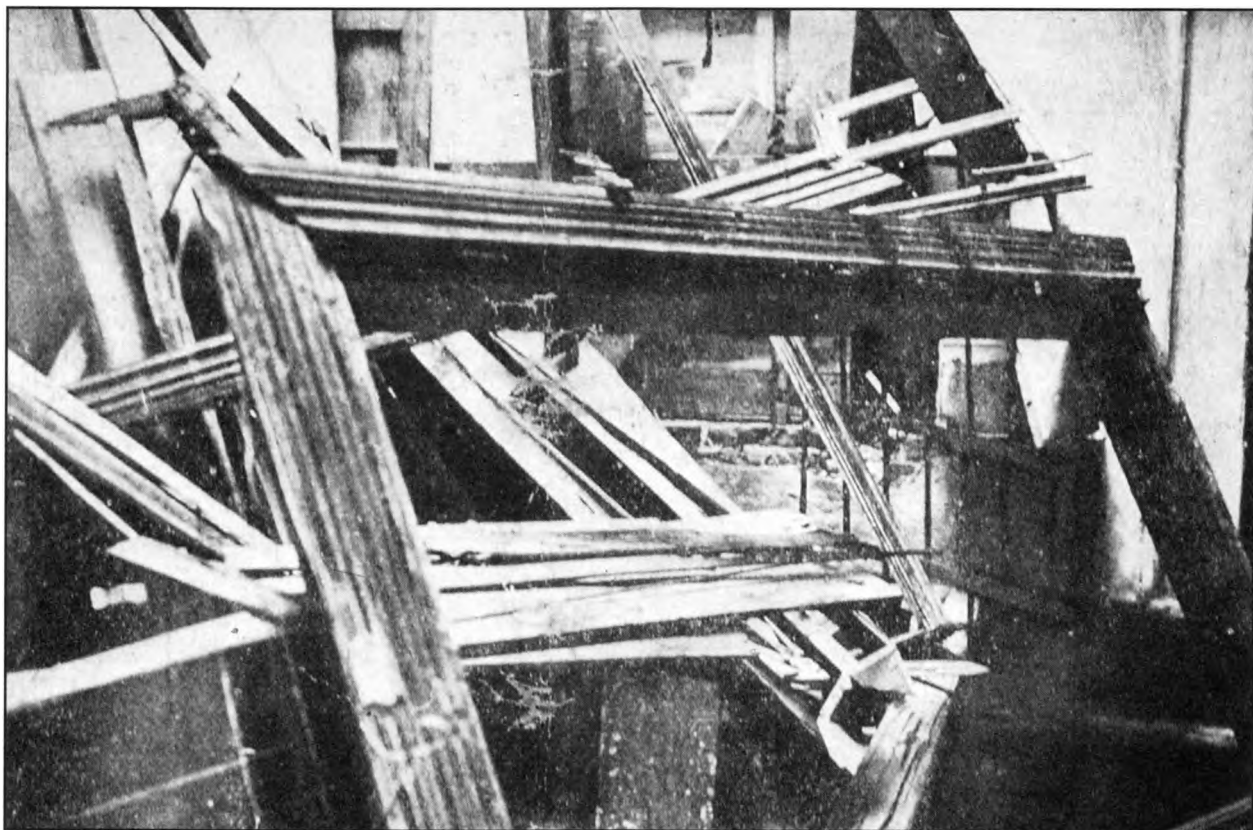
*What is interesting is that when the Polish government here in Lviv learned of the existence of those photographs not only was the Ukrainian hospital searched but also the residences of all the Ukrainian doctors. At the same time the Polish officials did not ask who those eleven victims were. The Poles are denying the fact that there were any beatings. All they wanted was to destroy the evidence, i.e., the photographs. These are indeed strange measures so that the Polish public in Poland and the entire world would not find out what happened in the Ukrainian land..."*



The norm was between 100 and 200 blows. Among those who were beaten were women, old people, and teenagers, and quite often priests and other local intellectuals. Then, while one party of soldiers was administering the beatings, another raged throughout the village. Under the pretext of searching for hidden weapons, the army devastated homes, tearing roofs off houses, smashing windows and stoves, breaking furniture, throwing clothing, underclothing, and sheepskin jackets from cupboards and chests, which the soldiers shredded with their bayonets. They ripped the feathers from pillows and down comforters, tossed food out of pantries into the yards, churned it into the mud and poured kerosene over it.

In stables they destroyed agricultural implements and despoiled water wells. After finishing with one house, they went to the next one. The permanent program of pacification also included acts disrespecting Ukrainian national feelings. Villagers were forced to kiss the ground and declare that it was 'Polish soil,' shout 'Long live Poland!' and yell vulgar things about Ukraine, e.g., 'I spit on the dog's mother Ukraine,' and sing songs ridiculing Ukraine and the Ukrainian nation. Thus, in the autumn of 1930 punitive expeditions traveled up, down, and across Halychyna, destroying Ukrainian cultural

achievements and leaving thousands of injured people. This pogromist action covered an area of 50,000 square kilometers. One petition sent to the League of Nations listed the names of 700 villages that had fallen victim to these pogroms, with an exact date, description of the event, and the surnames of those who had been beaten. If you accept the fact that it was not always possible to collect documentation from every locale because the Polish government did its utmost to impede this documentation, the number of pacified villages would probably reach 1,000. With insignificant variations depending on the sadism of the commanders of punitive detachments, the same type of action was repeated everywhere, and the protocols of eyewitnesses in various parts of the land were very similar to each other. The details of the pacification plan were drafted in Warsaw with this very kind of precision. A few words should be said about the people who were tortured. If you count only 20 people in every pacified village, the figure of 20,000 people is obtained. It took many weeks, sometimes months, for people to recover from their injuries: the beatings were so severe that their skin had literally split from the force of the blows, and their devastated bodies could not heal. In many cases gangrene would develop, because the injured people did not receive any



*In the wake of a bomb explosion at the Ukrainian Central Union in Lviv on 30 October 1930.*

medical attention and had no drugs or antiseptic bandages. The Polish government forbade hospitals to admit people who had been beaten, and doctors were forbidden to travel to villages and give assistance to the sick. When a family would bring a sick individual on a wagon to the city to see a private doctor, the police would detain the wagon and not allow the sick person to see a doctor. Very often the beatings caused damage to the internal organs and broken bones. As a result of the beatings several dozen people died, and five people died on the spot during the beatings.”

Concluding her analysis, Milena Rudnytska writes: “Thus, the sporadic acts of the revolutionary underground were only a pretext for the government to destroy Ukrainian cultural and economic achievements and terrorize the Ukrainian population. In applying the principle of collective responsibility and collective punishment, Poland placed itself on the Bolsheviks’ level” (“Dvadtsiatyatyrychchia patsyfikatsii” [The 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Pacification] 27 September 1955).

Punitive expeditions paid particular attention to buildings belonging to Ukrainian societies and institutions. The members of these expeditions completely destroyed cooperative stores, reading

rooms, and libraries, smashed stages, tore down theatrical backdrops and costumes, and smashed musical instruments belonging to village orchestras. When a punitive commission departed from a village or town after a couple of days, it looked as though it had been devastated by a Tatar horde.

Protests lodged by Ukrainian representatives, e.g., the head of the Prosvita Society, deputy Mykhailo Halushchynsky, and attempts to reach some sort of understanding with the Polish government in Warsaw not only did not produce any positive results but may also have led to Halushchynsky’s premature death.

“Metropolitan Sheptytsky, who traveled personally to Warsaw, was received in an extremely rude fashion; he was not permitted to see Marshall Pilsudski, and instead of using his highest authority that he enjoyed in the Ukrainian nation, Metropolitan Andrei was insulted in Poland. He returned with nothing.” (Homo Politicus: “The Cause Was Poland,” p. 125)

The Polish government’s absolutely unconsidered policy toward other nations and minorities ultimately led to the speedy and shameful demise of the Polish state.

**Myron Radzykevych**



*In the wake of a bomb explosion at the Ukrainian Central Union in Lviv on 30 October 1930.*



*Yulian Holovinsky, territorial commander of the Ukrainian Military Organization (UVO), summarily shot after his arrest by the Polish police on 30 October 1930 in the vicinity of Bibrka, near Lviv.*



*The Prosvita building in Hai, near Lviv, after a Polish inspection on 5 October 1930.*

# I SAW HELL: THE CRIMES IN VINNYTSIA

*(Fragments from memoirs)*

*The first and only edition of the book **Zlochyn u Vinnytsi** [Crime in Vinnytsia] by the educator and journalist Apolon Trembovetsky was published in Vinnytsia during the German occupation in September 1943. One of the initiators and participants in the exhumations of the mass graves of NKVD victims, Trembovetsky worked indefatigably to collect and publicize information on the Vinnytsia tragedy.*



*Apolon Trembovetsky.*

As I write these lines, my forehead is covered with cold sweat. Once again the terrible picture of the inhuman tortures and sufferings of my people opens up before my eyes.

Again I see thousands of dead bodies with their hands tied, who plead with me once again to tell the truth about the infernal sufferings they experienced in the NKVD dungeons.

Again I see the tears of thousands of widows and orphans from whom the bloody hands of the executioners seized their near and dear ones.

Again I see the endless stream of the living, who shed tears over the bodies of innocent victims, having come to the common graves in order to pay their last respects in a Christian way. Seven years have passed since the days when I viewed this hell. But to me it seems as if it happened only yesterday.

Yes! This was yesterday and today. And the worse part of it is when I think that all this is happening there, behind the Iron Curtain, with even greater brutality today — with unprecedented despotism.

I write these lines that come from the bottom of my heart for you, my countrymen, who were destined to find a new fatherland in sunny Argentina. Read this and carry the truth about Ukraine.

**Apolon Trembovetsky**

# THE CRIMES IN VINNYTSIA

As early as the fall of 1942 some residents of the city of Vinnytsia sought to direct the city authorities' attention to the possibility that mass graves of victims murdered by the NKVD could be found in the Dolynky district, on the Lityn highway. However, the arrival of winter temporarily halted all attempts to verify these suspicions. A special commission consisting of forensic experts, created on orders of the German administration, began excavating the graves of these innocent victims of Bolshevik terror in our city only in the spring of 1943.

On 24 May 1943 the first large grave was opened. Its contents instantly confirmed the complete veracity of the rumors that had long been circulating among the people.

A beautiful fruit orchard occupying an area of around one hectare was located at 1 Pidlisna Street along the Lityn highway. Suddenly, in late March 1938, boards, bricks, quicklime, and cement began to be delivered there. Eventually, a high wood fence was erected around the orchard. Soon, to the left of the gates appeared a small brick building that could barely be seen from behind the verdant greenery. The fence was built

very carefully so that there were no cracks. Even children could not find any way to peek into the orchard and find out what was going on there. Within a month the fence was topped by several rows of barbed wire, and guards appeared. It was forbidden to approach the fence. People living nearby understood that something secret was being built here. According to the current custom, this place was called a "military building site."

Eyewitness reports established that NKVD vehicles frequently arrived here. You could hear the sound of their engines, especially at night. The local residents became so inured to this annoying noise that they no longer reacted. Sometimes you could hear people talking, but it never occurred to them that terrible events were taking place there.

As confirmed later, the graves were prepared according to the trench principle. A square-shaped grave was dug in such a manner that the earth from the next grave was used to bury the corpses from the preceding grave, and so on. Trenches were laid next to each other among the orchard trees, like a pathway. The graves were dug very deeply. The clothing of the dead



*Exhumed graves at the old cemetery in Vinnytsia, 1943.*



*Reinterment of exhumed corpses in a common grave.*

appeared only at a depth of 1.5-2 meters, while the corpses themselves were found approximately one meter lower. In certain graves the clothing and corpses were mixed with lime. In graves where there was not enough lime the clothing was so well preserved that it can still be identified to this day.

The opening of such a grave is a horrendous sight. Among the clothing we find Ukrainian embroidered cloth shirts, peasant coats made of coarse woolen cloth, women's one-piece suits with embroidery, blouses, dresses, sheepskin jackets, military greatcoats, quilts, coarse hemp sheets, coats, women's skirts, and peasant bags containing well-preserved fatback and a cup of butter, several packages of low-grade tobacco and cigarette paper, thick long underwear, embroidered kerchiefs, towels, etc.

Within two weeks nineteen graves occupying an area of 228 square meters had been excavated to a depth of more than two meters (just to the layer of corpses), and a large quantity of various types of clothing was removed. Quite a few people had already gathered to watch these terrible excavations. Many tears were shed over the corpses of these innocent martyrs. Horror overwhelms people when they see with their own

eyes hundreds of dead bodies with their hands tied.

A large group of women has gathered near the corpses. A resident of the city of Vinnytsia, Olena Yukhymivna Olkhovska, recognized the corpse of her husband. In December 1937 this unfortunate woman, whose life was ruined by the Bolsheviks, lost her husband Petro, who worked in a Vinnytsia bakery. He was a dedicated worker, and for his unsparing efforts he became an "enemy of the people." Within a few years all five of their children died of misery and grief, leaving the woman completely alone.

On 7 June a young woman named Tamara Dzhevanetska came to the excavation site. Examining the many articles, she found a slipper belonging to her husband Borys Kostiantynovych Dzhevanetsky, and eventually, among the corpses that were lying on the surface next to the pit she husband's body. Onlookers tried to console the wretched woman, telling her that she must have made a mistake, and that the body could be that of someone else. Weeping, the woman told us about the clothing in which her husband had been arrested: a velvet shirt; the marks on his underclothing were proof positive that she was telling the truth.

Some residents of our city, particularly those who lived near the cemetery and park, still have an excellent recollection of the terrible year of 1937, when trucks frequently arrived at night. However, in those days it was terrifying even to think about this. Everyone had his own family, and “superfluous” conversations were dangerous. It was better to keep quiet and not discuss this even with close family members.

The exhumations of victims executed by the Vinnytsia NKVD, which began on 24 May 1943 in the orchard at 1 Pidlisna Street, broke through the wall of silence erected by the residents of Vinnytsia. People began to talk. On 29 June 1943, the search for new graves with the bodies of murdered people was begun in the left section of the cemetery, in the Pyrohov Raion Hospital. After five years this place was now overrun with tall weeds and bushes. When the excavations were started, some people thought the work would be in vain. But the very next day, on 30 June, six two-meter deep graves measuring 3 by 3 meters were discovered. First, there was a layer of clothing, followed by corpses. The ghastly sight on Pidlisna Street was also revealed in the Orthodox cemetery, which the NKVD had

brutally transformed into a place for hiding its terrible crimes. In these graves (fifteen of them have been exhumed so far) lie tortured martyrs with their hands tied and shot in the back of the head.

The Gorky Park of Culture and Recreation in Vinnytsia: everywhere are verdant greenery and huge pictures of the “leaders.” On the main alleyway are more than a dozen emblems of the Soviet republics, a huge portrait of Stalin, and a sea of flowers. At the end of the alley is a large statue of Lenin and Stalin sitting on a bench and talking. This was how the place looked five

On 30 June exhumations of graves containing the bodies of people who had been murdered by the Vinnytsia NKVD began in this park of “culture and recreation.” Fourteen graves have been excavated. Hundreds of articles of clothing and footwear were removed from those ghastly pits and hung on a wire for identification. A large quantity of women’s clothing was found: blouses, dresses, kerchiefs, and combs. There is a lot of peasant women’s clothing.

People from everywhere in Vinnytsia visit these excavations, searching for their loved ones. We have now established the fact that certain



*At the excavation site in Vinnytsia, 1943. Anastasia Styhoretska found a jacket belonging to her husband Mykola.*



*Collecting clothing found in the graves, Vinnytsia, 1943.*

residents have found the clothing of their family members in the “park of culture.”

Here, a woman has recognized the handkerchief of her husband Tymofii Ivanovych Yavletsky, who worked as a carpenter in the city of Vinnytsia. Mykola Ivanovych Styhoretsky, a worker from the Vinnytsia Water Canal, who was arrested on 15 June 1937, found his final resting place here. His wife identified his jacket. The relatives of Ivan Petrovych Lus, a collective farmer from the village of Shchitky, who was arrested on 23 December 1937 and then executed, recognized his jacket and coat. Weeping, Kateryna Korniienko recognized the embroidered shirt of her father Ivan, a collective farmer from the village of Kordyshivka, in Pohrebyshche raion.

We gaze upon these “standard” graves packed with human bodies, and pictures pass through our memory: right here, a few meters from them, happy young people were dancing five years ago to the thunder of a button accordion or an orchestra; Young Pioneers with faces red from laughter are coming out of the Fun House. The author of these lines frequently brought his pupils to this amusement park; he brought the children to this very Fun House and laughed with them, not

realizing that a dear family member was lying nearby in a terrible pit.

30 July. Today at 6:00 a.m. we came here to observe in solitude the horrific sight of the excavations. But we found eight women here, who for the past hour had been searching for their relatives’ belongings. This group of women had traveled to Vinnytsia from Bratslav raion. All of them had lost their close relatives and come to Vinnytsia to find at least some traces of them. Citizeness Venedykta Stepanovych Malakhovska from the village of Chernyshivka has found a cloak, woolen coat, jacket, and pillowcase that belonged to her husband. Weeping, she recounted the details of his life. In October 1937 her husband, the head of a collective farm, was arrested. After some time she was informed that he had died of dysentery. But the wretched woman was always tormented by doubt. She didn’t believe the NKVD. Later, five of her brothers were arrested. For six years nothing was known of their fate. But today, here in the “park of culture and recreation” next to swings, this woman’s sister-in-law, Frania Tushevskia, has found the woolen coat of her husband Andrii, who was working as a blacksmith at a Machine-



Tractor Station and arrested as an “enemy of the people” in 1937.

We walk around the excavation site. A terrible sight unfolds before our eyes. Lying on the ground, in the vicinity of the swings, are 295 corpses, 8 of them women. The hands of all the male corpses are bound. Both the hands and feet of one male corpse are tied.

Fourteen huge pits have been opened. Corpses have been exhumed only from a few of them. These remains are being delivered to Pidlisna Street for burial in a common grave. For a long time the inclement rainy weather complicated the work of exhuming the bodies. The exhumations of the horrible pits continued for more than three months. In the orchard on Pidlisna Street thirty-six large pits with corpses have been excavated, as well as three pits that contained only clothing and personal items belonging to the dead.

The NKVD executioners meticulously hid their bloody crimes. This is evident from the fact that among the large quantity of personal belongings that were found in the pits there are comparatively few documents identifying the individuals who died at the hands of the NKVD. A list of some of these documents follows:

1. A report of a search conducted on 14 April 1938. The search was conducted in the apartment of citizen Ivan Romanovych Syniavsky in the village of Savynets, Trostianets raion. Citizen Luzhansky was present during the search. A passport, series no. EO no. 647075, was found.

2. A report of a search conducted in April 1938 (the day is illegible). The search was conducted in the apartment of citizen Mykhailo Petrovych Rymsha in the village of Pliakhova, Koziatyn raion. Vasyl Kotyk was present during the search.

3. A baggage claim ticket no. 945 dated 21 April 1938, and a prisoner’s personal savings book no. A 5023. These two documents belong to Vasyl Mykhailovych Molodychenko.

4. A personal savings book from 1938 (the rest of the date is water damaged) issued to Liudvyg Sigizmundovych Maniavsky.

5. A report of a search conducted on 2 April 1938. Feodosii Volodymyrovych Melnyk, b. 1907, in the village of Olshana, Kryzhopil raion.

6. A report of a search conducted on 10 April 1938. Albin Oleksandrovych Podlisny, the village

of Rozsoshe, Tyvriv raion. A protocol of a personal search was also found in his name.

7. A ticket allowing a prisoner to claim money, issued to Vasyl Kyrylovych Dubniuk on 13 March 1938.

8. Medical certificate. Hryhorii Pavlovych Bevz, aged 33, village of Shkuryntsi, 31 May (year undetermined). The medical certificate was issued by a doctor to determine his physical state after he suffered a beating en route to the village of Bokhonyky.

9. A report of a search conducted on 14 April 1938 in the apartment of Semen Trokhymovych Denysiuk, a resident of the village of Savynets, Trostianets raion. A passport, EO no. 647017, and a military ticket were confiscated.

10. A report of a search, the town of Shpykiv, 12 March 1938. The search was conducted in the apartment of citizen Oleksandr Yosypovych Babulevych. The following documents were confiscated: passport, EU no. 383256; a military ticket, a tsarist passport, and various personal documents about service in the tsarist army (twelve documents in all).

11. A report of a search, town of Trostianets, 6 April 1938. The search was conducted in the apartment of citizen Samuil Fedorovych Sylavsky. The following was confiscated during the search: passport ES no. 710866, a double-barreled hunting rifle no. 19379, and a hunting permit no. 191.

12. In one pocket forty-two documents were found (receipts for the payment of taxes, etc.). All these documents were issued to Lukash Andriiovych Makovsky, a collective farmer from the village of Oleksandrivka, Trostianets raion. Among them is notification no. 77 sent to him from the Trostianets court on 3 April 1938. Citizen Makovsky is being summoned as a witness in the case of Lysohir and others. Of special significance is a small piece of paper ripped from a school copybook in which two postage stamps are wrapped. On the sheet of paper a child’s hand has written a schedule of classes.

13. A form stamped by the Kosior agricultural workshop in the village of Savynets, Trostianets raion in Vinnytsia oblast, dated 1 April 1936, no. 1.

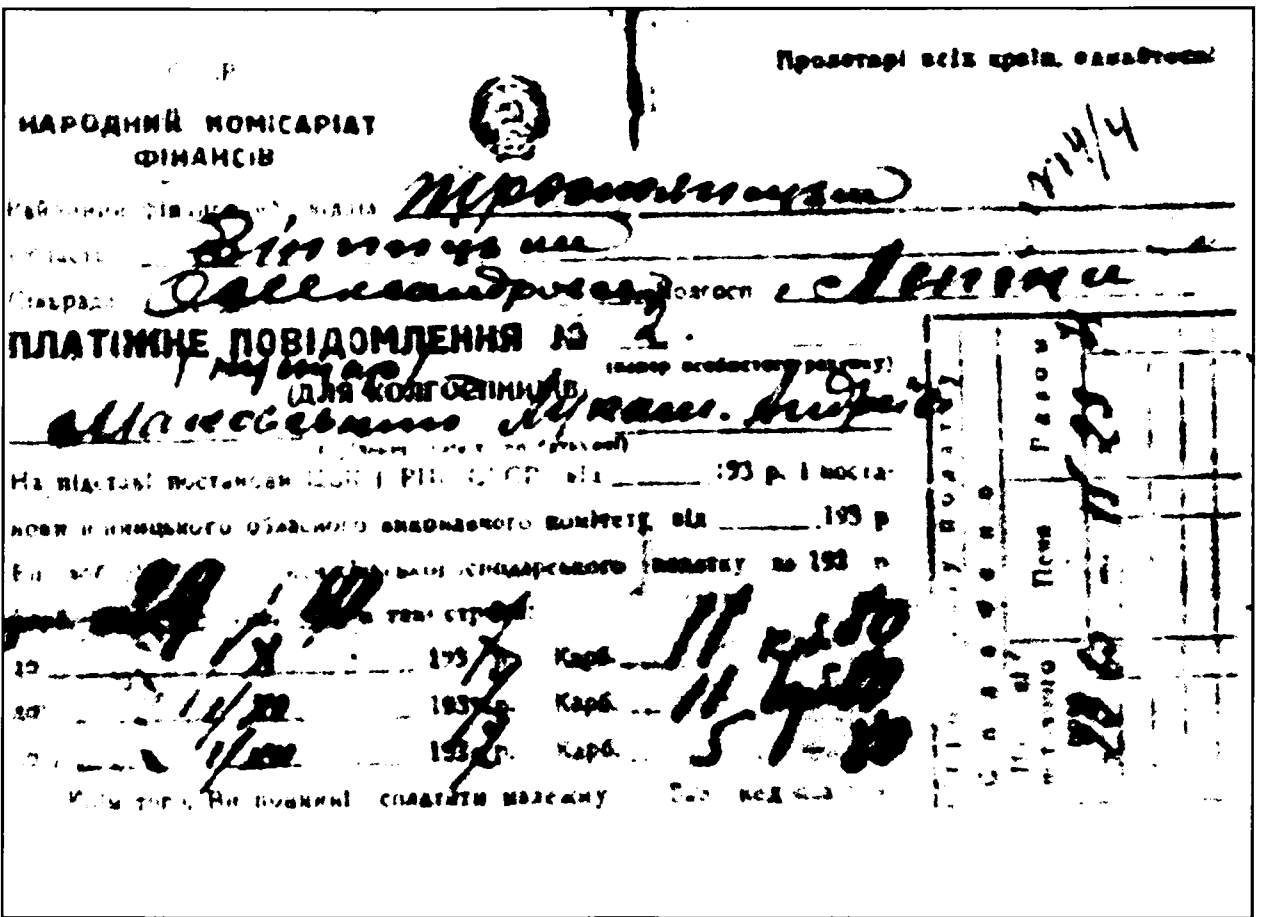
14. A form bearing the stamp of the Trostianets Machine-Tractor Station.

15. An extract from the minutes of a meeting of the presidium of the Tyvriv raion executive committee on 4 December 1935 about the



*At the excavation site in Vinnytsia, 1943.*





Document found in a mass grave in Vinnytsia.

waiving of the meat tax for citizen Dmytro Uhlianytsia from the village of Vitava.

16. A form dated 16 October 1937, issued to the young veterinarian Zakhar Vasyliovych Potashkov, stating that he works in the Haisyn Veterinary Hospital.

17. A report of a search, dated 23 March 1938. The search was conducted in the apartment of citizen Petro Myronovych Kucher, in the village of Nova Obodivka, Obodivka raion.

18. A report of a search, dated 10 March 1938, which was conducted in the village of Demivka, Olhopil raion, in the apartment of citizen Dmytro Semenovych Yanishevsky.

19. A report of a search, dated 29 March 1938. The search was carried out in the village of Nova Obodivka, Obodivka raion, in the

apartment of citizen Andrii Kindratovych Orymchenko.

20. A copy of a ticket (no. 18), dated 8 March 1938 allowing a prisoner to claim money; S. H. Lukiianchuk (the city of Tulchyn).

21. A receipt dated 25 April 1937, issued in the name of Klopotsky (Pohrebyshche raion).

22. A notice (no. 56) dated 7 September 1933 about a tax payment by citizen Sevastian Yavorsky; the Dorohoshch village soviet of Zaslava raion.

23. Certificate no. 374 issued in 1936 to the director of the Obodivka Machine-Tractor Station, Kostiantyn Pavlovych Havalovsky. Also found were some fragments of a signed complaint submitted to the Prosecutor-General in Moscow.

# VICTIMS

*Numerous documents, articles with markings, and the identification of corpses and clothing by family members helped determine the surnames of 580 people.\**

*The following individuals were “enemies of the people”:*

*peasants (212); workers (82); civil servants (51); specialists (26); servicemen (16); and priests (4).*

*The victims are divided into the following categories:*

## **PEASANTS:**

Collective farmers: 163

Independent farmers: 33

Brigade leaders: 6

Guards: 3

Gardeners: 2

Stablemen: 1

Forest wardens: 1

Stewards: 1

Record keepers: 1

Beekeepers: 1

## **WORKERS &**

### **SKILLED WORKMEN:**

Manual laborers: 40

Railway workers: 10

Blacksmiths: 4

Locksmiths: 3

Shoemakers: 3

Drivers: 3

Road workers: 2

Joiners: 2

Tailors: 2

Mining foremen: 1

Hairdressers: 1

Woodcutters: 1

Cooks: 1

Telegraph operators: 1

Machinists: 1

Railway locksmiths: 1

Millers: 1

Bakers: 1

Cartwrights: 1

Masons: 1

Heads of a confectionary factory workshop: 1

## **CIVIL SERVANTS:**

No specific profession: 27

Accountants: 13

Directors of MTSs: 3

Auditors: 2

Dealers: 2

Station heads: 1

City inspectors: 1

Directors of sugar refineries: 1

Bank inspectors: 1

## **PROFESSIONALS:**

Servicemen: 16

Teachers: 8

Military veterinarians: 6

Priests: 4

Veterinary doctors: 3

Engineers: 3

Military technicians: 1

Land surveyors' assistants: 1

Midwives: 1

Boiler laboratory heads: 1

School principals: 1

Judges: 1

\*This document was discovered on a corpse during an exhumation in the orchard at 1 Pidlisna Street, Vinnytsia.



*Exhumation of bodies in Vinnytsia, 1943 .*



*People searching for their loved ones in Vinnytsia, 1943.*

## FROM AN EYEWITNESS ACCOUNT

I remember one fall evening in 1937 (it was around 7:00 p.m.). I was rushing home and taking a shortcut. After leaving the main alley of the cemetery, I noticed a vehicle approaching the gates. At first I thought it was a vehicle from the garage of the Pyrohov Hospital, but some sort of feeling told me that this was not so (that morning a huge pit had been dug). I stood in the shadow of one of the trees and as the angle of light shifted, I changed my position, trying to stay in the shadows. And what happened? I became an involuntary witness to an unforgettable sight. I saw a truck covered with a tarpaulin, on which a few people were sitting, drive past me. The truck approached a pit, and to the accompaniment of brutal curses, corpses were dumped in, judging by the sound of falling bodies. Quickly shoveling earth on top of the corpses, the people got back on the truck — again to the accompaniment of curses — and left the cemetery. Alone in the darkness, I was gripped with horror (during the dumping of the corpses, the light in the truck was switched off, and all the work took place in the dark). Stumbling and tripping over the bases of the gate, I ran home. By the time I got home, I realized that the people who had been burying the corpses that resembled them were prisoners. What was going through their minds as

they realized that if not today then tomorrow the same fate would befall them as those whom they had been forced to bury?

After this I began avoiding the cemetery, choosing a route along the Lityn highway. In early March 1938 I was coming from downtown around 8:00 p.m. A short distance from the cemetery gates, opposite the blacksmith's, I noticed a guard in an NKVD uniform. Not understanding what was going on, I stopped and began looking around. When the guard spotted me, he began shouting [in Russian]: "Why have you stopped? Go about your business!" Retreating to a distance from where the guard could not see me, I stopped near a linden tree, listening to make sure that he was not coming after me. At this moment, a truck appeared at the corner of a street called 1 May in those days and the Lityn highway. It was followed by a second and, after a few minutes, a third. All three trucks were heading toward the city. A car flashing its headlights appeared on a hill near the second school (today it houses the 109<sup>th</sup> Battalion). The same thing was being done by the first truck that was approaching the gates of the city park, near the smithy on the Lityn highway. I thought they were signaling each other about passing, but the space between them was so large that there was no need for signals.



*Bodies exhumed from the graves.*



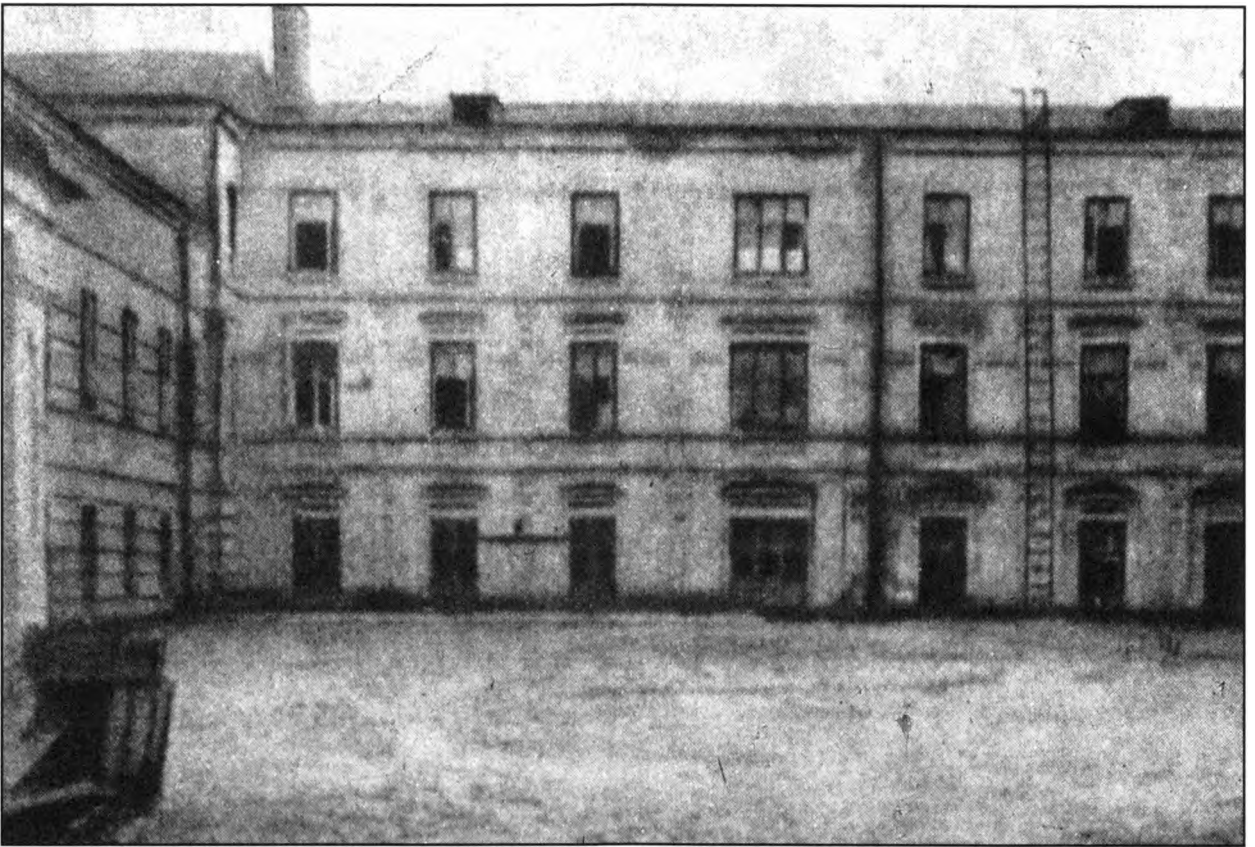
*Exhumations in Vinnytsia, 1943.*

Everything became clear when the three vehicles arrived at the city park (near the swings), while the car stopped on the highway. A few people got out of the car and followed the large trucks. After some time I heard brutal cursing, people shouting “Closer, closer!” and more cursing. Then, after a brief pause, I heard the sound of falling, which reminded me of the sound of the dead bodies falling in the cemetery. The trucks stayed longer in the park, but the car and its “masters” drove off in the direction of the city. After a while all three trucks headed out after it. After seeing all this, I came to the conclusion that there was no more room at the cemetery for pits or for some other reasons it was not convenient to “populate the cemetery.”

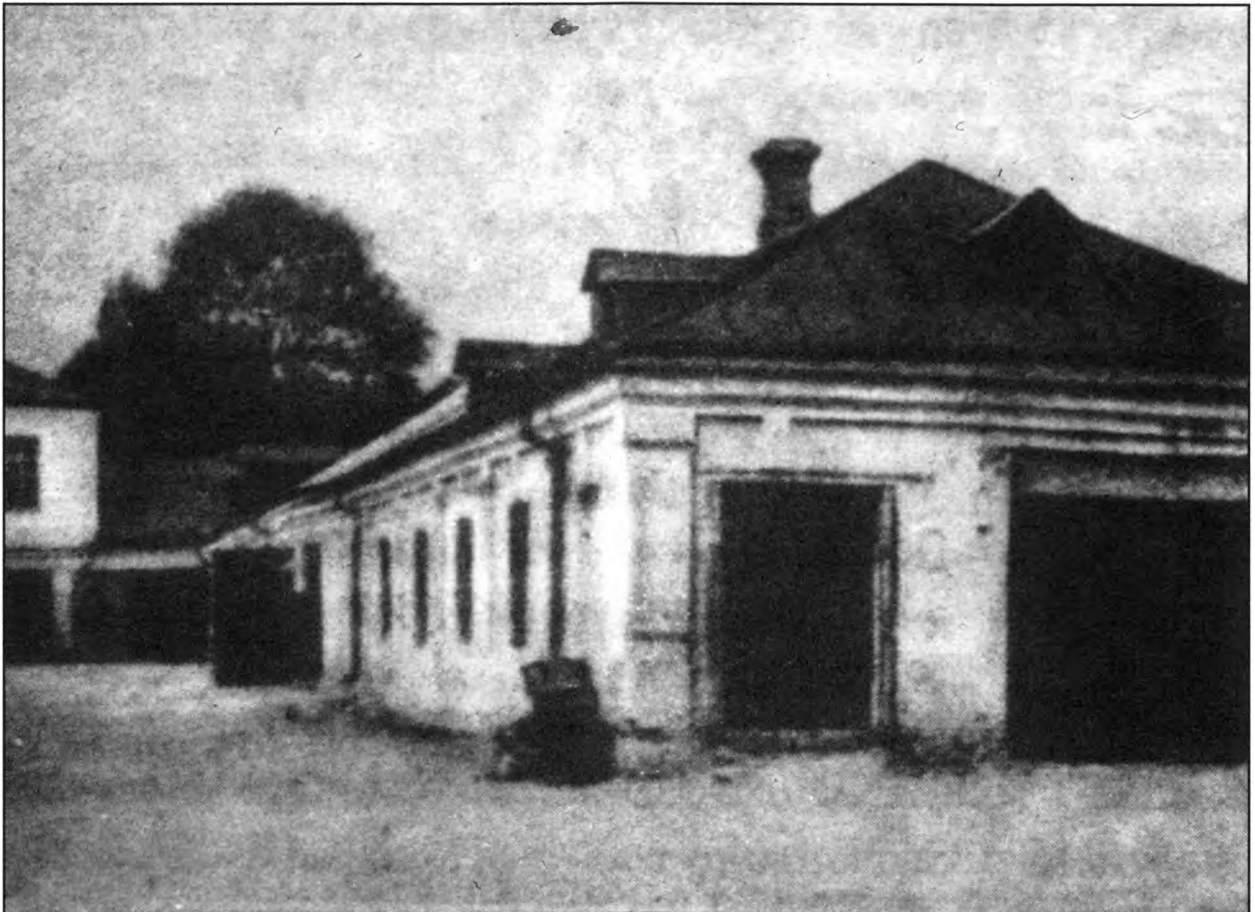
In the spring of 1938 I had to go to Kyiv, where I spent more than three months (that spring my brother was arrested). Returning to Vinnytsia at the end of the summer I saw a three-meter-high wooden fence opposite my institution (located in a building that is a psychiatric hospital today). The fence was made of closely nailed boards, with another board nailed to the seam. To all my questions about these goings-on and what they meant, I received different answers. Most people thought that something was being built for the NKVD. After a while rumors began circulating that executed people were being buried there. For a long

time I could not believe this, thinking that the savagery was at an end. But one day, when I was going to the woods, I smelled the stench of decomposing corpses, wafting from behind the fence. Looking around and not seeing anyone, I looked through a chink in a board, which some children had poked through a knothole. There was clay everywhere, and near the fence lay a pile of blackened bodies that the authorities had had no time to bury. Then I understood the meaning of this place, and every time I saw a truck I would look with pain at it until it disappeared behind the gates of this cemetery for people who had been tortured to death. Each time I thought: probably my brother, who was not guilty of anything, is lying in this truck. From the windows of my institution I saw many trucks that nearly every day at sundown would drive through these gates and in the daytime would bring out earth on the highway toward Lityn. How much horror must the nearby residents and passersby have experienced whenever they walked by and heard the sounds of shooting that from time to time echoed from behind the fence? What did this mean? During the day they were almost never heard. Shooting was usually heard in the evening hours. Were they shooting those condemned people, who were being forced to bury their fellow prisoners? Or perhaps they were finishing off the survivors?

**Apolon Trembovetsky**



*The courtyard of the NKVD building in Vinnytsia.*



*The garage in the courtyard of the NKVD building in Vinnytsia, where the sound of idling vehicles muffled the sound of prisoners being shot.*

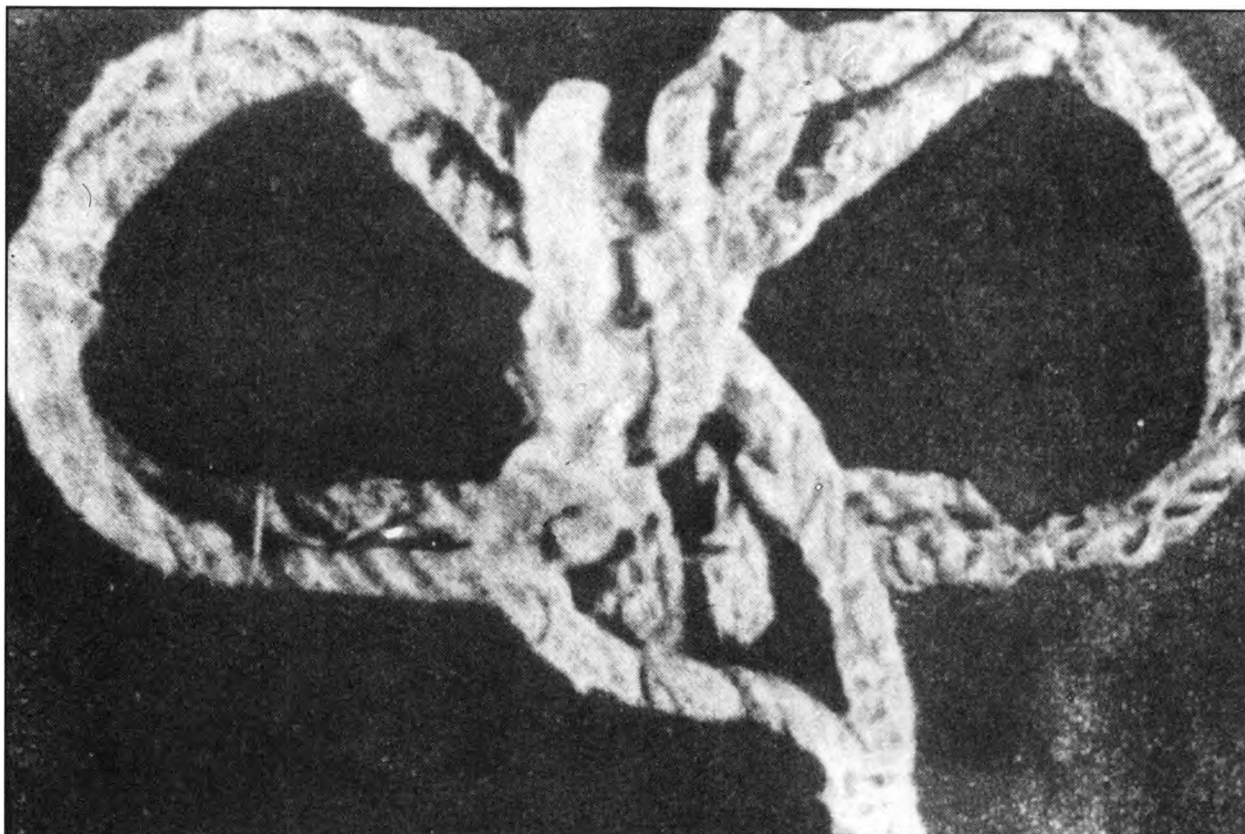




*The exhumations in Vinnytsia, summer 1943.*



*An exhumed corpse.*



*The rope of death. The victims' hands were tied before they were shot.*



*A human skull riddled with bullet holes.*

# TESTIMONIES OF VICTIMS' RELATIVES

On 25 May 1943 the residents of the city of Vinnytsia, Lionhyna Samiilivna Hashtelian and Yulia Mykolaivna Harlinska, found their husbands' belongings at the site of the excavations. Citizeness Hashtelian found the trousers of her husband Frants Bronyslavovych Hashtelian, an engineer with the Vinnytsia railway administration. He was arrested on 10 October 1937. At the NKVD office she was told that her husband had been deported to distant strict-isolation camps without the right of correspondence. Citizeness Harlinska recognized a towel and pillow case belonging to her husband Kazymyr Antonovych Harlinsky, who also perished here at the hands of the Bolshevik cutthroats. He worked as a cook in the Savoy restaurant and was arrested in April 1938. When she brought the last package [to her husband] she too had been told: your husband has been sent as an enemy of the people to distant camps without the right of correspondence.

This was the kind of reply given to families of prisoners, who, instead of being deported to distant camps, had ended up here in these horrible graves. They got this reply everywhere: at the NKVD and the regional prosecutor's office.

Every day the excavation site is visited by many women and children whose family members were seized by the NKVD. They sort through mountains of clothing, looking for their loved ones' things. Many items have already been identified.

Another resident of the city of Vinnytsia, Yevdokiia Kyrylivna Solomon, identified a jacket belonging to her husband Stanyslav Yosypovych Solomon. He was arrested on 19 November 1937. Before his arrest he was a skilled worker at the Yastrub Shoe Factory. He was taken and "deported" as an enemy of the people, without the right of correspondence.

Ivan Kotsiubynsky was also "deported without the right of correspondence." He was a collective farmer in the village of Pysarivka, in Vinnytsia raion. In his youth he completed military school and was a lieutenant in the

Soviet army. According to his brother Leontii Pavlovych, who found the army pants and shirt of his brother, in December of that year [1937], Ivan Kotsiubynsky was "deported" to distant camps.

Liubov Oleksandrivna Kosovska (village of Medvezhe Ushko), Yavdokha Dobrianska (village of Pultovtsi, Brailiv raion), Maria Semenivna Konovalchuk (village of Telepenky, Vinnytsia raion), and Tetiana Pavlivna Narutska (city of Vinnytsia) received the same reply from the NKVD. All of them were informed that their loved ones had been deported to distant camps without the right of correspondence. However, the items found in these graves attest to something quite different. [...]

On 6 June we had a conversation with the schoolteacher Olha Vasylivna Yanitska (town of Brailiv). She had come to Vinnytsia to find her husband's belongings among the victims' things. After a while she found a cap belonging to her husband Viktor Ivanovych Yanitsky. Until his arrest he worked at the post office in the town of Zhmerynka. In 1933, when he was working on a Soviet state farm, he was sentenced as a "wrecker" in a case connected to the herd of horses. After his return from exile in 1938 he was rearrested, this time as an "enemy of the people" and "deported" to distant "strict-isolation" camps. Making repeated visits to the Zhmerynka NKVD, the woman finally learned that her husband had been brought to Vinnytsia. When she arrived here, she insistently demanded to learn of her husband's fate. One time she approached the wicket of an NKVD employee, who took a book and found her husband's name. He read: "Yanitsky, Viktor Ivanovych, a Pole, sentenced as an enemy of the people to distant camps without the right of correspondence with strict isolation." When the woman demurred, insisting that her husband was no Pole but a Ukrainian, the NKVD man said, "Don't be upset, mother, it's too late to correct this mistake." Only then did the woman understand the full import of his words.

A resident of the village of Stryzhavky, Yuzefa Frantsivna Psheklia, found the

undershirt of her husband Ivan Danylovykh Kharkhut. He worked in the Vinnytsia highway administration and was arrested on 17 February 1938. After obtaining a guarantee from the investigator that his life would be spared, he obtained permission to send a letter to his wife. Here is a fragment of this letter:

“Yuzia! I am writing to you a second time. Prepare some bread, fatback, and some other things, come to the commandant’s office, ask them to summon the investigator of room no. 17 to whom you will give [the package], and I will get it from him. Don’t worry about me, I am alive and well. I hope to write more soon. Live as you can, and we’ll see about the future. If you can, send some money. Well, that’s all. I kiss you. Goodbye. Vania. 4 August 1938.”

On 15 June of this year we had a visit from the family of a resident of the village of Rozsoshe, Tyvriv raion, Albin Oleksandrovykh Podlisny, who died at the hands of the NKVD executioners. His father Oleksander Hnatovych Ksendzuk-Podlisny, mother Karolina Stepanivna Ksendzuk, and wife Bronyslava Ivanivna Podlisna, learned about the death of their son and husband from the newspaper.

Albin Podlisny was arrested on 10 April 1938. After his family’s exhaustive demands to learn what happened to him, the prosecutor’s office informed them that Podlisny had been exiled to a distant camp for ten years. After reading the terrible lines in the newspaper about Albin, at first his family refused to believe it and decided to come to Vinnytsia.

We will never forget the encounter with these people, who revealed the horrible picture of their personal sufferings, which were experienced by thousands of other families.

Podlisny worked on a cattle farm at a collective farm. He was a model worker, who had 600-800 workdays every year. Everything seemed to be going well, but suddenly friction arose between him and the village activists. Those “activists” were aware that at one time his parents had been dekulakized and deported from the raion, and that he was a Catholic.

The village administration tried to confiscate half of Podlisny’s parents’ house. He submitted

a complaint to the newspaper *Trybuna Radziecka* [The Soviet Tribune, organ of the Polish Bureau of the CC AUCP(b)] published in Moscow. After investigating Podlisny’s complaint on site, the newspaper’s representative resolved the case in his favor. For a long time the village administration waited for an opportunity to take revenge on Podlisny, which came in the terrible spring of 1938, when the wave of NKVD terror rolled over their village.

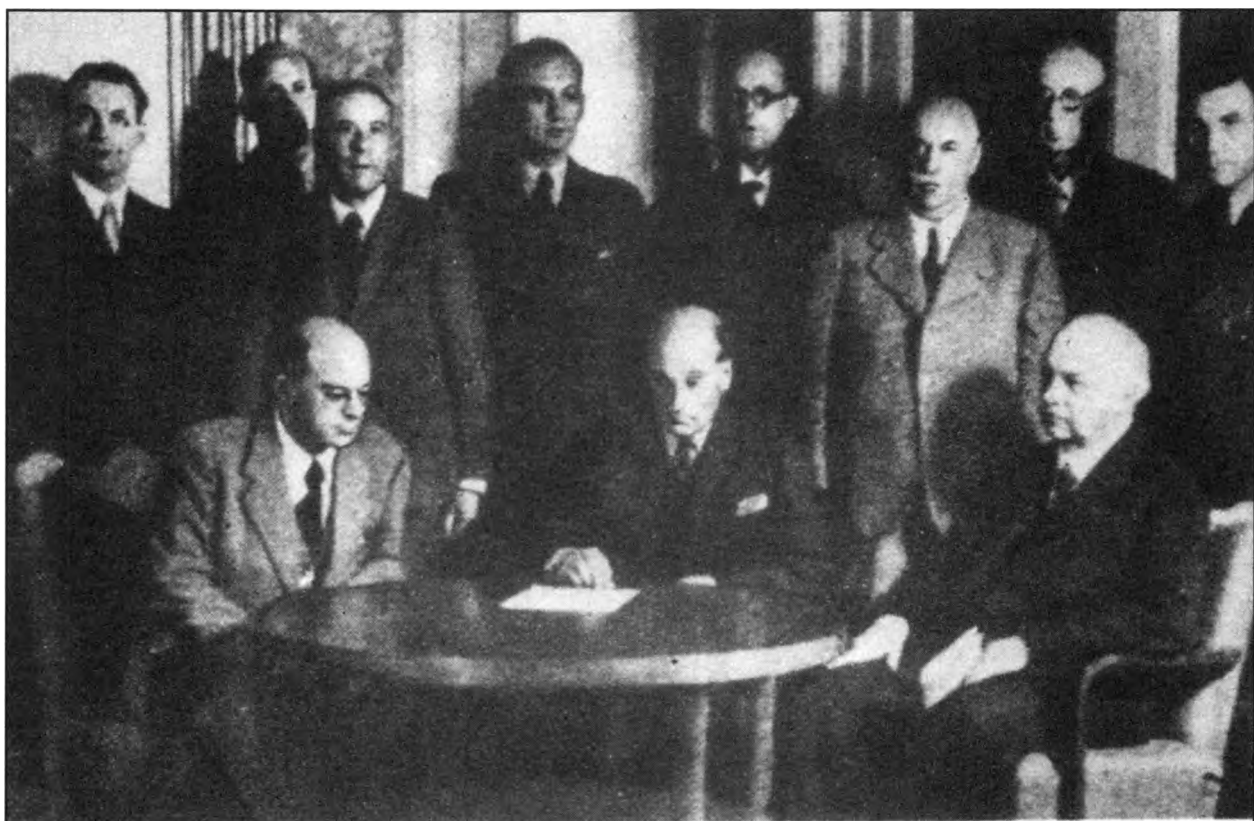
This was how the life of the “shockworker of socialist fields” ended prematurely. The search report found among their son’s clothing confirmed the account of these unfortunate people. With trembling hands they clutched this yellowed, wrinkled paper with the stench of corpses — the last souvenir of their tortured son.

A resident of the village of Pahurets in Ulaniv raion, Maksym Korniiiovych Kuzmuk, became a victim only because he was a “true Orthodox” believer. In the last days of April 1937 during one night around 200 such true believers were arrested in various villages in 8 raions of Vinnytsia region. At various times these people had sewn white crosses on the front of their outer clothing. They also marked their houses with crosses.

This “insolence” was sufficient grounds for these people to be repressed, while the fact that they had received letters from their spiritual leader gave the NKVD investigators a “legal basis” to accuse these people of receiving letters from “fascist Germany” and being spies. In “studying” the cross on one door, the NKVD officials shouted that it had the configuration of a “fascist sign.”

We showed the women [of this religious group] numerous religious books, icons, and large and small crosses that the commission found on 16 June in one of the pits at the excavation site. These women identified three books as their belongings. They had been confiscated during the search preceding their husbands’ arrest in 1937.

**Apolon Trembovetsky**



Інтернаціональна комісія експертів Європи. Вінниця, 1943 р.

ІНТЕРНАЦІОНАЛЬНА КОМІСІЯ ЕКСПЕРТІВ ЄВРОПИ

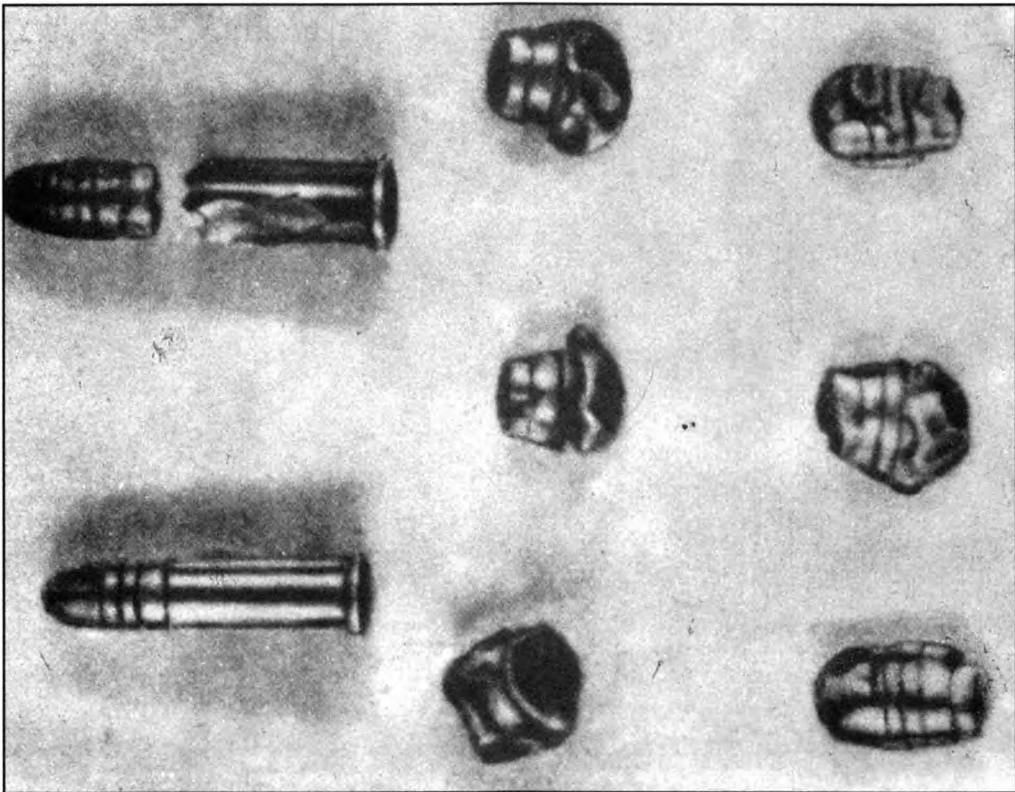
*Members of the international commission of forensic medical experts: Dr. Soenen, Dr. Michailov, Dr. Pesonen, Dr. Duvoir, Dr. Cazzaniga, Dr. Jurak, Dr. der Poorten, Dr. Birkle, Dr. Haggqvist, Dr. Krsek, and Dr. Orsos.*



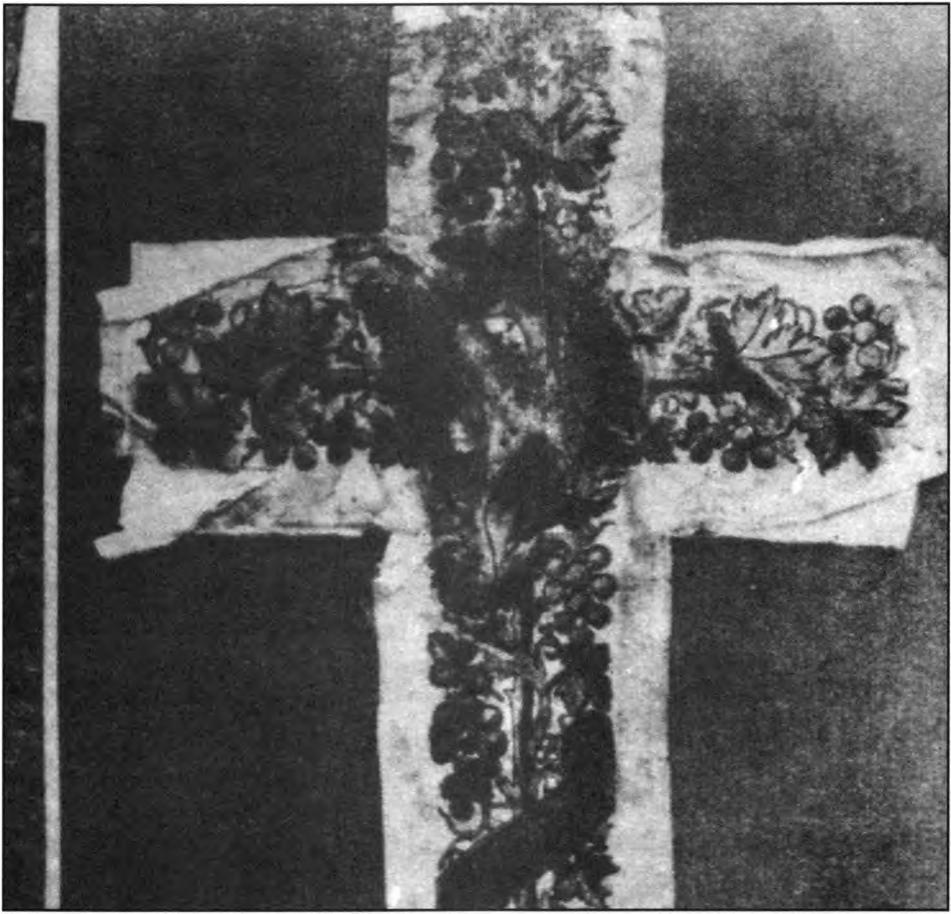
*Two doctors, Doroshenko and Malinin, examining a corpse.*



*Church seals found next to the bodies of executed priests.*



*A few small-caliber bullets (some deformed) that were found in the graves. Their diameter matches the bullet wounds in the victims' skulls.*



*Part of a priest's vestments.*



*An engraved snuffbox.*

# THE FUNERALS

On 12 June 1943 the residents of Vinnytsia first accompanied to their final rest their family members, relatives, and friends, who had been shot by the Vinnytsia NKVD. According to Christian custom, with religious songs and incense, to the sound of weeping, 230 bodies of innocent murdered people were committed to the earth.

It is morning. Quite a few people have assembled at the excavation site. Today only those unfortunates who were exhumed from the first three pits will be buried, but there are still many more pits hiding thousands of victims from peoples' sight.

People are walking along the Lityn highway to Pidlisna Street. They are going to see the bodies of the unfortunates for the last time, to say goodbye.

Amid the luxurious greenery of the neighboring orchard, to the left of these terrible pits, in two long, specially excavated graves, lie the corpses of the murdered people, one next to the other. Their hands have been untied and their clothing tidily arranged. Among them are two female corpses. One of them has long braids and is wearing an embroidered blouse; the other is wearing city clothing.

The remains were sprinkled with chloride of lime to kill the corpse smell. But the heavy odor of decomposition and lime often rises from the graves, mixing together with the aroma of jasmine bouquets held by people who have gathered here.

Small groups of people skirt the place where the victims' clothing is stored. Behind a wire fence we see a huge pile of clothing of the unfortunates, which was thrown into the pits with them. Numerous items are hanging on the wire: towels, embroidered shirts, little bags, suits, etc. People examine them, searching for the belongings of their loved ones, who were seized by the NKVD and whose fate is unknown.

A short distance away lies a solitary corpse, covered with a sheet. The victim's wife recognized her murdered husband, who was a member of a cooperative. This victim will not be buried in the common graves. The wife has obtained permission to take her husband's body to his native village and bury him there.

Only four corpses have been identified. The names of approximately forty other people have been identified by clothing that was lying separately in the pits and thrown on top of the bodies, as well as by documents. The other names are known only to God.

It is three o'clock. His Eminence Bishop Yevlohii arrives at the funeral site with priests. Representatives of the German authorities and Ukrainian municipal institutions have also arrived. The people form a tight square around the graves. Today hundreds and hundreds of people are paying their last respects to the murdered victims.

The *panakhyda* [pre-funeral service] begins. The bishop and the priests offer prayers for the souls of the victims. This *panakhyda* is indescribable. This is the first time that Vinnytsia is burying such a large number of people at the same time. With tears in their eyes the priests prayed for the peace of the victims' souls, proclaiming eternal memory over them. A few female mourners fainted.

After the *panakhyda* Bishop Yevlohii addressed the crowd: "Today we have raised our prayers to the throne of the Almighty for those who, parting with life, were deprived of God's prayer, who suffered torments and were thrown into terrible graves. These victims were killed in a secret fashion. The executioners thought that their infamies would remain secret forever. These martyrs lie silently here in the grave with their bodies, but they have an immortal soul. Their memory will always live in our hearts..."

After the bishop's address, Professor Sevastianov, the city mayor, addressed the crowd. He briefly summarized the discovery of the terrible crimes committed by the Bolsheviks. "In the near future, we, residents of Vinnytsia, should erect a grand monument here to the victims, which will always remind us and our generation of them. According to Christian tradition, let us for the last time throw a handful of earth into the grave of those who perished prematurely."

\*\*\*

Between 12 June and 3 October 1943 nineteen funerals took place in Vinnytsia. Altogether 9,439 people were buried.

**Apolon Trembovetsky**





*Bishops Hryhorii and Yevlohii at the excavations. Vinnytsia, 1943.*



*Bishop Hryhorii of Zhytomyr and Vinnytsia conducting the panakhyda at the funerals of the victims of the mass killings, Vinnytsia, 1943.*



*Witnesses of Bolshevik crimes before a television appearance in Washington, D.C., summer 1954. From left to right: Kostiantyn Kospiruk, an American named Vogeler, Archbishop Hryhorii, Apolon Trembovetsky, Mrs. Vogeler, and Mykhailo Olkhovy.*



*Victims of the crimes in Vinnytsia*



*Metropolitan Visarion of Odesa visiting the site of the Vinnytsia excavations.*



*General view of the funerals for the victims of the Vinnytsia crimes.*



*(Here and below) Ukrainian church hierarchs and mourners at the funerals in Vinnytsia.*



# THE STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM

The subject of this article is Ivan Shpontak, one of the heroes of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army. Severely outnumbered by enemy forces and with no outside assistance, the UPA waged a struggle for Ukraine's freedom for more than ten years. Relying exclusively on the support of Ukrainian peasants, the UPA was the largest organized military formation of the Ukrainian independence movement, and UPA detachments were the only force protecting the Ukrainian population from the punitive actions of the occupiers. The commander in chief of this army was General Roman Shukhevych (Taras Chuprynka).

In early 1944 the UPA numbered nearly 40,000 fighters. At this time Ivan Shpontak was the commander of an UPA battalion operating in a sector stretching from the city of Uhniv (Lviv region) to the Sian River. He fought against invaders of all stripes, who were robbing and killing people and destroying property, cultural centers, and churches.

As the commander of the "Ren" and "Zalizniak" battalions, Shpontak recruited the finest young people from every corner of Ukraine. After training the new recruits and preparing them for battle, he maintained law and order and civilized life in this territory.

In this area NKVD units cooperated with a mighty Polish division under the command of General Karol Swierczewski, who had completed the Frunze Military Academy in Moscow and commanded an international division during the Spanish Civil War (1933-1936). In the spring of 1947 during a battle in which Swierczewski was killed, Shpontak routed this Polish communist force.

This event was broadly publicized. Newspapers in many countries wrote about the successes of the UPA, which had achieved a brilliant victory over a regular army and killed Swierczewski, who at the time of his death was the deputy minister of national defense of the Polish People's Republic.

After a series of successful battles, UPA soldiers managed to protect the Ukrainian population from communist violence for another summer. However, it was becoming difficult to fight against their numerically superior and well armed opponents. In the fall of 1947 Shpontak was forced to disband his military units. He then crossed the Polish-Czech border with small squads of fighters, intending to break through to the West.

Ivan Shpontak was born into a peasant family on 12 August 1918 in the village of Vovkove, near Uzhhorod. His parents, especially his mother, raised

him in a religious spirit. From his early years she taught him prayers, the commandments, and the psalms. Ivan studied well and always helped his schoolmates. Later he studied at the Uzhhorod Teachers' Seminary whose director was Avhustyn Voloshyn. During his student years Ivan acquired solid scout training and felt the first stirrings of total devotion to Ukraine, which eventually led him to become one of his country's most fearless defenders.

Ivan's school friends remembered him as a dreamy, quiet, and modest boy, who loved historical classics. He was slender and handsome, and was always well dressed. He had a good heart and was always ready to offer a helping hand, often at his own expense. He dreamed of becoming a soldier. Instead, he worked as a schoolteacher, although his aspirations were realized when he joined the UPA.

The events connected with the establishment of Carpatho-Ukraine in 1938-1939 had a great influence on the formation of Shpontak's political views and his early participation in the national-liberation movement. He devoted himself heart and soul to building independent state life in his native land and, above all, to its internal structure by organizing dedicated national cadres and creating military forces for the young state.

Intending to settle in the West after crossing the Polish-Czech border in 1947, Shpontak stopped in Priashiv (Presov, Eastern Slovakia) to visit his mother and married sister. They convinced him to stay.

The years passed and Shpontak started a family. Although he was adapting to civilian life, he always felt the sword of Damocles over his head.

In the summer of 1959 the former UPA commander was arrested by the Czechs in the village of Velyki Kapushany, in the Priashiv region. During his interrogations in jail he conducted himself in a chivalrous fashion and did not betray any of his former comrades in arms, who were living in the Czechoslovak People's Republic. After a lengthy bout of interrogations and torture, he was extradited to Poland.

Many months of interrogations, torture, and imprisonment did not break his will or his spirit. His lifelong faith in God gave him strength and endurance.

Shpontak's trial took place in Peremyshl (Przemysl). The Polish court rejected his demand that he be tried as an UPA prisoner of war. He

openly admitted that he gave orders to hit enemy garrisons, burn military stations, and mete out vengeance to those who were attacking the civilian population, killing women, children, and old people, and destroying Ukrainian cultural and religious institutions.

The court handed down a death sentence. The sad news reached Shpontak's compatriots abroad. The Carpathian Society fruitlessly tried to enlist the help of two American senators. Then the secretary of the society, Ivan Sarvadii, a native of Khust, wrote to Archbishop Ivan Buchko in Rome, informing him of Shpontak's fate. The Ukrainian prelate immediately hired a well-known and experienced lawyer in Poland, who was able to change the death sentence to life in prison.

Ivan Shpontak spent many years in a prison near the Polish city of Opole. The prison warders had permission to brutalize the prisoner. All the Polish, Ukrainian, and German prisoners were aware of this. Ivan worked in the prison's shoe factory and quickly earned everyone's respect.

Ukrainians abroad knew about the abuses and sufferings of the imprisoned UPA commander, and they continued their efforts to gain his freedom. The indefatigable Ivan Sarvadii appealed to nearly every

Ukrainian civic organization in the American diaspora and collected thousands of dollars to hire the best Polish defenders, one of whom was a lawyer named Branicki, who for many years fought for Shpontak's release from prison. Sarvadii also provided financial assistance to Shpontak's family.

Finally, the Poles agreed to release Shpontak for a payment of 10,000 dollars. Sarvadii overcame even this obstacle. Contacting Shpontak's friends and former comrades in arms in the US, Canada, and other countries, this community activist sent dozens of letters requesting donations. The money was collected and the ransom was paid.

After spending twenty-three years in prison, Ivan Shpontak returned to his family in the spring of 1982. He lived as a free man for only seven years. His decades in prison, beatings, starvation, and other privations led to his death on 4 April 1989 in the Slovakian city of Koshytsi.

The years are passing, and our descendants will study and write about the Ukrainian nation's struggle for national liberation. New works will appear about this national movement and its participants, who entered battle with the slogan: "You will achieve a Ukrainian State or perish in the struggle!"

**Yurii Kerekesh**



*"During the ninety-nine-day march through Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Austria there were skirmishes with the enemy almost every day. Two hundred of us fighters left Ukraine, and on 11 October 1947, after crossing the German border, there were only thirty-eight left..."*

**Yurii Borets, participant in the UPA raid to the West.**



*The Gestapo hanged members of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army in public places to instill fear in the population. These scenes were common throughout Ukraine.*



*Members of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army about to be shot by the Germans.*



*Memorial complex at a site where the Soviets carried out mass executions of Ukrainian patriots on the Feast of the Redeemer, 19 August 1944, in Volyn's Pyriatyn Forest.*

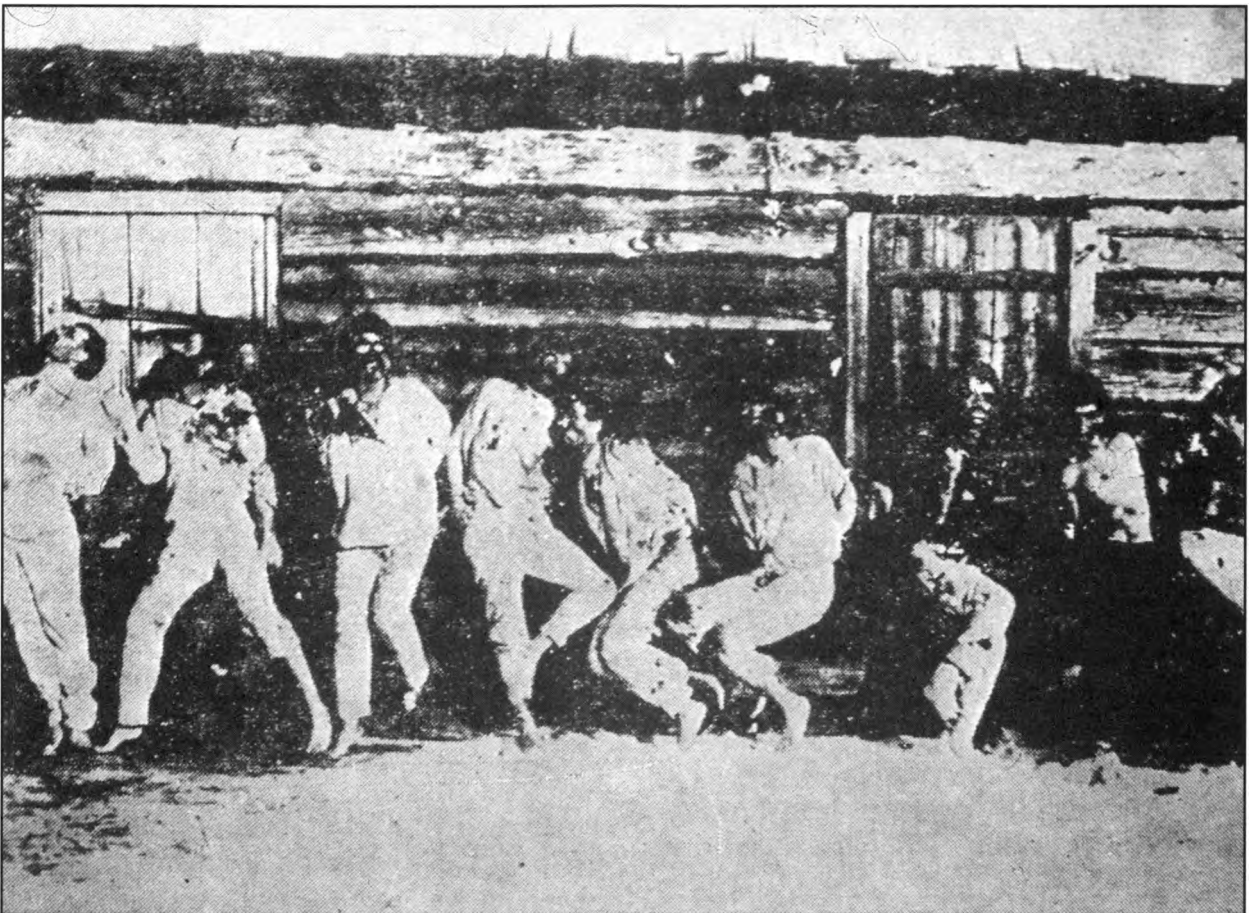


*In 1941, before the retreating Soviet army left Western Ukraine, the Soviet authorities murdered hundreds of Ukrainian political prisoners in Loncki Prison.*





*The bodies of murdered political prisoners. Sights like this were common throughout Western Ukraine in 1941.*



*Ukrainian peasants shot by the Bolsheviks in 1920 near Kharkiv.*

# THE CRIMES OF THE MUSCOVITE RULERS

*The Ukrainian-American activist, Ivan Sarvadii, was destined to witness much in his life. He has always maintained contact with Ukraine, where he was instrumental in efforts to erect a monument to Taras Shevchenko in the city of Uzhhorod and to inform his countrymen about the tragedy that took place in July 1942 in Kovner Castle in Mukachiv and other areas. As he writes in the book **Zmova proty uriadu Karpatskoi Ukrainy** (The Conspiracy against the Government of Carpatho-Ukraine), published in New York in 1984, he was appointed to the Carpathian Sich National Defense Organization by the head of the autonomous Carpatho-Ukrainian government, Monsignor Avhustyn Voloshyn.*

The exact number of Ukrainians from Transcarpathia who were destroyed in Soviet concentration camps on the eve of the Second World War remains a mystery. We know that the majority of the troops in General Ludvik Svoboda's 1<sup>st</sup> Czechoslovak Army Corps, which number 20,000 men, was comprised of Ukrainians from Subcarpathia. In early October, when the general's formation was on the high plain of Menchul, a few kilometers from the village of Yasin, the Muscovite command did not permit the Czechoslovak army to cross the border of Subcarpathia. A three-member Czechoslovak delegation headed by Frantisek Nemeč, Minister of Special Affairs of the Czechoslovak government in exile, and Monsignor Frantisek Hala (a personal friend of Avhustyn Voloshyn) arrived in the city of Khust, the capital of Carpatho-Ukraine, now liberated from the Hungarians. However, Moscow did not allow them to carry out their official functions. The Soviet army command deliberately deployed General Svoboda's army corps across the border into Slovakia, to the vicinity of the Duklia Mountains. These ordinary, non-mountain-troop units were ordered to fight against special German units. The terrible battles culminated in the destruction of the majority of the Czechoslovak 1<sup>st</sup> Army Corps.

The remaining forces in Slovakia were enlarged by soldiers from the Slovak army, which had many Ukrainian officers. The first to arrive in the liberated territories were the NKVD and SMERSH [Russian acronym meaning "Death to

Spies] whose units hunted down Ukrainians with carefully considered brutality. Among their victims was Yurko Bilei, a major in the Czechoslovak Panzer Troops — a former police captain from Khust. He was killed by a sniper near Sv. Mikulas, while his army unit was resting. Shortly afterwards, Popovych, a captain of a tank unit, was also killed by "accidental" fire. Dozens of other Ukrainian military men were killed in similar fashion. Concealed crimes, blackmail, terror, and arrests became daily occurrences.

In the first half of May 1945, the following Ukrainian political figures were arrested in Prague: the president of Carpatho-Ukraine, Monsignor Avhustyn Voloshyn; his ministers Dr. Mykola Dolynai, Dr. Yurii Pervuznyk, Stefan Klochurak, Prof. Chaplia, the architect Artemii Korniiichuk, and many other leading figures.

The local police operated differently: they would summon Ukrainians in connection with some bureaucratic matter, and they would instantly disappear. Others were taken away during the night in Black Marias. A so-called "repatriation center" was formed in Prague for the forcible resettlement of Ukrainians to their "motherland." In the summer of 1946, the Czechoslovaks used a government list from Khust to repatriate several hundred Ukrainian servicemen to the Soviet Union, where they were sent to hard labor in the Donbas. In 1947 First Lieutenant Yurko Bisun was captured on a street in Prague and paraded in handcuffs throughout Czechoslovakia and Carpatho-Ukraine. Bisun eventually perished in Soviet uranium mines, where few prisoners lasted for more than two years.

Meanwhile, in Carpatho-Ukraine, which was still a formal, legal part of the Federated Czechoslovak Republic, the NKVD and SMERSH imprisoned thousands of nationally conscious Ukrainians. In the city of Khust all underground cellars were filled with prisoners, who were interrogated, abused, and tortured at night. One of SMERSH's methods was to take a prisoner to a cemetery and order him to dig his own grave. This happened three times to Rev.-Prof. Dmytrii Popovych in the fall of 1944. I was taken to the same cemetery and forced to dig my own grave. This is how SMERSH psychologically broke down prisoners.

For many months the unfortunate prisoners were interrogated and abused. From the filth, cold, hunger, and lack of medical attention, some prisoners, many of whom had open wounds and broken ribs, were driven to insanity and died. Surviving prisoners were later taken by truck to the Priashiv region. A pair of friends, Dr. Ivan Horvat and Gilu Rapaport, distinguished themselves as prison informers.

The NKVD troops jailed the prisoners in a public school. For two days before they were transported here, the prisoners were deprived of all food and access to toilet facilities. They threw themselves onto the barbed wire, where they were shot from the guard towers. Other prisoners slit their wrists or committed suicide in other ways. In the bitterly cold winter of February 1945, the NKVD troops started loading their prisoners on cattle cars for deportation.

After three weeks of travel the death train stopped in the Donbas city of Yenakieve, at the Yunkom (Young Communists) Coal Mine. During transport some prisoners froze to death, but their bodies were not removed. I remember how the NKVD soldiers were unloading the wagons and screaming at us in Russian: "Get out quickly, you fascists!" As soon as the prisoners breathed in the cold air, they began collapsing. The international executioners fell upon these prisoners, beating them mercilessly and forcing them between the barbed wire.

The slaves were housed in buildings without windows and doors, heat, water, or toilets. The

area was cordoned off by three rows of barbed wire; there was a guard tower. Many prisoners fell sick with dysentery. Delirious from raging fevers, they would unwittingly approach the barbed wire and were instantly shot by the guards. Many prisoners suffered from severe frostbite to their ears, fingers, and toes. After a while, the frostbitten areas would turn blue, then black and yellow, and then become gangrenous. There were no doctors or drugs. Today the very memory of those days brings back feelings of horror.

The camp conditions were best summed up by the concentration camp commandant, Major Lazar Berkovych: "We brought you here so that you will croak — understand?" This well-fed NKVD officer, a brute with a human face, destroyed 2,000 prisoners by slowly starving them to death. Out of a total of 3,000 prisoners, there were only 1,000 survivors capable of working.

In the spring of 1947 the Soviet authorities transported the prisoners in cattle cars to the northern boggy forests of Tambov-Saratov. Other prisoners were sent to the vicinity of Kaliningrad to dig peat. In June 1948 I was sent with a group of surviving prisoners to Odesa-Lutsdorf, from where I escaped to the Priashiv region that fall. In December 1950, by Divine Providence, I escaped to Germany.

**Ivan Sarvadii**

## **A KINDERGARTEN ON THE SITE OF A FORMER BOLSHEVIK CHARNEL HOUSE**

The beautiful little village of Yabloniv was a green speck among the mountains. In this former raion center was a building dating to 1912. After the war it served as the KGB headquarters. The local population was even afraid to look in that direction. Many residents, including P. Palaniuk, D. Kotliarchuk, A. Tatsiuk, and many others say that there used to be a garrison here for the struggle against the Banderites. Thus, its main purpose was to destroy our national heroes, who fought for Ukraine's independence and freedom. Naturally, the forces in this struggle were unequal.

Those Ukrainians who did not want to live in slavery headed for the forests. Whenever the

NKVD found these patriots' hideouts, they tried to take as many corpses as possible from the field of battle. They would bring them to their base and leave them lying on wagons for a day or two, so that the local population could inspect these "trophies." If, God forbid, someone recognized a friend, relative, or family member, he would be interrogated and tortured to death in the KGB dungeons.

This happened to many people. Even family members did not admit that among the dead bodies were their brothers, husbands, and sisters, so that they could snatch the body at night and give it a Christian burial. Sometimes their secret

efforts succeeded; occasionally they would bribe guards with a bottle of moonshine.

The following account was related by Tanasii Kushnirchuk from Kosiv.

“My sister, who was a very beautiful young woman, was going out with a boy named Yurko from Stopchativ. Her fiancé was helping “the boys from the forests” and met secretly with Hannusia. Someone betrayed them, and the beasts with the red stars captured the engaged pair. Their neighbor, Paraska Lakhmaniuk, recalled that one day, when she was walking past the KGB building, she recognized Hannusia among the dead bodies, because there were only two women. She was wearing a Hutsul necklace made of glass beads, and one of her teeth had a gold crown. All this was preserved until today.”

Tanasii headed for Yabloviv as soon as heard about the excavations [in 1990]. For a long time he stood next to a well from which skulls, bones, barbed wire, ammunition, and spent shells were being removed. He stood there, unable to believe that after so many years he would finally see the remains of his little sister. But would he recognize them?

When the members of the Kolomyia branch of Memorial — Yurii Tymoshenko, Yaroslav Malkovych, Bohdan Yurashchuk, Myroslav Kushnirchuk, and Roman Strubytzky — dug their way to another victim in the park, they immediately found a necklace with glass beads, or rather just the beads, because the string had rotted. We ran to the pit and looked around, and could not believe that these women’s adornments were a testament of terrible tortures. How was that young girl guilty in the executioners’ eyes — for loving Ukraine and its loyal son, her young man? Executioner Sukorkin! Tell me what her crime was. We know your real name. We know other people’s real names. We also know the names of our own lackey executioners who are still living among us, because human memory is a living thing — it cannot be killed, or tortured, or persecuted. The bones of murdered people speak about this and give no peace either to those who murdered them or their superiors. I believe that one day there will be a trial, and the dead will speak out.

Some good people told Tanasii Kushnirchuk that they had found his Hannusia. When he arrived, he was only capable of lighting a candle. He cried and cried like a baby.

There are always a lot of people near the excavation site, and people recall the savagery of the KGB. Little by little, the terrible crime in Yabloniv is being revealed.

I was lucky enough to meet the person who buried Tanasii’s sister. The name of this woman was Hanna Tatsiuk, who came from Stopchativ. Her husband was in the Ukrainian underground, and she was always in great danger. After her husband was killed in battle, Hanna was grabbed by the NKVD. They interrogated, beat, and tortured her. Then they threw her into prison. She and a few other female prisoners were forced to bury the bodies of murdered people at night. During the winter they could not dig deep pits. This is why it was easy to find their scalps in the shallow pits. When Hanna was carrying the stretcher with the girl [Tanasii’s sister] who had been tortured out of all recognition — and also scalped — she blurted out: “Oh, the orphan, the orphan.” The deputy head of the KGB, Sukorkin, shouted: “Dig, dig! You’re going to be an orphan too!” But she was lucky: a distant relative bought her freedom with a bottle of moonshine and saved her life.

It is impossible not to shed tears after listening to the account of Maria Romanchych from Stopchativ. Maria saw many bodies of murdered youths and elderly people lying near the KGB building in Yabloniv. Among them was the body of a village boy named Vasyl Zaichuk. What crime had that child committed? For what crime was his dead body chained by the neck, attached to a horse, and dragged along the road? His own mother was afraid to admit he was her son because her younger son still lived with her. The unfortunate woman was never able to bury her elder son.

Mykola Urbanovych from the village of Verkhonii Bereziv recounted that the body of his brother Ivan, a platoon leader in Skuba’s UPA company, who shot himself to avoid capture, was brought to Yabloniv and buried somewhere or thrown into a well. Mykola was deported to a forced labor camp in the Far North. After eight years he returned and began a search for the well to find the remains of his comrades in arms who had fought against the Bolsheviks. Mykola Zaiachuk from Stopchativ remembers that six corpses were brought to the KGB building. He found out that they were all thrown into a well. But which one? There were many wells in the village. The communists wanted to sweep away

all traces of their crimes, but there were not enough wells in Yabloniv, so some murdered people were later buried in the park.

The KGB threw grenades, ammunition, and mines into the wells, believing that no one would ever bother digging up a destroyed well. The executioners were mistaken.

Can people forget about this terrible tragedy? Never! Could anyone ever imagine that one day a kindergarten would be housed in this former torture chamber? Who can guarantee the safety of our children, when eyewitnesses say that part of this KGB site was mined?

H. Ustynsky

## THE TRAVAILS OF THE MEMORIAL SOCIETY

The difficult work of exhuming the bodies in Yabloniv was carried out by the members of the recently formed Kolomyia branch of Memorial. Thanks to their courage and determination, most of its members were able to launch this painful but crucial mission.

The head of the society, Bohdan Yurashchuk, together with his deputy Yaroslav Malkovych, made five visits to O. Dubei, the prosecutor of Kosiv raion, who was deferring this criminal case and refusing to issue permission for the exhumations until zinc cases were furnished. The members of Memorial then went to the regional branch of the Prosecutor's Office and received an answer: dig, and then we'll see.

The members of Memorial, together with several members of Rukh, contacted the head of the village council, M. Stefanyk, who did not object to the excavations.

After these difficulties and lengthy delays the members of Memorial decided to go to Yabloniv on 3 July 1990 to begin the exhumations. The first excavation site was a well that had been mentioned by many eyewitnesses. Yurii Tymoshenko, Myroslav Kushnirchuk, Dmytro Danyliuk, and several others began to excavate it. After removing rocks, they saw the brickwork of the well's interior. The narrow well was seven meters deep. The first to make his way into the well was Tymoshenko, followed by Kushnirchuk, who descended into the black depths after making the sign of the cross.

They removed a huge quantity of spent shells, cartridges, mines, and ammunition; four skulls (three male and one female); bones; iron articles; a ring engraved with three initials, B. D. M., the year [19]48, and a trident [Ukraine's national emblem]. Some people identified the ring that had belonged to a relative of theirs, Mykhailo Dmytrovych Basarab from Bania-Bereziv. I met the relatives of M. Basarab as well as his brother

(from Moldavia) and niece. The brother had given Mykhailo the ring in 1948.

A flood of witnesses is arriving. They carry flowers, light candles, pay their respects, and make donations. Local members of Rukh, O. Ulvansky, M. Morhan, M. Churevych, and others, organized digging shifts and the preparation of hot meals for the diggers. Every day the members of Memorial exhume two or three victims. It is not easy for them to see skeletons of people who had nails driven into their bodies, hooks stuck in their ribs, broken legs, arms, burned bones, and hands tied with barbed wire. Gritting their teeth, Yu. Tymoshenko, M. Kushnirchuk, B. Yurashchuk, and Ya. Malkovych carry out their sacred work, so that future generations will have the restored historical truth about communist terror in Ukraine, which is equal to fascism.

Two women, H. Vintoniak and M. Ivaniuk, who at one time were victims of state repression, work alongside the men. By 10 July twenty-five skeletons were exhumed.

I often wonder why the Soviets told us, young people, so many lies about the Banderite era and its consequences. Perhaps they lied so that today we can understand even more clearly that we must follow in the footsteps of our grandparents, parents, brothers, and sisters, who laid down their lives in the unequal battle. We must and we will! But we must act and unite, because these victims will not permit us to forget the bloody communist terror in Western Ukraine. I know that the exhumations in Yabloniv will interest many journalists, writers, and poets. I call on them to provide truthful information and call things by their true names, because it is impossible to salve one's consciousness by remaining silent.

I was a witness of these exhumations on 13 July 1990.

H. Ustynsky

# THE TRIAL OF THE SIXTY-FOUR IN DROHOBYCH

Immediately after the Soviet occupation of Western Ukraine in the fall of 1939, the Bolsheviks encountered the population's fierce resistance to the introduction of the "socialist" lifestyle. For the most part, the resistance was organized by members of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN). The NKVD immediately carried out mass arrests among young people in schools, factories, and villages.

I became acquainted with the NKVD's investigative methods in 1940. At the time I was a student at an electro-mechanical technical college in Drohobych. On St. Nicholas Day two NKVD agents dressed in civilian clothing came to our school at 10:00 a.m. I instantly realized that they were NKVD agents and that they had come to arrest me. Once they entered the room, it was too late for me to escape.

"Is Bily here?" they asked.

"I am he," I replied.

"You're coming with us — without your things. Leave your books, we'll bring them later!" they ordered.

Later, in my presence, they searched my apartment and finally told me that I was under arrest. "If you make one false move, we will consider this an attempt to escape, and we will use our weapons against you!" they warned me.

Then they drove me to the raion branch of the NKVD in Drohobych. When I was brought into the office of the NKVD investigator, I saw an officer with a brutish face.

"Aha! Here's our little dove! Sit down, you scum," he said. He immediately read me the article from the Criminal Code under which I had been arrested. This was article 54-2 and 54-11. I was being charged with membership in the OUN and preparing an armed uprising against the USSR.

"We know everything about your organization!" said the investigator. "You were engaged in counterrevolutionary matters of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, i.e., you were recruiting new members, issuing orders to collect money for the organization, and preparing an armed uprising against the Soviet government at the right moment. We are well informed about your counterrevolutionary activity from Stepak and some other students. You were studying OUN conspiratorial literature. Here is the report of Stepak's statements about you. He has admitted

everything and is now working for us. So, we propose that you admit to everything, repent, and then everything will be fine. You will be released today. Here is the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR, which states that the NKVD or the court can release from prison any individual who voluntarily admits to his crime. Read! This is not a joke!"

I read it and began to think.

"What's there to think about?" asked the investigator.

"It's not very clear to me because I don't know the Russian language well," I replied. "I have to read it over."

Pretending to read, I thought: could he be telling the truth? It was all lies! Some more time passed. Then I raised my head and said:

"Allow me to ask a question, comrade director."

"What kind of comrade am I to you?!" yelled the rabid NKVD officer. "You have to say 'citizen'!"

"Pardon me. Allow me to ask, citizen director, can one lie about oneself in order to be released?"

"Ah, you scum!" the NKVD officer shouted. "You're pretending that you're innocent? You pretend you don't know anything? Tell me the truth, and be quick about it! Will you confess? Were you in the organization or not?"

At that moment the investigator began beating me, wherever he could land a punch. Then he put his foot on my chair, leaving me only a corner to sit on, and said:

"So you want Ukraine? What? Here's your Ukraine." He hit me again and I stood up.

"Sit down! Straighten out your legs! Put your hands in your lap!"

I did as he ordered. Then a second NKVD officer sat on my knees and began jumping up and down so hard that my knees were cracking. At the same time he was hitting me in the chest. I was completely defenseless. I tightened my muscles and stuck out my chest so as not to feel the pain. The NKVD officer who was beating me was shouting non-stop: "Confess, you scum!" Then the first NKVD officer began interrogating me again in the same manner. But I was so exhausted that I had no strength even to reply. Both of them started yelling at me:

"On top of it, he doesn't want to talk, the scum. Take him to the cell!" Two NKVD agents

instantly appeared, and they all dragged me to an empty cell in the basement. Each of them stood in a corner of the cell, holding revolvers in their left hand. With their right hand they began shoving me from man to man. I was kicked around like a soccer ball. Then I stood in the middle of the cell and began fending them off. One of the NKVD agents said:

“Well, let’s leave him alone for a while. He will tell us everything now.” He placed a chair and graciously invited me to sit down.

When I was about to sit down, he kicked the chair away and I fell on the floor. At that moment one of them sat on my legs. Another one sat on my shoulders and, grabbing me by the hair, began to bang my head against the floor. A third one grabbed some sort of iron hook, and the fourth took a length of wood and began beating me. At first I lay defenseless, but seeing that they were still beating me, I shoved my hands under my body and wrenched myself so vigorously that they all fell off me. Then they pointed their revolvers at me, thinking that I would throw myself at them in despair. Then they changed their tactics.

“Let’s give him some peace,” one of them said. “He’s a nice person. He’ll tell us everything and then we will release him immediately.”

Then they brought me back to the office, sat me down on a chair, and began questioning me. But as soon as they saw that I wasn’t telling them anything, they began shouting:

“He still doesn’t want to talk! Then shoot him!”

They brought me back to the cellar. This time they placed me with my back against the wall. One of the NKVD agents aimed at me for a long time. I thought the end had come. While he was aiming, the others were shouting:

“Don’t shoot! He wants to live! He’ll confess. Confess, or it’ll be the end of you!”

They terrorized me this way for some time. After they completely wore me out, at 11:00 p.m. they brought me to the main prison on Stryiska Street. I was searched, and my tie, folding knife, and other items that could be used to commit suicide were confiscated. They told me to sign the questionnaire and brought me to cell no. 4. Here for the first time I encountered a large family of prisoners. There were forty-four prisoners in a room measuring 30 square meters, and I was the forty-fifth. All the prisoners were lying on the floor, resting on their sides because it was so crowded. Some people were already sleeping, while others talked quietly. When I was pushed into the cell, the prisoners

squeezed in together and made a space for me. I settled down, but couldn’t sleep because of my nervous tension. At first glance the prisoners made a horrible impression on me: they were unshaved, dirty, and terribly exhausted. Every prisoner was sleeping on his clothing; the prison authorities had not issued any bedding. Some prisoners were groaning from their beatings or illnesses, while others only sighed deeply. In the morning, I got to know them better and asked about their nationality. The prisoners were almost exclusively Ukrainians, but there were a few Poles, and two Jews. Among the prisoners I spotted one who had a lower back injury. From time to time he shook and was unable to speak. Another prisoner had been beaten with an iron rod on his back so hard that it looked as though it had been slashed with a knife. Other prisoners said that during their three weeks here they had gone completely gray. Some prisoners had broken ribs, etc. Every evening, starting at 9:00 p.m. you could hear muffled shots from the cellar. They were executing prisoners there.

After my first terrible interrogation I was not summoned to the investigators for a long time, probably because they had no evidence against me. I had time on my hands, and from the prisoners’ accounts I was able to acquaint myself better with the investigative methods of the Drohobych NKVD. These methods were:

- 1) Beating prisoners with iron rods, cudgels, and special whips;
- 2) Sending prisoners to the punishment cell. This was a cold, damp, and windowless room in the cellar. Water dripped down the walls and pooled on the floor. A prisoner was stripped naked before being sent to this cell. He was forbidden to sit on the floor or lean against the wall. A prisoner would be kept here for one or two weeks and given a daily ration of 100 grams of bread and one liter of unsweetened coffee;
- 3) Psychologically torturing prisoners. For example, a person was kept three or four days in a row underneath a table, without food, while an NKVD agent ate appetizing food. From time to time, the prisoner was beaten like a dog;
- 4) Faking an execution, as was done to me;
- 5) Hanging. A noose was placed around a prisoner’s neck, and a rope would be threaded through a hook in the ceiling. The

prisoner was suspended in such a way that his feet barely touched the ground, and he was interrogated in this position;

- 6) Using subterfuge and promises. I will give an example from my own experience. When the NKVD officers were unable to beat me into confessing, they resorted to a ruse. The investigator informed me that my brother had told them everything about me, and offered to hold a personal confrontation with my brother. I said: "Go ahead." In a few minutes they brought me to the confrontation with my brother. The door opened. As soon as I stepped into the room, they asked me if he was my brother. "Yes," I said. "But he couldn't have said anything against me," I added, thereby warning my brother. The investigator yelled at me to be quiet and took me from the room. Their planned confrontation had failed.

### **THE TRIAL**

A few days later I had to sign the act attesting to the end of the investigation. Then I was summoned to my trial. A total of sixty-four people were tried. The trial lasted eight days: it was truly a legal farce because no evidence was examined, and questions similar to the ones posed by the NKVD officers were asked. Whenever a defendant said that he had been savagely beaten and forced to sign a false report, the prosecutor would scream [in Russian]:

"This is not a resort! This is the NKVD!"

On the eighth day of the trial the sentence was handed down. Half of us were sentenced to be shot, and the other half was sentenced to ten or fifteen years' hard labor in NKVD concentration camps in Siberia. Only two defendants were lucky: one was sentenced to a short term of eight years in the camps, and the other was remanded for further investigation.

After the sentence demanded by the prosecutor was read out, the trial was interrupted for two days of meetings to finalize the sentencing for each prisoner. After the break was announced, the defendants were brought to assembly room no. 7. This was the so-called transit room, where prisoners designated for deportation to Siberia or to other prisons were gathered. There were 120 prisoners in the room measuring 50 square meters. There was no place to sleep. After the two-day break, the court read out the nearly unchanged sentences and their length:

### **DEATH**

Mykhailo Bily, Petro Danylyshyn, Ivan Harasymiak, Mykola Huk, Filomena Ivanchuk, Vasyl Khovan, Ivan Kiselychnyk, Petro Kiselychnyk, Teofil Matsiurak, Maria Mudra, Hryhorii Skoropad, Atanas Soroka, Ivan Soviak, Ivan Subotiak, Osyp Tozhovets, Mykola Tsapiak, Mykhailo Yedlitsky, and Stepan Zarytsky.

### **TEN YEARS IN THE SIBERIAN CAMPS**

Mykola Behei, Olha Bilas, Dmytro Bily, Stepan Harasymiak, Stepan Havrysh, Mykola Hrabar, Vasyl Hurii, Andrii Khomyn, Yevhenia Khomytska, Vasyl Kushnir, Vasyl Kutsii, Kateryna Lesyshyn, Vasyl Manko, Maria Matsiurak, Stepan Poliuha, Ivan Sokyrko, Dmytro Vladyka, Osyp Stempitsky, Mykola Subotiak, Anastasia Velhush, Sorochyn and Bats.

### **EIGHT YEARS IN THE SIBERIAN CAMPS**

Yaroslav Bachynsky, Ivan Barazhsky, Vasyl Horokhovsky, Mykhailo Khomei, Vasyl Kiselychnyk, Vasyl Klishch, Vasyl Kovbasniuk, Mykola Torsky and Korolyk, Koval, Pavuk.

The other members of our group, who were in Germany, were sentenced in absentia: \_\_ Tsmots (execution), and Olha Bilas (ten years in Siberia). This list is incomplete due to lack of information.

The families of all the defendants were stripped of their civil rights and deported to Siberia for an indeterminate time.

A few days later, the condemned were brought to death row, while those who were sentenced to ten or eight years in the camps were put on trucks and driven to Sambir Prison. The trucks were escorted by NKVD troops armed with pistols and rifles.

### **IN SAMBIR PRISON**

After we arrived in Sambir, we were thoroughly searched and assigned to cells. During Polish rule almost all the rooms were solitary confinement cells, but under the Soviets each of these cells now held between fifteen and twenty people. Our cell was filthy and tiny (eight square meters).

After the inspection we were given a list of prison rules. We got ready for sleep, trying to figure out how sixteen people would fit on those eight square meters. We lay down on our sides facing the same direction. We turned to the other side all together. When someone went to the parasha (toilet) he would step on prisoners' feet. We rose at 7:00 a.m., tidied the cell, washed, and waited for



inspection. Then we had breakfast. Every second day we were led to the prison courtyard for a five-minute walk. Every two weeks we were brought to the baths, and once a month to the shop, where prisoners could buy bread, sugar, pickles, tomatoes, or soap. We tried to occupy ourselves in our spare time: we made chess pieces out of bread and played. We were still not issued books because this was the period before the Court of Appeal.

The greatest joy for prisoners was to receive a package from home because the items in it were usually accompanied by clippings from the newspaper used to wrap the food.

The best packages came at Christmas or Easter. Prisoners would share their eggs, greet each other with the words, "Christ has risen!" and exchange best wishes for a speedy liberation. It was a warm and beautiful Easter. In the free world it was warm and the trees were in bloom, but we were forbidden to open the window even a crack to let some fresh air into the cell. We were suffocating from lack of air.

Time passed, and the Court of Appeal was approaching. Each prisoner wondered whether he would be lucky and receive a lighter sentence.

One morning, a week before our second court appearance, we were ordered to pack our belongings and return to Drohobych. We were escorted to a special prisoners' train. The court session began on 9 May and lasted three days. There were few changes to the original sentences. Everyone received the same sentence, except a student named I. Soviak, whose death sentence was commuted to ten years' hard labor. My sentence was changed from ten years to eight, and Mykhailo Yedlitsky was remanded for further investigation.

After the sentencing we were brought back to Sambir, while those sentenced to death remained in Drohobych. After our return to Sambir we were searched, registered, and placed temporarily in cell no. 34. The windows were boarded up, and a light bulb was left burning day and night. We were kept here for three weeks, after which we were placed into single cells. This time we were lucky because there were only twelve prisoners to each cell, so there was room to sleep.

After the Court of Appeal we were prepared for the departure to Siberia: three photographs were taken of each prisoner: left and right profiles, and full frontal, and our fingers and palms were

printed. These documents were attached to the acts containing detailed descriptions of each prisoner and the article under which he had been sentenced.

The prison authorities told us to write home to request warm clothing. But the German-Soviet war broke out, which interrupted all their plans.

Early on Sunday morning, 22 June 1941, while we were still asleep, planes began rumbling overhead. They dropped bombs, destroying the arsenals near our prison. NKVD and army troops immediately tightened security in the prison and surrounding area. The number of armed guards stationed in the prison corridors was increased, and they were issued gas masks. We were told to behave or we would be shot. From the first day of the war our food worsened, and the schedule of meals became erratic. From the corridors you could hear lots of commotion and doors slamming. Prisoners were being taken to the cellars and shot.

On Thursday of the first week of the war the prisoners were led according to lists to the prison courtyard for execution, but German planes appeared. The NKVD took the condemned back to the prison. The next morning the prisoners were brought back to the courtyard. Their names were read out, and they were told to kneel. They were mowed down from the back by two machine guns, and grenades were thrown at their bodies from behind the wall.

The prisoners in their cells were petrified with fear. They thought everyone was going to be executed. All the prisoners began to pray, asking God to save them. Then a shout rang out:

"Friends, let's save ourselves! Life or death! Let's destroy the prison!" A great roar erupted, and within a second the corridors were filled with prisoners. Seeing this danger, the NKVD officials climbed over the prison wall and for the next two hours fired at the prison. Prisoners who tried to climb over the wall were instantly cut down.

The prisoners began saving their wounded comrades and tending to their injuries. Others headed for the prison cellars. We found two cells, each about fifty square meters. From the top floors down to the cellars the corridors and stairways were covered with blood and dead people. According to our estimates, about three-quarters of the prisoners had been shot. The remaining prisoners saved themselves by destroying the prison.

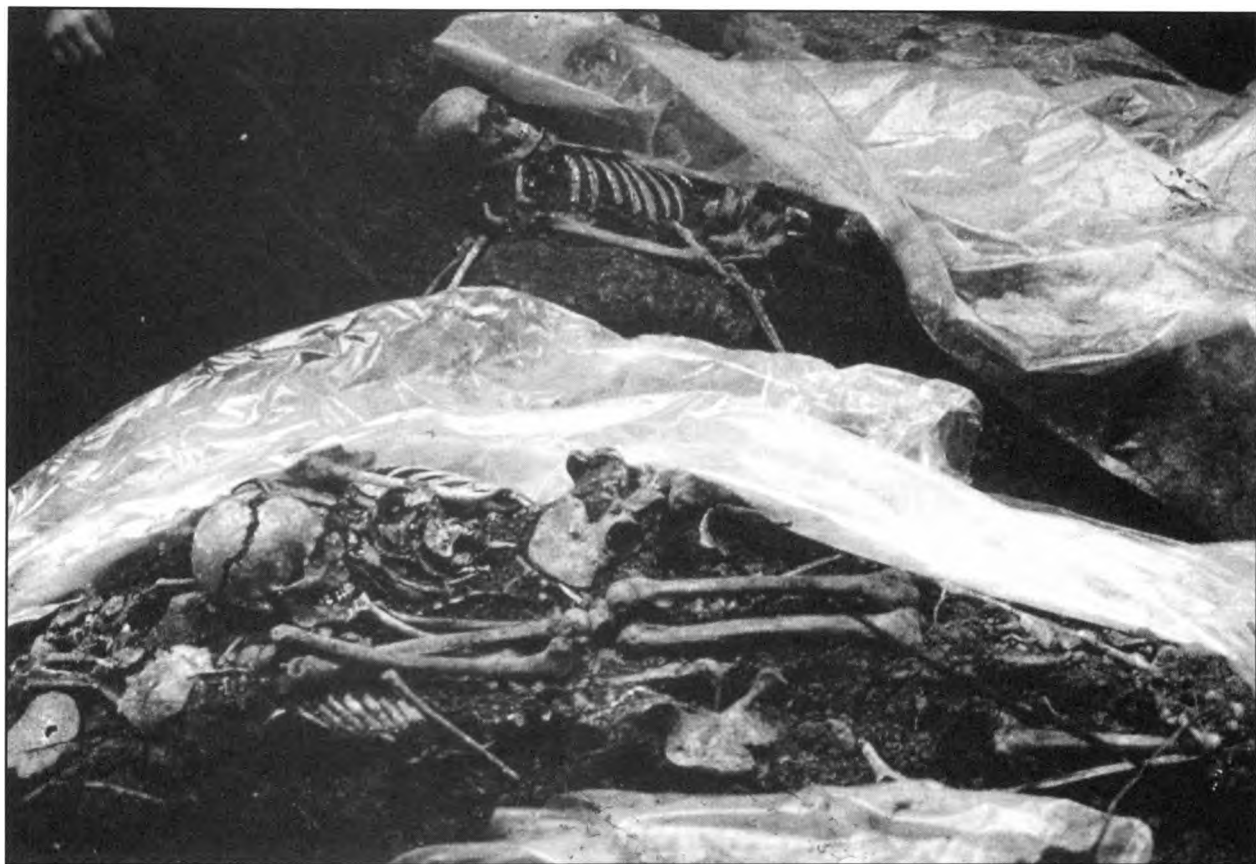
**Dmytro Bily**



*Bones exhumed from a well in a park in the village of Yabloniv, Ivano-Frankivsk region.*



*Bones of murdered Ukrainian patriots, which were removed from a well.*



*Bones of Ukrainian patriots, which were removed from a well.*



*Bones of Ukrainian patriots exhumed for reburial .*



*Funeral of political prisoners executed in the cellars of Drohobych Prison, Lviv region.*



*Exhumations of mass graves containing executed members of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) in the village of Demianiv Laz, near Ivano-Frankivsk.*

Photo supplied by UPA veteran H. Dmytro-Tsiapka.



*Exhumation of the remains of Ukrainian patriots executed by the Soviets in Demianiv Laz.*



*Coffins containing the remains of Ukrainian patriots before their reinterment.*



*Coffins containing the remains of murdered Ukrainian patriots, ready for reburial.*



*Solemn funerals of the heroes of Demianiv Laz.*



*More than 20,000 mourners arrived from Ivano-Frankivsk region and many Ukrainian cities, including Lviv and Kyiv.*



*The funeral was attended by numerous clergymen and victims' relatives.*

# SAVED BY A ROSARY MADE OF BREAD

(Reminiscence)

Three months before the German-Soviet war in 1941 the Bolsheviks imprisoned me in the Sambir jail, where I was put into cell no. 2 on the second floor. This was a solitary confinement cell, but there were ten to thirteen prisoners in it. There were political prisoners and people who had been charged with various crimes. There was a Jew from the Ukrainian city of Boryslav, who traded his shoes for a chicken. He had a very beautiful red beard, and when the prison warders shaved it off, he would pray to God every evening at dusk, complaining about his persecutors, who had inflicted such an injury on him.

Life in prison was very bad — “a dog’s life,” as everyone said. The hygiene was awful and the air in the cell was very thick. The windows were boarded up, and it was impossible to open them from the bottom. But we made a small opening at the top, and when there were no NKVD guards nearby, we would open the window slightly.

Prisoners from various cells would be brought for interrogation to the regional NKVD in the city of Drohobych.

Women were housed on the first floor. Through the wall telegraph [the “alphabet”: messages tapped out on cell walls] I learned that underneath our cell on the first floor were two young girls from a village in the Drohobych region, whose mothers did not know where the Bolsheviks had imprisoned them. Often, when I was brought for a hearing in Drohobych, we would be loaded onto a truck at the railway station. On that day, usually a Tuesday, my family — mother, brother, sister, and even some neighbors — would come to see me at the station. When I got close to them, I shouted that those two girls “M” and “O,” from such-and-such a village, were in Sambir Prison. Our people didn’t need a lot of explanations. True, the NKVD officer hit me on the head with his stave, but it didn’t hurt me very much because I knew I had done a good deed. Three days later the mothers of those girls came to Sambir Prison and waited in line until they received

confirmation that their girls were really there and then passed some packages to them.

This prison housed approximately 2,000 prisoners, most of whom were Ukrainians. We communicated with each other in various ways: by Morse code or tapping on the pipes in the toilet, which branched off in various directions to each cell. We knew exactly who was in the prison and in which cell. News traveled efficiently from cell to cell because among us were veterans of Polish imprisonment, who knew how to tap messages well. In 1934, when I was nineteen years old, I was a prisoner in the Polish concentration camp Bereza Kartuzka, where I spent eleven months and gained much experience and courage.

On Easter Sunday at 5:00 a.m. all of us prisoners climbed up on the grated, boarded windows and shouted three times:

“CHRIST IS RISEN! CHRIST IS RISEN! CHRIST IS RISEN!”

We made such a huge noise that the frightened NKVD officials raised the alarm. After I was released, I was told by some residents of Sambir who lived near the prison, or those who were walking by the prison at that very moment, that they had clearly heard our “Easter call.”

On 22 June 1941 the Germans attacked the Soviet Union. The NKVD began to execute prisoners en masse. At first they shot death row prisoners and those who were imprisoned in the cellars. Later, they started taking some prisoners from our cell during the night, and they vanished without a trace. Afterwards, their corpses were found in the woods.

The girl named “M,” who was in the cell directly beneath us, made a rosary out of bread. To ensure that the bread would hold well together and not fall apart, she chewed it for a long time and only then rolled the bread into balls. She strung the pieces of bread on a piece of string made from some thread from her clothing. She framed the cross with straw so that it would gleam nicely. When I lowered a rope made out of thread down to her cell, she passed the rosary through my cell window at



the very moment when the NKVD guard stepped away from our cell. From that day, every evening by knocking on the toilet pipe she would teach me how to pray with the rosary. We lived in constant danger, because we felt that something awful was afoot. The NKVD staff was running around like mad dogs and from time to time took prisoners from the cell. At night you could hear the mournful sound of baying dogs and muffled gunshots. We guessed that war had broken out because a German bomb had damaged the corner of the prison. All of us were ready for an uprising at the right time. We knew that otherwise we would be shot.

The morning of 27 June 1941 arrived. Nearly 300 prisoners were driven into the prison courtyard, and everyone was told to kneel down facing the wall. I was in the last row. Suddenly shots were fired from the windows and corridor of the prison, and the guard who had escorted us began to shoot back with his revolver. Lowering my head and peeping from underneath my arm, I noticed that the escort guard was shooting at us. At that second I began praying to the Almighty, asking Him to forgive my sins. I also begged him for a good death, so that I wouldn't be wounded and die in torment. There were many dead and wounded prisoners. Surviving prisoners were crawling in a panic toward the center of the courtyard, huddling next to each other. The NKVD agents were shooting at them and tossing grenades that ripped the prisoners' bodies into pieces. Cries and shouts rang out everywhere, and the prisoners were overcome with horror. I looked numbly at the horrific scene around me and did not understand why I was still alive.

When the shooting had started, the prisoners who were still locked in their cells began to break down the doors. The NKVD officials thought it was the Germans breaking into the prison and gave the order to stop shooting. Everything quieted down, and an officer went through some doors. From inside the prison you could hear bloodcurdling cries from the prisoners who were escaping. There were about 1,000 of them.

I quickly realized what was happening. Racing to the wall, I charged toward the door through which the NKVD officer had gone. I

noticed a telephone lying on the floor. I raced back to the courtyard and told the prisoners that the NKVD had run away. Those who were still alive began to organize themselves and started breaking down the doors to the cells that still contained prisoners. They experienced a surge of energy and soon all the prisoners were freed and began milling in the corridor or the prison courtyard. We were certain that the Germans had occupied Sambir. Gathering up the wounded, all of us left the prison heading for Drohobych Street. Everywhere we saw Soviet soldiers, who were running away. When they saw us, they stepped aside in horror to let us pass, while we ran every which way, through gardens and houses.

I stopped near a house and saw a woman, who recoiled in horror when she saw me because my shirt was covered in blood. I asked for a shirt and she gave me one. I hid behind the stable, changed my shirt, and then ran with some prisoners through kitchen gardens, heading toward the Dnister River. We swam across the river, and after crossing some fields, approached the village of Kulchych.

Many prisoners were hiding in the fields, and among them was a woman from this village. We stayed in the field, while the woman went to the village to gather some information. She returned with good news: all the NKVD officials had fled and there was no militia. She advised us to stay in the field until evening, and then, if there were no changes, to enter the village. Miraculously, the girl who had given me the rosary appeared next to me. "Where is my rosary?" I wondered. When they were taking us to be shot, I had hidden it somewhere! But where? In those days it was customary to have a small pocket for a watch. I looked inside and there was my rosary! I showed everyone my rosary and said a prayer to the Blessed Virgin Mary for saving my life.

When the German troops arrived the next day, we went back to the prison to bury the executed prisoners. We counted approximately 850 prisoners and buried them in the cemetery. We placed four bodies into each coffin and then buried everyone in a common grave.

Glory to the Blessed Virgin Mary for saving me! Eternal memory to those who were executed!

**Roman Ivanytsky**

# THE FIRST CHRISTMAS IN THE BEREZA KARTUZKA CONCENTRATION CAMP

Near the city of Kobryn in the Polissia region is the small town of Bereza Kartuzka. The town was named after a monastery called Kartuziv.

I am from Drohobych, where my parents lived. But fate led my older brother to the Polissia region, to the city of Berestia (Brest) on the Buh River. There he opened a small grocery store that soon expanded into a large enterprise located on the corners of 3 May and Zyguntowska streets. The store was located near the home of the Polissian *voivode* [military governor] Kostek Biernacki, who in the wake of the assassination of Poland's Minister of the Interior Bronislaw Pieracki, founded a concentration camp in Bereza Kartuzka.

In 1934 I was living with my brother in Berestia. Since I was very interested in the life of Ukrainians in the Polissia region and had an opportunity to travel to various villages to purchase supplies of butter or vegetables for my brother, I often talked with the peasants. They spoke proper Ukrainian, but when I asked them what nationality they were, they would reply, "We are people from here." They were afraid to admit they were Ukrainians.

In Berestia there was a Ukrainian bank with a sign picturing the blue-and-yellow flag and the trident; a four-grade school; and a branch of the Prosvita Society. Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky sent books to this school from Lviv and helped some orphans move to this city.

When Biernacki was not at home (he often went hunting) one of his servants with whom I was friendly would let me into the house, even though there were guards in the backyard and inside the house, while a policeman marched up and down on the sidewalk in front of the building.

The memorable day of 19 November 1934 arrived. Out of the blue, nine Polish agents dressed in civilian clothing, two police commissioners, and two uniformed policemen entered the home I shared with my brother.

After searching my pockets and the apartment, they handed me a piece of paper stating that I was being arrested on the orders of voivode Biernacki and would be taken to Bereza Kartuzka.

I said goodbye to my brother and freedom for eleven months.

After seven days of torture at the police station in Berestia, I was led in chains to the train. Late that evening we arrived at Bereza Kartuzka. After one hour's travel the small horse-driven cart brought us to the camp. A wet snow was falling, and it clung to my body. I was exhausted from not having slept for seven nights. At the camp gate I was greeted by several young policemen, who started beating me wherever they could land a blow, and I ran a gauntlet to the police station, some 500 meters away. There another gang of policemen was waiting for me. While searching through my clothing, they beat me mercilessly while yelling about how many Polish policemen I had murdered — to give themselves a reason to continue beating me.

They led me to the prison barrack surrounded by a five-meter barbed wire fence to an empty hall on the second floor. A policeman pointed to the framed prison regulations hanging on the wall, which I was supposed to memorize by the next morning, when I was to report to the camp commandant. But there was no report the next morning; it happened two days later. On the third day I was escorted to the yard for the report. There were many rows of prisoners, who looked like walking corpses. The camp commandant was a Polonized German named Grefner.

"Mr. Commandant, prisoner number 250 (marked on my back) reporting to the place of sequestration in Bereza Kartuzka."

"So you are a *haidamaka* [participant of the eighteenth-century insurrections against the Polish nobility in Right-Bank Ukraine]" he replied and told me to stand with the other

prisoners, among whom were Roman Shukhevych (later the commander in chief and general of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army); Dmytro Hrytsai (later an UPA colonel); V. Yaniv; Dr. Herbovy; the Starukh brothers; V. Makar; M. Bihun; B. Deichakivsky; the engineers Pasternak and Bazelevych; R. Paladiichuk, O. Matla, and many others. By the end of the year there were nearly 480 Ukrainian nationalists in the camp. There was also a small number of Polish national democrats, who were against Pilsudski, and a large number of Polish, Ukrainian, and Belarusian communists. However, Jews formed the majority of this small group.

There were forty of us in one room. Water was constantly poured on the stone floor to prevent us from sitting, but we were exhausted. It dried as we sat on the floor.

On the second floor of our block was a long unlit corridor with cells on both sides. A policeman walked along the corridor, making sure that we did not talk. The doors to the cells were always open.

Christmas Eve, 6 January 1935, was an ordinary day of work outside in the cold. We were digging moats around the barracks, which would later be filled with water to prevent the prisoners from escaping. That day after supper, which consisted of “soup on the run,” we rushed outside (we did everything on the double) to wash ourselves with water from standing barrels and to scour our plates. Actually, there was no point in washing them because every prisoner licked his plate clean. We were tormented by hunger and our close companions — lice.

But none of this prevented us from celebrating Christmas Eve and singing a few carols. Two prisoners lay on the floor next to

the door to check for the whereabouts of the policeman. When he walked away, quietly we began to sing “God Eternal,” and then, if possible, we sang other Christmas carols. Then we listened as one prisoner after another talked about Christmas Eve at home. With these thoughts we lay down to sleep, so that we would get up at 5:00 a.m. and welcome Christmas Day.

The Baby Jesus did not forget us. That day Rev. Yosyf Kladochny arrived at the camp. Metropolitan Sheptytsky had appointed him chaplain to all the Polish prisons. We were ordered to get ready for Holy Mass that was supposed to take place in the block housing the camp administration. This building stood across the road, so it was a real event for us to leave the barracks surrounded by barbed wire and go to the chapel. Rev. Kladochny, a young priest with a full head of black hair, made a very pleasant impression on us, and we didn't even feel that we were under police guard. Confessions took a long time, because each prisoner wanted to have his say, ask questions, or pass a message. Those whose “confessions” were the longest were residents of Lviv, where the priest was from. After the Holy Liturgy we did not go to work and thanked the Baby Jesus that we had had a chance to celebrate His Nativity and welcome Him into our enduring hearts.

Then the winter came, and the hard labor and difficult conditions started taking their toll. Once I was in America, I received a letter from Lviv from Rev. Kladochny with whom I corresponded until his death. He sent me several books, including his memoirs of Bereza Kartuzka.

**Roman Ivanytsky**

# BOLSHEVIK CRIMES IN THE VILLAGE OF PENIAKY

In 1941, when the Red Army was retreating, the parish priest of the village of Peniaky in Brody raion, Lviv region, Rev. Vasyl Oberyshyn, hid in various villages with his wife and children because they were being sought by the NKVD. The entire parish was honeycombed with hideouts. After refusing to join the Russian Orthodox Church, Rev. Oberyshyn was arrested and sentenced to twenty-five years' imprisonment. In 1956, after Stalin's death, he was acquitted and then released. However, he was unable to obtain registration documents to be able to rejoin his family in Lviv for another four years, and he was forced to live in Volyn region. After rejoining his family, Rev. Oberyshyn conducted Holy Liturgies in secret, as well as baptisms, marriages, and burials.

When Cardinal Liubachivsky of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church returned to Ukraine, on Holy Thursday he gathered all the priests who had been in the underground and then sent to the GULAG. Emulating the example of Jesus Christ, who washed the feet of the apostles before the Last Supper, the cardinal washed the feet of the oldest priest of the UGCC, Rev. Vasyl Oberyshyn, who celebrated his ninety-fifth birthday in 1999.

Rev. Oberyshyn's brother, Illia, a leading member of the OUN and the UPA, spent forty-eight years in the Ukrainian underground. The NKVD tried in various ways to flush out Illia. One time they took his elderly mother to a well, threatening to drown her if she didn't reveal the whereabouts of her son. NKVD agents, dressed as UPA soldiers and pretending to have important documents for Illia, came to Rev. Oberyshyn. After spending thirty years in the underground, Illia Oberyshyn finally surfaced only after the referendum on Ukraine's independence on 1 December 1990.

During their retreat in 1941 Soviet troops committed a number of atrocities in the village of Peniaky. They killed a guard named Ivan Boitsun, the two Orlovsky sisters were murdered in Zolochiv Prison, and a Ukrainian tank gunner

accused of sabotage was killed only because the tank was damaged and could not move.

Yosyf Matviiv and another eighteen-year-old boy, both members of the Luh and Prosvita societies, were arrested on weapons possession charges. Both of them were sentenced to long prison terms. Matviiv and some other boys in prison made a hole in the wall on the second floor and escaped after fashioning ropes from some blankets. Matviiv and his father hid out with my family.

The following members of the OUN and UPA were punished in Siberian prisons and camps or perished in the struggle for Ukraine's freedom against the communists: Petro Holovaty (code name: "Povin"), commander of an UPA unit, killed in battle; Mykhailo Kotyk ("Khmara"), commander of an UPA unit, killed himself during an NKVD dragnet operation; Yosyf Chyzhevsky, an UPA officer and leading OUN member, served a twenty-year sentence in Siberia; Volodymyr Chyzhevsky was killed in battle on 17 April 1944, at the age of twenty-two; Dmytro Kots was wounded in battle and died in prison; UPA officer Ivan Chyzhevsky ("Kalyna"); Petro Kulyna; Ivan Bratkiv; "Kobzar"; Mykhaiko Kots; the brothers Stefan and Yosyf Krokhmaliuk.

The UPA courier Maria Krokhmaliuk died in a battle with the Bolsheviks; Volodymyr Melnychuk, a medical student, served ten years in Kolyma and died in Brody; Volodymyr Panchyshyn, deported to Siberia, became an invalid. Osypa Chyzhevaska and Sofia Yakubovska were arrested and imprisoned. As a result of their tortures, they became invalids but did not betray their fellow UPA and OUN members. Stefania Panchyshyn, who was persecuted by the NKVD, went underground.

Volodymyr Petryk, Ivan Gazda, Petro Kotyk, Yosyf Shamro, Volodymyr Semchyshyn were imprisoned in Siberia. The families of the following individuals were deported to Siberia: Ivan Krokhmaliuk, Anton Chyzhevsky, Ivan Shamro, Stefan Shamro, Yosyp Gazda, Ivan Semchyshyn, Yevstakhii Melnychuk, Luka Krokhmaliuk, Pavlo Holovaty, the Kutyras, and

the Marunchaks. Petro Chyzhevsky died in the Vorkuta mines. Volodymyr Melnyk was killed in 1943 in the village of Komaryn, Pochaiv raion.

In 1943, eighteen-year-old Ivan Gazda joined an UPA fighting group to fight for Ukraine's freedom. On 24 June 1945 he was betrayed and then captured by the Soviets. He was interrogated for two months and urged to sign a false confession, naturally, with the help of ramrods and rubber truncheons. He was later tried in Zolochiv and sentenced to ten years. From Lviv he was transported to Pechora. He found out later that in 1950 his father and brother Dmytro, who returned from the war an invalid, would be deported to Siberia. After nearly completing his sentence, he went to his parents' home in Tomsk region (Russia). But his imprisonment continued because he was under constant supervision and could not take a single step without permission.

In 1947 the NKVD deported Yevstakhii Melnychuk, his wife, and his younger children, as well as his son Yaroslav and daughter Anna to Siberia. Yaroslav and Anna escaped from exile and made their way back to their village. In a few

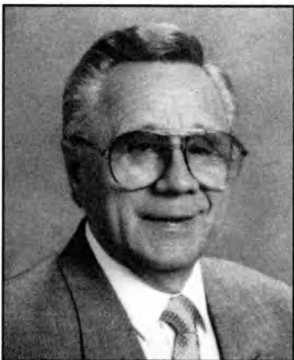
days Yaroslav was arrested. Then his sister Anna was also arrested and sentenced to five years in Karaganda.

Volodymyr Semchyshyn's life was a reflection of the fate that befell an entire generation of Ukrainian freedom fighters. The Germans arrived in his native Peniaky in 1941 and sent the eighteen-year-old to work as a slave laborer in Germany. In 1945 Soviet troops occupied Germany and took him into the army. In March 1948 he returned briefly to his native village. After several months of persecution by the NKVD, he was transported to Vorkuta in May 1950. There he met his future wife Hanna, who had been deported there with her mother because her older brother and sister had fought for Ukraine's freedom.

We recall those who were sent to slave labor in Siberia. All of them experienced great tribulations. Many of them died in exile or were starved, frozen, or tortured to death in Soviet prisons.

**Osyp Panchyshyn**

Former resident of Peniaky.



Ivan Kontek (code name: "Hrizny"), pictured at left, became a Ukrainian freedom fighter when he was only sixteen years old. The persecutions and unbridled actions of the occupiers, which Kontek's family and other Ukrainians endured in the Yaroslav area, prompted him to join the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA). Kontek's struggle in the fight for freedom was a long one and eventually led to Australia, where the former UPA fighter and ordinary worker eventually became a noted Melbourne businessman. Today Ivan Kontek is known as a generous patron of church and community activities.

# I WOULD BE PROUD TO BE CALLED A “BANDERITE”

*The following letter was published in the Russian newspaper **Vecherniaia Odessa** (Evening Odesa).*

This is the first time that I am writing. If something is not right, please excuse me. As a Russian, I simply would not like the people of the country in which I have been living for thirty-eight years to think badly of me. In *Vecherniaia Odessa* I read the ultimatum of the left forces of Odesa to the government and the president, and I would like to express my opinion. Yes, I agree that those structures are not working, especially the presidential administration. This is evident from the fact that we have a bit too many “left-wing” and “right-wing” forces that are waging open policies. They don’t like anything in Ukraine — the language, the emblem, the flag. They even call those who speak Ukrainian “Banderites.”

I am a Russian, but if I were a Ukrainian I would be proud to be called a “Banderite.” Stepan Bandera fought for the rebirth of his nation, culture, the language of his people, for the liberation of his land from a 350-year-long occupation. But in whose name are today’s “left-wingers” — chauvinists, Black Hundreds types and others — issuing statements? You’re standing up for the Union? But immovable and free, it never existed. Everything was held together by bayonets, terror, the abasement of one nation by another. The Soviets fought against the Basmachis [members of an anti-Soviet movement in Central Asia], then the Banderites, and later the Dushmans [Afghans]. So, “left-wing” comrades, I have a big favor to ask of you — don’t foment new hostility, for a return to your empire is impossible, and it may end in a new war.

Your aspirations to become our masters once again are understandable. That is why you shout like a thief: “Grab that thief!” as though today you are championing the rights of the Russian-speaking population of Ukraine. Where were you when we, Russian speakers, were being shot, exterminated in the camps, deported, and chased out of our land?! And how many Russian lads with your silent agreement, perished in Afghanistan and other “hot” spots of the planet, yes, even in Moldova?

It is right that self-defense units are being formed in Ukraine. A nation should and has a right to defend itself. And there should be an army in Ukraine...

Incidentally, the Russian fellow Konstantin Morozov, the defense minister, learned the Ukrainian language in two months, and today he speaks it fluently...So you write correctly — we should be worrying about our children — about our children, not a bowl of soup. And “about the children” means peace in the nation, friendship among all nations, so that every nation will have the right to its rebirth, its culture, and language. We should help Ukraine get back on its feet and treat it with respect, because we live here, and our children and grandchildren will be living here.

**Yurii Steklov**  
**World War II veteran, Group II**  
**invalid**

*I marched from Berlin to Prague, but started out in Stalingrad. I was wounded four times and concussed twice. I was wounded twice in 1951 near Rivne (Ukraine) in combat actions against the UPA, but they were defending their land, their nation; their war was cruel but just.*



*The first groups of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army on their raid to the West through Czechoslovakia.*



*An UPA unit on its raid to the West in 1948 (From underground materials supplied by P. Novyna).*



*Yaniv Cemetery in Lviv, where the Ukrainian Sich Riflemen, whose graves were destroyed by the Soviets, are buried.*



*There are thirty-six stab wounds on the body of this brutally murdered UPA soldier.*

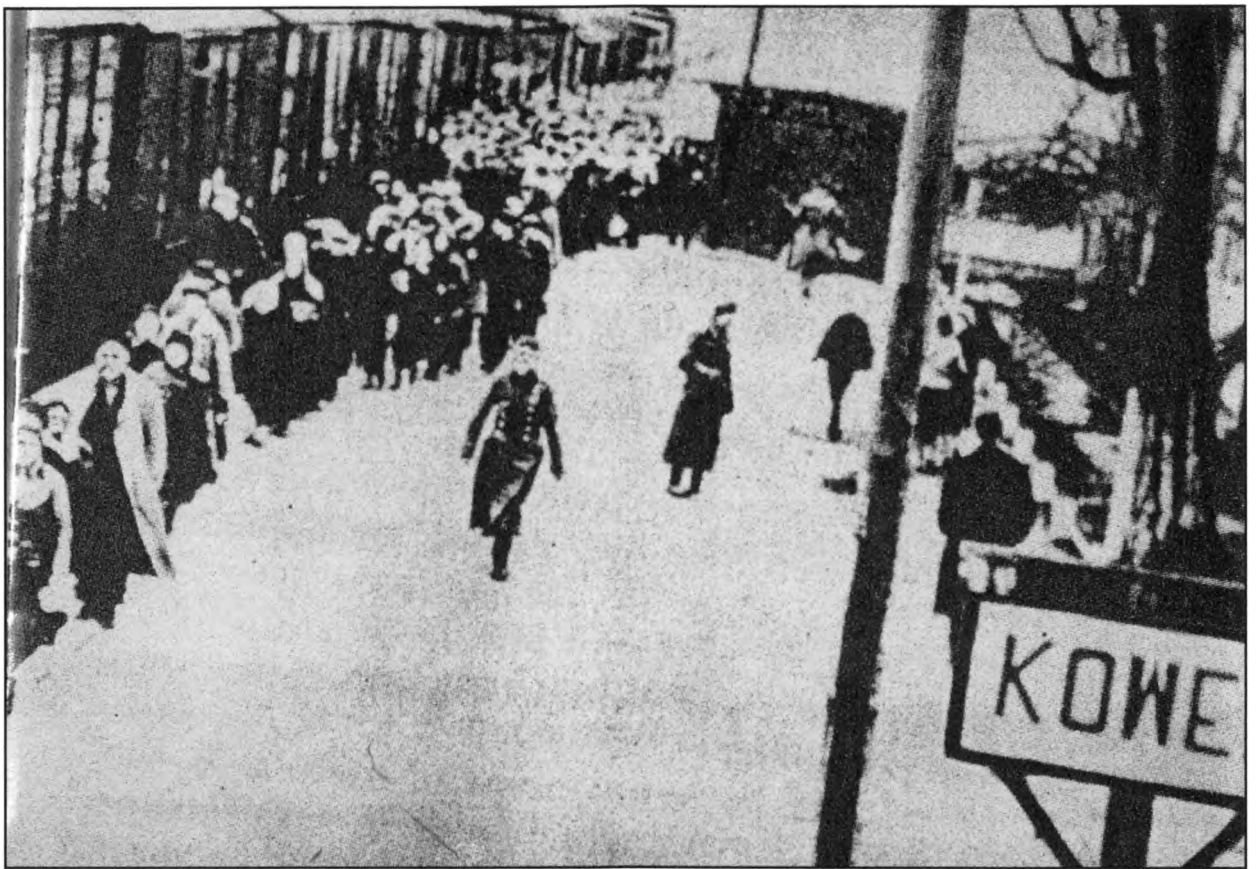




*The leaders of the Soviet criminal clique headed by Joseph Stalin pose for a group photo in Moscow, 1936. Soviet communists committed the greatest crimes in history. According to rough estimates, they were responsible for destroying more than 25 million people.*



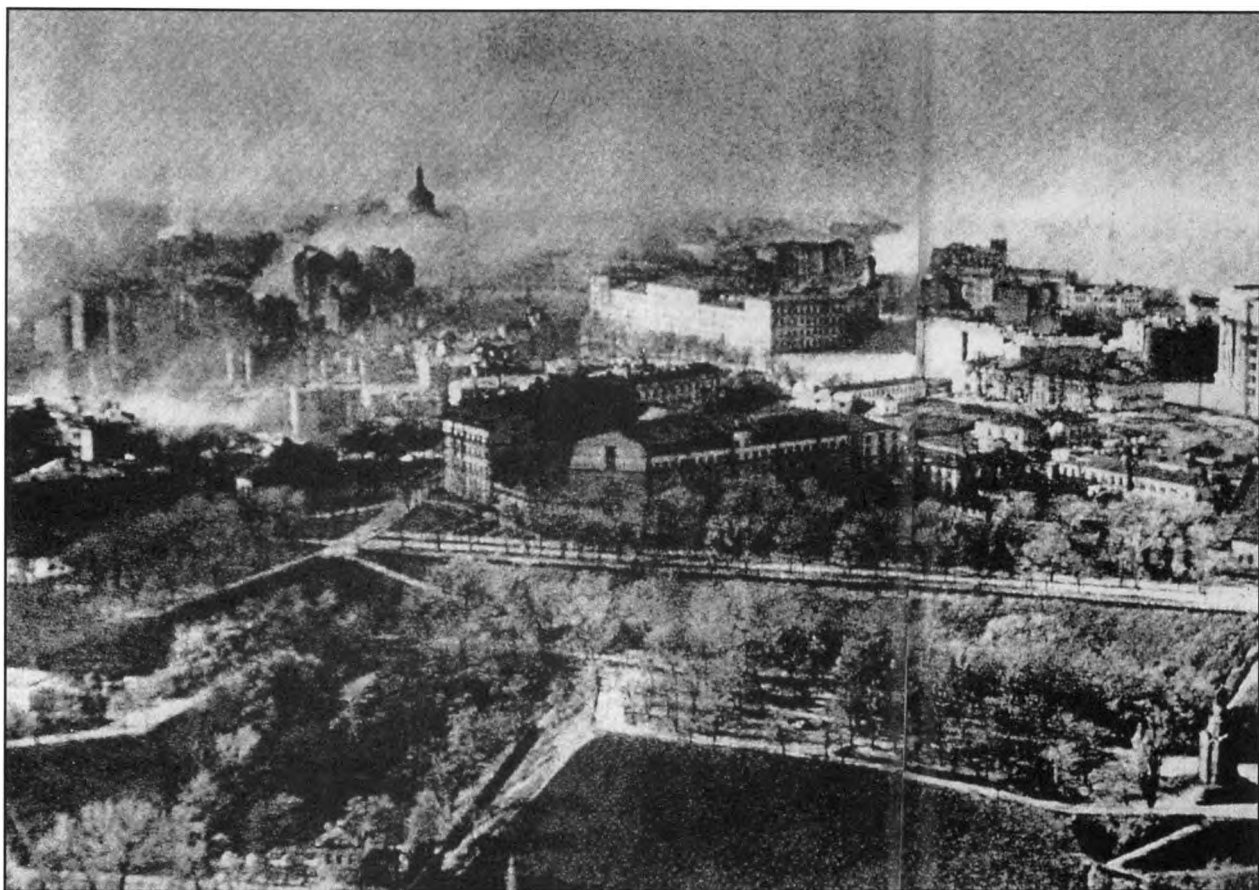
*During the German occupation of Ukraine, 2.5 million young men and women were forcibly recruited for slave labor in Germany. The column of wagons pictured here is bringing people from Ukrainian villages to the nearest railway station, where they will be loaded on trains and sent to the German Reich.*



*At the railway station in the city of Kovel (Volyn region) the Germans are loading Ukrainian slave laborers onto trains headed for the Reich.*



*When the German occupiers were retreating from Ukraine, they shot innocent people, burned Ukrainian villages, and looted everything they could get their hands on. Pictured here are two elderly people before their execution.*



*Kyiv lies in ruins during the German army's retreat.*



*German troops retreating from Kyiv while the Taras Shevchenko Museum on Shevchenko Boulevard burns behind them.*

# PROFILES OF FOUR UKRAINIAN FREEDOM FIGHTERS



## **SYMON PETLIURA** **(10 May 1879 - 25 May 1926)**

*Statesman and publicist;  
supreme commander of the UNR Army  
and president of the Directory  
of the Ukrainian National Republic.*

Symon Petliura was born in Poltava, where he spent his early years. In 1895 he began his studies at the Poltava Theological Seminary, but was expelled for belonging to a clandestine Ukrainian group.

In 1900 Petliura joined the leadership of the Revolutionary Ukrainian Party (RUP) whose main goal was the struggle for Ukrainian state independence. Two years later this political activist established contact with the editorial board of the Lviv-based *Literaturno-naukovyi visnyk* (Literary-Scientific Herald), and began contributing to this journal.

The tsarist police placed Petliura on its list of dangerous individuals. To avoid arrest he moved to the Kuban region, where he taught school and worked in the archives of the Kuban Cossack Army.

In 1903 Petliura was arrested in Katerynodar for his involvement in the Black Sea Free Hromada, a local RUP branch. Released on bail, he traveled twice to Lviv. After the general amnesty, he left for St. Petersburg, where he coedited the social democratic monthly *Vilna Ukraina* (Free Ukraine). After returning to Kyiv in 1906 he coedited *Slovo* (The Word), the organ of the Ukrainian Social Democratic Workers' Party (USDRP) and contributed to the monthly *Ukraina*.

In 1909 he moved to Moscow, where he became coeditor of the Russian-language monthly *Ukrainskaia zhizn* (Ukrainian Life), where he worked until the February Revolution of 1917. That year he was mobilized to the army. In May the Ukrainian Military Committee of the Western Front sent him as a delegate to the First All-Ukrainian Military Congress in Kyiv, where he was elected chairman of the Ukrainian General Military Committee and in June 1918, general secretary of military affairs of the First General Secretariat of the Central Rada.

Petliura was a skilled political prognostician: at the Congress of Peoples in September 1917 he spoke about the crucial need to nationalize the army as Ukraine's last salvation, and outlined the hopeless situation of the Russian empire that was destined to collapse if it introduced a national-federal order.

In late 1917, after a disagreement with the political direction of the head of the Central Rada's General Secretariat, Volodymyr Vynnychenko, Petliura resigned and began organizing the Haidamaka Battalion of Slobidska Ukraine, a military formation that played a decisive role in the battles against the Bolsheviks in 1918. After the popular uprising against Hetman Skoropadsky, Petliura became a member of the UNR Directory and supreme otaman of the UNR Army. For the next ten months he headed the Ukrainian Republic's armed struggle against Bolshevik forces and Denikin's troops.

The liberation struggles ended in failure. After moving to Paris, Petliura remained a symbol of the struggle for Ukrainian state sovereignty. After the tragic Battle of Poltava, the Muscovite imperialists called Ukrainian independence activists “Mazepites,” and after the liberation struggle of 1918-1921 — “Petliurites.” On 25 May 1926 Symon Petliura was assassinated by a Jewish Bolshevik agent named Shalom Schwarzbard, claiming vengeance for Petliura’s purported responsibility for the pogroms in Ukraine.



## **YEVHEN KONOVALETS** **(14 June 1891 - 23 May 1938)**

***Military commander with the rank of colonel in the UNR Army, head of the Ukrainian Military Organization (UVO), founder of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN), and head of the Leadership of the Ukrainian Nationalists (PUN).***

Yevhen Konovalets was born in the village of Zashkiv, near Lviv, into the family of a schoolteacher. After completing the gymnasium in 1909, he studied law at Lviv University. He also studied history with Professor Mykhailo Hrushevsky. Law studies are a jurist’s “bread and butter,” while knowledge of one’s national history

not only expands the range of scholarly studies but is the main foundation for a person who aspires to be a political thinker. There is no doubt that for student activists like Konovalets state independence for Ukraine was the paramount goal.

In 1914 Konovalets was mobilized into the Austrian Army. The following year he was captured by the Russians after the battle of Makivka. Released as a result of the February Revolution, in the fall of 1917 the young officer, committed to the idea of an independent and unified Ukraine, moved to Kyiv, where he began organizing the nucleus of the Ukrainian armed forces: a battalion of the Sich Riflemen, which later became a corps.

Konovalets was a realist. He knew that a well organized, deeply patriotic, idealistic, and well trained army was crucial to the struggle for state independence and consolidation of the new Ukrainian state. The twenty-seven-year-old officer became the most distinguished commander of the Ukrainian armed forces.

After the failure of the Ukrainian national-liberation struggles, when many Ukrainians were overwhelmed by despair and apathy, Konovalets and his comrades in arms fully recognized that the struggle was not over.

In July 1921 Konovalets became the head of the Ukrainian Military Organization, which was created one year earlier. Its goal was to maintain and strengthen the military framework. As a result of the consolidation of the finest political and patriotic forces in Ukraine and abroad, Konovalets and his associates founded the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists in 1929.

The OUN’s struggle was aimed at the main foes of Ukrainian statehood: the Bolshevik satraps and chauvinistic Polish occupiers.

After Petliura’s assassination communist Moscow viewed Yevhen Konovalets as its chief enemy. Twelve years after the murder of Symon Petliura, the communist agent Pavel Sudoplatov assassinated Yevhen Konovalets in Rotterdam on 23 May 1938.

Terror, which the Bolsheviks ostensibly “opposed,” was in reality their primary political weapon.



## **STEPAN BANDERA**

**(1 January 1909 - 15 October 1959)**

*Revolutionary nationalist  
and leader of the Organization  
of Ukrainian Nationalists.*

Stepan Bandera was born in the village of Uhryniv Saryi, Galicia, into a priest's family. After completing high school in Stryi, he continued his studies at the agronomy department of the Lviv Polytechnical Institute in Dubliany.

In 1927, at the age of eighteen, he became a member of the Ukrainian Military Organization, and in 1929 he joined the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists. In 1931 he became a member of the OUN national executive in the Western Ukrainian Lands (KE OUN ZUZ). In June 1933 he became the head of the national executives of the UVO and the OUN. In 1934 these two organizations merged, and the UVO became the Military-Combat Section of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists.

Some shortsighted critics reproached Colonel Yevhen Konovalts that he had made a great error in handing over the reins of power to the young Bandera. But events in subsequent years proved the correctness of the colonel's choice. Stepan Bandera proved himself as one of the

most distinguished Ukrainian political figures of the twentieth century.

Bandera's revolutionary concept was opposed by the head of the OUN leadership, Colonel Andrii Melnyk. In 1940, after a falling out with Melnyk, Bandera became the head of an opposing faction. The split stemmed from two different conceptions of the liberation struggle: revolutionary (Banderite) and moderate (Melnykite).

The revolutionary conception was based on the idea that under all conditions, regardless of any territorial-political changes in Eastern Europe (Ukraine), the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists would continue to wage a struggle for a Ukrainian United Independent State. Thus, when the German-Soviet war began, the OUN proclaimed the Act of 30 June 1941, restoring Ukrainian statehood. The revolutionary conception of the OUN and the Act of 30 June 1941 became the ideological and political basis of the armed struggle that the Ukrainian Insurgent Army, created by the revolutionary OUN, waged on two fronts for many years.

At the very time when the UPA's struggle was unfolding, Bandera, his deputy Yaroslav Stetsko, and other revolutionary nationalists were arrested and imprisoned in German prisons and concentration camps.

In the fall of 1944, after the withdrawal of German troops from Ukraine, Bandera, Stetsko, and Melnyk, who had been arrested in early 1944, were released. Bandera immediately requested the OUN to help him return to Ukraine and take part in the armed struggle of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army.

Bandera came to symbolize the Ukrainian nation. No other political figure enjoyed such great popularity both in Ukraine and abroad. The communist leaders even dubbed the members of other anti-Soviet national-liberation movements (Uzbek, Lithuanian, Georgian) "Banderites," a word that became a synonym for warriors who fought against Muscovite slavery.

Stepan Bandera was assassinated in Munich on 15 October 1959 by the Soviet agent Bohdan Stashynsky.



## **ROMAN SHUKHEVYCH** (17 July 1907 - 5 March 1950)

*General and Supreme Commander  
of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army,  
head of the OUN Home Leadership,  
and chairman of the General Secretariat of  
the Ukrainian Supreme Liberation Council.*

Roman Shukhevych (nom de guerre: Taras Chuprynka), was born in the town of Krakovets, Lviv region, in 1907. This was the birth year of many other important figures that would play a key role in Ukraine's struggle for independence: Zenon Kossak, the revolutionary nationalist who perished in the struggle for a free Carpatho-Ukraine; Oleh Kandyba-Olzhych, who perished in the German concentration camp of Sachsenhausen; UPA General Dmytro Hrytsai ("Perebyinis"); and his replacement, Colonel Oleksa Hasyn ("Lytsar").

Born into the distinguished Shukhevych family, Roman was raised in a patriotic spirit. The liberation struggles that he witnessed in his youth had a major impact on his character and the formation of his political thought.

In 1923, when Shukhevych was sixteen, he and other young patriots took part in military training with an experienced soldier from the ranks of the Ukrainian Galician Army (UHA) in which his own uncle, Major Stepan Shukhevych, a lawyer, writer, memoirist, and member of the Ukrainian scouting organization Plast, had fought.

In August 1943 Shukhevych was confirmed as head of the OUN Home Leadership at the Third OUN Congress. That year he was appointed Supreme Commander of the UPA. In July 1944 he was elected the head of the General Secretariat of the Ukrainian Supreme Liberation Council, which was a kind of national parliament and government, and simultaneously the political super-structure over the armed forces of the UPA.

Shukhevych had many opportunities to go abroad, but he stayed in his country together with his fearless soldiers whom he considered the finest of all citizens.

Rank and file soldiers and officers alike regarded him as a father figure.

The national-liberation struggle of the 1940s-1950s, which began in 1939 on the territory of the Silver Land (Transcarpathia) was not in vain. The soldiers of the UPA perished so that our nation would continue to live forever.

On 5 March 1950 an NKVD extermination unit surrounded Shukhevych's safe house in Bilohorshcha (today: part of the city of Lviv). After a brief but savage battle General Roman Shukhevych-Taras Chuprynka was killed.

**Marichka Halaburda-Chyhryn**



**LEV ROMAN REBET**  
**(3 March 1912 - 12 October 1957)**

*Political leader, publicist, and head of  
the Political Council of the OUN  
(Abroad).*

Lev Rebet was born in Stryi, Galicia. In high school he was an active member of Plast. In his senior years he joined the Ukrainian Military Organization (UVO) and later the OUN, immediately after its founding.

After completing high school in 1930, Rebet, spurred by his interests, intellectual directions, and political ideals, enrolled in the Law Faculty of Lviv University. He was arrested several times by the Polish police on charges of illegal political activity. His studies, which he completed with a Master's degree in 1938, were interrupted by a two-year prison sentence.

In 1936 Rebet was appointed leader of the OUN national executive in the Western Ukrainian Lands. He remained in this post until

his next arrest by the Polish police in early 1939. He was in prison when the Polish republic fell. In 1936-1938 Rebet was one of the closest associates of the founder of the UVO and the OUN, Yevhen Konovalts, with whom he had spent time abroad illegally.

After the fall of Poland, Rebet crossed the Sian River and moved to Cracow. After the OUN split, he took part in the Second OUN Congress in April 1941. After the proclamation in Lviv of the Ukrainian state restored by the Act of 30 June 1941, Rebet was appointed second deputy head of the government.

On 14 September 1941 he was arrested by the Gestapo and jailed for more than three years, first in a police prison in Cracow, and later in Auschwitz. Shortly before the end of World War Two he and a number of others were released.

Rebet was in Vienna when Germany capitulated and Soviet troops occupied the former eastern lands of the Reich. From Vienna he and his family moved to Munich, where he was appointed chief judge of the External Units of the OUN. In 1952 he became a member of the Foreign Representation of the Ukrainian Supreme Liberation Council.

In the summer of 1953 an announcement came from Ukraine, stating that "the leadership of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists in the Ukrainian lands was authorizing Lev Rebet, Zynovii Matla, and "Byilykho" (Stepan Bandera) to take over the leadership of the External Units of the OUN temporarily and reorganize them in keeping with the positions of the OUN Leadership in Ukraine."

Unable to reach an understanding with Bandera, in December 1955 Rebet and Matla were appointed to head a separate faction called OUN (Abroad). On 12 October 1957 Lev Rebet was assassinated by a KGB agent.

**Andrii Hlukhanych**



# HELL NEAR LIUBART CASTLE

*For there is nothing covered,  
that shall not be revealed; neither hid,  
that shall not be known.*  
Luke 12:2

In the last few years the Ukrainian press has devoted much attention to the accounts of eyewitnesses, who miraculously escaped being shot in Lutsk Prison on 23 June 1941. For nearly half a century the Soviet government sought to hide this crime and others that it had committed in Katyn, Bykivnia, Lviv, Drohobych, and many other places.

In 1994 the Kyiv-based historian Ivan Bilas published his two-volume study of archival documents and materials, entitled *Represyivno-karalna systema v Ukraini, 1917-1953* (The Repressive-Punitive System in Ukraine, 1917-1953). Among the special communications, reports, and memoranda marked “Top Secret” is much information on the prison in Lutsk. In particular, the special communication entitled “On the Situation in the Prisons of Volyn, Rivne, Ternopil, Lviv, and Chernivtsi Regions” dated 28 June 1941 states: “After the selection of the indicated prisoners by Goncharov, the head of the 2<sup>nd</sup> department of the NKGB Directorate, his NKGB colleague Dvorkin, and comrade Stan, the head of the prison division of the NKVD Directorate, with the participation of other staff members of the NKGB and NKVD, around 2,000 prisoners who were left in the promenade courtyard were shot. All registration materials and personal files of the prisoners were burned.”

In his report to Kyiv the head of the NKVD prison division for Volyn region, Sergeant Stan of the state security service, reported the following on 3 September 1941: “We buried all the corpses of the 70 or more prisoners condemned to death and the approximately 800 who were under investigation, and kerosene was poured over the places with the corpses and burned, and after, all the places were covered with lime (Bilas, p. 273).

There is no exact data on the numbers of victims still lying beneath the asphalt of the former Lutsk charnel house. The worst method of

massacring prisoners was carried out in Lutsk Prison: there prisoners were shot, torn apart by grenades, and then finished off with bayonets. The Muscovite executioners never thought that their secret reports and announcements would one day be exposed. There is an unfathomable paradox here: those who tortured and killed their fellow citizens willy-nilly became the chroniclers of these events.

Everything passes, but the crimes that took place in our country cannot be forgotten. There are surviving eyewitnesses to these horrific events. I am one of them. Here are some fragments from my reminiscences of the hell that I endured.

For my love of Ukraine and our great prophet Taras Shevchenko I was first arrested in 1939 by the Polish police. In 1940 I was the first person in my village to be arrested by Stalin’s NKVD and imprisoned in Lutsk Prison no. 1. The investigation lasted nearly one year. The torturers could not fabricate the necessary charges against me. Finally, on 12 June 1941 I was summoned from cell no. 19, where I was held all this time, and heard the sentence handed down by the troika: ten years’ imprisonment “in the distant northern raions of the USSR.”

I was brought to cell no. 34 on the third floor, which contained 238 prisoners sentenced to various terms. Just like in the investigation cell, there were so many of us prisoners in the post-sentencing cell that we were jammed in like sardines in a can. People were fainting from the lack of air and had to be revived with water.

At dawn on 22 June 1941 the first German bomb fell near the prison, shaking its walls. There was no doubt that the war had begun.

The bombardment did not stop. Powerful bombs were falling on the prison courtyard past the main building. The city of Lutsk was on fire. Some time around 4:00 p.m. a bomb falling on the northwestern wing of the prison smashed part of the wall. The force of the explosion warped the doors to several cells on the second floor. The prisoners escaped from these cells and massed in the corridor. Encouraged by this sight, prisoners in other cells began smashing the doors and

assembled in the corridors and the courtyard. A period of temporary freedom reigned: fathers found their sons, brother found brother, and friends found each other. All the prisoners were hugging each other, crying, and rejoicing, but not for long. Toward evening the bombardment abated, and the NKVD guards crawled out of their hiding places and began shooting prisoners and shouting: "Back to your cells, back to your places!"

In our corridor two prisoners lay dead, and another was wounded. We returned to our cells, and the NKVD guards ran to every cell threatening: "Whoever takes a step into the corridor will be shot. Sit quietly until a special order is issued!"

We sat in our cells the whole night and all of the next morning. On Monday, 23 June 1941, at around 11:00 a.m. new NKVD agents appeared and shouted at us to come out of the cells with our things. When some prisoners asked the prison head where they were going, he replied malevolently: "You're going home."

As I was heading down the stairs from the third floor, I noticed a machine gun masked by branches on the western wall near the guard tower, and the silhouette of a man next to it. I also saw several dozen NKVD soldiers strapped with grenades. They were shoving the prisoners toward the long wall.

Then I said to my fellow villager Oleksa Prystupa: "They are taking us to be shot." My friend looked at me and replied angrily: "I am surprised that you, Mykola, of all people, would panic and throw other people into a panic. This cannot be. What would the world say?" Then he fell silent, and I stopped talking.

When we were going downstairs, I heard shouting: "Attention, attention! Those who were arrested, investigated, and sentenced under political article 54/11, i.e., for counterrevolutionary activity, go to the left, to the western courtyard. Those who were arrested, investigated, and sentenced for ordinary crimes, go to the right, to the eastern courtyard."

This directive was repeated several times. After I stepped off the last tread of the stairway, I turned right into the eastern courtyard, where

around 600 prisoners were already assembled. After everyone had left the cells and the prison was empty, the NKVD men shut the doors, crossed to the eastern courtyard and began shouting: "Who among you, sentenced under political article 54, has not understood and has mistakenly come here? Leave now, because we'll be checking, and those whom we find charged under this article will have a bad time." I heard several prisoners saying they had made a mistake. Around twenty men left the group, and they were led down the prison corridor to the western courtyard. Suddenly machine guns began firing there, grenades began exploding, and people began screaming. From the exploding grenades chunks of human flesh and clothing flew high into the air above the prison.

An insane panic broke out in our eastern courtyard. People were screaming: "God, oh God! They're shooting us, blowing us up with grenades. Barbarians! Animals!" Someone shouted: "People! Save yourselves!" At that moment a group of prisoners rushed to the gates in the hope of pushing it open by force. They had not even reached the gate when the machine gun started firing at them. They died on the spot. I saw some lads placing boards against the wall, which were lying around after the bombing. They were scaling the wall and jumping over. But not many managed to escape. Even those who dodged the bullets and swam across the Styr River were hunted down by the NKVD and shot at the river's edge.

Seeing some prisoners scaling the wall, I too began climbing up behind a brawny young man. But he was mowed down by a bullet, and he fell dead on top of me. Both of us fell to the ground. His body was on top of me, and his blood was pouring over my face. Other corpses began falling on top of me and their weight became unbearable.

For a long time the NKVD agents continued shooting at prisoners who were running here and there, looking for an escape route. Finally, the shooting died down, and bodies of both the living and the dead were lying everywhere. Wounded prisoners were groaning, begging God for help or to be finished off. Others were calling for vengeance.

Lying beneath the corpses, I heard uninterrupted shooting. Wounded prisoners were being shot. When the shooting stopped, the NKVD men went to the eastern courtyard. Each of them walked up to a wounded prisoner and put a bullet in his head. There were very many wounded and some who only had minor injuries, but as soon as the executioners saw fresh blood on a prisoner, they would shoot him on the spot. Then I heard shouting: "Attention! Those who are alive, get up, we will not shoot anymore!" This order was repeated several times. Making a concerted effort, I was able to free myself a bit from the weight of the dead bodies, and I raised my head. Seeing a lot of people in groups of five near the entrance to the prison, I got up. Standing next to me was an NKVD man pointing his pistol at me. "Are you wounded?" he shouted. "No," I replied, "I am not wounded; I am just covered with other people's blood." It was fortunate that there was no fresh blood on me; otherwise he would have shot me. I wiped myself off and stood in a group of five at the back. Again I heard an order: "Will you work?" Voices were heard: "We will, we will, citizen head, anything you say, we will do it."

We were brought to cells on the first floor, and soon we heard an order: "Come out for work!" I came out to the western courtyard. My God, what I saw there! I simply cannot describe the scene: the huge courtyard was covered with corpses and body parts. The long wall of the two-storey wing was spattered with blood from top to bottom. This massacre was caused and accelerated by grenades that the NKVD guards had thrown from the windows of the empty prison at the solid mass of prisoners.

We placed the corpses and body parts into the huge craters left by the German bombs and sprinkled lime on them, which had been prepared beforehand. Corpses were carried out of the horse stable located next to the courtyard. There were seventy bodies with their hands tied behind their backs. These were the condemned and "especially dangerous" prisoners, who had been tortured to death in the first days of the war. They had not been shot but bayoneted to death.

On Tuesday, 24 June 1941, we finished burying the remains of the victims of this unheard

of barbarism, and each of us was thinking that after we finished, we would be shot too, so that there would be no witnesses to what Lutsk — during its entire 900-year-long history — had neither seen nor heard. But God willing, we didn't even notice how the executioners quietly disappeared after drinking their fill of innocent blood.

When the Germans appeared in the prison courtyard, everyone breathed a sigh of relief, knowing that they had been saved from death; that we would live. Huddling next to me with tender, childlike affection was a young fellow from the village of Piddubtsi, named Serhii Prus. He was a student at the Lutsk Ukrainian Gymnasium. At that moment, both of us hugged each other and burst into tears. Serhii said: "Mykola, my friend, when I go back home, what will I tell the people, now that everyone from my village has remained here forever? It would be easier for me to stay here with them." I consoled the boy as best I could, because I was thinking the same thing: all the residents of my village of Buian were here too.

After our release the two of us walked around the courtyard of death and looked at everything. Clothing mixed with bits of human bodies was still burning in long cylinders. There was a lot of clothing, because each prisoner had a hefty sack that had been prepared for Siberia.

Four pits filled with noble corpses, four deep graves forever hid 4,000 innocent sons of Volyn. I buried eleven people from our village of Buian. Seventeen people did not return to the village of Piddubtsi, and forty prisoners never made it back to Shelviv. And how many such innocent victims were there all over Volyn?

In nearly every village there were quite a few patriots who, after the establishment of Soviet power in 1939, were forced to go underground. But there was not a single case involving the killing of those who had betrayed them to the Soviets. I bow my head to the thousands of people known and unknown to me, who were massacred by the executioners in the courtyard of Lutsk Prison. Let us not forget their martyrdom; let us remember them.

**Mykola Kudelia**

1995.

# IN AUSCHWITZ

## (Memoirs of a German concentration camp prisoner)

After running for five kilometers we arrived at a huge set of gates with a large inscription: "AUSCHWITZ," below which was another inscription: "Arbeit macht frei" (Work Brings Freedom). Thus, right at the very entrance to the concentration camp the administration was mocking the unfortunate prisoners. It was the excessively difficult physical labor without adequate rest and nourishment that brought people to such a state of exhaustion that their final stop was the crematorium. Rows of barbed wire stretched from both sides of the main gates, forming a high wall around the concentration camp. The fence was rectangular, and on the sides and in each corner were high guard towers lit with electric lights. There were always guards armed with semi-automatic weapons and machine guns in these guard towers, which we called "dovecotes." They did not stint on bullets whenever they spotted someone approaching the fence. On the barbed wire fence, placed fifty meters apart, were large warning signs with the emblem of the death's head, which meant that anyone approaching the fence would be killed. For greater protection against escape, the barbed wire was electrified by 3,000 volts, which killed many prisoners. In the camp was another set of gates about which I learned later. Above the gates hung another sign saying "Obedience and work sweeten life."

Without stopping, we ran through the gates and came to the center of the camp. I was exhausted from the run and from carrying my friend. Together with my neighbor in the same row we managed to drag him to the camp. This friend had been wounded during an unequal battle with the Germans and fell into the hands of the Gestapo. He had been shot in the leg above the knee, but the wound had not been cleaned or bandaged. His wounds were not treated either in Kolomyia Prison, where he was held for one day, or in the dirty train car during the two-day journey to Auschwitz. He was fine until the end of the journey, when he started running a high fever.

I promised to help him as long as I was able. But I could do nothing more once I dragged him to the camp. The next day he had a very high fever. He was taken to the clinic and then "to freedom through the crematorium chimney."

Despite my exhaustion, I was curious about my surroundings and tried to grasp what was happening around me. I looked around in every direction to note the lay of the land. I saw a huge square filled with groups of people. On each side of the square were long two-storey buildings that looked huge at first glance. As I learned the next day, these buildings were the prisoners' blocks. One such block housed 1,000 prisoners. Each block had a number, and there were many of them, because Birkenau (part of Auschwitz) looked like a small town. Some parts of Birkenau were inhabited by entire families that had lived there for a long time as permanent camp residents. These were gypsies and Jews, who were German citizens. For unknown reasons they were imprisoned for a long time, after which they were gassed and burned. Neither the gypsies nor the Jews were sent out to work.

There were 12,000 prisoners who had to work. Many more could be housed there because between 6,000 and 7,000 new prisoners arrived every day. But the four huge crematoria that constantly operated, as well as additional open sites where prisoners, piled up in stacks, were burned, regulated the balance of the living in the camp.

There was another huge crematorium in Auschwitz no. 1. Each group of people that I saw on the square was engaged in a different activity. Some stood erect in long rows while SS guards in uniform or civilian clothing walked past them, shouting threats and curses and waving their clubs, whips, and truncheons. From a distance it was difficult to tell whether they were just waving them around or hitting, but I quickly realized that no one waved anything around for no reason: they beat with whatever they had at hand. Another group of people seemed to be getting ready to

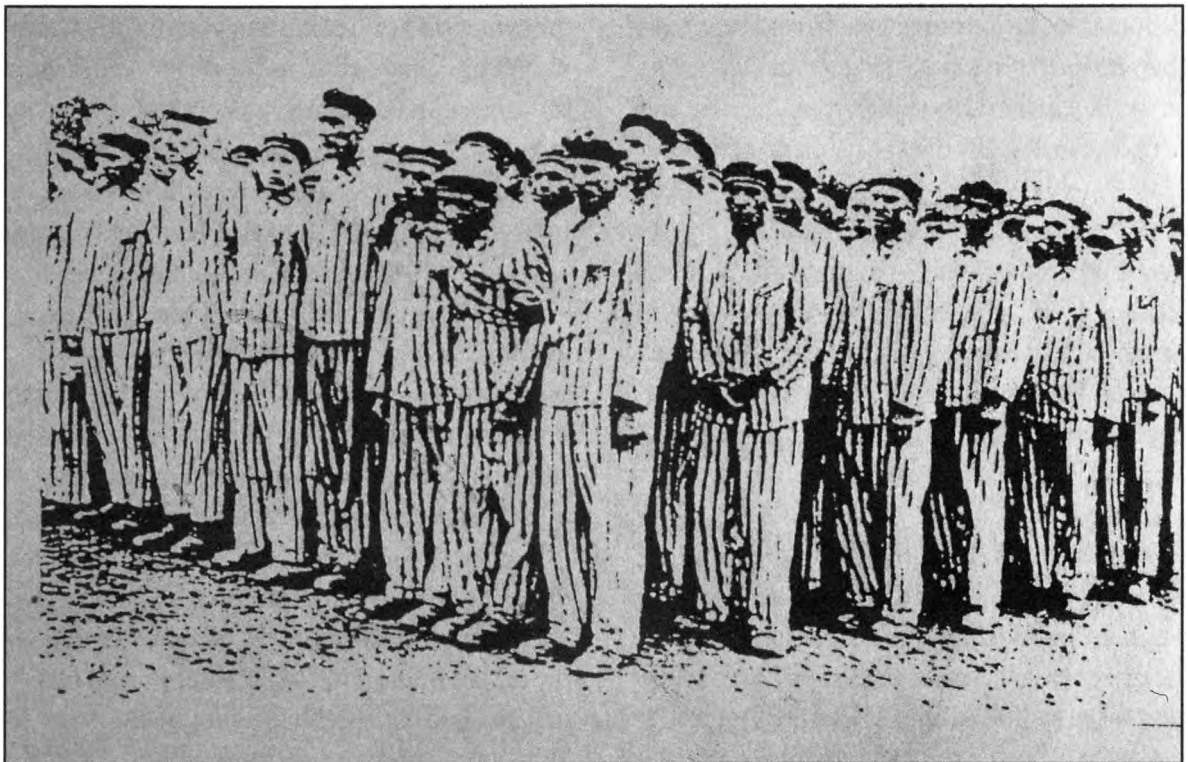
leave for work, because the prisoners were lining up in rows, and the SS guards were counting them and yelling something, which I didn't understand at the time.

Another rather large group of prisoners was jumping up and down in a crouching position. Then they rolled around on the gravel and rocks, first in one direction, then another. The guards were running between the rows and around them, yelling and cursing them. Later I found out that this was how prisoners were punished for some transgression, and the guards would always shout "jump and roll." This method of abuse was horrible and inhumane, especially when the prisoners had just returned from work. It absolutely finished off the exhausted prisoners, because the next day they could not get up for roll call (morning inspection) and they ended up in the crematorium.

I also noticed something that I had never seen before: living skeletons called "Muslims" (their skin was yellow). But I had no time to look at them because of the whips and the snarling dogs. Finally we ran to our designated spot in the concentration camp. We stopped in front of a large building resembling a ramshackle barrack with bare walls and a roof but no ceiling. The

window openings were quite large, but there were no window frames or glass. On one side of the building were huge doors the length of an entire wall, which bolted shut like a train car and were now locked. On the other side of the building, where we entered, was a barrier that swung open on both sides of the barrack. At first I thought that we would have a lot of fresh air here, not to mention cold air. We did, because all of us had only light clothing, and there was nothing to cover ourselves with. The cement floor was full of holes filled with water. We were ordered to enter the building quickly. The guards drove us in with their whips and yelled at us as though we were cattle being herded onto freight trains. Many prisoners were smashed with a cudgel or slashed with a whip before they made it inside. Once we were all inside, the SS guards ordered us to go to sleep. I looked around but besides the wet cement floor, I did not find a single thing that could be used to lie down on. I decided not to sleep but torment myself by standing or crouching.

It was a cold autumn night, but I was overheated from the recent run. I was sure that if I lay down on the wet floor in this condition, the next day I would end up in the clinic, and from there the road led to the crematorium. At the time



*Roll call in Auschwitz.*

I was not sure about this, but somehow I had guessed correctly and managed to save myself. The prisoners did not know anything yet about the crematoria and after being ordered to sleep, they lay down on the wet floor. They did not expect that because of their exhaustion they would fall asleep so soundly. Once they woke up from the cold, it was too late. The prisoners who caught cold developed a high fever, and in two or three days they ended up in the clinic. After that no one ever saw them again.

That first night in the concentration camp I slept standing up. For this I organized four of my friends from Berezhiv. It was significantly easier, and warmer, for us to stand together than alone. For a short time we sat down together at the same time, but the cold got to us much faster that way. Thus, alternating between standing and sitting, we lasted until morning. Although my friends and I were tired from not having slept, we managed to avoid catching cold and its eventual repercussions. As it later turned out, this is the way most of the prisoners died. A minority of prisoners died of exhaustion brought on by the heavy labor or from a kapo's blows from a cudgel, whip, or shovel. Here a prisoner had the right to live as long as he was healthy and capable of working, but our captors always made it clear that sooner or later everyone would reach "freedom through the crematorium chimney," and we had come to grips with this eventuality. From the excessively hard labor, utter malnutrition, and little rest, even the strongest prisoners died like flies.

My first morning in Auschwitz was like the first morning when we were leaving Kolomyia. It was a cloudy day and drizzling. While the prisoners in the other blocks were going for their coffee and then assembling for roll call, with which we were not yet familiar, no one bothered us and did not chase us out of the barrack. We didn't have to tidy up or make our beds, because we didn't have any. We waited in the barrack and standing first on one foot and then the other, we looked through the holes in the walls at the square, staring at the prisoners who were taking part in the very important roll call. We didn't have the foggiest notion as to how this roll call took place, but we

saw that the guards who were arranging the prisoners made energetic use of their clubs and whips, or kicked the prisoners. Afterwards they divided the prisoners into smaller groups and led them off to work.

After all the groups departed, there were still quite a few prisoners left sitting or lying on the square. As I later found out, these were sick or wounded prisoners, or those who had died during roll call. These sick, feverish prisoners had been dragged or carried out to roll call. It was a cold and damp day. After a while, an uncovered wagon pulled by two prisoners came to pick them up. They loaded the dead people and took them away — where to, we still did not know, but we soon found out. We waited to receive some food and coffee. We waited for a long time, but we had not been forgotten. At first a small group of people consisting of four SS men, six Polish Volksdeutschers, and two dogs came to greet us. Those Poles, who were pretending to be Volksdeutschers, were also prisoners. They were the worst sort of scum, and the Gestapo gladly exploited them for all sorts of dirty work, including killing. In order to welcome us fittingly, each of them had a club or wire-tipped rubber cable, or a thick handle from a shovel. The SS men and the dogs remained in front of the building but sent the Poles in after us. They jumped into the center of the building and without any warning or order began beating us furiously. At the same time they cursed us vilely in Polish and threatened to kill us. They beat everyone indiscriminately. Those who suffered most were the sick and injured, because the strongest prisoners were able to dodge the blows. Prisoners who fell were kicked in the face, teeth, head, chest, ribs, and everywhere else. Some prisoners wanted to escape outside, but the door was barred and the brutes continued their beatings. Older prisoners said that this was the way they showed their power, authority, and hatred to every new batch of prisoners. During the attack all you could hear was the muffled sound of blows from the cudgels and rubber cables, the cries of the wounded, and the curses of the band of attackers. Until that instant I had never seen the likes of this in my life. What particularly struck me was their perfected

method of kicking a prone prisoner with their heavy German shoes, the so-called *Bergsteigers*, which, as I later learned, they had stolen from the “Canada” team. Those Polish Volksdeutschers were real pros at kicking. Later, after I had been in Auschwitz a long time, I often saw how during their kicking they would smash jaws and break teeth, ribs, and smash the entire rib cage. This is what happened to seven prisoners from our group during that first attack, only because they were Ukrainians for whom the depraved Poles felt particular hatred. Those seven injured and unconscious prisoners were sent to the clinic, from where they were sent to the crematorium. The main Gestapo camp administration turned a blind eye to this behavior on the part of the auxiliary camp administration — the *Kapos* and their helpers, the block and room orderlies. These bandits, who were known by the German terms *Kapo, Oberkapo, Unterkapo, Vorarbeiter, Blokführer, Stubendienst*, and every other kind of “führer,” were appointed by the Gestapo camp administration. Recruited from the prison population, they had unlimited authority over prisoners like themselves. Because the Polish Volksdeutschers had a free hand in their conduct vis-à-vis the prisoners, they treated certain groups or individual prisoners better, and even helped them. Those privileged groups were the Poles and Germans. They helped the Poles as their “blood brothers,” and the Germans out of fear and in order to ingratiate themselves. The German prisoners were being punished for crimes, like murder, robbery, rape, etc., but even though they were the worst sort of bandits, they were treated much better than political prisoners of different nationalities.

The Poles, with their chauvinistic and hateful attitude to Ukrainians, as I consistently observed, not only diligently carried out their masters’ orders, but with their brutality and abuses outdid their Gestapo teachers. The Gestapo knew this and allowed them to do their dirty work, so that they would have less trouble.

It is difficult to say how long this bandit’s “welcome” lasted, but at the time it seemed that it would never end until everyone would be lying there massacred. Finally, after completing their

inhuman deed, the torturers set about carrying out their next task. They ordered everyone to strip naked, and once this was done, we were driven into the square and ordered to line up in ranks to be sent for haircuts, shaves, and baths. While we were lining up, the Gestapo’s lackeys ran along the column and beat any prisoner who stepped out of line on the back or stomach with clubs or whips. We were told to wait naked in the cold wind and rain because they had not yet emptied the block where we were being taken. We stood there for two hours, shaking from the cold.

The long wait in the unbearable autumn weather shortened a lot of prisoners’ lives. After a couple of hours they became feverish and ended up in the clinic and then the crematorium. Finally, it seemed as though the SS men were tired of waiting because they chased us back into the building where our things were and ordered us to dress. The return trip to the barrack was accompanied by new blow and shouts of “Schnell!” Again they beat us wherever they could land a blow, without justification or mercy. I immediately resolved to try and avoid direct hits. So, whenever I noticed a club or cable directed at me, I would jump away like a deer pursued by hounds. During my entire stay in the concentration camp I always tried to dodge the beatings.

When they ordered us to dress, it was not necessary to hurry us up. Each prisoner, chilled to the bone, dressed quickly to get warm. Even though it was cold in the barrack, because the wind was blowing through the open gates, at least we were protected from the rain mixed with snow. The bandits went away and we were left alone, except for one SS man. We thought about what the next moments would bring during our stay in the camp. I was glad to be able to rest and relax my nerves. Some time around noon a wagon with soup pulled up near our barrack. This was *Rollwagen* no. 2. It was followed by three guards, one of whom was carrying a thick club. As it turned out, the other two had their clubs on the wagon. We were supposed to line up for soup. We were all starving, and each prisoner hurried as quickly as he could to the front of the line, and the more impatient ones began to break ranks. Blows rained down on our backs and heads, and order was restored.

The soup, one ladleful, was a grey broth with a few groats, probably barley. It tasted of rotten rutabagas and frozen potatoes. It was sticky, like egg white, and had a terrible smell. There was no time to think about this, and I drank it quickly because I was starving. There was no hope for better tasting food. This one ladle of soup did not assuage my hunger, and I decided to try and get another portion. I wasn't the only one with this idea, but other prisoners beat me to it. They were standing in line for another portion of soup. The Gestapo lackeys immediately spotted them, and when the prisoners approached the vat of soup, they attacked them like savage dogs with their clubs and shovels. The morning pogrom was repeated. It was terrible to look at this scene. I still get a chill down my spine when I remember those two events: the morning "greeting" and the first distribution of soup, because this was my first glimpse of the beatings administered in Auschwitz-Birkenau. This was genuine horror and insanity. When I saw this, I no longer wanted anything; even my hunger stopped bothering me. Besides the soup, we were not given anything else, not even cold water. Then we were driven back to the barrack and told to await a new order.

Soon three lackeys dressed in civilian clothing arrived with an SS man. They told us to get undressed and run to the square. Like before, they placed us in rows with the help of clubs and kicks, and then they led us to a nearby block, where everyone got a haircut and shave. Not a hair was left on our heads, and we were shaved everywhere there was hair. You could endure the haircut, although the scissors were very dull, but the shaving was truly horrible. The blade used for shaving was so dull that it only partially cut the hair; it tore out hair by the roots and often pierced the skin. If any prisoner cried out in pain or made a sound, or even grimaced, he would get a fist in the face from the overseer, who was standing next to the barber. Almost every prisoner left with a bloody face, and most had bruises under their eyes from the blows administered by the German or Polish sadists. After the haircut and shave, we stood naked in rows and waited for the other prisoners. Now the cold affected us even more because we were naked and wounded.

After everyone was placed in rows, using the same methods they led us to the bathhouse. This cheered me up, as I was expecting to wash off the dirt and the dried blood from my old prison wounds, and maybe quench my thirst. But it soon became clear that this was no bath but additional mockery. Such a powerful burst of hot water was shot at the frozen prisoners that it was hard to endure it. After that we were subjected to hot steam. Once we got used to the heat, they shut everything off and we were driven out into the cold. Now the cold viciously penetrated our bodies: it was already evening and there was frost on the ground. Many prisoners quickly caught a cold and in two days landed in the hospital. This was their sad end. After I left the bathhouse I also felt the terrible cold and began to shake like an aspen leaf. My teeth were chattering, as if from ague, and I was unable to control my shaking. Thank God, I did not catch cold. But our sadistic caretakers wanted to see how a whip curls around a naked body, leaving in its wake cracked skin from which fresh blood spurted. They ran around us, kicking, swearing, and bringing order to the rows, beating us with clubs on our backs and stomachs. They placed us in rows and then dispersed us, only to renew the beatings.

Then they placed us farther apart in the lines and ordered us to run to the last man, and then that prisoner had to run back to the first. Along the way we were urged on by clubs and whips. They made us run the gauntlet like this at least fifteen times. This was our salvation because if we had continued standing there naked in one spot in the cold wind and snow, none of us would have avoided fever and pneumonia. This time the mustering and running, which lasted around three hours, saved our lives. Unfortunately, not everyone survived this procedure. Those who were less resistant to the cold got sick and in a few days were brought to the clinic and from there to the crematorium.

After satisfying their sadism, the guards ordered us to return to the barrack, get dressed, and await further orders. We did this gladly and sat down to rest on the wet floor. Although it was a cold night, I felt much better than when I was running naked in the cold rain and snow. From a



distance, near the front gates you could hear the sounds of marching music. This was the camp orchestra set up near the front gates, as I was later to hear this music twice a day. It played whenever the prisoners went to and from work, barely shuffling in from exhaustion. At this moment prisoners were coming back to the camp and had lined up for roll call.

My ruminations on the marching music were interrupted by the arrival of Rollwagen no. 2, bringing supper. Now we were given a ladleful of murky water, called tea (brewed leaves), 1/16<sup>th</sup> of a loaf of bread, and a piece of margarine. I ate everything and somewhat assuaged my hunger, but I still had a powerful thirst because we had not been given a drop of water. After supper we were ordered back to the barrack and told to go to sleep. The night was much colder than yesterday, so I had neither the desire nor guts to lie down on the cold, damp floor. My friends from Bereziv and I leaned on each other, repeating the collective standing and crouching of the previous night. This is how we spent our second night in the concentration camp. The next morning we heard the gong and whistles from neighboring blocks, but no one told us to get up, and we continued to sleep standing up or crouching. Other prisoners were also sleeping in a crouched fashion, leaning against the wall, but disregarding the consequences, the majority of the prisoners had lain down on the floor to get some sleep. They were prisoners who had realized the critical situation and lost all hope of surviving. They had decided it was better to die quickly than to suffer for weeks or months. Drifting in and out of sleep, we listened to the music accompanying the prisoners heading out to work. Outside it was becoming light. The sun appeared and the autumn day promised to be sunny but cold.

Suddenly, a loud whistle was heard at the entrance to our block. This meant that our rest was over, and we had to get up and start our second day in Auschwitz-Birkenau. When the whistle sounded, three “caretaker bandits” dashed to the center of the block and, cursing and shouting, began beating us with rubber truncheons. They drove us to the square. This time even I got hit with a rubber club, because it

was impossible to dodge them when we were heading for the door. This was my first failure since I left Kolomyia. Once we had assembled on the square, they lined us up, ten men to a row, with the aid of blows and kicks. They made us break ranks and line up at least ten times, without sparing their whips. In the meantime Rollwagen no. 2 had arrived, bringing us coffee made of roasted acorns and barley. We were ordered to line up in rows for the coffee. Here too there was no way to avoid the unjustified beatings. After we had drunk the coffee, they mustered us briefly, like the previous day, and then ordered us to return to the barrack, strip, and run back to the square and line up.

After we lined up, we were brought to a block where prisoners worked as tattoo specialists. We were sent in rows to each of these workers, and they tattooed an assigned number on our arms, between the elbow and wrist. The workers who did the tattooing worked very well. My number was 159-269.

During the tattooing each prisoner had to stand up straight with a pleased look on his face. If someone grimaced or expressed any dissatisfaction, he would immediately receive a blow from a club on his head or neck. The tattooing process was the same as during the haircut and shave. Those who got their numbers first went outside and stood there waiting for the others. After the last number was tattooed, we were brought to the steam bath. They turned on hot steam that became hotter and more unendurable with every moment. It felt as though a million pins were pricking our skin. The pain was similar to the pins-and-needles sensation you feel when you dip your frozen fingers into hot water. They kept us there until we worked up a big sweat, and then they brought us to a long and roomy barrack, where instead of windows and doors there were only wide openings that let in drafts of cold air. We were kept here for a long time, probably to cool down, because nothing was happening. This steam bath shortened the lives of many prisoners, and after a few days they disappeared.

Each of us tried as best he could to endure the cold and thus avoid sickness and its

repercussions. We stood in pairs, back to back, and slapped each other lightly to warm up. Toward noon we were chased outside and then back to our barrack to dress. At the entrance to the block they began beating us savagely. They beat us from both sides of the entrance, so it was difficult to dodge the blows because they had opened only one side of the gate.

This was designed to ensure that as many prisoners as possible would be beaten. The entryway was narrow, and we were jammed together. The prisoners tried not to end up on the outer edges, where the Gestapo sadists could easily reach them with their clubs or cables. Then they told us to dress and go to the square. We began dressing as quickly as possible, but this did not help. Again, curses rang out and we were beaten. Those sadists must have been filled with some sort of unholy power or Satan himself because for no reason whatsoever they would attack us like savages and beat us.

On the square they placed us in rows and ordered five prisoners at a time to come for their soup, because the wagon had arrived. This time there weren't many beatings; everyone remembered the previous day and no one dared line up a second time for soup, even though everyone was starving. After lunch we were allowed to return to the block, and for some time they left us in peace. The peace was short-lived, and I was afraid that it was the quiet before the storm. I think even the Gestapo men wanted to have a rest because when they returned, they instantly chased us out to the square, where they began drilling us. They made us run for a couple of hours, devising more and more tasks for us. We finished the drill ten minutes before supper and were sent to the barrack. We were very tired, but there was no chance to sit down because it was as cold and damp inside as outside. We kept moving so as not to catch cold. Meanwhile, the wagon arrived, and we had to go outside and line up. After supper we were sent back to the barrack and told to go to sleep. Like the previous night, my friends and I did not lie down, but suffered standing up or crouched down together. The night was very cold, but I was so worn out

by the drill that I didn't pay any attention to the cold and discomfort, and I dropped off to sleep.

When my whole body was frozen and numb from the cold, wet floor, I got up, like the other prisoners, and walked around, and then sat down and tried to sleep. I stood up and sat down all night long until morning. At first, every day was a repetition of the preceding one: the same irritating gong, the whistles of the block heads, the same movement and running around the square, the shouting of our "bandit guardians," the beatings, the departures of individual groups of prisoners going to work, and the marching melodies of the orchestra near the camp gates.

Once the square was empty and quiet, the orchestra had stopped playing, and the shouts had died down, our "guardians" would suddenly appear with clubs and cables and repeat the savage beatings of the previous day. I successfully jumped through the entrance and saw that the coffee wagon was waiting for us. After drinking that black broth, we stayed on the square for an hour-long drill. This time, our tormentors increased our list of tasks by forcing us to jump around like frogs. This jumping lasted unmercifully long and we fell exhausted on the ground. But the blows from clubs and cables instantly gave us strength and we continued to jump.

They tormented us this way until noon. They gave us a break only when the wagon brought the soup. We were completely exhausted, but we were more tormented by thirst than hunger. After lunch we were allowed to rest. Then they ordered us to strip naked and run to the square. The drill did not last as long, and afterwards we were sent to the bathhouse. This time the bath was cold. I took advantage of this and washed myself but also quenched my thirst, even though the water was not drinkable. Then they sent us to the square, where we were supposed to receive prison clothing and wooden clogs. If they had given us a hot bath instead of a cold one, it would have been the last bath for many prisoners, who would not need any prison clothing or Dutch clogs: it was a very cold day and the wind was mixed with snow.

**Yurii Pasternak**

# HOW UKRAINIAN PRISONERS DIED IN AUSCHWITZ

The Ukrainian nation lost millions of people in the struggle against the Nazi occupiers. Unfortunately, owing to political opportunism and diplomatic wrangling among the victors, Ukraine remained under the communist yoke.

Non-Ukrainians know little about the thousands of Ukrainian patriots that were arrested by the Gestapo and sent to prisons and concentration camps, especially after the Act proclaiming the restoration of the Ukrainian independent state on 30 June 1941. Above all, it is direct eyewitnesses of those cruel times, who should inform the world about our martyrs who perished in the struggle for Ukraine's freedom.

In writing these few lines about Ukrainian victims of Nazi Germany, I want to make my small contribution to Ukraine's martyrology by recounting the savage killing of Vasyl Bandera, prisoner of Auschwitz no. 49721.

I was arrested by the Gestapo in the town of Otyniia on 15 September 1941. Toward noon two Gestapo cars arrived at the municipal administration building. A Gestapo officer and his translator, a Ukrainian from Bukovyna, entered the building and with the aid of a list questioned the head of the municipal administration about several people: Ivantsiv, me, and several others. Both of us were in the office with the head, who pointed us out. The Gestapo officer told us about an important meeting between various Ukrainian organizations and the German administration, which would be held the next day in Stanyslaviv. We were supposed to go there immediately; the Germans would drive us there. When I replied that I would have to telephone and discuss this matter with the regional administration in Stanyslaviv, the Gestapo officer became offended and raised his voice: "What, don't you believe us?" After saying goodbye to the head of the municipal administration, we left and got in the Gestapo car.

They drove us in the direction of Kolomyia. Once we were past the town limits, the car stopped near a large military transport truck. The

Gestapo men shouted at us to get out of the car and board the truck. Now it was clear what kind of "conference" this would be. It was a Gestapo trick to quietly arrest the people on their lists. We sat on the floor of the truck with our heads down, while four Gestapo men aimed their rifles at us. We continued in the direction of Kolomyia. There they put us in jail and went off to search for more "bandits," as the translator whispered to us.

Around 4:00 p.m. the Gestapo brought two Hutsuls to the jail: Andrii Livak (Lystok) and a man named Gutkovsky. After a while a military bus arrived and the four of us were shoved inside along with some German soldiers. We were driven to Stanyslaviv, and by 8:00 p.m. we were in the prison on Bilinsky Street. The prison corridor was jammed with the "participants of the conference." Gestapo men and their dogs surveyed us. If one of our faces did not please a Gestapo officer, we would be slapped, while the German shepherds tugged at our pants. One by one they led us to an office, where our information was written down.

After two nights, on 17 September 1941 we were chased into the prison courtyard and to the accompaniment of brutal swearing from Krueger, the head of the Stanyslaviv Gestapo, loaded us onto five trucks, and driven to Lviv. The road to Lviv went through the ancient historic city of Halych. In the city center we witnessed the Gestapo viciously abusing Jews. Dozens of gray-haired Jews dressed in festive clothing — long black, shiny coats — were lying on the ground in the little square, while the Gestapo ordered them to roll on the ground to the end of the square and back again. The rolling was repeated several times. I don't know what happened to them because the vehicles with the Ukrainian prisoners sped past them quickly.

That scene depressed us because we were not sure of the fate that lay in store. We spent two days in Lviv's Loncki Prison and then were driven to Montelupich, the Gestapo prison in Cracow.

In the prison we met friends of ours whom the Gestapo had arrested in eastern Ukraine, as well as Volyn, Polissia, and Pidliashia. Six of us were put in a small cell, where we slept on the cement floor, covered with filthy ragged quilts. It was hot and damp in the cell. We couldn't wash our clothes and quickly became ridden with lice.

In mid-December the prison authorities deloused the cells. The Ukrainian prisoners were taken for their first walk in the prison courtyard. Everyone was pale, thin, and exhausted. They ordered us to run, and those who could not were prodded with sticks, beaten, or kicked. We had to run in pairs. My partner was Vasyl Bandera. He was a cheerful man of average height with large, calm eyes. When I could no longer run and stopped, a Gestapo man ran up and hit me on the back. When I tried to start running, I lost my balance. Falling against the wall, I tried to prop myself up with my right hand and broke my arm. I was brought to the medic, who gave me a shot to reduce my fever that had climbed to 40 degrees. A Ukrainian medical student named Oleksa Latyshevsky, who was assisting the medic, applied a splint to my arm.

I was in Montelupich until 20 July 1942. On the morning of this memorable day twenty-four prisoners were brought from various cells. We were told to bring all our belongings and face the wall in the corridor. One by one we were summoned to the prison office, where every prisoner received his personal papers and valuables, if any had been confiscated when he was brought to the prison. Then we were led to the courtyard and loaded on a Gestapo truck. We were told to kneel down and bend our heads. Whoever did not comply with the order instantly was smashed with a rifle butt. A few Poles were placed on the truck, and we were driven off under heavy Gestapo escort.

At around noon the truck stopped in front of a broad, high gate. Gestapo men and some prisoners who were dressed in striped uniforms came out and shouted at us to get out. There was a little man who shouted at us in Polish in a loud, piercing high voice. We found out later that this was Stasik, the dwarf, from Poland's Staniewski Circus. He worked as a runner at the main office

near the camp entrance. We were called out one by one and placed in alphabetical order. We were in Auschwitz. Above the gate hung a huge banner inscribed with the words "Arbeit macht frei."

We stood for a long time in front of the registration office. At around 3:00 p.m. we were taken to the office where the prisoners had to leave their belongings. We were registered, and each of us was assigned a number that was used instead of our surnames. Prisoners had to sew their numbers on a triangle on the upper left side of the prison shirt and on their pant leg, above the right knee. Political prisoners had to wear a red triangle. Prisoners in Auschwitz also had their numbers tattooed on their left forearm. In the office all the prisoners' clothing was thrown into paper bags on which their number was written, and other items were registered and left in the office. If someone was released, his belongings were returned. There were very rare cases that someone was released through the camp gates; usually they went through the crematorium chimney.

Our next journey was to the bathhouse. We got haircuts and all the hair on our bodies was shaved off. They injured us during this procedure because the razors were extremely dull. Then the shaved parts of our bodies were slathered with some sort of liquid (petroleum or something else) which burned, and then we were forced to take cold showers. The bath attendant was a Volksdeutscher from Silesia, who showed his hatred of us, Ukrainians, by giving hot water to the Polish prisoners, who came after us.

After the "bath" we were taken to the hospital. In the courtyard they weighed and measured us, and checked our mouths to see whether we had our own teeth or gold ones. Each prisoner received gray-striped camp clothing and wooden clogs. We were made to stand at the hospital for some time. We watched the brutalities of the Nazi soul-killers unfolding before our eyes: dead bodies were being loaded on carts. The corpses were being removed from the hospital cellar. One prisoner grabbed a dead body by the hands, another by the legs, and with one swing they tossed it on the cart. The prisoners filled five carts with dead bodies, approximately forty per cart.

Then they hitched themselves to the cart, while four other prisoners pushed from the back. The cavalcade set off for the crematorium. This sight depressed us greatly. No one said a word; each of us was thinking of the fate that awaited us.

From this building we were brought to block no. 11, where we would be quarantined for three weeks. The yard of the block was surrounded by a 2.5-meter-high wall. The iron gates were shut behind us. On the opposite side of the gates was a black wall (asphalt or tar) covered with bullet holes. Gallows stood at both ends of the wall, while various chests contained implements of torture (cudgels, hammers, pincers, whips, etc.). Prisoners were tortured and executed against this wall. The members of the block administration arrived: the block head, room orderlies — these were prisoners. They separated us from the Poles, lined us up in a single row, and someone gave an order in Polish: “Wait for coffee.”

One of the block administrators, a Pole named Bolek, who was either an ethnic Pole or a Volksdeutscher, was standing next to Vasyl Bandera, and asked him: “What’s your name?” Vasyl gave his name and surname. Then, snarling like a dog, Bolek, said: “You, bandit, murdered Minister Pieracki [Polish Minister of Internal Affairs assassinated in 1934 by members of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists].” Vasyl replied that he did not have anything to do with that. Bolek then began beating Vasyl on the face and head. He grabbed him by the hair and yanked his head back with his left arm and with his right hand beat him on the windpipe and his chest. Another “official” rushed to Bolek’s assistance. Together they beat Vasyl and stepped on his bare feet (his clogs had fallen off). Then they picked him up and dropped him on the ground like a piece of wood. Vasyl groaned and started spitting blood. Bolek and his companion moved away from him, searching for fresh victims. They spotted a few Ukrainian journalism students from Warsaw University — M. Koval, V. Pasichniak, and B. Vitoshynsky — and started beating them mercilessly. Rev. M. Domansky, L. Diakiv, and B. Rybchuk also got a savage beating,

The cooks brought coffee in a pot, and whoever had a cup got some coffee, which tasted

like roasted oak bark. After this “supper,” everyone was chased into the block and ordered to sleep, four men to a bed (bunk-beds). During the night Bolek and his colleagues hunted for victims in the “bedroom.” They would drag them off the beds and beat them. Rev. Domansky, Diakiv, and Bandera were beaten again.

At 5:00 a.m. all the prisoners were chased out for roll call. After the inspection the same black coffee was handed out, as well as a piece of black, clayey bread. This was breakfast. Then two Polish Oberkapos, Kral and Podkulski, came to the Ukrainian group and selected prisoners for the work detail on a construction site. They took all the Ukrainians and a few Poles. They brought us to the building site of a new block. Vasyl Bandera was running barefoot because he could not put the clogs on his injured feet. The work involved pouring concrete for the first floor. Skilled civilian workers had laid boards for a scaffold on which they placed an iron mesh onto which the cement had to be poured. Boards no wider than twenty centimeters were laid on the mesh. The prisoners delivered wheelbarrows of cement along these boards. From the cement mixer down below the ready cement was put on a conveyor belt that brought it up. At the very top prisoners placed empty wheelbarrows, filled them with cement, dragged them away and moved them along the narrow path to the required place.

Bandera worked at the top. When his wheelbarrow was full, he tried to push it. He couldn’t budge the wheelbarrow because he was so injured. It overturned and Podkulski started shrieking. Kral, the other Oberkapo, appeared and both of them attacked Bandera. They dragged the bleeding Vasyl downstairs and threw him into a water barrel where prisoners washed the cement off their hands. The cement started burning his wounds, and he was screaming with pain.

Eventually Vasyl was brought up to the scaffolding. He was soaking wet and injured, and he didn’t even have the strength to lift an empty wheelbarrow. Kral reported to the Gestapo officer in charge of the work group that prisoner no. 49721 was refusing to work. Vasyl was dragged down and locked in a shed, and at

around 4:00 he was brought to the hospital. In the evening, after roll call, some Polish prisoners said that in the hospital Bandera, “the one who had murdered the Polish minister, Pieracki” had been given an injection of poison.

In late July 1942 Dr. Oleksa Bandera was brought to Auschwitz. I met him in the camp. He was beaten and injured. Groaning heavily, he told me that he had a very difficult job on the new construction, where Oberkapo Kral was abusing him mercilessly. Oleksa Bandera met the same fate as his brother Vasyl. His death was confirmed by a Gestapo officer named Wilhelm Boger in February 1965 at the Frankfurt trial of Gestapo personnel in Auschwitz.

Other Ukrainian prisoners from this work group at the new construction site were also savagely beaten, but not as badly as Vasyl Bandera. They were able to survive the torture. One day, when my wheelbarrow overturned, Podkulski beat me too. But luckily his cudgel broke and while he looked for another one, my fellow prisoners helped me right the cement-filled wheelbarrow and bring it to the designated place.

After several weeks of hard labor at a second construction site in the main camp, the Ukrainian group was brought to Babitz, five kilometers from Auschwitz, to build grain warehouses. Here there were no sadistic Kapos, like Kral or Podkulski.

Dozens of books could be written about the fate of Ukrainian prisoners and other nationalities in Auschwitz, where the Gestapo and their Volksdeutscher lackeys murdered millions of innocent people.

A trial of former Gestapo officers from Auschwitz took place in Frankfurt-am-Main between May 1964 and August 1965. Twice the court called the former Oberkapo Jozef Kral, now a Polish citizen, as a witness to testify against the Gestapo officers: Stark, Boger, Dylevsky, and Kaduk.

Among the observers of this trial were two former Auschwitz prisoners: Omelian Koval and Borys Vitoshynsky, an editor. They recognized Kral and informed the court that when he was an Oberkapo in Auschwitz, he had tortured two brothers, Vasyl and Oleksa Bandera, causing their deaths. They gave sworn affidavits and provided the names of two other witnesses — former prisoners of Auschwitz Dr. Oleksa Vintoniak and Dr. Petro Mirchuk. The court called them as witnesses on 2 February 1965. Kral, who was living in Poland, did not appear.

In the absence of the defendant, I testified under oath in Frankfurt about the abuses committed by Oberkapo Kral against Vasyl Bandera, which led to his death. My testimony was recorded. The testimony of the two witnesses, Vintoniak and Mirchuk, was corroborated by Wilhelm Boger, who recalled that the Gestapo had ordered Kral to murder the Bandera brothers. Boger added that the death of Oleksa Bandera had caused some trouble, because his wife was an Italian from the aristocratic Ciano family, and certain Italian circles had demanded an explanation of his death.

After 183 days the trial ended in Frankfurt on 20 August 1965. The president of the court, Hans Hoffmeier, handed down the verdict: Stark, Boger, and Kaduk were sentenced to life in prison, and six others were sentenced to lengthy prison terms. Only the killer of the Bandera brothers evaded punishment, because he was living in communist Poland, which would probably not have extradited the criminal for trial in a democratic country.

**Prof. Oleksa Vintoniak  
(Former prisoner of the Auschwitz  
concentration camp, no. 49743).**

# NIL KHASEVYCH, HERO OF THE UKRAINIAN INSURGENT ARMY

In the Volyn region during the Second World War, and for nearly ten years after it ended, the Ukrainian Insurgent Army waged a deadly combat against the German and Soviet occupiers. The heroism of these fighters left their traces in the people's memory. For half a century Moscow sought to slander the heroes of this struggle, which unquestionably laid the foundation of Ukraine's independence in 1991.

One of the participants in the struggle for independent Ukraine was the talented graphic artist and member of the UPA Nil Khasevych. In June 1992 an exhibit of this artist's graphics was held in the Lutsk Ethnographic Museum, which had obtained them from the Security Service of Ukraine, where these artworks had lain for forty-five years.

Today Khasevych's name has been restored to Ukraine alongside those of such distinguished individuals as Yevhen Malaniuk, Oleh Olzhych,

Olena Teliha, Ulas Samchuk, Mykhailo Cheresniovsky, and many others. Until recently, the majority of people in Ukraine and the Diaspora did not know who Khasevych was.

Nil Khasevych was born in 1905 in the village of Diuksyn, Volyn region, into the family of a church deacon. As a result of a tragic accident at the age of seventeen, Nil lost his left leg. In the late 1920s, after completing his studies with an icon painter in Rivne, Khasevych, armed with a walking stick and fitted with a homemade prosthesis, set out for the Warsaw Academy of Arts. After a few years he became one of the founders of the Spokii (Tranquillity) art group. Its members enjoyed the patronage of Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, the writer Yurii Lypa, and the Volynian senator Stepan Skrypnyk, the church's future (first) patriarch, Mstyslav. In 1932

Khasevych's painting *The Washerwomen* won a prize during a competition organized by the academy, as did his later portrait of Hetman Mazepa, mentioned in the Lutsk magazine *Znich* in 1935. At approximately this time Khasevych won an honorary prize from the Vatican. In 1939 he published a book of ex libris entitled *Knyzhkovi znaky Nila Khasevycha* (The Bookplates of Nil Khasevych) with a foreword by the well known critic Tadeusz Leszner.

In his detailed introduction Leszner acquainted readers with the art of the Ukrainian ex libris, among whose practitioners were such giants as Yurii Narbut, Vasyl Krychevsky, and Olena Kulchytska. "The great achievement of Khasevych, the graphic artist, lies in the fact that, having grasped the meaning of art and the artist's social role, he devoted the lion's share of his creative energy to book art, which has such an important significance from the general cultural standpoint. In Ukrainian ex libris art he created a separate tone, full of fresh inventiveness and marked by the considerable originality of his ideas and formal techniques."

Khasevych participated in numerous shows, particularly exhibits of Ukrainian graphics in Berlin and Prague, at the International



*Nil Khasevych.*

Exhibit of Wood Engravers in Warsaw, and later in Chicago, Los Angeles, and Paris. Thanks to the efforts of the Volyn Regional Museum in Lutsk and Ukraine's Security Service for handing over Khasevych's works, the book *Hrafika v bunkrakh UPA* (Graphics in the Bunkers of the UPA) was published in Lutsk in 1992.



*Nil Khasevych.*

In addition to his artistic activity, Khasevych, faithful son of his native land, did not neglect civic work. He was an active member and delegate of the Volynian Ukrainian Union, and when the Germans occupied our lands, his feelings of national duty and the desire to see Ukraine a cultured, civilized, and independent European state led him to join the ranks of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army. There, together with the engraver Mykhailo Cheresniovsky, Khasevych worked under the code name of "Bei-Zot," creating an artistic school known as Zot's Link. He devoted his creative energy and formidable talent to propagandistic work. Reserved and faithful to his difficult craft, the handicapped artist became an UPA fighter.



It is difficult to imagine the huge contrast in the artist's life, when he left the Bohemian circles of Warsaw artists to enter a quiet UPA hideout. During his ten-year life in the Ukrainian underground, which was fraught with danger, he created art by using primitive underground technology, without daylight, and always on the move — all for a noble idea.

Khasevych did not leave for the West with an UPA expeditionary group. He remained loyal to

the struggle until 4 March 1952, when he committed suicide after NKVD troops surrounded his underground bunker in the village of Sukhivtsi in Volyn.

Nil Khasevych died a hero's death without ever putting down his weapons.

**Natalia Tyravska-Radyvyl**



# OPERATION WISLA

The name Operation Wisla still strikes fear in the hearts of Ukrainians, especially those who still live in Poland. This action was marked by depraved savagery and inhumanity.

The goal of Operation Wisla, an action that was prepared well in advance, was the total forcible resettlement of Ukrainians from their native lands to the territory of the postwar Polish communist state. This operation was carried out by terrorist means, as a result of which the Ukrainian population now in Poland, especially in the Lemko region, was resettled in areas from which the Germans had been expelled, the so-called Recovered Territories. The pretext for this operation was ostensibly the existence of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army that was operating on the territory of Poland, waging an armed struggle against the Polish government. If this pretext was indeed the reason for such a “punishment,” then it was not necessary to punish the Ukrainian population in Poland, as it was living in UPA-free territories. Nevertheless, the Ukrainian population even in these territories was forcibly deported.

The operation was carried out in a brutal, systematic fashion and involved the settlement of one or two families in every new place of settlement. Thus, the large mass of the Ukrainian population was dispersed throughout the new areas. The settlers were forbidden to leave their areas without government permission. It should be noted that the Polish government was acting with the full awareness that this would lead to the Ukrainian settlers’ assimilation, which would thus resolve the Ukrainian problem in Poland once and for all.

This operation was an act of genocide similar to the Katyn massacre, Vinnytsia, and the Holocaust. The Ukrainian population of Poland was deprived of all assistance and left to its own devices.

In writing about these painful events it is not our goal to foment anti-Polish sentiments, no matter how justified they are, because neither the Ukrainians nor the Poles need this, especially in view of the good relations between Poland and Ukraine since the latter’s

*Ukrainians being expelled from their villages during Operation Wisla.*



independence. We must continue to work in this direction.

Nevertheless, we want to remember our brothers and sisters who were killed during the operation and those survivors, who suffered physically, economically, and morally. We also want to reveal the truth to the Polish people about the fact that Operation Wisla was a great crime against the Ukrainian minority in Poland. We would also like to recall the fate of our long-suffering Ukrainian Catholic Church, which in the early days of the operation that was taking place on Ukrainian ethnic lands was declared illegal and then outlawed in the Polish state.

The Polish nation and its political leaders, priests, and hierarchy of the Polish Catholic Church should be reminded that besides love of one's nation and fatherland there exist Christian, universal, and humanist virtues that are no less important than national patriotism and cannot be ignored. Unfortunately, the Polish nation, especially its leadership, was lacking in these nobler sentiments. That is why we must write about events like Operation Wisla, so that they will never be repeated.

The operation took place in a more or less normalized period, after the Second World War, after Europe was divided in two. Communist Poland, which had become a Soviet satellite state, was not endangered. The borders of Poland had been decided at Yalta, and Stalin had firmly declared that there would be no changes to the western Ukrainian lands.

What is surprising is that the Polish nation, which had been condemned to extermination by Nazi Germany and had lost countless

victims, sought to destroy the Ukrainian minority in Poland using identical methods, or even worse ones.

We are not entirely convinced that the image of Ukrainians in Poland has changed much today. At one time the Polish underground press noted that in Poland there can be any foreigners but not Ukrainians. For decades, Polish school textbooks, the press, and television programs broadcast the image of a Ukrainian as a murderer with a knife between his teeth. How else to explain events of recent years, including the incident that took place in Przemyśl (Peremyshl), when Polish citizens and Carmelite nuns did not permit Pope John Paul II access to a church that until 1946 had been a Ukrainian Catholic Church?

It puzzles us to note that the current government of Poland, headed by President Alexander Kwasniewski, has shown greater understanding of these questions than Polish ecclesiastical circles. In the light of such episodes as Operation Wisla the Polish church, and its hierarchy and clergy, should enlighten their faithful not through literary works, like Sienkiewicz's *With Fire and Sword* and the National Democratic Party, because this is not the path of Christ's Church. It is high time to forget the past and start creating new pages of positive values from our common history, based on good neighborliness and mutual respect, and above all Christian love. Let us strive for this together. If there is goodwill on both sides, then we will surely achieve a better future for the Ukrainian and Polish peoples.

**Mykola Haliv**

*Built in 1792,  
this Ukrainian  
Greek Catholic  
church in Neznaievo  
(near Horlytsia)  
was destroyed  
by the Poles in 1972.*



*Built in 1898 in the village of Bashkiv, county of Liubachiv, the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary was destroyed by the Poles in 1945 during Operation Wisla.*



*Built in 1910, this Ukrainian Catholic church in the village of Terko, county of Lisko, was destroyed by the Poles in 1958.*



*This Ukrainian Catholic church in the village of Bircha was destroyed in 1968.*

# THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF OPERATION WISLA

The fiftieth anniversary of the notorious Operation Wisla — the forcible expulsion of nearly 150,000 Ukrainians from the Lemko, Boiko, Nadsiania, Kholm, and Pidliashia regions to northwestern Poland — was commemorated in 1997. This operation was one of the great tragedies of the Ukrainian people, and its goal was to destroy the national life of Ukrainians on their age-old ethnic territories and to denationalize them, thereby solving the Ukrainian question in Poland.

By means of terror, the operation served to disperse Ukrainians within a foreign environment, destroy churches and historical and cultural monuments, and ban all manifestations of Ukrainian national life in their new places of settlement. One of the goals of the operation was to deprive the Ukrainian Insurgent Army of the support of the local Ukrainian population and thereby to destroy it.

Operation Wisla, the culmination of the tragedy that befell the Ukrainian nation in so-called Zakerzonnia, had its beginnings seven years earlier.

In April 1940, after the Soviet armies occupied the Western Ukrainian lands, the communists deported 102,800 Ukrainians who were forcibly removed from the new strip of borderland measuring 800 meters across.

The end of the Second World War had introduced changes to the borders of the territory settled by Ukrainians. Stalin had persuaded Great Britain and the United States to accept his plan for dividing this territory. Thus, at the Yalta Conference of 1945, the Soviets forced the Polish government to agree to the borders established along the Curzon Line (hence the term Zakerzonnia, i.e., the lands beyond the Curzon line). At stake were Ukrainian ethnographic lands lying to the west of this line. The Soviet-Polish agreement paved the way for the decision to expel the Ukrainian population from this territory.

The Soviets allowed Polish settlers and colonists to return from Galicia and Volyn to Poland, and in exchange half a million Ukrainians who had ended up on the Polish side of the new border were forcibly deported in 1944-1946 to the USSR from their age-old lands in the Kholm, Pidliashia, Nadsiania, and Lemko regions. This operation was known as the Buh-Dnipro deportation.

The Polish government, striving for the total expulsion of the Ukrainians, used its army to carry out Operation Wisla in which the armed Polish underground also took part. However, the Ukrainian population, deeply attached to its ancestral lands, resisted the forced deportation.

The operation was carried out in a brutal fashion. Entire villages were burned down, and people were abused and killed. The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and the Ukrainian Orthodox clergy were subjected to vicious repressions. Leaving or staying became a question of life or death. In order to remain on their lands, Ukrainians had to pretend to be Poles and convert to Roman Catholicism. On the verge of being resettled, other resisters fled to the forests, where they spent weeks and months. After the Polish troops departed, they would return to their homes, if they had not been burned down, or move into houses standing empty.

Poles were settled in the places from where Ukrainians had been expelled. During 1945 murders of men, women, children, and the elderly took place in nearly every village. The largest number of fatalities occurred in the following villages:

- Pyskorovychi: over 1,200 people;
- Pavlokoma: in one day more than 365 people, including the parish priest, Rev. Volodymyr Lents, were killed;
- Malkovychi: 153 people killed in one night;
- Sahryn: 80;
- Liublynka: 200;
- Verkhovyny: 194;
- Horaiets: 160;
- Terka: 80
- Zavadka Morokhivska: 79;
- Kobylnytsia Ruska: around 40 people, including the parish priest, Rev. Lev Sokhor;

During the operation forty-six or more Ukrainian priests were murdered, often together with their families.

According to data of the Polish security organs, between March and June 1945 more than 1,500 Ukrainians were killed by members of the Polish underground and gangs.

No one came to the aid of the persecuted Ukrainian population. The European “democracies” were silent. Many more people



*This church in the village of Volodzh was destroyed by the Polish communist government.*



*The Church of St. Michael the Archangel, built in the village of Verbytsia in 1886. Prior to Operation Wisla this Boiko-style wooden church featured three cupolas atop a three-tiered structure. After the local Ukrainian population was deported, the Poles closed the church and later converted it into a fertilizer warehouse. The floor and walls of the church are rotting from the chemicals, and the church is slowly falling into ruins.*

would have been killed if not for the UPA's heroic defense of its people and resistance to the expulsion operations. Members of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army blew up railways, railway stations, and bridges, routed Polish army units, and destroyed resettlement administrations. The UPA protected the population and saved many Ukrainians from certain death.

The third deportation, known as Operation Wisla, took place mainly in 1947, but in certain areas it continued sporadically until 1950. Approximately 150,000 Ukrainians, who had managed to evade deportations to the Ukrainian SSR, were forcibly resettled on the northwestern (post-German) lands of Poland. This Ukrainian population supported the UPA whose forces were trapped in a triangle of death, encircled by hostile Poland, Czechoslovakia, and the Soviet Union.

The goal of Operation Wisla was to deprive the UPA of the Ukrainian population's support and thereby liquidate it; assimilate the Ukrainians who had been forcibly dispersed among the Polish population; settle and consolidate control over the territories recently recovered from the Germans and which were still not quite Polish; and bring about the final "resolution" of the Ukrainian problem in Poland, i.e., to rid Poland of all national minorities.

A 20,000-strong Polish army concentrated its energy on the terrorized and unarmed Ukrainian peasants. Polish soldiers were assisted by the militia, secret collaborators, neighbors, and bandits.

Army troops would surround a village in the middle of the night and within two or three hours the peasants would be loaded on trains and transported to an assembly point. There they were divided into groups: those suspected of clandestine activity or assisting the OUN and the UPA were arrested and sent to the concentration camp in Jaworzno (a branch of Auschwitz). Approximately 160 people died in the camp. Many of those who were released from Jaworzno died as a result of maltreatment in the camp. The other deportees were sent to the lands recently vacated by the Germans.

The deported Ukrainians left behind their burning homes, nearly 700 churches, and most importantly, the land they had tilled since time immemorial.

Settled in small groups among hostile Poles, who called the deported Ukrainians bandits,

Banderites (in the negative sense), and other insulting epithets, the victims of Operation Wisla were subject to a Polish government order banning even the very use of the term "Ukrainian." The resettlers were forbidden to return to their lands under pain of imprisonment. For ten years after the deportation operation it was forbidden to conduct the Holy Liturgy in the Ukrainian rite, and for many more years Ukrainian priests and their faithful had to seek official permission to conduct marriages, baptisms, and confirmations in the Ukrainian rite. The teaching of the Ukrainian language and the organization of community life was banned for many years. Even today, after the fall of the Soviet Union and the proclamation of Ukraine's independence, the process of reviving Ukrainian community organizations encounters resistance and persecution on the part of the Polish population.

Out of a total of 689 Ukrainian Greek Catholic churches that existed as of 1939 on the territory of the Peremyshl Eparchy, 346 were destroyed, 245 were converted to Roman Catholic churches, 61 were closed or used for non-sacral purposes, 28 are being used by the Orthodox Church, and 9 have been retained as examples of Ukrainian church architecture. In the Kholm region hundreds of Ukrainian Orthodox churches were burned and destroyed.

During the three waves of forcible deportations from the ancient Ukrainian lands of western Galicia approximately 800,000 Ukrainians were expelled, hundreds of churches were destroyed, hundreds of villages were burned to the ground, and thousands of people were killed.

**Orysia Stefyn**

### **Bibliography**

Borovyk, Oleksander. "Aktsiia 'Wisla': buv pochatok, ale chy bude kinets?" (Operation Wisla: There was a Beginning, but Will There Be an End?) *Tserkva i Zhyttia* (Church and Life), 1997.

Dziubyna, Stepan, The Rt. Rev. Mitered. *I blahoslovy dilo ruk nashykh* (And Bless the Works of Our Hands). Warsaw: Ukrainskyi arkhiv, 1995.

Sermon at the unveiling of a monument honoring UPA heroes in Hrushovychi. 8 October, 1994.

Ivanusiv, Oleh V. *Tserkva v ruini* (The Church in Ruins). Shevchenko Scientific Society, 1987.

Subtelny, Orest. *Ukraine: A History*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press/Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1988.

Tys-Krokhmaluk, Yuriy. *UPA Warfare in Ukraine*. New York: Society of Veterans of Ukrainian Insurgent Army, 1972.

Zabrovarny, Stepan, ed. *Ukrainskyi almanakh* (Ukrainian Almanach). Warsaw: Union of Ukrainians in Poland, 1996 and 1997.

# JAWORZNO

*The following account was written by a former inmate of the Jaworzno concentration camp. The author recounts the inhuman conditions of his imprisonment, one of the consequences of the notorious Operation Wisla. It should be noted that the events described here did not take place in wartime or during revolutionary upheavals but in the normalized conditions of the established Polish communist state.*

The arrests lasted three days. All the prisoners were brought in groups of four to the station in Horlytsi. There were about fifty of us, including women. Walking next to me was Rev. Ivan Bulat. Along the way the heavily armed escort did not allow anyone to approach us. A passer-by wanted to offer cigarettes to a prisoner, but the guards shoved him away brutally and later wanted to add him to the prisoners' ranks.

We were loaded onto a cargo train and we set off. The next day, 15 June, we arrived at the Szczakowa railway station. En route some people threw rocks at our train car, calling us bandits, who should be hanged for murdering Poles. Their remarks were in keeping with Polish communist propaganda that had blackened our names among the local population.

From Szczakowa we were forced to walk to the Jaworzno camp. We had to go through a forest, where prisoners who had died in the camp were later buried. Near the camp gates we saw an electrified barbed wire fence with a sign saying "Central Labor Camp in Jaworzno." This was a former German concentration camp, a branch of the notorious Auschwitz camp. A captain came out, said a few words, and then turning to us, priests, said: "So you priests are to blame for everything because it was you who urged people to kill Poles; you above all are responsible for this."

I told him: "Mr. Captain, there is a great misunderstanding here, because I come from Cracow Province, Nowy Sacz County, and we, Lemkos, lived in great harmony and friendship with the Poles; not a single Pole fell on this territory."

After hearing these words, the captain, was embarrassed and said:

"What the devil! Whom have they brought us?"

Perhaps my explanation helped because later in the bathhouse none of us was beaten, although it was well known that prisoners were beaten to a pulp there. I often saw prisoners leaving the bathhouse with head injuries.

There may have been another reason: I had "given" 1,000 zloty to the officer of the escort guard from Horlytsi. When it came time to transfer my money from the Police Security Service branch in Horlytsi to the camp depository, it turned out that my 1,000 zloty were missing. The convoy officer blushed, and I managed to say that my memory was bad and I may have been mistaken about the amount.

We were kept waiting for several hours in front of the barrack. It was a hot day, and we were very thirsty, because we had not had a drop of water for two days. I was almost fainting and asked for some water. But no one gave me any.

Before we went to the bathhouse, we had to leave all our food, clothing, and underwear in an anteroom. When we returned, luckily without any beatings, our food was missing.

Then we went to the barracks. There were five men's barracks, numbered 10 to 14. I was assigned to barrack no. 10. There were two women's barracks and an investigation barrack. The women's barracks were separated from the men's by barbed wire. When we were brought to the camp, the barracks were not yet jam-packed, but later there were 200 people in one huge room. On the grounds of the camp were a hospital, men's and women's workshops for tailors and shoemakers, a kitchen barrack, and other buildings of unknown designations. In another section of the camp, separated by barbed wire were German soldiers and Volksdeutschers. Each barrack had a barrack and room orderly, and there was also a head of all the barracks. They were all prisoners, but some of them treated their fellow prisoners in an extremely brutal fashion. The cruellest ones were Ivaniv, the room orderly, who was from Sianik, and the barracks head Wengrzyn, who came from around Bircha.



The most brutal barrack orderly was Yahnishchak, who came from Vilkhivtsi, near Sianik. Some block orderlies were murderers and sadists. One block orderly was a noble-minded sergeant from Silesia, who was very sympathetic to us and cheered us up by saying: “You will receive crosses for Jaworzno.”

At first I was held in barrack no. 10, but later all the priests were housed in barrack no. 12, a huge room where that Ivaniv held sway. Our move may have been ordered by the camp administration, which had learned of his particular hatred for priests. Ivaniv tormented us brutally, subjecting us to both physical and mental tortures.

In general, the prisoners were beaten anywhere in the camp. They beat us when meals were distributed, in line for the latrine — for the slightest “transgression.” The worst beatings occurred during an investigation. My fellow prisoners told me that the investigators told them to admit to acts they had never committed, and when the prisoners refused they beat them to a pulp. They also recounted cases of prisoners being tortured to death. Others returned from the interrogations with broken ribs and legs, their teeth knocked out, fingernails torn out, or fingers crushed between the door and the doorframe. I saw a prisoner coming from an interrogation with a broken leg. Prisoners walked to an interrogation on their own two legs, but were carried out on blankets because they were so injured. During interrogations the investigators also used electric shock torture.

Naturally, spies were sent among the prisoners to eavesdrop and report on us. But we caught on quickly because the new prisoners would arrive in our midst with their hair uncut, whereas the rest of us had shaved heads.

One time we were ordered one by one to approach a hut in which someone was sitting. Although we couldn’t see him, he could see us clearly. We approached the hut, leaving a few meters of space between us. I did not know the reason for this “operation,” but later someone told me that there must have been a traitor from our underground sitting in the hut, who was identifying his former comrades in order to betray them to the Polish administration. Much later I learned that this was Yaroslav Hamivka whose code name was “Vyshynsky.” (His other code names were “Meteor” and “UNRRA.” He was the leader

responsible for supplies and materiel of the 1<sup>st</sup> OUN *Okruha* during the Ukrainian-Polish conflict in Zakerzonnia in 1945-1947. In May 1947 he surrendered to the Polish Army and began collaborating with the Polish security services.)

After the first round of interrogations, which lasted three months, there was a brief respite, but soon a new group of investigators — more brutal than the first — arrived at the camp. New interrogations, abuses, and tortures began. Some prisoners were forced to sign confessions and charges indicting themselves, after which they received long prison terms.

The drills (running around the barracks) were a great source of torment. Those who could not run because of exhaustion, advanced age, or illness were beaten. When a prisoner fell to the ground, he was kicked. The sadistic overseers looked for any reason to force us to run or leap-frog. They would put tobacco leaves in front of the barracks, and you know what a temptation this is for smokers, especially those who have not smoked for a long time. The smokers tried to tear off at least one leaf. But all the leaves had been counted, so once again the entire barrack had to run and leap-frog. Some smokers wanted to smoke so much that they would trade their bread ration, the only camp subsistence, for tobacco, and the next day they would starve.

We suffered most from hunger. We were constantly famished and walked around like phantoms. The cruel irony is that we learned later that entire trainloads of food designated for the prisoners were sold under the table.

Each prisoner had a perpetually rusty tin bowl that had to be scrubbed with sand. When a room orderly noticed that a bowl was insufficiently clean, the prisoner would be beaten. After I was transferred to the hospital, I was told that the prisoners were given salted herring without a drop of water. Some prisoners became sick and several died.

The main subsistence was a small bread ration accompanied by a dark, stinking brew — “coffee.” This was our breakfast and supper. We had water for lunch. After four months of this diet prisoners swelled up from starvation and dropped dead during morning roll call. Sometimes several dead bodies would be carried out after a single roll call.

The dead bodies, wrapped in paper sacks, were transported on a two-wheeled cart outside the camp perimeter to a nearby forest, where they were buried. Volksdeutscher prisoners pulled this cart and did the burying.

There was worse starvation in Jaworzno than in the German concentration camp of Auschwitz, where some prisoners managed to survive for five years. In contrast, prisoners in Jaworzno died after only four months. In a few months 160 prisoners died, and many more died from exhaustion after they were released.

The administration used these worn-out, starving people to carry out various types of work, e.g., building walls. First, we had to level the ground; then we carted earth and bricks. They beat us even when we were working.

In order to morally abase the priests, the camp administrators thought up other kinds of work for them. When the first snow fell, an order came to shovel the walkways between the barracks, which were covered with cinders. The swept-up dirt was put on a wagon hitched to a priest, while another priest holding a broom was forced to sit on the pile of dirt. Amid laughter and jeering the priests had to pull the wagon past the barracks.

One day we found a dead cat lodged between the barracks. The camp administrators forced Rev. Yurii Mentsinsky to perform a funeral for the cat. They threw a cloth over him, which was supposed to be the chasuble, made him hold a broom, and then assembled some prisoners. After the priest was mocked this way, the cat was taken away to be buried.

One time our priests were brought to the tower to sing religious songs for the guard. To add insult to injury, the guard tower stood right next to the latrine. Packages began arriving for the prisoners, but priests were not allowed to receive them.

In our camp there were twenty-two Ukrainian Greek Catholic priests and three Ukrainian Orthodox priests. Two of the Orthodox priests did not admit to being clerics. The Greek Catholic priests were: Adam Abrahamovych, Volodymyr Boziuk, Ivan Bulat, Kost Datsko, Mykhailo Dochylo, Stepan Dziubyna, Hryhorii Fedoryshchak, Mykhailo Hashchak, Yaroslav Hrebeniak, Omelian Kalyniuk, Yevstakhii Kharkhalis, Yevhen Khyliak, Oleksa Koliankivsky, Omelian Kotys, Sylvester Krupa,

Yulian Krynytsky, Petro Maziar, Rev. Yu. Mentsinsky, Ivan Seneta, Stepan Sheremeta, Ivan Yaremin, and Mykola Zaiats.

No one was beaten in the German sector, and the prisoners there were not physically or morally abused. If not for the fact that the Germans were behind a wire, you could have called their life normal. Their barracks were clean, without lice or fleas, their clothing was washed in the laundry, and they visited the bathhouse. The Germans' food was far better than ours, and the Volksdeutschers could buy food at the camp office and they worked in the kitchen. The German part of the camp also had cultural activities: there was an amateur group, and the prisoners could play a variety of instruments. There were sports and gymnastics competitions; they could even swim in the camp pool. Their spiritual life was ensured as well: a POW Catholic priest served Mass every day, and every Sunday you could hear the Latin sung Mass from the German sector.

Although it may sound strange, it was a stroke of luck when I became seriously ill after three months in the camp. An order came to move me to the hospital located in the German sector. Four captured German doctors worked there, as well as medical personnel consisting of Germans and Volksdeutschers.

After I regained some of my health, a priest from a parish in the town of Jaworzno came to the camp, where it was announced that anyone who wanted could go to him for confession. Since I had no contact with our priests, I took advantage of the occasion and went to confession. Afterwards I asked him to tell my family where I was. But he refused to carry out this Christian deed. I was stunned that a Catholic priest did not consider it his duty to help someone who was living in such dire conditions, all the more so as there was nothing to stop him; there would have been no repercussions. Perhaps that priest forgot Christ's words: "Whoever does not love the brother whom he can see, can not love God whom he has not seen." After swallowing Polish propaganda, perhaps he did not consider me his brother in Christ. I turned out to be a brother to a Volksdeutscher, who upon his release agreed to inform my family that I was imprisoned in the Jaworzno Polish concentration camp.

According to camp regulations, after several weeks' recuperation in the hospital, I was supposed to return to my barrack. But I had another stroke of luck: I had befriended the hospital secretary, a Volksdeutscher named Karol Kautski, a former gymnasium teacher from Nowy Sacz. He was serving three years for having listed himself as a German national. At the very time that I was supposed to return to my barrack, Kautski's assistant was released. So Kautski, who was always very polite to me, asked the hospital head to allow me to replace the outgoing assistant.

I met the main government doctor of the prison hospital, who came from Horlytsi. I knew his father very well. He was also well disposed toward me, which I believe had an impact on my fate in the hospital. Before occupying my post in the hospital office, I worked as an orderly in the sick ward. I got to know the German doctors and their medical staff. In 1948 the chief doctor was replaced by a Jewish doctor. Working with him was a bit worse, but tolerable.

Meanwhile, I observed the work in the hospital. I saw the doctors giving fatal injections to dying patients who had no chance of recovering or surviving camp life. The doctors explained that they were euthanizing them for humane reasons.

I was the first Ukrainian to work in the hospital, so I tried to use my position to help my friends by transferring them from the barracks to hospital work. I succeeded in bringing Rev. Yaroslav Hrebeniak to work in the hospital office. The barrack orderlies were persecuting him, and their abuses could have led to his death, so who knows if the transfer didn't save his life. I also helped save several of my parishioners from Nowa Wies, who had already started to develop starvation edema. I asked the hospital head to assign them some sort of physical labor on the hospital grounds.

At that time Stefan Shmihelsky from Horlytsi was working as a doctor in the hospital. There was also a pharmacist named Osidach; I think his first name was Mykola; he came from Balyhorod. A medical student also joined us.

As a hospital clerk, I was able to visit patients and hear confessions of those who were gravely ill. I was also allowed to go to the women's section. One day I was able to baptize a child

there. For a long time I did not know the mother's name. After many years I found out that her name was Kateryna Deineka. She and the son whom she bore in the camp hospital live in Toronto, Canada.

The prisoners were tormented by lice, fleas, and bedbugs, which multiplied rapidly in the unsanitary conditions. There was no place to wash underclothing, and a change of clothing was out of the question, since the prisoners had to wear the same clothing in which they had been arrested. Many people suffered from scabies for which there was no treatment. A few people also died of typhus. The hospital administration covered up these incidents and listed a different cause of death. At first even I did not know about these typhus cases, although the documents had passed through my hands. But as the secretary's assistant, I recopied only what came to me from the head doctor and Kautski, the secretary.

Later, the Western press began publishing reports of typhus in the camp, which elicited a swift reaction from Warsaw. Suddenly a control commission arrived at the camp. One official held some harsh discussions with the people responsible for the situation in the camp. His tone was sharp when he asked me whether I was the one who had written the reports on these deaths. I was nervous. In order to protect my hospital superiors (my fate was in their hands) I said that I was. Then the controller ordered the removal of my shoulder band that allowed me to move freely throughout the hospital, and sent me to the punishment bunker. I was not worried; I was glad that the inspection would save many from death. As it was, the conditions in the bunker were better than the barracks were for my fellow prisoners: there was no water on the cement floor. I had a makeshift bed, and there was even a little window through which I could observe camp life.

That was when I saw two of our boys from "Burlaka's" company. ("Burlaka" was the code name of Volodymyr Shchyhelsky, commander of Udarnyky 4 Company, which was later merged with the UPA's Peremyshl Battalion. In the summer of 1947, during a raid to the West, Shchyhelsky was captured in Czechoslovakia, and on 22 May 1948 he was deported to Poland together with 122 UPA soldiers. For several days they were imprisoned in a separate part of the Jaworzno concentration camp. On 4 January

1949 “Burlaka” was sentenced to death by the Military District Court in Rzeszów. He was executed on 7 April 1949.) Our boys were carrying lunch from the kitchen for their fellow soldiers. “Burlaka’s” fighters were already expected in the camp a few days before they arrived. A barrack encircled by barbed wire was readied in the German sector. Incidentally, it was the German prisoners who spread the news that the UPA people were coming, because there was a German doctor among the Ukrainian insurgents.

Later, someone told me about an incident involving the “Burlakites.” They were driven into a barrack, where all sorts of administrative camp scum and sadists were waiting to greet them. With a shout they attacked our boys, but commander “Burlaka” shouted: “Boys, we’re still alive!”

They began defending themselves, and the block orderlies soon ran away and never tried this again. Our boys spent three peaceful days in camp. Afterwards they were secretly transferred in chains to a prison in Cracow.

I spent two or three days in the bunker. When the inspector departed, I asked for a visit from the head doctor, who examined me and said that I should not remain in the bunker in view of my health. I was transferred to the hospital and after a few days began carrying out my office duties.

One month later something changed in the camp: there were fewer abuses and somebody said: “There’s a new wind blowing.”

One day an investigator dressed in civilian clothing showed up at the office. The office head informed him that a female prisoner was protesting against her unjustified imprisonment and had begun a hunger strike. The investigator replied: “Let her croak. There’ll be one less.” But the woman was pregnant and her unborn child was also at risk of dying. At this point the office head reacted nobly: “No, no. This cannot be. This is too serious a matter. The higher authorities must be informed about her.” Then he asked me to accompany him on his visit to the woman, so that I, a priest, could convince her that the hunger strike could kill not just her but her child, and this was a mortal sin. We tried to persuade her, and finally she gave in and stopped the hunger strike.

The block orderlies often dropped by the office. They knew I was a Greek Catholic priest. I explained that the prisoners were innocent and their sufferings were unjustified. Some block

orderlies agreed with me, but at the same time they said: “But, Father, don’t you know what they’re saying about all of you, what kind of propaganda [they’re spreading]?”

According to official thought, the Ukrainians’ imprisonment in Jaworzno was revenge for the death of General Karol Swierczewski. In reply, I said that the camp in Jaworzno had been planned two years before the general’s death.

There was a lot of camp talk about the killings in Volyn, where Ukrainians were allegedly killing Poles en masse. I did not know about this and had not heard anything about these matters, which is why I asked an office worker named Wladyslaw (I don’t remember his last name) who was, I think, the son of a distinguished Polish colonel and the owner of an estate in Volyn, which Pilsudski had awarded him for his loyal service.

Wladyslaw was a young man, who was finishing eighth grade in the gymnasium when the Germans occupied Volyn. He registered as a Volksdeutscher, for which he later served a three-year sentence in Jaworzno.

In answer to my question about Volyn, he replied that it was not at all the way people were saying. This was the work of the Germans. Before the occupation — until 1941 — there were no killings. But when the Germans attacked the Soviet Union and after the Ukrainians proclaimed an independent Ukraine [that year], the Germans arrested the entire government and its supporters headed by Bandera. Then the Ukrainian insurgents began fighting the Germans. The Germans were afraid of the Ukrainians, who formed the majority of the population in Volyn. Poles only lived in the cities and certain Polish colonies; the villages were almost exclusively Ukrainian. Therefore, the Germans assisted the Poles in Volyn, and a considerable number of bamboozled Poles succumbed to German provocations. The Poles then joined the Germans in fighting the Ukrainians.

Wladyslaw admitted to having been taken in by the Germans, and he registered himself as a Volksdeutscher. The Germans gave him weapons, and together with them he engaged in the pacification of Ukrainian villages. Then the Ukrainians killed the Germans and killed us. It was not true, he continued, that they had started immediately killing Poles. First of all, they issued

an ultimatum that the Poles should leave Volyn, and if they didn't, then they would be killed. That's how it started, Wladyslaw said.

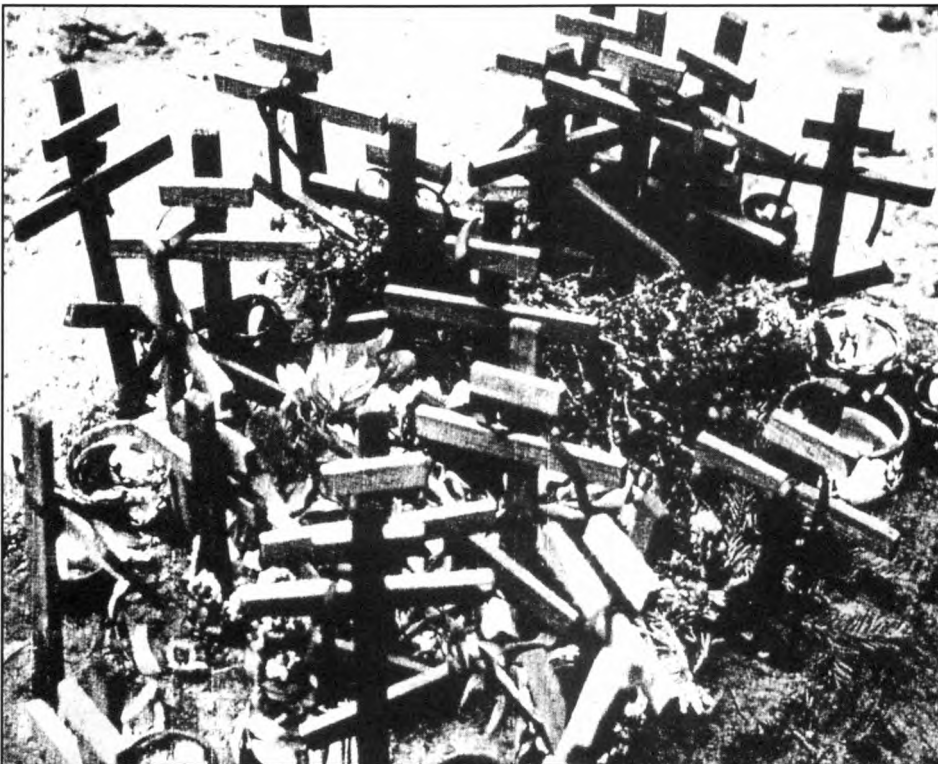
A terrible fate befell two sisters, who came from a family of intellectuals in Cracow. The younger sister, who was married, had a nervous breakdown, and the other sister was taken for interrogation to Montelupich Prison in Cracow. When she returned after a month, it was difficult to recognize the once beautiful young girl, who showed signs of horrible abuse and complete exhaustion. She was briefly a barrack head.

The women's barracks had the same regime as the men's. When I got sick and was being carried past the women's barrack to the hospital, I saw a punishment drill in progress: the women were forced to leap-frog and hold bricks above their heads. One of the female block heads was a sadist, who liked to abuse the women. One day, a prisoner snapped and grabbing the block head by the hair, put her head between her legs and beat her on the rear end with a broom. When she realized what she had done, she began to cry: "What have I done? Now they'll kill me!" Although they didn't kill her, she was beaten so savagely her body turned black. They also threw her into the punishment cell for a long time. The block head was relieved of her duties for having compromised herself.

One elderly woman, who was worn out from all the abuse, bravely reprimanded the block heads. She was beaten severely for this, and she was often sent to the punishment cell. One day a block head told her: "What a w[hore] you are," to which she replied: "I'm not the w[hore] but your mother, who gave birth to such a villain." Later this woman fell sick and was transferred to the hospital. One day she disappeared. The block heads searched the entire camp for her and finally found her hiding behind a cupboard. This time her illness protected her from abuse.

During interrogations women were beaten like the men. One time some interrogators grabbed a girl by her beautiful long hair and began dragging her along the floor and bashing her head against the wall. Another woman, Anna Hipshan from Maliava, had needles stuck into her legs. Late one night seven girls were placed in a cell. They kept them there all night without food or water, and then another day and night. The girls were released from the freezing cell at 8:00 a.m. the next morning.

There were also seventeen children in the women's block. The three oldest children were thirteen; nine others were born in the camp. When I was still in barrack no. 10, I saw a boy who went insane. He was later removed from the camp.



*Crosses standing on a common grave of inmates from the Jaworzno concentration camp, 1992.*

After a wave of new interrogations and a deadly epidemic that claimed the largest number of victims in the fall, the process of reviewing prisoners' cases began. Some were remanded for trial in Cracow, but there were only a few of these prisoners. Others, against whom the authorities could not fabricate anything, were being readied for release. Winter was approaching, and an epidemic of some kind could be expected. Thus, each prisoner was photographed with a sign with pertinent data about him/her hanging from a string around the neck. The preparation of the release documents took nearly a month. Some prisoners were released in the fall, and some during the winter of 1947-48. By springtime nearly everyone had been released, except for priests, schoolteachers, and more nationally conscious prisoners. About a hundred of us intellectuals remained, and the camp authorities planned to separate us from the rest of the Ukrainian prisoners.

Life in the camp had calmed down, and there were no more interrogations and abuses. You could receive packages from home and play chess with a set made of bread.

In the spring I was summoned to the investigation barrack at midnight. This was very surprising because I had never been called to an interrogation at this time of night, and all the investigations were nearly over. In the barrack I saw a man dressed in civilian clothing, who very politely informed me that he had come especially from Cracow to release me. I was innocent, they know this, he said. Then he expressed regret that I had been imprisoned in the camp. He made a few other remarks and then said: "You see, Father, the times are such that we need collaborators. We will gladly release you if you agree." I instantly rejected his proposal and told him that collaboration had been already proposed to me at the Security Service in Horlytsi. So if I had agreed back then, I would not be sitting here in camp today in such terrible conditions, I said. But the investigator continued his efforts to persuade me, mentioning my wellbeing and that of my family and declaring that nothing special would be asked of me. When I still refused, he said angrily:

"Then you will croak here in Jaworzno."

I replied: "I won't be the first or the last."

Some time in July or August 1948 a group of prisoners was sitting in front of a barrack playing chess. One of them was Rev. Yuliiian Krynytsky, the parish priest from the village of Verbytsia. Suddenly we heard him snoring loudly. I even said: "Look, Father has fallen asleep and is snoring." Slowly he keeled over. We lifted him up and started to revive him, but it was too late. He was dead. We immediately informed his daughter, who was also imprisoned in the camp (his son had already been remanded for trial in Cracow) and the camp authorities.

The death of Rev. Krynytsky is significant in that he was the first prisoner to be provided with a coffin, and priests were allowed to recite the *panakhyda* [brief liturgy for the dead]. But we were not given permission to participate in the funeral.

Shortly before my release I was called back for another talk; a new investigator had arrived from Cracow. He asked me about relations between the Ukrainians and Poles during the German occupation and how many Poles had been killed in my parish. He was stunned when I said that in the entire western Lemko region there were no Ukrainian insurgents and that the Lemkos did not kill a single Pole — on the contrary, they had fought with the Poles against the Germans, and some had even been killed while escorting Polish officers across the Czechoslovak border. He said: "I assure you, Father, that whoever is innocent will be released."

Some time between 20 December and Roman Catholic Christmas the rest of the prisoners started to be released. We had to sign pledges to the effect that we would not disclose what had gone on in the camp. If we did not keep this secret, we would be rearrested. Except for five priests, everyone else, including me, was released.

We were transported with our belongings on trucks to the Szczakowa railway station. From here we had to make our own way home. Everyone had a release paper with our ID photograph. This was our only document; we were also issued a free train ticket.

**The Rt. Rev. Mitered Stepan Dziubyna**

# THE MASSACRE IN THE VILLAGE OF ZAVADKA MOROKHIVSKA

*The following account of the attack by a large Polish communist force on the Ukrainian village of Zavadka Morokhivska, in the county of Sianik (Sanok), was written by a daughter of the Poltava region, who was a direct participant and eyewitness of these events. It is far from an exhaustive description of all the barbarous acts of terror inflicted on this village.*

At 8:00 a.m. on 24 January 1946, a large formation of Polish communist troops occupied several neighboring villages. At around 10:00 scouts rushed in from Zavadka [Morokhivska], and shortly after from Mokre, Vysochany, and Kamiane, with the news that a large number of Polish troops had arrived in these villages. Armored vehicles had arrived in Mokre.

[UPA] Commander “Khrin’s” company was camped in the woods and preparing for a defense. When the scouts returned from the field and reported on the concentration of Polish troops in the neighboring village and the armored vehicles in Mokre, commander “Khrin” instantly decided to move camp. During our march through the woods we encountered peasants fleeing from some villages, who confirmed our scouts’ reports that the troops were preparing to cordon off the woods and that Polish partisans were right behind us.

Some of the fugitives said that the Polish army had set fire to several houses in Zavadka Morokhivska with incendiary bullets, but no one knew the real situation. By setting fire to the houses, the Polish bandits were protecting themselves from the side of the woods, so that we would not hinder them in their massacre of the peasants of Zavadka Morokhivska.

By evening we reached the village of Karlykiv, because we had been informed that the Polish communist troops had murdered fourteen people there, including a priest and his entire family. The peasants said that the bandits (this is how they described the Polish soldiers) attacked so suddenly that only the priest’s son-in-law managed to escape.

After examining the dead bodies and talking with the peasants, we left for the village of Kamiane, where we learned that Polish troops had murdered seventy people in Zavadka Morokhivska and then burned it to the ground.

Early in the morning we set out for the village. From a small hill we could see the burning remains of the village. People were walking about looking for something. We drew near. Next to the remains of the first fire we saw the corpse of a young woman, who had bayonet wounds all over her body. A few meters away lay the body of a man and next to him, the body of a thirteen-year-old girl. An elderly mother was walking around the bodies of her children, staring fixedly at their wounds. She was not crying but making some sort of strangled whimpering. Her eyes were dry and gleamed strangely; her lips were burned.

With the arrival of the [UPA] soldiers various figures began to creep out of their hiding places: these hunched, ragged unfortunates had already had years of misery, only to experience this latest disaster. They began approaching the UPA men. The horrific wasteland, this dominion of death, began coming to life. Spotting the UPA soldiers, some people began wailing, their desolate cries of pain and sorrow tearing our hearts out.

Others looked around silently and morosely, lost in thought. ‘Why had they been massacred this way? Why had they been so cruel to her?’ wailed one woman, showing the insurgents the body of her daughter, who was sliced to pieces.

A short, hunched elderly man with his arms outstretched approached the riflemen, beseeching them: “Come, my dear ones! Here you will see what they did.” Tears poured from the old man’s eyes, and his stooped body, dressed in rags, shook. At the remains of a fire near a fence lay three small children. One of them was seven months old, the second was two, and the third was three. The old man looked at them, patted the children’s heads, and went to the other side of the burned ruins, where the body of a woman lay, with bayonet wounds on her chest and legs. “Here is my wife,” he said, “and here is my

father,” pointing to a body on the straw. He began to weep. “I am all alone now. What are they doing to our people?”

A little boy about eight years old came out of a half-burned house. “I’m all alone with my seven-month-old brother. What am I going to do with him? Here is my mother, and here is my father. They were killed on the spot while my father was chopping wood. Here are my sisters,” he said, pointing to two bodies with slashed breasts and legs, stripped of their clothing by the Polish bandits.

Slowly the villagers assembled to pour out their grief. A fourteen-year-old boy came. “I am all alone. My mother, father, and sisters are lying here,” he said, pointing to some bodies that were already washed from the ashes and laid out. There were no dead bodies farther in the village; they had all been brought to the cemetery. At the other end of the village lay the bodies of four men who were shot while escaping to the woods. They were lying in a row across the road, just like they had been walking one by one.

More than a dozen bodies — slashed and mutilated corpses of fire-shriveled children, women, and old people — were already lying in a common grave at the cemetery. Several dozen bodies were lying at the edge of the pit. Two bodies were so charred that they barely looked human. The body of one old man was burned right through to the spinal column and his body was contorted: he was kneeling with his arms toward the ground and his head facing upward: the old man had been on his knees praying when he was killed. All the faces of the adult corpses, both male and female, had bruises and contusions. Their hands were covered with scratches, either from wire or pins. It was a horrific sight.

A rifleman arrived with a photographer to take pictures of the common grave filled with the victims of enemy terror. The survivors — women and children — pleaded with them to take photographs of the bodies of their family members, who had not been brought to the grave yet.

After this first attack, Zavadka Morokhivska was attacked three more times. To complete the picture of what Ukrainian people living beyond the Curzon Line are experiencing today under

Polish communist occupation, we are also providing a short list of victims in this village.

On 24 January 1946 this action was carried out by the 34<sup>th</sup> Regiment of the Polish Army from Sianik County in the Lemko region. The 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion of this regiment took part in the massacre. Other battalions were deployed in the vicinity to protect the murderers. The regimental headquarters, commanded by Colonel Pluto, was billeted at this time in the village of Mokre. The action took place between 8:00 a.m. and approximately 3:00 p.m. A list of murdered families and the manner in which they were killed follows.

1. Kateryna Bilas, 62 years old: wounded. The Poles piled logs and straw on top of her and burned her alive.

2. Melania Bilas, 50: burned alive in her house that was set on fire.

3. Maria Kyrleiza, around 41, born in the US: bayoneted seven times. Her toes and right arm were broken; her left breast was sliced off, and her skull was smashed in.

4. Anna Kyrleiza (her daughter), 16: broken legs and arms, smashed skull.

5. Kateryna Kyrleiza (another daughter), 15: smashed skull, bayoneted in the right leg above the knee.

6. Andrii Maksym, 70: burned alive.

7. Maria Maksym: shot in the back of the head.

8. Anastazia Maksym (daughter-in-law): the muscles of her left leg, from the foot to the knee, were carved out; left leg broken above the knee; right leg broken in two places; both arms broken; three bayonet wounds to her left breast; five bayonet wounds in her right breast; disemboweled; smashed skull.

9. Stepan Maksym, 10: bayoneted in the chest and shot in the head.

10. Anna Maksym, 1: abdomen sliced open.

11. Kateryna Maksym, 4: bayoneted through the mouth and two times on the right side of the chest; disemboweled.

12. Kateryna Tomash: breasts sliced off; five bayonet wounds to the abdomen, slashed legs. She lived for more than an hour and identified some of the bandits as civilians from Nebeshchany (the residents of this neighboring



Polish village participated in the army's attack on the village).

13. Maria Tomash (her daughter): nose sliced off, tongue cut out, eyes gouged out.

14. Anna Tomash (another daughter): nose sliced off, tongue cut out, eyes gouged out.

15. Stepan Tomash: nose sliced off, tongue cut out, eyes gouged out.

16. Anna Nechysta: shot through the chest, lived for three more hours.

17. Kateryna Nechysta (her daughter), 20: wounded in the leg and burned to death.

18. Eva Bilas, 36: bayoneted to death.

19. Teodor Bilas, 65: bayoneted in the stomach, lived for another seven hours.

20. Ivan Bilas, 40: shot in the back.

21. Maria Bilas, 22: tongue cut out, broken right wrist.

22. Sofia Bilas, 7: slashed legs and abdomen.

23. Mykhailo Nechysty: wounded in the right leg above the knee and left wrist.

24. Taras Nechysty (his son), 3: shot by an exploding bullet in the left shoulder, died after six hours of torment.

25. Kateryna Nechysta (wife of Mykhailo, no. 23): wounded in the left leg, burned alive.

26. Mahdalyna Nechysta, 17: wounded, then burned alive.

27. Sofia Nechysta, 8: wounded and burned alive.

28. Maria Nechysta, six years old: wounded and burned alive.

29. Osyp Dudynchak, 40: two bayonet stab wounds to the chest.

30. Anastazia Dudynchak, 40: shot in the chest.

31. Eva Izdebska: shot in the back.

32. Kateryna Izdebska, 6 months old: throat cut, bayonet wounds to the head.

33. Dmytro Bonchak, 50: knocked out by a blow from a rifle butt and burned alive.

34. Ivan Bonchak (his brother): shot in the abdomen and burned alive.

35. Anna Klepchyk: throat cut, shot through the rib cage.

36. Vasyl Tsyhanyk: wounded in the arm by an exploding bullet, died three weeks later.

37. Kateryna Tsyhanyk (his mother): fractured skull, shot in the back of the head.

38. Ivan Tsyhanyk: bayoneted to death.

39. Ivan Hrynio: shot in the back of the head.

40. Mykhailo Izdebsky: bayoneted to death.

41. Petro Izdebsky (his brother): shot in the head.

42. Kateryna Kozlyk: blow to the head, exposing brain matter.

43. Anna Kozlyk: shot in the chest.

44. Eva Kozlyk: shot in the chest.

45. Dmytro Klepchyk: shot in the back of the head, finished off with a bayonet.

46. Kateryna Kyryleiza: shot in the chest.

47. Yaroslav Kyryleiza (her son): throat cut.

48. Petro Kyryleiza (his brother): shot in the back.

49. Osyp Bonchak: shot in the chest.

50. Kateryna Bonchak (his wife): shot in the chest.

Wounded survivors were not allowed to see a doctor. Medical attention was provided by UPA medics, but over the next weeks several more people died as a result of their beatings and severe injuries. The village was completely looted. The Polish army confiscated 17 horses, 34 cows, 157 chickens, 7,800 kilograms of grain, and other items. Twenty-seven houses were burned down; they had just been rebuilt after the Germans burned them down when the front was shifting in 1944. All remaining property was burned in the fire. The villagers were left without any means of subsistence.

After the Polish army action the communist government began circulating rumors to the effect that eighty bandits had been killed in Zavadka Morokhivska because they had been shooting at the Polish soldiers from inside the houses. Village reeves sent the same announcements to village heads. These announcements were patently false because during the action not a single shot was fired from inside a house.

The UPA soldiers provided the survivors with food, clothing, and money. The remaining villagers moved into seven houses that were still standing and began rebuilding their homes.

*Holos Lemkivshchyny*  
(Lemko Voice)

# THE FORCIBLE DEPORTATION AND GENOCIDE OF UKRAINIANS IN POLAND

At 4:00 a.m. on 23 January 1946 a Polish army unit surrounded the village of Ratnavytsia (county of Sianik). The soldiers immediately began seizing barnyard fowl and other household property, and beating the village men. People attempting to flee were shot. A householder named N. Mazur and Mykola Kotyk, an invalid, were killed. The latter was quartered. A young boy named Stepan Bilas and his parents were tied to a bench and horribly tortured: among other tortures, red-hot needles were poked into the soles of their feet. Finally, the soldiers released the parents but took the boy. Many villagers were stripped naked, tied with ropes, and kept outside for five hours. Fourteen men were arrested, several of whom were instantly murdered in the woods. That day two men were murdered in the village of Dolezhivka, and nine were arrested. After torturing them, the soldiers brought them to the village of Bukivsko. En route some of the prisoners were murdered. When they were passing through the village, the soldiers mocked their prisoners and sang "Ukraine has not yet perished" [Ukraine's national anthem].

On 24 January 1946 a Polish army unit launched an attack from the village of Bukivsko on the village of Karlykiv (county of Sianik). They looted the village and killed two civilians. During the night this Polish band launched a second attack on the village. Some Polish riffraff from the village of Bukivsko participated in this attack. The village was looted and its residents were murdered. Seventeen people were killed, including an eighty-year-old priest and his wife, daughter, and four-year-old granddaughter. The murdered victims had broken arms, legs, ribs, eyes gouged out, and noses and ears sliced off. These tortures were carried out while the victims were still alive; then they were shot. Many people were injured and crippled, sustaining broken arms and legs, and teeth knocked out.

After these murders, a new wave of deportations of Ukrainians began in many villages in February and March.

The deportations began in the Peremyshl area, followed by the Lemko region. In April Polish army operations engulfed the county of Sianik and

the suburban villages in the county of Lisko. People started burying their belongings in the ground and escaping to the woods. The soldiers destroyed the household belongings and burned down the deserted houses. A cordon was thrown up around the woods. After capturing the fugitives, the soldiers confiscated everything from them and then drove the ragged, beaten, and hungry villagers to the Zahiria station. It was terrible to look at the completely exhausted women and children, swollen from cold and hunger, from the Lemko villages of Kamiane, Volia Petrova, Mokre, Mokhoriv, Yavirnyk, Karlykiv, Polonna, Vyslik Horishnii, Vyslik Dolishnii, and others. Typhoid fever weakened and killed off more survivors.

Polish troops shot peasants who returned to their villages and those who went to work in their fields. They launched new attacks on the burned out and looted villages, burned down newly built huts, and beat and killed their prisoners. Mass murders took place in the villages of Zavadka Morokhivska, Morokhiv, Mokre, Ratnavytsia, Vyslik Vyzhnii, Komancha, and Volia Nyzhnia.

Broken by exhaustion and starvation, survivors began to leave. Seventy-five percent of the Ukrainian population was deported in this manner.

On 24 January 1946 the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion of the 31<sup>st</sup> Regiment from Sianik attacked the village of Zavadka Morokhivska (county of Sianik). The Polish troops massacred fifty-six Ukrainian peasants.

On 23 March 1946 a band of Polish soldiers, with the help of an NKVD captain's unit and four grenade launchers, began a second attack on Zavadka Morokhivska. Some of the villagers fled to the woods, and the Polish troops assembled the rest of the unfortunate villagers on the square near the school and told them that they would "shoot them all for refusing to go to their motherland [the USSR]." Eleven men were selected and shot on the spot: Ivan Masliuk, Teodor Masliuk, Mykola Masliuk, Mykhailo Klepchyk, Vasyl Dobriansky, Yakym Shchurkalo, Stepan Kozlyk, Dmytro Kyryleiza, Mykhailo Nechysty, Ivan Bilas, and Teodor Bilas. Seven

huts were burned down, and cellars and pits in which villagers were living were destroyed. The soldiers then confiscated the last two cows and one horse.

Between 13 April and 30 April 1946 there was another attack on Zavadka Morokhivska. Captured villagers were beaten senseless or shot. The following villagers were murdered:

Volodymyr Dobriansky (age 15); Ivan Dobriansky (22); Orest Masliuk, (27); Dmytro Bonchak (18); Senko Nechysty (3); and Ivan Kyryleiza (42). Three newly-built huts were burned down. The soldiers brought the survivors under convoy to the Zahiria station. A total of seventy-three villagers (only four men) were deported.

On 21 April 1946 approximately 100 Polish soldiers from border military outposts in Yaselko and Yaslyska attacked the village of Vyslik Dolishnii (county of Sianik). They immediately began looting everything they could get their hands on: cattle, grain, footwear, clothing, and food. They murdered seven people (three women, two children under ten years old, and two men). Three villagers were wounded. They also beat and injured many people. When the soldiers were leaving, they burned down thirty-three houses.

On 29 May 1946 a group of Polish soldiers attacked the village of Uliuch (Sianik area). At first they fired on the village with machine guns, and then began setting fire to it. A total of 193 homesteads were burned down. Seven people were murdered: Mykhailo Krovak (aged 40); Vasyl Moskal (60), Mykhailo Sosnytsia (a 76-year-old one-legged invalid), Ivan Pavlovsky (76), Onufrii Tkhir (32), Tetiana Tkhir (80), Maria Soletska (30) (the bodies of the latter two

were thrown into a fire), and Ivan Moroiko. Many people were severely beaten, especially old people and children, who could not escape. A Polish soldier struck a five-year-old girl so hard on the head that one of her eyes popped out. A total of 178 villagers were brought to Sianik. This type of deportation action lasted until July 1946.

The Ukrainian population of the Peremyshl and Yaroslav regions was almost completely expelled; and ninety percent of the Belz region.

On 8 July 1946 a Polish army unit attacked the village of Terka (county of Lisko). The bandits seized twenty-eight villagers, exclusively women and children. They brought them to a lone house at the edge of the village, and one of the bandits shot them, while another tossed in grenades. Only fourteen-year-old Vasyl Soniak managed to escape; he later described this atrocity. That day thirty-three people were killed in the village of Terka, including centenarian Anna Diak. Twenty-four houses were burned down, and the village was totally looted.

In late July looters from the Polish Army or other Polish military-police formations were deployed in almost every Ukrainian village.

Large military formations were deployed throughout the Lemko region. As is known, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and the USSR had signed a pact aimed at smashing the Ukrainian insurgent movement. In April 1947, 100,000 Polish troops were stationed in the eastern Lemko region. This was the beginning of the resettlement action. Surviving Ukrainians were settled in the Olsztyn, Gdansk, and Koszalin provinces; later in Szczecin, Zielona Góra, Wrocław, Białystok, Lublin, and Rzeszów provinces.

## THE BLOODY RESETTLEMENT OF THE LEMKOS

The Polish communist state carried out the deportation with the aid of the well-equipped 2<sup>nd</sup> Army (100,000 troops), and the governments of the USSR and communist Czechoslovakia. The expulsions were conducted in a barbarous way. As a result of this resettlement action, the Lemko region and all ethnographic Ukrainian lands west of the Curzon Line were totally decimated. Entire villages were looted and burned to the ground,

including churches, many of which were priceless ancient architectural monuments. Many people were murdered, including intellectuals — mostly priests, schoolteachers, elderly people, and children, including infants. The terrorized survivors were deported: some to the Ukrainian SSR, and others to the northwestern lands that were ceded to Poland after World War Two. The deported Lemkos were scattered among the Poles, many

of whom were extremely chauvinistic toward Ukrainians, and abandoned there without religious care, schools, or the opportunity to develop their culture. The ultimate aim of the deportation was to denationalize the Ukrainian population of Poland. Some of the deportees were jailed without trial in the Jaworzno concentration camp. Among the camp inmates were elderly people, women, and children, many of whom perished there.

Below is a partial list of atrocities committed by soldiers of the regular Polish Army against the defenseless Ukrainian population of the Lemko and Nadsiania regions:

On 14 January 1946, a Polish army unit attacked the village of Poliany Surovychni and murdered thirteen people, including Mykola Varianka and Petro Onusiv.

On 24 January 1946 a seventy-year-old priest named Rev. Maliarchyk, his family, and twenty-four villagers were massacred in the village of Karlykiv.

On 3 March 1946, 365 residents of the village of Pavlokoma, including elderly people, women, children, and the parish priest, Rev. Volodymyr Lemets, were massacred.

Many other atrocities took place, and the exact number of victims may never be established.

In 1956 the Polish government admitted that a great injustice had been done to the Ukrainians, but despite various declarations and laws passed to establish the equal rights of Poland's national minorities, Ukrainians continued to be systematically denationalized and deprived of the opportunity to develop and practice their faith, language, and culture. The Polish government relentlessly applied a policy of total ethnocide against its Ukrainian minority.

The tragic deportation of the Lemkos and the inhabitants of the Nadsiania region dealt a heavy blow not only to the direct victims but to the entire Ukrainian nation. This tragedy will continue to have long-term repercussions because a large proportion of the Ukrainian population was destroyed on its native lands.

Below is a partial list of Ukrainian Catholic priests who were murdered during the Second World War and the deportation period:

1) Blessed Yosafat Kotsylovsky, Bishop of Peremyshl and Sambir, was arrested by the

Poles. He was beaten during his arrest and dragged from the palace while still seated on his bishop's throne, and handed over to the Soviets. After being mercilessly tortured, he died on 17 October 1947. This great son of the Lemko region was born in the village of Pakoshivka on 3 March 1876.

2) Oleksander Bilyk, parish priest in the village of Berezky: tortured to death.

3) Ivan Demianchuk, parish priest in the village of Skopiv: shot.

4) Illia Fedevych, parish priest in the village of Krekhovychi: shot.

5) Ivan Haiduk, administrator of the village of Lubyn: tortured to death.

6) Mykola Holovach, catechist in the village of Bosko: shot five times.

7) Vasyl Huchko, parish priest in the village of Radruzhe: shot and then nailed to a fence.

8) Orest Kaluzhniatsky (aged 75), parish priest in the village of Izdebky: thrown into a cellar and immured alive.

9) Tadei Kaminsky, parish priest in the village of Myrotyn: murdered.

10) Yaroslav Kneichuk, administrator of the village of Belzets: shot.

11) Myron Koltuniuk (aged 70), parish priest in the village of Zhukiv: shot.

12) Stepan Konkolvsky, parish priest in the village of Lishchovate: shot.

13) Yosyf Krysa, parish priest in the village of Kinske: tortured to death.

14) Volodymyr Lemtsio, parish priest in the village of Pavlokoma: beaten to death.

15) Mykola Matsiuk, parish priest in the village of Voloskiv: murdered.

16) Dmytro Nemylovych, parish priest in the village of Hrabivka: murdered.

17) Mykola Nisevych, parish priest in the village of Dobrovytsia: murdered.

18) Mykhailo Plakhta, administrator in the village of Surokhiv: murdered.

19) Volodymyr Rydosh, administrator in the village of Velchykhovychi: murdered.

20) Anatol Sembratovych, parish priest in the village of Vakhiv: shot.

21) Bohdan Semkiv, curator of the village of Voroblyk: shot.

22) Stepan Shalash, parish priest in the village of Mystova: shot.

23) Rostyslav Shumylo, parish priest in the village of Zavadka Romanivska: murdered.

24) Yaroslav Shchyrba, parish priest in the village of Shkliary: murdered.

25) Adam Sliusarchyk, administrator of the village of Novyi Liublynets: shot.

26) Lev Sohor, administrator of the village of Ruska Kobylnytsia: murdered.

27) Ivan Sorokevych (80), parish priest in the village of Yukovychi: shot with his wife.

28) Hryhorii Syvak, parish priest in the village of Bukiv: tortured to death.

29) Mykhailo Velychko, parish priest in the village of Bosko: shot.

30) Orest Venhrynovych, parish priest in the village of Komancha: shot.

31) Stepan Venhrynovych, catechist in the city of Sianik: tortured in prison.

32) Petro Vovk, administrator in the village of Horynets: shot.

33) Petro Voitovych, parish priest in the village of Nehrybky: drowned in a well.

34) Osyp Yakymovych, parish priest in the village of Dubetsko: shot.

These documented eyewitness testimonies were compiled by Yulian Tarnovych and published in 1966 in the form of a brochure dedicated to the millennium of Christianity in Poland.

## “TIME HEALS ALL WOUNDS, BUT WHAT ABOUT MEMORY?”

*For Ukrainians in Poland the end of World War Two was the beginning of new suffering. For them it was hell on earth. It was as though a living body were being torn into pieces, with the forcible resettlement of Ukrainians eastward to the Ukrainian SSR taking place simultaneously with the westward deportation of Ukrainians during Operation Wisla. They were condemned not only as ordinary mortals in keeping with political calculations. They were condemned for professing one of the greatest ideals of all: freedom and independence. To be a Ukrainian in those days — dead or alive, born or unborn — was dangerous.*

*Sometimes fear and weakness give rise to aggression, hatred, and cruelty. Is this not why Poland persecuted (destroyed) everything that was a carrier of the Ukrainian spirit — language, churches, schools, songs, and historical memory? A negative image of Ukrainians was actively and systematically cultivated in Poland.*

*But, wonder of wonders, hell itself could not destroy us. We exist. We are in the East and the West, in small towns and large cities, in villages, in schools, with our language and our songs, in our churches. And the dead reside among the living because their memory is kept alive.*

*Our memory of the native lands from which we were expelled more than fifty years ago is*

*alive. Operation Wisla is another tragic page in the history of Ukrainians in Poland, and its consequences are still being felt today. Thousands of Ukrainian civilians, including women, children, and mostly elderly people, were forcibly deported by Polish troops, members of the civil militia, and security organs — packed into cargo trains and deported to the northern and western regions of Poland.*

*Thus, the Ukrainian deportees were forced to live in a foreign land, without schools where their native language could be heard, without neighbors with whom they could chat about everything, and without a future for their children. The feeling of temporariness never abandoned them, for it is difficult to warm a spot for yourself in a foreign land. They nurtured the hope that one day they would return to their land, that all this was just a terrible dream, and that soon — maybe tomorrow — they would awaken and once again hear the rustle of the forests, breathe in the scent of the fields, and the joyful ringing of the church bells would summon them to prayer, to give thanks to God for His grace.*

*Sofia Opar (née Romanyk) was a resident of the village of Vankova, county of Lisko, in the Lemko region. Today she lives in Australia where she settled with her husband and children in the 1960s.*

*She remembers everything to this day. Below is a fragment of her account of those times.*

After the war ended, all hell broke loose. There was no peace either day or night. In 1946 the Poles launched the forcible deportation of Ukrainians to the east. We hid in the forests. We slept on pine needles, ate roasted potatoes, and milked the cows. By autumn we were beginning to suffer from hunger and were forced to return to the village. My dad asked his son-in-law Andrii Polehenky to take over our farm because he had a gray ID card marked with the letter P [Pole], but my father had a blue card marked U [Ukrainian].

You may ask how my brother-in-law became a "Pole." It all started when his father was still working as a coach driver for a rich lord. In the winter he transported logs to the sawmill. The rich man promised to sell him a field at a lower price if he brought his birth certificate to the Polish priest. Because they were poor, the elder Polehenky said:

"What difference does it make where the birth certificate is kept, as long as my children have bread to eat?" He did as he was asked, but he was not fated to eat this bread from that field, because one day when he was delivering logs the load disengaged from the sled. Somehow he managed to get everything down the hill. When he tried to hook the sled up to the load, the horse kicked him in the head and he died on the spot.

So Andrii took over our homestead during the deportations to the Ukrainian SSR. When the army arrived at our house, the soldiers asked: "Who lives here?" Andrii showed his ID card with the letter P, and this is what saved us. They left us in peace, but not for long.

In the springtime the deportations started up again (Operation Wisla). My brothers were at home. Fedio somehow managed to forge some documents, while Ivan was hiding at home, because he was sick. Somehow we lived through that year. My father was tormented by asthma contracted from working in the mines in the US, where he had gone to work. So my fourteen-year-old brother Osyp and I, aged eighteen, ploughed the field ourselves.

One day in the winter of 1946, two armed Poles, who were going around robbing people, came to our house. They had been appointed by the government to "protect" the village. They

were both drunk and had submachine guns. They lined my father, two brothers, two sisters, and me against the wall in the kitchen. One of them began shooting, firing off a whole round of bullets. I don't know how things would have ended if the second Pole had not knocked his submachine gun upwards and said: "What are you doing, Janek?" The bullets flew above our heads.

We fell on the floor. Everything became still, and the strangers left. Another brother was in the hiding place, and he didn't know whether we were dead or alive, whether the Poles had gone or were still there. We picked ourselves off the floor and began asking each other if everyone was alright. Thank God, death passed us by. We had survived the horror. Polish and Soviet troops robbed our place seven times, because the Polish army could not handle all the looting and summoned Soviet troops to help. They were hunting for Banderites and at the same time they looted whatever they clapped eyes on: a watch or an item of clothing, footwear, or our emergency soap supply — they took everything. After the war there was nothing to buy because the Germans had confiscated everything, and people were very poor.

### **POLISH ARMY HEADQUARTERS IN OUR HOUSE**

Early in the spring of 1947 Polish troops arrived in our village. Our large new house stood near the road. Even though it was not completely finished, the Polish military set up their headquarters there. They were about to evict us, but my father begged them to let us stay, because it was a working farm, and the cows, horse, pigs, and chickens had to be fed. The army agreed and we stayed.

Under the floor in the room where interrogations were conducted was our hiding place, where my brother Ivan and another person were concealed. In the daytime the soldiers would bring our people from various neighboring villages to the room for interrogations. The prisoners were beaten mercilessly day and night. The Poles tortured Pshtur, the village administrator, and other people. They hitched him to a wagon and poured liquid manure into some barrels, and he had to drag it to the field. They beat him savagely because his son and son-in-law had joined the Ukrainian underground. Many people died as a result of the tortures.

Our people issued warnings to some individuals. So, in the daytime we sat in the stable and boiled potatoes intended for the pigs and ate them ourselves. From the barn we peeked through the cracks in the boards into the kitchen window of our house. We saw the Poles slamming a door onto the fingers of women and girls or sticking needles under their nails, shouting: "Admit that you contacted or brought food to the Banderites!"

Those who were caught doing something were tortured unbelievably. Some people could not endure their torments and died. Sometimes the interrogators would be changed for the day or they would go to Lisko for a rest, and the cook who was on duty would force me and my sister Ruzia to wash the blood-spattered walls and floor.

One day my sister pretended that we didn't know anything, and she asked him: "Why is everything so bloody here? What happened?" He said: "I was butchering a chicken, and it got away. That's why there's so much blood. And don't ask any more questions like that, because if you encounter someone different, you will suffer."

We laid some boards in two rooms that didn't have finished floors yet. We scattered some straw over them and slept like that. From here we managed to burrow through to the hideout, and secretly carried out the pails of earth to the stable. There was always a guard post stationed on a little hill behind the stable to protect the headquarters, and the whole village was surrounded. So my brother and his friend could not leave the hideout without attracting attention.

The population of the neighboring villages was being deported through Vankova on the way to Vilshanytsia and the station in Zahiria. Expecting that we too would be deported, my mother baked bread at my sister Yeva's house and dried rusks that would come in very handy on the road. In early May, on the sixth I think, army troops arrived in the village and shut down the headquarters. They began deporting the inhabitants. The army was still in charge of things in our house.

The nights were very bright, and our UPA soldiers could not leave the hideout. They were there until the very last night. Once they were inside the house, they put on dad's breeches, boots, and hats, and carrying a pail of slops for the pigs, they crossed to the stable. But the night

was bright and starry. The guard was stationed behind the stable, and the boys had to reach the water willow standing in the third field. Past it was a little ravine that would provide cover, and then they could get away safely. Inside the house we were praying to God to help them. Suddenly a little cloud appearing in the night sky passed in front of the moon. It became slightly darker, and at this moment the door to the stable opened. They came out and slipping on the frozen ground, they reached the safety of the willow tree, which hid them. We sat listening for gunfire. Everything was quiet.

## DEPORTATION

The Poles began deporting us the next morning. No one knew where we were going. It was so frightening and uneasy. People were lamenting, and some families became separated. Mother, who was suffering from calcified veins, was very worried about Ivan. She was packing a few things and went into the kitchen for some pots. She wanted to take the down comforters, but the soldiers didn't let her take a thing. They said: "This is all ours!" Mother began crying, but neither her tears nor her pleading helped. A soldier began beating her with his rifle butt. Mother left the kitchen and had to leave everything to the new masters. My father consoled her: "Don't cry, Kateryna, let them take everything, as long as they let us live."

People who owned horses were allowed to take more of their belongings. We loaded the wagon with our things. We took a few sacks of wheat, some farming tools, the cow, and the bull. In four hours we were heading for the station. Since my mother was very sick, we were put on the first transport. We left the following day, after spending the night outside the station. The night passed uneasily. People were looking for their family members; there was much crying, and the cattle was lowing.

The next day seven families, including ours, were shoved into a train car. The doors were closed. Soon we had problems breathing because there was only one small window near the ceiling, and it was very dark, even though it was a beautiful spring day. In these conditions we were brought to Oswiecim. Fortunately, no one from this transport was arrested. But someone told the train conductors that we were transporting a

Banderite hidden in a chest. Our train car and all our baggage were taken apart and reloaded. Fortunately, they didn't find anyone. Each of us was brought separately for questioning to a cabin situated between the train cars, where the conductor sat. They asked us about my brother. We all said the same thing: the Germans had taken him away. We managed to avoid being arrested. At the next station, where we were given some kind of soup, we noticed that the train cars with our grain and our belongings were not there. They probably unhooked them back in Oswiecim and sent us off with nothing.

On 19 May we reached the station at Binche. It was very early and you couldn't see anything through the thick fog. We were made to disembark in the middle of a field. It was cold. We were hungry, because we had eaten the rusks a long time ago. When it became light, we saw some of our property. We hitched our bull Hryfko to the wagon and set out to our designated place. We walked for eighteen kilometers to the village of Ciezne in Człuchów County, in the province of Koszalin. The village administrator told everyone where they were supposed to go. Perhaps because mother was very weak, we were the first to be assigned to a nearby house that was in ruins and had broken windows. Two days later my mother died.

Before the expulsions the Poles told my brother-in-law Andrii: "When the Ukrainians are deported, take whatever place you want and start farming, because you are a Pole." But my sister was outraged by the harm that had been done to us and she said: "Since my family has been chased out like this, I won't stay here. We're going too; their fate will be our fate."

Then they voluntarily went to report themselves and left. They were sent to the city of Leduczka, about nine kilometers from us. We felt like prisoners in our new place. We were forbidden to go to the neighboring village. When we asked the village administrator where my sister and her family lived, he told us but refused to give us permission to invite her to our mother's funeral. We were the only ones who brought my mother to the cemetery, where we buried her without a priest or a Christian burial. Father lived with us for ten more years. By then we were attending a Roman Catholic church. We learned how to speak and pray in Polish, because we were very devout and needed spiritual care. Even

so, in 1957, when my father died, the Polish Catholic priest did not let us bring his body to the church, according to Christian custom. He locked the doors and only sprinkled a few drops of holy water on the coffin.

## ARRESTS

At work we became acquainted with a lot of people. There was a widow from Vankova in that village, who lived with her sister and younger brother. Young people began gathering at their place. One of them was Yulia Shvan, who was a member of the Ukrainian underground; she was expecting a child. She was hiding and needed to make fake documents under the name Maria Brelyk. She asked my sister Ruzia, who was twenty-two, to be her witness.

One day in the spring of 1948 a group of people, young and old, gathered at the widow's place. They exchanged a few jokes, laughed, sang a few humorous songs, and went home. The next day the militia came and arrested all the people who had been at the house and took them to the prison in Człuchów. One of them was that woman from the underground. Somehow the authorities found out about her, and she was sentenced to five years in prison. She gave birth in jail, and Petro Shtynda and his family raised the child.

My sister Ruzia was held for six months and then released. Those prisoners were severely tortured. I remember that when Ruzia was released, she said that they were be summoned for interrogation once or twice a night, and during the day they weren't allowed to sit or even lean against the wall. Kulakowski, a Polish security service interrogator, was a torturer whom all the prisoners feared. Ruzia was interrogated about our brother Ivan, the UPA fighter. But she was tortured mostly for being a nationally conscious Ukrainian and for having acted as a false witness. She was never prosecuted, because the authorities had no grounds to try her, and she was released.

I met a boy in the underground, who lived in Leduczka. Even though so many years have passed, I am still afraid, particularly when I see a policeman or a soldier in uniform. This terrible fear comes over me in various situations.

**Maria Pankiv**





*The consecration of a monument to the heroes who fell in the struggle for Ukraine's freedom while protecting their countrymen from marauding bands of Polish troops.*



*A memorial plaque listing the names of people who were murdered during the night of 17-18 April 1945 in the village of Malkovychi during the deportation of Ukrainians from the Western Ukrainian lands beyond the Curzon Line (Zakerzonnia).*



## **MONUMENT TO THE HEROES OF THE UPA (HRUSHOVYCHI)**

*This monument to the heroes of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army was unveiled on Sunday, 9 October 1994. The commemoration of the fallen UPA heroes began with Holy Masses said in the villages of Khotyntsi and Kalnykove. From there the procession went to the cemetery in Hrushovychi. People carried crosses, religious banners, and blue-and-yellow Ukrainian flags. May the memory of these heroes live forever! Eternal glory to them!*

# CRIME:

## UKRAINIAN CATHOLICISM'S WAY OF THE CROSS

The fate of Christianity in Ukraine is closely connected to the destiny of the Ukrainian nation. Throughout the centuries Christ's Church was often the sole protectress of Ukraine's religious and national spirit, and identity. Our neighbors and political foes, Poland and Russia, understood the great role of the Ukrainian Church. Under the veil of sharing the same faith and similar rite, Russia in particular often interfered in the life and activity of the Ukrainian Church in order to restore Russian rule. The Muscovite state destroyed the Ukrainian nation and its cultural and state-building aspirations, while religious Moscow persistently destroyed the religious spirit of the Ukrainian nation by forcibly driving Ukrainian Catholics to (Muscovite) Orthodoxy," writes Rev. A. H. Velyky.

After occupying Ukrainian lands weakened by the struggle against Asia, Roman Catholic Poland rejected and did not try to support Eastern-rite Ukrainian Christianity on its territory, regarding it as an inferior kind of Christianity. This attitude led to resistance on the part of the Ukrainian masses and propelled them into the orbit of Constantinople's influences, and after its decline in 1453, into the "embrace" of political and Orthodox Muscovy.

Neglected by the Greek metropolitans, the Ukrainian church went into decline. The Kyivan metropolitans — Greeks sent from Constantinople — fearing Tatar incursions, moved their base and their title of metropolitans of Kyiv and all of Rus' to Moscow. This enabled the Muscovite tsars to obtain an agreement from the Constantinople patriarchs to create a separate Muscovite Metropolitanate in 1448, and in time a patriarchate (1589), after co-opting the title "...and of all Rus'" for its metropolitans and patriarchs. The claims of the Muscovite metropolitans and patriarchs that Moscow was the Third Rome and the guardian of Orthodoxy in the East grew in direct proportion to the political growth of the Muscovite empire.

In order to escape Greek and Muscovite influences, the Ukrainian Church in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth found a solution and salvation through a union with the Apostolic See

in Rome (Union of Brest, 1596). The Ukrainian Church thus acquired equal rights with the state Roman Catholic Church in Poland sidestepped interference from Moscow and Constantinople, which was dependent on the Turks.

Initially, Poland supported the Union of Brest, hoping to use it to build a bridge for converting the Ukrainian nation to the Latin rite and for Polonizing the population. Meanwhile, Muscovy, preoccupied with the idea of the Third Rome, turned itself — with the assistance of Ukrainian turncoats — into a protector of Orthodoxy in the Polish-ruled Ukrainian lands. This was the reason behind the persecutions of the Uniates and the systematic destruction of Ukrainian Catholicism while Muscovy steadily occupied Ukrainian lands.

Moscow was instrumental in the fall of the first victims — supporters of the Union: the attack on Metropolitan Ipatii Potii in 1609, and the martyr's death in 1623 of Archbishop of Polotsk, Yosafat Kuntsevych.

Russia and Poland had grasped the inner strength of the Ukrainian Church, and with concerted effort each country, in its own fashion, sought to destroy it. This was the beginning of Ukrainian Catholicism's way of the cross, which lasted for nearly 400 years.

In his book *How Moscow Destroyed the Ukrainian Church*, the Basilian monk, historian, and journalist Teofil Kostruba writes: "In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries Moscow monopolized the right to champion Orthodox interests and even reproached the Greeks for having departed from original, pure Orthodoxy. Thus, the Orthodox faith and the church became tools in the hands of the Muscovite government, and Moscow became the 'Third Rome.' The policies of the Muscovite government and Orthodoxy became synonymous: the tsars were called upon to take care of Orthodox believers, while the latter were supposed to appeal to Moscow for protection from repression. This was indeed the case. The Muscovite tsars thus had an excellent moral argument for the 'gathering of the Rus' lands.' Dynastic right was not sufficient. With minor exceptions, the Ukrainian and Belarusian lands came under Lithuanian rule, and later, the

Polish kings. The rule of both had legal foundations, more so than the incursions on the part of the new Romanov dynasty of Russia. Therefore, to use a current expression, 'a nationalistic moment' had to be exploited, which now had a confessional form. It was easy for Moscow to lure the Orthodox of Lithuania and Poland out of purported concern for them. In time, this 'care' led to intervention in Poland and the three partitions of 1772, 1793, and 1795" (pp. 9-10).

As a synthesis of Eastern and Western spirituality — Christianity of the Eastern rite blended with the mentality of Western Catholicism — the Union, which was Western-oriented, was a nation-building factor and, as such, an obstacle to the imperialistic policies of the Muscovite tsars and patriarchs in their efforts to include Ukraine in the orbit of their influences. It is therefore understandable that they did everything they could to destroy it.

According to Kostruba, "Already in October 1656 in their negotiations with the Poles, Muscovite envoys concluded that 'within a short period of time the Union must be destroyed everywhere, with no regard for diplomas and privileges that the kings gave to the Uniates.'" In keeping with this principle, Tsar Alexei gave an order to his voivode in Vilnius, Prince Shakhovskoi: "Immediately expel all Uniates from the city of Vilnius and from neighboring cities and towns, so that under their influence there will be no deviations from the Orthodox faith." The tsar's order was carried out. Those who valued their faith were exiled, while those who were weaker were 'converted' to the Orthodox faith (p. 11).

To a great degree the Poles were to blame for the gravitation of Ruthenian Uniates in Ukraine and Belarus toward Moscow. After the Lithuanian-Ruthenian Kingdom was annexed to the Polish Crown (Union of Lublin, 1569) the Poles persecuted the Ukrainian and Belarusian populations on the occupied territories in an effort to convert them to the Latin rite. Despite state treaties on the equal rights of the faithful of both the Latin and Byzantine rites, for centuries the Poles sought to "convert" Orthodox believers to their sole "righteous" Catholic Church, in keeping with the slogan "Cuius regio, eius religio" (Whose rule, that one's religion) through deceit, and even by "fire and sword." The Poles did not amend their attitude to the Ukrainian Church (Catholic

and Orthodox), sad proof of which was the so-called revindication of Orthodox (and former Uniate) churches in the Kholm and Pidliashia regions in 1938. The only hierarch who raised his voice in defense of the Orthodox in Poland was the Ukrainian Greek Catholic metropolitan, Andrei Sheptytsky.

The Poles behaved no differently during Operation Wisla, when they destroyed Ukrainian Orthodox and Greek Catholic churches, used them for non-religious purposes, and deported the population of the Lemko, Kholm, and Pidliashia regions after the Second World War (1945-1947).

Poland's Latinizing pressure sparked hatred for Rome and the flight to the "protective mantle" of Moscow. The Poles explained the Ukrainians' resistance to Latinization and Polonization as the Ukrainians' detestation of Rome, and this is how they represented Ukrainians in the Vatican, thereby propelling the Ukrainian Church into Moscow's "embrace."

First and foremost, the Poles viewed the Union as protecting Ukrainian ethnicity. Therefore, its nationally conscious existence was a danger to the Poles' own nationality and state, writes Hryhor Luzhnytsky (p. 392). "Despite bans issued by the Apostolic See and the popes' numerous appeals and reminders, the Polish Catholic hierarchy and clergy forcibly converted Ukrainian Uniates to the Latin rite and justified their actions to Rome by declaring that the 'Ruthenians were voluntarily accepting the Latin faith'" (p. 407).

For that reason, Ukrainian bishops frequently appealed for help and protection to the patriarchs of Byzantium, Rome, and occasionally even Moscow. The latter, however, regarding itself as the Third Rome and the protector of Orthodoxy, exploited these occasions and under the veil of a common rite, interfered in the religious affairs of the Orthodox in Poland (and occasionally in Austria). The Orthodox Church in Ukraine became the plaything of two states: Poland and Russia, two countries that were competing with each other to subjugate the Ukrainian lands and the Ukrainian nation to their own interests.

Embittered against Latin Catholicism, the Greek patriarchs simply propelled the Ukrainian church in Ukraine in the direction and influence of Moscow. Owing to the Poles' folly and arrogance, in Ukraine resistance to Poland and

Rome emerged together with a favorable regard on the part of the Ukrainian nation and the newly created Orthodox hierarchy (1620) for Moscow, which ably capitalized on this.

## THE COSSACK PERIOD

The Ukrainian Cossacks played a sad role in the destruction of the Union. In their treaties with Poland, Khmelnytsky (Treaty of Zboriv, 1649) and even Vyhovsky (Treaty of Hadiach, 1658) demanded the destruction of the Union. There was no room for Uniates. Even the Polish kings agreed to its abolition (Wladyslaw IV, 1632). After the Treaty of Andrusovo was concluded between Poland and Muscovy (1667) which divided Ukraine between these two states, all of Right-Bank Ukraine came under Polish rule and within a short period of time became almost exclusively Uniate. Nevertheless, after the Treaty of Pereiaslav was concluded in 1654, Moscow continued to regard itself the “guardian” of Ukraine and its church and did not stop interfering in its life. Moscow became a “haven” for all those Orthodox clergymen and faithful who were allegedly being persecuted by the Uniates and the Poles.

In May 1688 Patriarch Dionysius IV of Constantinople transferred the Kyiv Metropolitanate to the Muscovite patriarchate. That same year Moscow forbade the Kyiv metropolitan to use the title “...and all Rus’ — only “Metropolitan of Kyiv and Halych and Little Russia” (Luzhnytsky, p. 144).

Tsar Peter I justifiably earned the disgraceful title of the Union’s executioner, when with his own hands he murdered two Basilian hieromonks in Polotsk in 1705. Later, he excused himself by saying that he had been drunk. The Russian ruler imprisoned Bishop Dionisii Zhabokrytsky in 1710 and forced him to convert to Russian Orthodoxy. When the bishop refused, the tsar castigated him, spit in his face, and struck him in the chest with his fist. Later, the tsar exiled the Ukrainian prelate to the Solovets Islands, where he died in 1715.

## THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

After the three partitions of Poland, almost all the Ukrainian and Belarusian lands (with the

exception of Galicia) came under Russian control, and the physical destruction of the Union in Right-Bank Ukraine soon followed.

Catherine II had confiscated the church’s property in Russia in 1764 (in 1786 in Ukraine). Thenceforward the clergy was supported by the state, a situation that made the church and clerics extremely dependent on the state leadership. Since that time (and to a great extent until the present day) the Orthodox Church in Ukraine became a tool of the Russian government to Russify the Ukrainian people. Despite the fact that the tsarina had signed an accord on religious tolerance in 1773, that same year she issued an ukase that set the stage for the mass conversion of Uniate believers.

According to the writer, journalist, and scholar Hryhor Luzhnytsky, these conversions were carried out in a simple fashion. It was enough for one or two “volunteers” in a community to opt for Orthodoxy for the parish to be transferred instantly to the Orthodox Church. The Uniate priest would be ejected from the parish, and disobedient parishioners were persecuted.

A parish officially consisted of 100 households, but because many villages did not have the required number of homes, the government liquidated such “superfluous” parishes or merged them into larger Orthodox ones. As a result of this “peaceful conversion” of Uniates in Right-Bank Ukraine, during almost a quarter of a century (1773-1796) the Union lost 8 million believers, 9,316 churches, and 135 Basilian monasteries.

In his 1906 study of the Uniate Church in Lithuania and Ukraine in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Edward Likowski describes the “voluntary” conversions of Uniates to Orthodoxy: “After arriving with the army in a Uniate village, Orthodox priests would order the church bells to be rung and the people assembled. Meanwhile, in the church and at the cemetery behind it they prepared piles of switches and cudgels with which the soldiers threatened the people. Later, the priest donned church vestments and read out the tsarina’s order to accept godliness. He threatened the disobedient with harsh vengeance and promised favors to supporters.

If people remained silent or said they wanted to remain in the Union, the priest would strike them in the face, often drawing blood; he would grab them by the hair inside the church and throw

them on the floor. Then, on the officer's order, the soldiers would bring the community elders to the cemetery and beat them with switches or cudgels. If even this did not help, the church would be locked, the Uniate priest clapped in irons and brought to the county authorities, and imprisoned together with common criminals for several weeks... After witnessing the terrible lawlessness and violence against his church, Bishop Mykhailo Stadnytsky of Lutsk, fled from Volyn to Warsaw, where he lost his sanity and died in 1797."

## THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

The destruction of the Union in Belarus and the Kholm and Pidliashia regions was carried out systematically, in keeping with the motto of the "gendarme of Europe," Tsar Nicholas I (1825-1855): "autocracy, Orthodoxy, and nationality." The Union was painted as a Polish intrigue, while Orthodoxy was represented as the "ancestral faith."

A tsarist ukase of 1832 obliged parents in mixed marriages to raise their children in the Orthodox faith. Joint Roman and Eastern-rite Catholic processions, liturgies, and Holy Communion were banned. Uniates were ordered to use liturgical books printed in Moscow, forbidden to build new churches, while former Ukrainian Catholic churches were transferred to the Orthodox.

Under the pretext that the Uniates had taken part in the Polish uprisings of 1830-1831 and 1863 against Moscow, the Russian government eradicated the Union on its occupied lands: Belarus, the Kholm and Pidliashia regions, and the so-called "Polish Kingdom."

The persecution of the Ukrainian Catholic Church in the Kholm and Pidliashia regions was launched in 1836 with the aid of Uniate apostates, like Markil Popel, under the pretext of removing Latin influences from the rite. Aply exploiting both Polish chauvinism and the Austrian government, Moscow generously funded manifestations of support among those Muscophile Ukrainians who sought Moscow's protection. The Russians applied the tactic of using Ukrainians to destroy Ukrainians.

While the liberal Western European press remained silent about these "loving conversions,"

Pope Gregory XVI raised his voice in protest. In November 1838 he expressed his pain in connection with the persecutions and in the summer of 1840 sent a letter to the Russian tsar in this matter. But his efforts were in vain (Kostruba, p. 69).

In 1905, after official permission was granted for people wishing to change religions, Uniates who had been forcibly converted to Orthodoxy were forbidden to return to the Union. They could adopt the Latin rite or remain members of the Russian Orthodox Church. During this period more than 200,000 inhabitants of the Kholm region adopted Roman Catholicism and soon became Polonized.

The fate of Ukrainian Catholic believers, who after the partition of Poland ended up under Austrian rule, was no easier. On 24 February 1807 the Galician Metropolitanate was created, and the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church obtained equal rights with the Roman Catholic clergy. The Russian government financially supported the Muscophile movement in Galicia and encouraged Ukrainians to return to the "ancestral faith" and the "Russian nationality." In the eyes of Moscow, Galicia was a nest of "Mazepites and aspirations for independence." Hence, Greek Catholicism, which was an obstacle to Russification, represented a threat to Russian unity. The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church had to be destroyed so that the Galicians could be "reunited."

During World War One and the Russian occupation of Galicia, Metropolitan Sheptytsky of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church was deported to the east. By 27 September 1914 the Orthodox prelate Evlohii was appointed bishop of Galicia. The tone of his sermon against Greek Catholics was so harsh and intolerant that even the Russian censors banned it.

## THE FINAL GOLGOTHA OF THE UGCC

Wherever the Russians stepped foot in Ukraine, they destroyed the Union and imposed Muscovite Orthodoxy. During the Second World War the Soviets occupied Galicia, and with this occupation came slavery and religious persecution. The hallmarks of this persecution were: confiscation of church lands, a ban on

public church manifestations, including the teaching of religion, arrests of priests, disbandment of monasteries and all ecclesiastical, scholarly, and charitable institutions and organizations, as well as excessive taxation of churches, designed to propel the Uniate Church toward self-liquidation.

As a result of the first Soviet occupation (1939-1941) the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church emerged materially poorer but spiritually tested and stronger.

During the Nazi occupation of Galicia Metropolitan Sheptytsky lodged protests against Nazi violence against Ukrainians and Jews, and provided spiritual care to those Ukrainians who had been taken as slave laborers to Germany. In his last message to the faithful before his death on 1 November 1944 the metropolitan predicted the way of the cross and the resurrection of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church: "Our Church will be destroyed and smashed by the Bolsheviks. But hold on. Do not stray from the faith, from the Catholic Church. The difficult experience that will befall our Church is temporary. I see the rebirth of our Church. It will be more beautiful and grander than the past one, and it will embrace our entire nation. Ukraine will be freed from its decline and will become a mighty, united, and great state that will be the equal of other highly developed states. Peace, prosperity, happiness, high culture, mutual love, and accord will reign supreme. All this will come to pass as I say..."

A new wave of persecutions of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church unfolded after the second Soviet invasion of Galicia in 1944.

Guided by the principle, "Strike the shepherd and the sheep will disperse," during the night of 10-11 April 1945 the NKVD in Lviv arrested Metropolitan Josyf Slipyj and his assistants, Bishop Nykyta Budka and Bishop Mykolai Charnetsky. In Stanyslaviv the NKVD arrested Bishop Hryhorii Khomyshyn and his assistant, Bishop Ivan Liatyshevsky. A similar fate befell the two Ukrainian bishops in Peremyshl, whom Moscow handed over to Poland. In January 1946 the Poles arrested Bishop Yosafat Kotsylovsky and his assistant, Bishop Hryhorii Lakota, and handed them over to the Soviets. In Germany the UGCC's administrator, Rev. Petro Verhun, was arrested. All the Ukrainian prelates were brought to Kyiv, where they were tried

behind closed doors on charges of committing "political crimes" against the Soviet government, and sentenced to long terms of imprisonment. Bishops Khomyshyn and Kotsylovsky died after being tortured in a Kyiv prison in 1947. The only hierarch of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church to survive was Metropolitan Slipyj, who was released after eighteen years' imprisonment in the concentration camps of the Soviet Union in February 1963 through the intercession of Pope John XXIII.

In an interview with Rev.-Dr. Ivan Hryniach, later published in "*Litopys Holhoty Ukrainy*" (Chronicle of Ukraine's Golgotha) vol. 2: *Represovana Tserkva* (The Repressed Church, Drohobych, 1994), Metropolitan Slipyj recalled:

"The real reason for my arrest was that I was the metropolitan, and therefore [the Soviet authorities] demanded apostasy from me and offered me the Kyivan Metropolitanate. In fact, they could not accuse me of anything and said that I was in prison in place of Metropolitan Andrei [Sheptytsky] 'because he died and we cannot punish him.'... Patriarch Aleksei of Moscow played a sad role [in the persecutions] of our Church because he became passionately 'involved' in the Galician Metropolitanate, and with his authority he abetted the KGB's violence in the liquidation of our Church, [and] 'he had to show mercy and occupy himself with the flock abandoned by the pastors, because all the bishops had fled,' at the very time that we were under arrest and perishing in the prisons of Kyiv... Later I was also accused of bolstering and supporting Metropolitan Andrei in his counterrevolutionary activity. In short, the charge sounded like this: [I was] a Vatican spy, an enemy of the Soviet people, as a church hierarch I lived off the people, in a word — a counterrevolutionary..."

A similar fate befell our Church in Transcarpathia in 1947 and Slovakia in 1950. After the forcible annexation of Transcarpathia to the Ukrainian SSR, the Soviets unleashed a wave of persecutions targeting the local bishop, Teodor Romzha, who was wounded and later murdered in a hospital. In Slovakia Bishop Pavlo Goidych and his assistant Vasyl Hopko were arrested and imprisoned in Leopoldov Prison in Czechoslovakia.

The arrests of the Ukrainian Catholic hierarchs were followed by the persecution and arrests of the lay and monastic clergy, and efforts were renewed to engineer the “return” of the Ukrainian clergy and their faithful to Russian Orthodoxy. In Galicia this “movement” was headed by the Ukrainian Catholic apostate, Rev. Havryil Kostelnyk. On 8-10 March 1946 a “council” took place in Lviv, during which the Ukrainian Catholic Church was forcibly liquidated.

The hounding and ultimate liquidation of the UGCC in Galicia, Transcarpathia, and the Ukrainian lands under Poland and Czechoslovakia were the final links in a long chain of Moscow-inspired persecution. Throughout the centuries, wherever it could, Moscow destroyed our church, murdering hierarchs, priests, and the faithful, or forcibly converted them to Russian Orthodoxy.

In the eyes of political and ecclesiastical Moscow, the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church was a symbol of Ukrainian separatism and independence. In both the tsarist and communist empires it was possible for Judaism and Islam to exist, but there was no place for the Ukrainian Catholic Church, because the Catholic religion and the Ukrainian rite were a synthesis of the Eastern and Western spirits, turning the Ukrainian people toward the West, to Europe, rather than Moscow.

### MATERIAL LOSSES OF THE UGCC

As of 1939-1950: five eparchies; two Administratures and Apostolic Visitatures; ten bishops. The faithful: 2,950 lay people (50 percent of whom were arrested, tried, and deported to Siberia; 20 percent went underground or emigrated; 30 percent were forcibly converted to Russian Orthodoxy); 520 monks were dispersed, arrested, and deported to Siberia; 540 theologians were dispersed; 1,090 nuns were dispersed and deported to Siberia; 4,283,000 faithful, many of whom were

imprisoned and deported to Siberia — most believers engaged in passive resistance; 3,040 parishes were liquidated or forcibly transferred to the Russian Orthodox Church; 4,440 churches and chapels were closed or forcibly transferred; 195 monasteries and theological institutions were liquidated; Catholic schools (i.e., schools on Ukrainian lands in which the Greek Catholic religion was taught): 9,900 elementary schools, 380 high schools, and 56 institutions of higher education were either liquidated or converted to atheistic institutions; 41 Ukrainian Catholic organizations, 38 periodicals, and 35 publishing houses were liquidated.

**Rt. Rev. Mitered Ivan Shevtsiv**

Sydney

#### Sources:

Kostruba, Teofil, Rev. *Iak Moskva nyschyla Ukrainsku Tserkvu* (How Moscow Destroyed the Ukrainian Church). Toronto: n. publ., 1961.

*Litopys Holhoty Ukrainy* (Chronicle of Ukraine's Golgotha), vol. 2: *Represovana Tserkva* (The Repressed Church). Drohobych: Vidrodzhennia, 1994.

Luzhnytsky, Hryhor. *Ukrainska Tserkva mizh Skhodom i Zakhodom* (The Ukrainian Church between East and West). Philadelphia: n. publ., 1954.

*Martyrolohiia Ukrainykykh Tserkov* (Martyrology of the Ukrainian Churches), 4 vols., vol. 2: *Ukrainska Katolytska Tserkva* (The Ukrainian Catholic Church). Toronto-Baltimore: Smoloskyp, 1985.

Nahaievsky, I. Rev. *Katolytska Tserkva u mynulomu i suchasnomu Ukrainy* (The Catholic Church in Ukraine's Past and Present). Philadelphia: n. publ., 1950.

Shevtsiv, Ivan, Rt. Rev. Mitered. *Za iednist Tserkvy i Narodu* (For Unity of Church and Nation). Melbourne: n. publ., 1973.

Stakhiv, Matvii. *Khrystova Tserkva v Ukraini 988-1596* (Christ's Church in Ukraine, 988-1596). Stamford, CN: n. publ., 1985.

Velyky, A. H. Rev. *Khresnyi Shliakh Ukrainskoho Katolytsyzmu* (The Ukrainian Church's Way of the Cross). Lviv: n. publ., 1995



# **PATRIARCH JOSYF CARDINAL SLIPYJ AND THE MARTYRS FOR CHRIST'S FAITH**



## **PATRIARCH JOSYF CARDINAL SLIPYJ (1892 - 1984)**

His Eminence Patriarch Josyf Cardinal Slipyj, Kobernytsky-Dychkovsky, was born on 17 February 1892 in the village of Zazdrist, Terebovlia County, Galicia. After completing the Ternopil Gymnasium in 1911, he studied at the Lviv Theological Seminary and from 1912, in Innsbruck, where he obtained a doctorate in theology in 1916. He was ordained on 30 September 1917 by the Lord's Servant, Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky. After further studies in Innsbruck and the Oriental Institute in Rome, he was appointed Professor Habilitatus of Dogma. In 1922 he began teaching dogma at the Lviv Theological Seminary and was appointed rector in 1925. Slipyj was the cofounder of the

Theological Scholarly Society and eventually its permanent head. He helped develop the Lviv seminary to such a degree that in 1928 it was restyled as a Theological Academy, and His Eminence became its permanent rector until his imprisonment.

He reformed the curriculum of his academy in keeping with the latest models and requirements of his native church, wrote scholarly works, edited the theological journal *Bohosloviia* published scholarly works, traveled on scholarly matters to various universities abroad, and took part in the Velehrad Union congresses and other scholarly forums.

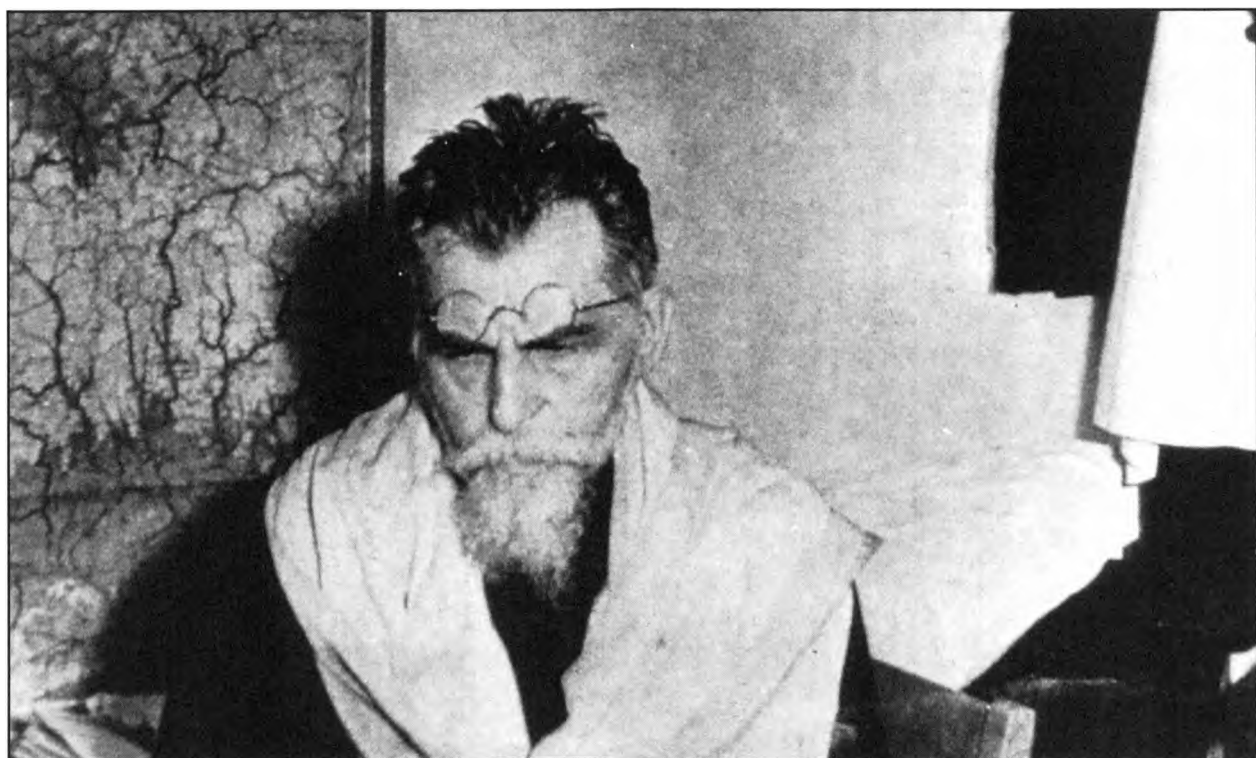
The Second World War did not interrupt Slipyj's activity, despite the difficult circumstances.

On 22 December 1939, during the first Soviet occupation, Metropolitan

Sheptytsky consecrated Slipyj bishop with the right of succession. After the death of Metropolitan Sheptytsky, amid the destruction of our church and nation, Bishop Slipyj became the head of the Martyred Church and the spiritual father of his nation.

Bishop Slipyj was named metropolitan of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church during one of the most tragic periods in the history of the Ukrainian nation and its church on 1 November 1944, three months after the second Soviet occupation of Lviv.

Like his teacher and spiritual father, Metropolitan Andrei, Metropolitan Slipyj did not abandon his flock during the trials and tribulations of his church. He was always guided by these words of Christ: "And ye shall be hated by all because of my name, but he who hath endured to the end, he shall be saved. . . The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord" (Matt. 10: 22 and 24).



*Metropolitan Josyf Slipyj during his arrest on 11 April 1945. This photograph was found in the KGB archives.*

On 11 April 1945 Metropolitan Slipyj was arrested by the Soviet authorities and sentenced in Kyiv to eight years' imprisonment in Siberian concentration camps. In 1953 he received an additional sentence. He was again re-sentenced in 1957 to seven years' hard labor. In 1962 he was sentenced a fourth time to a term in the concentration camps of Mordovia. Altogether the metropolitan served a term of eighteen years' imprisonment, exile, and hard labor in the GULAG. Like Metropolitan Sheptytsky and the first confessors and martyrs, Metropolitan Slipyj accepted his path of suffering. Even in the camps the metropolitan wrote numerous epistles to his faithful and the clergy, calling upon them to be steadfast in their faith and loyal to the Apostolic See, and not doubt the prophetic words of Metropolitan Sheptytsky about the resurrection of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church. The personality and stance of Metropolitan Sheptytsky inspired Slipyj to endure his imprisonment courageously and steadfastly, and he often recalled his predecessor in his epistles and memoirs.

In 1960 Pope John XXIII granted His Eminence Josyf Slipyj the title of cardinal *in lectore*.

On 9 November 1963 the metropolitan was released from imprisonment through the pope's intercession and immediately took part in the

Second Vatican Council. On 25 February 1965 Pope Paul VI appointed Slipyj cardinal.

During his twenty-one years in freedom Cardinal Slipyj visited every Ukrainian community in the world. He united the Ukrainian episcopate into the Synod of the Ukrainian Church and in 1975 accepted the title of Patriarch of Kyiv and Galicia. Anticipating papal recognition, he purchased a monastery for the Studite Order of monks and assembled them from every part of the world. He founded and built St. Clement's Ukrainian Catholic University and the Cathedral of St. Sophia, reacquired the Church of Saints Sergius and Bacchus with the patriarch's residence for the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, and founded a Ukrainian parish. He organized the St. Sophia Theological Seminary in Rome, established six branches of the Ukrainian Catholic University in various countries, and launched a series of translations of liturgical books into Ukrainian.

Patriarch Josyf Cardinal Slipyj died in his home near St. Sophia's Cathedral in Rome on 7 September 1984 and was buried in the crypt of this church on 13 September 1984. Shortly after the first anniversary of the proclamation of Ukraine's independence, on 29 August 1992, his remains were transferred from Rome to Lviv, where he was interred in the crypt of St. George's Cathedral.



*The funeral of His Eminence Patriarch Josyf Slipyj in St. George's Cathedral, Lviv.*



*Metropolitan Josyf Slipyj, accompanied by Bishop Ivan Buchko, meets Pope John XXIII in Rome after his release from the GULAG.*

# BISHOP YOSAFAT KOTSYLOVSKY (1876-1947)



Bishop Yosafat (secular name: Yosyf) was born on 3 March 1876 in the Lemko village of Pakoshivka near the city of Sianik. His father was a member of the Galician Sejm. After completing high school in the town of Yaslo, he began law studies at Lviv University. During a five-year period (1896-1901) the young student searched for his calling and paths of self-realization. In 1898 he interrupted his studies and enrolled in a one-year course for artillery reserve officers in Vienna. After completing his studies, Kotsylovsky spent a few more months in military service and then left the army with the intention of pursuing theology. In 1901 he began studies at the Collegium Ruthenum in Rome on the advice of Bishop Chekhovych of Peremyshl. As a young seminarian, he quickly made a name for himself while working as a librarian, prefect, and editor of the journal *Zapysky pytomtsiv Ruskoj Kolegii u*

*Rymi* (Notes of the Seminarians of the Ruthenian Collegium in Rome). He completed his theological studies at the Angelicum, the Dominican University in Rome, obtaining a doctorate in philosophy in 1903 and one in theology in 1907. The young scholar then returned to Galicia, where he was ordained on 9 October. Shortly afterwards he was appointed vice-rector and professor of theology at the Stanyslaviv Theological Seminary.

On 2 October 1911 Rev.- Dr. Kotsylovsky entered the novitiate of the Basilian Order and adopted the name Yosafat. As a monk he was known for his strict discipline, profound humility, and love of prayer. On 16 May 1913 he became a hieromonk and began teaching theology at the Basilian Monastery in Lavriv. In 1914 he went to Moravia, where he was the rector of the theological seminary. In 1916 he returned to Western Ukraine and became a fully ordained monk.

On 23 September 1917 he was appointed bishop of the Peremyshl-Sambir eparchy. After his ordination in Peremyshl, Bishop Yosafat began building up the bishopric. His work in the oldest Ukrainian eparchy coincided with the difficult period of World War One. At this time the Austrian authorities were

imprisoning many priests and lay people in the concentration camp of Talerhof for their Muscophile sympathies. The bishop's efforts to obtain their release succeeded owing to his personal acquaintance with Emperor Karl I of Austria whom he knew from his military service.

The first steps of the new bishop won him the affection of both the clergy and lay people, as attested by his first epistle dated 12 November 1917. Bishop Kotsylovsky worked to consolidate monastic life, strengthen national missions and recollections, distribute religious literature and press, and organize youth. In 1921 he founded a theological seminary in Peremyshl. He was especially concerned with the devotional and educational level of his priests with whom he held frequent discussions. The bishop introduced courses on ascetism and mysticism, and launched monthly theological debates. He sent his best

students for studies abroad, to the universities of Rome, Innsbruck, and various cities in France.

Bishop Yosafat constantly encouraged the priests in his eparchy to deepen their spiritual life. With this aim, he issued pastoral letters, convened frequent conferences and mini-synods for the clergy, and ordered them to take part in at least three recollections every year. The bishop also cared for monastic orders and communities, as well as orphanages, kindergartens, and schools staffed by Sister Servants and Basilian nuns.

Bishop Yosafat drafted statutes for the Sisters of St. Joseph, which were ratified by the Apostolic See. As a true pupil of Christ, he endured many sufferings, which began in 1939, when the Soviets occupied the eastern part of his eparchy together with Peremyshl. After the three-year Nazi occupation, the bishop was arrested by Polish state security on 21 September 1945 and transferred to the Riashiv jail, where he remained until 17 January 1946. The following day he was handed over to the Soviets, who sent him to an NKVD prison until 24 January. He was then released and sent back to Peremyshl. Predicting that he would be rearrested and deported to the USSR, Bishop Yosafat took part in a conference of Polish bishops in Czestochowa, where he passed a handwritten message of declaration of loyalty to Pope Pius XII: "In the event of my

arrest and deportation I humbly request that the Holy Father be informed that I am declaring my loyalty and complete devotion to him to the last beat of my heart, pleading in a filial manner for his paternal blessing."

On 26 June 1946 Bishop Yosafat was rearrested and forcibly deported to the east by Polish and Soviet troops. He was moved from prison to prison, where he experienced terrible abuse and was urged to collaborate. After his transfer to Kyiv, the Soviet authorities tried to persuade him to convert to Orthodoxy, a suggestion that the bishop decisively rejected. He insisted that he was not a Soviet citizen and the Soviet authorities had no right to try him. After Bishop Yosafat became gravely ill with pneumonia, he was moved to the concentration camp in the village of Chapaiivka near Kyiv.

Before the feast of St. Yosafat the Martyr, the bishop, sensing his impending death, conducted recollections. He died on 17 November 1947.

To the end of his life Bishop Yosafat Kotsylovsky, a victim of Bolshevik violence, was true to the Catholic Church. Through his martyr's death he attested to the loyalty of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church to the Apostolic See. His cross and bitter cup are venerated by his descendants.



*Bishop Yosafat Kotsylovsky and Rev. Deacon P. Mekelyta before their arrest.*

## BISHOP HRYHORII LAKOTA (1883-1950)



Hryhorii Lakota was born into a poor peasant's family on 31 January 1883 in the village of Holodivka (today: Zadnistriany), in Sambir raion, Lviv region. After graduating from the gymnasium in Lviv, on 20 June 1903 Lakota enrolled at the Lviv Theological Seminary. On completing his studies, he was ordained a priest by Bishop Konstantyn Chekhovych on 30 August 1908. Noting Rev. Lakota's diligence and virtue, the bishop summoned him to Peremyshl, appointing him as his personal chaplain and catechist at the local gymnasium. In 1910-1913 the young priest studied in Vienna, where he obtained a doctorate in theology in 1911. In 1913 he was appointed professor at the Peremyshl Theological Seminary, where he taught homiletics and catechism, and later the history of the church and canon law. From 1918 to 1926 Rev.-Dr. Lakota was the rector of the Peremyshl seminary. On 1 June 1925 he was named archpresbyter of the Greek Catholic capitula in Peremyshl. In 1926 Pope Pius XI named him auxiliary bishop of the Peremyshl eparchy, and his chirotony took place on 6 May at the Church of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist.

During the first Soviet occupation of Western Ukraine (1939-1941) the Peremyshl eparchy was split in two parts by the German-Soviet border. Bishop Kotsylovsky appointed Bishop Lakota to manage the affairs of the western part of the eparchy based in Yaroslav.

After the Second World War the Polish-Soviet border shifted eastward from Peremyshl, and the

city ended up on the territory of communist Poland. The situation of Ukrainians, particularly the clergy and the intelligentsia, became very difficult. After coming to power, the Polish communists launched massive deportations and arrests. Bishop Lakota was arrested and deported to Lviv, where he began living with a local family near the monastery in Holosko. One month after his move to Lviv, the Soviets arrested the bishop on 25 June 1946 and sent him to be tried in Kyiv. In fact this was no trial but a special session of a troika that sentenced the bishop to ten years' imprisonment in Vorkuta. At first he labored in the mines, but owing to his fragile health, he worked at various jobs in the labor camp: as a blacksmith and janitor, carrying water, and peeling potatoes. In the winter of 1949 the bishop was transferred to the camp hospital in Abez, 180 kilometers south of Vorkuta. There he was considered still fit to work and was assigned the filthiest job, the sanitation brigade. The camp authorities did this deliberately in order to humiliate Bishop Lakota and priests, who comprised the majority of the workers in such brigades. The prisoners decided among themselves that the bishop should not carry out this degrading job and wanted to replace him with another prisoner. But he refused, declaring that it was God's will and that he wanted to carry his cross to the very end, in accordance with God's wishes.

Every day at dawn the priests in this camp said Mass. Simple little tables served as the altar. All the preparations for serving Mass were made in secret, because if the guards had found out, the prisoners would have been condemned to a slow death by starvation in the punishment cell.

Bishop Hryhorii had such great respect for the Holy Eucharist that he did not serve Mass in the horrible camp conditions. But he requested that Holy Communion be brought to him every day at the hospital. Bishop Lakota died on 5 November 1950 (according to other sources: 12 November). He was conscious to the very end and talked to the priests assembled at his bedside. He died suddenly and quietly, without groans or cries, as though he were falling asleep.

In the history of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church Bishop Lakota is known as an unshakeable witness to the unity of the Holy Church and martyr for Christ's faith. The severe tribulations and harsh conditions of exile did not break the spirit of this apostle of Christ. On the contrary, they revealed the profound evidence of the might of God's Church and the indestructibility of faith.

## BISHOP TEODOR ROMZHA (1911 - 1947)



Teodor Romzha was born on 14 April 1911 in the large village of Nadbochko (today: Velykyi Bychkiv) in Rakhiv raion, Zakarpattia region. When Romzha was born, his father Pavlo, a railway official, was forty-four years old, and his wife Maria was forty-two. Teodor was their ninth child. The large family, which belonged to the lower stratum of the middle class, lived a modest and singularly devout Christian life. According to family accounts, when he was a little boy, Teodor loved listening to stories about the lives of the saints, and he often wept when he heard accounts of the Christian martyrs.

In 1930 Romzha graduated from the state real gymnasium in Khust with outstanding marks. Besides Ukrainian and Hungarian, which he spoke since childhood, he learned Czech, Latin, French, and Russian. His high school teachers noted Romzha's aptitude for the exact and natural sciences and encouraged him to study engineering at Prague University. But the young student had other plans — to become a priest. In 1930-1933 he studied philosophy, and from 1933 to 1937 he studied theology in Rome. He became an administrator of a parish in the town of Berezovo, and in 1939 he was appointed professor of philosophy at the Uzhhorod Theological Seminary.

On 24 September 1944 Teodor Romzha was ordained bishop of the Mukachiv eparchy. His

first celebration of the Holy Mass as a newly ordained bishop took place at the cathedral in Uzhhorod on 28 September 1944.

The Red Army completed its occupation of Transcarpathia by October 1944. The war did not inflict great harm on the eparchy, and only a few churches and parish buildings were damaged. There were no losses among the clergy, but seven priests left the eparchy. When the eparchy was temporarily divided, 117 Ukrainian priests moved to Czechoslovakia, 10 moved to Hungary, 4 to Romania, and 12 to the West. During 1944-1948, forty-two more priests left the eparchy.

In view of these circumstances, Bishop Romzha asked his clergymen not to record anything but memorize what they heard from him.

Characterizing the political situation, the bishop told his priests that it was impossible to reach any compromise with the Soviet authorities because they had one goal with respect to the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church — to destroy it. Events in Galicia had made this perfectly clear. He told each priest and every believer: “Do not be afraid. Whenever necessary, model yourselves after the early Christians by sacrificing your life for our greatest good — the holy faith.”

The eparchy stood firmly behind Bishop Romzha, but he knew that the might of a believer's soul in the secular world would be too weak to withstand the hatred of atheism and the overwhelming physical forces. Through God's will, the tribulations of His Church would reach extreme limits. By refusing to betray his faith by converting to Orthodoxy, the bishop condemned himself to death.

Khrushchev's proposal to murder Bishop Romzha was approved by Stalin, after which the scenario for his assassination was drafted. On 27 October 1947 the Soviets carried out an assassination attempt on the bishop, who was returning from the villages of Lokhove and Lavky, where he had consecrated a church. The bishop suffered severe injuries and was transported to a hospital in Mukachiv, where he was later poisoned by the MGB agent “Odarka” and died on 1 November 1947.

The life of Bishop Teodor Romzha is an organic part of the history of the Mukachiv Greek Catholic eparchy, which he guided during its most critical period, when various bans and repressions were leading inexorably to the destruction of the UGCC.

**Rev. Laslo Pushkash**



*A Black Maria delivering another victim. People who were taken away in these vehicles never returned: they were either imprisoned in the camps or shot.*



*A group of exiled Basilian Sisters: Sister Epistymia, Sister Yosafata, Sister Eroteia, Sisters Omeliana, Sister Filoteia, Sister Prokopia, Sister Stefanyda, and an unidentified nun (far right).*



# BISHOP HRYHORII KHOMYSHYN (1867 - 1945)



Hryhorii Khomyshyn was born on 25 March 1867 into a poor peasant family in the village of Hadynkivtsi, in Husiatyn raion, Ternopil region. From early childhood the young Hryhorii displayed an aptitude for studying and even tutored his peers to earn his tuition fees. After graduating from the Ternopil Gymnasium in 1888, the pious youth enrolled in the Lviv Theological Seminary. Shortly after completing his studies, he was ordained a priest on 18 November 1893 and was appointed third assistant priest at the cathedral in Stanyslaviv. Bishop Yulian Sas-Kuilovsky predicted a glorious future for the young priest and sent him for further theological studies in Vienna (1894-1899).

After obtaining his doctorate, Rev.-Dr. Khomyshyn returned to the Stanyslaviv cathedral. In 1902 Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky summoned the gifted young priest to Lviv, where he was appointed rector of the seminary.

On 16 April 1904, at the urging of Metropolitan Sheptytsky, Emperor Franz Josef I named Hryhorii Khomyshyn bishop of

Stanyslaviv. He began his activities by holding recollections for the clergy through which he sought to spiritually strengthen his priests and encourage them in their pastoral work. The bishop also introduced canonical visitations of parishes, where he held missions lasting from two days to two weeks, during which he preached and listened to confessions.

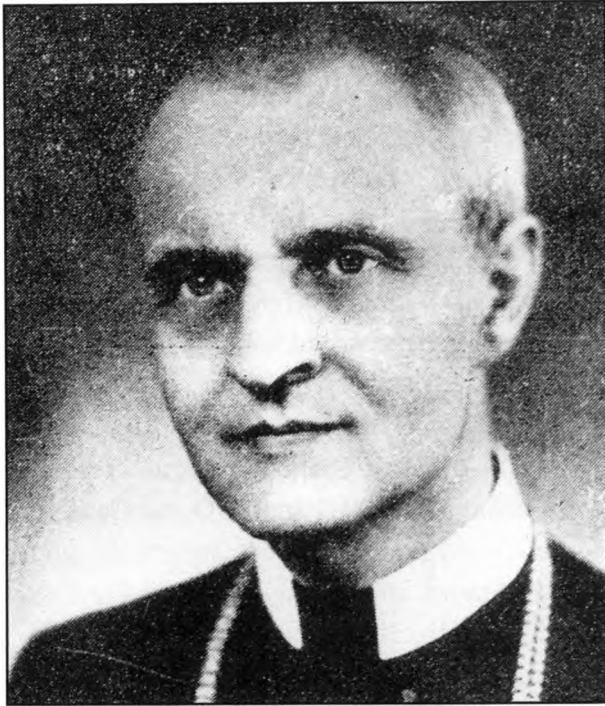
Bishop Khomyshyn was arrested twice by the Soviet authorities. The first time was in 1939, when he was detained overnight in the local NKVD building. After being released in the morning, he returned home, where a search had just been completed.

The bishop was arrested a second time on 15 April 1945, around the same time as all the other bishops of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church were being detained. He was charged with "agitation and propaganda conducted with the aim of subverting or weakening the Soviet power." Bishop Khomyshyn's final interrogation took place on 11 September 1945. It is difficult to determine what interrogation methods were used. However, the small number of questions that were asked during dozens of hours of interrogation suggests that torture was used.

On 21 December 1945 Bishop Khomyshyn was transferred from the internal NKVD prison of the Ukrainian SSR to the hospital in Lukianivka Prison. In answer to the investigator's question, "If you were released, what would you do," the bishop replied without hesitation: "The same as I have been doing until now. I will fight against you, because I am a servant of Christ, and you are His enemies."

On 28 December 1945, after eight months of unendurable physical and moral tortures, the bishop's heart gave out. Numerous eyewitnesses confirm that the bishop, who fearlessly defended the holy Catholic Church, died after prolonged beatings during interrogations. The life and spiritual achievements of Bishop Hryhorii Khomyshyn are a brilliant example of martyrdom for Christ's faith.

# BISHOP PAVLO GOIDYCH (1888 - 1960)



On 4 November 2001 Pope John Paul II beatified Bishop Pavlo Goidych of Priashiv [Presov]. His refusal to compromise with the Czechoslovak communist authorities led to his death in prison in 1960.

Bishop Goidych worked closely with Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky, who was a fellow Basilian. His life is inextricably linked with the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church.

Pavlo Goidych was born in 1888 in the Slovak village of Ruske Peklany. After studying theology in Priashiv and Budapest, he was ordained in 1911. After working for eight years in the bishop's office, Rev. Goidych entered the Basilian Chemecha Hora Monastery near Mukachiv (Ukraine). In 1926 he took his monastic vows in Krekhiv Monastery, and after his chirotony by Pope Pius XI the following year he was appointed bishop-administrator of Priashiv eparchy. He occupied the bishop's seat in Priashiv from 1943 to 1950.

Bishop Goidych founded monasteries, built an orphanage, founded a Ukrainian Greek Catholic gymnasium, and fought against the Slovakization of Priashiv [part of Ukrainian

Transcarpathia ceded to Czechoslovakia during WWII].

This was a time when the outlines of two opposing camps were being clearly delineated: a camp led under the flag of Christ and the other under the flag of Satan the Antichrist. As a witness to the persecutions, confiscations, arrests, and other manifestations of violence against his spiritual children, the bishop stood unshakeable and confident. At Easter, 1949, he issued this epistle to the faithful:

“Death and the struggle in this vale of tears do not embitter us, believers. They do not anger us and will not tear us from the Holy Church. On the contrary: they will bind us even more tightly with Him because we know whom we believe, and therefore are firmly convinced that we must walk through many thorns to enter the Kingdom of Heaven, and that after Good Friday a joyful Easter will come even for us. Christ is risen! Truly He has risen!”

This was the secret behind the mighty spirit of this physically frail man, Bishop Paul Goidych of the Basilian Order. He believed in the Crucified Christ and His glorious Resurrection, and never for one second did he falter in his faith in this great truth.

In March 1950 the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church was liquidated in Czechoslovakia. In an action resembling the Lviv pseudo-church council, the Czechoslovak authorities sought to force the clergy of the Priashiv eparchy to convert to Orthodoxy. Bishop Goidych steadfastly resisted the pressure of the communist agitators, and Ukrainian Catholics flocked in unprecedented numbers to their bishop and priests. The level of Catholic consciousness began to rise.

The bishop was arrested and sentenced to life in prison. After serving ten years of his sentence, Bishop Pavlo Goidych died in Leopoldov Prison on 19 July 1960.

In 1969 his remains were transferred to the crypt of Priashiv Cathedral.

# BISHOP MYKOLAI CHARNETSKY

(1884-1959)



Mykolai Charnetsky was born into a devout peasant family on 14 December 1884 in the Western Ukrainian village of Semakivtsi. After completing high school in the village of Tovmach, Charnetsky enrolled in St. Nicholas Gymnasium in Stanyslaviv.

The young man soon declared his wish to become a priest, having felt the calling since childhood. In 1903 Bishop Hryhorii Khomyshyn sent him to study in Rome. On 2 October 1909 Bishop Khomyshyn ordained Mykolai Charnetsky. He then returned to Rome, where he obtained a doctorate in theology.

In the fall of 1910 Rev.-Dr. Charnetsky returned to Stanyslaviv and was appointed professor of philosophy and dogmatic theology at a local seminary. Yearning to become a monk, in October 1919 he entered the novitiate of the Redemptorist Order. On 16 October 1920 he took his first monastic vows.

With the goal of working to unite Christians and help spiritually neglected people return to the church, in 1926 the Redemptorist Fathers of Lviv province opened a mission in the Volynian city of Kovel, where Rev.-Dr. Charnetsky was dispatched. He quickly earned

the respect of the local residents and even the Orthodox clergy. After opening a monastery and a church in Kovel, he expended great efforts to uphold the purity of the Ukrainian liturgy's Eastern rite. Noting hieromonk Charnetsky's devoted work in this field, in 1931 Pope Pius XI named him titular bishop and Apostolic Visitor for Ukrainian Catholics in Volyn and Polissia, where he worked devotedly for fourteen years, first as a missionary and later as a bishop.

From the very beginning of his activity, Mykolai Charnetsky, the first Ukrainian Redemptorist bishop, was persecuted. During the first Soviet occupation of Western Ukraine in 1939, the Soviet authorities expelled the Redemptorist Order, including Bishop Charnetsky, from Volyn. He settled in Lviv, in the monastery located on Zyblykevych Street (today: Ivan Franko Street).

After the Lviv Theological Academy resumed its activities in 1941, Bishop Charnetsky became one of its professors. He taught certain philosophical disciplines, psychology, and moral theology. His students considered the bishop a saint because of his quiet nature, which was grounded in a powerful and unassailable belief in Divine Providence, his profound humility, and penchant for prayer. To his students Bishop Charnetsky was the finest model of a monk and a human being.

Bishop Charnetsky's long and difficult way of the cross began when the Soviets reoccupied Galicia in 1944. He was arrested on 11 April 1945 and imprisoned in the NKVD jail on Loncki Street, where he was severely tortured. He was awakened at night and brought for interrogations, during which he was beaten. Eventually the bishop was sent to Kyiv, where he spent one year in prison. Awaiting trial, he was frequently beaten and abused. Finally, he was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment in an intensified-regime camp on charges of being an "agent of the Vatican." Initially, Bishop Charnetsky, together with Metropolitan Slipyj, was sent to the Siberian town of Mariinsk in Kemerovo region; later he was frequently moved from camp to camp.

According to reliable sources, during his imprisonment (from his arrest in Lviv in April 1945 to his release in 1956) Bishop

## BISHOP NYKYTA

### BUDKA

(1877 - 1949)

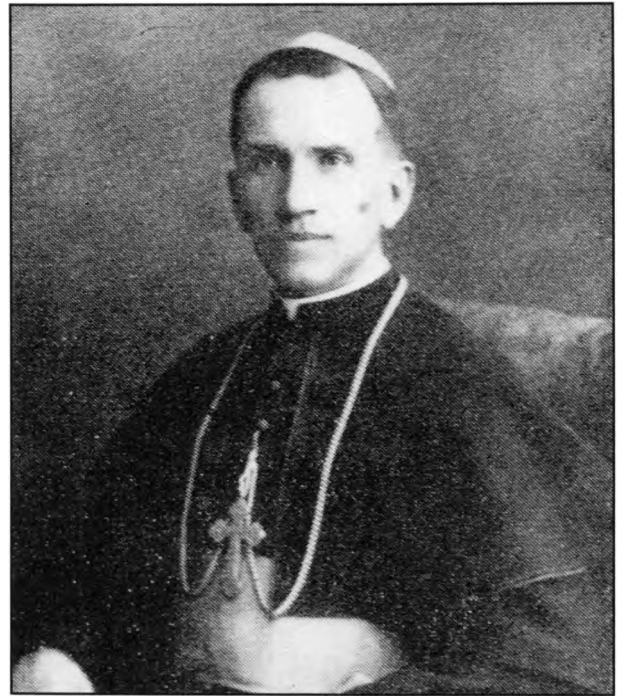
Charnetsky was interrogated and tortured for a total of 600 hours and imprisoned in 30 different prisons and forced labor camps. Despite his physical and spiritual sufferings, the bishop always had a consoling word for his fellow prisoners whom he knew by name and supported spiritually. The bishop was a magnet for the unfortunate prisoners, who found solace only in him.

The bishop spent his last years in a prison hospital in Mordovia. In 1956 his health worsened, and the camp doctors were sure he would die. A set of clothing in which prisoners were buried was prepared for him. The camp administration sent him to Lviv in order to avoid any future accusations that the Soviet authorities had been complicit in the bishop's death.

In 1956 Bishop Charnetsky returned to Lviv. He contracted hepatitis three times and suffered from many other diseases. He was immediately hospitalized. Although everyone assumed he would die, the bishop recovered and began living with Brother Klymentii on Vechimia Street, where he was cared for by his fellow Redemptorists and the Sisters of Mercy of St. Vincent. Bishop Charnetsky resumed his life of prayer and suffering, praying and reading in a cell-like room. His visitors said that they often saw the bishop in a state of rapture. Even when he was very ill after his return to Lviv, Bishop Charnetsky remained loyal to his mission of the Good Pastor: he gave spiritual support to his fellow men, prepared candidates for the priesthood, and ordained more than ten priests.

The bishop's recovery was not long-lasting. On 2 April 1959 he died in a state of blessedness. His last words were an appeal to the Blessed Virgin Mary in whom he always had filial trust. The bishop's funeral took place on 4 April 1959. A description of the funeral, preserved in the archive of the Yorkton (Canada) Province of the Ukrainian Redemptorists, ends with these words: "We think the day will come when he will be canonized, because he was truly a holy bishop."

During his visit to Ukraine in August 2001 Pope John Paul II beatified Bishop Charnetsky.



Nykyta Budka was born into a peasant family on 7 June 1877 in the village of Dobromirka in the country of Zbarazh, Western Ukraine. He finished high school in Ternopil in 1897. After returning from compulsory military service, he studied theology in Vienna and later in Innsbruck.

In 1905 he was ordained by Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky and was appointed prefect of the Lviv Theological Seminary and director of emigration affairs at the Metropolitan Ordinariat. In this post he visited Ukrainian émigré centers in Germany, Brazil, Argentina, and Canada. In 1919 he began editing an informational monthly for Ukrainians called *Emigrant*.

In July 1912 Pope Pius X ordained Rev. Budka the first bishop of the Ukrainians in Canada. His chirotony, presided over by Metropolitan Sheptytsky, Bishop Konstantyn Chekhovych of Peremyshl, and Bishop Hryhorii Khomyshyn of Stanyslaviv, took place on 14 October.

While carrying out his apostolic work in Canada, where he lived until 1927, Bishop Budka laid a solid foundation for the development of the current metropolity. As a

good pastor, he worked tirelessly, visiting Ukrainian settlements in Canada, giving spiritual support to the faithful, strengthening their faith, founding parishes, building churches, opening schools and university dormitories, and publishing prayer books and journals.

During the critical wartime period Ukrainian Canadians were very fortunate to have the services of a wise church administration headed by Bishop Budka. As the first bishop of his eparchy, he encountered many difficulties that are encountered by those who head any kind of community: suspicion, indifference, quarrels, disobedience, a dearth of good assistants, and a lack of funds. Bishop Budka devoted himself wholeheartedly to ensuring that Ukrainian Canadians remained loyal children of the church and became devoted citizens of their adopted country.

Despite his efforts, Bishop Budka became a victim of human spite and internal intrigues. In 1927, at the demand of certain influential figures, the Apostolic See recalled Bishop Nykyta Budka to Rome, and in 1928 he returned to Lviv, where he was named vicar general of the Lviv archeparchy.

On 11 April 1945 the Soviet authorities imprisoned Bishop Budka and all the other Ukrainian bishops and sentenced him to eight years' hard labor in Siberia. During the investigation he was imprisoned in Kyiv together with Metropolitan Josyf Slipyj. According to the metropolitan, Bishop Budka rose to his defense during the trial. During his imprisonment in the GULAG, the bishop consoled his fellow prisoners, who suffered from cold, hunger, heavy labor, and tortures.

After nearly five years of exhausting forced labor and torture, the bishop died a hero's death for Christ's Church. In his sermon to Canadian candidates for the priesthood Metropolitan Volodymyr Sterniuk recalled the eyewitness report of a nurse, who worked at the Siberian labor camp: "After patients died, their hospital clothing was torn off them. After [the bodies] were sewn into paper sacks and numbered, and a card including personal data was attached to them, they were transported to the nearest woods, where they were eaten by the wild beasts of Siberia."

According to this nurse, Bishop Budka predicted his own death: "Before dawn tomorrow I will no longer be here." This came to pass. In recognition of his dignity the camp guards left him in his prison clothing. Like the bodies of his predecessors, his remains were dumped in the forest. Recalling the goodness of this servant of God, who had served his brothers to the very end, the next morning many prisoners set out to pay their final respects to the man who was the embodiment of angelic goodness. But all they found was a sleeve from his shirt."

## **BISHOP VASYL VELYCHKOVSKY**

(1903 - 1973)



Vasyl Velychkovsky was born on 1 June 1903 in Stanyslaviv into a family that had produced many generations of priests (the Velychkovskys and Teodorovyches). His parents, Rev. Volodymyr and Anna, raised their children to be devout, self-sacrificing Christians, which explains their son's desire to devote his life to saving souls.

He attended high school in the town of Horodenka. At the age of fifteen he was already an ardent Ukrainian patriot, and during World War One he served in the ranks of the Ukrainian

Galician Army. After returning from the war in 1920, Velychkovsky enrolled at the Lviv Theological Seminary and in 1924 was ordained a deacon by Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky. At this very time he felt the calling to become a monk. With the help of his aunt, Sister Monika of the Basilian Order, Velychkovsky entered the novitiate of the Redemptorist Order and one year later, on 29 August 1925, he took his monastic vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. After completing his novitiate, on 9 October 1925 he was ordained a priest by Bishop Y. Botsian.

Velychkovsky's superiors had already noted his penchant for missionary activity. In order to help him develop this talent, they dispatched him to Stanyslaviv, where he conducted mission work with experienced Redemptorists. This was the beginning of his apostolic work that lasted twenty years, until the onset of the persecution of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church.

On 16 November 1928 Rev. Velychkovsky arrived at the Redemptorist monastery in Kovel (Volyn). He immediately set to work visiting Galician communities in Volyn, Pidliashia, Kholm, and Polissia, which had abandoned the Greek Catholic Church and fallen under the influence of Russian Orthodoxy. He also began conducting missions among the local population of Volyn, Polissia, and Belarus. Through the financial assistance of Metropolitan Sheptytsky and other patrons, he built several churches and chapels. In 1935 Rev. Velychkovsky returned to the Redemptorist monastery in Stanyslaviv, where he occupied the post of abbot.

The persecution of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church began during the first Soviet occupation of Western Ukraine in 1939. Continuing his pastoral work, in 1940 Rev. Velychkovsky organized a Procession of the Cross through the city, in which approximately 20,000 people took part. As a result, he was summoned to the NKVD headquarters and threatened with imprisonment. In 1941 our loyal pastor, on orders from Metropolitan Sheptytsky and at the request of local Orthodox Ukrainians, left to conduct missionary work in the central Ukrainian city of Kamianets-Podilsky. Three days after his arrival he was summoned by the German occupation authorities in connection with his alleged ties with the Banderites. Under threat of

being shot, Rev. Velychkovsky was forced to leave the city. He was transferred to Ternopil, where he was appointed abbot of the monastery attached to the Dormition Church.

During the second Soviet occupation of Galicia, on the night of 10-11 April 1945 the entire Ukrainian Greek Catholic hierarchy was arrested. On 26 July 1945 Rev. Velychkovsky was arrested in Ternopil for anti-Soviet agitation and for giving sermons. In the investigation cell the NKVD told him: "Either you sign a document about your conversion to Orthodoxy and return home immediately, or you will never leave here." He steadfastly refused and was then transferred to Kyiv for an investigation that lasted nearly two years. The Kyiv regional court handed down a death sentence based on two anti-communist phrases that the bishop had written in his pocket calendar: "red horde" and "red band."

While he was on death row for three months, Rev. Velychkovsky continued to carry out his pastoral duties: he taught prayers to prisoners, the tenets of the faith, and prepared them for Holy Communion. One night prison guards came for the bishop, but instead of bringing him downstairs for execution, they took him to the prison head, who informed him that his death sentence had been commuted to ten years' imprisonment.

Rev. Velychkovsky spent two years in a camp in Kirov region, and in 1947 he was deported to Vorkuta, where he worked in the mines. Nearly every day he said Mass in secret, using the tops of tin cans instead of church plates. As Metropolitan Maksym Hermaniuk later declared, "This piece of metal was his chalice, his discos, his altar, and his Church. . . which no one and nothing will ever destroy, for this is the strength of conviction, because this is the Grace of God."

Through the assistance of his friends, Rev. Velychkovsky spent the last months of his imprisonment working as a medical attendant at the camp hospital. He would not have been able to endure any more hard labor because his ten-year sentence had destroyed his health. He was released on 9 July 1955.

After returning to Lviv, he found no trace of any church or chapel where he could serve Mass, but this did not discourage him. He found a small room on Vozziednannia Street, where he fashioned an altar out of some empty paper

## BISHOP SYMEON LUKACH (1893 - 1964)



cartons. The faithful came to him in groups of fifteen people to take part in the Liturgy. During the underground period of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church he ignored the danger and every day served Mass, conducted recollections, and acted as the spiritual leader of many devout Christians. In 1959 the Apostolic See appointed him bishop of the "Silent Church," but owing to the difficult situation in the Soviet Union, his bishop's chirotony took place only four years later.

Contrary to the Soviets' expectations, Bishop Velychkovsky's ten-year sentence did nothing to turn him away from the church. He continued "to engage in anti-communist agitation among the people, refused to take part in Soviet civic work, did not declare himself a citizen of the Soviet Union; he wrote and circulated a book about the icon of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Perpetual Help, in which he argued that a person stripped of faith cannot be a good citizen of his state; he listened to radio programs from the Vatican." This list of "transgressions" formed the basis of his second arrest on 2 January 1969. He served his three-year sentence in an intensified-regime prison in the city of Komunarsk, in the Donbas region, where he developed heart disease.

Bishop Velychkovsky completed his second sentence on 27 January 1972. This time the Soviet authorities did not allow him to return to Lviv but sent him for a "rest" to Yugoslavia. After visiting his sister in Zagreb, he flew to Rome, where he met Josyf Cardinal Slipyj and other countrymen. He also had a private audience with Pope Paul VI and later accepted Metropolitan Hermaniuk's invitation to come to Canada.

As a living witness of the persecutions of the clandestine Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, Bishop Velychkovsky was not destined to live long in Canada. On 30 June 1973 he died at the age of seventy, having served as bishop for ten years.

His heartbeats seem to proclaim in our hearts: "Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer persecution for ten days. Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life." (Rev. 2:10)

Symeon Lukach was born into a peasant family on 7 July 1893 in the village of Starunia, Solotvyna raion, Stanyslaviv region. In 1913, after completing high school in the city of Kolomyia, he responded to his calling to become a priest and enrolled at the Stanyslaviv Theological Seminary. His studies were interrupted by the First World War, and he completed his theological studies in 1919. In October of that year he was ordained a priest by Bishop Hryhorii Khomyshyn.

In December 1920 he began teaching moral theology at the seminary in Stanyslaviv, where he worked until April 1945. After the Soviet authorities closed down the seminary, Rev. Lukach moved to his native village of Starunia, where his brother lived. At first he served Mass in the local church and later, secretly, in his home. In February 1949 he was summoned to the village soviet, where he was threatened with deportation from Starunia. He moved temporarily to Nadvima.

On 27 October 1949 he was arrested by the MGB on the basis of the following charges: "After the [German] occupiers were expelled, being an active supporter of the Vatican, in 1945-1946, in the period of the Greek Catholic Church's

separation from the Russian Orthodox Church, he opposed the unification and became an illegal.”

On 30 December 1949 Soviet investigators were issued a resolution prolonging the duration of the investigation because “information has been recently obtained, which proves that Lukach Symeon, being a supporter of the Vatican, was an illegal bishop of the Greek Catholic Church in Stanyslaviv region and directed anti-Soviet activity carried out by the Uniate underground.”

Although it is difficult to determine the exact date when Rev. Lukach was consecrated bishop, he was most probably ordained by Bishop Hryhorii Khomyshyn in March-April 1945. However, the MGB was unable to unearth crucial proof about Bishop Lukach’s chirotony, and therefore on 21 January 1950 the term of his investigation was prolonged. After numerous interrogations, a sentence was finally handed down on 2 February 1950: ten years’ imprisonment in Siberian labor camps. His investigation file, no. 7115, is a testament to the spiritual achievement of Bishop Lukach. Throughout his sixteen interrogations he never once betrayed the Catholic faith or his loyalty to the pope; neither did he name any of the individuals with whom he was in contact as an underground Ukrainian Catholic bishop. To the interrogators’ questions he replied: “My priestly conscience does not permit me to answer your questions.”

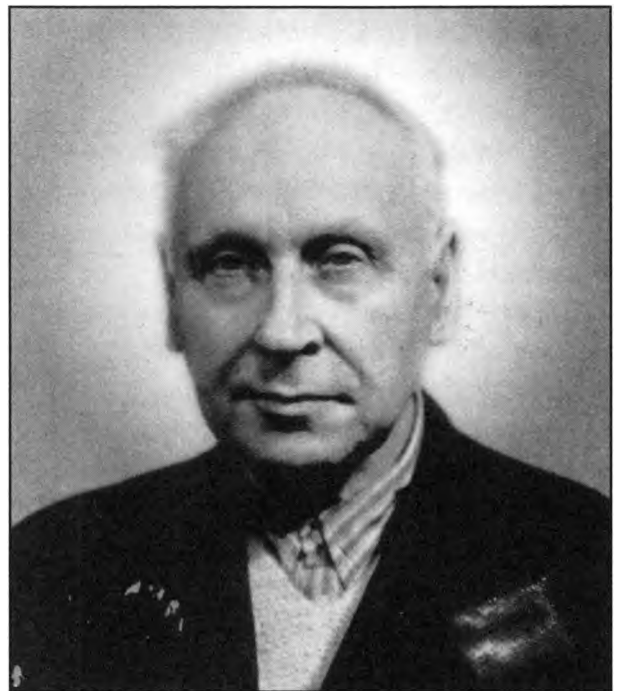
Bishop Lukach served his first sentence in the forced labor camps of Krasnoiarsk krai. In poor health, he worked in the forestry industry for five years. On 11 February 1955 he was released. Returning to his native village, he continued his pastoral work. Following a search of his home in July 1962, he was rearrested. The trial of bishops Lukach and Sleziuk [see next profile] turned into an atheistic propaganda show held expressly to coincide with the beginning of Vatican Council II in Rome and to show the Apostolic See and the entire world that the Soviets had finally put an end to the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church.

Bishop Lukach was imprisoned in Stanyslaviv. Unfortunately, his second prison term turned out to be fatal. He developed a serious lung disease, which the prison doctors diagnosed as asthma. In fact, he was suffering from tuberculosis, which caused much suffering and led to his eventual death. According to eyewitnesses, the onset of the disease was hastened by the inhuman prison conditions, hunger, and the abusive treatment by

the camp guards. In March 1964, owing to the bishop’s critical state, the camp authorities released him to die in his native village. They were in such a hurry that they failed to draw up the appropriate act, and to this day the documents confiscated from Bishop Lukach during his arrest and trial have not been returned.

Despite his disease, Bishop Lukach continued to fulfill his pastoral duties: he served Mass every day, heard confessions, and upheld the strict rules of fasting. He accepted all his sufferings as God’s will and did not complain about his tormentors. A few days before his death, his illness worsened. On 22 August 1964 Bishop Symeon Lukach died in a state of blessedness in the village of Starunia, where he is buried.

## **BISHOP IVAN SLEZIUK** (1896 - 1973)



Ivan Sleziuk was born into a wealthy peasant family on 14 January 1896 in the village of Zhyvachiv, in Obertyn raion, Stanyslaviv region. After completing his studies at the Stanyslaviv Theological Seminary in 1923, he was ordained by Bishop Hryhorii Khomyshyn. He worked as a priest-catechist in the Polish schools of Stanyslaviv, at the Skarbovsky gymnasium for men and women, a state men’s lyceum, and a general men’s Polish lyceum. Until 1939 he was the father-confessor for the Sisters of Mercy of St. Vincent de Paul and the adviser to the eparchial church court on marital affairs.



During the German occupation Rev. Sleziuk worked as a catechist in a trade school and was an associate of the cathedral synod.

In April 1945 he was consecrated bishop by Bishop Hryhorii Khomyshyn. Bishop Sleziuk was arrested on 2 June 1945 and indicted on charges of conducting organized anti-Soviet activity aimed at subverting the measures that the Soviet authorities were instituting in Ukraine's western regions.

After a military tribunal handed down the sentence, Bishop Sleziuk was transported under convoy to the Vorkuta labor camps, where he was imprisoned with Bishop Hryhorii Lakota, the vicar of Peremyshl. After Lakota's death Bishop Sleziuk continued his spiritual work: he organized joint prayers, celebrated Christmas and Easter, conducted the Holy Liturgy, and heard prisoners' confessions. In the early 1950s he was transferred to a camp in Mordovia. After his release on 15 November 1954 he returned to Stanyslaviv.

For nearly eight years this clandestine Ukrainian Catholic bishop managed the affairs of the Stanyslaviv eparchy, and this activity led to his second arrest in July 1962. He was charged with secretly heading the religious activity of Uniate priests of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, which the Soviet had banned in 1946. Thus, at his trial he was accused of heading a criminal group and sentenced to five years' imprisonment in strict-regime corrective labor camps.

After his release, on 30 November 1968 Bishop Sleziuk consecrated a member of the Basilian Order, Rev. Sofron Dmyterko, as bishop. After Sleziuk's death Dmyterko became Bishop Ordinarius of the Ivano-Frankivsk eparchy.

Until his death Bishop Sleziuk was the eparchial administrator, conducted the Holy Liturgy, taught catechism classes, and officiated at baptisms and marriages. His spiritual activity was a thorn in the side of the Soviet security organs in their struggle against the clandestine UGCC. He was often summoned for "conversations" with the KGB, and his home was under constant surveillance. The last time he was summoned to the KGB headquarters was two weeks before his death.

Bishop Sleziuk recounted that he was put into a solitary cell, where he sat for two hours. Then he was told he could leave. He had trouble

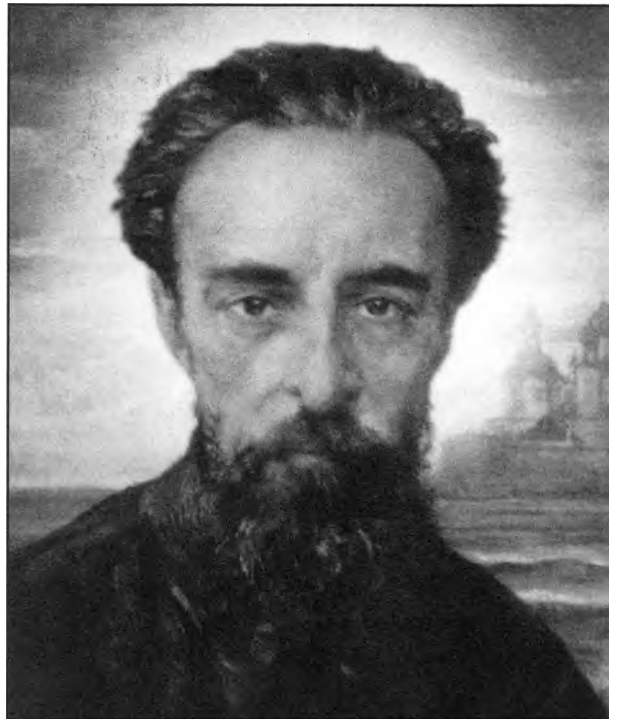
walking because his head was spinning. He was feverish and his skin seemed to be on fire. The nuns who took care of him later reported that the bishop had come home with a red face.

Exhausted, he went to bed and died two weeks later. It was suspected that the KGB subjected him to radiation in order to rid themselves of another Uniate priest.

Bishop Ivan Sleziuk died in a state of blessedness on 2 December 1973 in the city of Ivano-Frankivsk.

During his fourteen years of torture and abuse in the GULAG, Bishop Sleziuk did not betray Christ and His Church for which he sacrificed his righteous soul.

## **EXARCH LEONID FIODOROV (1879 - 1935)**



One of the first religious figures to be affected by the 1917 Revolution in Russia was exarch Leonid (monastic name: Leontii) Fiodorov. He was born on 4 November 1879 in St. Petersburg. His father Ivan was a cook and belonged to the St. Petersburg cook's guild. His mother Liubov, who was of Greek parentage, was known for her piety and deep faith. She was artistically gifted and instilled a love of art in her son, who developed an interest in the Greek classical world at the age of nine. When he was fourteen, he read

the entire Bible. Deeply moved by what he had read, the young boy declared his wish to become a monk. When he was twenty years old, he began studying the works of the Holy Fathers and the history of the Universal Synods, reaching the conclusion that the Universal Church was the one true church. However, he was not yet ready to convert to Catholicism.

In 1901 he entered the St. Petersburg Theological Academy, where he quickly distinguished himself. The turning point in his decision to convert to Catholicism was his encounter with the head of St. Catherine's Catholic Church in St. Petersburg, Rev. Ivan Styslavsky.

The young man's decision to convert cost him dearly. Until 1905 conversions from Russian Orthodoxy to another faith carried serious consequences: confiscation of property, deportation, loss of parental rights, etc. Fiodorov's decision to leave Russia in order to convert to Catholicism meant that he would never be allowed to return to his country. Overcoming many difficulties, the young St. Petersburg native took this decisive step for the sake of uniting both churches: in church unity he saw the salvation of Russia over which loomed the dire threat of atheism. He decided that working to unite the West and the East would become his lifelong goal, and he was prepared to make any sacrifice, even martyrdom.

After finishing his second year at the theological academy, Fiodorov and Rev. Styslavsky traveled to Lviv, where the young student met Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky. His eight-day stay in the metropolitan's palace had a profound impact on the young man. The metropolitan, who was celebrated for his exceptional kindness and simplicity, became his spiritual father.

The young Russian traveled to Rome, where he converted to Catholicism. With the help of Rev. Styslavsky, he had an audience with Pope Leo XIII, who sent him to study at the seminary in Anania (Armenia). He received a papal stipend and adopted the pseudonym Leonidas Pierre, so as not to alert the suspicions of the Russian Embassy. In 1907 Fiodorov obtained a degree in theology and in the summer of 1907 took part in the First Velehrad Congress.

In order not to endanger Fiodorov's future work, Metropolitan Sheptytsky decided that the

young Russian's ordination should take place abroad. In Lviv the metropolitan appointed him as reader and subdeacon, and on 25 March 1911 the Bulgarian bishop Mihailo Mirov ordained Fiodorov at Holy Trinity Church in Galata (Turkey).

In May 1912 Fiodorov entered the novitiate at the Studite monastery in Kamenica (Bosnia). His stay in this small monastery was a period of spiritual preparation for his difficult work in Russia. His fellow monks noted that he was always dressed poorly, always placed himself last, and never spoke an unkind word to anyone. Both monks and lay people loved listening to his sermons and his explications of the Holy Writ. All the monks were convinced of Fiodorov's saintliness. On 12 February 1913 Fiodorov took his monastic vows and adopted the name of Leontii.

At the request of Metropolitan Sheptytsky, in January 1914 the future exarch left for Russia, spending time in St. Petersburg, Moscow, Nizhnii Novgorod, and Saratov. The Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church and the State Department were hostile to Eastern-rite Catholics. Nevertheless, Rev. Fiodorov took part in meetings of Russian Catholics, where his presence served to foster agreement even among obdurate opponents.

Shortly after his return to Lviv in June 1914, he was forced to return to Russia in connection with the tense political situation. Two weeks after arriving in St. Petersburg, Rev. Fiodorov was arrested for being a Russian Greek Catholic priest and informed of his imminent deportation to Tobolsk. The Russians viewed Fiodorov as an "agent of the Uniate Metropolitan Sheptytsky," but the real reason for his arrest was the Russian state's hostile attitude toward Eastern-rite Catholics. Rev. Leonid spent forty-two months in the harsh Tobolsk climate, which undermined his health. After the Bolshevik coup Alexander Kerensky received a petition from N. S. Ushakova, requesting the release of Rev. Fiodorov. The response was positive, and in March 1917 he returned to St. Petersburg.

Metropolitan Sheptytsky, who had been imprisoned in Russia, was also released at this time. On 29-31 May he convened a synod of the Russian Greek Catholic Church, where Rev. Leonid Fiodorov was elected exarch of the church. On 24 February 1921 the pope

confirmed the creation of the exarchate headed by Fiodorov, whom he named Apostolic Protonotary.

Russian Catholics were harshly persecuted in the wake of the October Revolution. In order not to starve to death and to help his starving parishioners, Rev. Fiodorov worked incessantly: “My arms and knees shake from hunger, I have to chop wood, break up fences for heating, push wheelbarrows and drag sleds with goods and garbage. Only God’s intercession and mercy explain why I haven’t died or become an invalid in view of the anemia and rheumatism that are eating me up, like a rat [gnawing at] an old tree,” he recalled.

Despite his struggle to survive, Rev. Fiodorov did not neglect his pastoral duties. In early March 1923 the Soviet authorities accused him of “inciting religious prejudices among the masses,” and the ensuing “Moscow trial” of 21-25 March 1923 was a clear manifestation of violence and abuse directed against the Catholic Church. A number of Catholic priests, including the exarch, were accused of creating anti-Bolshevik organizations, failing to implement the decree concerning the separation of church and state, resisting the authorities during confiscations of church property, and teaching religion to children. Rev. Fiodorov refused a lawyer and defended himself. His speeches during the trial were logical and persuasive. He was sentenced to ten years’ imprisonment in the prisons of Butyrki and Sokolnytsky.

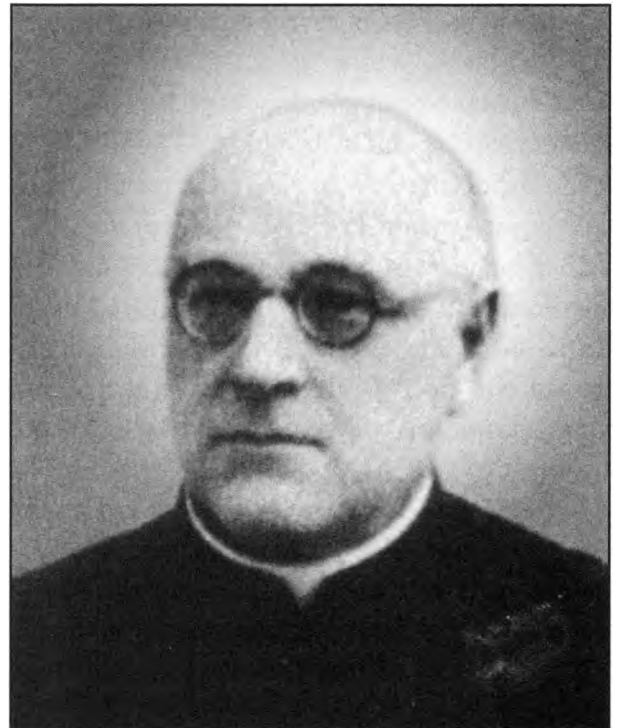
In late April 1926 he was released thanks to the personal intercession of Maxim Gorky’s wife, Elena Peshkova. Rev. Fiodorov’s release documents contained the notation “minus B,” meaning that he was forbidden to reside in the six largest cities of the Soviet Union. The exarch was forced to settle in Kaluga, where, despite the risk of re-arrest, he continued his spiritual work. During his stay in Mohilau (Belarus) where he was invited by Rev. Yosyf Bieloholovy, Rev. Fiodorov gave a fiery sermon during the Holy Liturgy. The GPU’s reaction was swift: both priests were arrested on 10 August 1926. Rev. Fiodorov thus spent only four months in freedom. In Moscow an OGPU collegium sentenced him to three years’ imprisonment in the Solovets Islands.

The exarch began his first day of imprisonment in October 1926 by serving Mass in a cell with

some Catholic prisoners and later in the chapel of St. German. Even here he continued to be the apostle of unity, impressing jailed Orthodox clerics with his optimism, vitality, restraint, simplicity, and endurance.

After his release on 10 August 1929, the exarch was detained for one month in a “corrective house” in Arkhangelsk. In October he was exiled to Kotlas, Viatka, and finally, the city of Kirov, where he found shelter with the kind-hearted Kalinin family. None of the family members even suspected that Rev. Fiodorov had experienced many years of deprivation. Soon, the various illnesses he had contracted in the GULAG — asthma, rheumatism, gastritis, and sciatica — reached a critical stage and on 7 March 1935 Rev. Leonid Fiodorov died at the age of fifty-five.

## **REV. -DR. MYKOLA KONRAD (1876 - 1941)**



Mykola Konrad was born on 16 May 1876 in the village of Strusiv in Ternopil region. He completed his philosophy studies in Rome, at the Collegium for the Propagation of the Faith. On 9 December 1895 he obtained his doctorate in philosophy. In 1896-1897 he completed his studies at the Angelicum, the Dominican

## REV.-DR. ANDRII ISHCHAK (1887 - 1941)

University in Rome, obtaining a doctorate in theology in 1899. That same year he was ordained a priest of the Lviv archeparchy. In 1900 he began teaching at a Ukrainian gymnasium in the city of Ternopil.

During World War One Rev.-Dr. Konrad worked in the Hungarian city of Gradec and in a Ukrainian refugee camp in Switzerland, where he was a director of high school courses until 1918.

From 1920 to 1929 he taught high school in Berezhany and Ternopil. In 1929 he founded the first Ukrainian Catholic student society in Lviv, called *Obnova* [Restoration]. Between 1931 and 1935 he was the chaplain to Ukrainian students in the city of Lviv.

In 1930 Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky invited Rev.-Dr. Konrad to teach sociology and ancient and modern philosophy at the Lviv Theological Academy. On the recommendation of Rev.-Dr. Josyf Slipyj, the rector of the academy, Konrad was appointed extraordinary professor of the philosophy department on the basis of his work *Narys istorii starodavnioi filosofii* (Outline of the History of Ancient Philosophy).

When the Soviets occupied Galicia, Metropolitan Sheptytsky appointed Rev.-Dr. Konrad parish priest in the village of Stradch near Yaniv. Undeterred by the dangers of wartime and official persecution, he carried out his pastoral activities under all circumstances. According to his surviving parishioners, he was greatly loved and respected as a decent and just man. He taught his parishioners catechism, paying special attention to young people, making sure they did not lose their way.

On 26 June 1941 Rev.-Dr. Konrad and his deacon, Volodymyr Pryima, risked their lives by giving Extreme Unction to a sick woman. After they came home, they were arrested by the NKVD and led to Birok Forest, where they were murdered.



Andrii Ishchak was born on 23 October 1887 in the city of Mykolaiv on the Dnister River. During the years 1910-1914 he studied theology in Lviv and Innsbruck.

After obtaining a doctorate in theology at the University of Innsbruck in 1914, that same year he was ordained a priest of the Lviv archeparchy in which he occupied various posts. During World War One he was a military chaplain. In 1918 he was appointed prefect of the Lviv Theological Seminary. The following year he began working as the parish priest in the village of Milno.

In 1928 he began teaching Eastern dogmatics and canon law at the Lviv Theological Academy, while continuing his rural pastoral work in the village of Sykhiv near Lviv. Through his brilliant academic work he raised the prestige of the Theological Scholarly Society and the Lviv Theological Academy. He is the author of numerous scholarly studies and reviews in the fields of history, dogmatics, and scholastic and patristic literature, which were published in *Nyva* (The Field), *Meta* (Goal), *Bohosloviia* (Theology), and other journals.

The first Soviet occupation of Galicia marked the beginning of the destruction of the Ukrainian clergy. Despite the harsh persecution, Rev.-Dr.

Ishchak continued his pastoral work, consciously choosing the path of martyrdom after refusing to abandon his flock.

His parishioners, who loved and respected their kind, intelligent, and highly educated priest, often urged him to go into hiding, but he refused.

On 24 June 1941 Rev.-Dr. Ishchak was arrested briefly and taken for interrogation. After one day he was released. Two days later, on 26 June 1941, he was arrested by Red Army soldiers and then disappeared without a trace. According to eyewitnesses, he was led into the woods, where he was shot.

The decomposing body of Rev.-Dr. Ishchak, which bore the signs of numerous bayonet wounds, was found two days later.

Rev.-Dr. Andrii Ishshak died a martyr's death while faithfully carrying out his pastoral duties. He never abandoned Christ's faith or his parishioners. He is a shining example of the good shepherd, who never abandons his flock.

## **REV. ROMAN LYSKO** (1914-1949)



Roman Lysko was born into a priest's family on 14 August 1924 in the town of Horodok, Lviv region. From his youth Roman dreamed of entering the priesthood.

His unparalleled talents, energy, and penchant for scholarly work were revealed

during his studies at the Lviv Theological Academy. The young theologian, who was the favourite of the academy's rector, Josyf Slipyj, published his scholarly articles in the socio-religious journal *Nyva*. Rev. Roman Durbak, a persecuted priest-poet, recalled that Roman Lysko was also a talented poet. Nevertheless, the young seminarian was most interested in working with people, particularly youth. During his vacations he assisted the Society of Mary at his father's parish, conducted the choir, gave lectures, and organized amateur theatrical productions.

In 1938 Lysko completed his theological studies and married Neonila Huniovska, the daughter of a priest. During the first Soviet occupation of Galicia, Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky delayed Lysko's ordination and advised him to take up teaching for a while. Lysko and his wife began teaching at the village schools of Pobich and Koltiv, in Olesko raion.

He was ordained by the metropolitan on 28 August 1941 and appointed parish priest in the village of Koltiv and later in Belzets, Zolochiv raion, where he remained until 1944. These were the years of the forcible liquidation of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church. Rev. Lysko was persecuted and threatened with death for his refusal to convert to Russian Orthodoxy. Finally, the Soviet authorities forbade him to serve the Holy Liturgy and closed the church. He and his family were forced to move to Horodok, where he became the clandestine associate of Rev. Rozdolsky, who still considered himself a Greek Catholic even though he had signed conversion documents. With Rev. Rozdolsky's permission, Rev. Lysko conducted Greek Catholic Masses in churches located in the surrounding villages of Drozdovychi and Bratkovychi, and secretly carried Holy Communion to those in need.

On 9 September 1949 Rev. Lysko was arrested and jailed in Loncki Prison in Lviv. He was accused of anti-Soviet activity and urging young people during the German occupation to join the SS Division "Galicia."

During a search of his church, NKVD troops uncovered religious literature, which they deemed nationalist and anti-Soviet in nature, as well as 100 cartridges buried near the church.

In the first days after Rev. Lysko's arrest his family received written confirmation from him that he had received their packages. Then for six months the authorities banned all packages for prisoners. A wave of terror was unleashed after the assassination of the Galician-born pro-communist writer Yaroslav Halan, and nothing more was heard from Rev. Lysko.

On 31 May 1950 his family received confirmation written in a stranger's hand that their package had been received. All efforts to determine the whereabouts of Rev. Lysko were unsuccessful, as were appeals to higher instances by his mother and elder sister.

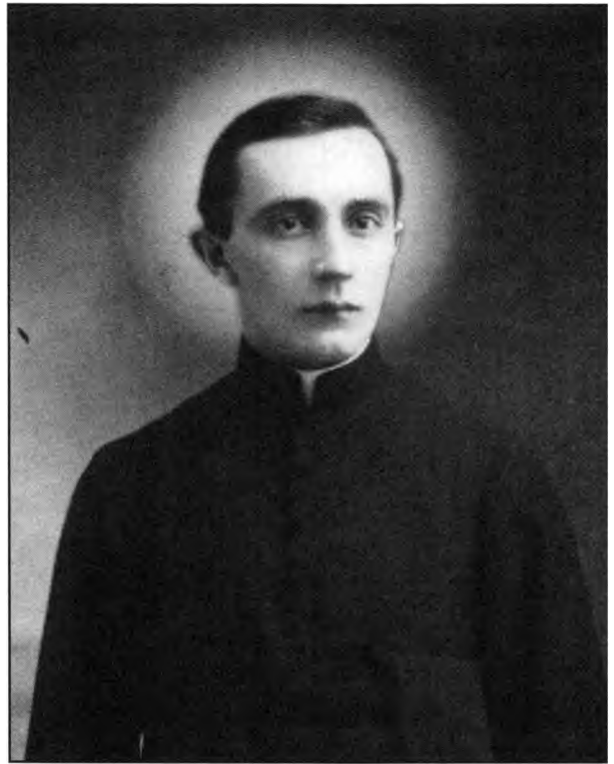
On 20 February 1956 the Office of the Prosecutor-General of the USSR sent a notice stating that Rev. Lysko died of heart failure on 14 October 1949. His criminal file was closed because of lack of evidence, and he had been rehabilitated.

A note issued by the Security Service of Ukraine on 26 February 1993 indicates the article of the Criminal Code under which Rev. Lysko was indicted: article 54-10, part 11, i.e., propaganda aimed at toppling, subverting, or weakening the Soviet government. People convicted of such crimes were shot.

Despite the official documents about Rev. Lysko's death, the date remains suspect, as several former political prisoners later declared that they had seen him alive after the indicated date. As for the cause of death, one can only guess how this healthy thirty-five-year old man, who did not suffer from heart disease, met his end.

Rev. Roman Lysko never betrayed his priest's vows or his loyalty to the Apostolic See, and therefore died a martyr's death.

## REV. MYKOLA TSEHEL'SKY (1896-1951)



Mykola Tsehelsky was born into a priest's family on 17 December 1896 in the village of Strusiv, Ternopil region. He was a brilliant student at the gymnasium in Terebovlia. After graduating in 1918, he immediately began his studies at the Faculty of Theology of Lviv University. Despite the difficult postwar years, he graduated with distinction in 1923.

On 31 August 1924 he married Yosyfa Ratych whose three brothers were priests. On 5 April 1925 he was ordained a priest by Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky. Rev. Tsehelsky immediately plunged into his pastoral work and civic activities. In the village parishes of Vysypivka and Soroky he proved to be an extraordinarily hardworking and indefatigable pastor, who was deeply engaged in the spiritual and educational wellbeing of his parishioners. He also founded and headed religious societies for men and women.

Rev. Tsehelsky was particularly interested in church-affiliated youth organizations. In the village of Soroky he built St. Dymytrii's Church and a Prosvita reading room, and organized a Ukrainian cooperative.

Rev. Tsehelsky and his wife were known for their concern for poor peasants whom they

supplied with food and various items. Their own lifestyle was very modest.

The church administration valued Rev. Mykola, who was constantly given new assignments, as attested by the metropolitan's various decrees. In 1938 he was appointed vice-deacon in the Hrymailiv diaconate.

In spring 1945, when World War Two was ending in Europe, savage repressions against the clergy and the faithful of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church were just beginning in Ukraine. The plan to liquidate the UGCC, devised by Stalin and developed by NKVD colonel G. Karpov, was launched. After the entire episcopate of the UGCC was arrested and the Lviv Theological Academy liquidated, the Soviets launched a decisive and systematic offensive targeting the Ukrainian Catholic clergy. The organs of repression scrupulously "processed" each clergyman. Initially, the Soviet authorities refrained from arresting them, but tried to "convert" them to Orthodoxy by inviting them to join an "initiative group." The Ukrainian Catholic clergymen ignored this proposal and after several months of being subjected to psychological and physical processing, they were ordered to assemble at a diaconal meeting attended by members of the "initiative group" and NKVD agents. The clergymen were warned that they would be severely punished if they refused to convert to Russian Orthodoxy.

Rev. Tsehelsky was terrorized, threatened, and beaten, but he remained steadfast in his faith. Although the severe stress exacerbated his ulcer, he refused to go for treatment because he did not want to abandon his flock.

On 28 October 1946 Rev. Tsehelsky was arrested on charges of anti-Soviet activity. On 25 January 1947 he was sentenced by a military tribunal to ten years' imprisonment in corrective-labor camps with confiscation of property.

After his trial he was held in a transit prison in Lviv. There he regularly served Mass, accurately recording the date of each Holy Liturgy. His faithful wife managed to send him a parcel containing the items necessary for serving Mass.

Rev. Tsehelsky was transported under convoy to Mordovia, leaving behind his wife, two sons, and two daughters. In the camp he suffered terribly from stomach pains that occasionally prevented him from standing up straight.

Rev. Mykola Tsehelsky, martyr for the faith, died on 25 May 1951.

## REV.-DR. PETRO VERHUN (1890 - 1957)



Petro Verhun was born on 18 November 1890 in the town of Horodok in the Lviv region. Forced to help his carpenter father, he did not complete high school in Peremyshl until World War One. With the help of Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky he began his studies at the Prague Theological Seminary, which he completed in 1927. At the same time he obtained a doctorate in philosophy at the Ukrainian Free University. His scholarly interests were the history of the Eastern and Ukrainian churches.

On 30 October 1927 he was ordained a priest by Metropolitan Sheptytsky at St. George's Cathedral in Lviv. In November he was assigned to minister to the spiritual needs of Ukrainian Catholics in Berlin, where he continued his scholarly work. He was appointed assistant to the Faculty of Church History at the University of Berlin. His first months in this post were difficult: he had no income and had to organize pastoral work for Ukrainians living in Germany's large urban centers. However, his work found favor with the German church authorities, and he organized a number of lectures on the Eastern rite at German theological seminaries. In extremely difficult circumstances he proved to be a devoted clergyman, who cared deeply for the wellbeing of his parishioners. He was an indefatigable pastor, who worked day and night.

For his loyal service to the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church Rev.-Dr. Verhun was named prelate in 1937 by Pope Pius XII, who appointed him Apostolic Visitor on 23 November 1940 with the rights of administrator for the Ukrainian Catholics of Germany.

In this post he was a good father and friend to his clergymen, who loved him for his gentle nature and selflessness. However, he was a strict taskmaster where punctuality and diligence were concerned. He conducted a voluminous correspondence late into the night and helped finance the studies of young seminarians in Prague, Podebrady, and Graz. Not even the frequent bombardment distracted him from his work.

In 1943 the priests of the Apostolic Visitature appealed in writing to Metropolitan Sheptytsky, requesting that Rev.-Dr. Verhun be elevated to bishop.

On 2 May 1945 the Red Army captured Berlin, and most Ukrainians left the German capital, heading for the American Sector in West Germany, while Soviet troops monitored the remaining members of the Berlin Ukrainian community.

Although nothing was preventing Rev.-Dr. Verhun from moving his seat to Munich, he wanted to share his parishioners' fate, understanding that they needed his spiritual support. But he urged all his priests to save themselves by going to Munich. When his close friend Ivan Mirchuk said: "Father, you have no reason to remain in Berlin, because you will not stay here long: you will be arrested," he replied:

"As long as one Ukrainian remains in Berlin, I shall stay here."

On 21 June 1945 the NKVD carefully searched the residence of Rev.-Dr. Verhun. After the search he was arrested and sent without trial to the Soviet Union. He was harshly interrogated, and in the summer of 1946 a closed military tribunal in Kyiv sentenced him to eight years' imprisonment in the GULAG. On 22 June 1952 he completed his term of imprisonment and was exiled to the large village of Angarskoe in Krasnoiar'sk krai. He lived with the Ukrainian artist Ivan Khandon, who was from Skole raion. In 1954 he underwent stomach surgery, which greatly weakened his health. One of his fellow exiles, who knew him until December 1954, recalled: "I was always struck by his moral strength. Despite all his illnesses, despite the intolerable loneliness under all sorts of surveillance, he was always an extraordinarily friendly and polite person, and there was never any sadness in his face. He greeted everyone with a smile."

Rev.-Dr. Verhun's greatest ordeal was the inability to conduct his pastoral activities. The only thing left to him was prayer and the conviction that the church in Ukraine would be resurrected. He was frequently summoned for nocturnal interrogations and urged to convert to Russian Orthodoxy.

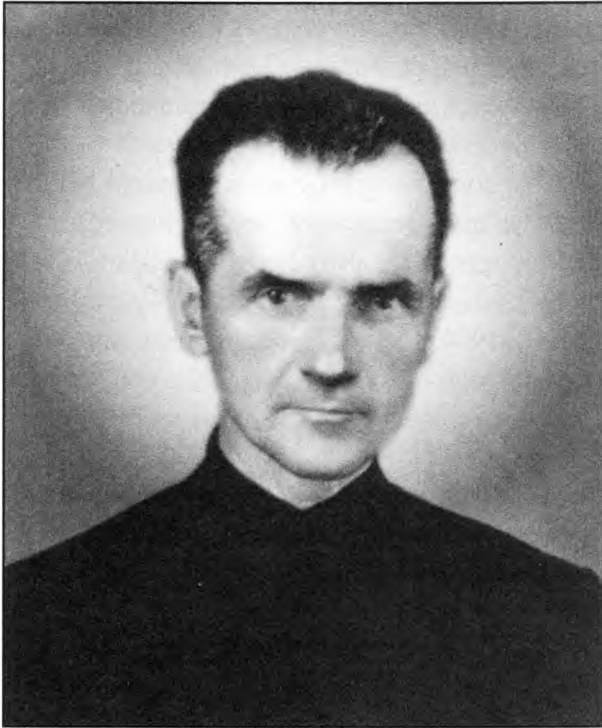
Rev.-Dr. Petro Verhun died in Siberian exile on 7 February 1957 and was buried on the shores of the Angara River. To this day he is devoutly remembered by the German Catholic clergy, for he attested to the truth of the unity of Christ's Church by his martyrdom.

*Mother Abbess Yosyfa Viter of the Studite Order. In 1921-1928 she was assigned to the Basilian monastery in Lviv and was mistress of novices at the Studite monastery in Yakteriv, where she was later abbess in 1933-1939. She was arrested and imprisoned in Brygidky Prison in Lviv in 1939. In 1946 she began her term of imprisonment in the camps of Irkutsk, Mordovia, and Krasnoiar'sk krai. From 1956 to 1988 she worked clandestinely as the abbess of the Studite Order of Nuns in Galicia.*





## REV. OLEKSII ZARYTSKY (1912 - 1963)



Oleksa Zarytsky was born on 17 October 1912 in the village of Bilche, Lviv region. In 1922-1931 he studied at the Stryi State Gymnasium, where he was noted for his model behaviour and profound grasp of religious subjects. After graduating, he studied at the Lviv Theological Academy until 1934.

On 7 June 1936 in Lviv's St. George's Cathedral he was ordained a priest by Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky. After working as a parish priest in the villages of Stynova Nyzhnia and Stynova Vyshnia, he was transferred to the village of Strutyn in Zolochiv raion, Lviv region. His former parishioners were reluctant to part with their priest. His arrival in Strutyn markedly changed the villagers' lives. He organized a children's nursery, field trips, and helped children of poor peasants obtain an education. He was loved and respected for his humility, sincere devotion, modesty, and gentle character.

Rev. Zarytsky's trials began during the first Soviet occupation of Western Ukraine in 1939. Several workers' families were billeted in his house, and their presence hampered his pastoral activities. The Soviet authorities banned the teaching of religion to children. Unable to teach them at school or church, he taught them at home, despite the risk. He remained in Strutyn until 1946.

That year another great famine occurred in Ukraine. Rev. Zarytsky provided help to refugees

fleeing the starving regions. One day he came to the church and told his parishioners that he would probably never serve Mass again, as he was being pressured to convert to Orthodoxy.

Like all the other Ukrainian Catholic priests who had refused to convert, Rev. Zarytsky was arrested and spent six months in the Zolochiv prison. Here he continued his pastoral work: every day he served Mass, prayed with the prisoners three times a day, told them about the history of the church, and gave moral support to the prisoners, who were expecting to be shot. He was transferred to the prison in Lviv, where he was abused and starved.

Although the main reason for his arrest was his refusal to convert to Orthodoxy, Rev. Zarytsky said that he was also charged under political article 54. On 29 May 1948 an MVD tribunal sentenced him to eight years' imprisonment in corrective-labor camps. He served his term mostly in Kemerovo, Omsk, and Karaganda regions. He was released on 31 December 1954. Forbidden to return to Ukraine, he was forced to remain in exile in Karaganda.

Rev. Zarytsky was released from exile on 10 May 1956, but he remained in Karaganda, where he continued to conduct the Holy Liturgy in private buildings attached to mines nos. 17, 19, 20, 47, and 49. He organized parish life and devoted special care to young people. This pastoral activity was initially possible because village-based policemen were not carrying out close surveillance of former prisoners. He also served the Latin Mass for Germans and Poles, for which he was fondly remembered by the former. Very often he did not eat or rest all day. He heard confessions, baptized children, and served Mass.

On 26 October 1957, owing to the absence of a crime, Rev. Zarytsky was rehabilitated by the Military Tribunal of the Subcarpathian Military District. This was the beginning of his final period of missionary activity in Samara, the Urals, Orenburg, and Kazakhstan. In 1960 he was officially registered as a resident of the city of Omsk. One day he came home from a brief mission trip to learn that the militia had cancelled his residence permit. Refusing to correct this bureaucratic problem, he became a "wanderer of Christ," and for two years continued his missionary work, despite the fact that he could land in jail.

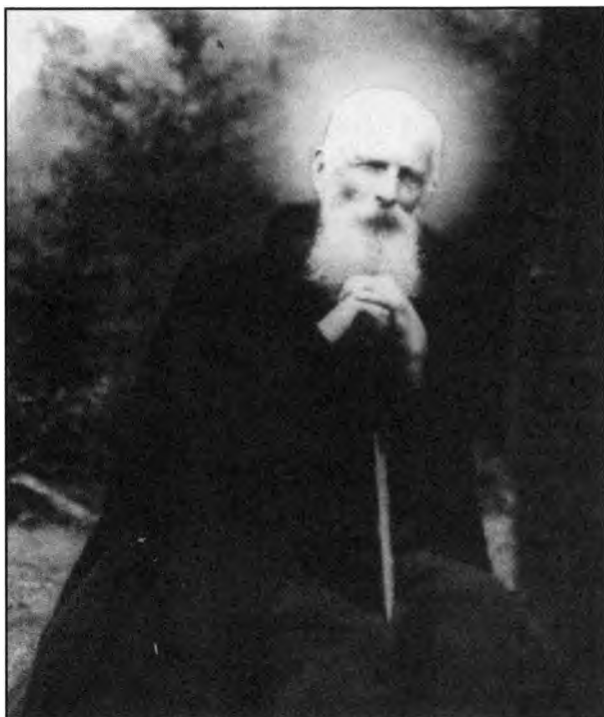
He was in poor health when he arrived in Karaganda in April 1962: his gastritis had flared up. But he wanted to complete his work among the

local Ukrainian community and then head for Tadjhikistan. He was arrested on 9 May in Karaganda, near mine no. 17, where there was once a Ukrainian church in which he had served Mass. According to his friends, Rev. Zarytsky was betrayed by a Ukrainian.

On 30 June 1962 he was charged with vagrancy, the real reason being his religious activity. He was sentenced to two years' imprisonment in the settlement of Dolinka, Karaganda region, where he found work as a tailor. Although the work was not difficult, his health, aggravated by hypertension, was deteriorating. It was practically impossible to survive in the camp, where between thirty and forty prisoners died every day. During the winter their corpses were not buried but thrown into ditches, where they were torn apart by wolves.

Rev. Oleksii Zarytsky, the "Apostle of Siberia," completed his mission on earth in the camp hospital on 30 October 1963.

**REV. KLYMENTII  
SHEPTYTSKY  
(ARCHIMANDRITE  
OF THE STUDITE ORDER, 1869-1951)**



Klymentii Sheptytsky was born on 17 November 1869 in the village of Prylbychi, the county of Yavoriv, Lviv region. He was the sixth

child of Count Ivan Kanta and Sofia Fredriv-Sheptytska; his baptismal name was Kazymyr-Maria. He graduated with distinction from St. Anna's Gymnasium in Cracow. In 1887-1888 he studied law at the University of Cracow and continued his law studies in Munich and Paris in 1888-1890. He obtained a doctorate in law from the University of Cracow in 1892.

After completing his studies, Kazymyr helped his father manage the family estates located in three countries. He also cared for his ailing mother, who traveled frequently to Italy until her death in 1904. The voluminous correspondence between mother and son reflects Kazymyr's struggle to come to terms with his monastic calling.

In 1900 Kazymyr was elected deputy to the Austrian parliament and candidate to the State Council, becoming a full member in 1901. Despite his important political duties, he continued to care for his sick mother and help his father manage the family estates in a conscious effort to compensate for the "loss" of his brother Roman [the future metropolitan, Andrei Sheptytsky], who had become a monk.

In 1907, in connection with the dissolution of the Austrian parliament, Kazymyr abandoned his political activity and devoted himself fully to managing the family estates and working on his manorial farm in Leviatnyky, where he built a brick parish church for the local Eastern-rite Catholics.

Following in his brother's footsteps, Kazymyr decided to enter an Eastern-rite Catholic monastery, resolving to "place himself completely at the disposition of the Lord." At the request of his brother Metropolitan Sheptytsky, he entered the Benedictine monastery in Beuron, in the upper Danube valley in Baden Württemberg in Germany, to test himself in this Roman Catholic monastic order.

After one year, he decided to follow his brother and return to the Ukrainian Catholic rite of his ancestors. In 1912 he began his novitiate at the Studite monastery in Kamenica (Bosnia). In 1913 he became a monk, adopting the name Klymentii. He began his theological studies in Innsbruck, completing them in 1918. On 28 August 1915 Brother Klymentii was ordained by the bishop of Krizevac (Croatia).

He was appointed abbot of the Studite monastery in Sknyliv. After it was damaged during the war, the monastery was transferred to the summer residence of the Galician metropolitans in Univ, where Abbot Klymentii began reconstructing the buildings and adapting them to the needs of the monastery. However, his main task in these unsettled times was to continue the work started by Metropolitan Sheptytsky: to renew the monastic tradition in the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and raise a new generation in the spirit of healthy monastic discipline.

In 1926 Rev. Klymentii was appointed abbot of the Holy Dormition Lavra Monastery in Univ and was responsible for its related monasteries. In 1937 he began living in Lviv, caring for his ailing brother and helping him in his administrative work. Although he was greatly respected by the clergy, Rev. Klymentii remained in the shadow of his famous brother whom he served discreetly.

In 1939, immediately after the first Soviet occupation of Western Ukraine, the Soviets shot Klymentii's brother Leon and his wife in the family home in Prylbychi. There was also an order to execute Rev. Klymentii, who fortunately was not in Prylbychi at this time.

In the winter of 1939 Metropolitan Sheptytsky divided the Soviet Union into four exarchates, assigning one of them (Russia) to his brother Klymentii. The exarchs held four synods in which he took active part.

During the Soviet and German occupations Klymentii remained by the metropolitan's side, and headed the action to hide Jews in the metropolitan's palace. He cared for the ailing metropolitan until his death on 1 November 1944. That year Metropolitan Josyf Slipyj appointed Rev. Klymentii archimandrite of the Studite Order. In November the new metropolitan dispatched a delegation to Moscow, headed by Rev. Klymentii, for negotiations on the affairs of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church.

In 1945, following the arrests of all the bishops of the UGCC, Rev. Klymentii became the de facto leader of the clergy, whose members opposed the Soviet authorities' measures to forcibly convert the Ukrainian church hierarchy, clergy, and faithful to Orthodoxy. He continued his Thursday meetings with his priests, during which he encouraged them not to submit to the

Soviets' promises or threats. He also held meetings with the abbots of other monastic orders (Basilians and Redemptorists), who also resolved to resist the Soviets' pressure.

Archimandrite Klymentii's own way of the cross began on 5 June 1947, when he was arrested in the Univ Lavra. His torments began in the MGB internal prison in Lviv. Although he was charged with anti-Soviet activity because of his work with the Vatican, the real reason behind his arrest was his correspondence with Rome in which he informed the Holy See of the persecution of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church.

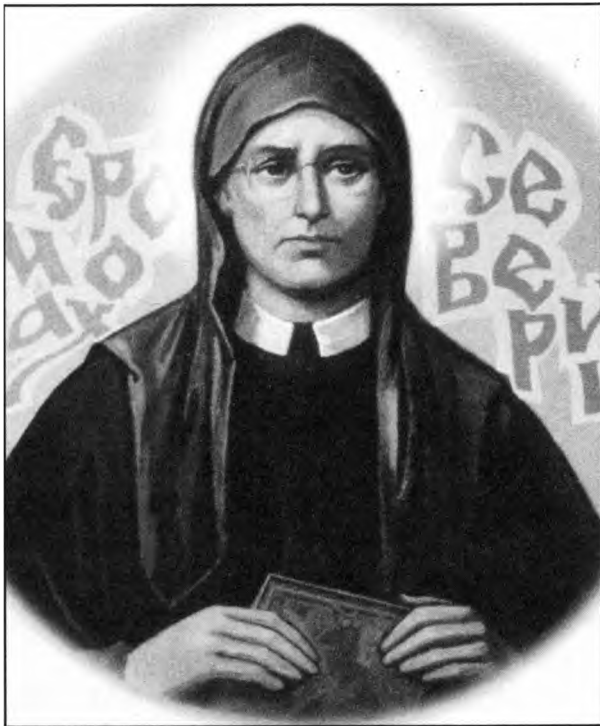
On 27 June 1947, on the directive of the Deputy Minister of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, Rev. Klymentii was transferred to the MGB internal prison in Kyiv, where the seventy-eight-year-old abbot suffered his greatest torments. Reports on his nocturnal interrogations are contained in his personal file, no. 3103. According to his fellow inmates, "Rev. Klymentii, despite his advanced age (79), was in good shape, he was not sick, never demanded that the regime be eased, did not ask for medicine. The enemies of Christ applied various methods to break the unshakeable faith of Rev. Klymentii. The interrogator suggested that he convert to Orthodoxy and then he would be released to the monastery. He refused.

When he was still in the prison in Univ the archimandrite continued his monastic life of prayer: immediately after rising, he prayed and fasted. Every day, in the morning and evening, Rev. Klymentii would approach the window and stand one meter from it (it was forbidden to come closer), and leaning on his cane, bent his head and whispered prayers to the Lord. In prison he shared with his fellow prisoners the modest packages that he received from the nuns."

After he was sentenced, the abbot was sent to a prison in Moscow and later to Vladimir Prison. Despite all his sufferings, he still had the strength to smile. It appears that smiling was Rev. Klymentii's sole weapon with which he would spread the Gospel.

On 1 May 1951, at 9:30 p.m. the earthly journey of the martyr for Christ's faith, Rev. Klymentii Sheptytsky, came to an end in Vladimir Prison.

## SEVERIAN BARANYK (HIEROMONK OF THE BASILIAN ORDER, 1889-1941)



Severian Baranyk was born on 18 July 1889. His place of birth is unknown. He entered the Order of St. Basil the Great on 24 September 1904 in Krekhiv, where he took his permanent monastic vows on 21 September 1910. He was ordained a priest on 14 February 1915.

He was assigned to the monastery in Zhovkva and worked as a catechist in the local school. He also edited the children's magazine *Nash Pryiatel* [Our Friend] and was active in the local parish. He headed the Marian Society for young people and artisans, headed an orphanage, taught monks, and held recollections for the faithful. He was known as a friendly, sincere, and helpful clergyman.

In 1932 Rev. Baranyk was appointed abbot of the Basilian monastery in Zhovkva and the parish priest of Holy Trinity Church in the city of Drohobych, an important ecclesiastical and religious center in Galicia. Although Rev. Baranyk experienced many difficulties and joys in his new post, no one could predict that his life would end in martyrdom in Drohobych.

Although outwardly Ukrainian religious life died down in Western Ukraine during the first Soviet occupation, the intensity of its inner life intensified. Despite the difficult conditions, Rev. Baranyk continued to work energetically and always tried to help those who were in need. A great friend of young people, he was active in the city's athletic life

and was also a civic activist and member of the municipal council.

During the Soviet occupation the Bolshevik authorities forbade Rev. Baranyk to leave the premises of the monastery. Urged by the faithful to go to a safer place, the hieromonks refused, explaining: "If they [the Soviet occupiers] find out we have gone, they may take revenge on everyone. It would be better if we endure." They made their confessions and patiently awaited the expected. On 26 June 1941 the NKVD arrested the monks and took them to Drohobych Prison, after which they were never seen alive.

Two days later the Germans entered Drohobych and allowed people to look for their family members at the prison. There they came upon a horrific scene. Yosyf Lastoviak recalls: "In late June 1941 the front was approaching Drohobych. The Bolshevik government was trying to cover up its tracks. Behind the prison I saw a large pit hidden underneath piles of sand that had been rolled smooth. When the Bolsheviks retreated, the Germans arrived, and people rushed to the prison to find their relatives. The Germans let a few people at a time into the prison to identify their murdered family members, while the majority of people stood near the gates. Since I was just a boy, I could not see anything from the gates. So I wandered off and climbed a tree. There was a terrible stench. I saw the Germans sending people to dig up a pit that was covered with sand. It was freshly made because the people who were digging were able to move the earth with their hands and exhume the bodies of the murdered people. Near the pit was a shed, next to which I saw the body of Rev. Severian Baranyk of the Basilian Order. It was extremely mangled from being tortured in the prison: his body was black and swollen, and his face looked frightful. Later, my father said that a cross had been carved into his chest. I saw the body of Rev. Baranyk from a distance of ten to fifteen meters."

A few years after the end of the war the local prosecutor told Sofia Morska what had taken place in the prison in those days, especially in relation to priests: "One of them was boiled in a vat and fed to the prisoners; others were buried in the ground up to their necks and people walked on their heads."

The burial place of Rev. Severian Baranyk is unknown, but numerous eyewitness reports state that he was buried together with other prisoners in the mass grave at the cemetery located on M. Hrushevsky Street in Drohobych.

**REV.-DR. YAKYM  
SENKIVSKY**  
(HIEROMONK OF THE BASILIAN  
ORDER, 1896-1941)



Yakym (Ivan) Senkivsky was born into a peasant family on 2 May 1896 in the village of Hai Velyki near Ternopil. His father did not stint on money to educate his hardworking children, who were raised in a devoutly religious and patriotic spirit. It is thus no surprise that his two sons, Ivan and Volodymyr, decided to become priests.

Ivan completed his theological studies in Lviv in 1921 and was ordained on 4 December 1921 at St. George's Cathedral. He continued his theological studies in Innsbruck, where he obtained a doctorate in theology.

Not satisfied with his academic achievements, he decided to proceed with his plans to become a monk. On 10 July 1923 he entered the Basilian novitiate in Krekhiv. According to one of his fellow novices, Ivan was a model candidate for monkhood. Even though he was older than his fellow novices, and a priest, Rev.-Dr. Senkivsky was a friend and brother to even the youngest novice. He enchanted everyone with his happy, calm nature, piety, modesty, and industriousness.

Rev. Senkivsky took his first monastic vows on 1 March 1925, after which he was transferred to the monastery in the village of Krasnopushcha in the county of Berezhany, Ternopil province. In 1927 he began teaching in the higher theological

school of St. Onuphrius Monastery in the village of Lavriv, in the Staryi Sambir area. This school prepared monastic and teaching personnel for parish schools. Rev.-Dr. Senkivsky was a professor of Basilian humanities and rhetoric (he taught Ukrainian courses, Latin, general history, geography, and chemistry). He also taught catechism at the local school in the village of Linyn. No matter where he was posted, he always enjoyed the love and respect of young and old alike.

Between 1932 and 1938 Rev.-Dr. Senkivsky was based in St. Onuphrius Monastery of the Basilian Order on B. Khmelnytsky Street in Lviv. In 1939 he was appointed hegumen of the Basilian monastery in Drohobych, where he quickly became the city's most beloved resident. He gave brilliant sermons and knew how to talk to everyone, from intellectuals to workers, young people and the elderly. He was unfailingly courteous and always smiling. People intuitively felt that he was free of malice and that his innate modesty and dignity hid a true servant of Christ.

After his arrival in Drohobych Rev.-Dr. Senkivsky's energetic pastoral activities helped galvanize religious life in the city. Together with the hieromonk Severian Baranyk, he helped strengthen religious life in Drohobych.

During the first Soviet occupation of Galicia all church properties — land, schools, and parish buildings — were collectivized, monasteries were liquidated, and monks were forcibly expelled, deported, or simply murdered. However, this did not curb the devotion of the unshakeable Basilians, none of whom abandoned their monastery or pastoral activities.

The Stalinist authorities were trying to put a stop to the activities of the Drohobych monastery. The popularity of the sermons given by the golden-tongued Rev.-Dr. Senkivsky, which instilled a profound love for Jesus Christ and the Blessed Virgin Mary in the souls of his parishioners, was a thorn in the side of the Bolsheviks. During his sermons the church was packed with people, while outside stood rows of uniformed NKVD agents near the church gates. Rev.-Dr. Senkivsky was frequently summoned for interrogations and urged to stop his pastoral activities at the monastery. As a result, he redoubled his activities, which the Soviets could not forgive.

On the morning of 26 June 1941 hieromonk Yakym Senkivsky served his last Holy Liturgy, and by noon he was arrested together with his

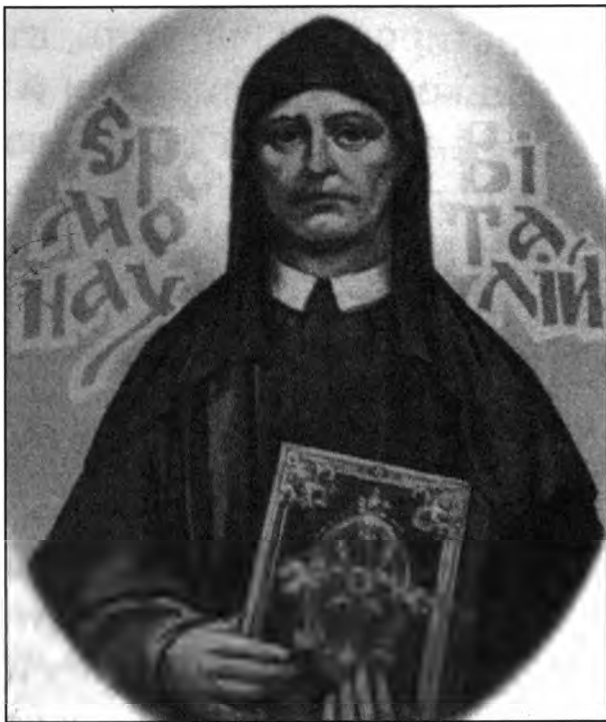
fellow monk, Severian Baranyk, the abbot of the Drohobych monastery. A few days earlier their parishioners had urged both monks to leave the monastery and wait out the danger. Rev.-Dr. Senkivsky replied: "I will not hide, and without the Lord's will, not a single hair will fall from my head."

On Sunday morning, 29 June 1941, before the German troops entered the Drohobych, city residents rushed to the prison in the hopes of releasing their jailed relatives. Instead, they found hundreds of corpses showing signs of torture. One of the cells in the dungeon revealed Severian Baranyk's liturgical book of prayers, the Chasoslov, and a postcard belonging to Rev.-Dr. Senkivsky whose body was never found. Eyewitnesses reported that he was boiled in a huge vat, his body parts fed to the prisoners. These reports may be considered reliable, as former prisoners testified that the broth that was served to them in prison had a sweetish taste and human nails were found floating in it.

Hieromonk Yakym Senkivsky is remembered as a shining example of a priest and a devout Ukrainian patriot.

## VITALII BAIKAK

(HIEROMONK OF THE BASILIAN ORDER, 1907-1946)



Volodymyr Bairak was born into a devoutly religious family on 24 February 1907 in the village of Shvaikivtsi, the county of Chortkiv in Ternopil region. In high school he was an exemplary student

and energetic civic activist. He entered a Basilian monastery on 4 September 1924, and after his novitiate in Krekhiv and further preparations in various monasteries in Lavriv, Dobromyl, and Krystynopil (today: Chervonohrad), he studied philosophy and theology. On 26 February 1933 he took his final monastic vows, adopting the name Vitalii. He was ordained a priest on 13 August 1933.

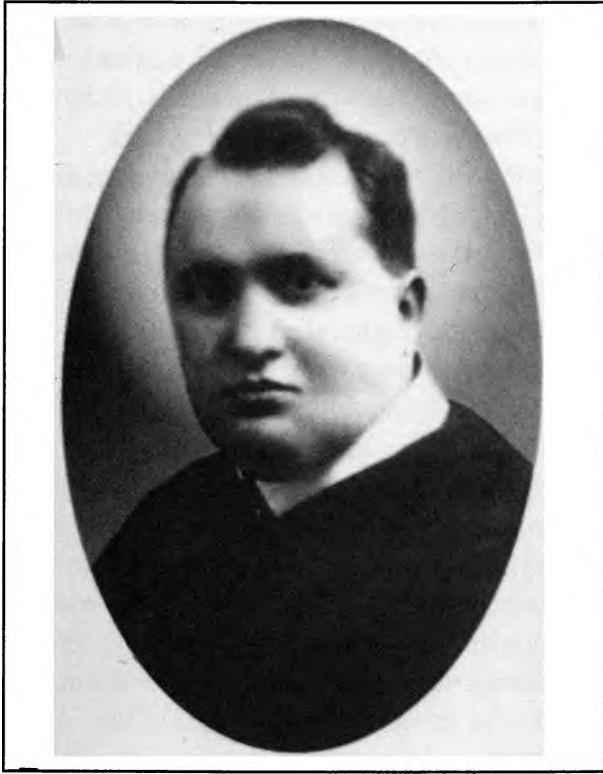
Rev. Bairak served his first Holy Liturgy in his native village, in the presence of his parents, brothers, sisters, relatives, and fellow villagers. On that joyous day there were no harbingers of the terrible event that would befall the newly ordained priest in 1946.

In Zhovkva Rev. Bairak completed his studies while working at the parish of the Church of the Blessed Heart of Jesus. He was also appointed deputy abbot in charge of the parish office and the head of the Marian Society. Besides devoting himself to prayer and work, Rev. Bairak also traveled frequently on missions throughout Western Ukraine. Many villagers remember his passionate and persuasive sermons during recollections. He was known for his friendly manner and his ability to listen to people and give excellent advice.

In June 1941 he replaced Rev. Yakym Senkivsky, the abbot of Holy Trinity Monastery, who was murdered at the end of the first Soviet occupation. His own religious work also did not escape the attention of the NKVD. On 17 September 1945 he was arrested on charges of conducting a Mass in 1941 in the village of Turynka at the gravesite of fallen soldiers of the Ukrainian Galician Army; giving an anti-Soviet sermon; and writing "an article of a slanderous nature against the Bolshevik Party, which was published in the anti-Soviet calendar *Misionar* for 1942." On 13 November 1945 an NKVD military tribunal in Drohobych region sentenced him to eight year's imprisonment with confiscation of property. In fact, Rev. Bairak was not guilty of any crime, as attested by a document issued in 2001 by the Security Service of Ukraine. It notes that Rev. Bairak was unjustifiably repressed and therefore rehabilitated on 14 August 1995.

News of his death was brought shortly before Easter 1946 by a Mr. Vasylenko from Hai, who was supposed to bring the arrested monk some blessed food. He recounted that Rev. Bairak had been beaten severely and was later carried into his cell on a sheet. He was buried in Brygidky Prison, the NKVD interior prison.. The blessed memory of this servant of God will always be honored by the faithful.

## REV. ZYNOVII KOVALYK (REDEMPTORIST, 1903-1941)



Zynovii Kovalyk was born into a peasant family on 18 August 1903 in the village of Ivachiv Horishnii, near Ternopil. Before joining the monastery, he taught in the lower elementary grades of a village school. Responding to his calling that he first felt in childhood, he entered a Redemptorist monastery and on 28 August 1926 took his monastic vows. He was then sent to study philosophy and theology in Belgium.

After completing his studies, he was ordained a priest on 9 August 1932 and the following month returned to his native village to serve his first Mass. Immediately after his ordination Rev. Kovalyk and Bishop Charnetsky departed for the Volyn region to work for the cause of unity with their Ukrainian Orthodox brethren. The young priest was a joy to work with. He had a happy nature, a beautiful voice, and clear enunciation. He was a magnificent singer and truly a “golden-tongued” preacher whose apostolic passion attracted thousands of believers to him. Rev. Kovalyk had a special, almost childlike, devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary to whom he devoted numerous missions.

After working for several years in Volyn, Rev. Kovalyk settled in Stanyslaviv, where he conducted missions throughout the city and

surrounding villages. Prior to the first Soviet occupation of Western Ukraine in 1939, he moved to Lviv and settled in the Redemptorist monastery on Zyblykevych Street, where he served as steward.

Every Sunday during the Soviet occupation Rev. Kovalyk served Mass in one of the churches in Lviv. His fearlessness during the occupation is truly remarkable. Whereas most of the clergymen who were working clandestinely tried to avoid broaching the problems of the day in their sermons and only urged the faithful to be loyal to God, Rev. Kovalyk was not afraid of openly opposing any manifestations of atheism being introduced by the Soviet authorities. His fiery sermons had a strong impact on the faithful, but at the same time they spelled danger. When his parishioners tried to warn him, Rev. Zynovii had one reply: “If God wills it, I will gladly accept even death, but as a preacher I will never present a false face.”

Rev. Kovalyk’s last great sermon took place on 28 August 1940 in Ternopil, where he had been sent to give a sermon on the feast of the Dormition of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Approximately 10,000 people gathered for the feast day to hear his sermon. A few months later he became a martyr for the faith. On the night of 20-21 December 1940 NKVD agents arrived at the monastery to arrest him because of his sermons in the Stanyslaviv monastery. Before he was taken away, he asked his superior, Rev.-Dr. Joseph de Vocht, for his blessing and absolution.

The Redemptorists tried to learn what happened to Rev. Kovalyk, but for a long time their efforts yielded no results. In April 1941 they learned that he was being held in Brygidky Prison in Lviv. During his six-month incarceration Rev. Kovalyk had been interrogated twenty-eight times. For three of those interrogations he was sent to other prisons, and one time he was so severely beaten that he became very ill.

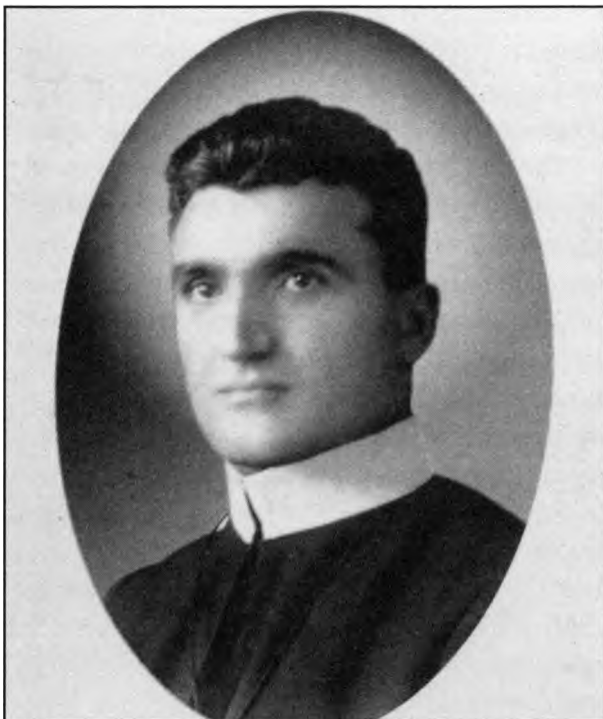
Rev. Kovalyk continued his pastoral activities in prison. His cell, measuring 4.2 by 3.5 meters, held thirty-two prisoners. Every day he said one-third of the rosary and on Sundays, he prayed the entire rosary. Every day he said liturgical prayers and celebrated various religious feast days. He heard prisoners’ confessions, gave them religious lessons and taught catechism, and in his typical way cheered up his fellow prisoners with various stories on religious themes.

When the Germans were approaching Lviv in 1941, the NKVD began shooting prisoners in all the jails of Western Ukraine. It was not enough for them simply to shoot Rev. Kovalyk: in the presence of his fellow prisoners, the NKVD crucified him on the wall of the prison corridor.

When the German troops entered Lviv, they started clearing the prisons of the decomposing corpses of executed prisoners. According to eyewitness reports, the greatest horror was finding the crucified priest into whose slashed abdomen a fetus had been placed.

Confirmation of the blessed martyrdom of Rev. Zynovii Kovalyk may be found in the Old Testament's Book of Wisdom 3:1; 4-5: "But the souls of the just are in the hand of God, and no torment shall touch them. For if before men, indeed, they be punished, yet is their hope full of immortality. Chastised a little, they shall be greatly blessed, because God tried them and found them worthy of himself."

## **REV. IVAN ZIATYK** **(REDEMPTORIST ORDER, 1899-1952)**



Ivan Ziatyk was born into a poor peasant family on 26 December 1899 in the village of Odrekhiv, some 20 kilometers from Sianik

(today: Poland). When he was fourteen years old, his father died, and he was raised by his mother and older brother Mykhailo.

Ivan was a quiet, obedient boy, who quickly revealed his aptitude for learning. In 1919 he entered the Peremyshl Theological Seminary, which he completed with distinction on 30 June 1923. That year he was ordained a priest.

During 1925-1935 Rev. Ziatyk worked as a prefect at the Ukrainian Catholic Seminary in the city of Peremyshl. Besides giving spiritual training to seminarians, he also prepared them for the priesthood and taught catechism and special dogmatics. He was also the chaplain and catechist at the Ukrainian Girls' Gymnasium in Peremyshl.

Rev. Ziatyk was known for his good heart, great humility, and profound inner life. He was a very perceptive listener, who made a profound impact on his colleagues and lay people. For a long time he nurtured plans to enter a monastery, although his superiors constantly dissuaded him from taking this step. Despite their opposition, Rev. Ziatyk joined the Order of the Holiest Redeemer on 15 July 1935.

After completing his novitiate in 1936, he was sent to the monastery of the Mother of God of Perpetual Help in Stanyslaviv. He stayed there briefly and in 1937 moved to Lviv, where he lived in St. Klymentii's Monastery. He was responsible for managing the monastery and often acted as the deputy hegumen. When the Redemptorist Fathers opened their own seminary in Lviv, Rev. Ziatyk was appointed professor of dogmatic theology and Holy Writings. During 1941-1944 he was also the abbot of the monastery in Zboiska, where a Redemptorist gymnasium was based.

The end of World War Two brought a fresh round of terror to Ukraine, the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, and the Lviv Province of the Redemptorists. After arresting all the bishops, in the spring of 1946 the Soviet security services assembled all the Redemptorists from Ternopil, Stanyslaviv, Lviv, and Zboiska in an unheated wing of the monastery in Holosok. Among them was Rev. Ziatyk, who spent two years under house arrest. The NKVD came to the monastery three or four times a week to check that everyone was there and to conduct interrogations, promising the monks various high positions if they



converted to Orthodoxy and betrayed their monastic vows.

On Sunday, 17 October 1948, the Soviet authorities loaded all the monks onto trucks and brought them to the Studite monastery in Univ. Shortly afterwards, the protohegumen of the Redemptorist Fathers, Rev.-Dr. de Vocht was deported to Belgium. Before his departure he named Rev. Ivan Ziatyk, one of the most experienced members of the order, as his replacement. From this point the Soviet authorities began focusing special attention on him.

On 20 January 1950 the Ministry of State Security issued a search and arrest warrant for Rev. Ziatyk. After he was interrogated many times, the following indictment was handed down on 4 February 1950: "Ivan Ziatyk has been a member of the Order of Redemptorists since 1936 and propagates the ideas of the Roman Pope on the spread of the Catholic faith among the nations of the world and the unification of Catholics."

Rev. Ziatyk spent nearly two years in investigation prisons in Zolochiv and Lviv. Between 4 July 1950 and 16 August 1951 he was interrogated thirty-eight times. In all, he was interrogated on seventy-two occasions. Despite the brutal tortures, Rev. Ziatyk refused to become a traitor and submit to the godless Soviet authorities, who applied pressure on him through his relatives.

On 21 November 1951 Rev. Ziatyk was charged with "abetting the members of an anti-Soviet nationalist organization and conducting anti-Soviet agitation," and sentenced to ten years' imprisonment. He served his sentence in the corrective-labor camp "Ozerny Camp no. 7" in the city of Bratsk, Irkutsk region (Russia). He experienced severe abuse during his imprisonment. According to eyewitness reports, on Good Friday, 1952 he was savagely beaten with staves. The prison guards poured water on his body, and he was left outside in the bitter cold. Three days later, on 17 May 1952, Rev. Ivan Ziatyk died in the camp hospital. He is buried in Taishet raion, Irkutsk region.

## **SISTER TARSYKIA MATSKIV**

**(SISTERS OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN  
MARY, 1919-1944)**



Olha Matskiv was born into a prosperous Ukrainian Greek Catholic family on 23 March 1919 in the city of Khodoriv, Zhydachiv raion, Lviv region. Her father Roman was the director of the Khodoriv railway station. When the depot was moved to Rava Ruska, he moved his family there. Olha's parents, through their own example, raised their children to be responsible, hardworking, and devout. After completing high school in Khodoriv, she enrolled at the State Industrial Women's School, from where she graduated as a sewing instructor in 1937.

Since childhood Olha had felt a calling to devote herself completely to God. She loved to pray and attended Mass frequently. But her mother refused to permit her daughter to join a convent and placed various obstacles in her way.

Immediately after completing her studies, Olha visited the novitiate home in Krystynopil in order to learn about monastic life. However, she was not yet ready to defy her mother. With God's help she overcame her difficulties on 3 May 1938, when she entered the Order of the Sisters of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

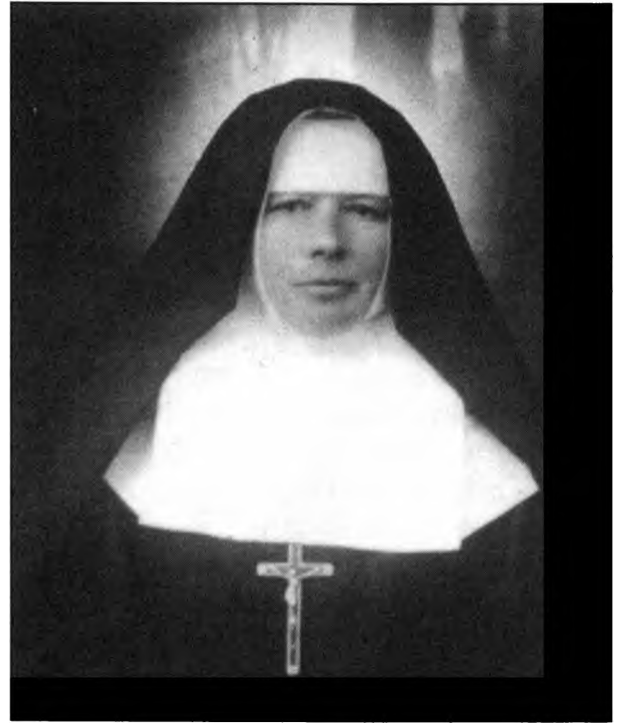
**SISTER LAVRENTIA  
HARASYMIV  
(CONGREGATION  
OF ST. JOSEPH, 1911-1952)**

After completing her novitiate, she adopted the name Tarsykia and took her first vows on 5 November 1940. She was then placed in charge of the convent's workshop and also worked as a sewing instructor at the convent school. Sister Tarsykia was known for her great spiritual qualities. She was a quiet, calm, patient, considerate, happy, and courteous person. She endured spiritual and physical sufferings with humility and joy, and was a magnificent role model.

Sister Tarsykia, who took her religious vows during the war, was well aware that the Soviet authorities were persecuting the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, disbanding monasteries and convents, arresting bishops, priests, monks, and nuns, and deporting them to Siberia. However, the extremely difficult situation only spurred her to devote herself more completely to God.

On 17 July 1944 Soviet troops began advancing to Krystynopil. The nuns hid in the basement of the convent. The bombardment, shooting, and fires lasted all night. By morning the Red Army was at the convent gates.

Every morning Rev. Yosyf Zahviisky of the Basilian Order would serve Mass at the convent. That morning the sisters were expecting his arrival, especially Sister Tarsykia, who wanted to take part in the Holy Liturgy. When the doorbell finally rang, she went to open the door. A shot rang out and Sister Tarsykia fell to the floor. The sisters' efforts to save her were too late. The killer's words, "I killed her... because she was a nun," reveal his hatred for the Catholic Church.



Levkadia Harasymiv was born in 1911 in the village of Rudnyky, Mykolaiv raion, Lviv region. Her father, a farmer, and mother, a country midwife, had six children. Levkadia completed only four grades of elementary school because she had to help her parents. When some girls from a neighboring village joined the Congregation of St. Joseph, she also decided to become a nun. In 1931, when she was nineteen years old, she was accepted to the congregation based in the village of Tsebliv. She took her religious vows in 1933 and adopted the name Lavrentia. She was then sent to work in various parishes.

In 1938 Sister Lavrentia was sent to the city of Khyriv with the abbess, Sister Olimpia. Sister Lavrentia had a gentle, friendly nature. She had a beautiful soprano voice and always sang at Matins and Vespers.

During the first Soviet occupation of Galicia the Ukrainian nuns expected to be arrested, but they refused to abandon their convent. Working clandestinely, they taught catechism to young children and prepared them for their First

## SISTER OLIMPIA BIDA

(CONGREGATION  
OF ST. JOSEPH, 1903-1952)



Communion, even though such activities were banned.

From time to time the NKVD would conduct searches of the convent and mock the nuns, who endured these raids bravely. The nocturnal raids were the worst. One such forced entry took place in April 1950, when NKVD soldiers attacked the convent and broke down the front door. Sister Lavrentia ran to the pantry and climbing through a small window, escaped into the orchard. Noticing the open window, the NKVD troops combed through the orchard, poking their bayonets into every bush. A few times the blades of their bayonets narrowly missed her. Unable to find the missing nun, the NKVD left. Sister Lavrentia remained in the orchard the entire rainy night. She became seriously ill and was bedridden. In this state she was dragged off to the prison in the city of Boryslav.

The prison regime was extremely harsh, and the prisoners received no food. The nuns' only nourishment came from the food they had managed to grab when they were being arrested. After a number of interrogations, the nuns were exiled for life in Tomsk region. It took two weeks for the nuns, including Sister Lavrentia, who was still sick, to reach their destination.

On 30 June 1950 the nuns reached their final destination, the village of Kharsk, where they were forced to find their own lodgings. None of the residents wanted to accept a nun suffering from tuberculosis. But one deported Russian family kindly agreed to let Sister Lavrentia stay in a room with the bedridden owner of the house, who was paralyzed. The nuns were quickly set to work. Sister Lavrentia was forced to make artificial flowers. It was pointless to go to the doctor. The Soviet system was so depraved and aimed at destroying "enemies of the people" that the local doctors were not interested in easing the sufferings of the exiled nuns.

Sister Lavrentia bore her sufferings bravely. She not only patiently endured the cries of the dying invalid, but also prayed for him. As a result of her prayers, he stopped yelling and became more pleasant to everyone.

Sister Lavrentia was particularly devoted to the Blessed Virgin Mary, and through God's grace she died in a state of blessedness on the eve of the Dormition of the Virgin Mary.

Olha Bida was born in 1903 in the village of Tsebliv, Sokal raion, Lviv region. She joined the Congregation of St. Joseph early in life and adopted the religious name Olimpia. After her novitiate she was sent to the village of Zhuzhel in Sokal raion, where she provided spiritual instruction to young convent girls.

In 1938 Sister Olimpia was transferred to the town of Khyriv, where she was appointed abbess. She was a spiritual mother to the nuns whom she treated as God's children. She was patient, calm, and never raised her voice. During the first Soviet occupation of Western Ukraine the communist authorities constantly harassed the sisters, threatening them if they did not remove their habits. But bolstered in their faith, they steadfastly refused and continued to gather the faithful for prayers and taught catechism to children and youth. From 1946 sisters Olimpia, Lavrentia, and Hlikeria began clandestinely preparing children for their First Communion.

As the communist terror intensified, the NKVD began "visiting" the convent. Breaking into the convent, they conducted searches, confiscated whatever they wanted, mocked and

## REV. EMILIAN KOVCH

(1884 - 1944)

threatened the nuns, and demanded that they renounce God. The nuns steadfastly refused, declaring: “We made a vow to Almighty God and we will not remove our habits.”

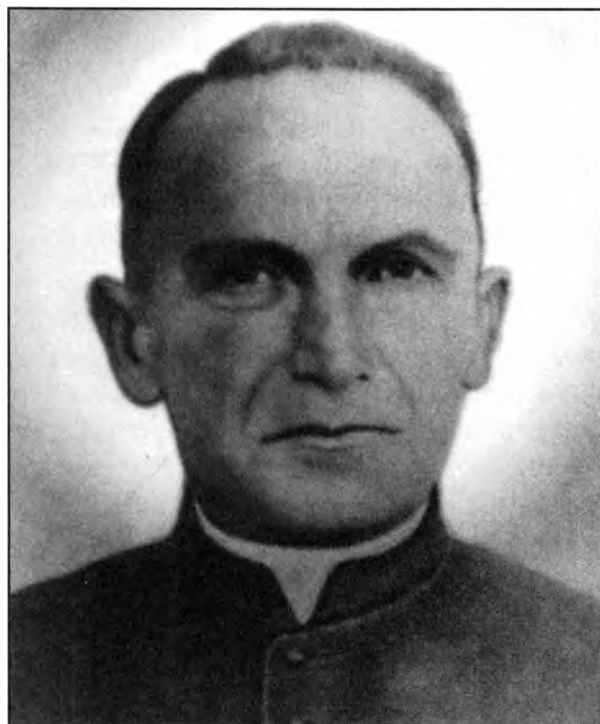
The nuns faced one of two choices: either they would convert to Orthodoxy and cooperate with the atheistic Soviet government, or remain true to their faith. They chose the latter, which placed them firmly on the path to martyrdom.

The reaction of the Soviet authorities was swift. In April 1949 NKVD troops set fire to the convent. This act of arson heralded the imminent arrest and deportation of the sisters.

One Sunday in 1950 the nuns held a clandestine Holy Liturgy — without a priest officiating — at the cemetery, which was attended by many people. NKVD agents dressed in civilian clothing surrounded the nuns and brought them to the school, which was already filled with other NKVD personnel. After being interrogated, the nuns were sent back to the convent, where a thorough search took place. Then they were loaded onto trucks and brought to the prison in the city of Boryslav. They spent six weeks there. According to archival documents, the nuns were courageous in the defense of their faith. On 16 March 1950 Sister Olimpia was exiled for life to the village of Kharsk in Tomsk region on charges of conducting anti-Soviet activity. After arriving at her place of exile, she was forced to work. At the same time she continued to serve as abbess and cared for a sick nun.

In a letter addressed to her abbess, Sister Olimpia wrote that they were being persecuted only because they were Catholic nuns. “We are suffering for the faith, for God’s cause, and what can be finer than this.”

Sister Olimpia Bida died on 23 January 1952.



Emilian Kovch was born on 20 August 1884 in the village of Kosmach, in the Kosiv area. After graduating from the Ukrainian State Gymnasium in Lviv, he completed his theological studies in 1911 at the College of Saints Sergius and Bacchus in Rome. A year earlier he married Maria-Anna Dobriansky. In 1911 he was ordained a priest by Bishop Hryhorii Khomyshyn and was then posted to a parish in the village of Pidvolochysk in Skalat raion.

In 1912 he volunteered for missionary work in Yugoslavia, where he worked in the parish of Kozarac (Bosnia).

Rev. Kovch was an extremely gifted preacher and had a talent for uplifting people and instilling love of God in them. His passionate sermons about the Almighty and the Blessed Virgin Mary drove people to tears.

In 1926 Rev. Kovch returned to Galicia and began working in the village parish of Sernyky Horishni, Rohatyn county. In 1919 he joined the Ukrainian Galician Army and became the chaplain of the Berezhany Unit. Every morning after serving Mass, he rushed to the field hospital, drill field, or office. Everywhere he settled conflicts and cheered up sick soldiers. He showed a certain “intemperance” only during combat

actions, when he always made his way to the front lines. "I know that a soldier on the front line always feels better when he sees a doctor or pastor there," he used to say, adding jokingly, "You know, men, that I am blessed, and a bullet cannot hit a blessed man that easily."

In 1922 Rev. Kovch began his long period of service in the parish of St. Michael's Church in the city of Peremyshliany, in the Lviv region. Ukrainian religious, civic, and economic life was burgeoning in this city, which until recently was Polonized. This was frowned upon by the Polish government and, later, the Soviet authorities. Searches of his home became an unhappy local tradition. Between 1925 and 1934 nearly forty searches were conducted at Rev. Kovch's residence, half of which resulted in his arrest and various terms of imprisonment. However, thanks to his organizational talents, wisdom, and determination, he was always able to find a way out of the most difficult situations.

His parishioners often said: "Angels fly over that house," referring to the modest house where Rev. Kovch and his wife lived with their six children. Their home was also a haven for a few orphans who lived there. Rev. Kovch would temporarily house recently orphaned children to help them get over the loss of their parents and then find a place for them in the orphanage. He was extraordinarily compassionate to children from poor families for whom he purchased clothing, books, and school supplies.

Although he was an ardent patriot, Rev. Kovch chastised some of his parishioners for their excessive "nationalist passions," e.g., after the first Soviet occupation of Western Ukraine, when some locals wanted to revenge themselves on local Poles.

In June 1941 the NKVD carried out mass arrests in Peremyshliany. Among those detained were Rev. Kovch and his two daughters. Miraculously, they were released from prison.

A few days later the Germans entered Peremyshliany. Rev. Kovch's parishioners informed him about the Soviets' retreat and joyously carried him to the church. During the Holy Liturgy word arrived at the church that all those who had been imprisoned by the NKVD had been found murdered in the prison.

After the Germans occupied Peremyshliany, they began killing Jews. Rev. Kovch asked his parishioners, especially young people, not to work for the new administration and get caught up in anti-Semitic provocations. Meanwhile, the Jews of Peremyshliany appealed to Rev. Kovch for help. One day a group of Jews ran into his house and told him that the Germans had thrown bombs into a synagogue, which they then locked, preventing the people inside from escaping. Rev. Kovch went to the synagogue and speaking loudly in perfect German, ordered the German police to disperse. Stunned, they did as he ordered, and then Rev. Kovch began dragging the bodies out of the inferno.

In 1942 the German occupiers established a Jewish ghetto in Peremyshliany. The local Jews thought they could save themselves by converting to Christianity. One day a delegation of Jews visited Rev. Kovch, informing him that nearly 1,000 Jews wished to be baptized. It was a difficult decision, and Rev. Kovch consulted with Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky. As a priest he was obliged to baptize anyone under imminent threat of death, but he was troubled by the fact that these people were asking to be baptized for non-religious reasons. Meanwhile, there was little time for reflection. Throughout the city posters announced the forcible confinement of Jews in the ghetto. Rev. Kovch decided on the following step: after conducting preliminary catechism classes and teaching the group of Jews the Symbol of the Faith, he conducted a mass baptism of the Jews of Peremyshliany. Despite their conversion, most of them ended up in the ghetto and were eventually killed. According to reports, the new converts created a separate community in the ghetto and espoused Christianity.

Rev. Kovch's fearless activity was impeding the Nazis' plans. On 30 December 1942 he was arrested and brought to Loncki Prison in Lviv, where he was tortured and thrown on the ground like an inanimate object. Despite the inhuman tortures, Rev. Kovch's face was illuminated by an otherworldly smile, and he was still able to console his fellow prisoners.

His family and friends did everything to effect his release, as did Metropolitan Sheptytsky. He could have been released had he not refused to

stop baptizing Jews. He told the Gestapo: “The law left to me by my Sovereign, says: ‘Baptize in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.’ There is not a word in this about Jews. I will baptize in the name of this law whoever wants to be baptized.”

Rev. Kovch was sent to the Majdanek concentration camp near Lublin (Poland), where he became prisoner no. 2399. There were more than 100 barracks in the camp, each of which housed between 300 and 700 prisoners. Camp conditions were particularly harsh.

Rev. Kovch was assigned to barrack no. 14, where the barrack orderly was a Pole named Zygmund Miller. In order to maintain his position he beat everyone without exception. But he allowed Rev. Kovch to serve Mass in a corner of the barrack and pretended not to see him hearing prisoners’ confessions and distributing Holy Communion.

Rev. Kovch accepted his imprisonment as a gift from God. In his letters to his children he wrote: “I understand that you are working for my release. But I am asking you not to do anything. Yesterday they beat fifty men here. If I am not here, who will help them endure these sufferings? They would go into eternity with all their sins and in profound despair, which leads straight to hell. Now they are going to their deaths with their heads raised high, leaving their sins behind them. And thus they are crossing the bridge of eternity.

I thank God for His goodness to me. Besides heaven, this is the only place where I would like to be. All my equals are here: Poles, Jews, Ukrainians, Russians, Latvians, and Estonians. I am the only priest among them. I cannot even imagine what would happen here without me.

Here I see God, who is the same for everyone regardless of the religious differences that exist among us. Our Churches may be different, but one Almighty God rules us. When I serve the Divine Liturgy, everyone prays... They die in various ways, and I help them cross this little bridge to eternity. Is this not a blessing? Is this not the grandest crown that the Lord could place on my head? Indeed. I thank God a thousand times a day that he sent me here. I do not ask him for anything more. Do not worry and do not despair at my fate. Instead, rejoice with me. Pray for those who created this concentration camp and this system. They are the only ones who need prayers... May the Lord have mercy on them...”

After Christmas 1944 Rev. Kovch began suffering from stomach problems, which he could not hide. The barrack orderly found out and sent him to the camp hospital. Everyone knew that sick prisoners were not treated there but “helped” to die more quickly. His fellow prisoners did not know about the fate of Rev. Kovch, who disappeared by early spring. In 1972 Rev. Kovch’s daughter succeeded in obtaining a report on his death, which stated that concentration camp prisoner Rev. Emilian Kovch died on 25 March 1944 as a result of circulatory problems stemming from a suppurating inflammation of the leg.

In September 1999 the Jewish Council of Ukraine posthumously awarded Rev. Kovch the title “Righteous of Ukraine.” The people whom he rescued remember him with deep gratitude.

Rev. Emilian Kovch is a martyr of our days, a martyr of the last World War, and a universal martyr, who serves as a model for everyone.

**DEACON VOLODYMYR  
PRYIMA  
(1906-1941)**



Volodymyr Pryima was born on 17 July 1906 in the village of Stradch. His father was a deacon and his two brothers, Myron and Maksym, were priests.

Pryima was a trained deacon and conductor of the village church choir. His devout faith and work in the church earned the parishioners' love and respect and helped him endure the dangers of wartime and the persecutions of the faithful and clergy of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church during the Soviet occupations.

According to eyewitness reports, on Thursday, 26 June 1941, Volodymyr Pryima and Rev.-Dr. Mykola Konrad carried the Blessed Sacrament to the bedside of a sick woman. On their way home they were seized by NKVD troops, who led them to a nearby forest called Birky. Risking his own life, the deacon remained with Rev.-Dr. Konrad, and both of them were savagely murdered. The body of the martyr, Deacon Volodymyr Pryima, was later found mangled and broken.



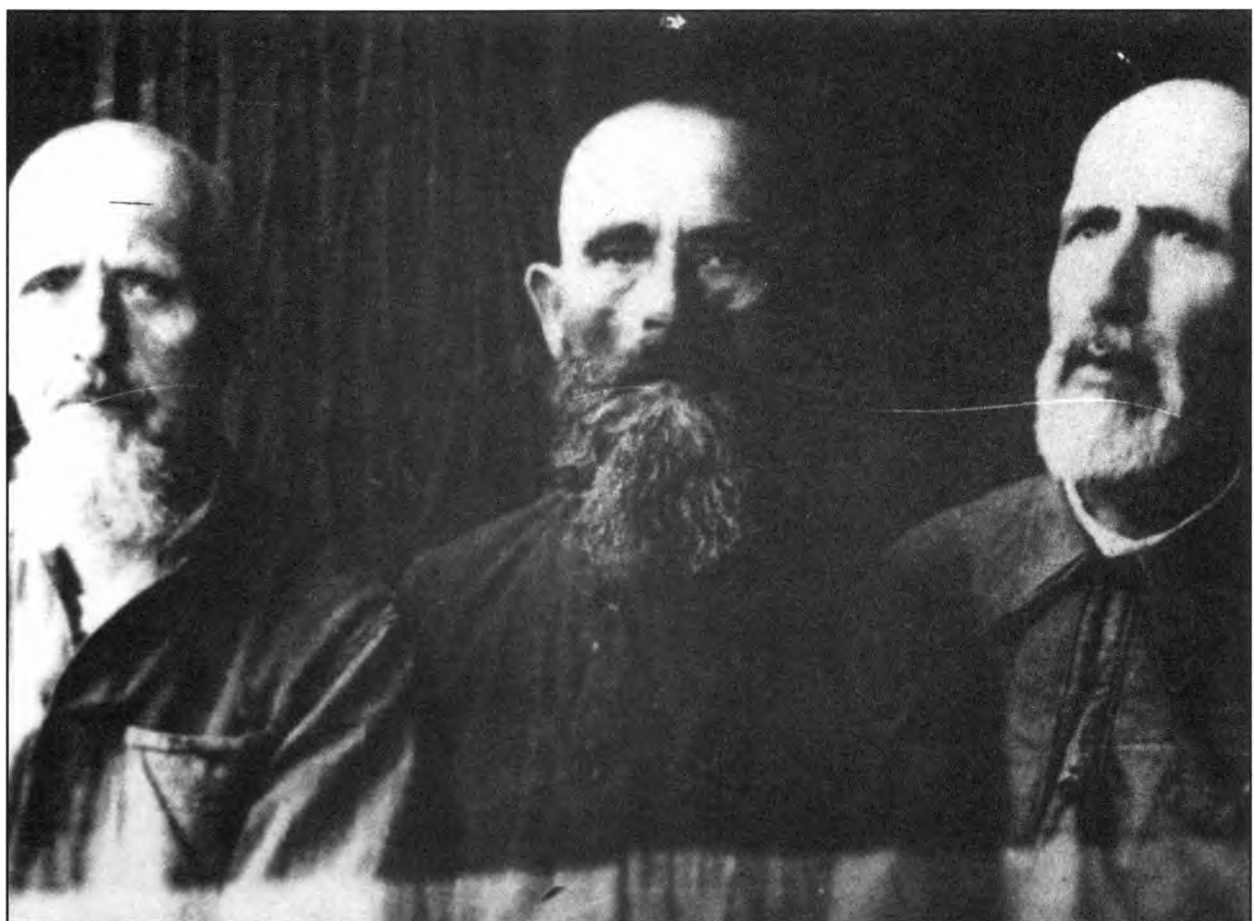
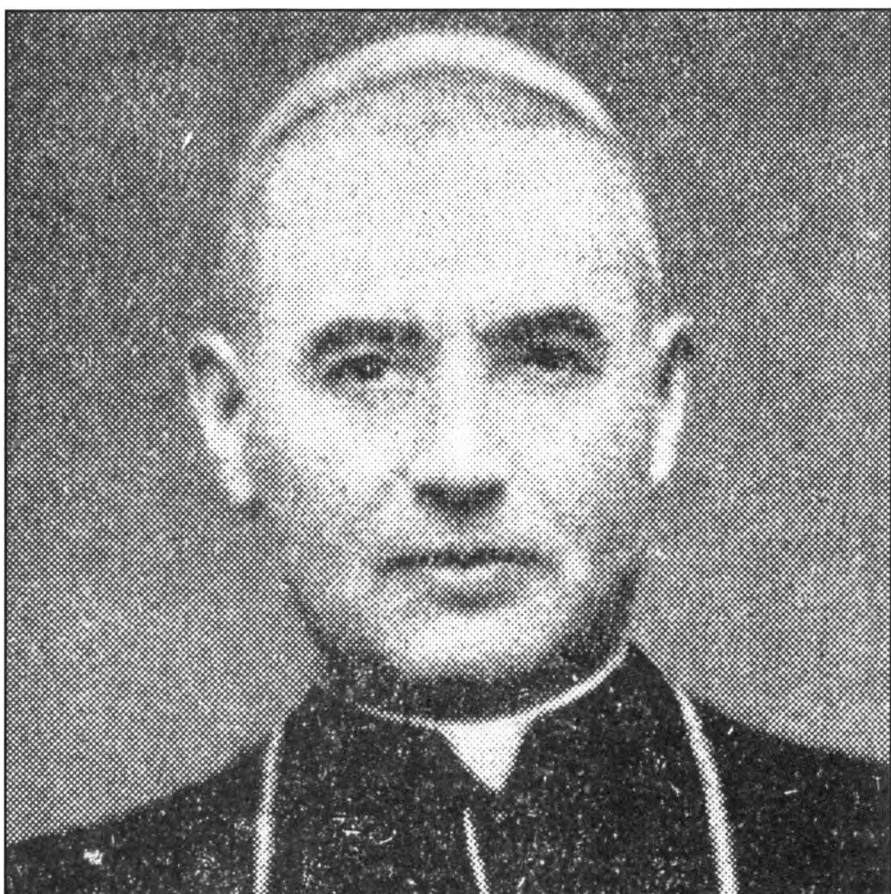
*Avhustyn Voloshyn, the Ukrainian Greek Catholic priest and political and civic activist of Carpatho-Ukraine. He studied at the Uzhhorod Theological Seminary and completed his theological studies in Budapest. He is known as the father of the national revival of Transcarpathia. On 26 October 1938 he was named premier of the Autonomous Transcarpathian Government and elected president of Carpatho-Ukraine on 15 March 1939. He was arrested in May 1945 and deported to the USSR, where he died under mysterious circumstances.*



*In 1988 Rev. Yaroslav Lesiv held a hunger strike in the Arbat district of Moscow, calling for the legalization of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church.*



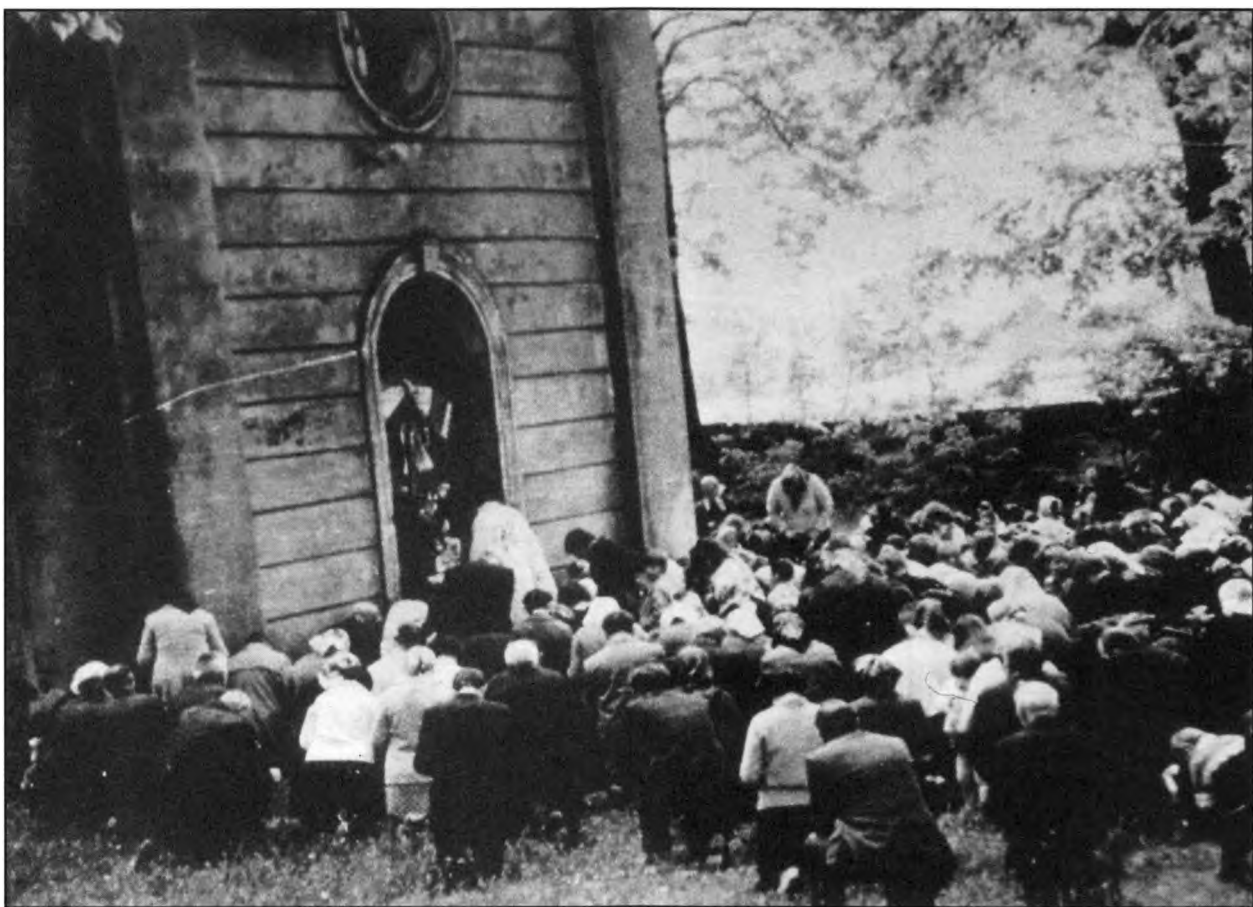
*Bishop Ivan Liatyshevsky, distinguished church leader and professor of the Stanyslaviv Theological Seminary. In 1919 he headed the department of religious affairs in the government of the Western Ukrainian National Republic and in 1939 was appointed assistant bishop and vicar general of the Stanyslaviv eparchy. He was arrested by the Soviets in 1945 and deported to Siberia. After serving his ten-year sentence, he returned to western Ukraine and died shortly after his release.*



*Rev. Volodymyr Hrytsai, Rev. Mykhalika, and Rev. Vovchyk in the Mordovian labor camps.*



*Rev. Ivan Pasika and his family lived in this little hut during his term of exile in the village of Bikin, Khabarovsk krai.*



*A clandestine Mass in the village of Mshana during the Soviet occupation of the 1970s.*

# HOW THE WESTERN ALLIES HELPED MURDER THOUSANDS OF COSSACKS

Every June since the end of World War Two the Western Allies have marked their victory over the Nazis. These celebrations have taken place jointly with the Russians in Moscow, even while Russia is conducting a genocidal war against the Chechens.

In marking the anniversaries of V-Day, the world media publish numerous articles about how the allied forces in Europe liberated millions of people. However, they deliberately omit any mention of the crimes committed against refugees by allied troops. The total number of victims is undetermined, but Ukrainians alone numbered approximately 200,000. An equal number of soldiers from General Vlasov's army were captured by the Western Allies, while 50,000 Cossacks and their families crossed from the Balkans into Austria. In addition, approximately three million anti-communist refugees, citizens of the Soviet Union, were in the Western Sector of postwar Europe. Two and a half million young people were forcibly brought to Germany as slave laborers. Hundreds of thousands of these

displaced persons had no desire to return to the USSR.

On the basis of an agreement concluded by the US, Great Britain, and the USSR, all Soviet citizens and non-citizens born in the USSR without exception were subject to forcible repatriation to the USSR. A secret clause of this agreement stated that the Allies had agreed to the forcible deportation also of those people who did not want return to their "motherland." The Allies, blinded by their victory, decided to divide Europe into sectors. Thus, nations that had been independent states before the war ended up under Russian communist control. With the Allies' agreement, Ukraine and several other countries were occupied by Soviet troops. As a rule, the Western Allies did not recognize Ukraine as a separate nation, even though they were well aware that hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians were perishing in forced labor camps in Siberia and Kazakhstan.

The Russian rulers conveniently exploited the policy of the Western "democracies." In response



*At the end of the war, in 1945, Cossack units ended up as POWs of the Western Allies.*

to the USSR's demand, the Allies began creating camps, so-called "Soviet missions," throughout Germany, where British and American soldiers deceitfully delivered truckloads of people who were refusing to be repatriated. Some military units cooperated with the NKVD and conducted hunts for people whom they handed over to these camps set up for their forcible repatriation. Thousands of refugees from the Soviet Union were trapped. Many preferred to commit suicide than be sent to a slow death in Soviet concentration camps.

In the summer of 1944, the whole world learned of the murder in Italy of approximately 600 Cossacks, who had surrendered to the British High Command. The Cossacks were beaten and killed; in some cases, their hands were tied and they were thrown into the sea. Some British soldiers, unable to endure the POWs' despair, refused to carry out their orders.

Some military commands simply lied to Soviet refugees, thus luring them to their eventual repatriation and death. For example, soldiers from General Vlasov's army voluntarily surrendered to the Americans and Italians. At first, the Western Allies treated them like German POWs. Gradually, however, their attitude changed and they began treating them as traitors of Russia.

But there were some Western individuals, who witnessed the despair of people slated for forcible deportation. Thus, Field Marshal Lord Alexander ignored his government's orders to deport these refugees. Some of his subordinates ordered their soldiers to shoot over the heads of the refugees in order not to wound them. In certain cases, civilians helped refugees evade deportation. Alone among the world's journalists, George Orwell protested against the so-called "democratic" agreement and its secret clause about the forcible repatriation of Soviet citizens, which the Western Allies and Stalin had signed in Yalta. Pope Pius XII sent a strongly worded protest against the forcible deportations and refusal to grant refugees asylum.

## **A HORRIBLE REALITY**

After World War Two ended, events began unfolding quickly. In the Balkans, the Cossack army laid down its arms and after surrendering to the British and the Italians, they marched to

Austria. Approximately 50,000 Cossacks and their wives and children were housed in tents near the city of Lienz. They immediately created a Cossack Council headed by generals Andrii Shkuro and Naumenko, and colonels Bondarenko and Tarnavsky. The Kuban Cossacks were represented by General Peter Krasnov and his son, both of whom were citizens of Yugoslavia. The Cossack leadership established contact with the Western Allies. During the ensuing negotiations the Cossacks emphasized that their army had never fought against its country or the partisans. During the war their soldiers had often provided assistance to the British and the Italians. General Krasnov, whose works had been published in English in Great Britain, sent a letter to the Queen of England, in which the Cossacks pleaded with the British monarch not to return them by force to the USSR, where they would be slowly tortured to death. The Cossack POWs and their families begged for mercy. Later, it was learned that the letter had never been forwarded to the queen.

After this "historic encounter" with British military officials, the POWs and refugees were assured that those who did not wish to be repatriated would not be handed over to the Soviets. Meanwhile, refugees were being perfidiously transported to the "Soviet centers" under the pretext that they were simply being moved to another camp under the protection of the Western Allies. At this point the Allies first witnessed horrific scenes of refugees slashing their veins or fighting to escape forcible deportation. The British soldiers shot, beat the refugees and POWs with rifle butts, and stabbed them with their bayonets, after which they loaded the wounded survivors onto trucks. In certain cases, the Allies drugged the food of recalcitrant refugees, who became apathetic and cooperative.

In these horrific circumstances the British military headquarters invited the Cossack Council and all its colonels to a meeting. The "conversation" ended when all the Cossack leaders were clamped in chains and brought to a town near Frankfurt, where special units of the NKVD and SMERSH were waiting for them. They were put on planes to Moscow, where they were jailed in Lubianka Prison. After being interrogated and tortured, everyone was hanged, with one exception. The lone survivor was



*Betrayal of the Cossacks at Lienz. Painting by S. G. Korolkoff.*

Mykola Krasnov, the grandson of General Peter Krasnov. After serving a ten-year sentence in Soviet labor camps, he returned to Germany via Switzerland, where his wife and mother lived. Eventually he moved to Argentina, where he died suddenly. After his death his memoirs were published in New York: *The Hidden Russia: My Ten Years as a Slave Laborer* by Nikolai N. Krasnov Jr.

The Cossack tragedy in Lienz took place on 1 June 1945. That day the British troops dismantled the camp and repatriated approximately 50,000 people. This drama was a precursor of later tragedies that took place in Ukraine. In his book *Velykyi obman* [The Great Deception] survivor Viacheslav Naumenko writes: “1 June 1945 will remain in my memory as a historic day of brutality and inhumanity that has no parallels in history and which was perpetrated by the Western Allies — British soldiers — against the defenseless Cossacks in Lienz and against thousands of women and children on the shores of the Drava River.”

This was genocide: it is no wonder that once the facts emerged, Winston Churchill was called a “war criminal.” It is not known how many women

and children were killed, but there are twenty-seven mass graves at the Lienz cemetery. The majority of the Cossack POWs were Ukrainians, who formed the elected leadership of the Cossack Council.

## OPERATION KEELHAUL

The allied operation to forcibly deport refugees from the Soviet Union was named “Keelhaul.” The documents relating to this deception are still under lock and key in the Pentagon.

Representatives of the “repatriation commission” were based in Austria, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia, which had large populations of Ukrainians since the end of the Ukrainian national-liberation war in the early 1920s. The beautiful city of Vienna became an NKVD center rife with agents and informers. In broad daylight passersby were dragged into waiting automobiles and never seen again. People were taken for questioning at night. Ukrainian students — members of the Society of the Viennese “Sich” — and their Austrian friends were particularly targeted. According to reports, around 100

students disappeared at this time. Another victim of these NKVD abductions was Archduke Wilhelm Otto von Hapsburg, who was abducted on the street and jailed in a secret prison on the outskirts of Vienna. The archduke, who was a former colonel of the Ukrainian Sich Riflemen, nicknamed “Vasyl Vyshyvany” (Vasyl the Embroidered) by his fellow soldiers, was sent to a Soviet labor camp where he perished.

Many of those who were forcibly repatriated to the Soviet Union ended up in Ukraine’s Donbas region, in a forced labor camp in the city of Yenakiiieve. Three thousand people alone were deported there from the Priashiv region of Slovakia. Among them were Hungarians, Slovaks, Germans, Czechs, and approximately 1,000 Ukrainians, among whom were many educated people, including priests, monks, and teachers.

One night in early September 1945 additional prisoners were brought to the camp, including a few doctors from Prague and other cities. Dangerous “fascists” were held in a separate part of the camp, cordoned off by barbed wire. We later learned that among them were several former officers of the Ukrainian National Republic and Cossacks.

The head of the concentration camp was Shamuël Berkovych from Vienna. This NKVD man always abused doctors and priests. A sanitation brigade was formed exclusively of doctors and priests, who had to remove the night soil into barrels and bring them to the fields.

## **LEGALIZED KILLINGS**

Some 600 prisoners of various nationalities worked the night shift at the mine. Working alongside us were hostile Soviet citizens, who called us “fascists.” Later, we learned that the NKVD encouraged them to mistreat us. One of the mining supervisors, a man named Viktor Bolotov, sympathized with our plight. One night he told me that thousands of prisoners — Cossacks forcibly repatriated to the USSR by the British and the Americans — had been brought to the labor camps in Horlivka and Makiivka. He added that Cossacks had arrived by ship at the port of Odesa, where their officers were to be executed. Local bazaars were stocked with the personal belongings looted from the Cossack prisoners.

**Ivan Sarvadii**

# PATRIARCH VOLODYMYR OF THE UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OF KYIV AND ALL UKRAINE-RUS'



At 8:00 p.m. on 14 July 1995 Patriarch Volodymyr (secular name: Vasyl Romaniuk) died under mysterious circumstances in Kyiv.

In 1944 Vasyl Romaniuk was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment in Soviet labor camps for his support of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army, even though this charge could have been applied to every single resident of the Stanyslaviv area.

In 1945 his entire family — father, mother, and three brothers — were deported to Siberia.

In 1946 the camp authorities in the Kustolovsky labor colony “uncovered” a counterrevolutionary organization. In

reality, this was a fabricated organization, which the Soviet authorities named the “Ukrainian Sich Rifleman.” For his “membership” in this fictitious organization Romaniuk was given an additional ten-year sentence, which he served in the Magadan camps. He was moved from camp to camp in Siberia, Kolyma, Mordovia, and Yakutia.

In 1958 Rev. Romaniuk was released from the camps. He returned to Kosmach in the Hutsul region. He was a demanding and devoted pastor, who urged his parishioners not to forsake their ancestral faith and nation and to preserve their cultural traditions and rites. He was a firm believer in the Ukrainian nation and the

revival of both Ukrainian Orthodoxy and the spirit of his unvanquished nation. By the will of God he served briefly as patriarch of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church.

The day of the patriarch's funeral on 18 July is known as "Black Tuesday." That day the funeral procession, attended by thousands of mourners, was savagely attacked and dispersed. Many people were beaten

with rubber truncheons and gassed by special police units to the accompaniment of vile obscenities yelled by Russian chauvinists. This disgraceful episode was roundly condemned by Ukrainian communities throughout the world. May the patriarch rest with the saints! He will never be forgotten.

**Fedir Habelko**



*Kyiv, "Black Tuesday": on 18 July 1995 crowds of mourners attending the funeral of Patriarch Volodymyr were beaten and dispersed.*

*Photo: A. Danyliuk.*



# FAITH IN GOD AND AUTOCEPHALY

The history of religion and belief in the Almighty in Ukraine-Rus' is a historically rich process spanning thousands of years, predating the Mizyn culture of the Paleolithic period. It is characteristic that the supreme idea of pre-historic paganism (the name applied to native religions, excluding Judaism, Christianity, and Islam) of the Ukrainians' ancestors was the philosophy of eternal life, adoration of the natural creation of the world, and joyful existence on earth.

Our ancestors believed that a person entered the other world in the same form in which he had lived during his life on earth. Therefore, every member of the primeval society of our ancestors sought to achieve the highest virtues, respect, and wealth during his life, as well as to distinguish himself on the field of battle.

This age-old military aspiration passed into the traditions of Ukrainian Cossackdom, giving rise to the vital idea that "death is preferable to slavery," which has nourished Ukrainian patriotism for thousands of years. In modern Ukrainian history this idea was adopted by our nationalists. Therefore, a key idea of Christianity, non-resistance to evil, could not take deep root in Ukrainian soil.

The Ukrainian people have always been severely tested by history and destiny. This is explained by the fact that the Ukrainian lands lay on the crossroads of the East and West, and, later, the North and South. As a result, Ukraine was often at the center of clashes. Our country became a subjugated colony, which led to spiritual assimilation, denationalization, and the loss of all the features of its faith in God as practiced according to the customs and traditions of its ancestors. This is the root cause of Ukrainians' inferiority complex.

Christianity in Ukraine, as a faith that has dominated the last millennium, is an important epoch in the history of the Ukrainian nation. But it would be too simplistic to begin the spiritual history of Ukraine from the adoption of Christianity and the princely period before Volodymyr. One cannot ignore prehistoric accounts of Gothic maidens near the Rus' sea, the little-known victories over Sharukan

(Sharuk-Khan), entire epochs called "ages," and "Troian's seventh age" - in a word, this was a grand history that contemporary scholars are now trying to recreate through archaeological research, excavations, and scattered historical accounts.

When did Christianity appear in Ukraine? The traditional view is that our people were Christianized by the first prince of Kyiv, Volodymyr Sviatoslavovych, in 988. This view is widespread, but incomplete. Volodymyr did replace the ancient religion with Christianity. He did this officially and forced his people to accept the new faith. From that time Christianity became the official faith of the Ukrainian Kyivan state. But according to a widespread account dating to the ancient Greeks and those peoples who lived on the northern shores of the Pontus (Black Sea), St. Andrew the Apostle also preached Christ's faith in Scythia, i.e., on those lands that were settled by the Ukrainian people since time immemorial.

Preaching on the hills overlooking the Dnipro River in Kyiv, St. Andrew told his pupils: "Do you see those hills? God's grace will shine on those hills, a great city will arise here, and God will build many churches here." This tale of Andrew the Apostle, as the founder of the Ukrainian Church, was later included in our ancient chronicle and then spread to other early writings.

After the death of Volodymyr (St. Volodymyr the Great) his son Yaroslav the Wise (1019-1054) completed the grand design of Europeanizing Ukraine. The adoption of Christianity instantly linked Ukraine with Europe and its culture. The Ukrainian intelligentsia quickly became imbued with the new Christian ideas and began to benefit from European culture.

Although there is only one Orthodox Church in the world, there are many separate and independent Orthodox churches: Constantinople, Antioch, Alexandria, Jerusalem, Cyprus, Georgia, Ukraine, Romania, Russia, et al. All these churches recognize one supreme authority — Jesus

Christ — and accept the same dogmas of faith based on the Holy Bible and the same fundamental canons, i.e., apostolic rules, decisions of the seven universal and ten local councils, and the rules established by the Holy Fathers. However, each of the Orthodox churches is independent and has its own national life.

The most characteristic difference between the Orthodox and the Catholic churches is nationality. Each Orthodox Church is national, while the Catholic Church is international. Throughout the ages, each nationally-based Orthodox Church developed its own understanding of the canons, its own local tradition, and its own Holy Liturgy, feast days, etc.

Ukraine accepted Christianity from the Greeks, from whom we received our first church hierarchy, in accordance with rule no. 28 of the Council of Chalcedon, allowing the patriarch of Constantinople to appoint bishops to other countries, i.e., the Eastern Slavs.

The patriarch of Constantinople dispatched his own metropolitan to Kyiv, who appointed bishops from among local candidates. But this was not considered a normal state of affairs because the foreign hierarchy could not carry out its duties in keeping with national interests. Ukraine thus demanded its own native-born metropolitan. In 1051, through the efforts of Prince Yaroslav the Wise, the Ukrainian-born writer Ilarion became metropolitan of Kyiv. One hundred years later, in 1147, the Ukrainian-born Klym was appointed metropolitan of Kyiv.

Here it should be noted that the local (national) Orthodox churches rejected rule no. 28 of the 4<sup>th</sup> Ecumenical Council, on which the subordination of the Ukrainian church to the patriarchate of Constantinople was based. Centuries later the Muscovite church took advantage of this in 1589, when it separated from Constantinople, proclaimed autocephaly, and chose its own patriarch. The Moscow patriarchate remained unrecognized by the Constantinople patriarchate for more than 100 years.

From the tenth century onward, Kyiv became the center of Ukrainian life and the cradle of Christianity in Eastern Europe. From here it spread to all the neighboring lands, including northward, where the Muscovite

principality later arose. But in the thirteenth century Kyiv was sacked by the Tatars and began to decline.

Unable to endure the Tatar invasions, in 1299-1300 Maksym, the Greek-born metropolitan of Kyiv, left the city and settled in Vladimir on the Kliazma (Muscovy), and in 1325 Metropolitan Peter transferred his seat from Kyiv to the new city of Moscow, thereby significantly bolstering the newly created principality.

Living in Moscow, the Kyivan metropolitan had no interest in Ukrainian affairs. Therefore, prince Vitaut of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, which now controlled Ukraine, made efforts to ensure that Ukraine had its own metropolitan, Hryhorii Tsamblak, who was appointed in 1415. From this time the Kyiv metropolitanate became de facto separate from the Moscow metropolitanate, becoming truly independent only in 1458. After Poland liquidated the bishopric of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, Patriarch Teofan of Jerusalem secretly consecrated Iov Boretsky metropolitan of Kyiv in 1620, as well as five bishops, thus saving the Ukrainian church from destruction.

From this time, the main feature of the Ukrainian church was its unity: none of its hierarchs ruled arbitrarily, no clergyman could arrive at a parish uninvited, and all church positions were elected. A church council governed the Ukrainian church until it was deprived of its independence by the Russian tsarist government and the council of the Russian Orthodox Church. Thus, under pressure from the tsarist government the Mother Church — the Kyiv metropolitanate — was transferred to the jurisdiction of its former daughter, the Russian church. The forcible union of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and the Russian Orthodox Church in 1686 was carried out in violation of all ecclesiastical canons against the will of the clergy and people of Ukraine.

The movement to restore autocephaly to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church arose only three centuries later, during the national-liberation war of 1917-1921. Autocephaly was officially proclaimed on 5 May 1920 by the All-Ukrainian Orthodox Church Council. By 1927 the church had 27 bishops, more than 2,000

priests, and over a million faithful. However, the activities of the restored Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church opposed the spiritual occupation of Ukraine. The Bolshevik government launched a wave of barbarous repressions culminating in the Yezhov terror of the 1930s, which was aimed at the total destruction of the hierarchy and clergy of the UAOC.

Only a handful of clergymen returned from imprisonment to Ukraine during World War Two. On the German-occupied Ukrainian lands they quickly revived the activity of the UAOC. The hierarchy of the Russian Orthodox Church reacted with fury to the appointment of Archbishop Polikarp, the first hierarch and administrator of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church. The Ukrainian archbishop replied to those brutal messages with a number of rational declarations based on canon law. Later, in emigration, the Russian Orthodox Church intensified its provocative opposition to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in the US and other jurisdictions of the UAOC until the proclamation of Ukraine's independence in 1991.

Today, through its fifth column in Ukraine and by means of state and diplomatic measures, the Russian Orthodox Church is applying every effort to block the union of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (Kyiv Patriarchate) with the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church. As in tsarist times, during the existence of the Soviet Union the Russian Orthodox Church was in fact a state church, although this was cleverly hidden. To this day the imperialistically-minded and chauvinistic hierarchy of the Russian Orthodox Church does not recognize the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and is blocking Ukraine's efforts to have its own Local (*pomisna*) Church.

Even before the proclamation of Ukraine's independence, Filaret, the exarch of Ukraine and metropolitan of Kyiv and Galicia, quickly grasped the new situation and set into motion efforts to restore the independence of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and put an end to its subordination to the Moscow patriarchate. At a council of the Russian Orthodox Church Filaret broached the question of creating a separate church administration for the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Kyiv. At the

time, Moscow made certain concessions that it considered merely temporary, believing that the Ukrainian church would eventually return to Russian jurisdiction. But in Metropolitan Filaret's understanding, autonomy for the Ukrainian church was the first and important step toward the restoration of autocephaly.

In October 1990 the Russian Church Council held in Moscow declared the Ukrainian Orthodox Church autonomous, and the Russian patriarch even issued Metropolitan Filaret a Blessed Decree. But within a short time the Russian church hierarchy realized Filaret's intentions. Rescinding the Ukrainian church's autonomy, it appointed Metropolitan Volodymyr (Sabodan) at the uncanonical Council of Kharkiv.

Disregarding the subversive actions of the Moscow patriarchate, in early November 1991 a local council of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church was convened in Kyiv, during which autocephaly was proclaimed. Moscow then launched a campaign to blacken Metropolitan Filaret's name. Some Ukrainian bishops as well as some diaspora bishops abandoned Filaret. The Russian church hierarchy adopted the extremely uncanonical measure of depriving Metropolitan Filaret of his spiritual rank.

This is the historical background to the emergence of three Orthodox churches in Ukraine: the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church led by Patriarch Mstyslav [today: Mefodii], the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (Kyiv Patriarchate) led by Metropolitan Filaret, and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (Moscow Patriarchate) led by Metropolitan Volodymyr.

To this day, numerous churches and the most important shrines of Ukrainian Orthodoxy that were confiscated by the communists remain under the jurisdiction of the Moscow patriarchate, an avowed foe of Ukrainian Orthodoxy, Ukrainian Greek Catholicism, and the independent Ukrainian state.

Despite past and current difficulties, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church has been restored and has its own spiritual center, the Kyiv patriarchate. It is developing and gaining strength. Let us unite!

**Fedir Habelko**

# NUREMBERG-2

*Veritas nihil veretur nisi abscondi.  
Truth fears nothing but concealment.  
May Ukrainians learn the truth of their history.*

***The problem of prosecuting the Communist Party of the Soviet Union is a problem of settling past accounts and prospects for building a new society.***

For the national state-building forces it has always been clear that the disintegration of the Russian communist empire and the creation of an independent Ukraine is a transition from one historical epoch to another (or, to use a term more familiar to older generations — a transition from one socioeconomic formation to another).

The preceding era had a number of characteristic features: Moscow was the center of an empire and Ukraine was its colony; the dictatorship of one party and absence of freedom of political activity; the state will was formed in Moscow — not in the representative organs but in the CC CPSU; strictly centralized management of the economy, culture, and art; the subordination of religious life to KGB control; the attempt to teach people not to think independently and to raise them to be submissive executors of the party's will.

Analyzing both world practice and Ukrainian national traditions and ideals, Ukrainian nationalist forces view these features of the past Soviet society as unquestionably negative, and they see the future of Ukrainian society as one built on the complete negation of these traits of the past.

Ukrainian society is, first of all, the society of independent Ukraine; secondly, it is a democratic society with freedom of political and economic activity and all other human rights and freedoms; thirdly, the center for the formation of state will is based in Kyiv, not in the central committee of some party, in the representative ruling organ; fourthly, it is an open society with free competition among people in enterprises, politics, art, scholarship, philosophy, and all other spheres of human activity.

A comparison of the characteristic features of the two societies is crucial, as it makes it easier to see which society we are rejecting and which society we wish to have in the future. Furthermore, since a society does not move automatically from one era to the succeeding one

and the concept of “new” and “old” is not an abstraction but living people with deep interests, a clear-cut definition of the features of the old and new societies acts as a demarcation line that helps to clearly divide all the citizens of Ukraine into those who wish Ukraine well and those who, for egotistical or simply anti-Ukrainian motives, are resisting the new and seeking by all methods to delay the demise of the features of the old order and prolong its existence in Ukraine.

Marxism-Leninism is the theoretical basis of repressive totalitarian regimes. Marxism could have remained a great achievement of utopian literature and not inflicted immense harm on humanity if it had not become the state ideology of the huge Russian empire. Like the works of the utopians Saint-Simon, Fourier, and Owen, Marxism preached the ideas of a classless, communist society; collective ownership; equality; a planned economy; atheism, and the creation of a world state.

Already in the early twentieth century the Ukrainian writer, scholar, and political figure Ivan Franko, analyzing Marx's recipes for building a communist society concluded in his article “What Is Progress?” that a Marxist society would represent unprecedented slavery. He wrote:

“First of all, the omnipotent strength of the state will lie like a terrible weight on the life of each individual person. Every man's free will and personal opinion would have to disappear and waste away, for the state would declare it dangerous, unnecessary. Upbringing, whose goal would be to raise not free people but only useful members of the state, would become lifeless spiritual regimentation, bureaucratic. People would grow up and live in such dependence, under such state surveillance unheard of today even in the most absolute police states. The people's state would become a huge national prison.”

Let us examine how the reconstruction of a capitalist society into a communist one was realized in terms of individual Marxist-Leninist ideas, e.g., the building of a classless society. The very idea that only one class can exist in society is

erroneous. And if a society naturally always consists of various classes, then the idea of building a classless society, or to be more precise, a one-class society, means the intent to destroy all other classes.

To the question of how to destroy “enemy” classes Marx and Engels, and later Lenin and the Bolsheviks, gave a clear-cut and unequivocal answer: the use of arms and unlimited terror. “The dictatorship of the proletariat,” Lenin wrote, “is a stubborn struggle, bloody and bloodless, violent and peaceful, military and economic, pedagogical and administrative in opposition to the forces and traditions of the old society” (*Tvory* [Works], vol. 31, p. 27). Thus, the Bolsheviks’ goal was to destroy not only the enemies of its communist government but the entire old society — and to destroy it by any means, including mass starvation and terror.

The second key idea of Marxism-Leninism was the destruction of private ownership. The goal of this idea was to make all citizens completely dependent on the state. If there is only one owner, the state, and if a person can only earn a living through the state, then all freedom disappears and is replaced by total slavery. The state becomes an omnipotent despot, and people are turned into ordinary statistical cogs.

Marxism is dangerous not only because of its criminal past. It is destructive because of its essence, since it appeals to, legalizes, and justifies the lowest human instincts. Contrary to European civilization, which inculcates noble traits in the individual, Marxism annihilates nobility and turns the individual into a savage and an abomination.

Ukraine’s current troubles with Pavlo Lazarenko and his ilk have their ethical basis in communist, anti-Christian (anti)morality, which the communists thus formulated: “Everything that serves the interests of the proletarian revolution is moral.”

This moral relativism, which justified as the so-called interests of the proletarian revolution the murders of innocent people and other base actions, created amoral monsters, and Lazarenko is no exception. He is merely the most brilliant representative of the Ukrainian variety of “homo sovieticus.” Unfortunately, the official structures of Kuchma’s organs of state rule are filled with these amoral types, who have turned the state into a sack filled with holes — no matter how much the people try to fill it, everything falls out of it into the thieves’ foreign bank accounts.

Ukraine’s renaissance, and particularly the goal of leading our country out of its profound crisis, depends on vanquishing amorality and restoring normal, traditional norms of conduct: if Lazarenko were a moral person, he would not steal, and since he did not have a national morality but a communist one, he used his government position to siphon off 880 million dollars from the state.

Since communist amorality is a by-product of communist ideology, the national state-building forces continue to insist on the need to initiate a broad public inquiry into communist ideology and the activity of the CPSU with the goal of producing a legal assessment of the crimes of communism.

On the initiative of the All-Ukrainian Society of Political Prisoners and Repressed Persons, as well as other patriotic organizations, several scholarly-theoretical conferences devoted to the crimes of communism have been held. An international conference on this topic took place in 1995.

The further social development of Ukraine and other states of the former communist bloc demanded an international trial of the CPSU as a logical legal completion of our liberation from the empire of evil.

To launch this process, the All-Ukrainian Society of Political Prisoners and Repressed Persons, the Association of Researchers of the Holodomors in Ukraine, and the Memorial Society, together with twenty-three political parties and organizations, founded the Ukrainian National Committee at the Writers’ Building [in Kyiv] on 21 March 1996, whose goal is to organize an international court to try the CPSU for totalitarian crimes (Nuremberg-2).

The committee’s presidium and secretariat were elected at the founding meeting. Levko Lukianenko was elected to head the committee, and Prof. Stepan Pavliuk and parliamentarian Ivan Bilas were chosen as his deputies. The following individuals were elected to the presidium: Semen Gluzman, Mykhailo Kosiv, James Mace, Pavlo Movchan, Volodymyr Muliava, Oleksander Nechyporenko, Yevhen Proniuk, Slava Stetsko, Les Taniuk, Dmytro Chobit, Viacheslav Chornovil, and Bohdan Yaroshynsky. The committee approved the principles governing its activity — “A Message to the Ukrainian People” — and began its work. An informal group was formed in Ukraine’s

parliament, consisting of sixty-eight deputies, to initiate work throughout Ukraine. The committee met once a month. Public hearings on the crimes of the CPSU against Ukraine and Ukrainians took place in many regions. The committee concluded that an international court with imperative force could be created only one way: by concluding an agreement among several states to create such an international court. It is clear that the current government of the Ukrainian state will not approve such an agreement. If the Baltic countries sign such a document, then its decisions will not have any validity in Ukraine, because in order for the decisions of the international court to be binding on Ukraine, our country must be a party to the agreement to create such a court.

Under these circumstances our committee was tasked with collecting evidence that the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and its Ukrainian branch committed crimes against Ukraine and Ukrainians beyond the borders of Ukraine and organizing an international people's court.

The practice of holding hearings in the regions on the crimes of the CPSU has shown that they have a journalistic character, not legal. Therefore, I wrote an instructive letter to deputies in an effort to orient them to upholding the requirements of the Criminal Code.

Since the trial has not yet taken place, this letter has not lost its validity.

Between March and November (when I resigned and L. Taniuk became the head) eight meetings were held and much important organizational and research work was completed. Unfortunately, our meetings stopped, no funds were found to convene an international court, and all this activity ceased.

## **INSTRUCTIONAL LETTER NO. 1**

In the work of regional, municipal, and raion committees and holding trials, attention should be focused on two factors of the occupying [Soviet] government. It constituted itself as a legal government that issued laws. The repressive organs were governed by these laws. From the standpoint of legal theory, a regime based on law is one in which practice corresponds to the law. The sentencing of a person for criticizing the occupying government was legal because Article 62 of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR envisaged such punishment. Therefore, the

executive and court power were acting legally (as long as they did not violate Soviet law). The second factor is that the communist government's norms of law (e.g., the same Article 62) are not laws in the generally accepted sense, and are themselves illegal. This factor raises us to the level of accusing the legislative power and the necessity to reveal the motives of its criminal formation of laws and the supreme leadership through the implementation of its goals and ideology.

The deductive method (from the general to the specific, i.e., from ideology to concrete crime) of substantiating the criminal character of an ideology is less suitable in a court. Here, the inductive method will clearly serve us better because it enables us to logically deduce the practical essence of Marxist-Leninist ideology from criminal events.

In past years preliminary measures by the national democratic forces to prosecute the CPSU and the CPU for its crimes were of an educational character, and they were implemented in the form of various conferences. Taking part in these conferences were scholars and other individuals, who presented papers, made announcements, or displayed documents. These conferences and symposia were not juridical hearings. Unlike earlier measures, the Ukrainian National Committee's Nuremberg-2 is aimed at bridging to the maximum degree the gap between indictments and requirements of qualifying the crimes according to the Criminal Code, and the examination procedure — to the requirements of the Criminal-Procedural Code. The UNC will read the norms of international law above all through the prism of our national legislation.

Our paramount goal is to hold trials in strict accordance with the requirements of established legal norms. The difference between our trials and state trials is that the imperative will of the state does not stand behind our trials.

In view of this goal, regional, municipal, and raion committees that prosecute the CPSU-CPU for crimes of the occupying totalitarian government in preparation for a hearing on this issue with the participation of a judge, prosecutor, defender, and secretary of the trial proceedings are supposed to reach a clear conclusion. (A place in the courtroom is to be reserved for the defendant. The head of the local organization of the CPSU-CPU is to be officially subpoenaed as a defendant. If he refuses to appear, then his place at the table is to be marked by a sign

stating: “Defendant from the CPSU-CPU.” Next to this sign must be a copy of the announcement concerning the submission of a subpoena to the head of the CPSU-CPU organization to appear in court to defend his party during the trial.)

A public bill of indictment must be drawn up in accordance with the Criminal-Procedural Code. The first part (descriptive) must describe the various charges, noting when, where, and who committed what crime, and evidence that corroborates the charge.

A certain consistency may be proposed according to the character of the crimes: crimes against peace (Point A, Article 6 of the Statute of the International Military Tribunal); military crimes (Point B, Article 6 of the Statute of the International Military Tribunal); crimes against humanity (Point C, Article 6 of the Statute of the International Military Tribunal); crimes of genocide (the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide dated 12 January 1951 became valid in the USSR on 18 March 1954). The definition of the crime of genocide is given in Article II of the Convention: In the present Convention, genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:

- (a) Killing members of the group;
- (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
- (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
- (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
- (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

The great majority of the features of these crimes may be found in the dispositions of articles in the Criminal Code of Ukraine. Theft of property, confiscation of churches, the use of chemical weapons (the use of chemical preparations in food slipped to the Ukrainian insurgents, gas canisters and grenades tossed in insurgents’ bunkers, etc.), the use of psychiatry against political opponents, the introduction of forced labor, deportations, etc. — all these are crimes that can be qualified on the basis of articles listed in the Criminal Code of Ukraine.

In order to corroborate the crimes with evidence, it is important that peoples’ testimonies and documents submitted by them be legalized

beforehand, i.e., notarized by a village or municipal council.

A scholarly paper is not a bill of indictment. A written or audio recording of an eyewitness account is not evidence until it is confirmed by a notary or a local council. A scholarly paper is evidence only in that section in which it cites legalized demonstrations or documents, because a scholar’s conclusions are not evidence in this matter. Logical findings in a criminal matter are the prerogative of the court.

In the resolute section of the bill of indictment (and later also in the public finding after the incidents in the indictment are recognized as criminal) the CPSU, CPU, KGB, and NKGB can be declared criminal organizations on the basis of the above. (This is very important: on the basis of such decisions the Ukrainian National Committee or the inter-parliamentary group in the Verkhovna Rada could request the Prosecutor General to initiate a criminal case against those organizations.)

The following, e.g., could be included in the resolute section of the sentence:

1. Request the city prosecutor to launch a criminal case concerning an investigation into a crime;
2. Launch efforts at the government level to erect a monument;
3. At the government level broach the question of excavations of a burial place.

Dear colleagues!

The presidium is working on methodological recommendations that it will provide to all our activists. However, in order to provide some general reference points at the present time I am sending you this Instructional Letter.”

Addendum:

1. From the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.

Head of the Ukrainian National Committee — Nuremberg-2.

Levko Lukianenko

Since communism — both as an ideology and practice of the Russian empire — is an international phenomenon, so too is the juridical assessment of its ideology and crimes an international matter.

While our committee, Nuremberg-2 in the Verkhovna Rada, enlisted sixty-eight deputies to the informal group tasked with preparing for an international court and initiated energetic activity

in all directions, no assistance has been forthcoming from the pro-communist leadership in the Verkhovna Rada.

Meanwhile, on 27 June 1996 the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe approved Resolution 1096 on measures to dismantle the heritage of former communist totalitarian systems. Naturally, the reddish leadership of the Ukrainian state ignored this resolution. On 6 November 1997 the Lithuanian parliament passed a resolution on mass repressions, genocide, and other crimes against humanity and war crimes perpetrated during the period of occupation. The parliaments of the Czech Republic and Poland passed similar documents.

On 29 November 1997, on the initiative of Lithuanian organizations consisting of people who resisted the occupation and of victims of communism, an organizational committee was formed to prepare an international public tribunal to assess the crimes of communism.

In June 1998 an international congress of organizations uniting political prisoners and victims of communist regimes was held in Berlin.

In July 1998 discussions that began more than fifty years ago culminated in a resolution passed in Rome by world states to create the International Criminal Court to prosecute crimes and against humanity and their perpetrators, no matter who committed these crimes or where.

On 10 December 1998 Lithuania's parliament passed a declaration on communism and the former organs of the communist occupying regime, approving the resolution of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe dated 27 June 1996.

The Lithuanian organizing committee sent an invitation to Ukraine, to the Society of Political Prisoners and Repressed Persons as the organization most directly interested in the work of the international court. Unfortunately, the head of this society failed to inform the Association of Researchers of the Holodomors in Ukraine, even though this organization, after the cessation of the work of the Nuremberg-2 committee, began collecting facts pertaining to communist crimes and was arguably the most active organization in Ukraine in connection with this issue.

After being informed very tardily about the preparation for the Vilnius court, I quickly formed

a group of ten patriotic scholars from Kyiv to prepare the Ukrainian side for the trial.

Ensuring that Ukraine would be adequately represented, a group of scholars (the historians Serhii Bilokin, Vasyl Marochko, Arsen Zinchenko, and the economist Mykhailo Shvaika) prepared appropriate materials on the basis of which I drew up a twenty-two-page bill of indictment. On 11 June 2000 a group of five people (Nina Virchenko, Mykola Kulchynsky, Levko Lukianenko, Tamara Pakholok, and Yevhen Proniuk) arrived in Vilnius.

The work in the Lithuanian capital began on 12 June with a joint meeting in the session hall of the Lithuanian parliament. The participants from twenty-three states were greeted by the highest dignitaries of Lithuania: the president, the heads of parliament and the government, as well as distinguished guests from other countries. The work was divided into two parts: the International Public Tribunal to assess the crimes of communism and the work on this question at the international conference in Vilnius.

Owing to the absence of one of the tribunal's judges from a neutral country, the chief judge of the tribunal, Vytautas Zabiela, suggested that I join the tribunal. Since I had to travel to Israel to attend an international conference on political prisoners, I suggested that Mykola Kulchynsky take my place. Zabiela agreed.

Nina Virchenko, Yevhen Proniuk, and Tamara Pakholok worked efficiently during the theoretical conference.

I presented the bill of indictment in the name of Ukraine.

At an international theoretical conference held on 25 November 2000 at the Institute of History of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine I presented an abbreviated version of the bill of indictment and information on the Vilnius tribunal, as well as the following proposals:

1. To create an institute for the study of the genocide of the Ukrainian nation;
2. To introduce a weekly forty-five-minute television program;
3. To organize state financing for the Association of Researchers of the Holodomors in Ukraine.
4. To create films, plays, and dramas about the genocide, especially about the Holodomors.

**Levko Lukianenko**



# DAY OF MOURNING

On Saturday, 26 March 2005, a remarkable event took place in the history of the Ukrainian nation. At St. Volodymyr's Cathedral His Holiness Patriarch Filaret officiated at a liturgy of mourning for the victims of the Holodomor of 1932-1933. On this day, for the first time in the many decades that the world Ukrainian community has marked Ukraine's great unhealed wound, the Ukrainian government was with its people. Ukraine's President Viktor Yushchenko and his family, as well as the entire Ukrainian government, headed by Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko, took part in the liturgy of mourning.

This event is a watershed in the formation of national self-consciousness and the Ukrainian state's recognition of the scope of the 1932-1933 Holodomor, and the process of learning the truth and preserving the people's memory of this horrific crime.

March 1933 marked the apogee of this terrible death by starvation, which claimed

millions of people. The last Saturday of March will be proclaimed a Day of Mourning on the state level.

Our nation needs this. This is its pain, its memory, and its terrible truth. On this day commemorative liturgies of mourning in all the churches of Ukraine for the repose of the innocent souls murdered during the Holodomor are to be accompanied by official state measures. Mourning processions are to be held throughout Ukraine — in regional and raion centers and villages, which are filled with memorial mounds.

This is our human and civic duty to the memory of those millions who perished in 1932-1933. This is a spiritual cleansing of our nation, the unification of our people in mourning, and a warning to future generations.

Ukrainians need this Day of Remembrance and Mourning. Now I know that this day will come.

**Serhii Kot, Ph.D. (History)**



*President Viktor Yushchenko of Ukraine and his wife Kateryna honor the memory of Holodomor victims during the liturgy of mourning in St. Volodymyr's Cathedral in Kyiv, 26 March 2005.*



*President Viktor Yushchenko, Kateryna Yushchenko, Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko, and the members of the Ukrainian government honor the memory of Holodomor victims during the liturgy of mourning held at St. Volodymyr's Cathedral in Kyiv.*



*At left: the last president of the Ukrainian National Republic in exile and the head of the OUN(m) Mykola Plaviuk; and parliamentarian and academician Mykola Zhulynsky during the liturgy of mourning held in Kyiv on 26 March 2005.*



*His Holiness Patriarch Filaret of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (Kyiv Patriarchate) and President Viktor Yushchenko of Ukraine during the liturgy of mourning on 26 March 2005.*

# FUND COMMITTEE FOR THE BOOK “ZLOCZYN”



*At left: J. Kyrlyk, M. Kardash, R. Lazorko, A. Hlukhanych, P. Kardash, H. Vyshnevy, B. Tarnawsky, M. Jarocka, J. Kontek, J. Ruban, G. Semkiw, M. Hanytsky.*

Fund Committee for the Book “Zloczyn” [Genocide], which is the original publication of this work in the Ukrainian language, expresses its indebtedness to the authors of the reminiscences provided and to the contributors and sympathizers who had donated the necessary funds, making it possible to print two editions, of 11,000 copies in all, of the Book in Ukrainian.

These copies have already been distributed free of charge throughout Ukraine.

A free of charge distribution of this English translation publication will be conducted in due course at the United Nations Organization in New York and at all the Ukrainian embassies throughout the democratic world.

The Committee is also very grateful to all the participants for their valuable assistance in the preparation and distribution of this important publication.

Chairman  
*R. Lazorko*

Treasurer  
*J. Kyrlyk*

Secretary  
*J. Ruban*

## ***A NOTE FROM THE COMPILER AND PUBLISHER***

*Dear reader!*

*Through this book the tragic history of Ukraine down the centuries is speaking to you. The truth about the horrific legacy of violence, terror, denationalization, Russification, deportations, and the three Holodomors is finally beginning to emerge. This book describes the terrible wars, cruel occupations, and the destruction of the political, intellectual, and spiritual leadership of the Ukrainian nation.*

*The entire world watched as Nazi war criminals were tried in Nuremberg.*

*It is my firm belief that Ukraine has suffered more than any other nation in the world.*



*Who will take responsibility for the crimes of genocide against the Ukrainian nation?*

***Petro Kardash.***

# BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Arkas, Mykola. *Istoriia Ukrainy-Rusy* (The History of Ukraine-Rus'). St. Petersburg, 1908.
- Bolabolchenko, Anatolii. *SVU — sud nad perekonanniam* (SVU — Trial of Convictions). Kyiv: UKSP Kobza, 1994.
- Cheremsky, Kost. *Povernennia tradytsii* (Return of Traditions). Kharkiv: Tsentr Lesia Kurbasa, 1999.
- Danko, Mykola. *SSSR, viaznytsia narodiv* (USSR: Prison of Nations). Buenos Aires: Peremoha, 1947).
- “Vovky,” *khronika viddilu UPA* (“Wolves”: Chronicle of an UPA Unit). Buenos Aires: Peremoha, 1948.
- Duzhy, Petro. *Roman Shukhevych — polityk, voin, hromadianyn* (Roman Shukhevych — Politician, Warrior, Citizen). Lviv: Halytska vydavnycha Spilka, 1998.
- Entsyklopediia ukrainoznavstva* (Encyclopedia of Ukraine). Edited by Dr. Volodymyr Kubiyovych (Kubijovic). Paris-New York: Naukove tovarystvo im. T. Shevchenka, 1984.
- Forum* (journal of the Ukrainian Fraternal Union). Toronto (1995).
- Heroi Krut. Lytsarskyi podvyh ukrainsiv 29 sichnia 1918* (The Heroes of Kruty: The Ukrainians’ Knightly Feat of 29 January 1918). Compiled by I. Iliencko. Drohobych: Vidrozhennia, 1995.
- Khmelnysky, Ivan. *V kraini rabstva i smerty* (In the Land of Slavery and Death). 1<sup>st</sup> ed. Chicago: Samostiina Ukraina, 1951.
- Kobzari. Narys z istorii kobzarstva Ukrainy* (The Kobzars: A Survey of the History of Ukraine’s Kobzar Art). Kyiv: Mystetstvo, 1980.
- Kovalenko, Lydia, and Volodymyr Maniak, comps. *1933-y — holod. Narodna knyha-memorial* (1933 — Famine; National Memorial Book). Kyiv: Radianskyi pysmennyk, 1991.
- Kudelia, Mykola. *Kobzar u moiemu zhytti* (The Kobzar in My Life). Lutsk: Initsiial, 1998).
- Kulish, A. *Knyha pamiaty ukrainsiv (Korotkyi perelik zlochyntsv Moskivskoho imperializmu v Rusy Ukraini)* (Ukrainians’ Memorial Book: A Short List of Criminals of Muscovite Imperialism in Ukraine-Rus’). Poltava: *n. publ.*, 1999.
- Leontovych, Mykola. *Narysy z istorii ukrainskoi radianskoi muzyky* (Surveys of the History of Soviet Ukrainian Music). Pt. 1. Kyiv: Derzhavne vyd-vo obrazotvorchoho mystetstva i muzychnoi literatury, URSR, 1967.
- Muchenky — dzherelo Chudotvornoii syly* (Martyrs: The Source of Miraculous Power). Lviv: Postuliatsiinyi tsentr beatyfikatsii i kanonizatsii sviatykh UHKTs, 2001.
- Pamiatky Ukrainy* (Monuments of Ukraine: semi-popular illustrated magazine). Kyiv, 1991.
- Pasternak, Yurii. *Kriz komyn na voliu. Spomyn viaznia nimetskykh kontstaboriv* (Through the Chimney to Freedom: Memoir of a Prisoner of German Concentration Camps). *N.p.* [USA]: *n. publ.*, [1999].
- Pidhainy, S. O., V. I. Hryshko, and P. P. Pavlovych, eds. *Black Deeds of the Kremlin: A White Book*. Vol. One. *Book of Testimonies*. Translated from the Ukrainian by Alexander Oreletsky and Olga Prychodko. *N.p.*: Ukrainian Association of Victims of Russian Communist Terror, 1953.
- Pushkash, Laslo, Rev. *Kyr Teodor Romzha. Zhyttia i smert iepyskopa* (Kyr Teodor Romzha: The Life and Death of a Bishop). Lviv: Lvivska Bohoslovska Akademiia, 2001.
- Rozhenko, Mykola, and Ye. Bohatska, eds. and comps. *Sosny Bykivni svidchat: zlochyn proty liudstva* (The Pines of Bykivnia Testify: Crime against Humanity). 3 vols. Kyiv: Ukrainskyi Tsentr dukhovnoi kultury, 1999-2002.
- Semenko, Yurii. *Holod 1933 roku v Ukraini. Svidchennia pro vynyshchuvannia Moskvoiu ukrainskoho selianstva* (The Famine of 1933 in Ukraine: Testimonies on the Destruction of the Ukrainian Peasantry by Moscow). Munich: Ukrainskyi selianyn, 1993.
- *Natalia Pavlushkova*. Munich-Lviv: Chervona kalyna, 1999.
- Smith, Tim, Rob Perks, and Graham Smith, *Ukraine’s Forbidden History*. Stockport: Dewi Lewis in association with Bradford Heritage Recording Unit, British Library National Sound Archive, University of Sheffield, 1998.
- Suchasnist* (Munich). November (1984).
- Sverstiuk, Yevhen, and O. Skop, eds. and comps. *Vinnytsia, zlochyn bez kary. Dokumenty, svidchennia* (Vinnytsia, Crime without Punishment; Documents, Testimonies). Kyiv: Voskresinnia, 1994.
- Sydorenko, H. *Moie zhyttia* (My Life). Talalaivka-Poltava-Melbourne: Bili vezhi, 1995.
- Ukraina: entsyklopediia dlia molodi* (Ukraine: Encyclopedia for Young People). Edited by Liudmyla Ivchenko-Kovalenko. South Bound Brook, N.J.: Obiednannia ukrainskykh pravoslavnykh sestrystv u SShA, 1971.
- Ukrainska mala entsyklopediia* (Small Encyclopedia of Ukraine). Edited by Yevhen Onatsky. 16 vols. Buenos Aires: Administration of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church, 1957.
- Vodohrai — pisennyk Volodymyra Ivasiuka* (Fountain: The Songbook of Volodymyr Ivasiuk). Compiled by H. Ya. Hembero. Kyiv: Muzychna Ukraina, 1989.
- Volia, Oles. *MOR, knyha buttia Ukrainy* (Killing by Starvation, the Book of Ukraine’s Existence). *N.p.*: Doroha pravdy, 1993.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Foreword. Bohdan Rudnytski.....	3
2. Indictment. Levko Lukianenko.....	5
3. The Destruction of the Sich. Mykola Arkas.....	27
4. Ivan Mazepa. V. Shevchuk.....	35
5. The Kruty and Bazar Tragedies. Hryhorii Vyshnevy.....	36
6. The Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church (UAOC) Acquires Its Own Hierarchy. Yaryna Prelovska.....	47
7. How the Bolsheviks Imprisoned Priests. Very Rev. Archpriest M. Yavdas.....	51
8. How the Communists Turned Churches into Prisons. I. Matiushenko.....	54
9. The Thorny Road of the UAOC and Its Apostle of Truth. Fedir Habelko.....	59
10. Testimonies on the Destruction of the Ukrainian Peasantry. Yurii Sherestiuk.....	64
11. Testimony from a Village on the Dnipro. Pavlo Shynkola.....	68
12. Three Eyewitness Accounts.....	74
13. The Kuban Region. Fedir Selihor.....	77
14. In the Prisons of Poltava. P. Reshetylivsky.....	78
15. The Union for the Liberation of Ukraine (SVU). Anatolii Bolabolchenko.....	81
16. We Accuse Moscow. Oleksii Konoval.....	93
17. My Life Is a Testament to the Ukrainian Genocide. Opanas Nakonechny.....	95
18. The Fields Are Bursting, but Death Is in the House. Oleksandr Halkin.....	96
19. Soul Pain. Mykhailo Popilniukh .....	99
20. Resolution of the International Symposium “Holodomor-33”.....	100
21. The Nation’s Unhealed Wound. Volodymyr Tovkach.....	101
22. The History of a Village in the Kyiv Region. V. Nestor.....	104
23. Lysianka Raion, Kyiv Region. Taras Yakymenko.....	105
24. Myronivka Raion, Kyiv Region. N. Bohuslavsky.....	108
25. Testimony Concerning the Recent Past. O. Kushnir.....	109
26. The Destruction of the Church in Horodyshe. O. Kushnir.....	110
27. How Mokha “Pumped” Gold. O. Kushnir.....	111
28. Novomoskovske Raion, Dnipropetrovsk Region. I. Lisovsky.....	112
29. The Story of One Hamlet. S. Mezhovy.....	113
30. Molochanske Raion, Zaporizhia Region. Yu. Pysareva.....	115
31. Famine in the Zhytomyr Region. P. Pisny.....	116
32. Zinkiv Raion, Poltava Region. R. Suslyk.....	118
33. Opishnia Raion, Poltava Region. V. Vasiuta.....	122
34. Chutove Raion, Poltava Region. Ivan Melnychenko.....	123
35. Kolomak Raion, Kharkiv Region. P. Rud.....	125
36. Derkachi Raion, Kharkiv Region. V. Prokopenko.....	126
37. Krasyliv Raion, Kamianets-Podilsky Region. P. Deineka.....	126
38. Znamianka Raion, Kherson Region. H. Shumylo.....	126
39. Trykraty Raion, Mykolaiv Region. Panas Obruch.....	127
40. Bobrovytsia Raion, Chernihiv Region. S. Cherednychenko.....	128
41. Okhtërka Raion, Sumy Region. A. Mykolenko.....	128
42. Nedryhailiv Raion, Sumy Region. ....	129
43. Hlynsk Raion, Sumy Region. I. Ivanenko.....	129
44. Lebedyn Raion, Sumy Region. I. Perepelytsia.....	130
45. Talalaiv Raion, Sumy Region. Panas Nechypailo.....	130
46. Biliaivka Raion, Odesa Region. S. Yushko.....	131
47. Makiivka Raion, Stalino Region. Maksym Kochur.....	131
48. Medzhybizh Raion, Vinnytsia Raion. P. Bezruchko.....	132
49. Starobilske Raion, Voroshylovhrad Region. Semen Martyniuk.....	132
50. Plastunivsky Raion, Kuban. Dmytro Fesenko.....	133
51. Famine in the Crimea. Pavlo Loza.....	133
52. How the Farmers of Fertile Ukraine Begged for Bread. B. K.....	134

53. Famine in Zaporizhia. S. Lymar.....	135
54. Famine in Donbas. Mykhailo Vizyr.....	136
55. Starving People on the Squares of Kharkiv. M. Kozka.....	137
56. Cannibalism in the Poltava Region. K. Horobets.....	138
57. Industrial Giants and “Parks of Culture” Built on Human Bones. I. Sukhar.....	140
58. By Train through Ukraine. R. Bilenky.....	143
59. Molotov’s Raid on Ukraine. E.Barabash.....	145
60. Famine in the Kyiv Region. N. Oryshchenko.....	146
61. Famine as a Political Tool. O. Zelensky.....	147
62. Testimonies of Villagers from the Dnipropetrovsk Region Recorded by the journalist Mykola Chaban.....	150
63. Beetles above the Cherry Trees (short story). Mykhailo Dobrydenko.....	158
64. Pastoral Letter: Ukrainian Catholic Bishops of Galicia Protest against the Famine. Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky, et al.....	160
65. Executive Committee of the United Ukrainian Organizations of America.....	162
66. An Eyewitness of Ukraine’s Siege by Famine. N. Stryiska.....	163
67. The Famine of 1933 in Ukraine. Yurii Semenko.....	170
68. How the Kobzars of Ukraine Were Liquidated. Kost Cheremsky.....	171
69. The Persecution of the Kobzars. Borys Tkachenko.....	174
70. “I Would Take My Bandura.” O. Hostra.....	176
71. The Deportation of the Ukrainian Intelligentsia. Viktor Adamsky.....	178
72. The Thorny Road of the Ukrainian Language. Yevhen Roslytsky.....	182
73. Purged Ukrainian Intellectuals.....	184
74. The Melnyk Family.....	193
75. The Return of Vasyl Stus. Yurii Pokalchuk.....	196
76. The Mortal Remains of Vasyl Stus, Yurii Lytvyn, and Oleksa Tykhy Are Returned to Ukraine. Marichka Halaburda-Chyhryn.....	198
77. The Murder of the Composer Volodymyr Ivasiuk. Marichka Halaburda-Chyhryn.....	199
78. Open Letter to the Head of the KGB. Vitalii Lekhter.....	201
79. Ukraine’s Historical and Cultural Legacy, and the National Elite. Hanna Kos.....	202
80. Olena Teliha. Lidia Hladka.....	204
81. A Celebrated Poltavan (The Life of Vasyl Symonenko). Fedir Habelko.....	205
82. Zones of Penal Servitude and Imprisonment. Ivan Khmelnytsky.....	207
83. Ukraine’s Losses during 1939-1945. Dr. Volodymyr Trembytsky.....	211
84. The Norilsk Uprising. Meletii Semeniuk.....	212
85. <i>Mea Vita</i> — My Life. Hryhorii Sydorenko.....	215
86. I Was Dying amid Fields of Grain. Ivan Brynza.....	219
87. The Terrible Years. Petro Marchenko.....	223
88. The Bitter Aftertaste of Mint. Oleksandr Halkin.....	230
89. Sloviansky Raion, Krasnodar Krai (Kuban). Fedir Selihor.....	232
90. The Fate of One among Many Millions. M. Tatus .....	232
91. Mass Deaths of Deportees in Vologda. P. Kryvobok.....	234
92. The Building of Communism by Slave Labor. Prof. V. Dubrovsky.....	236
93. In the Siberian Concentration Camps. Ya. Vakulenko.....	238
94. “Master of His Vast Native Land.” M. Lomaka.....	239
95. The Transportation of Convicts. Ivan Mykhailovych.....	241
96. After the Victory March — to a Concentration Camp. A. Fedoriv.....	246
97. I Still Dream about the Mordovian Camps. Maria Chervinska-Matsiv.....	247
98. My Reminiscences about Kolyma. Maria Duzha.....	249
99. In the Claws of Satan. Volodymyr Andrushko.....	251
100. Sad Reminiscences of Captivity. Oleksii Trachuk.....	260
101. Kingir (Kazakhstan). Kateryna Kindras.....	266
102. The Kingir Uprising. Hanna Genyk-Skilska.....	267
103. The Destruction of Orthodox Churches in the Kholm and Pidliashia Regions. Very Rev. Archpriest V. Vyshnevsky.....	272
104. Klubochyn, Another Ukrainian Lidice. Stepan Radion.....	272



105. List of Ukrainians Killed in the Village of Sylne. Compiled by Ivan Shulha and Tetiana Perekhodko.....	277
106. A Symbol of Invincible Spirit. Volodymyr Datsko.....	279
107. The Bykivnia Tragedy. Prof. Mykola Rozhenko.....	280
108. Bykivnia: In the Zone of Special Silence.....	284
109. The Pacification of 1930. Myron Radzykevych.....	314
110. I Saw Hell: The Crimes in Vinnytsia. Apolon Trembovetsky.....	322
111. The Struggle for Freedom. Yurii Kerekesh.....	347
112. The Crimes of the Muscovite Rulers. Ivan Sarvadii.....	352
113. A Kindergarten on the Site of a Former Bolshevik Charnel House. H. Ustynsky.....	353
114. The Travails of the Memorial Society. H. Ustynsky.....	355
115. The Trial of the 64 in Drohobych. Dmytro Bily.....	356
116. Saved by a Rosary Made of Bread. Roman Ivanytsky.....	366
117. The First Christmas in the Bereza Kartuzka Concentration Camp. Roman Ivanytsky.....	368
118. Bolshevik Crimes in the Village of Peniaky. Osyp Panchyshyn.....	370
119. "I Would Be Proud to be Called a 'Banderite'." Yurii Steklov.....	372
120. Profiles of Four Ukrainian Freedom Fighters – S.Petliura, Y. Konovalts, S. Bandera, R. Shukhevych. Marichka Halaburda-Chyhryn.....	378
121. Lev Roman Rebet. Andrii Hlukhanych.....	382
122. Hell near Liubart Castle. Mykola Kudelia.....	383
123. In Auschwitz. Yurii Pasternak.....	386
124. How Ukrainian Prisoners Died in Auschwitz. Prof. Oleksa Vintoniak.....	393
124. Nil Khasevych, Hero of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army. Natalia Tyravska-Radyvyl.....	397
126. Operation Wisla. Mykola Haliv.....	399
127. The Fiftieth Anniversary of Operation Wisla. Orysia Stefyn.....	403
128. Jaworzno. Rt. Rev. Mitered Stepan Dziubyna.....	406
129. The Massacre in the Village of Zavadka Morokhivska. Reprinted from <i>Holos Lemkivshchyny</i> (Lemko Voice).....	413
130. The Forcible Deportation and Genocide of Ukrainians in Poland. Maria Pankiv.....	416
131. Crime: Ukrainian Catholicism's Way of the Cross. Rt. Rev. Mitered Ivan Shevtsiv.....	425
132. Patriarch Josyf Cardinal Slipyj and the Martyrs for Christ's Faith.....	431
133. How the Western Allies Helped Murder Thousands of Cossacks. Ivan Sarvadii.....	473
134. Patriarch Volodymyr of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Kyiv and All Ukraine-Rus'. Fedir Habelko.....	477
135. Faith in God and Autocephaly. Fedir Habelko.....	479
136. Nuremberg-2. Levko Lukianenko.....	482
137. Day of Mourning. Dr. Serhii Kot.....	487
138. A Note from the Compiler and Publisher. Petro Kardash.....	48
139. Bibliography.....	489
140. Table of Contents.....	490

# **GENOCIDE IN UKRAINE**

***FORTUNA PUBLISHING***

**P. KARDASH,  
74 SNELL GR., OAK PARK, VIC 3046  
AUSTRALIA**

INTERNATIONAL STANDARD  
NATIONAL LIBRARY OF AUSTRALIA  
ISBN-0-9581038-3-6

**COMPILED BY PETER KARDASH  
TRANSLATED BY DARIA MYRNA**

**DESIGN BOGDAN AND TARAS RUDNYTSKI  
JACKET DESIGN MARUSIA JAROCKA  
PHOTO LAYOUT MYCHAJLO HANYTSKY**



